**Stork Industries**

**By Elfy**

“This is bullshit!” Charlotte exclaimed.

She banged the desk in front of her in frustration. It wasn’t her desk but the desk of the much older editor of the newspaper that Charlotte worked for, Mr. Bloom. She rubbed her face as she tried to get her temper under control.

At 22-years-old, Charlotte was very new to her job as a journalist and she was eager to make her name for herself. Her impatience was doing her no favours though as she was desperate for a big story. Even though she only worked for a small regional newspaper she knew that she could go all the way to one of the big publications, she just needed the big break. That one story that pushed her over the edge and made her nationally recognised.

“Easy, Miss. O’Brien…” The editor said from behind the desk, “This desk would be harder to replace than you.”

Charlotte closed her eyes and took a deep breath. She found it hard to swallow her emotions when it seemed like all her male colleagues were getting the breaks whilst she languished at the bottom doing fluff pieces.

“I just… I just want a proper story.” Charlotte said with forced calmness.

“You get proper stories!” Mr. Bloom replied.

“The local beauty pageant? The story of the stolen horse?” Charlotte replied with a shake of the head, “These aren’t stories!”

“I don’t know what to tell you.” Mr. Bloom shrugged, “The others work bigger stories because they go and find their leads. If you come up with a bigger story you can write it.”

Charlotte held her tongue when she remembered when she had been brand new and sniffed out a story of civic corruption. She had told Mr. Bloom and was shocked a few days later when one of her male colleagues was given the story.

“Just be patient.” Mr. Bloom continued, “You are young and when you take things into your own hands it can be dangerous. Just keep chipping away and your time will come.”

“I’m going for lunch…” Charlotte replied sulkily. She didn’t want to hear what the old editor had to say, what did he know about being young and ambitious? He was the editor for a tiny newspaper out in the middle of nowhere.

Charlotte walked over to her desk in the middle of the newsroom and grabbed her coat and handbag. She wanted to get away to a quiet café where she could calm down and forget about the world. At college her ambition had been praised and encouraged, in the real world she felt like it was a negative and something to be ashamed of.

Walking down the road away from her offices, Charlotte felt like something was a bit amiss. She looked behind her as she walked and saw a woman who seemed far too covered up for the warm conditions. Charlotte wondered if she was being followed.

Charlotte continued down the road until she encountered her favourite lunch spot, a small café on the edge of the busy part of town. The café was never busy and it was the perfect place to go for some sandwiches, coffee and reflection.

“The usual.” Charlotte said with a smile to the young woman behind the counter as she sat down with her newspaper.

Charlotte opened the newspaper, held it in front of her and started reading. She shook her head at both her internal frustration and another day filled with bad news. She started reading a story about disappearing people that had the police stumped but she had to stop halfway through, the grammar was just atrocious. How did these people get jobs?

“Hello.”

Charlotte jumped so hard she nearly knocked the table in front of her over. She dropped the newspaper on to the surface in front of her and with wide eyes realised that the person she had seen earlier was now sat opposite her at the tiny table.

A young woman, maybe in her thirties, who looked like she hadn’t slept in days. She was pale and haggard and reminded Charlotte of a wild animal. The stranger’s wide eyes looked around the small café as if scanning for threats. She looked positively crazy.

“Do… Do I know you?” Charlotte asked haltingly. One of her hands went to her pocket where she had mace on standby. She knew journalism could be a dangerous job but she didn’t expect trouble at lunch time in the middle of a shop.

The mysterious woman didn’t reply. The swivelling eyes had settled on Charlotte and now she was staring a hole through the young journalist, it was as if she was looking into Charlotte’s very soul. She licked her cracked lips but didn’t speak.

Charlotte, getting over the shock of this woman’s appearance, lowered her voice and softened her face. If this woman was crazy and dangerous then surely she would have attacked Charlotte by now. That said, this was still a tricky situation to navigate. Charlotte could still sense the possibility of danger and she could feel adrenaline pumping to prepare for any situation.

“Is everything OK?” The woman behind the counter making the coffee looked over at the only occupied table.

Charlotte looked at the strangers darting eyes and could sense that she was about to run away. Charlotte didn’t want her to leave, there must be a reason this woman followed Charlotte and if she hadn’t attacked her by now Charlotte felt she never would.

“Everything’s fine.” Charlotte smiled. She spoke with a confidence that she didn’t feel, “Could I get another coffee for my friend though.”

The waitress looked a little confused and suspicious but nodded her head as the coffee making machine whirred into life behind her.

“You’ll love the coffee here.” Charlotte said as she folded up the newspaper and put it back in her bag.

The stranger stayed silent still but Charlotte could almost feel the woman relaxing a little. If Charlotte wanted to know why this woman had stalked her down the street she needed her to relax.

“My name’s Charlotte.” Charlotte said warmly, “What’s your name?”

The woman was still voiceless. Just when Charlotte thought she wasn’t going to answer, the stranger muttered something under her breath. It was far too quiet for Charlotte to hear.

“I didn’t catch that.” Charlotte replied as she leaned across the table a little.

“L… L… Laura.” The woman whispered so quietly that it was almost like she hadn’t spoken it at all. It was as if she had just breathed it across the table.

“Nice to meet you Laura.” Charlotte smiled as she leaned back in her seat.

A few seconds later, the waitress arrived and left two steaming cups of coffee at the table. Charlotte thanked the lady and assured her that they wouldn’t need anything else.

Charlotte sipped her coffee before putting it back down. Laura didn’t move.

“You should really try this coffee.” Charlotte said, “Delicious. Authentic too, not any of that chain shop crap.”

Charlotte watched as Laura rather robotically picked the coffee up and drank from it. She made no indication that she either liked or disliked what she was drinking. She kept her eyes on Charlotte the whole time.

“I’m guessing you didn’t follow me here for no reason…” Charlotte prompted.

“You… You’re a journalist?” Laura asked. Again her voice was so low that it took a moment for Charlotte to realise what she had asked.

“I am.” Charlotte replied.

“Can I trust you?” Laura asked. There was a quiet desperation to her voice.

“I’d like to think I’m trustworthy.” Charlotte replied.

Laura bit her lip, she was looking increasingly agitated again. Charlotte took another sip from her drink. This didn’t feel like a dangerous situation any more, this felt more like a desperate situation, Laura needed help.

Charlotte watched as Laura reached into her pocket and pulled out a photograph. She slid it across to Charlotte who looked down at it. The photo was of two people, an adult and a baby. They were outside in a park somewhere and looked very happy. The woman in the photo was clearly Laura but Laura looked very different now, this photo must have been taken years ago.

“Beautiful little girl you’ve got.” Charlotte smiled at Laura as she spoke.

Charlotte was surprised when instead of beaming with pride and happiness, her words caused Laura to look heartbroken and incredibly sad. Charlotte immediately realised she had hit a raw nerve.

“I’m sorry. I had…” Charlotte began.

“No, it’s OK.” Laura said as she took a deep breath and steadied her nerves, “I came to you because I need your help.”

“As a journalist?” Charlotte asked quietly.

“Yes… I just need someone, anyone, to investigate this before it’s too late.” Laura whispered. She looked out the window as if expecting to see someone watching them.

Charlotte had no experience with this level of story. This seemed like either a potentially career making piece of news or this person was completely insane.

“Talk to me.” Charlotte replied, “What’s wrong? How can I help?”

“My daughter.” Laura closed her eyes and a single tear rolled down her cheek, “She was kidnapped and taken to a secret facility.”

She’s crazy, Charlotte thought. Charlotte just nodded to Laura with a sympathetic look on her face.

“I have proof.” Laura continued sensing Charlotte’s scepticism.

Charlotte watched as Laura looked around again, brought out her phone and opened up a video. When she looked at what was playing it looked like it caused her great pain.

“Watch this.” Laura said as she passed the phone over.

Charlotte looked down at the video and it took her a minute to work out what was going on. The small screen showed what looked to be a close up of a bush, it took a second for Charlotte to realise that the person was sitting in a bush and breathing hard as they peered through the branches in front of them.

They appeared to be deep in a forest and as the hand moved a branch Charlotte could see a large warehouse building. It was oddly placed in the middle of a clearing in a forest and just as Charlotte was trying to work out the scale of this building a van parked outside a large metal shutter which opened.

“What’s goi-” Charlotte started.

“Just watch.” Laura replied quickly.

Two men dressed in black climbed out of the front seats and walked around to the back. They opened the door at the back of the van and started gesticulating wildly. It was too far away to make out what they were actually saying and Charlotte squinted at the little screen to try and see what was going on.

Charlotte audibly gasped as she saw a group of people pulled out of the van in chains. Men and women were pushed through the open door and into the factory. The camera was too far away to pick up what they were saying but Charlotte could see that these people were being herded against their will.

“Oh my God!” Charlotte exclaimed as once the adults had been moved she saw the men pull out a bunch of cages.

The camera zoomed in and Charlotte could see little human beings in the cages, most of them crying. Babies had been caged and were being carried into the warehouse that the chained adults had also been placed in.

“What the hell…” Charlotte gasped as the recording ended and Laura took the phone back.

“I followed them.” Laura whispered, “That warehouse or whatever must be full of people they have taken.”

“But… Why?” Charlotte asked with wide eyes.

“I don’t know.” Laura replied, “That’s the closest I can get. My baby is in there, I just know it.”

“You have to tell the police!” Charlotte whispered.

“I tried but they are either in on it or think I’m crazy. They won’t investigate it, even with the video.” Laura replied sadly, “I need you to get it in the media. They would have to investigate then!”

Charlotte’s first thought was to ask if Laura was crazy. Laura wanted her to visit this factory and get a scoop, she was a journalist not a superhero!

“Laura, I-” Charlotte began.

“I can’t trust anyone with this. I only come to you because bringing attention to this thing is my last hope.” Laura replied, “A young reporter like yourself, surely a story like this would be huge for you.”

Charlotte was stopped in her tracks by what the stranger had said. A story like this WOULD be huge for Charlotte, it was exactly the kind of thing she needed to push up to the next level of journalism. Heck, if this thing was legit she could win a Pulitzer Prize or something!

“Alright.” Charlotte said, “I’ll see what I can do. Give me your phone number so I can get in contact.”

Laura looked relieved that someone was taking her seriously and she quickly scribbled her number down on a napkin and handed it to Charlotte.

“Thank you.” Laura said as she stood up, “You have no idea how much this means to me.”

Charlotte smiled up at Laura as she stood and left the café. As quickly as Laura had appeared in Charlotte’s life she vanished again, mixed in with the crowds of excited shoppers.

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Charlotte thought about how to approach this throughout the rest of her shift at work. Her first thought was simply to walk up to the front door and demand to know what was happening but she dismissed that idea almost as soon as it had come to her. It was absurd to think that would get results.

