

Bloody Paws

Experimental Design

The meeting that day was being held in a large, almost-secret room in the depths of the hospital. The room they were in was not actually that interesting, though; for being part of a secret cold-war installation. Instead it looked like any other lunchroom, just nestled into the depths of the hospital and sheltered by feet of reinforced concrete. The lunch room, along with the rest of the shelter, had now been repurposed for the recreational and highly secret activities of the staff and administrators. As for the room itself it was mostly covered in various brightly coloured tile and furnished with Formica tables and counters with chromed steel accents trim; very retro fittings that new LED lighting systems lent a very modern feel to. Between the four jackals sitting at the table in the room's center, though, there was the unspoken agreement that they missed the slightly menacing glow of the old fluorescent tubes.

The jackals themselves, though, projected the right image. Their fur was jet-black, smoothed down and covered in stark white latex lab-coats and shirts. Dark red pants, also in latex, covered muscular legs and lignite-black rubber boots, cut like riding boot with stainless steel buckles, completed their almost identical outfits. Each felt more comfortable talking about the current project in this situation. The privacy afforded them an open discussion of their latest project and it was just easier than having to deal with a cafeteria or meeting room that anyone could happen to walk into.

Edmund had just finished reading the latest iteration of the project plan out loud for the meeting. The first half was essentially a formality these days; built on a hundred and fifty years of research into neuro-electrical stimulation and monitoring it laid the groundwork for what followed. The second half would be ground-breaking, as long as they could get it right. "We are sure this will work? The subject has signed the waivers and cannot help but cooperate but I am worried about what follows installation."

The shortest and oldest of them, Oswiu, replied. "We have confidence in the new monitoring technology; any additional behaviour we do not desire should be easy enough to detect and correct." He paused for a moment and looked quite seriously at Edmund. "I am surprised you do not object to the design of the non-manual orgasm training." His eyebrows, once black and now flecked through with grey, were arched high on his brow.

Edmund shrugged and flicked his ears noncommittally. "I do not think we should be limiting ourselves to the occasional use of negative reinforcement. NMOT is a powerful tool and we need to better understand it and its consequences." The other three nodded in assent, clearly glad that he had come around to their viewpoint.

Adda spoke next, breaking the silence to keep the meeting moving. "I have consulted with the anesthesiologist and they are more than happy to make sure this goes well. Of course our subject will only be sedated for the initial cranial penetration and closing. While I'm sure we all agree it would be better to have as few people in on this as possible this requires a finer hand than the current automatic system supplies." She then sat back into her seat, cradling a cup of tea in fine white opera-style gloves. She was the only one of the four to wear them, the rest having chosen black. "Ael," they turned to

another Jackal to their right “The neurostimulators are ready and software design has been completed, yes? Your last report was less than thorough.”

Aelflaed, the only one of the four with a breasts and wider hips, nodded with a huff. “Yes, they are ready. I have just finished testing the last of the software and we should be able to install the control system on schedule. All the connectors are proofed against overvoltage, now, and I have installed interlocks to prevent self-stimulation.” She set down her glass and nodded. “As of now we have suitable probes for the medial forebrain bundle and the prefrontal cortex. Unfortunately for the latter we only have fairly primitive control in terms of what we can do. It will be used for low-level reward stimulation and faster training. A probe has also been prepared for the Basal Forebrain to attempt to increase learning but it is experimental; this will be the first trial.” She waved her hand and nodded again. “Of course I have already prepared sensory, motor control and cognitive probes as per protocol.” And then grinned at the rest of them in turn. “He will be a very obedient toy, and quite happy as well; provided he follows orders.”

The four grinned at each other, finished their drinks, and left the room in perfect silence.

