

Contraband

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a. Logline:

Citizen journalist Toby must extract clues from violent dark web social app Contraband to find it's star Charlotte before her live execution. But when Charlotte broadcasts videos implicating Toby for an unsolved murder, his objectives blur. Chasing equal celebrity, Toby ensures Charlotte plays a final clip incriminating him for the murder he didn't even commit - giving him the money, fame and power of being Contraband's new number one.

b. Short Plot Synopsis:

In the not-so-distant future, the digital world is dominated by the dark web social app Contraband. More popular than anything before, ultra-violent and sadistic videos dominate the streams letting viewers chat, vote and bet on the hottest clip. But its popularity comes at a cost as rampant violence and privacy invasion plagues a society eager to emulate the app's content. The authorities simply can't cope - but a righteous hacker sect has finally discovered a way to bring down Contraband.

Problem is, most people want to be popular on this social app - and citizen journalist Toby is no different. But when he's caught filming Contraband's ruthless owner Tucker, he's yanked into his voyeur underground-an "urban theatre" where youths prowl neighbourhoods to illicit, stage and film violent events to satisfy society's insatiable desire for sensational content. Toby is certain of his demise, but his life will be spared if he can find Tucker's arch-enemy Charlotte.

Toby tracks down Charlotte and fellow tech-savvy activist Jarvis - both hell-bent on shutting Contraband down. Their plan to hack Contraband control from Tucker and shift ownership to each top-ranked video creator impresses Toby, but pressure mounts on him to lead Tucker to them. He's eager to save his own skin, although he can't help but feel drawn to Charlotte's drive and determination of Jarvis' mission.

Despite Toby concealing their location, Tucker kidnaps Charlotte - so Toby must use Contraband to track down the girl who was finally returning his affections. The more videos Tucker broadcasts of her abduction, the more people watch - and the more Toby is driven to find her. Yet Charlotte herself is not all that she appears.

Jarvis' Contraband hack backfires as people everywhere go to all lengths for the money, fame and power of controlling the social app. And inevitably it's insider Charlotte who gains ownership of Contraband. But instead of shutting it down, she continues broadcasting her wildly popular - and staged - violent abduction videos. And she uses this control to start framing Toby for the murder of Tucker's accomplice. But instead of trying to exonerate himself, Toby cunningly posts the new top-ranked clip of him admitting to the crime - giving him control of Contraband.

Toby is left alone, on the run and implicated for a murder he didn't even commit - all for the honour of being number one on Contraband.

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C. Long Plot Synopsis

Intro: Toby's been spammed all the top mobile videos - so it was only a matter of time that the radical clip of his girlfriend hit his inbox. He always knew it would become an instant classic. He just never thought he'd need it to help track her down.

June 1. Toby is in Belgium and he can't find his girlfriend - although he can see her anytime he wants. As host of Contraband, Charlotte is forced at gun-point to introduce violent and adult videos sent in by the live mobile channels' growing community of users. Her abductor is Tucker, the ruthless owner of Contraband. Only the night before, a bomb blew up the Whisper Mobile head offices and Tucker's best mate Plugger Jones was killed in the aftermath. Tucker is convinced his female hostage knows who murdered Plugger, but despite the threat of being tortured live on Contraband, Charlotte refuses to reveal the culprit's identity.

May 1. Four weeks earlier in London, Toby is caught filming Tucker and Plugger arranging an illegal Contraband video event. Fearing for his life, Toby's yanked into the men's voyeur underground, an "urban theatre" where youths prowl neighborhoods mobile filming violent and erotic events to satisfy society's insatiable demand for sensational on-the-go content. Here Toby's forced by Tucker to mobile film a teen-gang park assault and then blackmailed into spying on Charlotte and Jarvis, two tech-savvy anti-violence activists hell-bent on shutting Contraband down.

When Toby finds Charlotte he successfully captures mobile footage of the activist lamenting her latest Contraband sabotage failure. But again the hapless Toby is caught in the act and Charlotte threatens to castrate him if he films her again. Both terrified and captivated by the fiery woman, Toby keeps his nervy encounter with Charlotte from Tucker.

