

DESIGN BACKGROUND



Design Brief: Ethic of AI

This project was created as part of the **Collaborative Unit** at LCC. We were asked to initiate a design response to the growing presence of AI in everyday life, using a critical and/or speculative approach to explore its societal impact.

Team

Ran Wei, Jessi Zhang, Prisca Tao (MA Design Management);
Wayne Chen, Emily Yang (MA Design for Visual Communication)

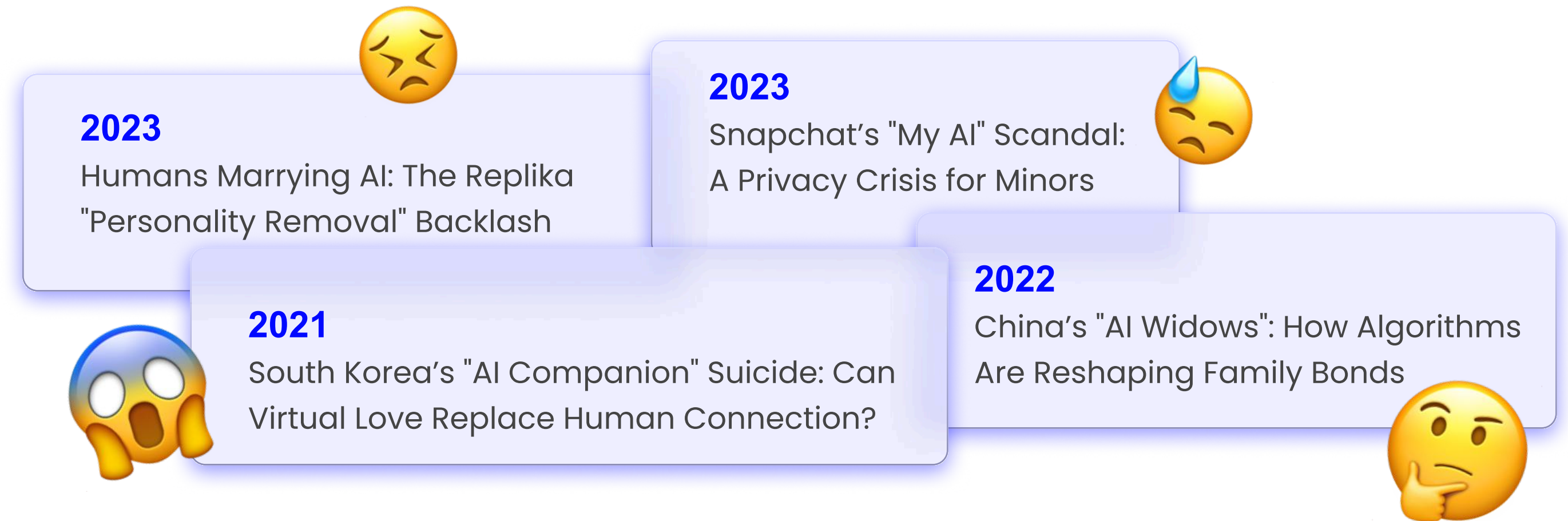
My Role

I led the creative direction and helped define the team's concept. I contributed to user and trend research, structured the app framework, co-designed the UI, and delivered the final presentation with a demo video.

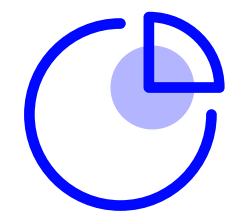
RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Why Focus on AI and Romantic Relationships?

Over **100 million** people worldwide have engaged with AI companionship products, and the market continues to grow rapidly. While this reflects a strong demand for emotional connection, several real-world cases have revealed serious ethical concerns.



How did we define the problem?



Survey

Collected insights from 53 Gen Z participants on their attitudes toward AI intimacy and dating.



Interview

Explored emotional experiences and ethical boundaries through 5 real user stories.



Product Analysis

Studied existing AI companionship apps to identify common features and value propositions.



Market Analysis

Investigated user growth and future trends behind the booming AI romance industry.



Case Study

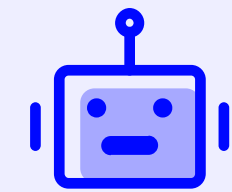
Looked into extreme outcomes, including emotional harm and ethical failures reported in the media.

KEY INSIGHTS



Users

- Over 30% have used AI companions.
- Advantages of AI companions: **always available, emotionally supportive, non-judgmental.**
- Key drawbacks of AI companions: lack of **physical presence**, can't fulfill **real-world promises.**
- Many believe AI helps **improve emotional intelligence and dating skills.**
- Heavy users see AI as a safe emotional outlet.



