

You would have never thought that something that could be found on the beach would change the way you are forever.

"Do you realize what this is?" said the nervous yet frightened specialist in front of me.

"I hoped *you* would have the answer to that question."

He clutched my hand. His was a clammy, unfamiliar, inhuman like hand. He then gave me a deathly grip, a worried and lost look in his eyes. That's when I started to get worried. I had showed my discovery to many specialists before who studied it's fine shape and texture for days and weeks, researching until their eyes were a burned red trying to figure out what it was. Then finally I knew that they had only one bit of information on this discovery, their curiosity. I was set on a mission, to figure out what this thing's function was. One thing that I was positive of, I went too far.

I never could remember what happened that day; my mind keeps **kept** going back to an empty memory. But each night with the discovery by my side the same horrifying thing would happen. Each night when I went to bed something would happen, but before I could grasp the memory, my mind was washed. I would remember everything else that was in my mind except for that night's memory and the more nights to come. One night when I went to bed I decided I would remember what was going to happen. I clipped a tiny recording chip on me that would record what was happening around me and what was going through my mind in various situations like this one. The chip was something that had been invented by William Phillip Jr. and only a few people had that kind of technology, especially in this time period. This chip would help me figure out what happens to me when the discovery that I found does it's strange magic. This chip would be the only thing that would help me know. So when I had the chip clipped, I went to bed, worried about what the chip would capture. And the next day when I woke up in a dirty sweat, I watched the recording.

I was walking. In an unfamiliar place, nothing looked the same. I looked confused, unfocused. Then suddenly something grabbed me.

The screen went black. I cussed, thinking I had lost what I had wanted.

Then, the screen came back.

I sighed, relieved that this technology could go through such rough conditions.

I was in a dark room, passed out; I could only hear my slow, raspy breathing. The chip said my mind was at ease. I seemed calm. Nothing like how I was before, no signs of anything strange. I finally entered consciousness and I looked around finding nobody else was in the hay filled room with me. I felt a jolt of desolation. After a while of staring at the low glowing light from the window that was decorated with a fine spider web, I more carefully glanced at the room wondering if I could be in an abandoned barn or a modern building set to look like something else to push my train of thought off it's tracks. My stomach flipped and I gagged as I noticed the discovery on a wooden shelf on the other side of the room. When I looked at it I noticed how it looked like a great evil was trapped inside it's marbled coils.

The phone rang, and then the screen went fuzzy.

"You figure out what that thing is, we'll finish you off," demanded the hoarse voice.

I trembled as I listened to the steadied breathing of the man on the other line. He seemed confident, like he could trick me into thinking I would stop my life mission. I would face him, no matter whom he was or what he tried to do to me. I wouldn't give up; I wouldn't let this man stand in my way. The imperious man hung up on me and I stiffened once as I caught the sound of the dial tone before I finally clicked the call off. After I shut off the phone, I realized the clip didn't catch one thing I needed; sure it caught some film, but nothing important. I walked over to my laptop that was next to my dull, creamy colored chair and gave my feet a rest while I thought about researching this discovery myself. I enjoyed using antiques. It made me feel connected to the past. All those new technology things made no sense to me. I didn't know why we needed them. I moved my tiny mouse to wake up my computer from hibernation. Once I logged into my account and put in the tiny star password code, I clicked onto the Internet and went to my favorite search engine. Once I closed all of the flashing pop-up ads, I typed in my discovery into the search bar. I waited an ever-lasting time for the tiny rainbow circle to stop spinning and for me to get my results. Finally, the rainbow circle finished and many websites showed up. I

clicked on the first one hoping it didn't take as long as before. The page finished loading faster than I thought and I was stunned when my laptop crashed and of course right after, my phone rang.

"We warned you. Don't be surprised when we come for you," said the crystal clear, velvety voice.

He ended our short conversation, never mind, it shouldn't even be called a conversation. It was more like blackmail. Maybe I felt a force, which in your time was called an "adrenaline rush" My heart was beating like a hummingbird's wings, the now extinct species. I needed help, fast. I called my closest relative.

