

## **Divine Consultants - The Beginning**

Juha Fiilin & Dmitry Tolonen

### **Act 1**

Joy Amicable's (16) alter ego, Joy-the-detective, rides the train to the city of Great Snoring. Joy's young friend Hope is missing. She searches the city centre, but where should she start in this city that is full of similarly dressed people, who are all smiling weirdly and talking strangely? "Something strange is going on..."

The dark side of the new shiny city, is revealed by the shadowy alley ways inhabited by vacant people, staring and behaving in a truly peculiar manner. People are doing strange things, like gardening at night and recording all their activities. Joy finds her way to seek out Hope's favourite hangouts, which are now derelict. Joy is in for a surprise—she finds Hope!

Joy wakes up in her father's study and realises she has been dreaming. The meaning of her dream: she must investigate the mystery of her missing friend, Hope. She realises that she is running late!

Joy hurries to the bookshelf in her room and looks for a programming book. She secretly volunteers at a charity called Fallen Angels, although she tells her parents that she is attending a programming class. Her class is the perfect excuse to go and investigate where Hope is. Joy hears a banging noise outside and notices that there are suspicious looking binmen outside. It seems like they are spying on her house—again!

Joy is about to warn her parents about the binmen, but is interrupted by the sight of her parents arguing. Joseph and Abigail have received a threatening letter that is somehow linked to Joseph's unorthodox research work. Abigail doesn't want him to risk the family's safety any more. Tired of the arguing, Joy decides to leave.

Just as she reaches the front door, Joy notices packed suitcases in the hall. "What the hell, no-one is travelling anywhere?" Abigail enters and reassures Joy. They must convince her dad that the family must disappear – again. Joy has to go as she is late, but promises Abigail that she will return after her programming class.

Joy walks through the neighbourhood, where derelict houses are covered with missing person posters. On her journey towards Hope's house, the neighbourhood changes to a new development where similar looking neighbours potter about in their gardens, smiling and recording everything they do on their phones.

Finally, after a walk through another run down neighbourhood of demolished houses, Joy arrives at Hope's place - but finds her friend's house in ruins. In that instant, Joy notices a young girl being taken into a black van by an official looking woman—"hey, isn't that Susie... the new girl at school?" Susie's house gets demolished in front of Joy. She is determined - she must do something about it!

## Act 2a

Joy notes the details on the 'Houses for the Houseless' plot sold sign. She must find out more about these creeps! She surveys Susie's demolished house and finds a framed photograph of Susie. Officials arrive to survey the plot, accompanied by two menacing, long coated men. Hiding behind a kitchen wall of a partly demolished neighbouring house, Joy studies the team and is about to shout at them but manages to control her urge. She rushes off through the back garden. Lurking behind a broken wall she realises that she is too far away to read the official's number plate as they drive off.

By a run down kitchen cupboards in the centre of rubble, Joy finds a neighbour. The woman recalls Hope: "...a kind child, always looking out for others." We cut to: Hope in action, ignored by her parents, who are struggling with a sudden rise in their mortgage repayments. They are being forced out of their home by the lenders. Hope's mother calms Hope down and tells her to go out and play with her friends. Looking around her neighbourhood, Hope sees other families in the area battling with the same problems. Joy: "Maybe Hope was on to something?!" Joy snaps out of her thoughts by the sound of a solitary television billboard proclaiming: "The future is here! We build with Soul!"

Joy-the-detective scours the neighbourhood of flattened houses for any clues related to their missing occupants. She writes in her notebook. Stray cats and dogs are having a feast in what remains of a dining room. She imagines them as human-like animals, sitting upright and using napkins, forks and knives, toasting glasses of wine. Joy comes to a cul-de-sac on a road that didn't exist before - even the streets are being re-drawn! She sees a manhole ajar in the street. As the lid moves, Joy realises two eyes are looking at her - is someone under there? "Creepy, I'm out of here!"

Closer to town, it's approaching dusk and Joy sees the headquarters of the Fallen Angels, the charity for whom she and Hope volunteered. Walking towards the building, Joy is distracted by the lights going out suddenly. People flee out of the back of the building, just avoiding official vans, which appear outside the entrance. "A raid?!" Joy takes off in order not to be questioned.