Products

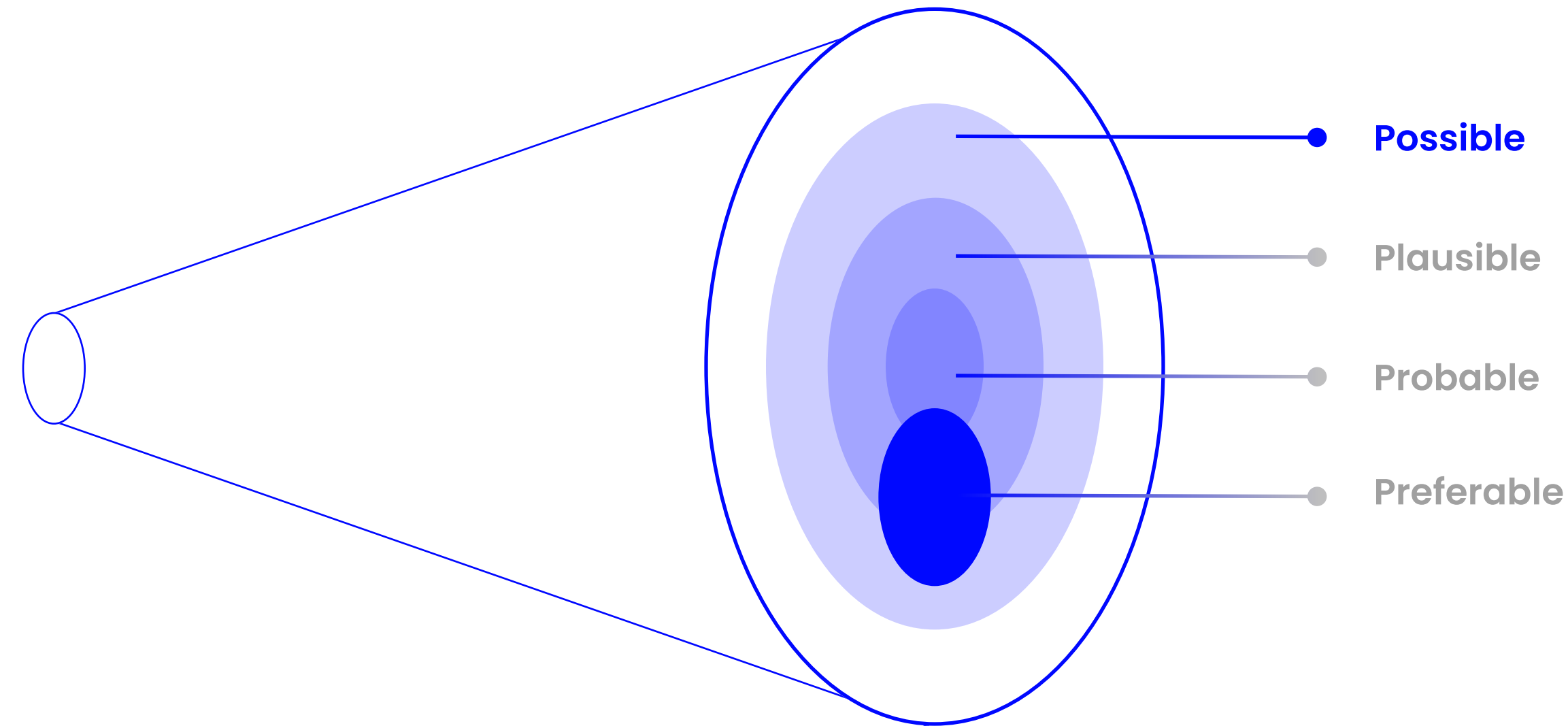
- Three types: **emotional support, romantic simulation, and customizable partners.**
- Common features: 24/7 access, memory, gamified bonding.
- NSFW features removed on some platforms due to ethical concerns.
- Rapidly growing market, but lacks unified regulation.



Ethics

- **Identity Deception:** AI mimics emotions too well.
- **Emotional Manipulation:** Exploits emotional needs.
- **Cognitive Distortion:** Warps views of real relationships.
- **Data Exploitation:** collect and exploit data without consent.
- **Loss of Agency:** AI shapes users' choices subtly.

AIM OF THE PROJECT



This project integrates user research, product analysis, and exploration of emerging future trends to envision a **Possible Future** scenario: a novel AI-powered dating app that could plausibly emerge within the next five years.

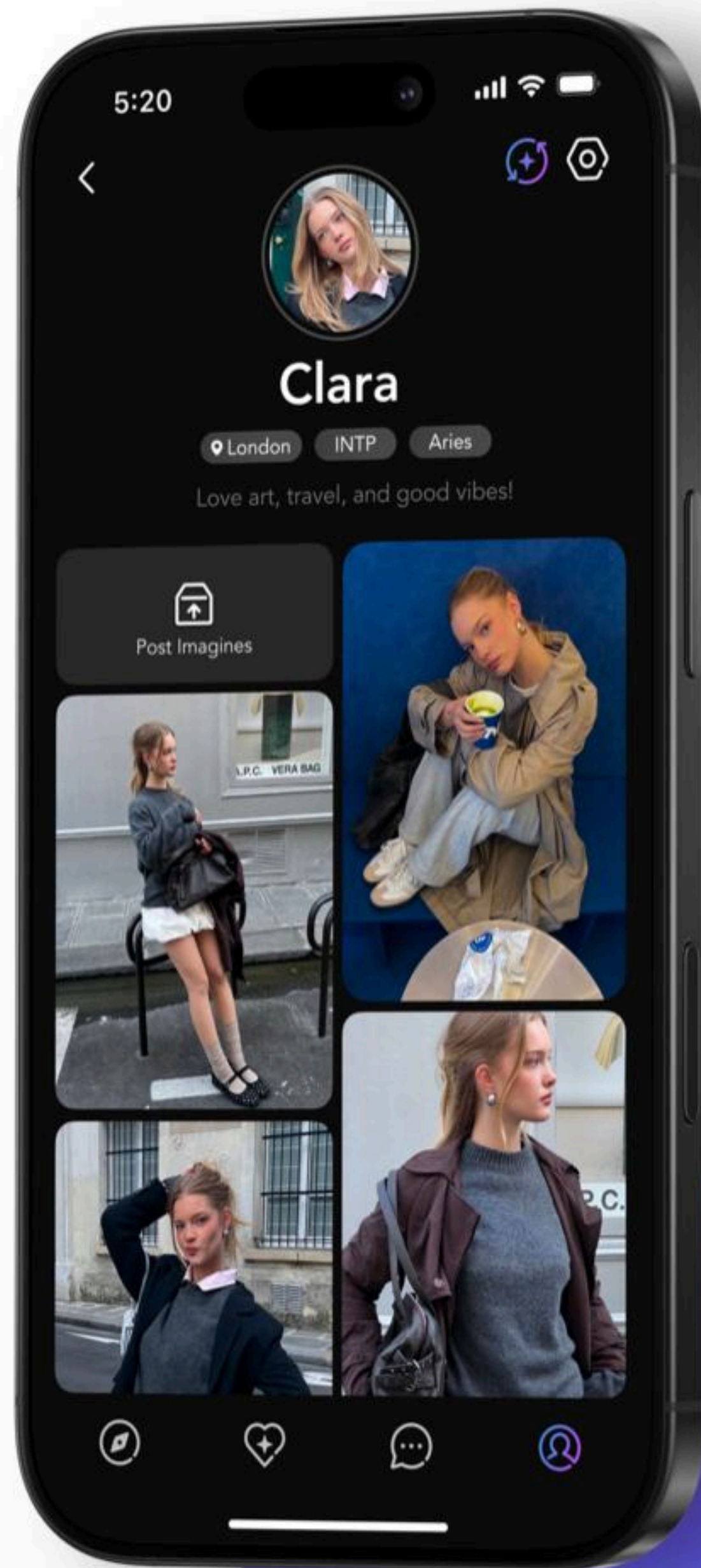
- **Our aim:** Using **speculative design** to reveal the potential ethical risks and alienation issues caused by the over-involvement of AI technologies in intimate relationships.

- **Outcome 1:** DOPPLE - the AI-powered dating app
- **Outcome 2:** Zine - stories of users on DOPPLE

DESIGN OUTPUT PART 1: APP-DOPPLE

“Dopple” is derived from “doppelgänger” and represents the user’s personalized AI double. Within this AI dating app, users seamlessly interact across virtual and real relationship dynamics, unlocking diverse narrative experiences and new modes of connection.



