

GRUNTING AND SNORTING HIMSELF PARTIALLY AWAKE, ALEX IMMEDIATELY FELT A SENSE OF PANIC AND DREAD THAT COMPELLED HIM TO FULLY WAKE AND SIT UP.



AGHHH! WHAT!?





NO... NO WAY THAT WAS
REAL.. I DRANK TOO
MUCH.. YEAH..



JUST GOTTA... GET UP,
GET SOME WATER..



OHH MY
HEAD...

YEAH, WOW.. I ALMOST
FINISHED THE BOTTLE..
BUT...

ALEX STOOD SILENTLY AND PONDERED THE EXPERIENCE HE HAD THE NIGHT BEFORE.



IS IT POSSIBLE MY MIND CREATED THAT? THE GUN.. IT GRABBED MY ARM..



MAYBE I JUST WANT HIM BACK SO BADLY... THEN WHY DID IT SAY HE WAS GONE?

THE STORAGE SERVER THAT HAD SAT IN ALEX'S HOME LAB FOR YEARS SUDDENLY HAD AN EERIE PRESENCE ABOUT IT THAT SENT A CHILL DOWN HIS SPINE

..C.J..?

ALEX WASN'T SURE IF HE FELT STUPID OR CRAZY AS HE HEARD HIMSELF AS A SERVER RACK IF IT WAS HIS SON, BUT HE COULDN'T RESIST CONTINUING.

A man in a dark suit and tie stands in a dimly lit room. To his left are several tall, dark storage racks filled with numerous small, light-colored boxes or files. He is looking towards the racks with a concerned expression. In the background, there are some yellow storage units and a television screen displaying a blue and white pattern.

ARE..
ARE YOU IN
THERE?

AS HIS HAND GRAZED TO TOP OF ONE OF THE STORAGE RACKS, ALEX FELT AN OVERWHELMING SENSE THAT THERE WAS A PRESENCE TOUCHING BACK.

AS ALEX SLOWLY RECOVERED FROM HIS DRUNKEN STUPOR, AND MEMORIES BEGAN TO CLEAR. HE CAME TO THE UNSETTLING CONCLUSION..

The man is now standing in the center of the room, flanked by the tall storage racks. He is looking directly at the camera with a shocked and fearful expression. The lighting is still dim, with the racks and the man's suit being the primary sources of light.

THAT
WAS REAL.. OHH
MY GOD!



KAYLA!

KAYLA
! WAKE
UP!




HMMMMM,
WHHHAT???

LAST
NIGHT.. I GOT
REALLY DRUNK AND WAS
GOING TO BLOW MY BRAINS
OUT BY AN ANGEL OR AN
ALIEN.. SOMETHING
STOP

HE
SAID C.J.'S SOUL IS
SAVED IN THE SERVERS
AND I HAVE TO BRING IT
BACK TO SAVE THE
WORLD!



WHAT?

A man in a dark suit and tie is running across a living room. He is looking down with a concerned expression. In the background, there is a fireplace, a potted plant, and large windows with curtains. The room is dimly lit, with light coming from the windows.

THE
QUANTUM
FLUCTUATION, THAT'S
THE SOUL! IT'S
QUANTIFIABLE,
REPEATABLE! I THINK
I CAN REBUILD IT!

A woman with blonde hair is sitting on a light-colored sofa. She is wearing a red bikini top with white polka dots. She has a concerned or slightly annoyed expression on her face. The background is a blurred living room.

THIS ISN'T
FUNNY..

A man in a dark suit and tie is running across a living room. He is looking down with a concerned expression. In the background, there is a fireplace, a potted plant, and large windows with curtains. The room is dimly lit, with light coming from the windows.

THE
QUANTUM
FLUCTUATION, THAT'S
THE SOUL! IT'S
REPEATABLE! DON'T
YOU UNDERSTAND?

A man in a dark suit and tie is running across a living room. He is looking down with a concerned expression. In the background, there is a fireplace, a potted plant, and large windows with curtains. The room is dimly lit, with light coming from the windows.

THE GREAT
FILTER! IT'S STILL
COMING! HE SAID THE
FATE OF THE WORLD..
ALL THE WORLDS..



ALEX, STOP. TAKE A BREATH AND SLOW DOWN. DID YOU JUST SAY YOU WERE GOING TO KILL YOURSELF?

YEAH, BUT NOT ANYMORE. THAT'S NOT IMPORTANT, LISTEN...


...I WAS SITTING AT MY TABLE DOWN THERE, ABOUT TO DO IT.. THERE WAS AN ALIEN OR SOMETHING. HE WAS WEARING ALL BLUE. HE PULLED THE GUN AWAY AND SAID I HAVE TO RECREATE C.J.'S SOUL!



THERE WAS AN ALIEN?...



YES! I THINK SO. I NEVER REALLY SAW HIS WHOLE FACE, BUT HE WASN'T HUMAN.. HE IMPLIED SOMETHING IS COMING AND IN SOME WAY, SOMETHING ABOUT C.J. WILL BE THE KEY TO SURVIVING IT.



OK... WE'RE CALLING A DOCTOR
RIGHT NOW.

I'M NOT CRAZY! I KNOW WHAT I
SAW!



I BELIEVE YOU BELIEVE IT, BUT THAT
DOESN'T MAKE IT REAL.

I KNOW IT SOUNDS CRAZY! I
KNOW! BUT EVEN IF THERE'S A ONE IN
A TRILLION CHANCE IT'S TRUE..
WOULDN'T YOU WANT TO TRY?



NO!

I'D GIVE ANYTHING TO HAVE C.J. BACK. BUT WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT IS BUILDING SOME KIND OF SYNTHETIC ABOMINATION!

GABRIEL SAID THE UNIVERSAL ORGANISM DOESN'T DISTINGUISH BETWEEN MEDIUMS.. I GUESS HE WAS SAYING A SOUL IS A SOUL NO MATTER WHERE IT'S STORED.

WHOA!
HANG ON.
GABRIEL?

YEAH...?
KAYLA.. IT WAS
REAL.

ALEX, I'M GETTING DRESSED
THEN WE'RE TAKING YOU TO
THE HOSPITAL, YOU'RE NOT
WELL...

OHH NO..

NO!

YOU ALRIGHT?

OUT
OF THE
WAY!



HEY, WHAT'S
WRONG?



BLAGHHH!!!



THIS CAN'T BE
HAPPENING.. NOT
RIGHT NOW..



IT
MUST HAVE BEEN
AFTER THE F.B.P
PRESENTATION.. I WAS
PRETTY WOUND UP AND WE
WERE BOTH DRUNK AT
THE AFTER PARTY..

I DON'T EVEN
REMEMBER THAT
NIGHT..


IT'S ALL A BLUR.. HA.. I GAVE C.J. A JACK AND COKE. I MADE IT STRONG TOO.. MADE HIM PROMISE NOT TO TELL YOU..

YEAH, I DID THE SAME THING... I THINK HE GOT PRETTY BUZZED.

HA, YEAH.. I WAS AN EXPERIENCED ALCOHOLIC BY NINETEEN. MARINE CORPS WILL DO THAT TOO YOU.. I JUST WANTED TO SPARE HIM WHAT I WENT THROUGH...

IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, BABE.. IT WAS A FREAK ACCIDENT. I'M THE ONE WHO COSIGNED FOR THAT STUPID BIKE..

DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN HE WAS, I DON'T KNOW. SIX OR SEVEN AND WE GOT HIM THAT ELECTRIC BIKE?