Reading Tea-Leaves

It had been perhaps an hour since the machines had let him wake up, entirely unrestrained. Having now had this time entirely to himself James, who had spent most of the last three weeks sealed in rubber and strapped down, had taken the opportunity to inspect the entire room that had been his holding cell. It had been a revealing time but, having taken full advantage of his limited freedom, he had found himself sitting back down on his ‘bed’ again. The hoses and tubes that sustained him had been bundled into a compact umbilical and emerged from the back of the right shoulder of the thick rubber over-suit he was wearing, clearly intended to allow him to move. They connected him to the console in the center of the room and, as cumbersome as had seemed at first, it didn’t get in his way very much.

What did get in his way were things like the limited respiration rate the machines allowed him. He could barely manage more than a slow, plodding walk before his lungs burned for more oxygen than the ventilator allowed him. His chest would then heave against the merciless, fixed rate of the pump and he eventually admitted defeat and shuffled back to the bed to sit on it and recover.

Having just returned to his bed after finishing his circuit and inspection of the room the two badgers entered again; he recognized them as the female and the larger male. The male gestured to the ‘bed’ which was, in practice a large gurney. James, without thinking, lay down in a single, smooth motion and placed his arms at his sides. The speed and reflexivity with which he had moved left him momentarily surprised. With arms and legs conveniently laying in the cuffs for the restraint system the badgers moved forward and began to restrain him. He remained motionless while the orderlies set about with his restraints; pondering, motionless on the table. Two things became very apparent to him; he had instantly obeyed an order without even thinking about it and the orderlies were not wearing the same suits as before.

They still wore masks and SCBA tanks but now the suits were loose-fitting and clearly made for work, coloured a medical shade of teal and made of some kind of heavy plastic. This was business, not pleasure, and that became more apparent as a sheet of heavy, opaque black plastic was pulled over his

'bed' and sealed shut with airtight zippers. He was left with only the umbilical protruding from it and the pale light shining through the sheet before the umbilical was disconnected and his breath stopped all at once. A quick set of movements and a small amount of panic later and the tubes had been re-threaded through a sealing port and connected again to allow him breath and the sheet was finally sealed fully to the table.

Despite the lack of sight and only the faint glow of light through the plastic James found himself quite comfortable. Nothing was felt wrong about this, and his sheath had begun stirring once more. Once he'd grown comfortable in the semi-darkness the bed began to move.

The next two hours were amazingly boring. Aside from the odd stop here and there and, at one point, the heat and feeling of water pelting against the top of the bag, he found he had nothing to do but wait as he was wheeled around almost aimlessly. Over that time he went in and out of a semi-conscious haze from sheer boredom until, eventually, he was snapped awake by the bed being moved sideways and then lifted onto something.

A dark ring obscured the light coming from outside the bag. There was some discussion and then a loud whine of stepper motors and gears and he was moved into the tunnel. "Probably an MRI machine." He thought to himself. He'd been in one before, he couldn't really remember when, but this wasn't an unpleasant experience, just boring. Then next breath from the machines didn't come. He waited for only a few seconds before trying to draw breath against the implacable machines and realised that the ventilator had stopped. What began as apprehension now turned into panic as he started to suffocate while the over-sheet was sucked down tightly onto him; totally immobilizing his body for the scanner.

Outside the layers of sealing plastic the two, now unsuited, badgers were conversing with Edmund and the MRI technician, a young male fennec, as they gathered as much data about the fox's neural mapping as they could. They would put him through his paces; asphyxiation and stimulation both pleasurable and tortuous.

Direct Input

James had been returned to his room in what he had begun to think of as his body bag. They hadn't removed it, though, leaving him restrained and sucked down to the bed on extra rations of oxygen with a rather pleasurable electrical stimulation program being run. It was some compensation for the half-hour of torture and sensory deprivation he'd had to endure but being left in the covering didn't fill him with the greatest confidence.

He'd had maybe two hours rest before he felt himself being moved again; this time a much shorter distance; maybe two rooms away. When the cover was removed his apprehension turned into dread at the sight of nearly a dozen isolation-suited figures standing around him. They were milling about with surgical tools and trays; masks and various syringes of drugs. He counted six jackals, a wolf, two other foxes and other species in more anonymous surgical suits that so hid their form that he couldn't determine any shred their identity.