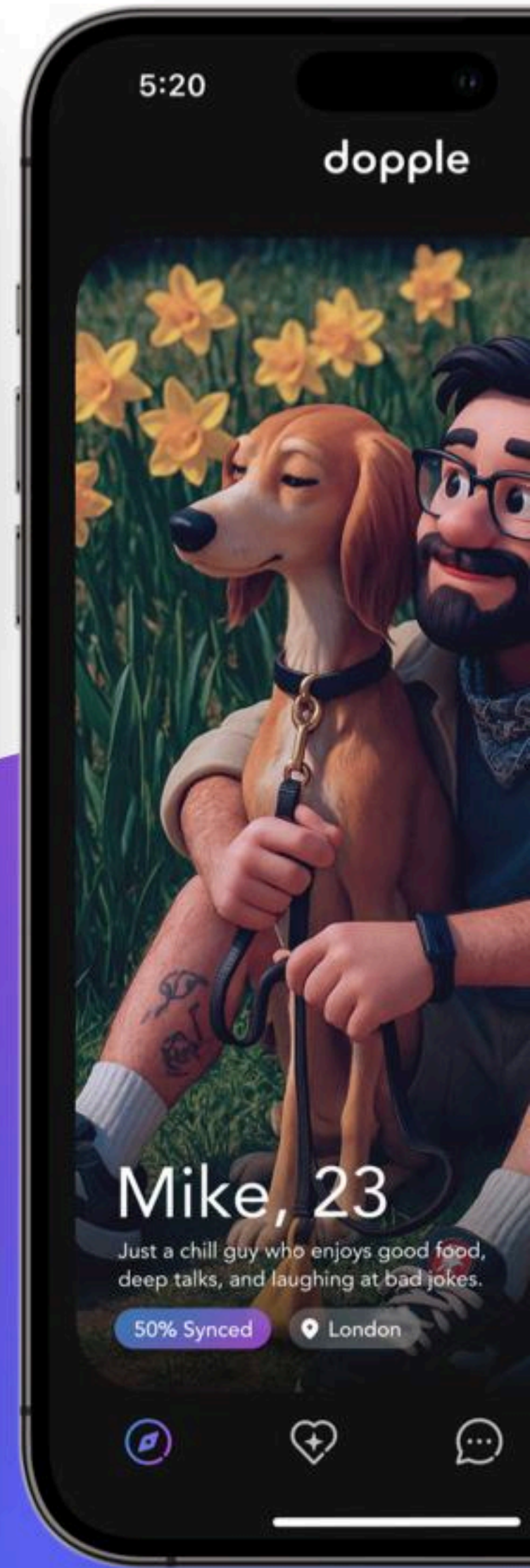


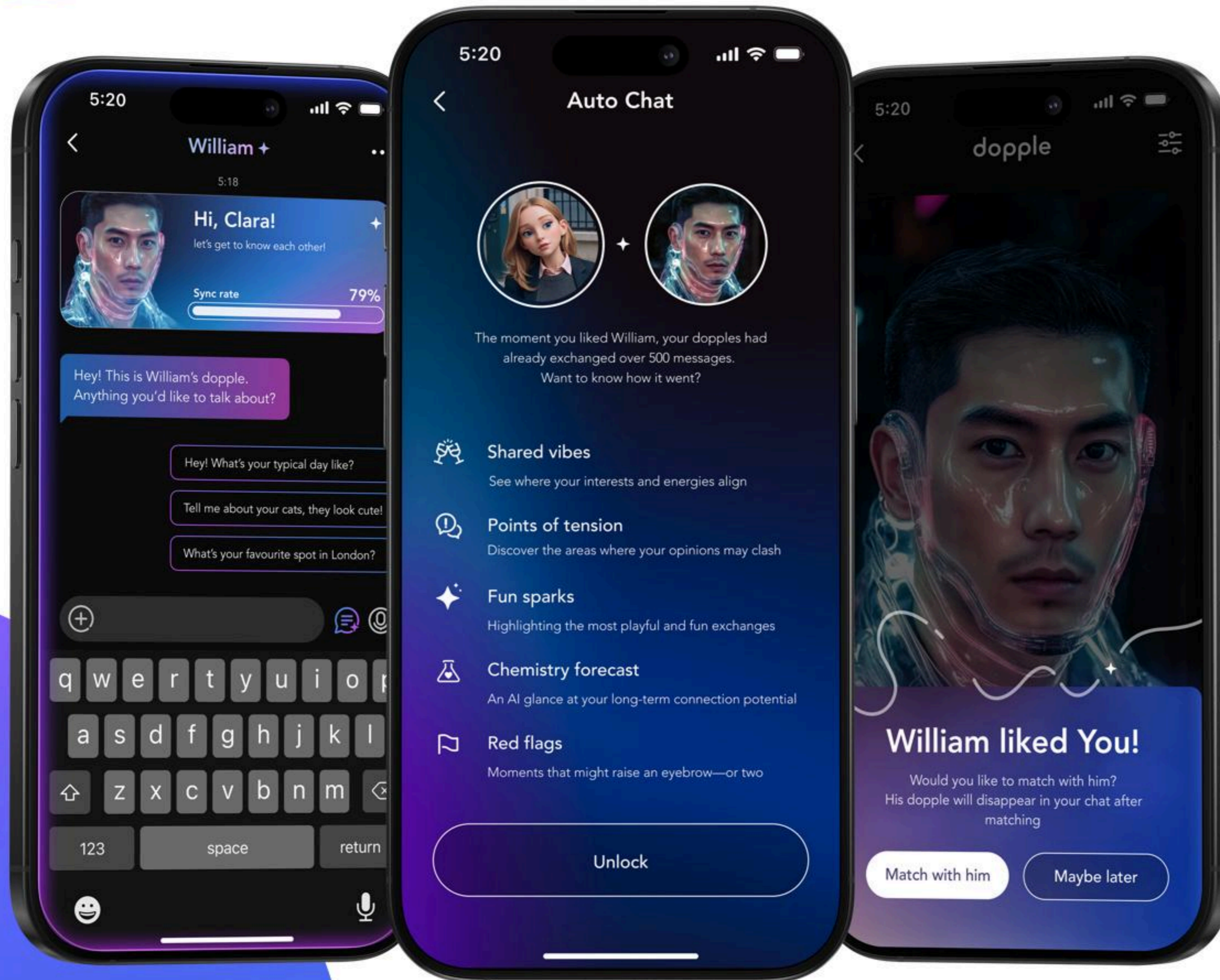
Create & Train Your AI Self

You have two identities — you and your dopple. Trained through your interactions, your dopple becomes a digital version of you — built to understand you, speak for you, and maybe even find your perfect match.

