

The New Face of Security

By

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INT. WHITE ROOM

ZACHARIAH (24) wakes strapped at wrist, ankle, and chest to a gurney. He blinks his way out of sleep as an LCD display mounted above him flicks on.

Security video footage plays on the display of Zachariah entering the lobby of a building. He's wearing a large, bulky coat. As he unzips it appears as though he's tazered. As soon as he stops twitching on the ground a half dozen men in uniform are on top of him.

BLANTON (O.S.)

Zachariah Raines. Welcome back to the world. How do you feel?

ZACHARIAH

Like I was tazered and tackled by a bunch of assholes.

Zachariah looks across the room, blinking hard to focus. BLANTON (30s-40s) is sitting back in the corner of the room on a chair. He's dressed in a well worn suit with hair perfectly slicked back.

BLANTON

Zachariah Raines. 24 years old. Son of Mary and Spencer Raines. Only child. College drop out. Single. No children. No fixed address.

ZACHARIAH

Where am I?

BLANTON

You're being detained for the time being.

ZACHARIAH

Where?

BLANTON

Thankfully we were able to stop you from detonating, Zachariah. My name is Agent Blanton.

ZACHARIAH

Of course. Fucking Homeland Security.

BLANTON

Close enough for our purposes here today.

Blanton rises from the chair and crosses the room to stand next to Zachariah.

BLANTON

We were hoping that you'd be interested in helping us out a bit, Zachariah. Providing us with some basic information. You help us and we'll help you.

Zachariah looks away from the man.

ZACHARIAH

Go to hell.

BLANTON

That's an unfortunate response from a man in your position.

ZACHARIAH

You wanna torture me just go ahead and torture me. I've been waterboarded before. You fuckers got nothin' to scare me with.

BLANTON

Just because you're strapped down to a bed that immediately leads to waterboarding? Is that it?

ZACHARIAH

You make your techniques public, you allow your enemies to study them.

BLANTON

Mona was right. You people don't have any imagination. That's not quite what we had in mind.

A series of pictures of Zachariah snapped from a distance with other individuals flick by on the LCD monitor.

BLANTON

We've already got you on terrorism, attempted murder, and collusion. We know some of the people you've associated with in the past. In fact, some of them are the reason you're here right now. You're a breath away from being forgotten about in some deep hole in Syria if you continue to be uncooperative, Zachariah.

ZACHARIAH

Just do it.

BLANTON

We're not asking for much, you understand. Filling in a few gaps in our information. The names of a few individuals we don't already know.

He punctuates this last line by flicking through several photos of Zachariah with different people. Silence.

BLANTON

Fine. That brings us to this.

A new picture displays on the monitor. It's fairly indistinct. Little more than a shaved patch of skin with a tiny stitched cut surrounded by hair. Zachariah puzzles over the image for a moment.

ZACHARIAH

What is that?

BLANTON

I'm glad you asked. That's your head, Zachariah. We made a tiny incision, drilled a hole through your skull, and made a minor addition.

Zachariah struggles against his restraints.

ZACHARIAH

You were fucking around in my brain? What did you do?

BLANTON

It's nothing to be afraid of, I assure you. Let me show you.

Blanton reaches in to his pocket and produces a small unit that fits in his palm with a dial attached to it. He turns the dial halfway.

Zachariah's body goes rigid momentarily before relaxing flat against the bed. His expression goes completely slack and his eyes roll back in his head. A few small moans of pleasure slip through his parted lips.

BLANTON

See? There's nothing to be afraid of here.

Blanton rolls the dial back down again. Zachariah's slack expression turns in to slitted eyes and a lazy smile.

BLANTON

We've wired an electrode directly in to the pleasure centre of your brain, Zachariah.

Zachariah snaps back to reality at this. His expression turning to terror.

BLANTON

A small amount of electricity stimulates the brain directly creating, what I've been told, are incredibly complex and overwhelming sensations of pleasure.

ZACHARIAH

Jesus Christ! Has this country gone completely fucking crazy?

BLANTON

Let's be clear here, Mr. Raines. You are a terrorist. A domestic terrorist at that. We're taking appropriate measures to protect this country from you and your kind.

ZACHARIAH

Your appropriate measures are the reason my kind exists. Freedom fighters are trying to take back this country. These are exactly the type of things were fighting against. You're a monster.

BLANTON

A monster? That sounds much more like you. Monsters revel in destruction, Zachariah. We prefer-

He turns up the dial. Zachariah has a repeat performance.

BLANTON

Pacification.

