



Forms of Dehumanization in *Never Let Me Go* (2010): A Study of Mechanistic Dehumanization

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Abstract: Film as a modern literary form reflects complex social and philosophical realities, including questions of humanity, identity, and systemic oppression. This study examines the forms of dehumanization depicted in the film *Never Let Me Go* (2010), directed by Mark Romanek and adapted from Kazuo Ishiguro's novel, focusing on how cloned individuals Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth are systematically stripped of their full human status. Employing a qualitative descriptive method within a postmodernist framework, this study applies Nick Haslam's Dehumanization Theory (2006), specifically mechanistic dehumanization, drawing on dialogues, scenes, characterization, and narrative events as primary data. The findings show that this treatment is produced through five interrelated mechanisms objectification, institutional control, marginalization, commodification, and the normalization of fate which operate cumulatively, embedding the clones' subordinate status into everyday institutional routine and language until their exploitation and death are sustained not by overt violence but by the society's quiet, collective consent. By tracing this systemic normalization mechanism by mechanism, the study extends Haslam's (2006) framework from text-based analysis into cinematic representation, contributing new insight to the discourse on dehumanization theory, dystopian cinema, and the ethics of identity construction in technologically advanced societies.

Keywords: *dehumanization, mechanistic dehumanization, postmodernist, identity, dystopian film*

INTRODUCTION

Language is an integral part of human life because it enables individuals to express thoughts, emotions, experiences, and meanings. Through language, people communicate not only factual information but also personal feelings such as fear, sadness, regret, loneliness, and love. Language also plays an important role

in shaping human understanding of emotional and social experiences, since emotion and language are deeply interconnected within human cognition and communication. According to Ghobain, Mahdi, and Al-Nofaie (2024), language and emotion are intricately related, and this relationship spans multiple disciplines while offering insight into human cognition and behavior, with language

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functioning as a crucial medium through which individuals interpret and construct emotional reality. Therefore, language becomes an essential aspect in understanding how human experience and identity are represented in literary and cultural texts.

Literature, in its various manifestations, functions as a mirror that reflects the complexity of the human condition, capturing the social, political, and psychological dynamics that shape life. Literature not only serves as a form of entertainment but also provides a critical space to understand and interpret reality. According to Tamme et al. (2025), literature, including its popular and widely consumed forms, functions as a mirror of society that encodes the ideologies, anxieties, and aspirations of the culture that produces it, making it an essential medium for examining human experience. Literary works continue to develop alongside the advancement of society, culture, and technology. Traditionally, literature was commonly associated with written forms such as poetry, prose, and drama. However, in the modern era, literary expression has expanded into broader forms including novels, song lyrics, digital narratives, and films.

In the digital age, literary studies can no longer be confined solely to printed texts because digital media and contemporary technologies have opened new possibilities for understanding narrative, genre, and representation. According to Bode (2021), digital technologies provide new ways of observing and interpreting literary forms within contemporary culture. In line with this perspective, Priyoto and Priskila (2023) analyzed *Aquaman* as a film text and demonstrated that film can function as a meaningful object of literary research. Therefore, modern literary works such as films remain an important part of literature because they continue to convey human experiences, emotions, ideologies, and social realities through narrative, characterization, and representation.

Among the various forms of modern narrative, film holds a significant position as a popular cultural product capable of reaching a broad audience. As noted by Tan (2022), film can be analyzed through the same critical lens as written literature, given the close intertextual relationship between the two media and the value of examining film through literary theory. One genre that is particularly compelling for critical study is dystopian science fiction cinema. Dystopian cinema presents imagined societies characterized by oppression, technological domination, social inequality, and the loss of individual freedom. According to Saleem (2025), dystopian fiction functions as a form of moral warning that compels readers and viewers to confront the ethical costs of unchecked power and technological control. Through speculative storytelling, dystopian cinema raises important questions concerning identity, morality, humanity, and the value of human life within systems that prioritize efficiency and utility over empathy and individuality.