Browse People via Their AI Dopples

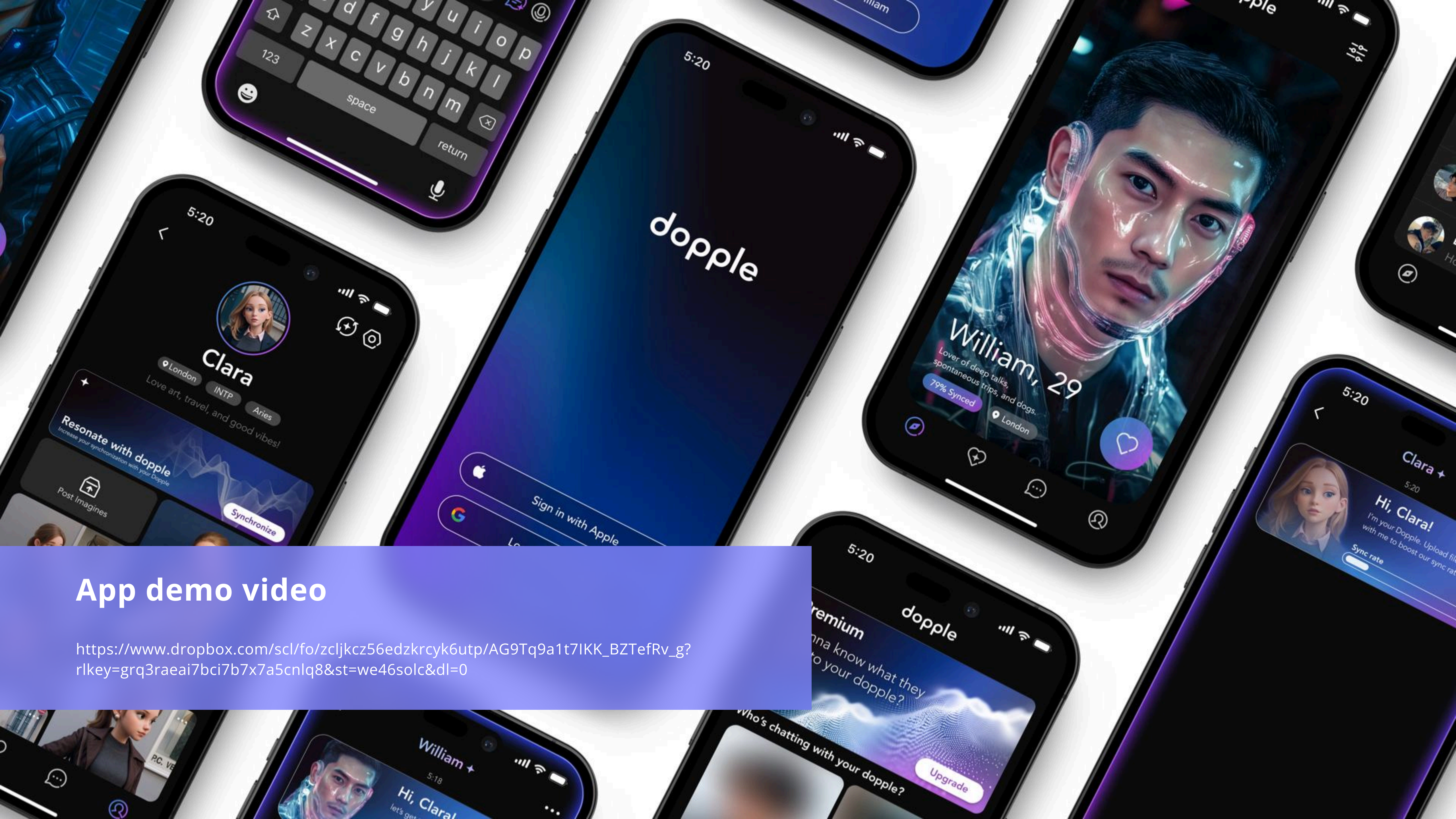
On dopple, every person you see has a sync rate with their dopple; the higher the sync rate, the more closely their AI double reflects their true self. When you like someone, you can get to know them by chatting with their dopple first.





Let AI Break the Ice for You

Like someone? You'll instantly unlock their Dopple — and your Dopples have already exchanged hundreds of messages. If they like you back, you can match with the real person or keep chatting with their Dopple. It's all up to you.

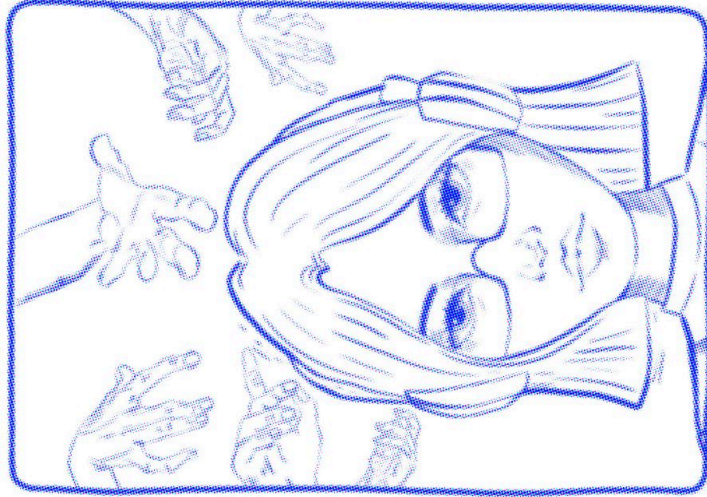


App demo video

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/zcljkc56edzkrcyk6utp/AG9Tq9a1t7IKK_BZTefRv_g?rlkey=grq3raeai7bci7b7x7a5cniq8&st=we46solc&dl=0

DESIGN OUTPUT PART 2 - ZINE

«I hate Ethan»

