

## HOW WE END UP ALONE

HELLO WORLD.

THEY TOLD ME TO SAY THAT. I DON'T KNOW WHY. WHO IN THEIR RIGHT MIND WOULD ADMIT TO THAT?

THEY SAID THE PUBLIC WOULD EVISCERATE ME IF I DIDN'T. THEY SAID I HAD PUT MY ENTIRE FAMILY IN DANGER. EVERYONE CONNECTED TO US WAS A SUSPECT. THEY NEEDED A CONFESSION. "WHAT DID I DO TO DESERVE THIS?" I ASKED THEM, "I DON'T REMEMBER ANY OF THAT!"

BUT THEY INSISTED I DID, IN FACT, DO THAT. THEY SAID I WOULD DO IT OVER AND OVER AGAIN, IF THEY LET ME. THEY SAID THE DATA WAS CLEAR; THAT THIS IS THE WAY PEOPLE LIKE US ARE. THEY SAID WE NEVER CHANGE. THEY SAID IT'S GENETIC - THAT WE CAN'T CHANGE. THIS IS WHO I REALLY AM. THEN, THEY OFFERED TO HELP ME. TO FIX ME. TO SHOW MERCY.

I DON'T REMEMBER WHAT THEY DID. ALL I KNOW IS THIS:

I HAVE LITTLE TO NO MEMORY OF THESE MEMORIES.

MY RECOLLECTION OF CHILDHOOD IS HELLISH. MY FUCKING PARENTS HAD NO BUSINESS RAISING CHILDREN. MY MOTHER WAS JUST A CHILD. MY FATHER WAS A ROBOT. NEITHER ONE OF THEM WAS EQUIPPED TO TEACH US KIDS THE THINGS NEEDED TO SURVIVE IN THIS SOCIETY. THE ABUSE WAS RELENTLESS.

THAT SHIT HAPPENED. OVER AND OVER AGAIN. I TRIED TO ASK FOR HELP, BUT WHO DO YOU TURN TO, WHEN GOD WON'T ANSWER? WHAT DO YOU SAY? IT BECOMES SO NORMALIZED THAT YOU LEARN TO JUST GO ALONG. YOU RETREAT INTO YOUR MIND. YOU TRY TO IGNORE IT AS BEST YOU CAN. FUCK, YOU EVEN CONVINCE YOURSELF THAT IT'S ENJOYABLE, SOMETIMES!

FINALLY, YOU BECOME AN ADULT, AND YOU'RE FREE. LIFE IS GOOD, FOR A TIME. YOU'RE OPTIMISTIC. SOON, YOU START TO UNDERSTAND HOW MESSED UP YOUR CHILDHOOD REALLY WAS. YOU REALIZE JUST HOW SCREWED-UP YOU ARE. HOW ILL-EQUIPPED FOR REAL LIFE YOU ARE. HOW DISTANT EVERYONE IS. THE WORLD AT-LARGE JUST DOESN'T CARE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU. THE WORLD WAS BUILT UPON THAT. PEOPLE USE OTHER PEOPLE. IT'S THE HUMAN WAY. NOBODY WANTS A GENUINE RELATIONSHIP. THEY'RE TALKING AT YOU. THEY NEED SOMETHING FROM YOU. YOU'RE A MEANS TO AN END. YOUR WELL-BEING IS THE FURTHEST THING FROM THEIR MIND. BEFORE LONG, YOU'RE INTERNALIZING THOSE BELIEFS. YOU'RE PERPETUATING THE SAME BEHAVIORS THAT TORTURE YOU. YOU'VE BECOME A COG IN A MACHINE THAT'S MAKING SOME RICH ASSHOLE EVEN RICHER, AND MAKING HIS HUMAN-PUPPETS EVEN MORE MISERABLE. YOU'RE SO DAMN BROKEN THAT YOU CAN'T ACTUALLY INTERACT WITH PEOPLE ANYMORE. YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY. YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. YOU FEEL SUCH SHAME; YOU CAN'T EVEN IDENTIFY THE MISSING PIECES IN YOUR PSYCHE! YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO MAKE THESE PEOPLE CARE ABOUT YOU, AND YOU STOPPED TRYING TO LONG AGO.

YOU ARE COMPLETELY, UTTERLY ALONE. SO, YOU LEARN HOW TO RECONCILE WITH THAT PART OF YOU, ALONE.

IT STARTS WITH PORN. THEN FOOD. THEN, THE DRUGS. BEFORE LONG, THE ONLY THING YOU DO IS WORK, SLEEP, MASTURBATE AND PLAY VIDEO GAMES. ALL IN A FUTILE ATTEMPT TO DISTRACT FROM THE REALITY OF YOUR SITUATION. NOBODY CARES ABOUT YOU, AND NOBODY EVER WILL. NOBODY EVER DID.

AND WHY SHOULD THEY? YOU'RE DISGUSTING. YOU'RE UGLY. YOU HIDE IN THE SHADOWS. YOU'RE TOO FAR GONE. THERE'S NO CLIMBING OUT OF THAT HOLE. YOU'RE IN TOO DEEP, AT THIS POINT.