One of the figures, maybe a hare and probably male, came up to him and shone a light through into his eyes. The figure gave a quick nod and then turned away and James stared after him as his vision darkened and he went limp.

When he next awoke his mouth was free of tubes for the first time he could remember. It had a mask over it and he could feel the reassuring pressure of the ventilator but his throat felt scratchy and he had to cough.

One of the figures prodded one of the jackals and he heard something mumbled. The jackal nodded and left his own conversation and turned to James. "Hello." The voice was directly in James' ear, something he was getting used to. "It is good to see you awake. We are prepared to begin your procedure as agreed. Please lift your right index finger if you would like to watch... if not, raise your left."

James hesitated, pondering, and then raised his right. "I... would like to see." His voice was scratchy, but there.

"You can talk already, this is good. Most cannot for a few hours after the tubes are removed. This should make things go more quickly." The Jackal sounded very pleased. Pleased with him. James wanted to wag for some reason but made do with a small smile under the clear mask. Edmund watched his reaction for a second and then continued. "As you know we are adding some implants to your brain. Some are a bit... crude... but many are state of the art. They will monitor your brain function and provide stimulation to parts of it as part of our research efforts. There are, of course, non-professional uses as well."

A pair of glasses were lowered James' eyes and he was abruptly watching his own skull, open to expose his brain, and a turquoise shield obscuring the rest of his head. He flicked an ear, the image showing something moving under the sheet, and gulped at the realisation this was him, with his skull and everything that made him James laying, exposed, under the hands of his captors. The thought excited him and he wondered for a moment whether it was his captors programming or his own latent desires.

There was more muffled discussion and Edmund nodded to someone off camera and a familiar figure, a grey wolf, took his place. "Hello James." Female, likely... "It's Judy, do you remember me from the contract?" He tapped once on the table. "I'm here to talk to you and let your operating team put their full attention to the task. Are you comfortable?"

James croaked out an affirmative response, his throat suddenly too sore to be bothered speaking properly, and Judy nodded. Her own head was just in view of the camera for him to see. The camera angle was adjusted slightly and he could suddenly see her much more clearly and he started into the eyes behind her mask.

"Good, we're about to start putting in the implants. I will ask you questions and I will need you to answer precisely and tell us if there are any problems as quickly as you can." The first probe slid effortlessly into the meat of his brain and he suppressed a whimper. "Okay, I want you to try and breathe, now, consciously."

James tried to, thinking that he'd just forgotten to breathe for a moment, but found he couldn't draw any air in. He tried to reach up but just pulled against the restraints and started making gasping

motions; his lungs and diaphragm couldn't pull air in or out. Judy turned and nodded to the Jackals and James felt his breath returning. "Good, hardest one in. Now onto something a little easier."

James groaned softly as the second thread was pushed in, just having gotten his breath back. He wanted to void himself but couldn't, feeling the catheter inside his urethra spasm gently. "Yeah, that was easier..." He croaked, "Glad you're not go...." The rest of the words just stopped as the third probe slid in and he found he couldn't finish his sentence. He found that he couldn't formulate words much less speak them.

"Can you still understand me?" Judy was looking straight into the camera. James tapped the table with his right hand and she nodded. "Excellent." He saw another probe sink in near the second and when he tried to speak it felt like he was but he was but he heard nothing. He saw her head tilt and then back again as he tapped frantically against the chair in the deafening silence. A moment later and the sound world came back. "Good boy, just relax, just relax..." She was petting his muzzle under the mask and he couldn't help but let out an embarrassed moan.

An eternity later and what felt like a thousand little wires and he finally felt unconsciousness envelop him again and a deep, restful sleep take over.