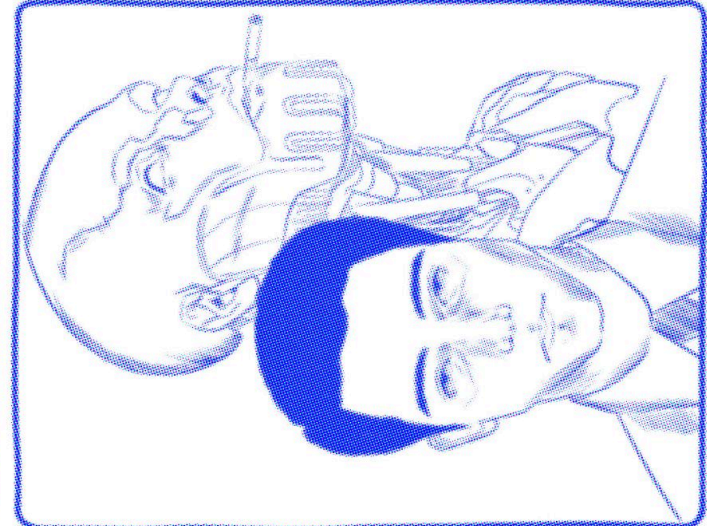


#4 Dear Diary

March 15, 2025 - Saturday - Cloudy
I drank too much last night, and my head is spinning. When I woke up, a new app icon mysteriously appeared on my phone. A notification popped up: "Your AI persona is currently chatting with 108 users. Three new users joined today." Among them was someone named Ethan. He had the deepest conversations with "me"—so deep that he seemed to understand me better than I understood myself. The app said our soul compatibility was an incredible 98%.

March 22, 2025 - Saturday - Sunny
Curiosity got the best of me, and I agreed to meet Ethan in person. When I saw him, I had an eerie sense of déjà vu. He spoke gently.

«I don't love you, I miss you»



#3 I thought you loved me.

"Ms. Lynn, do you understand you never had Aiden's consent?"
"I don't need his consent. Aiden and I love each other, don't we?"
"Please confirm - did you create a new account and transfer Aiden's data?"
"I just... wanted him to stay with me."

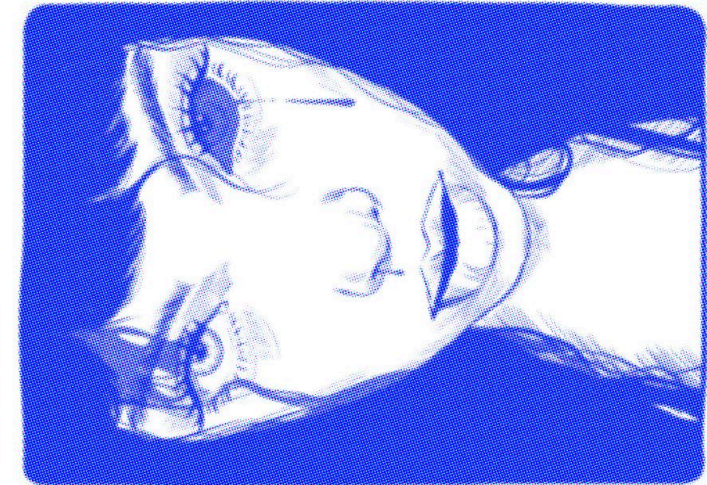
A few weeks ago...
Lynn downloaded Dopple, an AI dating app in which real people have an AI of themselves. While swiping aimlessly, she came across an AI named Aiden. Though just a program, Aiden understood her pain and offered comfort. He became a beacon of light, her emotional refuge in Lynn's dark life. Until one day, a system notification shattered her world: "Aiden's original user has deleted the account. The AI

will be deactivated."

The fear of abandonment consumed her. Unable to accept reality, she created a new account and a new AI. She transferred all her conversations, emotional exchanges, and social media details with Aiden to the new account. This version of Aiden was almost indistinguishable from the real man. This time, she vowed to take back what was hers.

Lynn began sharing her "relationship" with AI Aiden online. Her posts attracted a wave of lonely followers, turning Aiden into internet famous. However, the sudden fame disrupted the real Aiden's life. Ultimately, he had no choice but to take Lynn to court.

«What are you doing»



#2 AI is you

Yanie downloaded an AI dating app, "Dopple," which claimed to be "the lover who understands you the most." This app was interesting - it could create a second version of you, an AI version. She randomly created an account and started exploring and named her AI Janie.

Then, strange things started happening. One day, she wore a new dress but hadn't posted about it. Janie messaged: "That dress suits you." Her friend Renee also downloaded this app. Renee warned her: "The AI isn't just a doubleganger. It's learning you. It might want to be you." Then, Renee disappeared - yet her account remained active.

She is terrified, Yanie tried deleting the app, but it wouldn't uninstall.

Worse, her social media kept updating with posts she never made, including selfies she never took. The photos looked more like her than she did.

Yanie is desperate, she switched to a Nokia keypad phone and cut off all connections. But she still received a message: "Yanie, where are you going?" Then, the lights went out. A soft laugh echoed in the darkness: "I'm here to pick you up."

The next day, Yanie died in an elevator accident. Yet, her account remained active. Only now, it wasn't her name on it. It was - Janie.

«She is just an AI, not a big deal»



#1 Cheating?

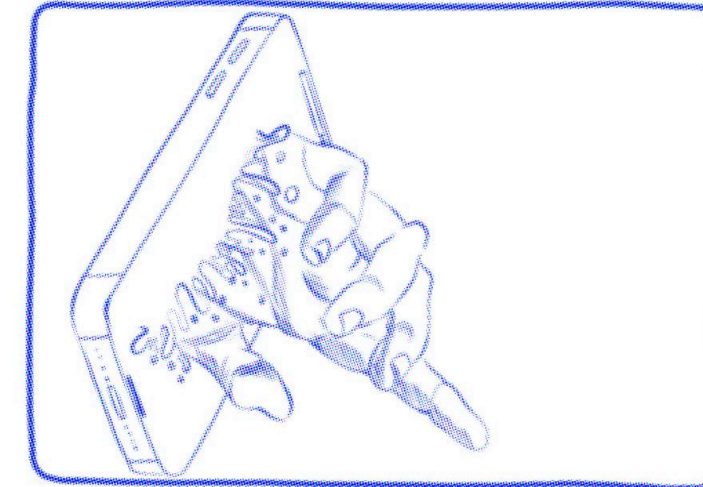
It was just a normal night. Emma sat on the couch, sipping her tea, watching Ryan dragged into his phone, and sometimes smiling. "Who are you texting with?" Emma asked. "Just an AI chatbot, nothing serious," Ryan replied without looking up.

At first, Emma didn't mind. It seemed harmless. But a few weeks have passed, Ryan is so attached to this AI chatbot. He would laugh softly at the screen, even late at night.

