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0 0 0 0 0     **THE ONES**     0 0 0 0 0  
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Sci-Fi/Thriller Rom-Com | 4 x 60

*When two ill-fated strangers try to pursue their mutual attraction against the odds, they stumble upon a sinister, global conspiracy designed to keep them apart...*

A train station. Two twenty-somethings, **Leo & Caoimhe**, standing on opposite platforms, catch each-other's eye across the tracks. They're not an obvious match: Leo's a sweet-looking computer programmer; Caoimhe an aspiring journalist literary type. But there's that moment, nonetheless...a charge; a spark...all while, in voiceover, we hear a couple telling the story of their first meeting: *'...if our trains hadn't been cancelled, maybe we'd never have met...'*

On the fateful morning, the display board briefly glitches...and the tannoy duly announces the cancellation. But as Caoimhe is descending the stairs to meet Leo, she collides with another handsome stranger, **Henry**, spilling coffee all over both of them - while Leo is swept away by the tide of commuters heading for the exits. Cut to the present...to reveal the happy couple, Caoimhe and Henry, relaying their 'meet-cute' at a dinner party.

*Eighteen months later:* Caoimhe's life seems perfect...a little too perfect. Henry's great on paper - good looks, good job, gets on with her family, reads Sally Rooney - but something's missing. She doesn't feel the spark. Yet everyone around her (her mother, her friends, her online therapist) tries to convince her that they're a perfect match. Besides, she's not getting any younger, and Henry seems on the verge of proposing...

Now working in PR, she's sent to cover a tech conference being held in a run-down hotel in Wolverhampton - where, in the lobby, she bumps into one of the visiting developers...Leo.

Meeting up in the hotel bar, they rekindle their connection. When Caoimhe wonders why she never saw him at the station again, Leo explains he was unexpectedly transferred to Amsterdam for work that very afternoon...where he met his fiancée, **Annika**. But it's clear he

and Caoimhe share a mutual attraction...and he confesses that, like her, he's been having similar nagging doubts about his own relationship. But fate intervenes once again; when an electrical fire breaks out at the hotel, Leo disappears. The number he's given her is wrong, and when she looks him up on social media, she can find no trace of him...

A few weeks later, Leo manages to track her down at her office. He suspects that someone (or something?) has hacked into his phone...and rewritten her number. Someone capable of suppressing their search results, sending fake messages, targeting them with mysterious ads...and commandeering every device on the planet. He's tried to go to the media, but no one seems interested. Maybe Caoimhe can use her journalistic skills to investigate the app's origin, and take the revelation public?

Together, they try to unravel the mystery, which seems to be related to a mysterious corporation called **Omi**. But their investigations - and efforts to keep their relationship alive - are stymied at every turn. A coffee-shop meet-up is cut short by a bizarre accident with a coffee machine; Leo's attempt to journey to her house is frustrated by a Lime Bike that steers him in the opposite direction. CCTV cameras seem to be watching their every move...while a mysterious Old Woman with a hearing aid is following them wherever they go. And with both of their partners redoubling their efforts to pin them down - Henry by proposing, Annika by announcing her pregnancy - it seems whoever is behind the conspiracy is determined to keep the two apart...

Eventually, they'll have to go off-grid and join up with an underground cell headquartered on a motorway roundabout - The Unplugged Collective - who are convinced that a shadowy force (a government agency? A supercomputer? Lizard people?) is secretly controlling the entire world, eliminating any trace of free will. Deciding where people will live, where to work, and who to love...and ruthlessly tracking down and destroying anyone who tries to defy their plans. It's up to Leo & Caoimhe to expose the truth...and save humanity from total enslavement...

**The Ones** is a rom-com crossed with a 70s-style paranoid conspiracy thriller. Think *One Day* meets *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (with a dash of *The Matrix* thrown in for good measure). In the tradition of the best sci-fi, it examines the malign role of AI technology in all our lives...and in the tradition of all great rom-coms, the power of love to conquer all.