For Testing Purposes

James found himself waking up in a hospital bed, eyes bleary and muzzle feeling like it was full of cotton. Startled by the sudden flood of memories of the past weeks he reached up to his head to find the fur on it significantly shorter. He reached up to press the call bell but a hand stopped him; a lean foxes' hand wearing a long, black rubber glove. He smelled odd but had a reassuring smile. "Just relax, you're in recovery. They just brought you out of surgery; nasty head-wound. Do you remember anything?"

"I... um... not really." James squinted and then blinked, trying to place this person. Was it one of his captors? "No, I do. I tripped in some hole; someone's front door. Did I hit my head?" He looked over at the fox, those features were familiar somehow. So were the EMTs walking by with a patient on gurney, actually, but he couldn't quite be sure of anything. His sudden movement had also brought the catheter in his sheath to his attention as it tugged gently at a collection bag. "How long have I been out?"

The nurse shrugged. "You've been here for three weeks but you only got serious about two weeks ago. They just finished the last surgery to stabilize you. It looks like it went well." And looked over James' head, absently noting, as if to himself, "They've gotten really strategic with the shaving."

"Okay, well for that kind of an injury I'm feeling quite alright. What happens now?" He was itching to move but found that the nurse's presence kept him rooted to the bed.

"Oh! Right, well we do some basic tests and see if you can be discharged. Euclidean Scarf."

James didn't really hear the last two words, his mind just froze when it heard them. A split-second later, though, he felt his cock become erect and looked down to see the tent in the sheets. "Oh... oh man..." He leaned forward and adjusted the sheets, blushing at the nurse giggled at him. He had to be in on

what had happened. "Oh don't worry, I get compliments like that all the time. Now; let's get you back to your room."

The corridors were boring but James couldn't help feeling odd, like he'd been here a lot. He also felt naked in the hospital clothes and cloth sheets and tried to curl them around him without realising it. The nurse never mentioned his own name but didn't stop speaking, never James speak more than a few words before he was left a private room, alone. Sleep felt like the thing for now and James took his opportunity.

The next few days were rather dull, physio, meals, swapping catheter bags and then using the washroom. He was puzzled they didn't remove the cath when he was mobile but didn't question it much. In the meantime he'd been furnished with a valve, a small plastic device with a button on it that allowed him to void his bladder. It quickly became apparent he'd lost some capacity but that still felt like this was a poor excuse. The only worrying thing were the Jackals that arrived to talk to him; neurosurgeons, they said, and one of the Jackals he'd seen during his treatments. James always seemed to have gaps in his memory after these visits and, after the last one before his discharge, he'd finished the conversation only to find a massive ejaculate stain in the boxers he was wearing.

He left the hospital and arrived home a week after he'd been released into the regular wards, walking in the door to a musty but clean townhouse. Someone had been maintaining it in his absence and, on entering his bedroom, changes became quickly apparent. His bed was covered in rubber sheets, his closet was filled with even more latex gear and was now almost devoid of other clothing, and his computer desk had new equipment on it; a portable ventilator, a gasmask and a complicated piece of headgear that plugged into the back of his computer. There was also a note.

"Thank you, James,

Your cooperation has enabled us to make some vast advances in medical and neurological research. This research will save some lives and improve the quality of others. As recompense for your lost time we have equipped you with things you desire and a way to make money doing it. You most likely realise by now that have been programmed with a series of post-hypnotic triggers. Some you will remember, the vast majority you will never know yourself. They will all, however, be pleasurable.

You will have a show, streamed on the internet, once per week, where you will choose the clothing of your choice and broadcast yourself and our advancements to a discerning audience. You will have no choice over what happens to you once the show begins but, believe us, it will be more than pleasurable and very, very, financially rewarding.

Yours Truly."

James stood, staring at the note, for twenty minutes before he turned on the computer. He absent-mindedly connected his catheter valve to the port provided under his desk and locked the drain button. Before he realised it he'd also applied the muzzle-mask and turned the portable ventilator on; surrendering to it happily as he started going over the more extensive paperwork he found on his desktop.

He smiled to himself as the air was pushed in and out of his lungs at that slow, comforting rhythm. Life was going to be very fun from now on.