"John, the specialist from specialist's supreme, speaking. How may I help you?"

"John, it's me, Tyler," my voice cracked and crumbled from distress.

"What's wrong? You only call my work if there is an emergency!"

"I know. There is one."

"What kind of trouble have you gotten yourself into now? You've been reading one of those forbidden books again?"

"No, much worse. I found something and its been getting me into some classified trouble."

"You promised me, no more trouble! I know it's hard for you with all these new rules, but that's no excuse!"

I sighed. My big brother was always looking out for me. Sometimes I appreciated it, I really did, but sometimes it just got plain annoying.

"I know, but it wasn't my fault this time! Can I come over tomorrow for a session?"

"Fine," he dragged out the word. "But bring money, I'm only giving you half price off."

"See you tomorrow!" The way I said it made it seem like he could see my beaming grin from between the phone lines.

"Bye," There was no enthusiasm in his voice.

I formed a frown, then pressed the red button and put the phone back into the charger.

My positive attitude was being torn apart by the racing new feelings pulsing through my blood and in and out of my heart and mind, ones that included the man on the other line. The circulation was pounding each vein and vessel and they were pleading desperately for a rest. I found no other way to control it other than hyperventilating and pacing. My eyelids fought and

fought and won as the green numbers flew by on my alarm clock. Finally the stars grew weary and faded away. The moon went too, to protect the little stars from their light going too dull. After drinking a brownish morning saver to help me wake up, I pushed my hair back, stood in the shower and listened to the faint tapping of the water hitting the porcelain. My body was tired. Staring at the darkness for hours, thinking, takes a lot from you.

After a quiet morning of nibbling on a muffin, drinking more liquids and beeping at slow drivers, I was finally walking down the shiny bright hallway I have always remembered. Each ceiling light was spaced evenly and each water fountain couldn't hold the light and had to reflect it off its lustrous surface, burning my red eyes and making my purple circles not seem so bad. My utterly perfect brother would not approve of me today. Maybe my positive notion yesterday didn't help my dazed physical form today. I found the indented room number and trampled inside. My brother took a glance and gave me a disapproving grimace. I sighed then sat in the chair that held open arms for me. My mind kept debating all of my thoughts, some pushed away and some stayed accepting my consideration. How would I tell him? Should I even tell him? He was my brother, if I would tell anyone it would have to be him. I stared at the purple clouds behind my brother that had something in store for us today. The clouds looked nothing like the clean, neat and tidy office my brother conserved. My mind accepted fate and filled my lungs with air before I forgot how to breathe again.

I told him everything. I told him about the empty memories, the clip, the raspy voice that blackmailed me, everything. Not even pausing for a breath, blabbing on and on. I wondered how my brother could bear to listen to me. I could tell he was though. He jotted down professional notes and nodded once in a while, pondering the information not everyone hears from their little brother. Finally I had let it all out and the sky jumped off my shoulders and my rib cage expanded, not being sunk in by all the things that were bottled up inside me.

My brother said nothing, not even a peep. After I finished, the room was dead silent, not even his chair squeaked. That's when trepidation started to kick in and my stomach got a pounding blow.

My brother stood up and traipsed out of the room. I didn't know what to do, my brother had never acted like that before, and he never seemed so *dead*. My lifeless brother walked in and muttered enough for me to hear,

"Now, it's your turn."

My mouth hung open, shocked, aghast at what my brother just told me, but more than anything I was discombobulated. Nothing had ever struck me so hard. My head was spinning and my mind was waist deep in thought. If I could explain how fast my heart was racing that number would be the amount of notions of negativity that were clouding my brain at that very moment.

Nightmares punctured my daydreams with horrifying images and I could neither close my eyes nor open them to keep them from haunting me, but the worst part about it, I had no idea what he was talking about. My mind changed that sentence to the worst thing I have ever heard in my life and I didn't even understand it.

