

THE FUTURE STORY CO.

EVOLVING FUTURES LITERACY

future
001:

eat meat d-day

Explore the future of ethical consumption, surveillance, privatisation,
personal accountability, power and justice.

A CHOOSE-YOUR-OWN-ADVENTURE
FUTURES SCENARIO

future
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eat meat d-day

In a future where all citizens remain vegetarian until age 25, one pivotal day forces them to choose between costly meat consumption, government surveillance, and underground alternatives.

SCENARIO

The morning of an Eat Meat Decision Day always feels different.

No official sirens, no government reminders blaring through the streets - but the city knows. The tension hums just beneath the surface.

Buses roll toward the farms, their tinted windows reflecting the quiet unease of those inside. Protestors gather at the gates, their chants rising in rhythm with the early morning sun. A police drone hovers overhead, its sleek form unnoticed by most but always watching.

Every adult in the country has the same choice at 25. Meat or no meat.

Most have already made up their minds. Some have been raised in Meat Eater households, waiting eagerly for their turn. Others have sworn, since childhood, that they will never cross that line.

But today is for the undecided. The hesitant. The ones who don't know what they'll choose until they stand at the edge of it.

In the next few hours, they will step onto a farm for the first - and only - time. They will watch animals live. They will watch animals die.

And then, they will decide.

Because once you choose, there is no going back.

**WHO ARE YOU
TODAY? CHOOSE
YOUR CHARACTER
TO CONTINUE THE
STORY ...**



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character 1: the birthday girl

Today, you turn 25.
It's time for Eat Meat
Decision Day Farm
Visit.

You wake up staring at the red-lettered government notification on your phone screen.

"VitalMeat Farms Visit: 09:30 AM. Confirm Attendance."

You hesitate. You've been preparing for this day for months, running through every possible scenario in your head. But now that it's here, you feel anxious.

Growing up, you always assumed you'd become a Meat Eater. When you turned 18 and moved out of home, you started realising the costs weren't just ethical. It's expensive. Meat Eaters pay higher food taxes to subsidise sustainable farming. They also pay mandatory farm fees, ensuring ethical treatment and ceremonial slaughter practices.

Your partner, already a registered Meat Eater, says it's worth it: *"It's a commitment-like choosing to have a car, or sacrificing luxuries to travel. Plus, it tastes freaking awesome."*

You wouldn't know about that. If you tasted what was on his plate, your stool sample would alert the government that you'd broken the law.

Lately, money has been tight. You want to move out of your cramped apartment, but even your rent is barely manageable. You could use that extra money to get on the property ladder. Or for a baby.

And yet—you have an iron deficiency. Your doctor has warned you that if you don't switch to meat, you may develop long-term health issues. Brain fog. Fatigue. Worse.

Your stomach clenches. Meat or no meat? You wonder if it has to be a choice. There are rumors of iron tablets on the black market—cheaper, untraceable. But how safe are they?

Last month, a girl in your intern group tried them. She swore they worked — until she passed out in the middle of a meeting. No one knows if it was the pills or something else.

You could message a contact. Get the pills. Stay off the system's radar. But if you're caught, it could cost you more than just money.

WHAT DO YOU DO?

Do you get dressed and go to VitalMeat Farms, knowing it could change your life?

Or do you delete the summons and text your black-market contact instead?



character 2: the activist

Today is an Eat Meat
Decision Day, and you
and your friends are
ready to expose the
truth.

You wake up before your alarm, but not because you slept well. The buzzing anxiety in your gut has been there for days, tightening each time you check your messages.

This morning's text confirms it: *"DO NOT COME. We're being watched."*

You glance at the bag by the door: mask, forged farm uniform, burner phone, protein bar. You've rehearsed every step. Today was supposed to be your turn - the one to finally get inside and document what's really happening.

But now one of your closest allies - a veteran of the movement, calm under pressure - has gone silent. Too scared to leave his home.

And then there's the farm worker who was found guilty last week. The charge? "Failure to uphold contact" - whatever that means. The trial was sealed. No media coverage. No transcript. Whispers only: that she let visitors skip the slaughter room, or maybe she recorded it herself. Was she part of another cell? Or just someone who'd seen too much?

You don't blame the visitors for looking away. But if the farms are hiding that, what else are they hiding?

The old tactics aren't working anymore. Contractors who used to accept quiet payments for camera placement now won't even meet in person. Police seem one step ahead of every protest. You've seen new surveillance vans parked outside regular meetups.

And now, today's your window. While protestors create chaos at the front gates, you're supposed to slip through the fence, get into the birthing barn, and document whatever you can. You've trained for this. You're ready. But a cold thought slides in: What if someone already tipped them off?

And then there's your mother. Her hydrotherapy appointment is in an hour. She still doesn't know what really happened with the chicken. You tried to tell her but she wouldn't listen.