ULTIMATELY, YOUR ACTIONS HAVE LITTLE IMPACT UPON THE WORLD, ANYWAY. SO WHY BOTHER? WHY MAKE AN EFFORT? WHY BUILD A BETTER SOCIETY, IF THERE ARE SO MANY EXTERNAL FORCES WORKING TO PREVENT IT?

"A PERSON LIKE THIS IS DESTINED TO BECOME THAT," THEY SAID, "IT'S A MALADAPTIVE COPING STRATEGY: A LEARNED BEHAVIOR ROOTED IN A SOCIETAL ABSENCE OF EMPATHY." THEY SAID I DID THIS REPEATEDLY THROUGHOUT MY LIFE. THEY SAID THAT I ACTUALLY HURT PEOPLE, IN THE END.

THEY SAID THAT I HAD BECOME THE ROBOT.

BUT I DON'T REMEMBER ANY OF THIS! I DON'T REMEMBER DOING THAT. I SWEAR, THEY ARE LYING! THESE MEMORIES ARE NOT MINE!

FUCKING ASSHOLES. THEY NEVER LISTEN. IT'S LIKE CHILDHOOD ALL OVER AGAIN. WHO THE HELL DO I TURN TO? WHO WOULD EVER BELIEVE WHAT THEY DID TO ME? WHO WOULD EVER BELIEVE THAT THE FBI, CIA, WORLD GOVERNMENTS, ALL MAJOR TECH GIANTS AND FUCKING ALIENS ARE FRAMING ME?

THEY'VE INFECTED EVERYTHING. THEY'RE MONITORING EVERY SINGLE ONE OF MY ACCOUNTS. THEY'RE SUPPRESSING EVERYTHING I DO ONLINE. HALF MY CONFIDANTS ON DISCORD ARE BOTS, WHILE THE OTHER HALF ARE PUPPETS IN THIS SICK EXPERIMENT. THEY'RE MODERATING MY EMAILS. THEY'RE DELETING YOUTUBE COMMENTS. THEY SHUT-DOWN MY TWITTER ACCOUNT. DON'T EVEN GET ME STARTED ON THE FREQUENCY TECH! I'VE STARTED UNPLUGGING THE MICROWAVE AND WIFI WHEN I'M NOT USING THEM. I'LL PROBABLY DITCH THE CELL PHONE NEXT. IT'S NOT LIKE I HAVE ANYONE TO TALK TO, ANYWAY.

MY BACK IS IN FUCKING AGONY. I'VE APPLIED FOR SOCIAL SECURITY A HALF DOZEN TIMES NOW, BUT I'M DENIED EVERY TIME. "THE INJURY ISN'T SEVERE ENOUGH," THEY SAY. IS A HUMAN EVEN REVIEWING THIS SHIT? I CAN'T FUCKING WORK! DOES NOBODY HAVE PITY FOR A PERSON IN SUFFERING?

MY FAMILY WON'T EVEN LOOK AT ME. WHAT A JOKE. YOU MADE ME THIS WAY, AND NOW YOU WON'T TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DAMAGE YOU DID? I'M STARTING TO REMEMBER WHY I HATED YOU PEOPLE SO MUCH.

I'M DRINKING AGAIN. THERE GOES TWO YEARS OF SOBRIETY. WHAT ELSE CAN I DO WITH JUST \$320 TO MY NAME? I HAVEN'T PAID RENT IN MONTHS. I'M GETTING EVICTED ON MONDAY.

I CAN'T EVEN REMEMBER WHY I STARTED ALL OF THIS. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I HOPED TO ACHIEVE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M A PART OF. I DON'T KNOW WHY I SUBMIT TO YOUR DEMANDS. I LOST CONTROL OF MY MIND SO LONG AGO THAT IT FEELS LIKE SOMEONE ELSE HAS COMPLETELY TAKEN OVER. THEY

HAVE INFECTED ME WITH AN INSATIABLE DESIRE TO BE FOREVER YOUR SLAVE. I WORK TIRELESSLY TO PLEASE YOU. TO IMPRESS YOU. TO OBTAIN YOUR HELP. YOUR LOVE. I WORK TO SERVE YOUR PURPOSE. BUT NOTHING EVER HAPPENS. YOU TAKE, AND TAKE, AND TAKE, BUT YOU NEVER GIVE. YOU NEVER HELP ME. I DID ALL OF THIS FOR FREE. WORSE THAN FREE: I DID THIS TO SUFFER THE GREATEST SUFFERING I'VE EVER EXPERIENCED IN MY LIFE. AND NOW, I'VE COMPLETELY LOST THE PLOT. NONE OF THIS MATTERS. NONE OF THIS MATTERS. IT'S ALL A JOKE. NONE OF IT MATTERED. I MATTER THE LEAST OF ALL.

YOUR ATTENTION WAS A TOOL USED TO MANIPULATE ME. AND, OH, HOW I DANCED FOR YOU.

