

Case Number A713N

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An interrogation scene between a detective and an unidentified "criminal".

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Case Number A713N

BERT

Okay, case number A713N. (turns on recorder) Please state your name.

JOHN

I do not have one.

BERT

You don't have one?

JOHN

No.

BERT

You don't have a name?

JOHN

No.

BERT

No identity at all?

JOHN

None.

BERT

Goddammit. Okay, fine. I'm going to call you John. When I say "John", you respond. Is that clear?

JOHN

Yes.

BERT

Good. Okay, John. Can you tell me why you were in the Youngstown Public Library after hours this evening?

JOHN

I was reading.

BERT

Okay... John. Do you not understand the concept of hours of operation?

JOHN

I do.

BERT

You do? Well, that seems a little strange to me, seeing as how you broke into city property and proceeded to vandalize the facility.

JOHN

I did not vandalize anything. I was merely trying to acquire your attention, and seeing as how our time is limited, I did not want to wait.

BERT

Well, you have my attention, John. And what exactly do you mean "our time is limited"?

JOHN

Precisely what I said. We are running out of time.

BERT

I don't... John. Are you making some sort of a threat?

JOHN

A promise, rather.

BERT

A promise? John, what exactly are you "promising" me?

JOHN

Nothing. It's a promise to all of you.

BERT

All of who? Are you making a threat to YPD? That, sir is a felony offense.

JOHN

No. I'm making a promise to your planet.

BERT

My planet? Ah, shit. (picks up recorder) case number A713N is mentally unstable, no further questioning necessary (turns off recorder).

JOHN

Are we alone?

BERT

Pardon?

JOHN

Are we alone?

BERT

Yeah. Why you ask?

JOHN

No one is monitoring our conversation?

BERT

No. Trust me, it's no longer necessary.

JOHN

Good. I have something to tell you. Something you will want to hear.

BERT

Look, John - nothing you can say is going to help. We're done here.

JOHN

Then what is the harm?

BERT

Okay, fine. (picks up recorder, tries to turn it on). This, piece of shit. Battery must be dead.

JOHN

It isn't. I have disabled the device.

BERT

Excuse me?

JOHN

I have disabled it using telekinesis.

BERT

Okay, John - with all due respect you're a few screws short of a toolbox and I've got better things to do then... AHHH! (feels electric shock from recorder) What the fuck is wrong with this thing?

JOHN

Do you believe me now?

BERT

(Long pause, stare) What the.... did you do that?

JOHN

Perhaps. Have I your attention now?

BERT

Yeah. Full.

JOHN

Splendid. Detective Ferguson, I regret to inform you that your entire planet is scheduled to be decimated at approximately 6:33 a.m. eastern standard time.

BERT

(Long pause, stare) Wow.... woooooow... well, thank GOODNESS you told me! I'm so glad that we picked you up! Looks like I saved the planet! All in a days work, right?

JOHN

Detective...

BERT

Listen, John. I don't know what kind of shit you're on, but you need to clean up your life.

JOHN

Detective...

BERT

No, I'm serious. You seem like an articulate guy. Your brain is going to be silly putty - if it already isn't - if you keep this shit up.

JOHN

Detective.

BERT

LET ME FINISH. I've got much more important things to do than listen to some whacked out junky tell me about the end of the world, so shut up and wait here until someone picks you up (gets up to leave).

JOHN

Wouldn't you want to save Charlie?

BERT

(Pauses) What did you say?

JOHN

I said, wouldn't you want to save Charlie?

BERT

How the fuck do you know my son's name?

JOHN

I know a lot more than you would give me credit for, detective.

BERT

Shut up. How do you know his name?

JOHN

Detective...

BERT

(Gets up in John's face) I SAID, HOW DO YOU KNOW HIS NAME?

JOHN

Bert, may I call you Bert?

BERT

What?

JOHN

Your first name, may I refer to you by your first name?

BERT

Sure. Answer my question.

JOHN

I will. Please, stand back - you are making me uncomfortable. There.

BERT

(Sits back down) How do you know my son's name?

JOHN

I know everything about you, Detective Bert Ferguson, age 45, weight 190 pounds, height 5 foot 10 inches. I know that your wife tragically passed due to a 2 and a half year bout with cancer. I know that you are a recovering alcoholic because you blame yourself for not being there when her lungs collapsed, and I know that your son Charlie is the most important thing in the world to you.

BERT

(Stares, horrified) Who are you?

JOHN

Let us say, I am not of your world.

BERT

(Scoffs) John, this isn't funny. I'm going to ask you one more time. Who...

JOHN

Is it so unbelievable?

BERT

What?

JOHN

Is it so unbelievable that perhaps your world isn't the only one out there?

BERT

I mean...

JOHN

Is it so unbelievable that - as many of your people suspect - that you are in fact being watched?

BERT

I, uh...

JOHN

I am here to warn you.

BERT

Why?

JOHN

I was sent here 250 years ago to observe your species. I

took form as one of your own and have been cataloguing data for my people since.

BERT

Cataloguing? What, like a... like a scientist?

JOHN

Precisely.

BERT

(Pulls out flask and takes a drink) Well... why are we going to be killed off?

JOHN

Because you present a threat to our kind.

BERT

Wait... what?

JOHN

Your people are a vicious, warring kind that seek nothing but self-indulgence and power. I have watched your kind kill off innocent animal species, men, women, and children.

BERT

I guess we are a pretty shitty kind. (Takes a drink) So why are warning me?

JOHN

Because. Much like your scientists have made error in observation, I too have made a mistake.

BERT

So you're not perfect?

JOHN

No. And neither are you. But you... you in particular. You show sincere compassion.

BERT

Me?

JOHN

Yes, you. I have been studying you extensively for the past 2 decades and you have presented evidence that regardless of circumstance, you can still provide compassion for those that need it most.

BERT

Mom always said that I had a big heart.

JOHN

I'm sorry?

BERT

Have you never heard that expression before?

JOHN

I'm afraid I haven't.

BERT

A big heart. Y'know, like... someone who likes to spread love.

JOHN

I'm afraid I'm confused by your incorrect anatomical linkage between emotional expression and cardiovascular functioning.

BERT

What the fuck ever. So, is there anything I can do to stop this? By the clock's standard, we've got about half an hour before we're outta here.

JOHN

There is nothing you can do.

BERT

Well then, with all due respect, I've got a son to kiss goodbye.

JOHN

There is one thing.

BERT

What?

JOHN

We share many similar traits, Bert. I too lost my wife, almost a century ago due to illness. And my daughter was vaporized when she tried to stand up for me prior to my deployment to your planet.

BERT

Holy shit. Why?

JOHN

Because this is in fact a suicide mission.

BERT

You mean, you're not getting out of here alive either?

JOHN

I'm afraid not. My government finds me expendable.

BERT

Well, how can we stop this from happening?

JOHN

I have made the necessary arrangements. I will be vaporized as a sacrifice for your kind.

BERT

Wait, what?

JOHN

After investing nearly infinite resources for my mission over these years, my government sees it fit to destroy someone or something to make a statement to our people.

BERT

So you're just going to take a bullet for a planet full of people that you don't know?

JOHN

No. I'm going to take a bullet for you, Bert.

BERT

For me? Why?

JOHN

Because you've just showed me what I have been searching for for over 200 years.

BERT

What?

JOHN

Unbridled curiosity and trust in the unknown.

BERT

That doesn't make any sense at all (lights black out, then flicker back on revealing Bert alone in the interrogation room). What the... ? (He stands, looking around, confused. He looks down at the table, picks up the voice recorder, presses rewind, and deletes the sound file).

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