The next idea she had was to try and get herself captured and to pass through the facility to see what was happening inside but, yet again, this was a terrible idea. She had no idea what was going on inside that building and if she ended up getting caught she had no way of knowing she could get out.

Despite the illegality of such a manoeuvre, Charlotte quickly decided that her one option was to try and break in to the facility. It was a risky move but her hope was that if she was caught and discovered to be a journalist that they would let her go.

That is why Charlotte found herself in a bush very similar to the one the video had been filmed in. It was pitch black and in the very early hours of the morning, Charlotte drank the last of her coffee from her thermos flask as she watched the guard making his rounds. She had been watching for hours now and thought she had discovered a way in, a way to shimmy up on to the roof.

Dressed all in black, Charlotte darted out of the bushes as the guard walked around the corner. She estimated that she had about thirty seconds from the moment he disappeared and she sprinted across the opening and up to the side of the building. She did a quick check to make sure her bag, camera and everything else was securely tied to her.

“Come on. You can do this.” Charlotte whispered to herself in the darkness. The glow of a single outside light lit the area Charlotte was in.

Grasping the drainpipe, Charlotte lifted herself up and began to climb as silently as possible. When she was about three quarters of the way up the building she slipped and for a second thought she was going to fall. She regained her grip just in time but was more than dismayed when she saw her cell phone fall out of her pocket and land on the grass at the bottom of the facility.

“Shit…” Charlotte muttered as she looked down at the phone.

There was no time to go and get it or to mourn it’s loss. Charlotte climbed up the last few feet of the tall building and pulled herself over the edge and on to the roof. She panted slightly as she looked over the edge, the building was a lot taller than it looked in the video and she must have been at least three stories up.

After taking a moment to regain her breath, Charlotte stood up and started carefully creeping around the roof looking for an opening to the building. She could feel her heart hammering and she could hardly believe that she was actually doing this. She took photographs of everything she could and took mental notes about her route. This was investigative journalism at its finest, Charlotte thought. Charlotte wanted to remember everything about this to remember it for her book deal and Pulitzer Prize that she was increasingly sure she would get once this was over. Something big was going on here and Charlotte was going to blow it wide open.

Charlotte saw a door that she creeped over to. She pulled the door and was quite shocked when the door opened up straight away, she assumed it would have been locked but she guessed that they didn’t expect anyone to be on the roof like this.

The door opened to a well-lit steel staircase. Charlotte quickly slipped inside and closed the door behind her in case someone saw the light. The building was warmer than it was outside and there was a slight hum as if a great amount of electricity was moving through the building. When the door clicked shut the outside world suddenly seemed a thousand miles away, Charlotte felt like she had just entered enemy territory.

Charlotte tip-toed down the steel staircase. There was a metallic sound with each step that echoed between the narrow walls. The immaculately white painted walls were almost blindingly bright as the lights on the ceiling shined down, it was very unwelcome and Charlotte was forced to shield her eyes as she descended the staircase. It was rather disorientating to say the least.

When Charlotte reached a door halfway down the stairs she pressed her ear up against the solid metal door. There were sounds of mechanical movement from the other side but no sound of any people.

Charlotte gave the door a small push and it opened very slightly. She carefully peered inside to see a dark corridor with doors on either side. Taking her flashlight from her bag, Charlotte flicked it on and started slowly walking down the quiet hallway. The quiet building was very disconcerting, Charlotte had expected a lot more people hanging around. Where were the people she saw being brought in?

“Intake”, “Orders”, “Processing”… The doors that Charlotte walked past were all clearly labelled with expensive looking plaques but nothing seemed out of the ordinary. This looked like the office department of any business, there didn’t seem to be anything unusual about any of this.

Charlotte continued down the hallway looking for anything that was unusual. She wasn’t exactly sure what she was going to see, it wasn’t likely that she would just stumble on all those people or the answer to what was going on. She was just about to retreat to the stairs when she saw a door at the end of the hallways that looked a bit different to the rest of them.

This door was painted a bright red and had the words “No Admittance. Level 5 Only.” stencilled on the door in black. Unlike the other doors, this one had no window on it.

Charlotte walked up to the door and read the brass plaque “Delivery Systems – Drones.”

There was something deeply mysterious about this door that made Charlotte certain that she needed to know what was inside. Unfortunately the door was locked and had a very elaborate locking mechanism, Charlotte wouldn’t be able to get in without a key card.

Frowning, Charlotte walked back to the metal staircase and walked into the blinding light again. She continued walking down into the bowels of the building. There were several doors that led to hallways similar to the first but Charlotte could find nothing of interest down any of them.

The inescapable feeling that the building was swallowing her became stronger as she walked down the stairs until Charlotte was sure she must be underground in some kind of basement. Even the mechanical whirring that she had heard further up appeared to be quieter here. She got the distinct feeling that she was very alone.

Finally, at the bottom of the winding staircase, was yet another door. A door with a very different sign hanging from it, a sign that made Charlotte audibly gasp and put her hand to her mouth.

“Livestock – Holding and Processing.”

The sign made Charlotte freeze for a second as she considered what it could possible mean. Surely they weren’t referring to the people as “livestock”. Charlotte couldn’t think what else they would be talking about and having seen how those people were herded into the building in the video…

“Oh my God.” Charlotte whispered as she considered what this could mean. She shuddered and suddenly felt very out of her depth.

Charlotte gasped and covered her mouth as she suddenly heard a door open and close from above followed by heavy footsteps on the metal stairs.

With nowhere else to go and since she was unsure if the person was coming her way, Charlotte took a deep breath and pushed the door open. Closing it behind her as soon as she was inside she pressed her ear against the door and tried to hear if the footsteps were coming her way. When Charlotte heard a door closing above her she breathed a sigh of relief.

Charlotte turned around to see the room she was in and gasped again. In front of her was a darkened concrete room with a large steel cage in the middle of it. The cage took up a huge portion of the centre of the room and was packed with people. Mostly young adults in their twenties and thirties and a few older people too. They were all in dirty clothes and looked like they had been there a while, the smell was very strong.

There must have been at least two dozen people in the cage and none of them had turned to see Charlotte. She didn’t know if they hadn’t noticed her enter or were just totally apathetic to everything going on around them. Eventually one young man who looked no older than Charlotte looked up and saw her.

“You don’t work here!” The man said in a combination of shock and confusion.

“No… I’m a journalist…” Charlotte replied quietly as she walked forwards with wide eyes, “What’s going on here?”

“I… I don’t know!” The man said as he scrambled to his feet and pushed against the bars, “I was brought here last night. I was out jogging and the next thing I knew I woke up in here. Help us, please!”

Charlotte looked around but saw no way to release the large steel door that was keeping everyone locked in. Charlotte’s mind raced but the most important part was working out what was going on and documenting everything. She could spread the word about this place and be the hero later.

“What are they doing with you?” Charlotte asked as she took pictures.

“I… I don’t know! Just get us out!” The guy responded getting hysterical.

“Listen.” Charlotte said strongly as she indicated that the man should quieten down, “There is no way for me to get you out but if I can figure out what is going on I can get the authorities here really soon. I just need information.”

“I don’t know… All I know is that they come in occasionally and take one us through those door.” The man pointed to the opposite end of the room.

Charlotte nodded and hurried around the other side of the room. There was a big pair of double-doors that were very scuffed, it looked as if the doors had been used a lot and there were signs of struggle and damage all over it.

Charlotte couldn’t hear any sounds through the door so she pushed it open with trepidation and stepped into a dark corridor. She walked down the cold and forbidding hallway until she reached the far end where there were two doors. One of the doors was marked “Boys” and the other was marked “Girls.”

“Don’t leave us!”

The doors behind Charlotte were still open and she turned to see the man she had been talking to before pushed against the bars with a desperate look on his face. Charlotte felt instant sympathy for him and all the others that were trapped in that cell.

“Don’t worry.” Charlotte replied with a weak smile, “I’ll be right back and I’ll get you out.”

Charlotte felt a little like a superhero at this point. She had already decided to forget about a newspaper article, this story could be its own book. The Pulitzer Prize could wait, Charlotte was envisaging the New York Times best seller list now!

With a deep breath to steady her nerves, Charlotte pushed on the door and walked through into the dark room beyond. The only light seemed to be coming from the corridor behind her and it was almost pitch black. Despite her misgivings, Charlotte stepped further inside and strained her eyes to try and see where she was.

With no warning and a loud echoing sound that must have woken up the whole factory, the door Charlotte had walked through slammed shut.

“AH!” Charlotte let out a shrill scream at the unexpected noise as she spun around and ran back to the door.

Charlotte felt along the door but couldn’t feel a handle or any other way to wrench the door open. It was a very smooth surface and the scared journalist couldn’t find any way to open it. She swore under her breath repeatedly as she started panicking.

From somewhere above her, Charlotte heard something like a generator starting up. She looked up at the ceiling just as lights started clicking on along the ceiling. Charlotte had to shield her eyes until they adjusted to the new light level and when she could finally see the door she had been trying to wrench open she saw there was no way to open it from here without a key card. With a shiver of foreboding, Charlotte realised that there was no way back now, she could only move forward.

Turning back to face the room at large was no more welcoming for the young woman as it was empty except for a conveyor belt with a board at the end of it. The belt disappeared through a hole in the wall.

When it didn’t seem like anything else was happening, Charlotte walked slowly forward to examine the conveyor. When she looked through the hole in the wall she saw that it curved out of view with no idea where it led.

Charlotte was just putting her camera to her face to document this strange machine when she felt a sudden push on her back. The shove was strong enough to force the woman on to the conveyor belt which started moving immediately.

“What the hell!” Charlotte screamed as she turned around just in time to see a metallic hand where she had just been standing.

Before Charlotte could process that image or recover her balance she found the conveyor belt going around a corner and taking the hand out of view. It was moving fast enough that Charlotte was unable to scramble back the way she came and when the belt tilted downwards Charlotte tumbled further down.

“No!” The camera that had all of Charlotte’s evidence suddenly slipped out of her grip and it fell to the side of the belt. There goes the evidence she had.

When the belt finally levelled off, Charlotte hit the back of her head on the hard surface below her and was temporarily dazed. She was travelling feet first along the conveyor and before she could regain her senses she saw a much bigger machine in front of her.

“Wait…” Charlotte tried to get off the belt but in her slowed state she was unable to move in time and she was taken into the large machine where the belt finally stopped.

A small door closed behind Charlotte’s head and she was totally encased in the machine with little room to move, there was roughly a couple of feet of room each side of the journalist to move.

“Hel-” Charlotte started calling for help as panic overwhelmed her but she was cut off almost immediately.

A pole rapidly extended down from the top of the machine and quickly pushed a pacifier into Charlotte’s mouth. The latex teat was huge and filled her mouth to effectively silence her. It was strapped to her head by what felt like a leather belt that wrapped around the back of her head.