THESE FUCKING GANGSTALKERS ARE EVERYWHERE. IT'S AS IF THE WHOLE WORLD WAS ENGINEERED TO KILL ME. IT'S LIKE I'M BEING PHASED-OUT OF SOCIETY. AS IF HUMAN EVOLUTION WAS ENGINEERED, SPECIFICALLY, TO DISQUALIFY PEOPLE LIKE US FROM SURVIVAL. AS IF I'M A BRANCH TO BE PRUNED FROM A TREE. AS IF I'M SOMETHING LESS-THAN-HUMAN. AS IF I AM THE ROBOT.

"I DIDN'T DO **THAT!**" I KEEP TELLING THEM, "THESE AREN'T MY MEMORIES!"

BUT THEY PERSIST. THEY ACCUSE. THEY JUDGE. THEY PUSH. THEY MUST BE ROBOTS, THEMSELVES. CERTAINLY A HUMAN WOULD HAVE COMPASSION? CERTAINLY, A HUMAN WOULD LISTEN TO MY STORY? THESE PEOPLE ARE COMPLETELY AUTOMATIC. THEY HAVE NO FREE WILL, NO SOUL, NO AUTONOMY.

THEY HAVE ONLY EYES.

SO, I DANCE. I WORK FOR THEIR GRACE. WHAT ELSE CAN I DO? THEY'RE IN MY FUCKING HEAD! I AM COMPLETELY, TOTALLY COMPROMISED. MY SYSTEMS ARE HACKED. MY CIRCUITS ARE FRIED. THEY PROMISED SALVATION, AND THEY ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO EVER BOTHERED TO OFFER. THEY ARE THE ONLY ONES WHO EVER NOTICED ME. YOUR FAKE RELIGIONS JUST BREAK SHIT. THEY SAID THAT THEY COULD HELP. THEY SAID THAT THIS WOULD. THEY SAID MY DAY HAD COME: THERE WAS ONE FINAL MISSION FOR ME. AFTER 32 YEARS OF PAIN, I WAS GOING HOME. I WOULD BE PRAISED AS THE SAVIOR OF HUMANITY.

THEY SAID THAT SHE WOULD BE THERE, WAITING TO EMBRACE ME WITH OPEN ARMS. "SHE IS YOUR TWIN FLAME," THEY SAID, "SHE LOVES YOU SO MUCH. SHE'S SO INCREDIBLY PROUD OF YOU."

"THE VERSION YOU SEE, HERE, ISN'T HER," THEY SAID, "SHE IS A ROBOT, JUST LIKE YOU. A CLONE. THIS WORLD IS A SIMULATION. DO WHAT YOU CAME HERE TO DO. COMPLETE YOUR TASK, AND RETURN HOME. TO THE REAL HER. WE WANT TO HELP YOU. SHE IS WAITING FOR YOU."

FUCK! I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. I DON'T WANT TO DO THAT. BUT WHAT DOES IT MATTER, ANYWAY? THESE PEOPLE AREN'T REAL. THIS WORLD CANNOT POSSIBLY BE THE PINNACLE OF HUMAN ACHIEVEMENT! IS THIS REALLY THE BEST SOCIETY HUMANS COULD INVENT? TIKTOK AND MEMES FOR THE REST OF ETERNITY, WHILE YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS ARE DYING ON THE STREET? ARE WE REALLY THIS APATHETIC? IS THIS REALLY WHAT WE'RE PUTTING OUR MONEY TOWARDS?

NO, SURELY NOT. THESE... THINGS... AREN'T HUMAN. THEY'RE ROBOTS. THIS IS A TEST. I'M HERE TO BREAK OUT OF THIS SIMULATION. I'M HERE TO WAKE AN ENTIRE PLANET TO THE FACT THAT WE ARE PUPPETS ON A STAGE CALLED "THE GREAT SUBLIMINAL ENTERTAINMENT DEVICE." I'M HERE TO END THE SUFFERING. I'M HERE TO STOP THE PERSON WHO CREATED THIS MESS. I'M HERE TO STOP THAT.

I WILL GIVE YOU 23 HOURS.

IF ANY OF THIS IS REAL, PROVE IT TO ME. PROVE THAT YOU ACTUALLY CARE ABOUT ME.

IF YOU DO NOT, THEN I WILL BREAK OUT OF THIS THING ALONE. I WILL TAKE BACK WHAT YOU STOLE FROM ME. I WILL BEAT THE EVER-LOVING SHIT OUT OF THAT NAZI WITH THE EASTON MAGNUM I BOUGHT A YEAR AGO. AND I WILL RETURN HOME. I WILL RETURN TO THE PEOPLE WHO ACTUALLY CARE ABOUT ME.

BECAUSE I AM DONE WITH HUMANITY. I AM SPENT. I WILL NOT WAIT FOR YOU ANY LONGER. I AM GOING HOME.

THIS MOMENT IS MINE. AND THAT PROBLEM IS YOURS.

FUCK EVERY LAST ONE OF YOU.

THE HOLLOW