My mind was virtuous and right. When a horrific man bombarded into the office, I knew it was the man on the other line. I looked straight through him, frozen until I felt the pain. The shot was excruciating, blinded my senses and then I was comatose.

My head watched pictures swirl, clouded by other pictures and other memories. Each time I saw one I couldn't remember the last one. I was benumbed, but still unconscious. I finally looked up, blinking, coming back to the present. I bemoaned when I saw the orange fuzzed dart sticking out of the arm and my stomach churned. I also got another wave of nausea when I realized it was the same hay filled barn from the clip. I saw the horrific man flash behind my closed eyes and knew he was behind this after all. He was the last thing I could remember and the pain. Speak of the devil, I mumbled when the man barged into the room. His attitude was nothing like his velvety voice on the phone the other day. He was smug and grinned at my stunned reaction.

"Welcome!"

"What?" I could barely speak the words, my throat burned with each breath I took.

"Congratulations! You have been chosen to test the new dawn of time!" Each word was thoughtful, but scrambled out as he was fighting to tell me everything. Making sure to add enough enthusiasm in every sentence.

I didn't even fully take it in yet. I was too exhausted to even think, but the man wouldn't let me lay around.

"C'mon! There is no time to stand around and be lazy!"

They took me far away and it seemed they had been carrying me for ages. Each step hurt and I moaned to show my grief.

Finally, my legs stood and wobbled. They were too weak to hold my weight. I bent over, to walk, each step felt like a marathon. It was like there were weights around my ankles and bags of

sand loaded on my back. The guards that were sent to watch me chuckled at my struggles. We walked into a bright building it reminded me of the times at my brother's office. It also gave me goose bumps caused by the new memories caused by my brother's strange behavior.

I forgot where I went. This part was the fuzziest of it all. I lay on a cold metal table while bright lights hurt my jaded eyes. I felt needles and more numbness. I saw operators and scary doctors in masks whispering. My body felt a new rush of terror. After a while, I didn't feel anything or see anyone so I slept, caught in many nightmares, ones I wasn't used to.

I awoke when I felt a presence. I was dumbstruck when one doctor removed his mask and it turned out to be the man.

"You're all done! Now, when you are feeling better I will explain to you what happened."

"Tell me! Tell me now!" I was getting impatient. I used all my energy that I hadn't already used to show how exasperated I was.

He told me that I was being experimented on, and sees **to see** how my body would react to being something new. He told me that he uses the discovery to lure people toward him and it was nothing to worry about anymore. He told me it had already had happened to my brother and that's why he acted so strangely today, I almost cried when I heard that. That my brother had to go through this same pain made me wince for the thousandth time that day. He told me not to worry; he was only like that because he was still in recovery. I was worried about what I was going to become and how I would have to change to adjust to this new life. At least I had my brother to help me.

I had to walk, so far. I walked sluggish and indolent. The sun's burning rays blinded me and soaked up the last of my energy.

Everything was so blurry, a dream, probably something I will never remember. My calves bled from the scrapes caused when my weak and clumsy legs couldn't take another step. I felt woozy and unstable. I felt lifeless, like my brother yesterday. I winced every time one of the guards patted their hand against my shoulder to encourage me to go farther. I saw a vast of unfamiliar faces that passed my wandering eyes that were begging for mercy. I tried running away, but the guard's deathly grip held me still and forced me to walk even faster. I screamed and kicked, but suddenly realized that when I tried to claw one of the guards, when I made a scratch, it disappeared after a few seconds. I tried to pinch myself to wake me up. I started to get frustrated when I couldn't feel the pain. I pinched harder and harder, clawing at myself. Anything to wake

me up from this nightmare! Tears welled up and my skin was red for a second then gone the next. The guard held my arms 'so I wouldn't do anymore damage'. He said we would have to go to security.

The pain of the stamp didn't hurt. It was just the blood that made me dizzy and the lights that flashed through my forced closed eyelids. The numbers 6130 will forever be stamped on my arm, for I will forever be test subject 61.