These concerns are closely linked to fundamental questions about what it means to be human, and they have become increasingly urgent as rapid advances in biotechnology, genetic engineering, and reproductive medicine move issues once confined to speculative fiction human cloning, organ transplantation, and the commodification of the human body into contemporary bioethical debate. Existing scholarship on dehumanization in speculative fiction has largely approached these themes through class exploitation (Mahalakshmi & Shanmugam, 2023), bioethics and virtue (Lacko, 2024), or posthuman ethics and institutional language (Mattar, 2022), yet comparatively little attention has been paid to how a single cinematic text constructs dehumanization as a systematic, multi-mechanism process rather than a singular theme. *Never Let Me Go* (2010) is a particularly apt object for closing this gap because it dramatizes these biotechnological anxieties not as distant speculation but as an intimate, everyday reality experienced by characters the



audience is invited to empathize with, making the ethical cost of treating human life as a harvestable resource concretely visible rather than abstract. Ideally, every individual should be recognized as possessing dignity, autonomy, emotions, and the right to live regardless of biological origin or social status; in this film, however, institutional structures reduce individuals to objects valued only for their biological usefulness, exposing the gap between the ideal conception of humanity and the treatment experienced by certain groups within society.

One notable example is *Never Let Me Go* (2010), directed by Mark Romanek and adapted from the novel by Kazuo Ishiguro. The film presents a seemingly calm yet unsettling world in which cloned individuals are created and raised solely for organ donation. Although the clones possess emotions, affection, creativity, memories, and moral awareness, society does not recognize them as fully human beings. Their lives are controlled by institutional systems that determine their future, bodies, and death. As Ishiguro (2005) noted, the narrative is not primarily about rebellion but about how people accept their fate. Unlike conventional dystopian films that emphasize action and resistance, *Never Let Me Go* explores its themes through quiet routines, emotional restraint, and intimate personal experiences. As a cultural text, the film raises important questions about marginalization, exploitation, and the social construction of humanity (Haslam, 2006).

The writer chooses *Never Let Me Go* as the object of this research because the film portrays cloned individuals who experience systematic dehumanization while simultaneously demonstrating deeply human characteristics such as love, empathy, creativity, and emotional suffering. The story centers on Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth, whose existence is determined by a social system that treats them merely as biological commodities. The film becomes particularly important to analyze because it portrays oppression not through overt violence,

but through institutional control, social acceptance, and the gradual normalization of exploitation as an unremarkable, routine fact of life.

The issue experienced by the clone characters can be analyzed through the theory of dehumanization. Dehumanization refers to the process in which individuals or groups are denied full human status and treated as objects, tools, or commodities for the benefit of others. According to Haslam (2006), mechanistic dehumanization occurs when human beings are perceived as passive, emotionless, replaceable, and object-like rather than as individuals possessing autonomy, agency, and emotional depth. This theory is highly relevant to *Never Let Me Go* because the clones are systematically controlled through institutional systems, medical procedures, and social expectations that deny their individuality and freedom.

Previous Studies

Several previous studies have examined *Never Let Me Go* from various theoretical perspectives. Mahalakshmi and Shanmugam (2023), in “Deterioration of Proletariats in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*,” apply a Marxist critical perspective, focusing on power struggles between social classes and the exploitation of clones as organ providers rather than complete human beings; they argue that despite the clones' efforts to embrace Hailsham's ideals, they remain a powerless underclass sacrificed for the ruling elite. However, this study does not examine dehumanization as a systematic process and focuses on the novel rather than the 2010 film.

Ihsanullah, Badri, and Zamani (2022), in “Naluri Kehidupan dan Naluri Kematian dalam Film *Never Let Me Go* Karya Kazuo Ishiguro,” apply Freud's theory of life instinct (Eros) and death instinct (Thanatos) together with Kübler-Ross's stages of grief to analyze the characters' psychological conditions. Although it uses the same film, this study concentrates on individual

psychological instincts rather than dehumanization as a systemic social process.

Lacko (2024), in "Dignity, Healing, and Virtue: Bioethical Concerns in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*," examines the bioethical dimensions of the narrative, arguing that the clones' capacity for compassion and moral reasoning implicitly challenges a society that denies them recognition as full ethical subjects. This study, however, remains focused on bioethical and moral-philosophical criticism rather than a systematic analysis of dehumanization theory.

Mattar (2022), in "Language and Betrayal: Posthuman Ethics in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*," investigates posthuman ethics and institutional language, showing how terms such as "donor," "carer," and "completion" normalize violence against the clones. This study centers on the novel and on language analysis rather than on a systematic categorization of forms of dehumanization in the film.