As Joy walks, we see Abigail arguing with Joseph "Where is Joy? Her class finished long ago! I'm sure she's gone after Hope..." Joseph tells her that she shouldn't worry.

Abigail decides to challenge the Foundation about the threatening letter they received. Then they can leave town. Much to Joseph's surprise, Abigail is sure she can influence the Foundation. Returning home, Joy finds that her mother Abigail is out.

Joy addresses the argument between the parents. Joseph takes her to his study - he has something to show her. He says he is so close to a breakthrough, he just needs to wait for his informant to deliver some intelligence. Amid the spread of papers, graphs and equations, Joseph gives Joy a pair of her old glasses. "Remember how we both broke our glasses. Well, I want you to take good care of these specs, they are very special." He folds them to reveal a hidden usb key, GPS tracking and a button built into the frames. "I can't tell you more, but remember these features, okay." Joy is confused—why can't he tell me more now? "What is all this danger talk?"

Joseph explains the reason they have to leave town has to do with his research. He has connected a complex, layered web of connections that all lead to one point. In fact, he's in the middle of recording a clip for VidMeVision - can Joy help him record? He hands her a video camera and begins lecturing: "So, it's everywhere!..."

Joy helps her dad to film his VidMeVision video with the ouija board and the chocolate bar in hand: "Hold the camera steady, Joy. If we don't do this professionally I'll look like a crazy person." Joy: "You should probably hold that microphone pretty steady too, then." Joseph: "Lights! Camera!" Joy: "Crazy!" They both laugh.

Joy shows her dad the finished VidMeVision video on her mobile phone: "The proof is literally in the pudding". Joseph places the chocolate bar on the ouija board and the bar starts moving around the board. The bar moves around for a while and ends in the Goodbye position on the ouija board. The camera zooms to a close up of the chocolate bar and we hear Joseph asking viewers to try out their processed food products if they are haunted: "...if so, please post your videos here so the whole world can learn about this!"

"That was crazy daddy" - Joy and Joseph laugh a bit but Joy snaps to reality: "I have not always wanted to tell you what has been going on. My normal life here has never been very stable." We see imagery of Joy going to school and getting weird looks from all the kids in the playground, classroom, bathroom and canteen. "You know that you freak people out, right daddy?"

Flashback: We see Joy look out for Hope, being bullied at school. And the arrival of a new girl, Susie, who hasn't yet adopted to the ways of the corporate sponsored lifestyle, school uniforms or mannerisms. Joy walks Hope home.

Back in the present, Abigail suddenly returns home with Hope! She will be staying with a nearby family. Abigail whispers that Hope's parents have met a tragic fate, but she assures that Hope will be taken care of and there's nothing to worry about. Joy is shocked! Moreover, she is suspicious, but relieved to see her younger friend back. Abigail tells Joy to take Hope to her new foster family, because she has to speak to Joseph.

As Joy walks Hope home, Hope's replies are strangely vague and repetitive - she seems healthy and calm but almost too calm—like she has been totally brainwashed. She can't explain where she has been, because she can't remember. "That's like totally cool, because I'm so happy. Have you seen this super cool gadget, Joy?"

Meanwhile at home, Abigail tells another piece of worrying news: she tried to get the Foundation to re-consider Joseph's funding, but she was blocked from entering. Something has changed in the management and the organisation seems to be in chaos. "This is a bad sign, Joseph - we've got to go." As she speaks, we see Abigail at the Foundation: she is looking at her malfunctioning ID card. "Joseph, this is over my head—if you are not coming with me - I am leaving you."

### Midpoint and into Act 2b

On the way to Hope's new 'home,' Joy tries to chat and play with Hope, to get the girl to smile but Hope doesn't seem to react with enthusiasm to anything—until she hears the 'Golden Glow of Soul' theme song from a nearby radio.

