

Control Experiment

Porter stood with James behind her, and held her gun at the ready as Blondie scanned the area for signs of monsters. Walking around the city, Porter found that James' description of the strange city was true. It was a maze and the city itself was in ruins. They looked for new shelter to hide from the monsters, but also to find answers on why trauma was so attractive to them.

“Blondie...it’s getting dark. Did you find anything yet?” I asked, I really didn’t like the feel of the city. It felt like a coffin, and so far it seemed like we were alone in it. That couldn’t be the case, after all James showed up and then there was the hospital staff and patients they were treating. How could they have found no one yet, since there were so many people around just the other night. Unless...

“Blondie, how long have you been here?”

She continued to look around and as she spotted a target place, answered calmly. “About two weeks.

Why?”

“Why did you come here?” I asked, feeling like I was onto something with at least one of the hundreds of questions this place dredged up.

“Intel told me to. I was to set up a location for living for the time being, so I did. You just happened to show up in the same place.”

Looking around, Blondie tapped the tattoo on the back of her neck and then did the same to her wrists. Approaching a building that looked less dilapidated than the others, she exposed herself from the corner we were hiding behind.

“What’s she doing? Is she trying to get killed?” James asked, more to himself than to me.

I wondered the same thing but, it seemed she found something useful about the building she approached, so I nudged James to follow.

Blondie laid her hands against the metal front door and pushed it off the hinges with barely any effort at all. A crippling stench crept into the air, truly gag worthy.

Able to smell the stench from where I was, I grabbed James by the arm and dragged him behind me. I knew that smell, and now I knew why Blondie chose this place.

Following her inside, James covered his mouth and nose, the stench hitting him hard.

“What did you find interesting about this building...besides the fact that it smells like a corpse.” I asked, trying to fan the air away and failing.

“Put your weapon away, you won’t need it here. James, stay close and try not to faint.”

Blondie directed as she set the door back up and stretched the metal so it clamped back into place. Looking around in silence, I watched the light disappear from beneath the door completely and the dark descend again. Looking back to Blondie, I found James’ other observation was true as well. I could see him and Blondie perfectly despite the pitch black setting. A flight of stairs led to the upper floor and hopefully to some more answers.

At the top of the stairs now, we looked into various rooms for one to set up in. Blondie and I both searched but it was James who struck gold. He let out a squeal of disgust and surprise when he stumbled upon the source of the stench, literally. Pushing himself up, he swooned dizzily at the stench, having tripped and fallen right on top of it. “I thought I said no fainting.” Blondie scolded, dragging James off the pile of degraded corpses and out to the hallway for fresher air.

“Leave him alone Blondie. He just got dizzy from the smell...we better avoid this room too if we want to avoid losing our wits like James did.” I chided, following them both out the door and closing it behind me. “...besides there's more of those monsters on the street again and-”

An ear-piercing scream caught our attention and chilled my blood when I ran to the room across from us where it sounded closest to. Someone was running down the maze like street, they glowed blue from their chest and the back of their head. Panting heavily, they looked around for an escape as the wind up toy sound returned and the dark monsters returned. Cornered by a lack of direction, the person turned into the monster's lunge at them. The screams became more and more muffled as more monsters showed up, and even more blue was exposed. The sound of limbs being ripped off, a nightmare sound that I suddenly was happy James wasn't conscious to witness.

“Is that what happened to the other people that were here?” Blondie questioned, arriving shortly after I had and watching in fascinated terror of the scene of monsters feasting on the person below.

“The hell was that?” I wondered aloud, turning and seeing James start to stir. “That blue glow...that’s like what’s inside you and James, Porter. You think maybe that person down there was one of you?”

Blondie asked, interested in my answer and conspicuously surprised by my agitation.

“What?”

“Nothing...let's just rest for now, when it's light again we can explore that mess on the street...and

Blondie?” I started, sitting down beneath the window and watching her sit beside me. “Yeah?”

“You try to make me any part of your own experiment and I'll shoot you. I'm sure you won't be coming back from it.”

Blondie looked at me astounded that I would suggest such a thing before speaking, “How am I supposed to collect your debt if I do that?” her eyes wandered to James as she spoke, and she stared at him. “Blondie...not him either. We need him still. Just go to sleep, I know you've got to be tired after the last few days of no sleep.”

Exploration

Awakening in the dark and horrifically foul smelling hallway of the derelict building filled with corpses, James glimpsed the light returning and heard the whine of broken mechanical toys beginning to diminish once more. The air was truly gag worthy as he stumbled to his feet and looked around himself for signs of any monsters still lingering. Thankfully, Blondie's plan worked and not a single creature seemed to have been through. He found a set of concrete stairs and descended them, possessed by curiosity.

I took the stairs cautiously, not telling what horror shows could appear now. It was safe for now though...hopefully safe enough to try and enjoy a few moments of peace. Leaning against the exit door, I was actually surprised by how easily it opened and walked out into the warm and lit alleyway. The first real breath of relief since all this started was blissful, so I took another and imagined myself millions away from the nightmare. Home again, nestled in my dorm chair and napping, safe and secure of my surroundings.

I was enjoying myself so of course it wasn't meant to last. I close my eyes for a second and the next thing I know, I'm twirled and eating building brick wall. Just what I wanted, a migraine and mouthful of blood...*great*.

"The experiment looks to be progressing smoothly with this specimen."

"We should make a quick examination to be sure. The last one hasn't progressed as far as I would have hoped she would when she was examined. Another waste of resources, and ultimately unsuccessful sample."

What? What's going on? What are they talking about? Experiments? Specimens?

I could hear who was speaking but, whenever I tried to turn and see who it was, I was held tighter against the wall. Looking as far behind me as I could, I spotted the shape of a person...their shadow maybe?

I didn't get much time to figure it out, because in the next instant I felt a burning pain dragging down my spine and sending my body into instant shock.