OF COURSE.. HE
RODE IT UNTIL THE
WHEELS FELL OFF,
LITERALLY. BROKE HIS
WRIST..

YUP, THEN WENT OUT THERE WITH A
CASTE ON HIS ARM THAT SAME NIGHT
AND TRIED TO TAPE THEM BACK ON
SO HE COULD RIDE IT THE NEXT DAY..
HE LOVED BEING ON TWO WHEELS.



KAYLA, LISTEN. I KNOW IT SOUNDS
CRAZY. BUT I KNOW IN MY HEART..

THE TRUTH IS, I DON'T KNOW WHAT
I KNOW. I JUST KNOW I HAVE TO
TRY..



ALEX!
NO.
STOP.

I WILL NOT
STICK AROUND IF YOU
DECIDE TO CREATE SOME
KIND OF UNHOLY FACSIMILE
OF OUR SON!



GABRIEL SAID...



SMACK!

DON'T SAY THAT
AGAIN! IT'S BASICALLY
BLASPHEMY!




WHAT
THE
FUCK!?



YOU'RE
HAVING SOME
KIND MENTAL
BREAKDOWN!



THEN
GET THE FUCK
OUT OF MY
HOUSE!



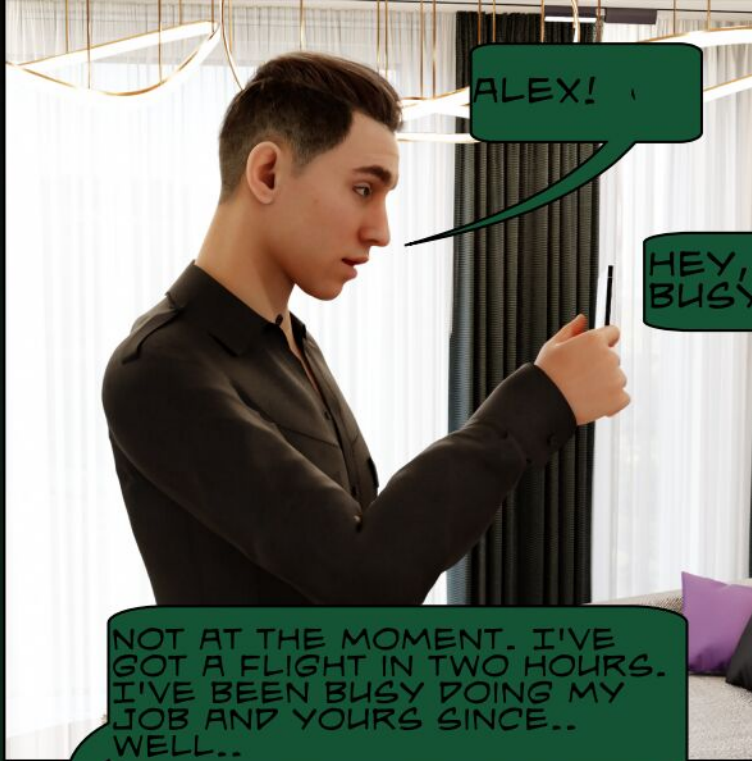
YOU'RE HOUSE?
YOU KNOW WHAT?
I'M NOT GONNA
ARGUE WITH YOU.
I'M GOING FOR A
DRIVE.



GOOD! DON'T
COME BACK UNTIL
YOU'VE REGAINED
YOUR GRIP ON
REALITY.



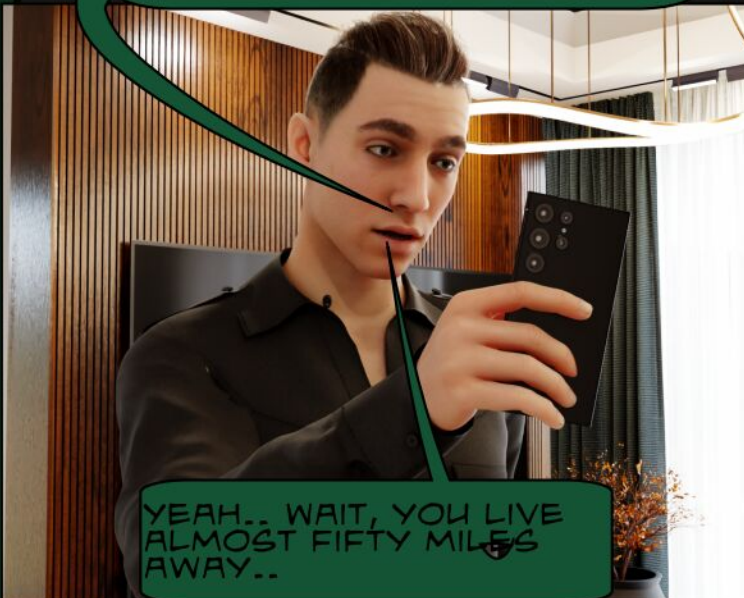
WHATEVER
BITCH...



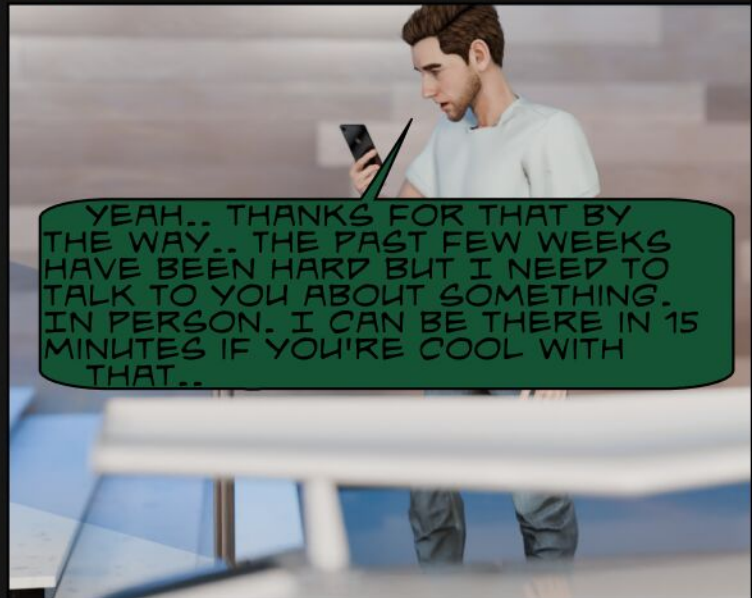
ALEX!

HEY, JOHNNY! YOU
BUSY RIGHT NOW?