Charlotte’s eyes flew wide and she breathed heavily as a screen above her head suddenly switched on. What was happening here!?

“Hello!” An overly cheerful young woman was looking at the camera and waving, “You have been selected by Stork Industries to take part in our adoption programme.”

Charlotte tried to hammer on the door by her head to get out of the machine but it wouldn’t budge. She was panicking now, utterly trapped inside whatever was happening and becoming part of the process she was here to investigate. She had so little room to manoeuvre, the machine made her feel like she was in a coffin.

“We are sure you are very excited about the coming opportunity.” The woman on the screen continued with her fake smile, “The chance to make other people very happy. The chance to bring joy to those who will love you.”

Charlotte was left frozen by these terrifying assumptions. She hadn’t volunteered for any of this, none of the people in the cage had volunteered for this. Charlotte felt her mind feeling cloudy and her muscles growing weaker, she was alert but found that resisting was getting harder.

“Right now we are releasing a relaxing gas into the air around you. We know that despite your excitement these can be scary first steps. In a few moments the machine around you will start the process of preparing you for your new life. Stork Industries wishes you the best of luck in all your future endeavours.” The woman on the screen concluded and the screen faded to black with the woman waving and smiling toothily.

After a few moments of silence, Charlotte could hear and feel the machine around her starting to hum and vibrate slightly.

Charlotte wanted to punch her way out of the machine but the gas that was silently surrounding her was forcing the young woman to lay still. Charlotte was a scared spectator to the things that were happening to her and as the vibrating and humming grew more intense she closed her eyes in fear of what might happen.

Charlotte felt her clothes suddenly loosen and when she opened her eyes she was shocked to see her clothes dropping off of her. They had all been cut open, everything from her black sweater to her underwear. She was left completely naked. Her trembling body embarrassingly exposed as the tattered remnants of her clothes fell the ground around her.

A tube opened to the side of Charlotte and she felt a strong suction as her clothes were sucked away. She was left naked and alone inside this scary looking capsule and despite feeling overwhelmingly panicked Charlotte could do nothing except get taken for the ride.

The conveyor belt moved as the end of the capsule nearest Charlotte’s feet opened up. She felt herself moving down the belt before stopping again. Charlotte couldn’t raise her head, she wanted to but her muscles just wouldn’t respond.

“Time to dress you appropriately.” Charlotte heard a strange female voice from by her feet. It sounded almost like an alien, they said the right words but it sounded so strange that they couldn’t possibly have come from a human mouth.

Charlotte felt her legs get lifted up and folded back against the cold metal of the machine. She could feel something cold and stiff holding her legs in that position, she could see a hand, she guessed it was supposed to be a hand at least. The metal claws looked more like the sort of thing you saw in an arcade cabinet than something at the end of an arm.

“What…” Charlotte tried to speak but could barely whisper.

Charlotte felt her legs get lowered but something was different. Instead of the hard rubber conveyor belt she now felt some very soft padding. It was as if someone had placed a small pillow underneath her butt. It was certainly more comfortable than the conveyor at least.

Charlotte still couldn’t see who or what was doing this. Whilst her lower half was outside the tight confines of the machine her upper half was still inside and her view was extremely obstructed.

It was only as Charlotte felt the cushion pulled up between her legs that she realised what it was.

“Stop… What’s going on!?” Charlotte’s strength was slowly started to return but her weak leg kicking wasn’t able to hinder what was happening.

The front of the padded material was pulled up and smoothed over Charlotte’s tummy. It felt bulky and much thicker than the underwear that Charlotte was used to. Any doubt in her mind melted away as it was confirmed what she was being dressed in.

“A diaper!?” Charlotte whined, “No! I don’t want that! Give me proper clothes and let me go!”

If anything could hear the girl’s impassioned claims for freedom they weren’t moved to help as Charlotte heard tapes being pulled. The diaper, there could be little doubt that it was anything else, was pulled tightly around Charlotte’s hips and the young reporter felt the tapes pushed against the front of the diaper.

There was a momentary pause where Charlotte could move slightly and heard a distinct crinkle coming from her crotch. She felt tears prickling her eyes as she fretted about what was going to happen next. For the first time she regretted her natural curiosity, something that had been very useful as a journalist had now become a curse.

Charlotte felt herself being pulled down the conveyor again and finally she emerged fully from the claustrophobic machine.

“What the hell!?” Charlotte exclaimed as her eyes adjusted to the more brightly lit room that she had been pulled into.

The room was a huge nursery. Charlotte had worked in a day care whilst in high school for some extra shopping money and this room was like a giant version of what she had worked in. She could clearly see the changing table, the crib and seemingly endless amounts of toys, teddy bears and other baby paraphernalia. It was surreal to suddenly go from the espionage mission to this setting.

It was then that Charlotte’s eyes fell on the one figure in the room apart from herself. She had to cover her mouth to stop from screaming as she looked up from her horizontal position at what she could only describe as a synthetic human, a machine made to look like a person. It was beyond the uncanny valley.

“Do not struggle.” The machine said in a strange cadence, “You will be dressed appropriately.”

The robot was clearly designed to look female. Its skin was pale and lifeless but it covered a slender and busty body. The face looked down at Charlotte without expression. Its eyes looking dull and tired and its mouth in a seemingly permanent half-smile. It was very creepy.

“W-What are you?” Charlotte asked in horrified fascination.

“I am the Nanny.” Was the stilted response from the figure in front of Charlotte.

“I’m… I’m a journalist!” Charlotte exclaimed, “I’m reporting on this place and I demand to be taken to the owner of this facility… And also to be dressed appropriately!”

“Your former life doesn’t matter now. I will dress you appropriately.” The Nanny replied.

Charlotte watched the robot reach under the table and pull up a piece of clothing that looked very familiar and very alien at the same time. It was a long shirt, pink in colour, with snaps at the bottom. It was yet another item that reminded Charlotte of her time working in a nursery.

“I’m not putting a onesie on.” Charlotte said simply. She tried sitting up for the first time but found that she was still too weak.

“You will be a good girl and wear what you are told.” The Nanny replied simply.

Charlotte wanted to resist and she tried really hard to fight the Nanny which started manipulating her body to put her in the thin onesie. Charlotte was getting increasingly frustrated and angry. Tears fell down her cheek as she blushed at this fresh humiliation. She impotently tried to get her muscles to move but found them to be too weak.

Charlotte found herself being moved around like a doll as the Nanny slipped each of her limbs through the holes and pulled the stretchy material over her head. Charlotte could do little more than scowl at the uncaring machine as it went about its task in a cold and calculating manner.

Once the onesie was on her, Charlotte could feel the snaps between her legs being fastened together. The soft padding of the diaper was pushed up into the journalist’s crotch as the stretchy onesie hugged Charlotte’s body.

The Nanny picked Charlotte up with an ease that surprised the young woman and she was carried over to the large crib. The nanny held Charlotte against her chest in the same way a mother would hold a baby.

Charlotte was gently lowered into the baby bed as she looked around for a way out. Apart from the conveyor belt there was one other door but it looked like it was very securely sealed.

“I’m not supposed to be here!” Charlotte yelled at the robot as it stood up and left Charlotte alone in the bed.

The Nanny didn’t respond. Charlotte watched it press a button that looked like a light switch and a television screen popped out of the wall it was embedded in. Charlotte saw four tubes, one attached to each corner of the screen, they came out of the wall behind the screen and moved over to the crib. Charlotte momentarily forgot her own fear as she watched this incredible machinery in action.

“Hey! Come back!” Charlotte shouted. She had looked away to see Nanny opening the secure door and leaving the room. Charlotte was alone.

The room was silent for a few seconds. Charlotte wondered briefly if this could be a practical joke but it was far too elaborate for that, the technology on display was stunning. Whatever this was, it was a very advanced operation.

Just as Charlotte was about to give up hope on anything happening, the screen suddenly turned on to reveal the same woman from the screen in the machine smiling at her. Charlotte felt an innate hatred of this complete stranger who seemed to mock her suffering with that smile on that face covered in make-up.

“Hello again.” The woman said with enthusiasm, “This room will be your home for a few days to allow you to adjust to your new role. You will receive mental and physical training to prepare you for the next step in your journey. Stork Industries thanks you for volunteering for such a noble cause.”

“What cause!?” Charlotte shouted at the screen uselessly, “I didn’t volunteer for anything! No one here volunteered for this!”

“As you know, Stork Industries supplies couples who wish to have a baby with their own adult baby and you are the latest in a long line of people who have been volunteered into the program. Now get your rest, little one. Tomorrow will be a long day.” The screen switched off as soon as the woman was done talking and the screen was pulled back by its tubes and returned to its original position.

“There’s been a mistake!” Charlotte shouted to no one in particular. She was sobbing now as she still couldn’t move her limbs all that well, “I’m not supposed to be here!”

When the screen had returned to its original position the lights in the nursery began to dim. Soon the room was almost pitch black apart from a little nightlight next to the large crib. On the ceiling were little pictures of stars and moons.

Charlotte sobbed in the dark as she slowly felt her motor functions returning. Soon she was able to stand up in the crib and lean against the bars. The room was very still and very quiet. The only sounds that Charlotte could hear was her own crinkling.

Charlotte rubbed her tear-filled eyes and shouted for help. She yelled into the darkness and hoped that somebody would be able to hear and come to help her. She wasn’t supposed to be here, she hadn’t volunteered for anything, and none of the people in the cage upstairs had volunteered for anything. This was false imprisonment!

“I’m a journalist! Help!” Charlotte shouted. She could feel herself shaking with fear as she pulled on the bars in an attempt to force her way out.

Charlotte tried to use the bars to climb over the restrictive toddler bed but found that the metal bars were far too slippery to climb.

“Let me out!” Charlotte shouted into the darkness.

The anger inside Charlotte started forcing its way to the surface. No one should be allowed to imprison someone like this with no reason. Charlotte was guilty of nothing except for investigative journalism. This “Stork Industries” organisation had no right to imprison her or anyone else.

Like a prisoner of war, Charlotte felt like she had a duty to resist her captors and the first thing that came to mind was to take off these ridiculous baby clothes. She reached down with her hands and unsnapped her onesie. She placed her hands on the tapes of her diaper and was about to pull when the lights suddenly turned on.

Charlotte had to shield her eyes from the sudden bright light and she toppled over backwards on her still unsteady legs. She landed on her puffy bottom with legs splayed obscenely wide open for a second. She had clearly got their attention.

The door that Nanny had disappeared through opened again and the robot marched straight back into the room and towards the crib.

“Settle down, little one.” The Nanny said as it reached the crib.

Charlotte looked up from the crib into its cold, robotic eyes. She felt fear but also anger towards this thing that had kidnapped her. For a second she just stared at the Nanny until she defiantly started reaching down to her diaper again.

Like a flash, the side of the crib dropped and the Nanny reached in. The cold and metallic hands grabbed Charlotte’s wrist before she could process what was happening. She struggled but the robot seemed infinitely more powerful than she was.

