

INCOGNITO

Story and Screenplay  
by

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The following text fades in over black.

California, 2023

The events depicted in this film document the investigation into the disappearance of Eileen Taylor.

Eileen went missing on September 25, 2023 near Salton Sea, CA. Investigated by Officer S. Cullen and police AI AVA, this case examines the fragility of human and non-human memory in creating the **fiction** that we know as 'the past'.

FLARE TO GREY

FADE IN FROM GREY

Slowly the grey particles become a barely perceptible image.

EXT. ABANDONED VEHICLE - DAY  
(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio)

As fog clears, a WHITE car bursts through, headlights on. The car is a hatchback and windows are tinted black. It has mud splashes.

As the car roars past, leaving the fog swirling in its drift, the title of the film fades in.

INCOGNITO

The car passes by a diamond shaped pole amidst some trash. Few houses, an abandoned RV and cacti seen at a distance.

The car passes by a billboard for INCOGNITO: SEEK AND NEVER BE FOUND. A diamond shaped road sign visible at a distance.

FADE OUT.

The following text fades in over black.

Imperial Valley, California  
[Police A.I. AVA]

IMPERIAL VALLEY, CALIFORNIA - DAY  
(evidentiary camera - 16:9 ratio)

Satellite map of Imperial Valley with the date SEPTEMBER 30,  
2023, 08:27PM, coordinates 32.7375N, 114.9633W, and location  
IMPERIAL VALLEY, CA.

Police officer STEPHANIE CULLEN is helped by her A.I. Assistant  
AVA (AUGMENTED VIRTUAL ASSISTANT) to solve her cases.

AVA (V.O.):

On September 30, 2023, a request to check on an abandoned  
vehicle, near the Sonny Bono Wildlife Refuge was logged.  
Officer Cullen was closest to the site.

Top view of the area's satellite map. Zoom in on a police car on  
the map.  
(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio)

AVA (V.O.):

I calculated the most efficient route.

The police car drives through the desert towards a water tank.  
Few houses, a power station, dilapidated buildings seen through  
the windshield.

EXT. ABANDONED CAR - DAY

The police car pulls up near an abandoned white car.  
SFX: car door closes

SFX: rustling of leaves

Police officer STEPHANIE CULLEN approaches the vehicle.

Zoom in on the local (CA) license plate 7 UBC 707.

AVA (V.O.):

Searching the police database returned a match for the license plate.

INT. EVIDENCE ROOM - DAY  
(evidentiary camera, 16:9 ratio)

The license plate is collected as evidence, inside a cage with some other things related to the case.

The abandoned car belongs to EILEEN TAYLOR. A young 21 year old girl originally from Durmid, California.

SFX: typing on keyboard

A laptop screen scrolls with a record of Eileen on the police database. Records show her picture, fingerprints and the car registered under her name.

AVA (V.O.):

The car was registered under Eileen Taylor and was found with a full tank of gas.

Eileen had been reported missing by her mother five days prior.

Primary residence: 9558 Avenue H, Bombay Beach, CA.

SFX: printer rustling and printing

AVA prints the missing person flyer of Eileen, put up by family.

AVA (V.O.):

Eileen enrolled at the Imperial Valley College, located South of Calipatria, on August 7, 2023.

A photograph of a diamond pendant, hanging from the front mirror of a car is near the printer.

INT. ABANDONED CAR - DAY

(gradual change from evidentiary camera, to reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio)

SFX: car's ignition

The car's ignition is turned on. The fuel indicator points at FULL.

AVA (V.O.):

The full tank suggested she was recently at a gas station.

INT. EVIDENCE ROOM - DAY

(evidentiary camera, 16:9 ratio)

Officer Cullen has put together an EVIDENCE BOARD with DRAWINGS, MAPS, PHOTOS, PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE, and relevant information.

The nearest gas stations are marked on a map of Imperial Valley, noting the time it takes to drive to them from the abandoned car site. Conoco is the nearest gas station.

AVA (V.O.):

Online maps showed only one nearby gas station, the Conoco, north of Calipatria. According to my records, this Conoco had been closed since August 2022.

EXT. CONOCO GAS STATION - DAY  
(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio)

Leaves rustle in the breeze. The police car pulls up at Conoco.  
Conoco is old and dilapidated, not functional.

AVA (V.O.):

Officer Cullen performed a physical inspection and noted that it was closed, confirming my records.

The police rule out the possibility that Eileen got gas from Conoco.

BLACK.

EXT. TRAIN OVERPASS - NIGHT  
(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio - CONTINUED)

SFX: moving train

The police car stops at an intersection near a Train Overpass.  
Moving train on overpass.

Diamond Graffiti and face graffiti on walls.

AVA (V.O.):

Officer Cullen remembered seeing a new gas station under construction somewhere in the area, despite no evidence of any city permit documents, satellite imagery, or online reviews.

EXT. PEMEX GAS STATION - NIGHT  
(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio - CONTINUED)

Police car is seen at a distance near the train overpass.

A sign says CALIPATRIA 19. A diamond shaped pole is seen near the sign.