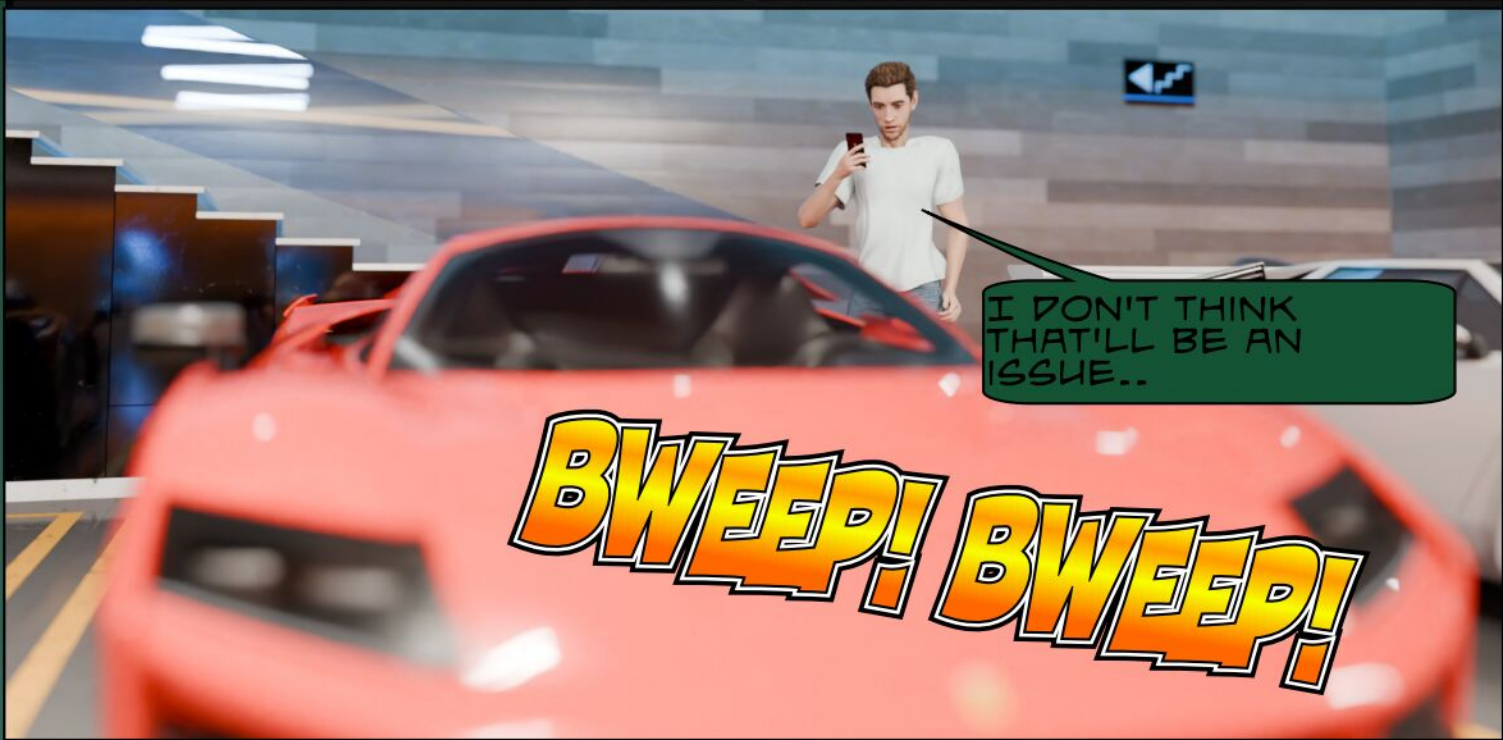
NOT AT THE MOMENT. I'VE
GOT A FLIGHT IN TWO HOURS.
I'VE BEEN BUSY DOING MY
JOB AND YOURS SINCE..
WELL..



YEAH.. WAIT, YOU LIVE
ALMOST FIFTY MILES
AWAY..



YEAH.. THANKS FOR THAT BY
THE WAY.. THE PAST FEW WEEKS
HAVE BEEN HARD BUT I NEED TO
TALK TO YOU ABOUT SOMETHING.
IN PERSON. I CAN BE THERE IN 15
MINUTES IF YOU'RE COOL WITH
THAT..



I DON'T THINK
THAT'LL BE AN
ISSUE..

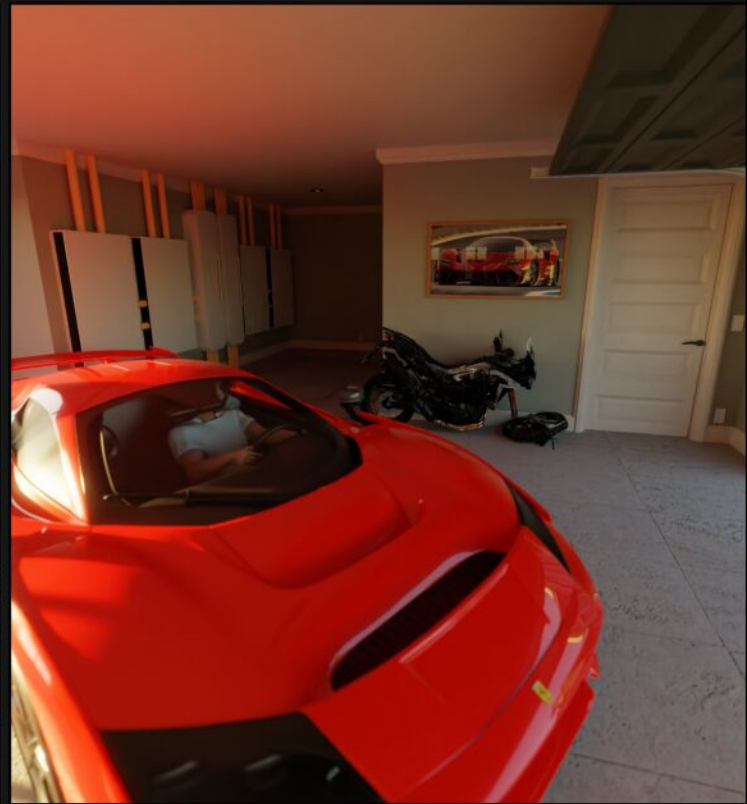
BWEEP! BWEEP!

WIRRRROMMMM!

