

Sorry for the delay, I completely forgot it was Wednesday then wrote this yesterday and just didn't get around to sending it out. I don't know why I've been writing them so fast the past few times, but I'm cool with it. Only five more to go now, it's been a great exercise and I plan to keep it going in some way after it's done. Happy Friday to all and please enjoy!

Life

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The time ticked in the same melodic tone as always, yet with each flick of the second hand it seemed like life was speeding up around me. What did they want? Was that the test, determine what it was they were looking for me to do? I glanced around the stone gray room, it couldn't be more than sixty-five degrees, maybe sixty-seven if one was being generous. There were three tables, one had a chess board, set and ready to go, the other had a box of children's blocks and Legos, and the third simply had a pencil and a legal pad.

People are idiots, searching the universe for other life. It was like Stephen Hawking once said, if they're out there, perhaps we should leave them be. Looks like he was right, but who *really* thought any "little green men" we found would come in peace. Humanity was so diluted by the thought of simply knowing, many forgot that knowing may cost us the lives we so dearly wanted to understand the purpose of.

I looked up at the ceiling where the clock sat comfortably in the middle, staring down ominously like the eye of Sauron. It reminded me of grade school, a simple black and white circle with a red second hand that bullied you into staying in your seat until the day was over. Teasing you into searching for answers to questions you honestly don't give a shit about. Maybe that was the test, maybe they were trying to break us down to a more primitive time and see what our reaction was.

When they'd first made contact the world may as well have gone to hell. The religious nuts lost what little shred of mind they'd still had, some said it was God showing them the way to a new haven and that these were the angels brought to enforce his judgment on the sinners. While others just couldn't deal with the fact that their holy savior was basically proven to not be there. Even faith has a hard time fighting what men and women can see with their own two eyes.

On the other side of the good God-fearing Catholics, Christians, Muslims, take your pick, were the scientists. They wanted to meet these new life forms. They had big ideas on ways we could benefit each other with our technologies and ideas. What a simple and human idea. These life forms came from the stars already, what could we possibly offer them in the way of technology?

It was as it is with every other advanced society meeting a more primitive one, they wanted our resources, nothing more, nothing less. What those resources are, however, is still to be determined. There is something unique in humans, something inside of us that makes us different than them. Something that makes us valuable.

And here I sit, in what we now call the testing rooms. They sprang up remarkably fast all over the Earth. Very few have escaped and lived to tell what they saw, and most stories are nothing more than urban legends. I know that now as I sit in the facility myself. I think they're looking for intelligence, maybe they take the smartest of us somewhere else. Whatever it is, I feel like my time is running out.

I walk over to the chessboard and the second hand's ticking rattles my eardrums, it might be getting louder, but I think my mind may just be getting quieter. The alternating blue and bright yellow of the squares on the board are disorienting, but, of course, I'm sure that's the point. Two kings stare at

each other from behind their rows of pawns, protected for the time being, or so they think. Like the ignorant humans, though, they don't know a simple tap of my little finger and they both fall over. It's the way of the world.

After I knock the kings down it's time to move to the block and Lego table. One small box of blocks, one small box of Lego's, together enough pieces to build a little house. Maybe a car or an airplane if there are wheels. I rip open each and dump them on the table, the noise of them hitting the metal top momentarily drowns out the vicious ticking of the clock and threatens to burst my eardrums with sensory overload. I stare down at the table once the pieces have fallen as they may. It's perfect chaos on a table, like the world outside these walls, broken and confused.

Now to the last table. I don't know where they're watching me from, there's no interrogation window, though, one would seemingly fit perfectly on the wall behind me. There's also no visible camera's, but I know they're watching. I can feel eyes on me like a caged animal that sleeps in the zoo.

I grab the pen and smirk at the yellow pad below. The word *legal* seems to be a perfect irony to this whole surreal situation. Today, in this new time of space travel and godlessness, there is no such thing as law. I don't know what it is they want, maybe a drawing that represents my emotional state. Or could it be a letter to those that I love telling them what's become of me? Doesn't matter, the ticking of the second hand seems slower than ever but bangs on my ears like a bass drum at a loud concert. With one quick motion, I scribble down two words and drop the pen.

I grab the legal pad and throw it face up, dead center underneath the clock that's staring down at the floor and attacking my mind. I'll just sit and wait until they read it, my testing is over. I think it should only be a matter of time before I'm killed or retrieved, or whatever. But I'll go out smiling as human as I came in and they'll know that when they read those two words, "*Fuck You.*"