“You are being naughty.” The Nanny said with no strain in its voice. It was as if this was no struggle at all for it.

Charlotte found her arms pulled above her head and get strapped down. The leather restraints were around Charlotte’s wrists and were attached at the other end to the bars of the crib.

“Stop it!” Charlotte yelled with a mixture of panic and anger.

Once Charlotte’s wrists were restrained there was nothing that would stop Nanny from grabbing her ankles and restraining them in the same way. Charlotte found herself pinned down to the bed and unable to move any of her limbs a significant amount.

To stop Charlotte’s shouting and screaming the Nanny brought forward a pacifier gag. Charlotte clamped her mouth closed when she realised what was happening. She was determined to resist this unlawful treatment.

“Baby will be quiet.” Nanny said without emotion.

The robot pinched Charlotte’s nose and made it impossible for her to breath. Charlotte struggled for a second before she was forced to open her mouth, as soon as the gap was there Nanny pushed the pacifier into the woman’s mouth and tied the gag around the back of her head.

Charlotte’s voice was completely muffled and her futile attempt at resistance was over before it had even started. What she had hoped to achieve, she wasn’t sure but she knew she was now in a worse position than she had been before.

“If baby is good she gets rewards. If baby is bad she gets punished.” The Nanny said simply. Charlotte watched through eyes swimming with tears as the robot turned and walked away leaving Charlotte tied up and gagged in the her crib.

It was a difficult night. Charlotte found it very hard to relax in such an unusual place whilst being tightly tied down. The thick padding between her legs didn’t help matters either, it all felt so unnatural that she couldn’t relax even when she wanted to. She knew that sleep would be a good idea to give her a chance to be rested if an opportunity to escape came along but she found everything about her current position prevented any rest.

Charlotte must have eventually passed out from exhaustion because the next thing she remembered was waking up to a bright room. As far as she could tell, she was underground and there were no windows to let in any kind of natural light. Instead, the lights in the room seemed to slowly get brighter as if to mimic the sun coming up.

Charlotte opened her eyes and remembered where she was almost immediately. Her wrists and ankles felt a little sore from where they had been rubbing against the leather straps that were holding her down. Charlotte’s jaw was also very sore from being forced slightly open all night. She had never had a less welcome wake up call.

The door to the nursery opened and Charlotte turned her head to see Nanny coming into the room. Charlotte felt that deep sense of dread in the pit of her stomach as she waited for the robot to make its way over to the crib.

“Are you going to be a good girl?” Nanny asked as she stared down at the woman.

Charlotte didn’t respond. She couldn’t talk because of the gag but she didn’t want to nod or shake her head either. She didn’t want to give the robot the satisfaction.

“Are you going to be a good girl?” Nanny repeated in exactly the same voice.

Charlotte knew the Nanny wanted her to nod but the stubbornness that so often helped her when interviewing people was now a hindrance. Despite knowing that it would help her position to just indicate that she would be compliant, Charlotte just couldn’t bring herself to do it.

The Nanny seemingly gave up on waiting for an answer from the young woman. The Nanny reached into the crib and for a second, Charlotte thought that she was going to be let out of the crib anyway. The Nanny took the pacifier and pulled it out of the gag.

Charlotte gratefully flexed the muscles in her mouth as the pacifier was removed.

“I’m a journ-Mmhmm.” Charlotte had started trying to argue again when she was summarily cut off by a clear tube with a teat on the end that was fastened to the gag.

Charlotte felt the tube push into her mouth and just like the pacifier before it she found it was impossible to push out. Charlotte would have sworn in surprise if she had been able to as she followed the tube and found it coming from the Nanny’s chest.

“Mmmm!” Charlotte mumbled around the tube. She watched in revulsion as a stream of white liquid started coming down the clear cylinder.

When the liquid reached the end and started squirting into Charlotte’s mouth, she had no choice but to swallow it down. It was cold milk which was actually quite refreshing to the imprisoned girl. She tried to forget where it was coming from and everything else, Charlotte looked up to the ceiling and just focused on the rhythmic swallowing.

By the time Charlotte had swallowed the last of the milk she felt absolutely full. She felt like her tummy was sloshing around as the milk filled her whole body. The Nanny reached down and pulled the tube out of Charlotte’s mouth and the pacifier was put back in. Charlotte could do little more than moan from the fullness in her tummy.

The Nanny turned around and left the room again. Charlotte watched her go in forced silence as she tried to take in what was happening. Was she being tortured? Were they trying to get information from her?

After quarter of an hour Charlotte was reaching her breaking point. She could feel herself increasingly desperately needing the bathroom. The milk that was still making her feel bloated was now filling her bladder. The diaper between her legs was becoming an increasingly attractive proposition as she felt an urgency developing.

Charlotte was still trying to work out what she was going to do when her body made her mind up for her. With wide eyes and blushing cheeks, Charlotte felt the diaper around her groin suddenly warming and the pressure in her bladder decreasing.

Shaking her head in disbelief, Charlotte tried to tense her muscles and cut the flow of urine but found that she couldn’t do it. Why was she wetting with so little control?

The warmth slowly spread around the padding even after Charlotte’s bladder had finished emptying. A strange tickling warmth spread around the back of the journalist’s diaper and she squirmed slightly in the warm and wet underwear.

Charlotte had no idea how long she had to lay there with the heavy diaper pressing against her skin but it felt like it was at least an hour. She grew increasingly frustrated at being trapped in such a state and angry that she was forced to lay in her own urine like this.

With nothing else to occupy her mind, Charlotte thought back to the video that had played earlier. It had talked about childless couples and people volunteering to help them… Charlotte thought about the diaper and the nursery and slowly started putting two and two together. She was going to be sent to a couple to be a baby!

Charlotte pulled at the restraints again in desperation. She could feel her heart hammering but she knew she had to keep her cool. If she got a chance to escape she had to be ready to take it. Getting emotional wouldn’t help. It wasn’t easy to hold back the panicked tears though.

The door to the nursery opened again and Charlotte turned her head to see Nanny walking across the room in that same slow and deliberate style. Charlotte was trembling slightly as she tried to keep a lid on the impossible combination of thoughts and feelings that were running through her head. The Nanny walked up to the side of the crib and looked down.

“Are you going to be a good girl?” Nanny asked for the third time.

Charlotte paused as her brain fought her heart for the answer to give. Her brain told her that she had to get out of this crib and that meant responding positively to the question. Her heart told her to resist.

“Are you going to be a good girl?” Nanny repeated yet again.

Charlotte closed her eyes and sighed before nodding in a defeated fashion. She felt a tear fall down the side of her face as the Nanny leaned in and took the gag away. Charlotte was grateful to regain her limbs as well when the leather restraints were removed. For the first time in hours she could move.

The Nanny lifted Charlotte out of the crib and over to the changing table. Charlotte could feel the strong arms of the robot wrapped around her. It was almost like being in a harness as Charlotte was unable to push herself away from Nanny’s chest. She felt defeated, like her resistance to this machine was useless. It had already made her wet herself and it was entirely in control of her, Charlotte knew the situation was totally out of her control and she was very scared at where this was all going.

“Be a good girl and you won’t be restrained.” Nanny said as she laid Charlotte down on the changing table.

Charlotte’s body wanted to run but she made herself lay still as the robot pulled the snaps of her pink onesie apart. The material that was tightly stretched over the woman’s body sprung up to reveal the wet diaper underneath.

“Who’s a wet little girl?” Nanny said the sort of things you would say to a baby as you changed their diaper and yet she didn’t say it in that the high pitched sing-song voice you would expect. It was the same emotionless voice that sent chills down Charlotte’s spine.

Charlotte could feel herself turning red as she felt the spongy padding pushed against her body by the robot who was apparently checking the diaper’s condition. Charlotte wondered what purpose there was for this other than humiliation, it was obvious the diaper was wet. It wasn’t like she had much choice as she was tied down in the crib for so long.

Charlotte laid her head back and closed her eyes as the robot’s hands moved up the smooth plastic and pulled the tapes off the front of the diaper. She felt like the Nanny was taking a deliberately long time to do this. Was embarrassment part of the process?

The front of the diaper was lowered and cold air made Charlotte jump as the warm confines were pulled away from her crotch. The room’s normal temperature felt a little chilly after sitting in her warm urine for as long as she had.

“Hey! Careful…” Charlotte exclaimed when Nanny had suddenly begun wiping her private areas with some very cold wet wipes.

Charlotte felt the used diaper pulled away and was saddened, though not surprised, when she watched the robotic caretaker begin to unfold a new diaper. She wanted to fight but remembered that the only thing that would get her was more time restrained and if she wanted to get away from this place she couldn’t be tied down.

The new diaper was slipped underneath Charlotte’s butt and the front pulled up between her legs. The soft and fluffy disposable underwear gently brushed Charlotte as it was pulled up snuggly and taped closed.

The process that made Charlotte blush so much was completed when the onesie was snapped closed again. The diaper was pushed up against her body by the stretchy material and made it impossible for her to forget what she was wearing.

The Nanny lifted Charlotte down from the table and placed her on the floor. Charlotte wobbled slightly and used the changing table to balance herself. Her legs hadn’t been needed or used in a long while and they felt a little weak as she put her weight on them.

“Play nice until lunchtime.” Nanny ordered.

“Wait…” Charlotte half-shouted as the robot began marching towards the exit, “Listen, I don’t know who you guys are or anything about you… Just let me go and I promise that I won’t tell anyone what’s going on here.”

The robot looked at Charlotte for another few seconds before turning towards the doorway again. It seemed entirely unmoved by Charlotte’s rather panicky plea.

“Wait!” Charlotte shouted again. This time the panic she felt was mirrored by her voice, “People will know I’m missing. Let me go or…”

Charlotte had been watching Nanny slowly advance towards her. She thought maybe she was finally persuading her captors to release her. She was shocked when the robot bent down and placed a small latex pacifier into her mouth.

“Little girls should be seen and not heard.” Nanny said as it turned again towards the door.

Charlotte watched the machine turned and leave the room in shock. The door swung closed behind Nanny and the sound of a heavy bolt locked the room behind it. Charlotte looked to the floor next to her and viciously spat out the soother that she had been given.

“Bitch…” Charlotte muttered darkly.

For the first time since she had scaled the building’s outer wall the previous night, Charlotte had an opportunity to take a deep breath and take stock of the situation. She was free to wonder around the room and this was her first chance to really assess the odds of escape.

Charlotte looked around at the room and caught sight of a large mirror that was stood behind the headboard of the crib she had slept in. She waddled her way over to it in curiosity, she had yet to get a good look at herself.

The image in the mirror was weird. It was as if Charlotte recognised herself but the situation was so strange and outlandish that her brain struggled to process it. The pink onesie was stretched tightly over the thick diaper underneath and the little papery edges of the leg bands poked out as an extra, unnecessary reminder as to what she was wearing.

