The Freedom Wars of the 2050s left Americans with a distaste for both socialism and rule by large corporations. In the power vacuum left after the end of the Freedom Wars, a new force gained prominence: economically self-sufficient gated communities. Using new psychometric technologies that let them accurately measure the minds of applicants they were able to let in only the best people, and good people made for successful communities. Gated communities were so successful that other organizations started mimicking their model, even corporations. Yet outside the walls of these new communities are slums, where those who can’t or won’t fit in elsewhere live. The island of Manhattan in New York City is one of the most notorious and dangerous of these slums.

visit www.FatesWorseThanDeath.com for more
This is me.

I was popular.

My parents bought me anything I asked for.

When I didn’t do well in school I got private tutors.

The only thing they couldn’t give us was danger, excitement.

They even let me get a nose job because I thought my nose was a little too big.
Evening.

So anyway I said to him...

We all wanted excitement, at least that's what we thought we wanted.

So we talked our parents into letting us spend the summer before our Senior year traveling.

We were going to Europe and all that, but what we were most excited about was the week we were going to spend in the city.
My parents were so freaked out. They made us all get taseres and pepper spray and complete self defense training modules.

We had to promise we wouldn't go out after dark, and we wouldn't leave midtown or take the subway.

They even got kidnap insurance on me, so there would be someone to pay any ransom if I got kidnapped.

God damn!

Look at that porn shop! There's dildoes in the window.

Let's go buy some porn. Hee hee.

Shut up!
F*ck! Look at this freak!

Room 357, third floor.
Can someone help us with our bags?
No.

What the fuck is this? This is supposed to be a luxury suite.

I heard they only keep the first five floors running. Don't have enough guests to keep the whole thing open.

...can't help you.
Well fuck you.

Can you believe that shit? I'm so going to get him fired.

Come on, let's go out. I want to see the city.
Guys, this is kind of scary. I'm starting to have second thoughts.

Oh come on. We have the best tasers money can buy, and each of us has over 20 hours of training in the best self-defense modules. You think anyone here has anything like that?

But what if someone has a gun?

There are no guns, stupid. The tunnel and bridge scanners keep them out.

What if there are some left over from before?

The Freedom Army went block by block and rounded them all up. Don't you know history?

But the resistance managed to...

Shut up. You guys keep acting all scared and someone is going to think they can rob us. Think confident. Confident.
Let's go in here.

Vodka tonic.

Hey, do you know where to buy drugs around here?
What do you want?

Got any God Killer?

What do you fucking think?

How much will 100 get me?

This feels good.

I feel like a fucking god.
Not for you.

What the fuck? Where do you get off talking to me like that?

You think because you're rich and pretty you can treat me like shit?

Stay back! I'm armed!

Stupid stuck-up cunt!
Help!

Help me!

Two years later.

I went into a deep depression after that.

My friends couldn't look me in the eye, knowing they had wimped out and let me get beat half to death.
Hey Angie. Need a smoke?  
Wouldn’t say no to one.

You be sure to tell me if you see any more Skin Borgs hanging around here, okay?

Jesus Summer, I told you I would. You know I keep my word.

I know. I know.

Friendless. Ugly. In pain. I began to question everything that I had taken for granted before. I realized that all the things I had taken pride in before were meaningless.
Mom, dad. What are you doing here?

We wanted to tell you that the White Swan Corporation is going to be holding testing for full-time employees.

This is where you live?

How can you live in a place like...

No dad. We can put you in rehab.

Yeah mom

Yeah mom.

Honey, we're willing to pay for you to have the best test tutoring.

I'm not on drugs. I keep telling you.

Sweetie, we want you to leave this place. It's not a good place. You have too much potential to waste it here.

What this place did to me? What about what the place I used to live did to me?

I don't know how you could even come back here after what this place did to you...

It let me get away with being a shallow, conceited, intolerant wimp. The city might be dangerous, but it won't let you get away with that.
Honey...

No dad. I know you want what you think is best for me, but that's not what I want. I'm happy here. I do things that actually matter here.

Sweetie...

Is that your cab I saw waiting downstairs?

Yes.

You'd better go before it takes off. The driver is not going to wait for long around here.

Give me all your money.

We don't have any cash on us.

I said give me your fucking money!
...please no...

Hey, leave them alone!

Back off bitch!

I said leave them alone. Now scram or I'll have to hurt you.
You'd better let me walk you to your car.

I used to be the most popular girl in school. Now I'm just one badass in a city of thousands of badasses. Yet there's nowhere else I'd rather be.
The future is you sleep on a cot filled with rusty springs. The future is that you fight with knives and can die of simple infections. The future is that you have to walk up four flights of stairs to get home and you're lucky to have hot water to take a shower.

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Welcome to the future. Welcome to the city.

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