

The drug simulator

By Jakob Mainz

Why couldn't it just work? Why did he always have to smash it against the wall to make it work? Why is it always necessary to be violent, to make anything work in this odd world?

He bowed and picked up the alarm clock. "Hello!" he yelled, close to the clock. No answer. The voice activation was broken. Of course it was. Now he had to buy a new one, once again. If he was lucky, he might borrow Lisa's. She was still sleeping, and he didn't have the energy to listen to her shouting all over again. He looked around. There. The wastebasket. He considered a moment or two, before he hurled down the alarm clock. It made a short and sharp "flush!", when the decomposer in the bottom of the wastebasket turned the clock into dust.

He felt it. The desire was so strong. He couldn't stand it. That was why he had wanted to get up early. He opened the door to Lisa's room. She was still asleep. Weird. Who could possibly sleep, when someone just threw an alarm clock against the wall? He grabbed his heavy bag and put on his jacket. The loss was too heavy to carry any longer. He slammed the door. On purpose. He really hoped that it had roused Lisa. He was angry. Very angry. And he knew why. He walked down the stairs in deep thoughts. Everything was chaotic on the inside, but only one person was to blame. Himself. It all started back then, when he was just a lad. He was too weak to say no. Some older boys had beat him up, and told him to rob the local mind reader shop. They only did it, because they were bored and needed money. Maybe because it was rumored that it was his uncle who owned the shop. It was also his uncle who invented the electronic controller, which made it possible to control all electronic equipment by voice. Something that he was actually very proud of.

They told him that the consequences would be serious if he refused. So, he had no choice. He could still feel the anger inside, when he thought about these neglected, underdeveloped psychos. In the dark night, he broke into his uncle's shop through the show room window. Right now, he just wanted to be back in the old days, when the windows were not surveillance. So far so good. The evil boys waited outside. He found the safe, and knew that the eye identification would not allow any access. Luckily, he knew the code. Five minutes later, he was ready to leave, with all the money and one mind reader which the boys wanted, so that they could read his mind, to find the code. He was so close to get out, when the alarm started. In 15 seconds the room was filled with smoke, and a red lamp flashed, while a penetrating sound went through the earpiece. Two minutes later he was apprehended by the police. They pointed at him with their stun guns, and he was handcuffed with the electronic stun cuffs.

The judge had no doubt. The punishment was the simulator. It was often used against young criminals. He didn't feel like an outlaw, but that was what he was. The judicial system had changed a lot the last few years. Capital punishment was legal, and new sources of punishment were invented. The simulator was one of them. Few years ago, the politicians wanted to find new ways to scare people to remain law-abiding. Everybody knew, how terrible it was to be a junkie, and the government used that. They created a simulator which could simulate all sorts of horrible scenes. Therefore, it was rather a psychological punishment, than a physical.

He was convicted of burglary. He had heard about the simulator before, but he had never seen it. It was big with lamps, buttons, and nano technology. It was located in a high tower, placed in the middle of the city. The flying cars rushed past the building, and the magnetized trains zoomed above his head when he entered the tower from the escalator side walk accompanied by two police officers. He was told that he was sentenced to 10 years of drug addiction. "That can't be that bad", he thought, but he didn't think about the consequences. He was about to be addicted to drugs the next 10 years.

They put him in a chair, and placed five sticking plasters on his forehead. He was nervous. The police officers pushed a button, and suddenly, he was in a completely new world. There was nothing to see, just a feeling of pure joy. He felt a smile spread all over his face. It felt like someone twisted his brain.

Suddenly he woke up. He was at home. He looked at his alarm clock. It didn't tell him anything. It was broken. He felt like he had been dreaming. He couldn't feel his feet. He looked down. They were still there. What was going on? Was he about to go crazy? He didn't remember anything clearly. Just flashbacks, like he was still dreaming. Maybe he was. He thought about his sister Lisa. He was mad at her. He didn't remember why, but he really hated her. He felt it again. The strong desire. He was dizzy. Sleepy...

He woke up. Looked at the alarm clock. What was wrong with it?! Why couldn't it just work? Why did he always have to smash it against the wall to make it work? Why is it always necessary to be violent to make anything work in this odd world? Now he felt it stronger than ever before. The strong desire. He had to get it, and he had to get it now.