The way Charlotte’s hips and butt stuck out with the padding around her waist made her feel much smaller than she was. Combined with the crinkling sound and the fluffy material between her legs and she could see her resemblance to an infant.

Charlotte also noticed a small black symbol stencilled over the middle of the onesie. She hadn’t taken the time to look before but she now realised the onesie was stamped with a small silhouette of a stork carrying a basket.

It all started making sense. Stork Industries took people and sold them to other people. More specifically, they seemed to take people and treat them as babies before sending them on. Charlotte shuddered as she realised she was basically a pawn in a modern day slave trade. She had to fight the urge to rip everything off of herself, all that would do was bring the Nanny back along with some unwanted punishments. She had to be smart and remain calm.

Charlotte distracted herself from these horrid thoughts by further examining her surroundings. The room was large and mostly empty, the walls and ceiling were all white and very clean. The floor was a black carpet that had a large white rug in the middle. It all looked fairly basic, as if the function of the room far outweighed the need for design.

The area with the conveyor belt that had delivered Charlotte the previous night had a thick steel door that was closed and didn’t budge when Charlotte gave it a push. The most obvious escape route was blocked off.

The walls were full of shelves that had toddler age books and toys all over them. There were no windows and only one other door, the door Nanny used to enter and exit. Charlotte couldn’t even see a vent or anything that she could pry open in some way.

Charlotte walked around the room a little and the only sound she heard was her crinkling diaper. Every step a reminder of her position, slowly she adjusted to the sound and it became a lot less obvious, she didn’t know if that was a good thing or not.

Nothing in the room was of much interest to the young woman. Absolutely everything in there was for a baby from the books to the toys and it had all been scaled up.

Charlotte felt smaller just my virtue of the everything around her being larger, it was eerie to see a rocking horse that was big enough that Charlotte would need some help to get on to it.

“Hello?” Charlotte shouted near the door that the Nanny had left. Her voice echoed slightly in the cavernous room but there was no response. Even when pressing her ear to the door she could hear no noise beyond.

Charlotte waddled back into the centre of the room and looked for something to do. Escape looked impossible at the moment so she needed something to fill her time. She saw the television that had moved to her bed the previous night and walked over to it. With few options that interested her, Charlotte pressed the power button and turned the screen on.

The television sparked to life and the same woman that Charlotte saw yesterday appeared on the screen. Next to her were some options for different sections of video. Was this a touch screen?

Charlotte reached forward and pressed the button labelled “History.” A loading screen appeared briefly before the woman came back.

“Stork Industries was founded ten years ago to provide a service that allowed individuals or couples to experience the joy of parenthood without the need for pregnancy or birth.” The woman’s artificial smile never left her perfectly made-up face.

“Volunteers or people that have been volunteered are brought here and entered into our online catalogue before being sold to our discerning customers.” The woman had a bouncy voice as if this was a great honour for people like Charlotte to be here, “We operate with UN approval and have a history of many happy parents and babies.”

The screen flickered back to the main menu and Charlotte was left with a frown on her face. Did she say the UN? Charlotte re-watched the “History” section again to make sure and the woman on the screen definitely referred to the United Nations.

“That can’t be true… Can it?” Charlotte muttered to herself.

It really was very unfortunate that the young woman was trapped in this seemingly inescapable room because this was clearly a story that would make international headlines. If she ever got the chance to write this article she would become one of the investigative journalist greats.

Distracting herself from the painful thoughts of her future, Charlotte looked back at the screen and pressed a different button. She took a deep breath and began watching the “Training” section. She knew that this would likely inform her of what was about to happen and sometimes the old adage of ignorance is bliss could ring true.

“Training has been honed over years of refinement to a fine craft.” The smiling woman said, “What once took months now only takes days and that is because of our revolutionary subliminal video re-programming. We aim to gently regress the subject in a nurturing environment before sending them on to the customers.”

Charlotte shuddered. So just a few days in this nursery before being shipped off to God knows where. She couldn’t help but shake her head at the “gently regress” statement. If this was gentle, Charlotte didn’t want to see harsh!

There was one button that Charlotte wouldn’t press. There was a button marked “Future” and Charlotte knew that if she saw the woman dispassionately write off her future that she would fall apart. She had to keep everything together to look for a way out.

Charlotte switched the television off and looked around the room again. The crinkling from her waist was very frustrating and distracting, she needed something to do. Anything that might pass some time without her having to dwell on the situation.

After a few minutes of searching, Charlotte found a colouring book and after initially discarding it she picked it back up as the only activity that seemed remotely interesting to her. With no tables or chairs in the room it meant that Charlotte was forced to put the small book on the floor in front of her. She pulled a tub of felt-tip pens over and started colouring without enthusiasm.

In the back of her mind, Charlotte couldn’t help but feel incredibly silly to be laying there like she was but the only alternative she had would be to contemplate what was coming which was a lot worse.

Charlotte had no idea how much time had passed when the door to the nursery suddenly opened again. Charlotte quickly stood up suspiciously and felt the onesie pull her diaper closer to her body. The padding was still clean and dry but Charlotte was aware that her bladder wanted to be emptied. A thought that had been in the back of her mind for a while but she tried to ignore.

A few seconds after the door opened, Nanny came marching into the room in that same slow and deliberate manner. Charlotte immediately jumped to her feet and backed away from the colouring book in a guilty way, she didn’t want anyone or anything get the false impression that she was having a good time.

“Lunch time.” The Nanny announced as it walked straight over to the high chair in the corner of the room and pulled it out into the centre.

Charlotte didn’t respond. She stayed on the spot and eyed the robot with intense suspicion. Her bladder let out another warning that she should find a toilet soon but that was the least of her concerns as the Nanny turned to look at her in expectation with the tray to the high chair up.

“Lunch time.” Nanny repeated as she stared her unblinking eyes at Charlotte.

Charlotte didn’t want to walk towards the Nanny and the high chair, she didn’t want to seem like she was going along with this obscene plan and yet she was very hungry and thirsty. She hadn’t had anything to eat or drink for a long time. She knew that she would be forced into the high chair to be fed one way or another, she had seen that this place had ways of forcing you to do whatever they wanted with you. The question was simply whether Charlotte made it easy for them or not.

“I can feed myself.” Charlotte said defiantly, “I don’t need you or the highchair. Bring me food and I will eat.”

“Don’t be silly.” Nanny responded immediately.

Charlotte felt her eye twitch as she tried to swallow her anger. Suddenly a new idea came to the young journalist.

“Argh!” Charlotte let out a war cry and charged forwards.

To hell with letting this all happen, it was time to fight her way out. Charlotte would take down and destroy this Nanny and any other Nanny they might have. She would destroy everything until this sickening company were forced to send a real human being in. She was a human, not a product to be sold or traded and not a toy to be played with by the rich and powerful.

Charlotte closed her eyes as she drew close to Nanny and prepared for the impact which would surely send them both against the wall in the background. She ran as hard and fast as she could and leapt at the last moment. Charlotte braced herself for impact.

Charlotte felt herself collide with the metal humanoid in front of her. She had hit Nanny directly in the stomach area, however her plan had almost immediately failed. The Nanny barely moved an inch, in fact all that really happened was that Nanny suddenly had Charlotte in her grasp.

“Get off!” Charlotte yelled as the Nanny easily picked the squirming woman up and dropped her in the high chair.

Charlotte felt tears of frustration come to her eyes as she was held down and her wrists and ankles were strapped down to the chair.

With a sigh of despair, Charlotte sobbed and felt her bladder empty into the diaper. The warm urine splashed against the padding and spread quickly as she was tied down with nowhere to go. Charlotte didn’t want it to be obvious what she was doing but it was hard to wet your diaper without it seeming like a big deal.

Whether Nanny knew what Charlotte was doing or not was debateable as it left the nursery briefly and returned with a bowl of food and a baby’s bottle.

By the time Nanny had returned, Charlotte had finished wetting herself and she could feel the wet heat of her urine creeping around the front and back of the padding as it soaked in all of her pee.

Charlotte felt utterly defeated as Nanny placed the meal, if it could be called that, on to the table. The bowl was full of mushy baby food and looked totally unappetising whilst the bottle was full of milk. Charlotte let out a deep and shuddering breath as Nanny dipped the small plastic spoon into the bowl.

“Open up for the airplane.” Nanny said in that same expressionless voice. Clearly whoever built these machines hadn’t mastered emotion.

Charlotte knew that if she resisted she would just be forced to feed in a more humiliating way. With all of her limbs strapped down and knowing that this machine would make her eat one way or another she opened her mouth slowly.

The spoon was upturned in Charlotte’s mouth as soon as she open it and she winced as the bitter taste of the mushy food covered her tongue. With some difficulty she swallowed the food down and as soon as she had done so she felt it replaced by another spoonful of food.

The meal was like a production line as Charlotte was given no respite from the awful tasting baby food. She had no idea what the food was supposed to taste like but whatever it was, it was failing. The closest thing that resembled the taste of this food would have been cardboard.

By the time the feeding was over Charlotte felt like her whole mouth was coated with a layer of the mushy food. She could taste little else except for her horrible lunch.

When Nanny lifted up the bottle of milk, Charlotte eagerly took the latex teat of the bottle in her mouth and began sucking the cold milk into her mouth. She visibly relaxed as she nursed on the baby vessel and the feeling of the baby food being washed away was divine. Charlotte was surprised when she rather suddenly found herself sucking air from the bottle, she had drained the whole bottle very quickly.

Almost as soon as the bottle was emptied it was pulled away from Charlotte’s mouth. She felt a little bloated as the food went down, she was red in the face but her anger had temporarily abated. Of course, her desire to escape hadn’t abated but having a full belly seemed to calm her a little.

“Do you need your diaper changed?” Nanny asked as the restraints were undone.

“No…” Charlotte replied quietly. She let out a little involuntary burp as she climbed down from the chair. She didn’t know where she was going to go but she definitely wanted to put space between her and the robot.

Charlotte had barely taken a single step when she felt a metallic hand grab her arm. She rolled her eyes like an annoyed teenager as she came to a stop.

“Hey!” Charlotte whined loudly.

Nanny reached down with her free hand and pressed Charlotte’s diaper against her crotch. Charlotte winced as the soggy padding was pushed up between her legs and the Nanny assessed the state of the diaper.

Charlotte tried to pull away but the Nanny picked Charlotte up without a word and carried her over to the changing table. The journalist hated the fact that the Nanny wasn’t even talking to her, it was just manipulating her however it wanted and Charlotte was forced to go along with it. There still seemed to be no way to get out and Charlotte was feeling increasingly hopeless.

The onesie was unsnapped and the wet diaper was exposed. The Nanny wasted no time in lowering the front of the diaper and starting the cleaning process. Charlotte didn’t fight it, she just let the Nanny do her job, and at least she would end up in a dry diaper… She could barely believe she was thinking that.