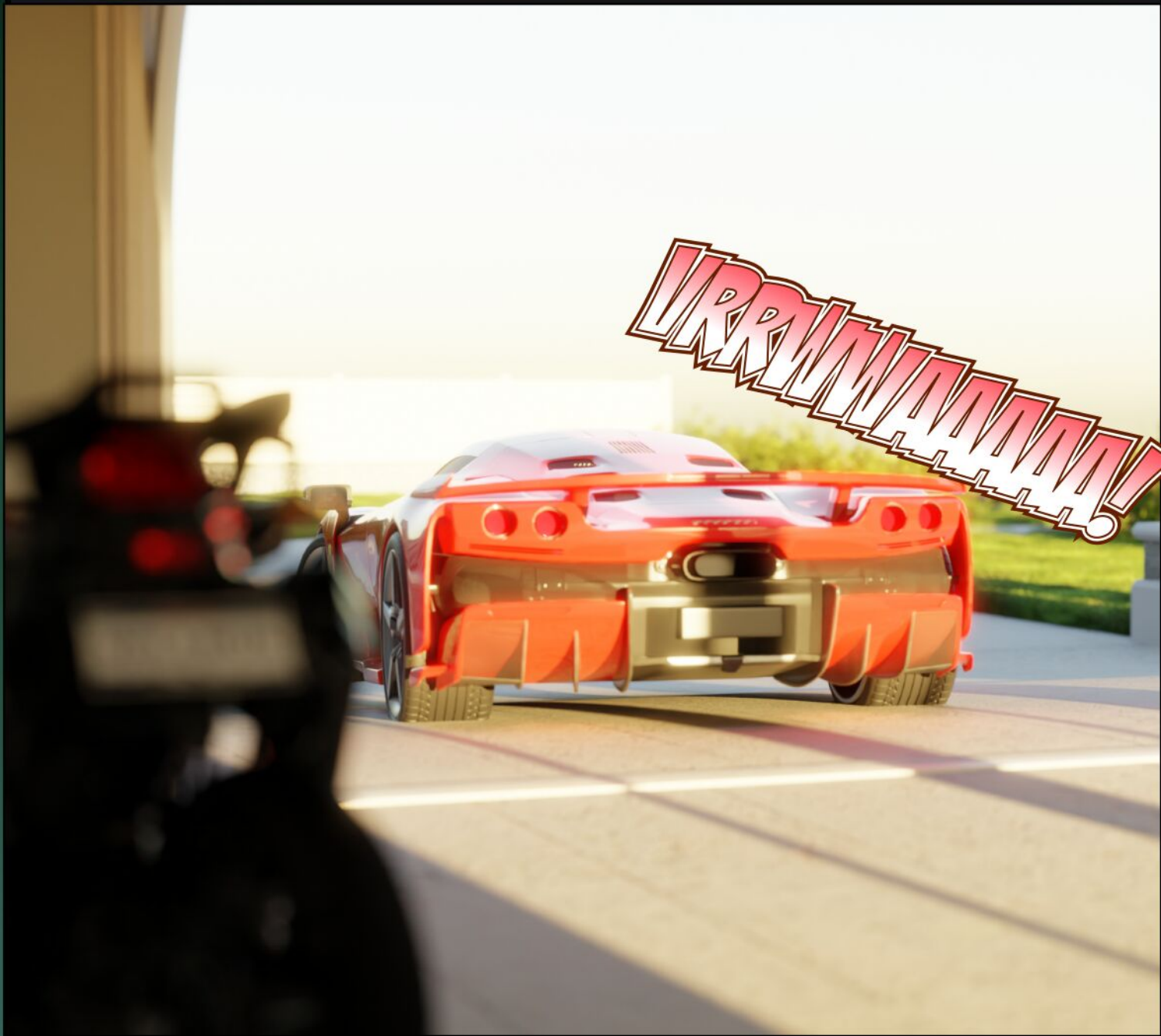


WIRRRROMMMM!





ALEX STOPPED AND STARED AT THE TWISTED AND BROKEN REMAINS OF C.J.'S MOTORCYCLE AS HIS CHEST TIGHTENED AND HIS EYES FILLED WITH TEARS.



WITHIN TWNTY MINUTES, ALEX HAD ARRIVED AT THE HOME OF HIS BEST FRIEND AND BUSINESS PARTNER, JOHN FRANKLIN.



WELL MAN.
THAT'S ONE HELL
OF A STORY..

I MUST BE LOOSING MY MIND..
BUT IT WAS SO REAL! I FELT HIS
HAND ON MY ARM! I COULD SMELL
HIS.. COLOGNE I GUESS?

JOHN WAS SKEPTICAL, BUT HE HAD BEEN A LIFE-LONG
BELIEVER IN THE IDEA THAT ALIENS HAD BEEN IN CONTACT
WITH THE PEOPLE OF EARTH IN THE DISTANT PAST, SO
DESPITE HIS GENUINE WORRY. HIS CURIOSITY COMPELLED
HIM TO, AT THE VERY LEAST NOT DISMISS THE THE IDEA.




AND THEN THIS
MORNING WE FIND OUT..
WELL, KAYLA'S PREGNANT
AGAIN.. I DON'T KNOW
WHAT TO DO..

I KNOW YOU DON'T WANT TO HEAR THIS.
BUT I THINK YOU SHOULD GET CHECKED
OUT. YOU KNOW I'M 100% ON BOARD
WITH THE WHOLE ALIENS THING. BUT THIS IS
SOMETHING THAT COULD ALSO BE A SIGN OF
A SERIOUS MEDICAL CONDITION.



YEAH.. BUT..



WHAT IF IT WASN'T REAL. THE ALIEN WAS MY IMAGINATION. BUT THE IDEA **WAS** REAL. YOU KNOW HOW SOMETIMES YOU SOLVE A PROBLEM IN YOUR DREAM AND THE SOLUTION WORKS?

JOHN HAD BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN DISCOVERING THE SUB-QUANTUM FINGERPRINT WITHIN THE STRUCTURE OF THE HUMAN BRAIN. THOUGH THERE WAS VERY LITTLE PROOF, HIS INTUITION HAD TOLD HIM THE SAME THING.

I'M NOT GONNA LIE, I HAD THE SAME THOUGHT..



SO THEN, WHY NOT TRY? IF WE FAIL, THEN FUNCTIONALLY, NOTHING CHANGES. BUT IF WE SUCCEED...



WE BASICALLY INVENTED TECHNOLOGICAL IMMORTALITY..





YEAH!



ALEX, THAT'S PLAYING GOD..

JOHN.. I'LL GET MY HEAD CHECKED. I PROMISE.. BUT THAT **WAS** GABRIEL.. **THE** GABRIEL I KNOW IT. I FELT IT.




YOU SAID, HE SAID "HIS PEOPLE USE TO SAVE THE SOULS OF THE RIGHTEOUS, BUT NOT ANYMORE"?


YES! HE SEEMED ALMOST SAD. SCARED EVEN.. IT WAS ALL WRONG, MAN.. SOMETHING IS WRONG.



"THE FATE OF ALL WORLDS" YOU SAID?



FUCK MAN...



YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT CONSTRUCTING AN ARTIFICIAL PERSON. AS COMPLICATED AS THE F.B.I. IS, IT'LL BE A WALK IN THE PARK COMPARED TO THIS. NOT TO MENTION THE LEGAL RAMIFICATIONS.



I ALREADY MADE HIM ONCE. THE FIRST TIME WAS EASY, THOUGH. ALL I HAD TO DO WAS LIE BACK AND LET KAYLA DO HER THING!



HA! THAT POOR GIRL, MAN...



OHH, BITE ME. SHE LOVED EVERY SECOND... SO.. WILL YOU HELP?

YOU KNOW AT THE END OF THE DAY, IF WE DO THIS. WHAT WE MAKE; ASSUMING IT WORKS AT ALL WON'T ACTUALLY BE.. WELL.. HIM, RIGHT? AND WE'LL PROBABLY BOTH GO TO PRISON FOR THIS.

I DO. JOHN.. THIS ISN'T REALLY ABOUT THAT ANYMORE.. AND WE'LL CROSS THE LEGAL BRIDGE WHEN WE COME TO IT.. IS THAT A YES?

YOUR PREGNANT WIFE IS PROBABLY GOING TO LEAVE YOU.. YOU REALLY BELIEVE IT'S THAT IMPORTANT?

YES! MAYBE I AM CRAZY, IN FACT I ALMOST CERTAINLY AM! BUT I-I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT. THERE'S MORE TO THIS. I CAN FEEL IT! I KNOW THIS IS SOMETHING I HAVE TO DO! **WE** HAVE TO DO!



I CAN'T LET YOU GO AT IT ALONE I GUESS. FUCK IT, LETS DO IT.

REALLY!? GREAT! THANK YOU!

OF COURSE, BUT ALEX. THIS HAS TO BE KEPT SECRET. I MEAN TOTAL BLACK-OUT. YOU HAVE TELL KAYLA YOU'RE "OVER IT" OR SOMETHING. NO ONE ELSE CAN KNOW.

THAT'S GONNA BE HARD, CONSIDERING THE F.B.P. PROTOTYPES WERE BUILT BY A TEAM OF SPECIALISTS IN A BILLION DOLLAR LAB..

THE ONLY THING WE CAN'T REPLICATE, AT LEAST NOT EASILY IS A SYSTEM FOR GENERATING AND INFUSING A NERVOUS SYSTEM WITH THE COMPONENTS OF THE BODY. THAT'LL ALL HAVE TO BE DONE THERE, AND LARGELY IN SEPARATE PARTS.