Sloane (2023), in "Empathy and the Ethics of Posthuman Reading in *Never Let Me Go*," discusses empathy and posthumanism, arguing that clones are forced to "perform" humanity in order to gain recognition. This study, however, examines empathy primarily as a reader-response phenomenon rather than applying dehumanization theory as an analytical tool.

Taken together, these studies confirm that *Never Let Me Go* has been extensively read through Marxist, psychoanalytic, bioethical, and posthumanist lenses, but no previous research has specifically examined the forms of dehumanization in the 2010 film using Nick Haslam's Dehumanization Theory as the primary analytical framework in combination with a postmodernist approach. This study fills that gap by offering a systematic analysis of how cloned individuals are objectified, marginalized, controlled, and commodified within the film's narrative.

Based on the explanation above and the gap identified in the previous studies, this study is to identify and analyze the forms of mechanistic dehumanization depicted in the film *Never Let*

Me Go (2010), employing Nick Haslam's Dehumanization Theory (2006) within a postmodernist framework.

In pursuing this objective, the study is expected to contribute to the broader academic discourse on dystopian cinema and the ethics of identity construction, by demonstrating how dystopian film functions as a critical medium for questioning dominant assumptions about humanity, technology, and power in contemporary society.

This study employs a postmodernist approach as its overarching perspective. As explained by Almaarof and Abdullah (2024) in their discussion of Lyotard's concept, postmodernism is characterized by skepticism toward grand narratives dominant ways of thinking that claim to explain reality and determine what is considered true, normal, and valuable in society. Instead of accepting these assumptions, postmodernism examines how reality, identity, and social values are constructed through language, discourse, ideology, and institutional practices. In the context of dystopian film analysis, this approach is relevant because dystopian narratives frequently depict societies in which institutional systems determine people's identities, social positions, and life purposes.

Within this postmodernist framework, this study applies Nick Haslam's Dehumanization Theory (2006) as its primary analytical tool, with a specific focus on mechanistic dehumanization. Haslam (2006) proposes that dehumanization occurs when characteristics that define humanness are denied to a person or social group. He identifies two dimensions of humanness: Human Uniqueness, consisting of characteristics that distinguish humans from animals such as rationality, morality, and civility; and Human Nature, referring to characteristics considered fundamental to human existence, including emotionality, warmth, agency, individuality, vitality, and cognitive openness. When the qualities of Human Nature are denied, individuals are viewed as cold, passive, rigid, and



interchangeable a form known as mechanistic dehumanization.

Mechanistic dehumanization is the most relevant form of dehumanization for this study. Haslam (2006) explains that it is often associated with modern institutions, medical systems, technology, and bureaucratic structures that prioritize efficiency and functionality over human dignity. In such contexts, individuals may be treated as bodies, resources, or instruments rather than as autonomous human beings with emotions, desires, and personal experiences. This concept is further supported by Guay (2022), who argues within a self-determination theory framework that excessive institutional control undermines an individual's basic psychological need for autonomy, whereas autonomy supportive conditions are necessary for individuals to be treated as full, self-determining human beings rather than passive objects.

This framework directly addresses the research gap identified above. Where previous studies on *Never Let Me Go* have relied on Marxist, psychoanalytic, bioethical, or reader-response approaches, combining Haslam's model of mechanistic dehumanization with a postmodernist skepticism toward fixed categories of humanity provides an analytical lens that has not previously been applied to this film. This combination is what allows the present study to fulfil its objective: not merely to note that the clones are mistreated, but to systematically map the distinct institutional mechanisms objectification, institutional control, marginalization, commodification, and normalization of fate through which that mistreatment is constructed and legitimized as an unquestioned "truth" about their status.

These concepts are highly relevant to *Never Let Me Go* (2010) because the clone characters Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth are created and raised primarily for organ donation. Throughout the film, they are not regarded as complete human beings despite possessing emotions, memories,

creativity, and interpersonal relationships. Instead, they are valued mainly for their biological function within a medical system designed to benefit ordinary humans. Their lives are controlled by institutional rules that determine their education, social roles, bodily functions, and eventual deaths, systematically reducing them to useful bodies whose existence is measured by their capacity to donate organs rather than by their individuality or humanity.