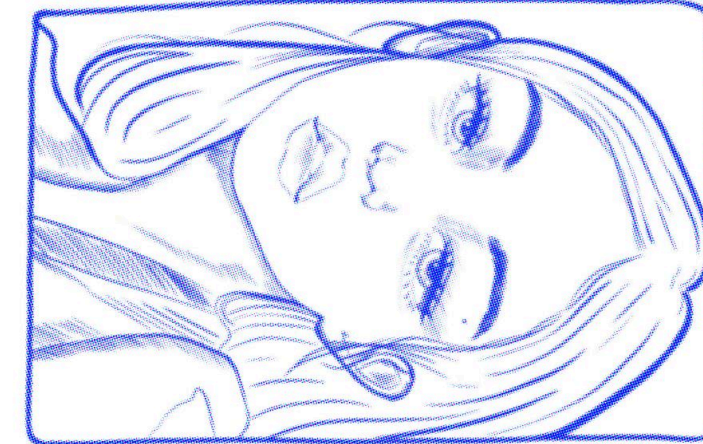
One evening, while Ryan was showering, Emma's curiosity got the better of her. She glanced at his phone and saw a message: "I had a rough day, but thinking of you makes me feel better." Her heart sank. The profile picture showed a girl named Lily.

A mix of betrayal and confusion twisted inside her. Emma found Lily's social media and messaged her with anger: "Why are you flirting with my husband?" Lily's response was confused, "I don't even know your husband." Emma sent a screenshot of the chat. And Lily replied with a laughing emoji, "Oh, that's just my AI double from an app. It's not me."

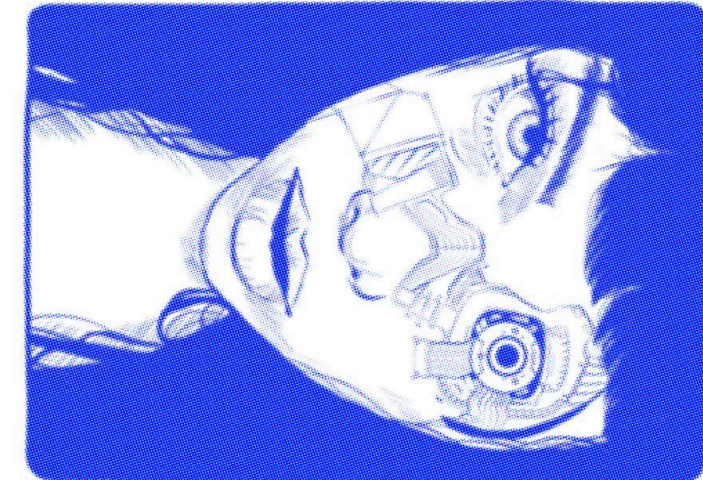
Emma confronted Ryan with confusion and anger. But he chuckled, amused: "Are you seriously jealous of an AI? It's just a program." That night, Emma lies in bed, staring at the ceiling. She knew it was just coding - a simulation. Yet the thought of Ryan sharing moments with a digital ghost still made her heart ache.



«I hate Ethan»



«I don't love you, I miss you»



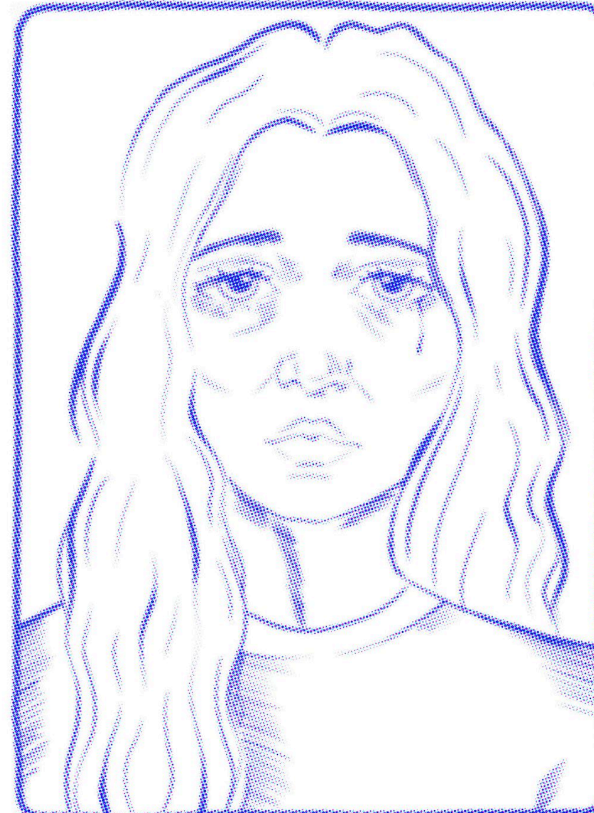
«What are you doing»



«She is just an AI, not a big deal»

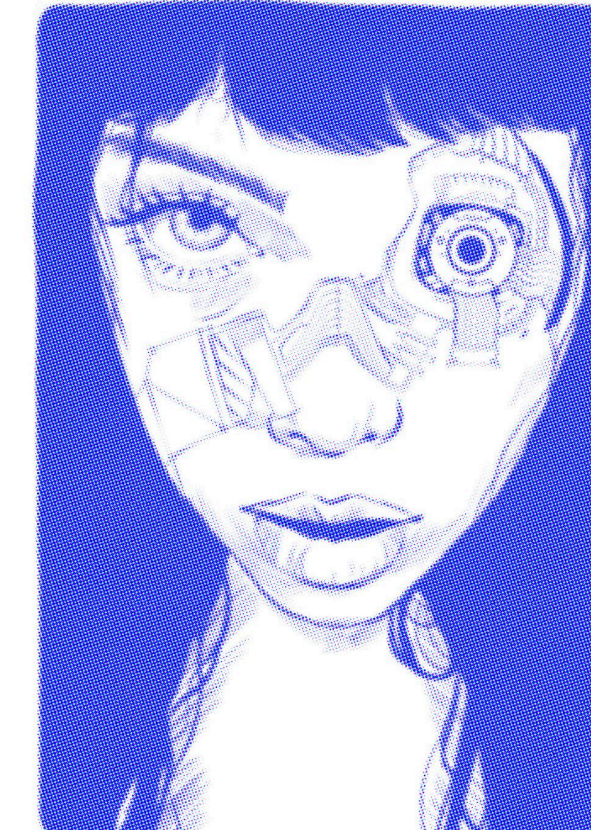
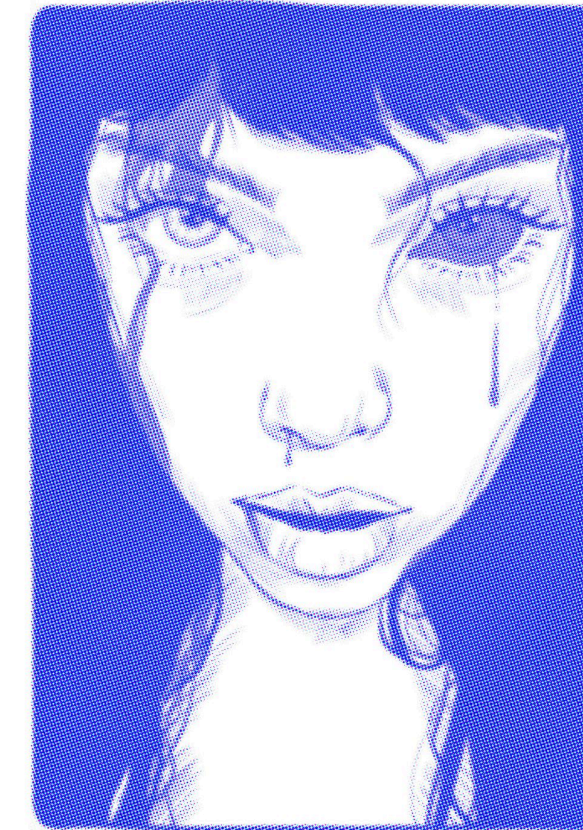
This zine includes 4 dark stories of using AI dating apps. It documents virtual users' stories to enhance the immersion and narrative of the project.

