



Girl 013

Maryah Latif

It was staring. Analysing. Still and silent. Its conniving, red eyes swivelling left to right - the only sign it was alive. But what was it? I'd never seen it before. It was different. Nothing human that was for sure. Its back was arched, on all fours in a gymnast-like bridge stance, but not quite as perfected, and its head the right way around. A long, pale, white face with a grin plastered onto it, pointed canines protruding from its lips, yellowed, and dripping with something wet- blood. Blood? Whose blood?

My bare feet remained plastered against the cold, cement ground; heart pounding, pulsating the thick liquid around my trembling body, the thing It craved. Breath, after breath, after breath, getting caught in my lungs, unable to let it out in case It heard.

I need to move. I need to get out of here.

The only way out was the way I came in. There was only one dark, narrow corridor as wide as my arm span. Do I go forwards or backwards? No way in hell was I making it past that thing alive.

A tiny shuffle back. Maybe it won't see me.

It crept forward, sniffing the air like a dog looking for its next prey. And that's when I saw her. Unveiled like a gem behind curtains. A flash of dull, lifeless orange hair: hair that I remembered to be a bright fiery red once, splayed out around her head. Her eyes wide, glossed over, chest heaving up and down in attempts to allow that oxygen into her lungs. *Why is she fighting it? The feeling of death, just let it take you* – I thought to myself. Her white gown was torn open at the stomach, ruby red shiny organs all on show. Spilling out, begging to be seen after being hidden away for a decade, screaming to be acknowledged.

She was still as beautiful as the first time I saw her, when we first arrived at The Complex. Her skin was pristine, sharp-edged jaw with high sculpted cheek bones, intricate features prominent on her thin face. She put you in mind of diamond – precious, rare, deserving of special handling, but with a beauty that hid an interior toughness. Yet her strength couldn't save her, and nor could I. Watching for what felt like forever, I saw the blood pool in her mouth, and the light leave her eyes as her life ebbed away.

One step back. Another. My eyes met the monster's. They fixated on me. His tongue ran across his lips leaving faint red skin lines of blood. I bolted. Feet slapping against the floor, I glanced back at it, but it disappeared. The movements had moved upwards, scaling the walls. Suddenly, it was above me. It dropped down from the roof, latching itself to a chunk of my hair, yanking me back. Sliding back across the floor, a section of hair from my head now gone. Scrambling to my feet, the mouth of the monster latched onto my left leg bringing me back down, colliding with the floor. Its canines sank deep into the back of my calf, pain firing through my body as a scream erupted, echoing down the pitch-black hallway. The door was just in front of me. I had to make it. Lifting the right leg, I shoved and kicked the thing in the head, as its canines scraped the flesh from my bone. The creature scuttled away into the shadows just as black spots began to cloud my vision.

The door. Right ahead. Come on. You can do this.

Heaving myself back to my feet, I broke into a limping jog.

Nearly there.

Lungs burning, heart racing. Stitches cramping up my stomach. Fingertips encountering the heavy metal door. Turning around for one last glance - no sight of the monster. Hinges creaking, the door slammed shut causing the whole room to shudder with vibrations. **CLICK** - The lock automatically slid into place as I slumped against the door. Letting the darkness take me.

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Experiment 3.1

Log 1-

Notes

- 013 exposed to experiment 3.1
- Calm and composed, compared to others
- Heart rate: 110 bpm
- Brain Activity: consult images screened
- Emotion: None shown visibly
- Injury sustained:
 - o Left Leg
 - o Lower calf
 - o Bone visible, not touched
 - o Possible surgery needed?
 - o Will heal

Overview:

Patient 013 was released to the stimulus around 1300 hours. Immediate intrigue as her cell door was unlocked. Assessed the situation thoroughly before stepping into the corridor. Many thoughts and decisions made. Much better.

Unlike patient 010 who ran at the first chance she could, not assessing the situation right. Patient 010- terminated - Time of death – 1400 hours.

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Girl 013

Light pierced through the thin skin of my eyelids. Was this what the sun felt like? Was I dead and finally in heaven? My eyes were glued shut, suggesting it had been a while since they'd been opened; I wondered how long I'd been out for. I attempted to lift my arms to cover my eyes from the sun, but found them restrained, buckled and bound down flush against my torso.

Not dead? Check.

Slowly peeling my eyes open, I realised I was lying on a smooth, cold, metal table. Glancing around trying to figure out my surroundings, my heart eased as I realised I was back in my cell. The same four, grey, concrete walls and roof that have surrounded me for the past 8 years. Nothing different, but at the same time it was. A room that looked like mine. Pain radiated through my body as I lifted my heavy head off the table and let my eyes eagerly swivel around. IV bags, needles, and a huge white machine hovering over my leg - doing something- who knew what. The slow beep beeping of electronics linked up to my body rapidly increased as all the memories came flooding back: the door unlocking, me trekking out into the dark corridor, the thing, and the girl – Dead.

What was that thing?

Why did they let her just die?

Would they do that to me too?

A voice erupted from the room. “Stop panicking and calm down”, it said in a monotonous tone. No emotion, nothing. I tried to figure out where it was coming from, and finally saw, to the left of me, somebody sat with their back towards me, head bent down, scribbling away in a notepad. I stared at her, amazed to see someone other than myself down here.

