East County Abode for the Criminally Insane

Smoke curled up in front of my eyes from the stub of my last cigarette. I held the smoke in my lungs as long as I could, and then I let it out in one huge wave of broiling gray. It gradually dispersed into the air of the break room. It settled over the uncomfortable plastic chairs and masked for a few moments the smell of air freshener the janitors use that smells like sweet rotting lemons. Goddam I hated that fucking smell.

Time passed and my fag burned down to a nub that I couldn’t take another drag off. Couple of minutes after that and Stevens walked in and sat down beside me.

“How’s it going with the nut rehabilitation?” I asked, hoping something interesting might have happened today.

Stevens settled further into the chair and cracked open the can of beer he bought from the vending machine. We weren’t supposed to drink on the job out here. Anyone who gave half a shit didn’t check up on the place though. Didn’t want to get their prissy fucking hands dirty with the shitlsingers we had out here. Stevens took a long drag on his beer, I waited patient like for him to come up for air.

“We got BURP, ‘scuse me, we got another one going to be heading your way soon Doc.” He said.

“Oh really? What’s this lucky feller’s name then?”

“Scuffer named Mickey Peterson, gave the guys up at the prison a lot of trouble so they sent him down here.”

“Yeah, yeah, think I recall you telling me ‘bout him before, but I thought you had him handled with the sedatives?”

“We did, stupid bastard tried to get back into the prisons or some shit. Near choked another loony to death with his robe tie.”

“I see, I see, another one too proud to break.”

“That’s where you come in Doc.”

“Indeed it is Stevie, in-fuckin’-deed it is.”

Me and Stevens talked for a little while longer afore he left, bought me a beer before he did. Nice of him, I suppose. The stuff tasted like someone pissing in my mouth, except cold and fizzy. It did fuck all to take the edge off. I’m gonna need to buy another couple packs of cigarettes when I get off today.

I walked back to the surgical room and started putting on my gloves. Stevens was calling in the patient now, and I needed a little bit of time to get ready. Took a quick bird bath in the sink. Disinfected everything I could. Slapped on all my scrubs and made sure the straps on the chair were all dandy. Then I waited for a couple minutes sitting in the chair myself, till I heard wheels and feet coming up the hall. I got up and dusted myself off. Took up position behind the chair while they wheeled him in. Mickey looked angry, probably would be too someone came up on me while I was tryin’ to sleep and stuck a needle in my ass. I helped get him all strapped in to the chair. Then I got the razor and the cream and started shaving him bald headed. Hair gets in the way of stuff like this. Took me a little while to check his head over, make sure it was all good, no irregularities or nothing. Took out my little permanent marker and sketched a line for cutting. Then I got the little electric powered bonesaw from one of the aides. Five minutes is all it took to get his cap off. Set if off to the side in the sink. Check the meat for any irregularities. Found none. One of the aides got the honors of grabbing the brain out while I snip the stalk and fit the compact electro stim into place. It'a a real clever little thing. Enough stimulation to keep all the stuff working. Keep it all nice and fresh for the donors. By the time I finished with that the think meat is already in the bell jar. Oxygen, and whatever else it needed, feeds into the jar. They loaded the cart back up and wheeled it off. I reached for my cigarette pack, empty, son of a bitch. Took my scrubs off and tossed ‘em in the pile to clean. I take a look at the paperwork I'm gonna be filling out for this one. Says he's slated for another one of the government semi-manned aircraft showing up all over these days. I scoop up the paperwork and head into my office. Maybe I left some smokes in there to take this goddam edge off.