“Time for re-education.” Nanny said as taped up a new diaper around the young woman’s hips.

“Huh?” Charlotte was confused by this. It didn’t seem in keeping with the whole babyish aesthetic.

Charlotte was carried back over to the high chair and sat back down. Before she could work out what was happening she found her legs tied to the chair’s legs. Charlotte’s wrists swiftly followed.

“What’s going on? Stop this!” Charlotte said in a panicked voice.

The Nanny remained silent. She just restrained Charlotte to the chair and turned it to face the television. Charlotte was nervous and that only got worse when Nanny walked behind her. Reaching around from behind, Charlotte saw Nanny’s arm shoving a pacifier into her mouth. Unlike the pacifier that Charlotte spat out, this one was firmly strapped to her head.

Finally, and stopping any and all chances of movement, Charlotte felt a leather strap against her forehead that forced her head back against the chair. It was pulled so tightly that Charlotte was forced to look straight ahead, she was unable to turn her head away from the screen or move a muscle.

The Nanny walked in front of Charlotte and to the television. She switched it on and followed a series of buttons through the many menus until it came to a channel that, for the moment, just showed static.

“Be a good girl and watch the pretty cartoons.” Nanny said.

Nanny turned and left the room. The odd silence descended on Charlotte as she struggled to move a muscle. She could do little more than blink and it was very worrying for her, until you have been tied down in such a way it is impossible to know how vulnerable it feels.

After a minute, the static disappeared and was replaced with a cartoon of talking animals. There didn’t seem anything more to it, it was just a show for babies, something a mother leaves on when she needs some time alone.

It seemed harmless even if after half an hour it was seemingly numbing Charlotte’s brain. There was only so many time she could watch these childish characters sing and dance before it started giving her a headache.

Charlotte tried shouting but found the pacifier made it impossible for her to make any more than a low mumble. She could close her eyes but she couldn’t block out the awful high-pitched voices that rang out from the speakers.

After an indeterminate amount of time, it felt like hours but was probably one hour at most, Charlotte noticed the pictures on the television changed slightly. She noticed occasional flashing, only a frame here and there but just enough for Charlotte to notice.

Time seemed to cease having meaning. Charlotte felt like she was going mad as more and more subtle changes happened on the screen. Was the cartoon changing or was she just going crazy?

The picture and sound seemed to speed up slightly, almost imperceptibly, and then slow down again. A couple of times Charlotte was sure that scenes repeated or were taken from different episodes and seemingly randomly placed in others.

Charlotte had no way of knowing how much time had passed but she did eventually feel her bladder asking to empty. All that milk had to come out sometime and with no sign of her release coming soon Charlotte tried to relax as best she could.

After just a few seconds of relaxing she found her padding getting increasingly wet. She almost surprised herself at how easily she started peeing and she soon found herself sitting in a puddle of her own urine.

As the hot liquid soaked into the diaper around her, Charlotte frowned as it sounded like the cartoon briefly dipped into a foreign language. It wasn’t something she recognised and as soon as she noticed it the cartoon seemed to go back to English. She hated the feeling of not knowing if she was going mad or if this building was trying to play with her mind.

More and more time passed. It had to have been hours by now, or maybe it wasn’t… Time no longer has meaning when you are unable to move a muscle. The cartoons were still playing and they still seemed to change in ways to mess with Charlotte. Sometimes there would be no weirdness for a long time and then suddenly, just as Charlotte questioned her own sanity, it would start again.

It was a long time coming but Charlotte started noticing a full feeling in her bowels. The horrible mush she had eaten that morning, at least she assumed it had been morning, had gone through her system.

Charlotte tried yelling again but obviously could make little more than muffled yelp. Her bowels were cramping strongly and quickly, Charlotte wondered if something in the food was making it harder for her to hold on.

Charlotte couldn’t move her arms or legs but if she wriggled in just the right way she could lift her padded butt off the chair slightly. The thought of trying not to soil herself barely existed in her mind, it felt like it was inevitable at this point. Had the cartoons changed how she thought or had she just given up?

Either way, Charlotte lifted herself up the couple of inches available to her and felt her cheeks blazing red under the gag. She felt her eyes tearing up as the effort of lifting her body up also forced her to push down with her tummy muscles.

As a tear fell from Charlotte’s eye she felt a very sudden spreading warmth in her pants. Unlike when she wet herself previously, this heat was decidedly lumpy and she could feel it solidly spreading throughout the rear of her diaper.

Charlotte felt a strange sense of relief as she pushed the mushy poop out of her body. It felt good physically to not feel the need to go anymore, but it also felt good mentally. She had been worrying about messing her diaper for a long time and now that it was done with the fear of the unknown was gone.

As soon as Charlotte felt like she was done she released her muscles and slipped back down into her own mess. She felt a shiver run down her spine as the soft layer of faeces was squeezed further throughout her padding. As if to complete her ritual humiliation, Charlotte didn’t try to hold her bladder back and she flooded the rapidly filling diaper.

Charlotte wanted to shout for help. She didn’t even care if it was Nanny who came in, she just wanted someone to change her out of diaper that was rapidly stinking up the air around her.

The session still wasn’t over and Charlotte quickly fell back into her daze as she was still in the chair and still watching the cartoon. It was roughly another hour until the cartoon suddenly stopped and it took Charlotte a couple of minutes to realise that this wasn’t time playing another trick on her. The door opened and from the corner of her eye Charlotte could see Nanny walking in.

Finally, Charlotte thought, the end of this horrible and numbing experience. She watched Nanny approach her with an internal smile similar to how a real baby would greet their mother.

“Feeding time.” Nanny said emotionlessly.

Charlotte’s joy faded away and she let out some muffled sobs and saw the robot connect that same tube from where her breast would be to the pacifier attached to Charlotte’s head. Charlotte saw the same white liquid start flowing down the tube and began to fill up the bulb inside her mouth.

Charlotte gave the teat a suck and squeezed it between her tongue and the roof of her mouth. She felt the milk squirt into her mouth and the bulb filled again. Charlotte repeated the procedure and kept on feeding from Nanny. The cool milk did taste nice and she would take any distraction from the television.

By the time the milk stopped filling up the bulb Charlotte was groaning from her full belly. When the tube was pulled out of her pacifier she took a couple of deep breaths and let out a long involuntary burp. She prayed that she would be allowed out of the high chair but was left disappointed when the strange television was turned back on and Nanny left the room. Charlotte didn’t even get her diaper, now feeling cold and itchy, changed.

It was another few hours, Charlotte had no way of knowing how long for sure, before the screen went black. She had spent the last several hours letting the programme wash over her and she just watched it tiredly. Twice more she wet her diaper and she knew that it wouldn’t take much more to cause it to leak, she was surprised it had taken as much punishment as it had.

When Nanny walked into the room again Charlotte didn’t dare hope that this was the end of her time in front of the television. She could barely even remember when it had started, all she could see in her mind were those damn singing animals.

Charlotte felt the straps that held her down get undone one by one and felt relief at being able to move again. Her aching muscles were thankful to be able to move again after so long locked in one position. As she slid forward off the chair she felt gravity pull her heavy diaper down and the tapes looked like they were struggling to hold on to Charlotte’s hips.

Charlotte didn’t get to enjoy her freedom for long as no sooner had she found her feet than she found her being swept off them again. The heavy metal arm reached around her from the front and pushed the messy padding against the young woman’s behind. She barely reacted, she just hoped she was going to be taken out of this horrible diaper.

With surprise, Charlotte realised the Nanny was carrying her out of the door which she had exited several times. The corridor had one door at the other end but Charlotte was carried through a door to the side. It wasn’t the freedom she hoped for, it was a bathroom.

The bathroom was very simple. The room was lined completely by tiles, all of them white. There was no toilet in the room, there was just a large bathtub with shower attachments. To the side of the room there was a sink and mirror. When Charlotte caught a look at herself in the mirror she gasped at how ragged she looked.

Nanny carried Charlotte to the large tub and stood her up in it. Charlotte found her legs were feeling rather weak after not moving for so long but she was happy when Nanny reached forward and pulled the tapes off the diaper. It fell to the bottom of the tub with a loud splat and Charlotte blushed as she looked at the mess she had made, the smell was awful.

“Time to clean you up.” Nanny said as she leant down and balled the diaper up. The machine seemed unperturbed by the smell of Charlotte’s bowel movement.

Charlotte shivered slightly as she stood naked in the tub. She wanted to fightback but she couldn’t make herself do it, she felt too vulnerable and scared. She was so different from the Charlotte that had boldly broken into this facility and she wondered if that was the point of everything that happened. Charlotte didn’t even know how long it had been. Was anyone looking for her? Did they think she had just taken a break? Charlotte wondered how long it would take for people to know she was missing.

“Ah!” Charlotte was brought back to her present position when she felt a sudden blast of lukewarm water hit her.

Charlotte felt the Nanny turn her this way and that as the water washed off the filth that was still stuck to her. She blushed extra hard when she was bent over and the Nanny spread her cheeks to wash her more thoroughly. She murmured complaints of being able to wash herself but these were predictably ignored.

When the showerhead was turned off and replaced, Nanny started running the bath and sat Charlotte down in the tub that quickly started filling.

“I can wash myself…” Charlotte said slightly louder. The empty room caused her voice to echo.

“Let Nanny help to make sure the baby girl is clean.” Nanny replied dismissively.

Charlotte scowled in the tub as the warm water and soap was liberally applied all over her body. The Nanny seemed totally uncaring about Charlotte’s sense of dignity as she felt the hands rubbing all over her body no matter how private the area.

When the bathing was over, Charlotte was lifted out, towelled down and dried. She was prepared to head back to the main room when Nanny stood her in front of the mirror. She was confused and a little humiliated to be standing there completely naked as the Nanny started fiddling with her hair. The robot was seemingly combing Charlotte’s hair as if she were a doll.

It was almost relaxing for the young woman to have her hair groomed like this. She closed her eyes and stopped worrying about what was happening, she just tried to take a moment to relax. She thought back to her friends and family, the people she would see when she escaped. She would escape of course, there was no way this was the rest of her life.

Charlotte remembered her favourite music and favourite TV shows, things she could look forward to. She smiled as she remembered one television show in particular. It was a show set in a small farm and it had these happy little animals who sing songs and…

“No!” Charlotte’s eyes snapped open with her sudden outburst. That damn cartoon was infiltrating her mind.

“But you look very pretty like this.” Nanny replied. Despite all it’s power and control it clearly had no idea what was going on in Charlotte’s mind.

“Wha-” Charlotte was cut off almost as soon as she started when she looked in the mirror and saw Nanny holding up her hair. To be more precise, the Nanny held up two braided pigtails that came out of the side of her head.