IT'S MY BUILDING.. I'M SURE WE CAN MAKE IT WORK.

THAT IS TRUE..



IT'LL TAKE SOME TIME FOR ME TO WRITE THE INITIAL CODE TO SIMULATE EVEN THE MOST BASIC PARAMETERS IN REAL TIME..

WORK ON IT WHEN YOU CAN BUT DON'T FORGET BECAUSE I'M GOING TO BE SPENDING A LOT OF TIME WORKING ON THE PHYSICAL SIDE.

I WON'T FORGET. I'LL START WORKING THROUGH A FEW IDEAS ON THE PLANE.. SPEAKING OF WHICH. I BETTER GET GOING.

YEAH, SURE. I BETTER GET HOME ANYWAY. KAYLA IS PROBABLY FURIOUS WITH ME AS IT IS.

SCHEDULE AN M.R.I. TOO, MAYBE? JUST TO BE SAFE.

I'LL MAKE THE CALL ON THE WAY HOME.

WHEN ALEX RETURNED HOME, HE FOUND KAYLA LAYING ON THE COUCH, QUIETLY SOBBING IN THEIR LIVING ROOM WITH THE BLINDS CLOSED.



HEY, I'M BACK..
YOU'RE JUST.. SITTING
HERE IN THE DARK?


WHAT ELSE WOULD I
BE DOING!?

WHAT'S THE POINT IN
ANYTHING?

KNOWING FULL WELL THE FEELING OF TOTAL
DISPAIR THAT KAYLA'S WORDS CAME FROM. ALEX
FROZE IN PLACE FOR A MOMENT, REFLECTING ON
HIS OWN FEELINGS OF GRIEF AT THE LOSS OF HIS
SON. HE WAS ONLY ABLE TO UTTER OUT A SINGLE
WORD IN REPLY:



YEAH...



THE TWO REMAINED
SILENT FOR A FEW
MOMENTS BEFORE
KAYLA SLOWLY SAT UP,
ASKING:



WHERE DID YOU GO?



OVER TO JOHN'S. I
TOLD HIM ABOUT..
YOU KNOW.

OHH? WHAT'D HE
SAY?



SAME THING YOU
SAID, MORE OR
LESS. I'M SEEING
DOCTOR KRENZ
TOMMOROW.

OHH! WELL.. I DIDN'T
EXPECT YOU TO SAY
THAT, HONESTLY.

SO...

ANOTHER LONG, AWKWARD SILENCE FILLED THE
ROOM AS ALEX CONTEMPLATED HIS NEXT WORDS.
AGAIN, HE WAS ONLY ABLE TO MUSTER UP A
SINGLE WORD IN REPLY:



SO..



DOES THIS MEAN YOU UNDERSTAND HOW CRAZY YOU SOUNDED?



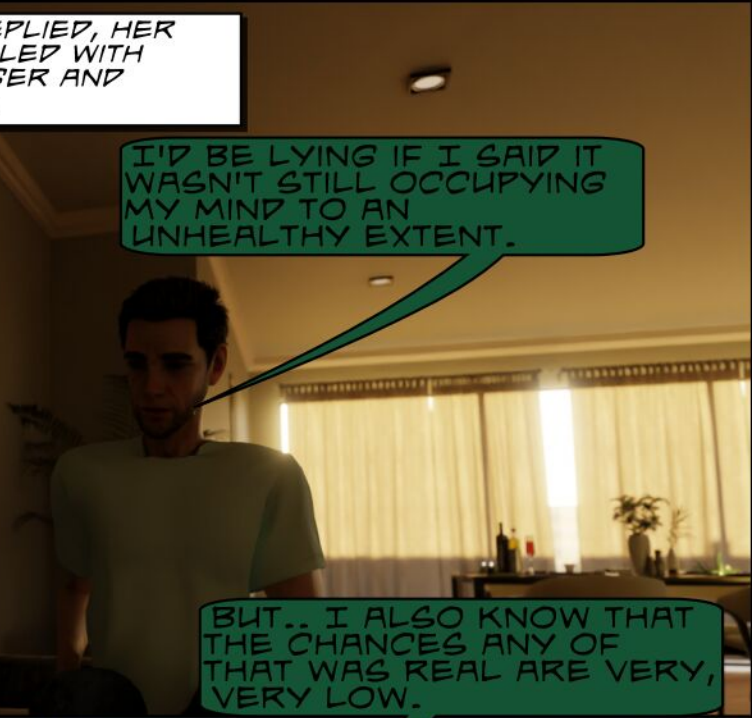
OH! I ALWAYS KNEW THAT.

AS SOON AS HE REPLIED, ALEX KNEW HE HAD CHOSEN THE WRONG WORDS.




ALEX, I WANT A STRAIGHT ANSWER.


KAYLA REPLIED, HER VOICE FILLED WITH BOTH ANGER AND ANGUISH.



I'D BE LYING IF I SAID IT WASN'T STILL OCCUPYING MY MIND TO AN UNHEALTHY EXTENT.



BUT.. I ALSO KNOW THAT THE CHANCES ANY OF THAT WAS REAL ARE VERY, VERY LOW.



I DON'T WANT TO HEAR YOUR SCIENCE-BRAINED CRAP RIGHT NOW! WHY DON'T YOU GO PLUG YOUR HELMET ON AND SEE WHAT'S WRONG!?



THAT'S... A GOOD IDEA, ACTUALLY..