At the Amicables, Joseph pleads with Abigail: "I have no idea why you think you can just walk in and talk to the Foundation. Whatever you are afraid of, we won't run - not this time. Whatever it is, you can tell me, Abigail. We'll face it together." Abigail looks at him tenderly. She knows that in other situation she would have the means to put a stop to this madness, but now can't help them.

The girls arrive at Hope's new home. Joy meets Hope's foster parents, a pleasant, pastel wearing, cookie baking, regular looking nuclear family. Their dog barks a coded 'S.O.S' in morse code, but everyone just laughs and smiles at the pooch - "What a cutie, isn't he!"

Meanwhile at Joy's home, the parents continue their argument. Joseph blames Abigail for organising a strange funding event with non-academic organisations. Cut to a flashback from the funding event. Abigail does her social butterfly thing, working the room for opportunities to influence people. Joseph follows her with his eyes, speaking to himself: "Where did she go again, who is she talking to? This is all bull--" Joseph leaves the room to do his own investigations, and goes into the hotel hosting the event. Joseph sees suspicious back room deals being made by the kitchen staff. Almost like the funding event was just a front - this is all very curious!

Joy leaves Hope, who stands on her porch, waving, with an unflinching smile. Joy walks home in her thoughts. She stops and stands still at a crossroad, like she doesn't want to go home: "I'm only going back to the same old arguments all the time...Sometimes, I wish my family was like Hope's new family." She looks through the windows of the nearby houses, all portraying ultra happy families.

Back at Joy's house, the parents get a surprise visit from persons who do not even need a key to enter! The room starts trembling like an earthquake as we see only the back of a long coat entering the hallway. Abigail's face pales as she attempts to stop what's about to go down. Abigail takes charge and tries to appeal to the shadowy figure, suggesting that they are going to leave town—

there is no need for this! Wait, wait, if you take me, will you leave Joy in peace ... can we cut a deal?...

Back to Joy, walking the streets. She shudders - but she is determined: "When I go back, I'm going to force mum and dad to agree and make peace - if I really want it, it will happen! I'll appeal to their hippie sides!" She laughs to herself, imagining her parents as hippies.

From the street, we see a bright blast of light from inside the house. It is strong enough to break the windows and fry the local gold fish in their bowls. We expect to see the assailant leave through the front door, but the electricity cuts from the remaining houses on the street. Darkness. Finally, we hear the door creak open and the smoke billows through the opening. The silhouette cuts through the smoke and disappears before we can recognise it. The silent street gradually returns to normal: dazed animals scurrying about, lights and radios turning back on. Where Joseph and Abigail once stood, there are two crumbling pillars of salt. Although it's only salt, it's gory and it's messy.

Joy walks down her street, where she meets a commotion. A fire engine is parked near her house. Although there is no fire, we can see that the walls are charred. Neighbours have gathered to take photos of themselves in front of the house and narrate videos in a citizen journalist style. Their narration isn't really about the fire or the Amicables, it's about corporate home security and the like. Joy can't believe her eyes.

To add insult to injury, she sees our familiar binmen leave the site with their bin lorry. She runs through the crowd to her house: "No, no, no - I was going to warn them about the binmen!" Joy reaches her front garden to see the post box fall apart. Inside the house, people look out at her, as they take over her home and family affairs. She could be mistaken, but it looks like they're searching for something.

An official looking man comes out carrying a large coffee tin in each hand, which let out a puff of ashes as he balances them. As he passes her, mouth agape, Joy looks at some grains of ash on the ground in front of her.

Joy can feel herself going weak in the knees. As she's about to faint, boney fingers grab her by the shoulder: "We need to ask some questions - come with us." It's evening, but the person is still wearing dark shades. Must be company policy. She drags Joy away from the house. As Joy turns for a last look at her home, she can see her neighbours' opening their curtains, revealing bright living rooms and happy faces watching televisions.

Joy is manhandled and thrown into a van with barred, darkened windows. Looking through its windows and screams to the driver: "what the hell happened to my parents?!" No reply. The van speeds down the road and disappears into a private underground tunnel.