“I’m not a little girl!” Charlotte whined as that old fire of annoyance welled up inside her, “I’m an adult with a career…”

“You are a baby girl.” Nanny interrupted.

Charlotte was about to respond when she was turned around and then lifted up by the robot. The cold metal arms caused the woman to shiver a little as she carried back through to the nursery.

Charlotte reached up to feel her new haircut as she was carried over to the changing table and laid down. She cringed at her own infantile appearance as she was placed on her back. As she watched Nanny reach for a new disposable diaper she felt like she should resist in some way, make a desperate break for freedom.

Despite the desire for escape, the crushing hopelessness of Charlotte’s position meant she didn’t move. She didn’t resist as her legs were raised up and lowered, she didn’t resist when the front of the diaper was pulled up snuggly and taped closed and she didn’t resist when she was lowered off the table.

Charlotte stood awkwardly as Nanny pulled a form off the shelf and placed it on the table.

“Come here.” Nanny ordered.

Charlotte sighed and stepped forward. She wasn’t happy but she knew that if she didn’t voluntarily step forward that she would be made to do so one way or another. She waddled forward in the fresh diaper unable to find any silver lining in complying with the order but the thought to resist was never a serious thought.

As Charlotte walked over to the table on shaky legs she noticed her diaper seemed so much louder than before. She wondered whether it was just her imagination or if her newly changed diaper was just much more crinkly. It probably wasn’t helped that she was wearing no clothes over her diaper. Her modesty in this place was non-existent at this point.

“Write your name.” Nanny commanded Charlotte.

Charlotte was confused as she looked down at a blank piece of A4 paper with a pen next to it. Why did Nanny want her to write her name?

With a small shrug of her shoulders, Charlotte picked up the pen and leaned over the table. She put the tip to the paper and then paused.

“Whenever you are ready.” Nanny said as it looked down at the paper.

Charlotte frowned as she tried to remember how to write. She couldn’t explain it, she could see the writing in her mind but she couldn’t make her hand write the letter. She felt panic rising in her body as she failed with this simple task.

“What the hell!?” Charlotte yelled as she threw the pen on to the table, “What have you done to me?”

“Please try again.” Was the only response Charlotte received.

Charlotte took a deep breath as her heart hammered in her chest. She leaned down and picked the pen up again. She stuck her tongue out in concentration when she pressed the pen to the paper.

“Come on…” Charlotte muttered herself as if she was trying to search for the answer to a particularly difficult exam question.

Charlotte started moving the pen on the paper as best as she could and for a few seconds she felt relief wash over her as the pen danced across the paper. She smiled as she wrote her name, she wrote her surname just to show off.

“Easy.” Charlotte said with a wide smile. She wasn’t sure why she was so pleased at being able to write her name but she felt pride swelling despite herself.

Nanny looked down at the paper without response, it’s face as expressionless as it ever was and Charlotte waited for a few seconds to see what was next. It was only when Nanny remained unmoved that she looked down at the sheet herself.

“Wha-… But…” Charlotte looked from the paper to the nanny and back in confusion. This didn’t make sense.

Where Charlotte had thought she had written her signature she saw just a childish scribble, an undecipherable mess of pen lines that could have said anything.

“Write “I love Nanny.”” Nanny said.

Charlotte didn’t care that she was trying to write something she disagreed with or that was embarrassing to her. She tried her hardest to focus on each letter that she needed to put on paper. Yet again, when the pen left the paper she gasped as she saw nothing but a scribble.

“Good effort.” Nanny lied.

“What have you done to me!?” Charlotte screamed. The once proud journalist, someone who prided themselves on their excellent writing skills, now couldn’t form even the simplest of words.

“Re-education is complete.” Nanny responded simply. Charlotte wasn’t even sure if Nanny was replying to her or just stating a fact.

Charlotte thought back to that cartoon she had watched for hours on end, the weird way it messed with her mind. Had it affected her ability to write and communicate? Was it even possible for to have been affected like that? Charlotte looked down at the paper with the childish scribbles and had no other explanation.

Whilst Charlotte was still reeling from this latest revelation she felt herself picked up and gently placed in the crib again. The bars were lifted and she was sealed inside. Charlotte sat dumbly on her padded rear as she tried to take in what was happening, she was in shock. What sort of technology was at work here? How did they get the funding? Who were the customers? Questions chased each other through Charlotte’s head and she wished she was in a position to investigate still.

“Big day for you tomorrow.” Nanny said once the bars were raised and Charlotte was effectively trapped, “Your new life will be beginning soon.”

The words were like a bucket of ice cold water tipped over Charlotte’s head. Tomorrow? She wasn’t ready, she would never be ready!

“No… I need more time!” Charlotte half-shouted. She had to escape. She needed more time to find a way out.

Nanny left the nursery again and Charlotte was stuck in the toddler bed with panic threatening to overwhelm her. Charlotte stood up on to her shaky legs and her first thought was to climb out of the crib. She jumped up and grabbed the horizontal bar running across the top but found it spun in her grip and Charlotte couldn’t maintain her grip.

Charlotte tried bending the vertical bars but found them to be absolutely rock solid. She thought about ripping her diaper off but she knew that would only end with her totally restricted which was the last thing she needed.

“There must be a way…” Charlotte muttered.

Lifting up the ends of the mattress, Charlotte looked for a trap door or something. There was nothing. This crib was harder to escape from than Alcatraz. Charlotte tried to think but found that damn song kept coming to the forefront of her mind.

“Shut up!” Charlotte shouted to herself.

Charlotte put her finger against the mattress and started trying to trace her name. She must be able to do it, she just had to concentrate. The information must be in her mind somewhere.

After a minute of trying to work out how to start, Charlotte began to sob quietly. She tipped over sideways and laid down as she sobbed quietly and begged someone to come and take her home. She felt so weak and defeated, she just wanted to tap out and admit her loss.

“Alright… You win!” Charlotte yelled through her sobs.

Silence.

“Let me go and I won’t tell anyone what I’ve seen here.” Charlotte continued, “I won’t write about anything anymore… I can’t write about anything.”

Silence.

“Please! I’m begging you to let me go.” Charlotte yelled. She was still laying sideways on the mattress and her tears were creating a small wet spot under her head.

When there was still no reaction Charlotte lapsed into silence. The only sounds in the entire room were her sobs and cries.

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At some point Charlotte must have fallen asleep as the next thing she knew she was opening her eyes whilst still in the crib. She had dribbled somewhat whilst asleep and she felt a pain in her neck, she must have slept awkwardly.

The nursery was still empty and quiet, with the lights turned down very low it created a creepy atmosphere. Charlotte had no idea how long she had been asleep nor what time it was now that she had woken up.

Charlotte slowly sat up and felt her hair, still in their pig tails, drop over her shoulder. She rubbed her eyes and heard the crinkling from her waist, there was a small silver lining in that she was still dry. She half-expected her diaper to be used whilst she was asleep, she had no idea how much the television show she had been forced to watch had affected her.

Maybe Charlotte’s movement had caused some motion sensor to trigger but it wasn’t long after she started moving around the crib that the door opened up and let Nanny into the nursery. Charlotte looked at the robot through the bars with trepidation, she feared the Nanny now.

“It’s time to go.” Nanny said as she approached the bars slowly.

“Go? Go where?” Charlotte asked as she pressed herself against the bars of her small prison.

“To your new parents.” Nanny replied simply. Nanny headed over to the wardrobe and picked out some clothes that she placed in the crib.

Charlotte felt herself freeze as the reality of what was happening crashed down on her. This was it, she had failed to escape and now she was going to be taken away. Her mind could hardly comprehend what was happening, there must be some way of stopping this madness.

“I’m… I’m not ready.” Charlotte almost whispered as a couple of bottles full of milk were dropped on to the mattress.

“It has been determined that you are ready.” Nanny replied as if they had run Charlotte’s statistics through a computer and made a determination. Maybe they had done just that, Charlotte thought.

“But… But…” Sheer panic was clouding Charlotte’s mind. She couldn’t get her mouth to work, she was panicking so much that she wasn’t even emotional. It was as if someone had just switched off the emotions inside her.

When Nanny had finished throwing supplies in the crib, she pressed a button and stood back as glass rose up just outside the bars of the toddler bed.

Charlotte’s eyes opened wide as she saw the glass on all sides. It was strong and looked like it would be even tougher to break the bars. When the glass had extended fully a large steel ceiling started descending to the crib. Charlotte hadn’t even seen it hanging from the ceiling before, now she was watching as it dropped lower and lower until it rested on top of the steel crib corners.

“No, no, no!” Charlotte whined when she heard the unmistakeable sound of screwdrivers and surmised that the crib’s roof was now attached to the corner posts. There were small holes dotted throughout the steel ceiling which was letting air in.

Charlotte felt like a rat in a cage as she pressed against all sides of the small box that now enclosed her. She was scared and looked out at Nanny, her enemy, her only hope of stopping this.

“Nanny… I can help you get more people, I can do things for you guys. Please don’t do this…” Charlotte begged as she pushed against the securely fastened ceiling of the crib.

Nanny didn’t respond. Charlotte wasn’t even sure it could hear her although the small holes should allow some of the sound to escape the glass prison at least. Charlotte watched as Nanny pressed another button behind the crib, she jumped when she felt the bed suddenly lifted up slightly.

Some wheels must have been brought out of the corners because Nanny began pushing the crib which moved towards the oft used door. Charlotte was trapped and just along for the ride as she was wheeled out of the nursery like an animal being transported by the zoo.

Charlotte was wheeled past the bathroom and through the door at the other end of the hallway. She looked out the sides of the crib in wonder as she saw a huge room filled with people, mostly in white coats, milling around. Charlotte could see screens with other nurseries very similar to hers on them, she realised that she was just one of many people trapped at this facility.

“Laura!?” Charlotte’s heart stopped when she saw one of the last people she had seen as a free woman.

The woman who had seemed so distressed at the café heard Charlotte and walked over to her. The young journalist could see that Laura was wearing a white coat with the same stork logo that her onesie had. What was she doing here?

“Hello, Charlotte.” Laura said with a thin-lipped smile.

Charlotte felt embarrassed that in a room full of professionals she was naked except for the diaper she had on, at least it was clean.

“What’s going on?” Charlotte asked as she hurried across her crib to stare out at Laura.

“You’ve done very well.” Laura said condescendingly as she looked at her clipboard, “You took to re-education very quickly and are much more obedient than we expected.”

Charlotte blushed. She thought she had resisted but these people clearly disagreed, she wondered what other people did to resist.

“What… What about your child? I’m confused…” Charlotte was still feeling overawed by everything. Was this all some kind of sick prank?

“Come on, Charlotte. You’re smarter than that.” Laura sighed and bent over, “There never was a baby. We don’t ship babies out of here, we aren’t monsters.”

“But you said…” Charlotte was so confused.