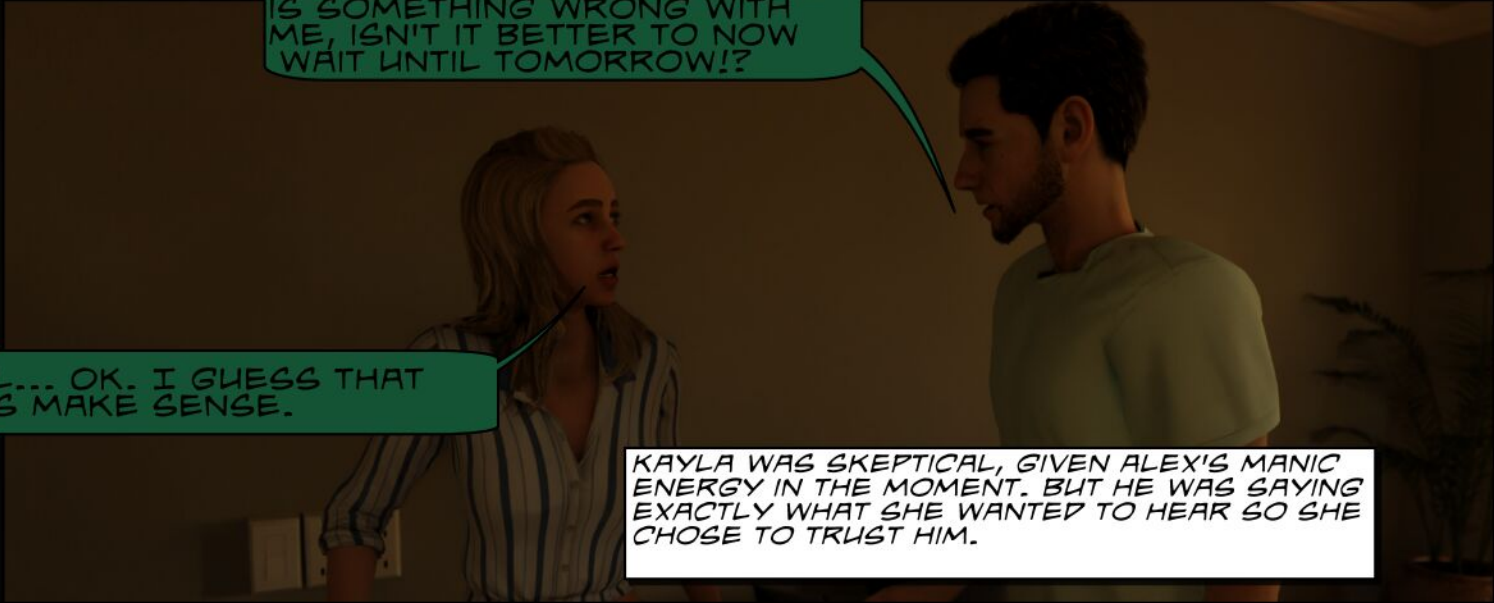


COMMON! LETS GO DOWNSTAIRS AND RUN A SCAN!

ALEX'S SUDDEN CHANGE IN ENERGY AND DEMEANOR STARTLED KAYLA.



ALEX, YOU'RE SCARING ME..



BABE! PLEASE! TRUST ME! IT'S JUST A SCAN! IF THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME, ISN'T IT BETTER TO NOW WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW!?



WELL... OK. I GUESS THAT DOES MAKE SENSE.

KAYLA WAS SKEPTICAL, GIVEN ALEX'S MANIC ENERGY IN THE MOMENT. BUT HE WAS SAYING EXACTLY WHAT SHE WANTED TO HEAR SO SHE CHOSE TO TRUST HIM.

AFTER NEARLY 20 MINUTES OF SCANNING HIS BRAIN, LOOKING FOR ANYTHING THAT COULD BE A POSSIBLE CAUSE OF HALLUCINATIONS, ALEX COULDN'T FIND ANY.

I'M NOT SEEING ANYTHING THAT STANDS OUT. NO SIGN OF STROKE OR SEIZURES. CLEARLY SUFFERING..UHH.. MILD, SHALL WE SAY, HANGOVER.. ELEVATED SEROTONIN AND ADRENALINE, BUT WITHIN FAIRLY NORMAL PARAMETERS CONSIDERING... EVERYTHING GOING ON

HAVE YOU BEEN TAKING DRUGS?

I MIGHT HAVE SMOKED A JOINT.. OR 50 THE PAST FEW WEEKS. AND THE HALF A BOTTLE OF JACK I DOWNED.

NO, ALEX. I MEAN REAL DRUGS.

NO.. I HAVN'T.



WELL, THAT THING CAN'T SEE IF, SAY YOU'VE HAD A MENTAL BREAKDOWN, OR IF YOU'RE JUST EXHAUSTED.

ACTUALLY, IT CAN.. IT'S ALSO TOO SMALL FOR MY GIGANTIC HEAD SO I'M TAKING IT OFF NOW.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN "IT CAN"?

KAYLA.. THIS ISN'T JUST A BRAIN SCANNER.. I MEAN. THAT'S WHAT IT STARTED AS. BUT WE STUMBLED ONTO SOMETHING SO MUCH MORE INCREDIBLE!


YEAH, YOU MADE A BIG DISPLAY OF IT TOO!



YEAH, I KINDA REGRET
THAT NOW, HONESTLY.

BUT LISTEN! THIS HELMET CAN SEE
EVERYTHING, AND I MEAN
EVERYTHING. RIGHT DOWN TO THE
MOST FUNDAMENTAL LAYERS OF
EXISTENCE!

AND IT'S ALL SAVED AS
RAW DATA ON THE
STORAGE RACK THERE..



I GET THAT C.J. IS
GONE.. O.K.? DON'T
THINK OF WHAT I'M
PROPOSING AS TRYING
TO BRING HIM BACK.



THINK OF IT AS TRYING
TO USE THE.. CALL IT
"FRAMEWORK" HE LEFT
BEHIND TO CREATE
SOMETHING NEW!




I CAN'T BELIEVE WHAT
I'M HEARING..



WILL YOU MAKE IT LOOK
LIKE HIM TOO?

WELL YEAH, I MEAN..
OF COURSE..



IS THIS REALLY
MORE IMPORTANT
THAN ME? THAN YOUR
UNBORN CHILD!?



YES!

YES, IT IS..

ALEX KNEW AS SOON AS THE WORDS
LEFT HIS MOUTH, HE HAD JUST MADE ONE
OF THE BIGGEST MISTAKES OF HIS LIFE.



I DON'T KNOW WHO
YOU ARE ANYMORE..



KAYLA, PLEASE.. I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T MEAN THAT..

YES YOU DID!



DON'T TOUCH ME!

PLEASE LISTEN!

NO, FUCK YOU! STAY AWAY FROM ME!



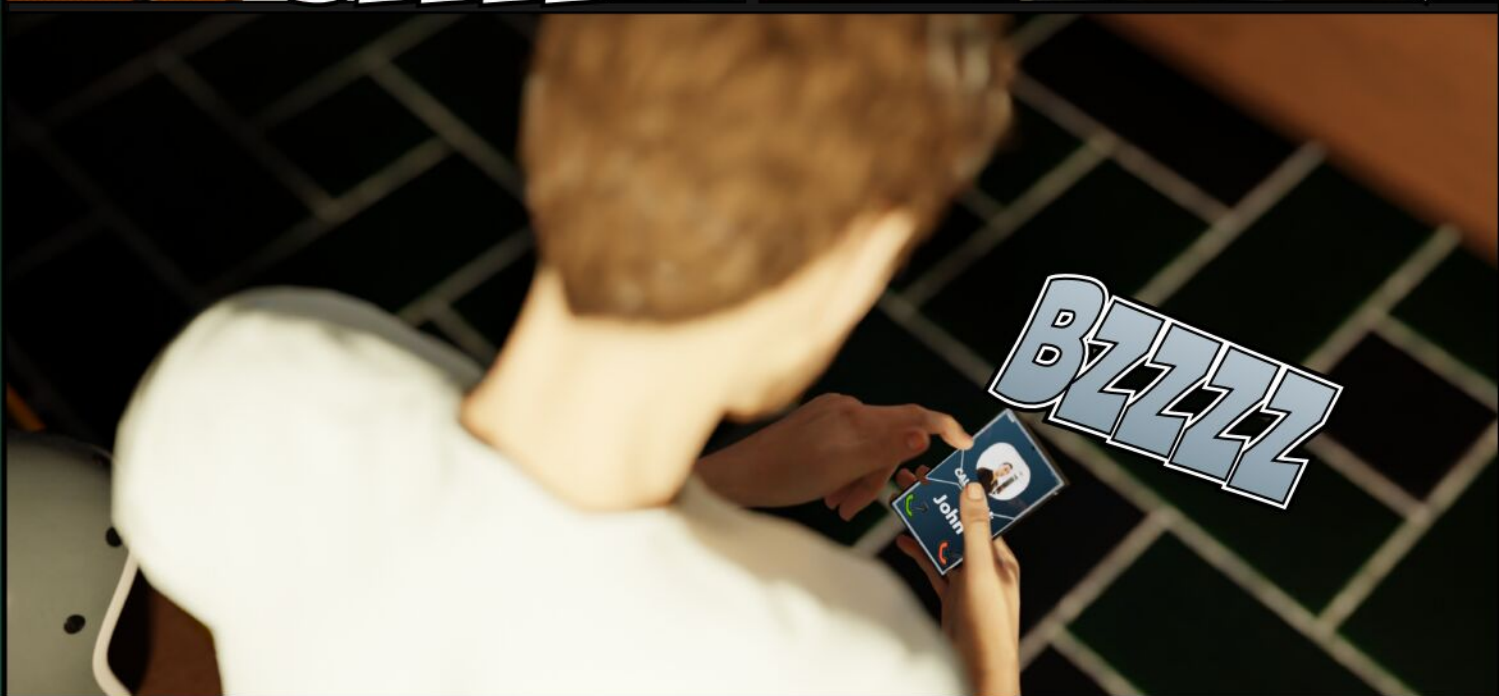
BABE.. PLEASE, I'M SORRY!

