

I awoke confused, blinded by darkness, and, most terrifyingly, unable to move.

Where was I?

How did I get here?

My most recent memory was peaceful, sitting on a rock somewhere, gazing into the trees, looking for...looking for, definitely looking for something...beyond that, context eluded me. I didn't know where I was, and I could see nothing that hinted at a location. I had no memory of arriving, nor of anyone, or anything, bringing me here. I wracked my brain, trying desperately to surmise my location, piece together my journey, but I found nothing, no scrap of memory, no hint of an idea, nothing. I knew who I was, what I did for a living, where I lived, my family, where I grew up, but a haze lay about the recent past. I was looking...searching for answers...but I couldn't remember the question, couldn't think what I'd been working on. I waited for my eyes to adjust, hoping for a glimpse of a landmark, a sign, anything at all.

I could hear no sound but my own breathing, see nothing past my eyelids. The darkness and silence were complete, seeming to swallow me.

I was suddenly blinded, no longer by darkness but by light, as powerful bulbs erupted into radiance above and around me. Flashing circles danced across my vision, obscuring my surroundings. As they faded, I saw only stark white. I lay flat on my back, and I found myself completely unable to move. I had no reckoning of how I might be restrained, why I seemed capable of nothing more than breathing and blinking, how I might have arrived here or for what purpose, for what reason. For a time, there were only the blazing lights and featureless white.

He entered, I could not see from where, but he entered, wearing a surgeon's garb, face obscured by mask, wearing glasses and a head covering. In one hand was an object, narrow, glinting, compact. In the other was a second object, small, dull, blunt. He approached, silently, unspeaking, and I incapable of speaking.

His face, near entirely covered and unrecognizable, was nearly level with my own as he drew near, stopping aside my supine form. I realized I must be on some sort of raised platform, but that was all I could deduce. The features I could make out, his eyes, mainly, sparked no burst of recognition, drew forth no memory. His eyes were blue, cold and steely, focused.

He brought the object up, near my face, out of clear sight beneath my chin.

I felt, vaguely, the sensation of the object aside my nose, forcing my eyes to focus, seeing nothing but gleaming metal. Its tip rested at my eye's corner, steady, unflinching.

He raised his other hand, lifting the second object to the first, not quite touching. He said nothing and made no expression.

He tapped one object against the other, once.

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Je qoij wpoka awoijo2qhng23-0

and i thought no more