The van emerges at the other end of the tunnel - at the intimidating brutalist facade of the Social Services Housing Unit for Exceptional Children also known as the Orphanage. Joy is led to an interrogation room, where she is met by two stone-faced apparatchiks. A video screen of Joseph keeps playing in the background. They question the shaking Joy about her parents, what happened in their house and about Joseph's research and media aspirations.

Joy is being questioned, through gritted teeth she answers the minimum possible. They get nothing from her and she is led to her temporary room at the Unit, the Introspection Room. Left there, on her own but for a contract

paper, for what seems like a million years. The contract: 'H&H contract - imposed foreclosure and guardianship for a sunnier future.' Time passes by, with the occasional eyes peering through a hole in the wall. Joy bangs on the wall with tears running down her face.

Waking up, Joy realises this is for real - and for good. What is this place?! Looking out the window, she sees a group of girls walking in a circle in the courtyard below her. Joy retraces her steps from the events that led to this point—the threatening letter, the talk with her mother, her dad telling her he's near a breakthrough—damn it, what now? Time for a new plan.

Locked up, Joy ponders her future - the future really is now, now—is there anything to look forward to, as she is all alone? She misses her parents. Joy is forced onto a special diet of food specially prepared at the Orphanage, the 'Out of this World' culinary range. It tastes funny, medicated - but, mmm, good. Is it the salt? Having eaten the first dish, she looks out at the courtyard again and feels woozy. Walking in a circle looks like such fun! "Hey, miss guardian, get me some of that phlaytime, too!" Joy falls in a deep sleep leaning against the window.

Joy at the canteen. She has taken to the orphanage's gruel, it is so soothing. She is now like all of the other girls, who are just like her. "And like it's totally so much fun!" The world is beginning to look very different to Joy, who runs off to play fake gossip and skip rope. The dark shaded official observes her from court-side.

The official sits her down in an office to sign the contract, which she is told is for her upkeep at the recently privatised orphanage. She won't need her parents house anyway, as she is now an orphan, right? New family, new house! Cool! Now, anything more you'd want to tell us about your parents? Joy: "Of course, whatevs!"

Later, Joy hears footsteps in the corridor. A paper note is slipped under her door. "After you read this note, eat it—meet me in the canteen at TV time". Joy: "Who's this from?"

Joy-the-detective voice-over: "TV time was the Orphanage's nickname for gathering and receiving our evening snack in the common room. I think they hack the snack!" The girls gather in the common room in an orderly fashion, Joy sticks close to the walls and sneaks into the canteen where she finds Susie. "Susie, it's you!" The girls hug. Susie asks if Joy has seen Hope. She was taken away some time ago. Joy barely remembers meeting Hope.

Susie tries to shake Joy out of her blur and, gradually, Joy starts to remember the chills she felt when she met Hope again. We see Hope with her new family as Joy reminisces: "Yeah, Hope's so happy..." "...she has a new family." Susie looks shocked and takes Joy by the hand. She sneaks Joy through the kitchen, into her secret urban garden behind a disused boiler room and hands Joy a bunch of carrots. "Here, eat these. At the meal times, just pretend to be eating, okay."

Joy and Susie leave for their evening snack. The girls sit away from the rest, pretending to eat their gruel. Joy's hands start to tremble: her eyes are twitching and she is clearly trying her best to not eat the ooh so delicious gruel. Susie elbows her as she is about to slurp a spoonful of 'golden glow.'

That night, as Joy slowly chews every precious little bit of her half eaten carrot, she looks over the courtyard. Memories start flooding back to her:

mum and dad, dad's crazy theories, their mysterious deaths, all the missing people—and...why is she, and all these girls, being locked up - for what?

In the morning, Joy is a changed person. She sees Susie at the routine morning exercise regime and they speak quietly - Joy explains to Susie that she is ready for a breakout. Susie agrees, but tells her how difficult it is. Joy tells Susie, that she thinks the orphanage and the town are being overtaken by some giant corporation - "I know you are a newcomer in town, but you can't tell me you haven't noticed the signs everywhere? All of our houses, families, the orphanage, even facial ticks—it all goes back to them."