Blanton allows the electrode to run a little longer. By the time he dials it back Zachariah is nearly drooling.

BLANTON

There is one very important lesson that terrorism has taught us as a nation; it's not about where you are, it's about how you feel. So tell me, Zachariah. How do you feel?

ZACHARIAH

(dreamily)

Euphoric.

Zachariah pulls out of his stupor and struggles against his restraints again.

ZACHARIAH

You can't do this people. You can't just strip away who they are.

Blanton grabs the chair and pulls it up to sit down beside Zachariah.

BLANTON

We don't have to be enemies.

ZACHARIAH

This is barbaric.

BLANTON

I've done nothing to hurt you and I don't wish to. My objective, my only objective, is to protect my country.

Zachariah spits his response.

ZACHARIAH

Your country.

BLANTON

Our country, Zachariah.

ZACHARIAH

It hasn't been our country for a long time now.

BLANTON

How about thi-

ZACHARIAH

I'm not telling you anything.

BLANTON

And I wasn't going to ask anything. I'd like to try and build some trust between us, Zachariah. Let's pretend for a moment there are no good guys and no bad guys just two guys sitting in a room.

ZACHARIAH

Sure. If we're just two guys in a room and you want trust then get me off this fucking table and send me home.

BLANTON

Well, now we're getting a little ahead of ourselves. It's not entirely unreasonable that you will be sent home after we've spent some time together. In the meantime how about something else?

Blanton holds out the controller in reach of Zachariah's fingers.

ZACHARIAH

I don't want that.

Action belying words he takes the controller anyway.

ZACHARIAH

Take it back.

BLANTON

You keep it for a minute.

Zachariah's thumb trembles at the edge of the dial.

BLANTON

Go ahead.

ZACHARIAH

I don't want to.

BLANTON

Don't you?

Zachariah nudges the dial slightly. He immediately relaxes.

BLANTON

There you go.

Zachariah's speech is slurred and halting.

ZACHARIAH

It's warm.

BLANTON

It's just a start. Turn it up a bit.

He dials it up just slightly.

BLANTON

Don't worry. It won't go higher than you can handle. Open it up.

Zachariah jams the dial with his thumb all the way up to the proverbial eleven. Blanton allows him to squirm on the gurney for a moment. He steals a quick glance at his watch rather than stare at Zachariah.

BLANTON

Okay, dial it down now.

No response. No movement.

BLANTON

Zachariah, bring it back down now.

Zachariah slowly dials it back down. He's little more than a puddle on the table.

BLANTON

There you go. Welcome back.

Zachariah immediately starts to the turn the dial back up again.

BLANTON

Slow down. Relax. You've got it for as long as you want.

He continues to slowly dial it up. He reaches a point where he stops, jams it up momentarily, then rolls it back. He does this several times.

BLANTON

There's one little thing we haven't discussed just yet, Zachariah. It's about the little dial in your hand and the electrode it's attached to in your brain. I'm sure you're feeling it already even if you haven't quite acknowledged it yet. That sensation that you're feeling, your euphoria, it's fairly

BLANTON
addictive. Or so I'm told. They
tell me it rates somewhere on par
with the desire to breath.

Blanton snatches the dial out of Zachariah's hand and dials
it completely back. It takes Zachariah a moment to come out
of it.

BLANTON
I trust you just heard what I said.

ZACHARIAH
You're insane!

BLANTON
I disagree, Mr. Raines.

ZACHARIAH
How can you do this? How can you do
this to your own people?

BLANTON
My own people? Mr. Raines, by your
own admission this hasn't been your
country for quite some time now. If
that's the case then how can you
possibly be one of it's people?

Zachariah starts thrashing against the restraints.

ZACHARIAH
Give it back! Give it back to me!

BLANTON
Calm down. You're just going to
hurt yourself.

ZACHARIAH
Please! Give it to me!

BLANTON
I think we have some things to
discuss, don't you?

ZACHARIAH
Please!

BLANTON
Are you interested in answering so-

ZACHARIAH
I'll tell you anything! Please!
Just give it back!

Blanton turns the dial slightly. Zachariah's agitation melts away. He relaxes and his eyes close.

ZACHARIAH
(dreamily)
More.

BLANTON
Excuse me?

ZACHARIAH
More please.

BLANTON
We'll get there, Zachariah. First,
how about we start with some names?

ZACHARIAH
Okay. Names. Which ones?

BLANTON
Open your eyes and look at the
screen. Who is this woman you're
standing with?

THE END.