Puppet of the State

By Mathias Markussen

John ran, and he ran fast. It was cold and dark and he could only faintly see the way in front of him. He stopped suddenly and stood and listened. He could hear a pair of feet splash in the tiny puddles and then fast footsteps which became louder and louder. He realized that all hope soon would be gone, and his dream about living a free life seemed increasingly unrealistic. He thought about his dog "Pep", a big slavering Labrador which loved to tear newspapers apart. He kept him hidden in the back of his bunker and decided that he wouldn't give up without fighting for his cause. He looked back and caught a glimpse of the machine-looking armours the humans wore. He looked to the right and saw a door right next to him and quickly went through it. He entered an old and dusty apartment that looked abandoned. John aimed towards a closet and hid in it and hoped that the guards wouldn't see him. He opened the closet door ajar and looked out the chink. He saw the ALO's run past the windows and also a vehicle which was floating in the air. John stood still a couple of minutes ensuring himself that they were gone, and suddenly the door opened and he saw one of the Assembled Law Officers who stepped into the room, and from his pocket he pulled an electronic device. After pressing some buttons a holograph raised from the device and a beam started to scan the room. John didn't know what to do so he just kept as quiet as a mouse and stood completely still.

"He clearly remembered the day where the so-called socialistic party "The Progress Party" gained power. Things changed quite fast. They wiped out the other parties bit by bit and Carrie Clarke, the "TPP" president, was soon the only person you saw on television. She ran the show relentlessly, and soon all jobs were almost taken by robots, and the only opportunity to work was at a state-owned company where your task was to put stuff in boxes. The only purpose of it was to keep some people activated, which led to less insurrections. As a result of that many people stayed home anyway and just sat around and watched TV. Few was chosen to be brainwashed and then educated to ALOs, but that involved letting go of your free will"

The ALO turned around and went out of the door he came from. John was now able to breathe a sigh of relief. He had felt it like the officer had breathed down his neck. He crept out of the closet and walked to the door and looked outside. No one was around. He inched along the walls of the houses and tried to find out where he was and where he should go. He intended to head to the countryside and hopefully find a more peaceful place to live. He stopped suddenly and took off his backpack which he had carried around the whole time. He rummaged his backpack and found what he was looking for: a pair of sunglasses. He came to think about the fact that he had bought them recently on the black market. John put them on and was now able to see a map over the city and his position. In addition to that the glasses contained an infra-red function, which made it a lot easier for him to spot any guards or other impediments.

"John was getting more and more tired of working at the factory, and when he came home he just sat in front of the TV, or fondled with his dog which he against the law had at home. A new law about keeping pets was agreed, it simply unlegalized pets. Pep was everything for him and he was therefore out of his mind. An investigation of animals showed that they didn't react to a restrictive injection and therefore posed a threat to the state. The human-look alike robots came to his house and asked for any pets. He had hidden Pep in a box under his bed, and he had hidden it ever since. It was due to these events his thoughts about rebelling started. As a kid he had lived on a farm and had always cared for the nature. Every time he thought back at that time he got nostalgic and frustrated over the life he was living at the moment. That was the last straw, John decided to run away to the countryside, and hopefully find a place to take shelter. The journey would of cause demand some preliminary work, but he believed everything would be better than the life in a big city in the year of 2046."

The glasses showed him the direction of his destination, and he obeyed like a slave. It was his only hope. He was still pressing his body against the wall to avoid any given ray of light. The street continued in front of him, and even though he couldn't see the end he didn't give up, but suddenly he stopped, and it wasn't by his free will. He shook his head and rubbed his eyes, then tried again to move further forwards, this time a bit slower. The same thing happened again; apparently it was an invisible wall. John was out of his mind. He had fought for this. He risked his life and what stopped him was outwardly nothing at all. He felt it again, he didn't know how to describe it. He thought about stiffened air, but again he couldn't describe it. As he turned around he could see staggering many human figures moving closer. He realized this was all organized by the ALOs and naturally they would notice anyone trying to break through "the wall". His knees were knocking together and he kneeled down and looked up in the supposed real sky and gave up. The guards found him and ensured he couldn't run away and then a syringe was found and put into him. It contained a lethal liquid which hampered his brain. All the earlier rebellion thoughts were gone and he continued his job at the factory without complaining the tiniest bit. John became a brainless, senseless puppet controlled by the state.