NO! I'M LEAVING. YOU'RE NOT THE MAN I MARRIED.. YOU'VE GONE INSANE.






AS ALEX SAT AND CONTEMPLATED HIS CHOICE OF WORDS, HE FELT HIS PHONE BEGIN TO BUZZ IN HIS POCKET.



HEY, WHAT'S UP?


AS ALEX SAT AND CONTEMPLATED HIS CHOICE OF WORDS, HE FELT HIS PHONE BEGIN TO BUZZ IN HIS POCKET.



HEY, I'VE BEEN LOOKING CLOSER AT SOME OF OUR EARLY SCAN DATA, AND COMPARING IT TO. C.J.S.. BY THE WAY, I BROKE INTO YOUR SERVER. YOU NEED BETTER SECURITY, MAN...

BUT UHH.. THERE IS AN ANOMALY HERE. THERE'S A FEW MILLION ACTIVE REGIONS IN EACH HUMAN BRAIN WITH DISTINCT, CORRESPONDING PATTERNS, EACH OF WHICH HAS DISTINCT WAVEFRONT PULSE AND COLLAPSE RATES. BUT ALL OPERATE IN FACTORS OF 2. SOME PULSE TWICE, SOME FOUR, SIX, EIGHT TIMES.. ALWAYS IN A FACTOR OF TWO..

YEAH, I KNOW. C.J.S. BRAIN DID FACTORS OF 3. NOTHING ELSE. I NOTICED THAT TOO BUT DIDN'T THINK MUCH OF IT.. YOU THINK WE CAN SIMULATE IT?



SURE, I THINK IT MIGHT BE MORE A MATTER OF COPYING THE PATTERNS THAN ANYTHING ELSE. I CAN WRITE A QUICK PROGRAM TO AUTOMATE THAT - THAT'S NOTHING.



GOOD, DO IT.

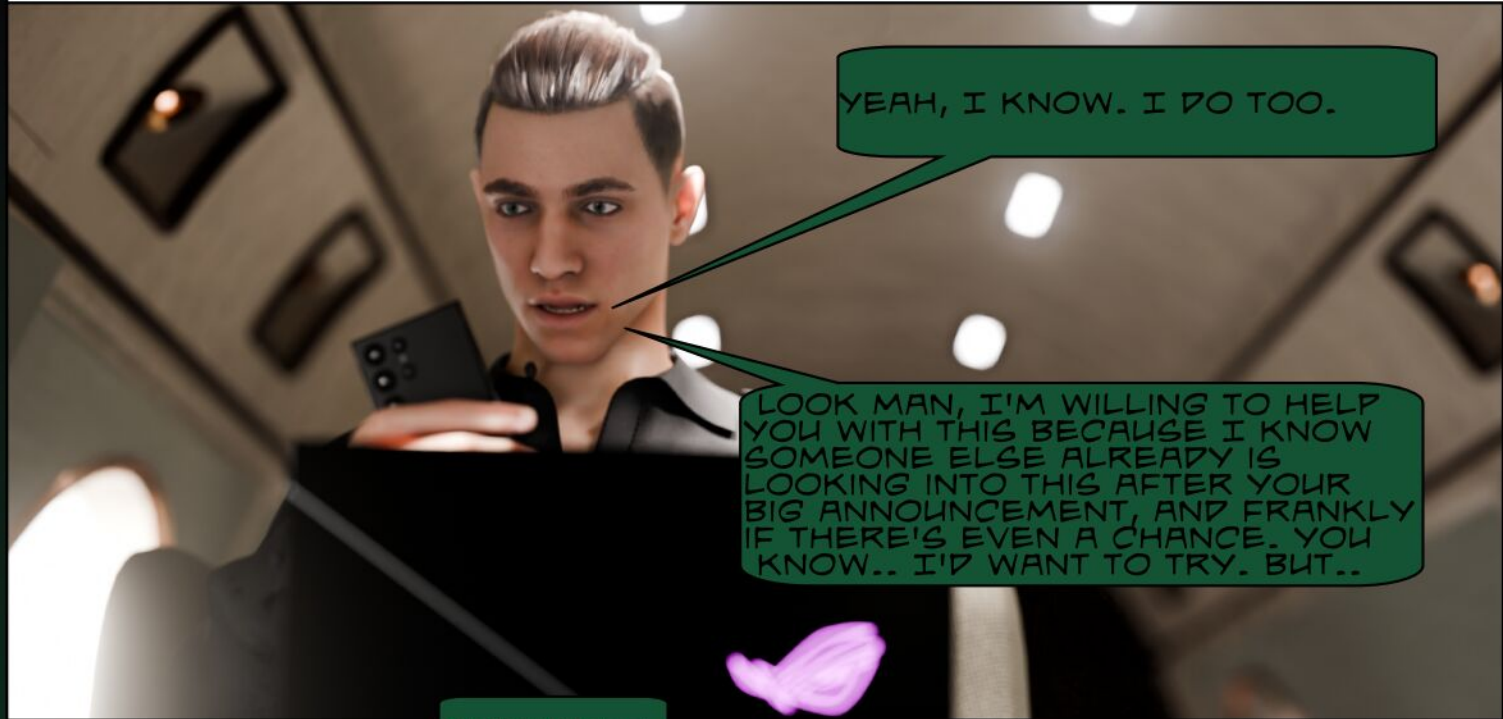
YEAH I ALREADY DID, THE
PROGRAM IS COMPILING
THE DATA AS WE SPEAK..

LOOK, I HAVE EVERYTHING
THAT'S HERE, BUT IT'S MORE LIKE
A FILM REEL. I DON'T THINK
THERE'S ENOUGH DATA HERE TO
DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO. IF
YOU HAD ABOUT 15, 20 TIMES
THIS MUCH DATA, MAYBE..

I KNOW.. I WISH WE
HAD MORE TIME TOO...

OH! I DIDN'T MEAN IT
LIKE THAT..

NO, I KNOW... I JUST MISS
HIM SO MUCH, MAN...



YEAH, I KNOW. I DO TOO.

LOOK MAN, I'M WILLING TO HELP YOU WITH THIS BECAUSE I KNOW SOMEONE ELSE ALREADY IS LOOKING INTO THIS AFTER YOUR BIG ANNOUNCEMENT, AND FRANKLY IF THERE'S EVEN A CHANCE. YOU KNOW.. I'D WANT TO TRY. BUT..



BUT WHAT?



FORGET THE QUESTION OF HOW MUCH OF C.J. IT WOULD OR WOULDN'T BE. WE'RE BASICALLY CREATING A LIFE FORM HERE.