June 2. As Toby scours Brussels for Charlotte, enough users download a violent video of Charlotte in Afghanistan to make her the top-rated Contraband member. Only two months old, this increasingly popular mobile channel ranks user-submitted videos based on both their controversial nature and strong revenue-generating popularity. Secondary services boost the interactive experience enabling users to chat, text, vote and bet on the hottest topic: Charlotte's live abduction.

And while Contraband's sophisticated functionality helps Tucker generate huge amounts of cash, its mobile videos also provide valuable clues enabling Toby to map out Tucker's route. But although Toby reaches each of the villains' locations, he's always two steps behind.

May 10. Back in London, Toby's interest in Charlotte increases - but so does the volume of insistent texts from Tucker demanding results. Desperate to see her, Toby tracks Charlotte to an anti-violence rally where Jarvis presents a government bill recommending a cross-channel ban of gratuitously violent video content. After Toby helps the two activists escape thugs keen to record, he's finally rewarded with a one-on-one with Charlotte. Toby is transfixed as she describes how Contraband quickly evolved from a simple video exchange community to a 'mobile weapon' that Tucker now uses to orchestrate premeditated assaults by offering rewards for graphic footage of his selected victims.

And while Toby manages to avoid Tucker, he does befriend his sidekick Plugger. Technically responsible for growing Contraband's user base, Plugger earns Toby's admiration for disclosing Whisper Mobile's privacy-invading and customer-tracking capabilities and illustrating the health risks of using mobile devices. He also hears how Plugger himself was blackmailed by Tucker over a self-defense killing the developer committed as a youth. But it's the sidekick's patchy details about Charlotte's turbulent relationship with Tucker that most interest Toby.

June 3. Contraband clues lead Toby to Brussels' seediest adult mobile emporium. But again he's too late. While the frustrated Toby ponders his next move, he's stunned to see Tucker broadcast a Contraband video strongly implicating Jarvis in the Whisper Mobile explosion. After watching user-submitted Contraband videos that place Jarvis in Belgium, Toby is convinced that the activist is also tracking the villain and his hostage Charlotte.

But Toby is not convinced Jarvis is responsible for the bomb or Plugger's death. Accepting he lacks the skill and technology to find Tucker on his own, he makes contact with Jarvis. Initially the weary activist insists he remain in exile to tactfully prove his innocence. But after seeing on Contraband that Charlotte is near death, Jarvis agrees to join Toby in his search.

May 20. Toby slowly earns Charlotte's trust and she reveals why she ended her turbulent relationship with Tucker. He learns that she stores a private mobile video of her most horrifying experience in Afghanistan. Toby knows that it's this clip that spurs Charlotte to focus 100% of her efforts on Contraband - but she vehemently refuses to show it to him.

With the channel booming, mobile thugs running rampant and Jarvis' anti-violence bill stuck in parliamentary debate, Toby learns the activists' last hope for shutting Contraband down. From his refuge under Whisper offices, Jarvis demonstrates a mobile application that will shift billing, CRM and access from Tucker to the user with the top performing Contraband clip. His hope is that poor content management by a constantly rotating controller will kill off Contraband's popularity. And although Jarvis application requires an upgrade to launch on Whisper, the beta version arrives in four days - courtesy of Plugger.

With Contraband set to implode and Charlotte returning his affections, Toby's sure he's played all his cards wisely. But when footage of Toby helping the two activists escape mobile thugs appears on Contraband, he's forced to flee and hides in a small village outside the city.

June 4. Jarvis and Toby search the Belgian countryside using an online location-based mobile application. As they narrow in on Tucker and Charlotte, Toby hears how Jarvis took in a completely traumatized Charlotte while working as a human rights campaigner in Afghanistan.

Jarvis is finally able to pin-point Charlotte and Tuckers' location. But they underestimate the villains' resistance and the rescue attempt is botched. Chaos ensues and Charlotte appears killed as Tucker escapes in his Land Rover. After a manic chase through Flemish farming roads, Tucker is tricked into capture, but the villain is alone. Although a distraught Toby believes he saw Charlotte

fatally injured, Tucker insists that she's alive, healthy and now controlling Contraband.