Defender Lightning

By Sandie Bolund

Just another day of hunting in the corridors of the subways, and sneaking around in the old trains, on the railways. A shattered mirror showed my reflection, as I walked by. I stopped, stepped back, and looked at the reflection. I knew it wasn't my wavy blond hair, which made me stand out, it was the blue stripes. The way I dressed, with colours that did not match at all, the cut of her clothes, she had sewn herself. Even if I was naked, the differences would show.

My thoughts were strangled by the "safety" globes.

"Damn it" I mumbled, and started to run.

Right, left, left, that's the way out I tried to recall, or was it right, left and then right? Never mind. Not enough time I thought and turned a corner.

"Are you kidding me!? Dead end!?" I yelled and kicked the wall, before thinking it through "Arhg shit, the safety globes!"

Too late they had heard the noise, and they were definitely coming this way.

"Nr. 1042 stop immediately!" the rough robot voice ordered.

The horror of being sent back to the psychiatric hospital kicked in, and I begun to hyperventilate and panicked. I had to get out of here! Jumping over the globes was definitely not a solution. They looked tiny, but as I had experienced, they were equipped with some advanced technology that wasn't yet known to the society.

"Alexis Williams, stop or you will be arrested"

They were moving closer and closer, and ready to attack the offender.

I was about to lose all hope about escaping, when I noticed something abnormal on one of the walls. A brick in the wall seemed different than the others, more outstanding. The fear made me push the brick, and a section of the wall glided open, as a door. I ran quickly through the door and pushed, with my body weight, to close it. The light turned on as soon as the door was closed.

With my back leaning against the cold brick wall, I felt the relief streaming down on me, while I wiped away a drop of sweat from my forehead and took a glance around the room.

I'd never seen anything like it before, many would say it looked like someone had just thrown up in a bin. But to me it was the most stunning area I had ever seen. It was a piece of heaven, a piece of the society I wished, I had lived in, but it wasn't more than a fantasy to me, and a myth to my fellow humans around me.

Rock band posters covered the cold hard walls, old papers and magazines stacked in big piles, a big shiny machine with the letters J-U-K-E-B-O-X, whatever that meant? The beauty and the discovery of the room took me by surprise. I picked myself up from the cold stone floor, and went on to explore, what seemed like another world to me.

I looked at the first pile of magazines and stared at the year 2005, that magazine was about 83 years old. Page by page I was surprised by the freedom and diversity that all the models possessed. The articles shocked me, the writers wrote whatever they felt like! Uncensored! Wow!

I pulled myself away from the magazine, that jukebox fascinated me, I wanted to see what it did. I pushed some random buttons, and music played; >>*We are only humans separated by our thoughts.*<<

Well not in my society, we have become so much alike that our thoughts were almost the same, like we were connected by some invisible network which for some reasons didn't reach my thoughts.

Some white sheets caught my eye, they were covering something, I had to see what it was. I pulled away the dirty sheets and some kind of machine appeared. It was huge, and constructed with watches and whatever found in the subways. The side was painted with the words "Time Traveller 2."

My hands were shaking heavily. Was this pile of garbage my ticket out of this brainwashing-zombie-lookalike hell? But if I travelled back in time, would I be able to get back to my own time? If I weren't then who was going to prove to the society that better times had existed, and we needed to change?

I slowly crawled up in the machine, careful not to break anything. All the switches had numbers, which I guess was the order to turn them on. I pushed button number one with sweaty palms. The machine begun with a growl, I gasped. Switch number 2. Number 3.

Should I? This was what I had been dreaming of my whole life. Switch number 4. Only one more switch to go. >>*Hey Monkey See and Monkey Do, Must I get brainwashed, by what's surrounding you, Didn't you know that, Every little thing's contagious, Oh yes every little thing's contagious*<< The song playing on the jukebox made my mind up for me, and I touched the fifth button.

A bright light exploded in the room and blinded me. No more Simon says.