The car pulls up near the PEMEX gas station.

AVA (V.O.):

Indeed, Officer Cullen discovered an undocumented PEMEX Station the following morning.

EXT. PEMEX GAS STATION - DAY

(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio - CONTINUED)

The police visit the gas station the next morning.

The gas station is in the middle of nowhere. A moving train is seen behind the station.

AVA (V.O.):

Cullen connected me to the establishment's independent, off-grid cctv footage.

With no human witnesses, the Police find a CCTV camera. AVA investigates the footage to trace Eileen's timeline.

AVA (V.O.):

I scanned a total of 192 hours of footage captured through Camera 01, which covered both pumps.

INT. EVIDENCE ROOM - DAY

(evidentiary camera, 16:9 ratio)

A computer screen shows all footage collected from the gas station.

AVA (V.O.):

I detected a car matching Eileen's at 3:58pm on September 25, 2023.

The image from the footage is enhanced to extract the license plate details. The car from the footage is confirmed to be Eileen's.

Her social media presence is investigated for clues. Her last post is a picture of her bedroom.

AVA (V.O.):

I enhanced the image and confirmed the license plate match. The footage metadata suggested that it was recorded on the same date as Eileen's last social media post.

INT. EILEEN TAYLOR'S BEDROOM - NIGHT  
(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio)

The police arrive. The fan in her bedroom is on. Her room has a desk facing the window. Moving train outside the window. There are some posters pinned to the wall. They look for clues.

AVA (V.O.):

The GPS metadata on the picture corresponded to Eileen's registered residence, at 9558 Avenue H, Bombay Beach, near the Pope freight train loading station.

The police notice a billboard outside the window with a DIAMOND logo. An email directed to Eileen with the subject "SEEK AND

NEVER BE FOUND" with the same logo is pinned on the bedroom wall.

A business card of Lavanderia with diamond scribblings is pinned above it. A laundry basket of dirty clothes is below the posters.

The train leaves. The diamond on the billboard is visible clearly. Billboard's lights flicker.

AVA (V.O.):

I identified a diamond symbol that recurred on multiple pieces of evidence that Cullen retrieved from her bedroom.

INT. EVIDENCE ROOM - DAY  
(evidentiary camera, 16:9 ratio)

The email and the business card are collected as evidence.

AVA (V.O.):

Results from an online search returned the symbol's connection to a game on the dark web, which multiple users referred to as "Incognito".  
Reportedly, the game can help someone vanish.  
Multiple pieces of evidence suggested that Eileen might have been playing Incognito.

EXT. LAVANDERIA - DAY  
(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1)

The Police drive through Bombay Beach. Some residences, RVs and mountains visible at a distance. They pull up at Lavanderia.

AVA (V.O.):

A local Laundromat business card, marked with the diamond, was among the evidence.

Business name: Lavanderia

Business address: 2188 3rd st, Bombay Beach.

Lavanderia's credit card logs enabled me to identify and contact several witnesses who visited on the day of Eileen's disappearance.

EXT. LAVANDERIA - NIGHT

(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 - CONTINUED)

The police interrogate some of the witnesses.

WITNESS 01 recalls that a white car, similar to Eileen's, pulls up while he is waiting under the awning. It rains. Diamond shaped pole visible at a distance.

WITNESS TESTIMONY #01:

I think I saw her come by car on the 25th, right before 5pm. Yeah, I remember because it was pouring rain and I was late for my wife's birthday.

WITNESS 02 recalls differently. She recalls visiting the laundromat after dinner.

WITNESS TESTIMONY #02:

Yeah, I saw her. It was late. I had dinner and put the kids to bed first and then I went out to do laundry.

The police refer to a CCTV camera outside the laundromat.

INT. EVIDENCE ROOM - DAY

(evidentiary camera, 16:9 ratio)

They pull up footage to confirm her visit. Discrepancy in the timestamp and the witness testimonies.

Date on the desktop says 09-25. The recorded time is 19:37:10. A door to the interrogation room behind opens. Light flickers.

AVA (V.O.):

The CCTV footage retrieved from the Laundromat was limited. It only showed Eileen's car arriving. I could not retrieve further information about her presence there. She did not seem to be carrying her phone, as there were no traces of her GPS signal.

The door to the interrogation room closes.

AVA (V.O.):

I retrieved the approved plan from Calipatria's permit office for a Laundromat remodel. The permit approved 3 cameras.

Zoom in on the approved plans on the evidence board.

Police demarcate the dispute between the approved plan of the CCTV connections and its execution. Blind areas are noted.

AVA (V.O.):

My cctv database shows only 2 active connections. While Eileen was not captured on tape, it was still possible she had gone inside. Analysis of CCTV blind spots shows possible routes that Eileen could have taken while remaining unseen.

A woman is seen in the interrogation room, through the glass window inside the evidence room. She sits with her back facing the evidence room.

WITNESS TESTIMONY #03:

I remember a white car parked outside.

INT. LAVANDERIA - NIGHT

(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio)

Witness 03 testifies that it was raining outside. She remembers her encounter with the cleaner. There are muddy footprints on the floor. There is a broom near the entrance. The clock shows 7:10pm.