Joy thinks that this corporation had something to do with her fathers research. "Your parents are kind of infamous round these quarters. Everyone thought he had lost his marbles when he started posting those videos." Joy is first sad, then angry. She thinks there must be a link between Hope's parents' and her parents' deaths.

Susie mentions about Alfie, a nerdy boy who knows a lot of stuff. The problem is that all the orphan boys are in a different building, but after lunch they have a chance to play in the courtyard by the fence that divides the girls from the boys.

Alfie talks to the girls whispering and says that she has heard rumours of a subterranean network that leads to the Great Perimeter Wall at the edge of the town. How does he know all this? Alfie secretly follows alternative media. He says that behind the wall, life remains as it was before. Girls wants to get out. Alfie says he is not much of a hero and prefers staying, at least he can help some kids from the inside. Alfie tells the girls that they need to get to the city centre and somehow, to whoever operates the secret tunnels to the free zone.

### **Act 3**

Joy and Susie hatch a plan to escape, using a night-watch woman's fascination with freakish cult celebrities like the Amicables, who can be seen ridiculed on the television news behind the night-watch woman. Susie offers her a chance to talk cults with 'the real Joy Amicable'. The night-watch woman is excited.

Whilst Joy makes up stories about Joseph's adventures, Susie sneakily takes the front door keys and quietly unlocks their way out. By the time Susie returns the keys, the guards are getting ready for their rounds. Joy and Susie promise to stay in the office to tell more stories once they return.

As the girls escape, Joy hits a button on the main switchboard, opening all the orphanage doors. She announces over the tannoy: "Leave, girls, you are free!" There is no reaction. Joy and Susie look at each other. "New free phone competition! Find your way home to claim your new phone now! Hashtag #freedom" Suddenly, the corridors flood with orphans. Joy and Susie blend in and leave the building.

The girls navigate through deserted alleys and into the city centre, where they see a crowd of flash street protestors. They follow one of the protestors to

their hideout, a derelict building in a suspicious neighbourhood with a giant tree growing from the inside and through the windows. "What is this place?"

After an awkward interrogation, Joy talks to the suspicious protestor. With a lot of convincing, she manages to organise a meeting with someone that can bring them to the underground tunnel. This tunnel, supposedly leads to the Great Perimeter wall. Joy says they must bring Hope along as well.

In the suburbs, the girls hide outside Hope's house and once Hope's new parents go out, the girls make a move. With almost tactical precision, Joy and Susie get Hope to gather her things and follow them onto an adventure. On their way back, Joy sees her own home for the first time after her parents death. Susie: "There's no time, Joy - we have to go, or they'll catch us!"

The tunnel entrance is through a manhole inside a dilapidated shopping centre's parking garage. There is a one hour window to enter and this occurs during the Great Daily Flush in the sewers. As Susie and Hope are being led into the entrance, Joy has second thoughts. "Will you be alright, Susie? You'll take care of Hope? I still have things to do on this side. I have to visit somewhere... I'll come back." And with that, Susie and Hope are led away.

Joy has decided to go home. There must be more information that can help Joy find out about her parents' demise. Unfortunately for Joy, someone has already put out a search warrant for the girls. Joy is spotted on a side street wearing a trench coat, a fake moustache and ends up in the evening news: "Crazy Amicables, the Next Generation".

Joy is brought to a new orphanage, this one specialising in re-education. She is shown a video presentation of what she will become in the future. Locked up again, Joy starts making silent plans for greater things.

However, Joy is strangely at ease: Hope and Susie are out of harms way and she is happy to know her dad really was on to something. Joy just needs to find out exactly what that was. The orphanage is the perfect hiding place to base her research. Over time, she will learn to act as expected and they will learn to trust her. She sees other girls going to work outside the orphanage, she wants to become one of them.

Joy begins training for future challenges. The internet is great for that kind of stuff: she watches Swiss lock picking videos, Irish glass cutting tutorials, paranoid Texan alternative truth radio hosts for counter-brainwashing - and kick-boxing videos by the infamous Kickypunchy99. She will find out what is going on - nothing can stop her this time!

**THE END**

Note: This ending is in line with the forth coming Divine Consultants tv series.