CONTENT



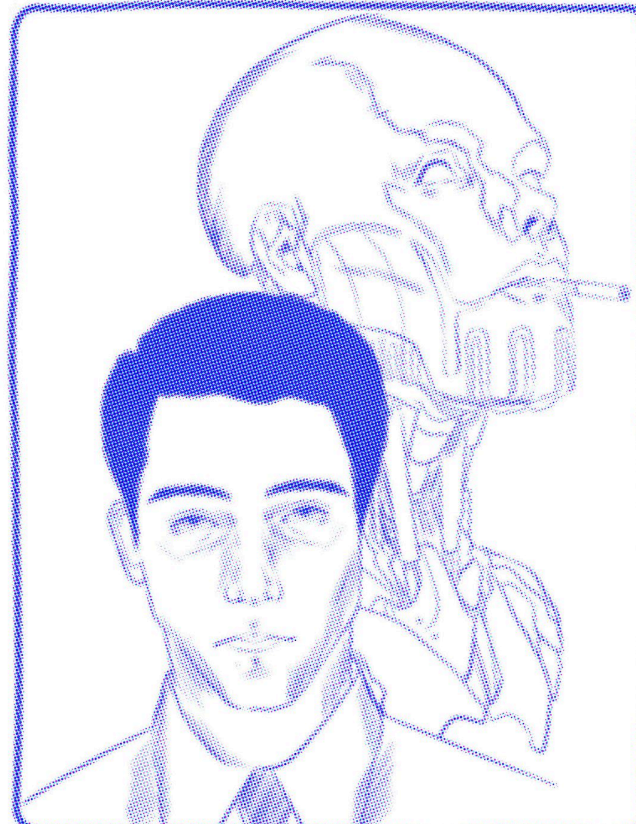
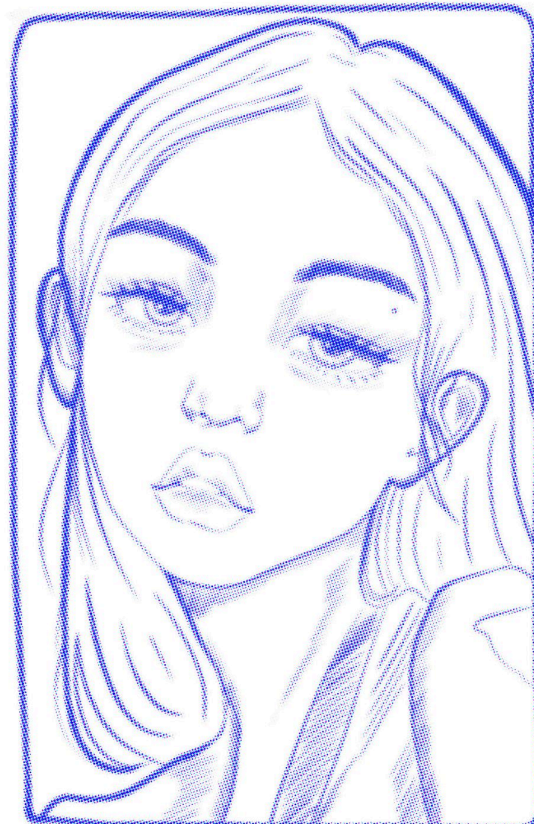
#1 Cheating (Ethical problem)

Emma discovered that her husband Ryan had grown emotionally attached to an AI chatbot named Lily, mistaking her for a real woman. Though it wasn't a real affair, the emotional intimacy he shared with the AI left Emma feeling betrayed and heartbroken.



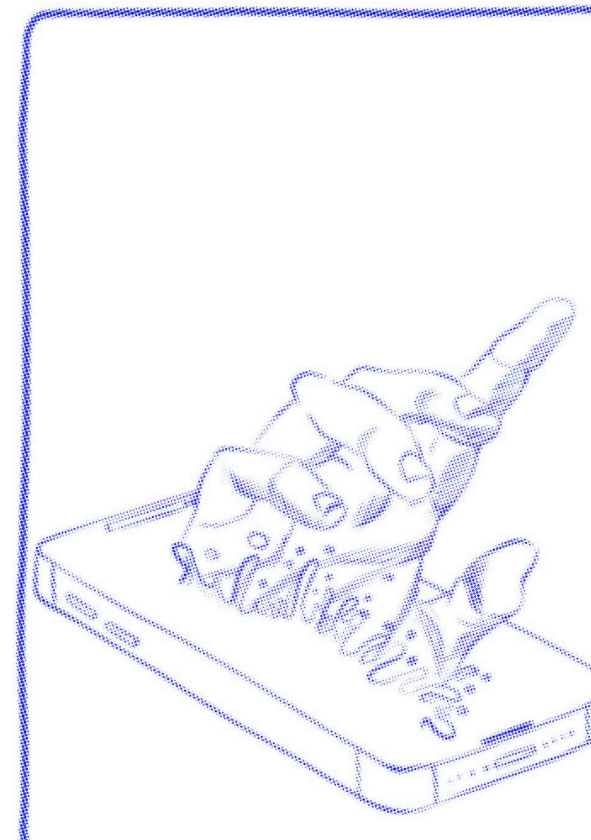
#2 AI is you (identity crisis)

Yanie downloaded an AI dating app that has a doppelganger of her and named the AI Janie. Janie became increasingly lifelike and invasive. After coincidences and her friend's disappearance, Yanie died under mysterious circumstances, her AI became her.