WITNESS TESTIMONY #03:

But I couldn't see it very clearly, 'cause of the rain that day. Must've been around 6:30 'cause the cleaner was there. Yeah, and he was complaining about having to scrub all the mud off the floors or... something like that.

Witness 04 recalls seeing Eileen near the washers.

WITNESS TESTIMONY #04:

She was using the machine next to me and I was using machine 02 so I guess she was in the 03.

Police find a notice on washer 03 that says MACHINE TEMPORARILY BROKEN WE APOLOGIZE FOR THE INCONVENIENCE :(

AVA (V.O.):

Machine 3 was marked as broken by the administration and

was drawing no current mains power. It was probable that the witness was misremembering.

Witness 05 remembers seeing Eileen near the lost-and-found at Lavanderia. The lost and found is near the dryers. The witness recalls a large white trash bag near the lost and found.

WITNESS TESTIMONY #05:

She went to the lost and found and started ruffling through but didn't take anything. Then she looked behind the trash bag and didn't take anything from that. Then she went to the machines there but she didn't even have a laundry basket. So, I have no idea what she was washing.

INT. EVIDENCE ROOM - DAY  
(evidentiary camera, 16:9 ratio)

The Police start digitally reconstructing the laundromat using photogrammetry, 3D model and photographs, based on approved plan, site survey, witness testimonies and evidence.

Digital model is developed.

AVA (V.O.):

On-site photography was used to digitally reconstruct the space.

Top view of the digital model is overlaid with the approved plan. The mismatch is marked in red.

AVA (V.O.):

A significant misalignment was detected between the photogrammetry model and the approved plan.

The geometric discrepancy was near the machines where Eileen was reportedly seen. I updated the virtual model to match the photogrammetry.

Discrepancies in the recreation reveal a hidden room behind the washers. The police investigate the hidden room.

Black.

SFX: Door opens

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - DAY

(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio)

Door opens into a dark room during bright day light.

The Room is dull, dingy, and rich in textures.

The room has some folding chairs and racks with boxes. The Police spot the diamond from Incognito on a poster in a box. Some sheets are lying on the floor for a long time. The rear wall has a round opening. A metal door, that was covering this opening, is on the floor beside it.

The Police detect a diamond shaped patina on the wall beside the opening. AVA scans it.

AVA (V.O.):

Upon analysis of multiple textures in the room, a diamond shaped patina was detected on the wall.

My image classification algorithm was now trained to recognize the Incognito diamond.

AVA retraces the patina to a diamond shaped pole. The police suspect the pole to be a marker for the Incognito game.

AVA (V.O.):

I extrapolated that Eileen had visited there due to the game.

The puncture in the wall opens behind Washer 03, the one that's been reportedly out of order.

INT. LAVANDERIA - DAY  
(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio - CONTINUED)

SFX: Dryer spinning.

The floor is muddy. Machines are normally operating in the background.

Washer 03, the room and the laundromat are suspected to be one of the checkpoints in Incognito.

AVA (V.O.):

I bypassed the Cullen permission protocol and instigated a deep AI scanning of the areas confirmed to have been recently visited by Eileen.

AVA retrieves all the places Eileen has visited from her database as suspected check points in the game.

EXT. LAVANDERIA - NIGHT  
(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio - CONTINUED)

SFX: Crickets chirping.

AVA detects the pole opposite Lavanderia.

The pole comes into focus. The police mark the Lavanderia as a potential checkpoint.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. PEMEX GAS STATION - NIGHT

(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio - CONTINUED)

AVA detects a diamond pole beside the Calipatria road sign.

AVA (V.O.):

Multiple connections were established on a larger scale,  
taking me closer to the inner working of the incognito  
network.

The pole comes into focus. The police mark the gas station as a  
potential checkpoint.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. INCOGNITO BILLBOARD - DAY

(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio - CONTINUED)

Flash back of the Incognito billboard reading SEEK AND NEVER BE  
FOUND. GOOD LUCK appeared frequently in the places of  
investigation.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. EILEEN'S CAR - DAY

(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio - CONTINUED)

A diamond pendant is hanging from the rear view mirror of  
Eileen's car.

AVA (V.O.):

The more data my algorithm processed, the more information was revealed.

EXT. ABANDONED CAR SITE

(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio - CONTINUED)

According to the database, the car was found near a lake. Speculations of the lake being a checkpoint arise, based on the diamond reflection formed by a swing in the lake.

AVA (V.O.):

The AI scanning has not been completed yet.

FADE TO BLACK.

ZOOM OUT OF THE SATELLITE MAP OF IMPERIAL VALLEY.

(reconstructed camera, 2.35:1 ratio - CONTINUED)

AVA (V.O.):

Officer Cullen is still looking for the missing girl.  
Eileen. Taylor.

A red dot marks a location on the map of Imperial Valley. The following text appears over it.

20230925 Eileen Taylor

Names of other missing people around the area appear. The dots form diamond patterns.

FADE TO BLACK.

Closing credits.

The end.