“We give the appearance of sending babies out because it helps lure marks to us.” Laura replied, “I lied, the video was faked and this was just my way of getting you to us. It’s how I get paid.”

“Why me?” Charlotte asked. She felt tears welling up in her eyes.

“Young, female, good looking… You fetch a high price in our catalogue.” Laura said, “We already sold you. Some are here months before moving on, apparently your new owners like a bit of fight so they don’t mind you not being fully trained.”

Charlotte didn’t know what to say. She was simply too horrified to really form any coherent response. Her mouth open and closed like a fish but no voice came out.

“Normally we capture random people but we had a very specific need for someone like you. I think I deserve an Oscar for the acting performance I put on.” Laura laughed, “I’m sure my bonus will make up for it.”

“You bitch…” Charlotte said quietly in shock. She had been played from the very beginning.

“We followed you for a week before I ran into you in the coffee shop, we had someone in your office give us information. Then we followed you all the way until you started climbing and our cameras did the work from there. Good luck.” Laura said with a small smile, “Nanny, take her to Departures.”

The crib began rolling again and Charlotte moved along the glass to keep facing Laura until the employee turned away from Charlotte and began examining another set of cameras.

Charlotte looked in the direction she was being pushed and saw a large hangar door partially open and, unless her eyes were playing tricks on her, she saw other cribs being wheeled towards the opening from other places in the vast facility. She was torn between curiosity and terror at what was coming next. It was so much to take in, just a few days ago she was a hot prospect as a journalist, now she was about to be sold as a baby slave. It was too fantastic to seem like it could be reality.

The large doors loomed ever closer until Charlotte was pushed through them and out into a new room. This room was empty except for five other identical cribs. They were being placed on small and slightly raised platforms.

Charlotte was breathing heavily as she was placed in her position. The Nanny had no sooner retracted the wheels to put the crib on the ground than she turned away and headed back through the huge hangar door.

Charlotte looked around at the other people in the other cribs and saw a vast array of emotions. Two of the others, a young man and a slightly older woman looked terrified and hysterical. One was laying down and seemed to be asleep or unconscious and the last one was sucking on a pacifier and looked very calm. Charlotte noticed that this man, probably in his thirties, was in a very wet diaper already.

After Charlotte, three more cribs were wheeled in and placed in the correct positions. These people also seemed rather panicky and disbelieving of what was happening.

The hangar doors closed and left a very eerie atmosphere. The people in the cribs looked like they were making a lot of noise but thanks to the thick glass and small breathing holes it was virtually muted.

There was silence for a few minutes and Charlotte felt a heightened sense of awareness as she looked around at everyone else. This was too surreal for her to have a normal reaction, she was still expecting people to come running in with camcorders and saying that it had been a prank.

With an almighty roar which echoed around the large and almost empty room, Charlotte looked straight up and saw the ceiling far above them sliding open.

“What the hell!?” Charlotte yelled though her voice was lost in the noise.

When the ceiling was opened and the sound died down, Charlotte could see the starry sky above. It must have been the middle of the night and it looked beautiful, Charlotte was able to just appreciate the outside world for a few seconds before she was brought back to reality.

“We hope you have enjoyed your time at Stork Industries.” A voice crackled from the loudspeaker system, “We wish you a happy second babyhood.”

“Fuck you!” Charlotte yelled in impotent rage.

A loud humming noise slowly got louder and louder until Charlotte looked up and saw something she recognised as a drone descending on the cribs. Not just one but one per person. The drones were shaped so as to look like a stork and the idea of a stork delivering a baby was lost on Charlotte who was far too panicked to think about that.

The drones were very large and looked very powerful.

Charlotte winced as one landed on the ceiling of her crib and she heard the same screwdriver sounds which she assumed meant she was attached to the drone. She belatedly realised what was about to happen and her eyes flew wide.

“No!” Charlotte made one last desperate attempt for escape. She pushed and pulled on the bars of the crib with all of her might. She had to get out, this was her last chance. Despite all her efforts there was no movement from the bars, she was utterly trapped.

The humming got suddenly louder and Charlotte watched as the crib nearest her lifted off the floor. The man in the crib looked at Charlotte as if pleading for help before he was lifted up and out of sight.

One by one the cribs were lifted up the shaft and out of sight. Charlotte’s was the second last to go, she felt a shake similar to turbulence as she lifted off the ground and started ascending the concrete shaft and out into a clearing in the forest.

Charlotte looked around in wonder as if hoping there was someone nearby who might be seeing what was happening but in the pitch black darkness she was fairly sure if anyone did look they would write it off as a weather balloon or something.

The crib went higher and higher before starting to move horizontally. Before long, Charlotte had lost sight of the facility and she was completely on her own and naked, except for the diaper, in the flying crib.

It looked like it should be cold but there seemed to be a heating system in the crib that acted as a sort of radiator, she was quite comfortable even without clothes on.

Charlotte had no idea where she was being taken and after an hour or so in the air she started to become restless with just looking at the scenery. She remembered all of the things that Nanny had placed at the foot of the crib thought now was as good of a time as any to see what she had been given.

Charlotte moved the bottles of milk and pacifier out of the way and grabbed the bag that had also been given to her. She emptied it out and the first thing she saw was a small tablet, the screen was turned off and Charlotte was intrigued by it. She pressed the power button and a video started playing very soon afterwards.

“Hello, Charlotte.” Charlotte frowned in anger. It was Laura on the screen, “As you are no doubt aware, you have been sold to another person as a baby. We can now tell you where you will be going and who you will be staying with.”

Charlotte felt her anger rise until she could feel herself shaking.

“The couple that have bought you live in Bremen, Germany.” Laura continued as she read information off a piece of paper, “Paid a high price, you should be very well looked after. They are in their late twenties and have been looking forward to getting a young woman for a while.”

“Germany?” Charlotte repeated in disbelief, “This crib was going all the way to Germany…”

Charlotte didn’t really think about it as she felt her bladder relax and a warm flow of urine was absorbed into the padding between her legs.

“The journey will take some time so you have been given enough supplies to last the whole way. Good luck.” Laura gave the camera one last smile before the screen went blank.

Charlotte placed the screen to the side and looked at what else was in the crib. Some spare diapers, some wipes, a few tins of baby food. Everything a baby would need to be sustained for the journey.

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The sun came up and went back down again whilst Charlotte was over the ocean. She was slowly coming to terms with what was happening but the endless ocean was very boring to look at. It was around midday that her bowels started demanding to be released. This was a moment she had been dreading thanks to the cramped and enclosed space that she was stuck in.

Charlotte waited another hour before she could hold on no longer. She laid flat on her back and raised her legs up in the air. Holding her breath, Charlotte pushed down and felt a solid log of excrement push into the waiting diaper. As soon as it was pushed out it was followed by a couple of smaller lumps that were easier to pass.

Charlotte banged her head on the mattress in frustration as she came to tears for what felt like the hundredth time on this journey. This was hell and she knew her destination would be no better for her.

After a few minutes, Charlotte undid the tapes of the diaper and quickly cleaned herself up. She folded the used padding into a ball and tried to stuff in the corner, out of sight and out of mind. Looking at the other diapers without appetite she smiled to herself as she decided on rebelling in a minor way and staying naked.

Charlotte laid down to sleep and woke up to see sun going down and, in the distance, the sight of land. A sight that thrilled Charlotte as much as it scared her.

Grabbing one of the bottles, Charlotte drained the whole thing in one go to quench her thirst. She followed that up by holding her nose and forcing down the baby food, something that at least filled her stomach.

When Charlotte crossed over on to land again it was very dark and she was sure there was no way anyone would be able to see her again. Another forlorn hope crushed by Stork Industries preparation.

After a few more hours, Charlotte felt her bladder aching for release and knew she wouldn’t be able to hold it for much longer. The diapers that were sitting in the corner furthest away from her seemed more and more tempting as she fought for control.

Eventually it became too much and despite how bad she felt about voluntarily putting a diaper on she knew that wetting the mattress would be a lot more uncomfortable. She opened up one of the diapers and awkwardly taped it on.

It wasn’t a moment too soon either as only seconds after Charlotte had the diaper on she released her bladder and flooded it. A full bladder of urine caused the padding to swell up and by the time she was done she felt soaking wet.

As terrified and panicked as she felt, Charlotte was also very bored with nothing to do but contemplate her future.

“Hello, Charlotte.” Laura’s voice suddenly came from the screen again causing Charlotte to rush over and pick it up.

Charlotte flipped the tablet over and looked at the screen.

“Your journey is fast approaching it’s end. You will soon be with your new family and you will be starting your new journey as a baby.” Laura smiled disarmingly as Charlotte felt the familiar feelings of panic rising again, “Your new family do not speak English and they requested a baby that didn’t speak German.”

“They asked you to be in the dress provided when you arrived and you will be expected to put it on before landing.” Laura continued.

Charlotte looked at the frilly pink dress and shook her head as if Laura could her. There was no way she would put that on, she planned to get away from these Germans as soon as possible, and she certainly didn’t plan on pleasing them.

Soon the screen turned off and just a few moments later, Charlotte noticed the drone was descending. She looked down to see a small town in the darkness. This was it.

Touch down was in the back yard of a large house. The lights were on and almost as soon as the drone touched down, Charlotte saw two people appear at the back door. They looked hopeful and expectant, for all the world like expectant parents about to meet their new baby.

Charlotte pushed up against the bars furthest from the couple that were tentatively coming outside. She suddenly realised she was still naked and wished she had covered up with that dress.

The drone disconnected from the crib and just as quickly as it had landed, it lifted off and headed into the darkness leaving Charlotte alone in the silence and darkness of this German couples back yard.

“Grüße.” The German man walked towards the crib.

“Listen. This is all a mistake.” Charlotte replied quickly, “You have to let me out and take me to the American embassy.”

“Ruhig, klein.” The German man said with a laugh. Charlotte felt him lower the wheels of the cribs and start wheeling Charlotte towards the house.

“Please… Let me out…” Charlotte started crying despite herself.

“Sie riecht.” The German woman said as she held her nose when Charlotte passed into the house, “Du reinigst das.”

“Ja, ja, ja…” The man repeated. He planted a kiss on the German woman as he walked by.

Charlotte didn’t understand anything that was happening and felt completely lost as she was wheeled through the house with the German man talking incessantly despite Charlotte having no idea what he was saying.

The German man smiled at Charlotte like a new father and pushed open a door at the end of a hallway. The crib was wheeled in and Charlotte felt her heart sink. The room was the perfect nursery.

Toys were everywhere, a changing table, a space for the crib that was filled when she was pushed over to it. It would be everything a little girl could dream of.

“I’m… Daddy.” The German said in very broken English, “You… Baby.”

Charlotte started sobbing as the glass panels lowered and Daddy began unscrewing the ceiling of the crib. She knew these people wouldn’t let her go. Unless she could escape herself she was going to be these people’s baby forever.