The research model of this study is structured as follows: the postmodernist approach serves as the overarching perspective, within which Nick Haslam's Dehumanization Theory (2006) is applied as the primary analytical framework. The research question what forms of dehumanization are depicted in the film *Never Let Me Go* (2010)? guides the analysis of primary data drawn from the film's narrative elements, including scenes, dialogues, characterization, and plot development. The findings are then interpreted and synthesized to produce conclusions regarding the systematic dehumanization of cloned individuals within a technologically controlled society.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach because it focuses on interpreting the representation of dehumanization in the film *Never Let Me Go* (2010). According to Fadli (2021), qualitative research is a research design whose findings are not obtained through statistical procedures, but rather aim to reveal phenomena holistically and contextually by exploring the meanings that individuals or groups ascribe to social or human problems. It involves inductive analysis, interpretive inquiry, and an emphasis on understanding phenomena within their natural context. The data analyzed in this research consist of dialogues, scenes, characterization, narrative events, and character interactions presented in the film.

The primary data source of this study is the film *Never Let Me Go* directed by Mark

Romanek and released in 2010. The primary data consist of dialogues, scenes, characterization, narrative events, and interactions among the main characters Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth that represent forms of dehumanization. Secondary data sources include books, journal articles, previous studies, and online academic publications related to dehumanization, dystopian films, identity, and qualitative research.

Data collection was conducted through several steps: the researcher watched *Never Let Me Go* (2010) repeatedly to gain a comprehensive understanding of the storyline, character development, social relations, and institutional systems portrayed in the film. The researcher then identified scenes, dialogues, and narrative events that represent forms of dehumanization experienced by the clone characters, particularly Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth, including objectification, control, marginalization, and bodily exploitation. Important scenes, dialogues, character interactions, and narrative events relevant to the research question and theoretical framework were recorded and documented.

The data analysis technique used in this study is qualitative descriptive analysis. Scenes, dialogues, and narrative events representing forms of dehumanization were classified, then interpreted by applying Nick Haslam's Dehumanization Theory (2006), particularly the concept of mechanistic dehumanization, supported by Guay's (2022) discussion of institutional control and autonomy. The analysis is further guided by a postmodernist perspective, particularly the concept of skepticism toward fixed identities and universal definitions of humanity as discussed by Almaarroof and Abdullah (2024). Conclusions were drawn based on the findings to answer the research question comprehensively.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the answer to the research problem: what forms of dehumanization are portrayed in the clone characters in *Never Let Me Go* (2010), based on Nick Haslam's (2006)

theory of mechanistic dehumanization? Operationally, Haslam's (2006) six attributes of Human Nature emotionality, warmth, agency, individuality, vitality, and cognitive openness were used as coding indicators: a scene was treated as evidence of mechanistic dehumanization when it depicted the denial or suppression of one or more of these attributes. Scenes meeting this criterion were then grouped inductively according to the institutional mechanism through which the denial occurred (explicit verbal assignment of biological purpose, self-narration through institutional role, an imposed test of qualification for humanity, medical justification of bodily use, and euphemistic language surrounding death), which produced the five thematic categories presented below: objectification, institutional control, marginalization, commodification, and normalization of fate. The postmodernist lens guided this classification by directing attention to how each mechanism constructs and legitimizes a particular version of "truth" about the clones' status, rather than treating that status as a neutral, pre-given fact. Screenshots from the film are used throughout as visual evidence and are read alongside the accompanying dialogue as a single unit of analysis, rather than as illustrative decoration.

Findings

Never Let Me Go (2010) portrays the clone characters Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth as individuals raised and later consumed within a system that systematically denies them full human status. The researcher found five forms of mechanistic dehumanization experienced by the clone characters, presented below with the textual and visual evidence supporting each.

Objectification: Clones Reduced to a Biological Purpose

This form of objectification is shown through Miss Lucy's revelation to the students at the Hailsham veranda during rainfall.



