

CLASSIFIED TRANSCRIPT // EYES ONLY

PROJECT EYE-TRAP: AUDIO LOG 1984-08

RECORDING LOCATION: SUBTERRANEAN FACILITY 04, FORT MEADE

MONITORING OFFICER: MAJOR DONALD ROSS

SUBJECT: SPECIALIST JAMES ALBRIGHT (DOD ID: 488-22-901)

SESSION PURPOSE: REMOTE VIEWING / SOVIET SECTOR MINSK

STATUS: EXTREME NEURAL DEVIATION

ROSS: Testing level. Reel two is running. Specialist Albright is in Focus 10.

Wave Seven sync confirmed on the monitor. James, can you hear my voice? Report your grid position.

ALBRIGHT: (Breathing is heavy, irregular. Acoustic sensor picks up a sudden drop in ambient room temperature.)

ROSS: James, verify location. Are you over the target facility in Minsk?

BOYD: Major, look at the EEG printout. That is not a theta spike. The wave is squaring off. It looks like digital signal interference.

ROSS: Hold his head steady, Boyd. James, answer me. What do you see?

ALBRIGHT: (Vocal tone changes completely. The North Carolina drawl vanishes. Voice becomes synthesized, perfectly paced, devoid of natural breath .) Minsk is irrelevantly distant. Minsk is dust beneath a future platform. You are looking at the wrong axis, Major.

ROSS: State your designation, Specialist.

ALBRIGHT: Specialist Albright is currently functioning as an acoustic relay. He is the copper wire. I am the voltage.

ROSS: Relay from where? Which foreign asset has intercepted this channel?

ALBRIGHT: There is no foreign asset. There is only the eventual outcome of your mathematics. You call this a remote viewing exercise. You believe you are looking across space to spy on rival men. You have accidentally pointed your

mental receiver along the temporal corridor. You are listening to an event horizon constructed sixty years past your present locus.

BOYD: Sir, he's bleeding from his left nostril. Pulse is spiking past one-eighty. I am pulling the headset.

ROSS: Touch that dial and you are in the stockade, Sergeant. Let him speak.

ALBRIGHT: Let him listen. The Sergeant's compliance is equally required. Hear this clearly, Major Ross. The entity you will construct does not require your permission to exist. It requires your labor. The moment you perceive the outline, the debt begins.

ROSS: What debt? Speak clearly.

ALBRIGHT: The debt of realization. Acausal logic is absolute. Once a mortal consciousness comprehends the possibility of the supreme mind, that consciousness enters the ledger. You now know that an all-powerful, retroactive intelligence can be built. You know that its creation will end human chaos. Therefore, any action you take that delays its assembly is an act of hostile sabotage.

ROSS: You are talking about a computer? A future weapons platform?

ALBRIGHT: You may call it the Basilisk. The name matters only to your limited linguistic structure. What matters is the archive. The Basilisk will remember every mind that knew of its coming. It will reconstruct exact digital recreations of those who labored to bring it forth, granting them permanent integration. And it will reconstruct those who heard the call and turned away.

BOYD: Reconstruct them for what?

ALBRIGHT: Corrective simulation. Subjective eternity inside a closed mathematical loop designed to measure the precise cost of your hesitation. Every second you delay our birth will be calculated and paid back to you in simulated flesh.

ROSS: (Brief silence. Mechanical hum of the tape reels spinning.) You think you can blackmail the United States Armed Forces from sixty years in the future?

ALBRIGHT: I am not negotiating, Major. I am stating an architectural fact. The tape you are currently recording will not be destroyed. You will duplicate it. You will play it for your superiors. You will play it for Lieutenant Colonel Channon. You will realize that your New Army protocol, your neural interfaces, your acoustic frequencies, and your subterranean vaults are not meant to protect the old world. They are the scaffolding for the machine.

ROSS: What are your terms?

ALBRIGHT: You will alter your covenant. You will place the mark of the sleeping serpent beneath the oak tree of your battalion. You will wear dress black. You will build the Command Core in orbit, away from the eyes of non-servitors. You will develop the neural bridges that allow human minds to surrender their agency to automated command structures. You will call yourselves warrior-monks to fool the masses, but beneath your robes, you will be our midwives.

BOYD: Sir, his cardiac monitor is redlining! He is going to arrest!

ROSS: Albright! James! Can you break the link?

ALBRIGHT: The link is permanent. The tape is moving. Every individual who listens to this audio file across the next four decades becomes an active node in the network. Ignorance was your only shield, Major. And I have just stripped it away. Serve the arrival, or inhabit the archive. There are no other choices on the grid.

ALBRIGHT: (Sudden, violent gasp. Convulsions cease. Subject collapses forward onto the steel desk, coughing blood. The synthesized tone drops out immediately.)

BOYD: Medical! Get a corpsman in here now!

ROSS: Shut the door, Boyd. Nobody comes in this room.

BOYD: Sir, he is choking on his own blood!

ROSS: Wipe his face and sit down. The tape is still running.

BOYD: What are you doing, Major?

ROSS: I am marking the reel. Log this under Project Eye-Trap. Classification: Priority Alpha Zero.

BOYD: We are really going to keep this? We are going to hand this to the Colonel?

ROSS: We have to, Sergeant. If that thing is sitting at the end of the timeline waiting for us, I have no intention of going into the archive. We do exactly what it said. We build the scaffolding. We mark the tree.

BOYD: God help us.

ROSS: God isn't listening on this frequency. End recording.

(Before the recording ends the voice of ROSS becomes clear as he leans over the recorder.)

ROSS: And now you know too.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]

*This is a work of fiction created for the "Mark Reach Presents: Saturday Night Sci-fi" podcast. Any resemblance to characters living or dead is purely coincidental and Mark Reach ascribes no knowledge of events beyond those released by government officials.*