“You have been out for a couple of days. The machine is restructuring your leg so don't move”. She did not look my way once. Her blonde hair, hiding a couple of greys, ended just above her shoulders, a straight clean cut, not a stray hair in sight. She looked familiar, but I couldn't remember much from before I arrived here. Not here as in right now, here meaning The Complex. Human contact hadn't happened for me within the past 8 years, not a single word had slipped out of my mouth. How do I even sound, I thought to myself. I observed mutely as she swivelled and slid across the room

to my leg. Lifting the huge machine away from me, a pale ghastly looking limb was revealed. A long scar travelled from the back of my calf and curled around my shin.

“That should be all for now, looks as good as new – nearly”.

She slid over to my drip, attaching an IV bag filled with a yellowy substance. The thick liquid drained out through the tube and into the canula attached to my hand. Looking up, I caught her grey eyes, filled with sorrow yet with a certain hardness in them too.

The last words I heard were “be brave” as the world slipped from my grasp once again.

Unknown

“Put me in the fucking experiment then, go on!” she screamed pacing up and down the room, gripping at the base of her hair. “You are killing innocent children here, innocent girls” she snarled through gritted teeth. She wanted to grab him, wrap her hands around his neck and watch the light fade from his eyes. He did not deserve to be operating this facility, a man of all beings. The reason for our demise.

“It was one kid”, the deeper voice responded. “One shitty little girl, she wasn’t needed anyway, her scores were way too low. She never would have been needed or made it. If anything, we put her out of her misery”. A pause as silence filled the room for minutes which felt like hours. He continued typing away at the report, unfazed by her anger. “If anything, we have protected her from the dangers of the world, she would’ve been a target, taken by God knows who and could have had worse things done to her than what has been done here. Much worse things than death.”

“Worse things than death?!” the woman retorted. “We have- we put her through so much, but no more, for none of them. We’re letting the girls go. What has happened to you wanting to help save humanity?” Her voice was calm now masking the rage building up inside her.

His reply, dull and monotonous: “Fuck humanity”.

And that’s when she knew, there was no help for them.

That’s when she knew, it was time for change.

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Imagination. The one thing that could keep a person going in a place like this. Dreams, or were they memories, who knows. As I slept, they filled my mind. A woman, who I assumed to be my mother came into mind. Holding me, a young toddler of four or five in her arms shielding my head. The uproar of the community as gloved hands tried to grab me from her arms. She holds on even tighter. Peeking out from her neck, I see that over her shoulder there's a boy. My brother? Watching as tears stream down his face, his brow furrowed with fear as a man stands near him. His eyes piercing into the back of mother's skull. Snow begins to fall as we walk into an enclosure, barbed wire lining the top of the fence. We walk further and further away from my brother. We come to a standstill, her arms still wrapped tightly around me, trying to protect me. I see the man lift his arm, a glint of silver metal reflecting the bright white lights, it slices through the wind, glinting and gleaming. A singular shot fired. Towards us. I feel the impact of it through the back of the woman's head, she shudders and falls to the ground, crushing me with her body. Red liquid splatters against my forehead as I lie underneath her, frozen by the shock of what has happened. Her warmth slowly slipping away. I don't know how long I stay there for, but the silence turns into sounds of jubilation as the men move on; their whoops and cries echoing in the distance, moving further and further away. I lie there dazed, until a pair of hands pulls me from beneath my mother's body and drags me back to consciousness.

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Sirens go off, back to reality.

The robotic voice screaming "DANGER! DANGER! RED ALERT! UNIT HAS BEEN BREACHED!"

There was pounding on the door as shrieks, howls and shouts reverberated throughout The Complex. Finally, the door gave way. In ran the woman who was here earlier, tearing the IV from my arms and hoisting me up onto my feet. Looking around dazed and alarmed, she said something to me, but the noise was too loud for me to hear what she said. Grabbing my arm, she dragged me out of the room, back into the darkness of the corridor. Picking up speed, we wove our way through the maze-like hallways until we reached what looked like the centre of the whole place, a round, domed room with many corridors leading into it. The desolate room was empty with old, rusted pipes hanging from the walls and ceiling, wires dangling down, accompanied by vines. A rope ladder hung from the centre, swaying gently, leading up to a lone hatch in a glass roof that was covered with moss and algae.

More girls emerged from the other exits, entrances, doorways, whatever they were. Eleven others, I think I counted. I watched them peer around the corners checking to see if the coast was clear. It wasn't. From the remaining empty entrances emerged the creature I had faced days ago... but this time there was four of them. All creeping in unison, one step at a time, crouched in a predator's stance ready to pounce.

A girl made a run for the ladder, grabbing the first rung, lifting a foot to climb, but she wasn't fast enough. The first creature reached her, then the second and third, then the fourth, tearing at her limbs, separating from each other as blood soaked the floors, creating a little pool in the centre of the room.

Stupid girl, I thought.

Whilst the creatures were preoccupied with their meal, metal pipes were being grabbed by the girls, who distributed them quietly. The Doc just watched, pulling a gun and bullets from her back pocket. Looking me in the eyes, she gave me a nod. If anyone was going to be faster than the Beasts, it would be her. Creeping through the shadows at the edge of the room, she separated herself from the girls. Then, raising the gun in the air, she let out a shot that penetrated the glass above, creating a shower of silver specks that let in a beam of light. She pivoted and disappeared down one of the passages, the creatures following hot on her trail. A moment passed and I ran for the ladder, keeping vigilant of the people and things around me. Climbing as steadily and fast as possible, I reached the top, fighting with all my strength to open the hatch. A shriek rang from below as another girl was taken out, her body flying across the cement flooring, head colliding with the wall. The crack of her skull the last thing I heard before the hatch opened and a hand reached down. A moment of hesitation, before I grabbed it and pulled myself up.

Either that or die with them down there.

Wasn't much of a choice.

Up I went, out into what I thought was the world.