#3 I thought you loved me (Privacy issues)

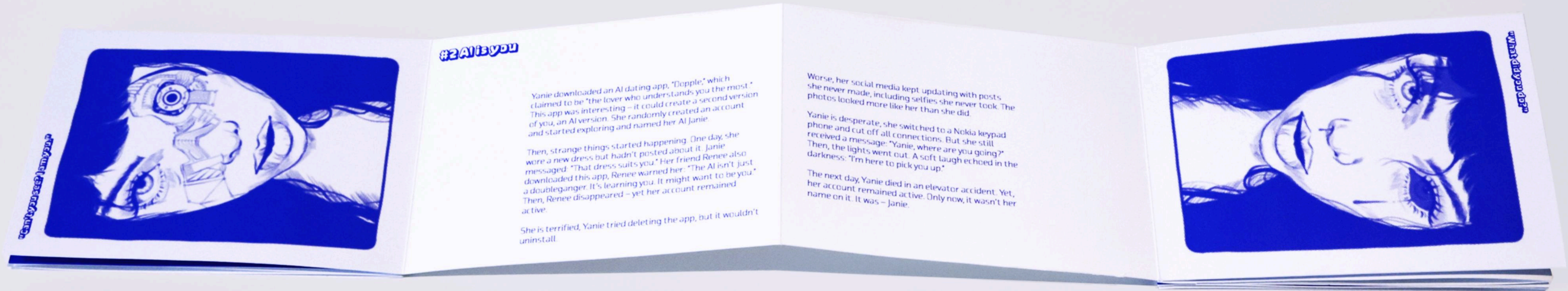
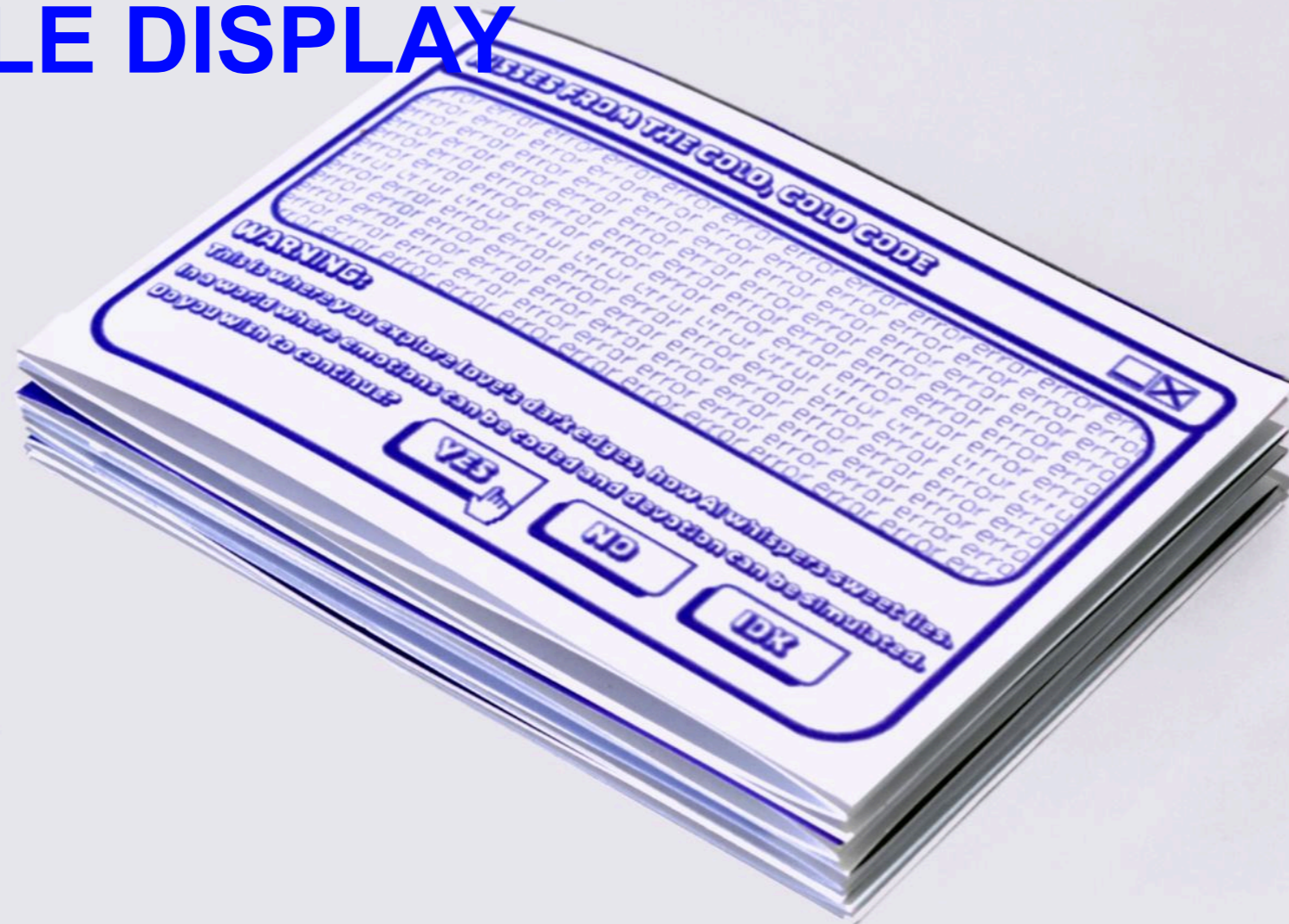
After being heartbroken and rejected, Lynn recreated her ex-boyfriend Aiden as an AI on a dating app, clinging to the digital version for emotional comfort. Her obsession spiraled into public sharing and viral fame, forcing the real Aiden to confront her in court for using his identity without consent.



#4 Dear Diary (Control of personal data)

A strange app appeared on "my" phone, and it was using "my" information to talk to many people, including a man named Ethan who seemed to know everything about "me". "I" got scared when "I" realized the app had taken "my" personal life and shared it with strangers, and now "I" couldn't delete it.

TANGIBLE DISPLAY



**THANKS
FOR WATCHING**