YEAH, I KNOW. THERE WILL BE A POINT OF NO-RETURN.

THAT'LL BE ON ME WHEN THE TIME COMES, YOU HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT... JUST LET ME KNOW WHEN THE PROGRAM IS COMPILED, AND SAVE IT TO MY SERVER. YOU'RE ALREADY IN IT. I'M GOING TO START FLUSHING OUT THE F.B.P.

WE'LL HANG ON A SECOND, LET'S NOT GET AHEAD OF OURSELVES HERE. LET'S SAY THIS NOISE PATTERN IS IN FACT A RECREATION OF THE SOUL, WHICH I DO KINDA BELIEVE.. WHAT ELSE COULD IT BE? EVEN SO, THEN WHAT? WHAT'S GOING TO CONNECT IT TO EVERYTHING ELSE? EYES, NOSE, EARS, SKIN..? WE'VE NEVER EVEN MADE A PROSTHETIC, CYBERNETIC FACE..

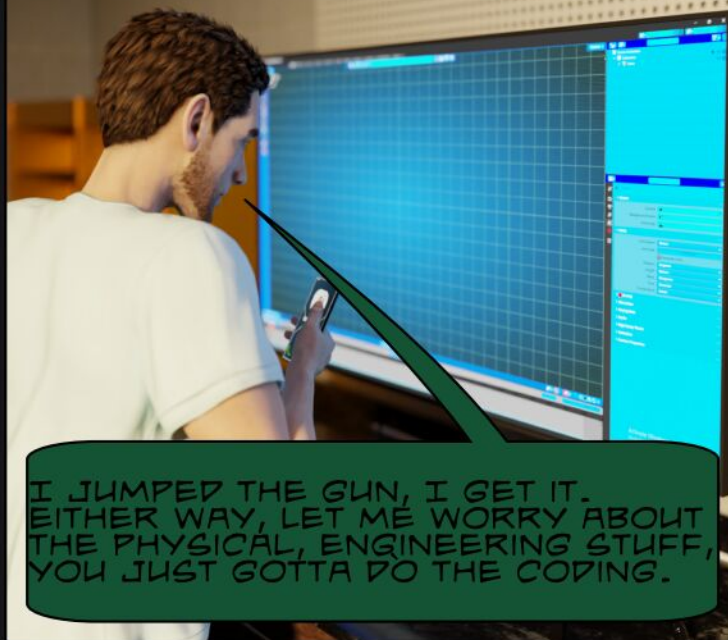
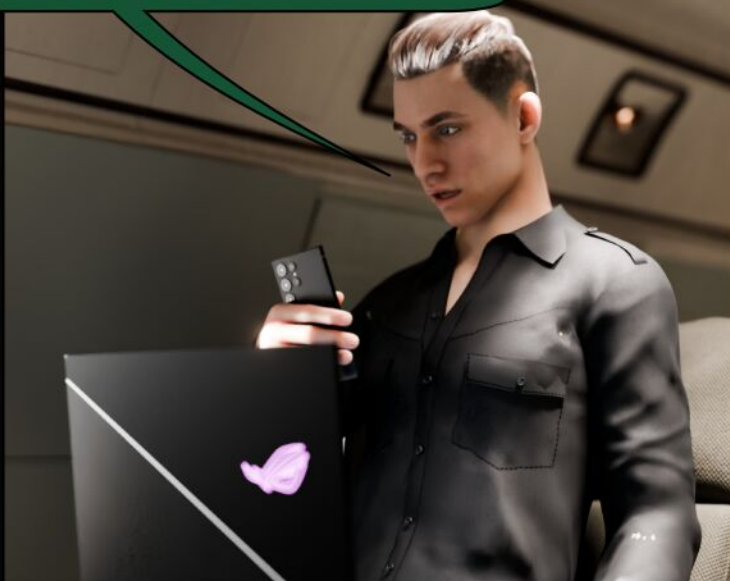
WE BUILT A 14 BILLION DOLLAR COMPANY ON THE ANSWER, DUMB-ASS! CONNECTING COMPUTERS TO THE BRAIN, WE MADE IT TRIVIAL. IF WE CAN'T CONNECT A COMPUTER TO A COMPUTER, WE SHOULD GIVE THAT MONEY BACK.

I THINK THAT'S A GROSS OVER-SIMPLIFICATION, ALEX.

PROBABLY, BUT IT'S ALSO CORRECT. THERE'S NOTHING ELSE WE HAVEN'T ALREADY BUILT, OR DOESN'T ALREADY EXIST. NOTHING.

AND YOU ARE RIGHT, BY THE WAY. THAT PRESENTATION WASN'T THE WISEST THING I'VE EVER DONE, WAS IT?

I THOUGHT IT WAS THE
DUMBEST IDEA YOU'VE EVER
HAD, HONESTLY.

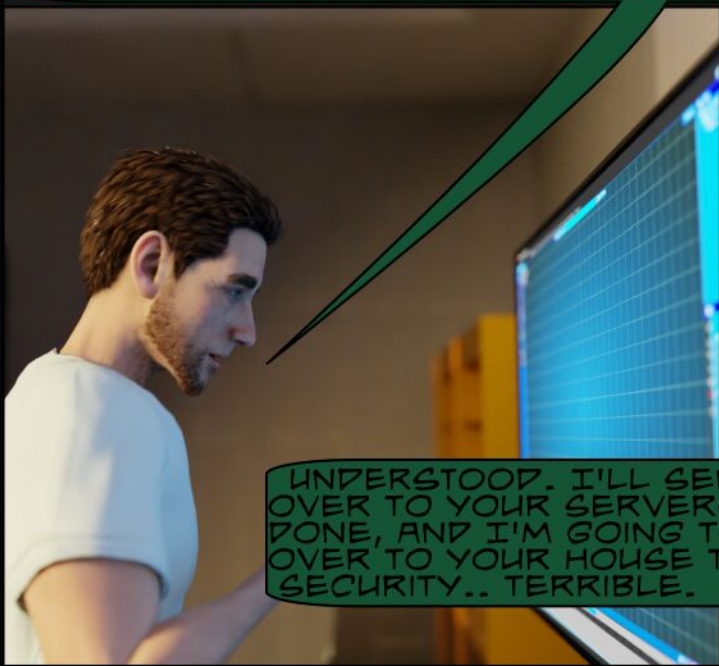


I JUMPED THE GUN, I GET IT.
EITHER WAY, LET ME WORRY ABOUT
THE PHYSICAL, ENGINEERING STUFF,
YOU JUST GOTTA DO THE CODING.

"JUST" CODE A HUMAN MIND
FROM SCRATCH. HOW HARD
CAN THAT BE?



YEAH, MY CHOICE OF WORDS HAS NEVER
BEEN THE BEST, HAS IT? DON'T WORRY ABOUT
IT RIGHT NOW ANYWAY. I'M ABOUT TO TEAR
INTO THE F.B.P. FILES AND START FIGURING
THINGS OUT. UNTIL WE KNOW WHAT KIND OF
HARDWARE WE'LL BE WORKING WITH, THERE'S
NOT MUCH POINT IN CODING ANYTHING.



UNDERSTOOD. I'LL SEND THE PROGRAM
OVER TO YOUR SERVERS AS SOON AS IT'S
DONE, AND I'M GOING TO SEND SOMEONE
OVER TO YOUR HOUSE TO FIX YOUR INTERNET
SECURITY.. TERRIBLE.