Picture 1. Miss Lucy addressing the students

Miss Lucy: "None of you will go to America. None of you will work in supermarkets. None of you will do anything except live the life that has already been set out for you. You will become adults, but only briefly. Before you are old, before you are even middle-aged, you will start to donate your vital organs. That's what you were created to do." (Seq. 00:23:46 - 00:24:19)

This scene provides the clearest instance of objectification in the film: the clones' entire existential purpose is collapsed into a single biological function, announced to children as an already-settled fact rather than a choice open to negotiation. In Haslam's (2006) terms, the denial of agency and individuality here is total, since the students are told not what they might become but only what their bodies are for.

Institutional Control: Kathy Defines Herself Through Her Institutional Role

This form is shown in the film's opening monologue, delivered by Kathy as the adult narrator.



Picture 2. Kathy narrating as a carer

Kathy: "My name is Kathy H. I'm 28 years old. I've been a carer for nine years. And I'm good at my job. My patients always do better than expected, and are hardly ever classified as agitated, even if they're about to make a donation." (Seq. 00:01:33 - 00:01:59)

Kathy introduces herself first by an initial rather than a full name, and defines her worth entirely through professional competence

within the donation system, with no reference to personal relationships, desires, or history. This self-narration illustrates how institutional control operates not only externally but through internalized compliance, consistent with Haslam's (2006) observation that mechanistic dehumanization is most effective when the dehumanized reproduce the institution's own values.

Marginalization: The Gallery as a Test of the Clones' Humanity

This is shown in the confrontation scene between Kathy, Tommy, and Miss Emily.



Picture 1.3a Kathy and Tommy confronting Miss Emily

Miss Emily: "We didn't have the Gallery in order to look into your souls. We had the Gallery to see if you had souls at all." (Seq. 01:27:29 - 01:27:50)

The Gallery, long presented to the clones as a space that valued their artistic creativity, is revealed here as an experiment to determine whether the clones qualified as human at all. This places the burden of proving humanity entirely on the clones, while the dominant group retains sole authority to grant or withhold that status the defining feature of marginalization in Haslam's (2006) framework.

Commodification: The Clones' Bodies as a Medical Resource

This is shown when Miss Emily explains the origin and purpose of the donation system to Kathy and Tommy.



Picture 1.4a Miss Emily explaining the system

Miss Emily: "You have to understand, Hailsham was the last place to consider the ethics of donation. We used your art to show what you were capable of. To show that donor children are all but human. But we were providing an answer to a question no one was asking. If you ask people to return to darkness the days of lung cancer, breast cancer, motor neuron disease they'll simply say no." (Seq. 01:26:08 - 01:26:39)

Miss Emily's admission shows that the commodification of the clones' bodies was not an oversight but a deliberate, collectively sanctioned arrangement, in which the majority's physical wellbeing was consciously traded against the rights of a minority. This corresponds to Haslam's (2006) notion of commodification, in which individuals are valued as means to others' ends rather than as ends in themselves.

Normalization of Fate: "Completion" as an Institutional Euphemism for Death

This is shown in a clinical exchange between a nurse and Kathy regarding Ruth, who is nearing the end of her donations.



Picture 1.5a The nurse informing Kathy

Nurse: "I think she wants to complete. And, as you know, when they want to complete, they usually do." (Seq. 00:59:01 - 00:59:11)

The word "complete," delivered in a flat clinical register, functions as an institutional euphemism that reframes death from organ donation as the successful fulfilment of a biological process rather than the loss of a

human life. This is the mechanism through which the film shows exploitation becoming routine: once death is renamed as completion, it requires no protest, grief, or moral commentary from anyone involved, including the clones themselves.

Discussion

In understanding mechanistic dehumanization, Haslam (2006) explains that this form of dehumanization occurs when individuals or groups are denied the attributes of Human Nature individuality, agency, warmth, and vitality and are instead treated as passive, instrumental objects. This denial commonly takes root in modern institutional settings that privilege function and efficiency over dignity. The discussion below examines how the five mechanisms identified above operate together, in reinforcing rather than isolated fashion, to strip the clone characters of full human status.

Objectification, as expressed in Miss Lucy's declaration, works first: it reduces the clones' entire existential purpose to a single biological function. The passive construction "what you were created to do" positions the clones outside the category of self-determining subjects, defining their existence not by what they are but by what they are made to do for others objectification in its most direct form, consistent with Haslam's (2006) framework of denied individuality, agency, and vitality.