"People get sick," she said. "It's not the system's fault."

She still believes. You don't. You haven't for years.

But if you disappear today - if you're caught, charged, detained - who takes care of her? Outside, a car slows as it passes your window. You freeze. Watching? Or just passing by?

Your phone vibrates. The screen glows with two choices:

"Meet at protest point. 9 AM sharp."

"Hydrotherapy with Mum. 9 AM."

WHAT DO YOU DO?

**Do you risk everything and attend the protest, knowing it could be the moment
things spiral?**

Or do you walk away, leaving your fight behind - for now?



character 3: the vitalmeat farm worker

Today is an Eat Meat
Decision Day - and you'll be
leading the tour at a
VitalMeat Farm

You work for VitalMeat Farms, one of the largest meat-producing conglomerates in the region. Five years ago, you opted into the Meat Worker Program after your older brother convinced you it was a steady career with solid pay. You never expected to stay long, but the work is physically exhausting, and by the time you get home, you rarely have the energy to apply for something else. Besides, you've gotten used to it.

You tell yourself it's just a job. But lately, it's been harder to ignore the growing tension outside the gates. Protestors scream at you every morning as you arrive. Some of them know your name.

Last week, your cousin - who works for an environmental nonprofit - sent you a message: *"Do you really believe this system is humane?"*

You haven't responded yet.

Today is an Eat Meat Decision Day, which means you'll be overseeing a group of potential Meat Eaters as they tour the facility. It's your least favourite part of the job. Some visitors can barely look at what happens here. Others ask questions you don't want to answer.

Your supervisor has just messaged you. You've been assigned to the slaughter floor today - the part of the tour most visitors struggle with.

You've heard rumours that some workers have started letting people slip out early, before the real butchering begins. One of your co-workers got fired last month for it.

You take a deep breath and pull on your work boots.

WHAT DO YOU DO?

Do you do your job as expected, ensuring that all visitors witness the full process—no exceptions?

Or do you quietly allow visitors to step out if they can't handle it, even if it risks your job?



character 4: the government monitor

You've seen things on
live feeds that are
unexplained, and your
doubts are growing.

You work inside a climate-controlled government building, surrounded by rows of screens that track the daily engagement of Meat Eaters across the country. Your job is simple: ensure compliance.

Every registered Meat Eater must log into the Meat Monitor App daily, watching live footage of their designated farm. If they fail to check in, their account is flagged and their status as approved meat-eaters is at risk of being revoked.

It's a pretty easy gig, most days. You monitor engagement data, flag anomalies, and send reports up the chain. A few times, you've raised concerns, but your supervisor always waved them away. Eventually, you stopped questioning things. If a farm's compliance rates dipped too low, you adjusted the numbers to keep everything running smoothly. Everyone does it. It's not about deception - it's about avoiding unnecessary scrutiny.

But today, something is different.

A government minister is launching an official audit of the Meat Monitor system. You overheard it in the breakroom - just whispers, but enough to make you nervous. If they dig too deep, they'll find everything.

You pull up the latest data. Engagement patterns have shifted. At certain farms, log-ins are too short, just long enough to register before users exit. A loophole. A workaround.

You dig further. Then you see it - a pattern of users whose feeds mysteriously cut out mid-session. The timestamps match too often to be a coincidence.

Someone is tampering with the system. Someone is hiding something.

Your cursor hovers over the report button. If you escalate this, the tech team will investigate. They might uncover fraud - or worse, an intentional cover-up at one of the farms.

And if that happens, they might also uncover your own history of falsifying reports.

If you report the anomaly, the truth might come out. And if it does, you could be out of a job. Or worse.

But if the audit happens and they find this issue before you report it? Then you might really be in trouble.

WHAT DO YOU DO?

Do you flag the anomalies and report the irregular log-ins, hoping to get ahead of the investigation before they find your past edits?

Or do you ignore it, keep your head down, and pray that when the audit comes, they don't look too closely at your reports?

How to Use This Scenario

This futures scenario is designed to immerse you in a plausible future world, challenging you to explore its ethical, environmental, social, personal and political implications.

Could this scenario really happen? Probably not exactly like this. But it's based on signals the foresight community is seeing out there right now. Real trends, glimmers of shifts, echoes of history and surprising details that others have not yet noticed.

You'll be presented with a scenario about a possible future, and asked to take on the role of a character. That character's storyline unfolds differently to the others in the scenario. As you engage with your character, consider their dilemma:

- What would you do in their place?
- What internal and external factors would influence you?
- What are the ripple effects of the decision you choose to make in that moment?
- How does this future challenge your beliefs and assumptions about the way the world works?

As you explore different storylines, you'll discover your preferred future - the one you want to work towards tomorrow, when you leave the story behind. What will that future be? The choice is yours.



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