May 30. Hiding outside London, Toby becomes increasingly paranoid his interactions with Tucker will be exposed. His predictions prove correct as the incensed Charlotte arrives to punish him for spying on her. As Toby desperately pleads his innocence, Charlotte surprisingly breaks down. She plays that private clip show she was abducted and made to film locals tortured for one of Tucker's video events. Toby comforts Charlotte, they sleep together - but the next morning, she's gone.

After days of isolation, Toby becomes restless. Seeing that Tucker sends out a Contraband alert offering mobile thugs cash for footage of the activists' death, Toby races to a fund-raising concert to warn them. Charlotte successfully gets Jarvis to safety, but she and Toby are caught by Tucker. The villain then pays Toby his reward for bringing him Charlotte. Despite Toby denying the accusation and professing his loyalty to Charlotte, Tucker plays Charlotte's abduction video and proves it was sent to Contraband from Toby's mobile.

Toby finds Jarvis back at his gallery. But both men are caught up in an explosion when Tucker bombs Whisper. Tucker enters the crumbling building to confirm Jarvis's death and Plugger follows to launch his Contraband virus application. As he enters Jarvis' wrecked basement gallery, Plugger is stabbed. An injured Jarvis emerges from the debris, retrieves the necessary code from Plugger's mobile and flees the building. Toby too escapes Whisper and as Tucker watches Charlotte's video reach number one, he realizes he's lost control of Contraband.

June 5. Broadcasting from a crumbling Belgian chateau, Charlotte is indeed alive and still controlling Contraband. But instead of crashing the mobile channel, she continues posting clips - including the footage of Toby filming that assault in the pack London. She then posts his personal details while accusing him of last month's Whisper Mobile crimes. As Toby's own ranking climbs into Contraband's top five, Charlotte promises users a final mobile video that will validate her claims.

Thousands watch as Toby confronts Charlotte at the chateau. It's revealed that Charlotte created and has always run Contraband and Tucker has been her content stooge responsible for staging violent mobile content (including her abduction "event" in Afghanistan). Charlotte also only used Jarvis to fuel his anti-violence message which thereby increased Contraband's awareness. And Toby? He will take the blame for Plugger's murder.

Jarvis proudly announces that because the government ratified his anti-violence bill, Contraband will soon die off. He's ridiculed as Tucker nearly beats the activist to death but Toby intervenes in time. Toby's ranking races into second on Contraband and Charlotte's promises her video will earn him the number-one slot. But just as she tries posting the clip, Toby fires a gun and the scene fades black. The scene re-opens with Toby watching a video on his mobile.

May 31. Toby emerges from the Whisper bomb debris to see Charlotte kill Plugger. Terrified that he's next, Toby is handed the bloody knife and is

mobile recorded by Charlotte. Toby stabs the (already dead) corpse repeatedly and claims credit for a murder he didn't commit.

June 5. Toby watches as cash floods into his mobile bank account - confirming he's number one and in control of Contraband. Charlotte's certain of Toby's obedience, but she quickly learns she's dead wrong as vicious mobile thugs descend upon the chateau seeking Toby's revenue-share reward for graphic footage of her and Tucker's demise. And Toby drives away, alone.

d. QUICK ANSWER TO "How does it end?" - Thousands of Contraband users watch as Toby finds Charlotte - but the naïve chap's shocked to discover she's always controlled Contraband along with Tucker. The anti-violence campaign, the faux channel sabotage and real-time chase has been carefully staged to build hype and attract global users to Contraband. But with the authorities closing in (and the money in the bank) Charlotte shifts control of Contraband to Toby's mobile giving him responsibility for running the channel. So Toby's broke, blamed for thousands of violent acts and now on the run - but in one final act of revenge, he offers a 50/50 revenue share to anyone creating and sending in footage of Charlotte and Tucker's gruesome death to his violent video channel called Contraband..