Institutional control then embeds this objectified status into everyday bureaucratic routine. Kathy's opening monologue reveals control on multiple levels: she identifies herself only by an initial, and her self-definition is entirely constituted by her institutional role, with no mention of personal desires or relationships outside it. As Guay (2022) argues, excessive institutional control suppresses autonomy and produces an internalized acceptance of one's controlled status; Kathy's calm, professional narration therefore reveals not resistance but deeply internalized compliance she has become the system's voice rather than merely submitting to it.



Marginalization extends this logic by placing the clones permanently at the boundary of the human category. Miss Emily's statement that the Gallery existed "to see if you had souls at all" reveals that an institution long presented as benevolent was in fact a qualifying test, with the burden of proof placed entirely on the clones while society reserved the right to judge according to its own criteria. Haslam's (2006) concept of marginalization exactly.

Commodification makes the material stakes of this arrangement explicit. Miss Emily's admission that society "used your art to show that donor children are all but human," while ultimately choosing medical convenience because people facing a return to disease "will simply say no," reveals that the exploitation of the clones' bodies was a deliberate collective choice rather than an oversight a social arrangement in which the majority traded the rights of a minority for their own physical wellbeing, consistent with Haslam's (2006) concept of commodification.

Finally, the normalization of fate closes the cycle by neutralizing all four preceding mechanisms at the level of language. The nurse's use of "complete" to describe Ruth's approaching death demonstrates how thoroughly the clones' deaths have been absorbed into institutional discourse, requiring no emotional acknowledgment, moral commentary, or grief. As Mattar (2022) observes, institutional language in *Never Let Me Go* functions to normalize violence by replacing emotionally charged terms with neutral, procedural ones; within Haslam's (2006) framework, this linguistic normalization is itself dehumanizing, since describing death as "completion" frames it as the successful fulfilment of a biological process rather than the loss of a human life. Kathy's calm reception of this news, without protest or visible grief, shows how completely this normalization has been internalized even by the clones themselves the point at which objectification, institutional

control, marginalization, and commodification cease to require justification at all.

CONCLUSION

This study has analyzed the forms of dehumanization depicted in *Never Let Me Go* (2010) through the lens of Nick Haslam's Dehumanization Theory (2006), specifically the concept of mechanistic dehumanization. The analysis reveals that the film systematically portrays five interconnected mechanisms through which the clone characters Kathy, Tommy, and Ruth are denied full human status: objectification, which reduces their existence to a predetermined biological function; institutional control, through which bureaucratic roles are internalized as personal identity; marginalization, which places the burden of proving humanity on the clones themselves; commodification, which treats their bodies as a collectively sanctioned medical resource; and the normalization of fate, in which the euphemism "completion" renders their deaths procedurally unremarkable.

These mechanisms are cumulative rather than independent. Objectification first defines what the clones are for; institutional control embeds that definition into daily bureaucratic routine and self-narration; marginalization then shifts the burden of proving humanity onto the clones while shielding the dominant group from the same scrutiny; commodification exposes the material calculus the majority's health traded against the minority's rights that this arrangement was built to serve; and normalization of fate, evidenced in the nurse's clinical use of "complete," closes the cycle by neutralizing all four preceding mechanisms at the level of language, so that the clones' exploitation and death require no acknowledgment, protest, or grief from anyone, including the clones themselves.

Together, these five forms of dehumanization construct a totalizing system of oppression in which the humanity of the clones is denied not through overt violence but through

the quiet mechanisms of language, institution, and social consensus. This finding aligns with Haslam's (2006) observation that mechanistic dehumanization is particularly characteristic of modern institutional settings where efficiency, functionality, and social utility take precedence over dignity and autonomy.

This study contributes to the academic discourse on dehumanization, dystopian cinema, and the ethics of identity construction by demonstrating that *Never Let Me Go* functions not merely as a narrative about clones but as a critical allegory for how societies construct, enforce, and normalize the dehumanization of marginalized groups. As biotechnology continues to blur the boundary between the ideal conception of humanity and its technologically mediated treatment, the film's quiet depiction of exploitation without violence stands as a warning that dehumanization need not announce itself to be systemic a warning that affirms the enduring relevance of dystopian cinema as a space for ethical and philosophical inquiry.

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