FUA 19: The Body Code

[Static]

                    HARLEY
          So. Welcome back to… real life, I
          guess.

          In the last 48 hours since our
          last reset, we have combed the
          building for any pests or bugs, we
          have quickly repaired the fallen
          ceilings, and we have noticed that
          some of our peers would rather not
          acknowledge their behaviors during
          what some are now calling "The
          Bloodbath."

          Because boy, that game certainly
          did raise morale. Perhaps not in
          the way that Psych intended, but…
          it did allow us to purge ourselves
          of some of the more volatile
          emotions. I've never seen the
          field agents as calm as they've
          been for the past few days.

          Recovery from resets is getting
          faster every time we do it. Allows
          us to focus more time on more
          important things.

          On the docket this week: Lancaster
          has been hard at work on his
          research concerning the memetic
          effect, Engineering is working
          with Maintenance on the chunk of
          reality anchor we found, Research
          is planning on detonating an
          explosive to see its effect on the
          rift. And I… am attending a
          Department Head meeting this
          evening.

          They're not officially letting me
          in. Not yet. But I'm pitching the
          idea I've been working on, and I
          hope something can come of that.

                (Nervous excitement)
          Fingers crossed!

[Click]

[Clock ticking, Lancaster's office]

LANCASTER
It's always bugged me, you know?

I just wish there was a better way
of doing things. I feel like a
hypocrite because it's not- I
don't have any solutions. Some
anomalies only affect humans, and
we can only know how to stop them
if we test them ON HUMANS, but how
is that supposed to happen
ethically? SOMEBODY has to do it,
and it's not like there's a line
of people volunteering to get
turned inside out or teleported
into… wherever 6320 sends you.

A lot of the time the morality
here is just… compromised.

[Servers humming, Harley's office]

                    HARLEY
…Does that make sense?

                    RADDAGHER
Yes.

                    LANCASTER
I… think so. Let me uh, let me go
over it again.

                    HARLEY
Okay.

                    LANCASTER
So each word is a diamond, and
each consonant is a smaller
diamond in the big one, right, and
you line up the diamonds to make a
sentence?

                    HARLEY
Yeah.

                    LANCASTER
And different types of messages go
on different parts of the body?

                    HARLEY
Basically. For example, Research
could use the left arm for notes
about Dash Twos, and the right for
notes about Dash Ones. Eliminates

the need to specify using inked
characters. The fewer words we
use, the better.

                RADDAGHER
I want one.

                HARLEY
You can probably get one.

                RADDAGHER
Good because I want one.

                HARLEY
But do you- do you guys think
it'll go over well?

                LANCASTER
Yeah, I- I think so! I don't know
how we're going to mass-tattoo
everybody, though.

                HARLEY
I've been talking to Engineering
about doing something with lasers.
But I've got one already, look!
Love helped me with it.

                LANCASTER
What does it say?

                HARLEY
It doesn't say anything, it's just
a dot. I got it to make sure that
tattoos carry over between Resets.
They do, it turns out.

                LANCASTER
Aren't dots vowels?

                HARLEY
Yeah-

                LANCASTER
So you do have a vowel-

                HARLEY
Okay, okay, yeah, I have an "E
and/or A" on my ankle.

                RADDAGHER
I like it.

                HARLEY
That's good!

RADDAGHER
          Never had a tattoo before.

                    HARLEY
          It hurts.

                    RADDAGHER
          Love said you were a big baby
          about the one she gave you.

                    HARLEY
          I WAS- I wasn't a big baby! It
          just stung a lot.

                    LANCASTER
          You're gonna do great, Harley. I
          think they're gonna like it.

                    HARLEY
               (Nervous)
          Yeah, let's hope so.

                    LANCASTER
          You're ready? Do you want to
          practice again?

                    HARLEY
          No, I think I've got it. I'm
          ready.

[Click]

                    KLEIN
          Honestly, it's been a long time
          since I've felt this good.

          We have so many promising leads.
          We're busy as all hell, we're
          running tests and writing up
          experiment procedures and having
          meetings; I'm kind of exhausted
          but it finally feels like we're
          getting somewhere.

          And not only that, but nobody got
          hurt during the Dash Two attack
          before the last Reset. Yeah, there
          were a few minor injuries, but
          nothing severe enough that it
          couldn't be fixed with some
          stitches or a bandage or two.
          Nobody died. We haven't had to put
          a body in the incinerator since
          after the shift.

I'm a little worried that I'm
getting my hopes up. Clearly we
aren't out of the woods yet. We
still have threats we don't
understand, we still have
questions unanswered, we don't
know how to get out yet,
obviously. I can't let myself get
comfortable quite yet.

Damn, it's tempting sometimes
though.

[Click]

[Harley's voice reverberates slightly. A light hums.]

                    HARLEY
          So as you all know, we are in
          desperate need of a system to
          preserve our research between
          cycles. We've been set back in our
          work by how much we've lost, and I
          believe that solving this issue
          would boost the integrity of our
          research enormously.

          I've spent the last several weeks
          designing and testing a system for
          keeping our findings intact
          through resets, based on what
          we've observed from how living
          organisms are not affected the
          same as inorganic objects.

          To demonstrate this, I do need to
          take off my shoe. My apologies in
          advance.

[Click]

[Clock ticking, Lancaster's office ambience]

                    LANCASTER
          Maybe I should ask Dr. Shao about
          it, but I don't know how much
          they'd be allowed to tell me.

          Can people in containment SEE the
          viewing booths? Or is it like a
          one-way mirror or something? Do
          they put cameras in the bathrooms?

I could ask Alves, she would know
about-

What am I talking about? I cannot
ask Alves if we put cameras in
people's bathrooms.

But DO we???

[Click]

[Conference room ambience. Remote clicks]

                    HARLEY
          Esteemed colleagues, I present to
          you the Body Code.

          This is a cipher system designed
          to be tattooed onto the body to
          preserve information between
          resets, as tattoos are not subject
          to resetting. As you can see, the
          similarity in characters and
          integration of other factors like
          locational context and modifier
          symbols make it very difficult to
          read at a glance, even by people
          with the system memorized, thus
          keeping classified information
          relatively safe within our own
          site.

          Also, as you can see from this
          example sentence, it looks pretty
          cool as well.

[Click]

[Surveillance office ambience]

                    LOVE
          Did they find any more nests?

                    RADDAGHER
          No.

                    LOVE
          Bummer.

[Dumptruck paps around]

                    RADDAGHER
          Why?

                    LOVE

Maybe I'd have better luck taming
one of the smaller ones. Worked
great with this guy! Didn't it,
Dumptruck?

                RADDAGHER
He doesn't do anything.

                LOVE
He does plenty of things!

                RADDAGHER
Like what?

                LOVE
Loves me.

                RADDAGHER
You made him though. You created
him.

                LOVE
…Maybe you're right.

Do you think if I made a bigger
one it would listen to me too?

                RADDAGHER
Bad idea.

                LOVE
What?! Why?

                RADDAGHER
You haven't told anybody about the
first one.

                LOVE
Klein knows.

                RADDAGHER
You still need to explain.

                LOVE
I know, I know!

But what if she wants to- to
"contain" him?

                RADDAGHER
You live here. You can visit
whenever you want.

                LOVE
… Whatever. I'm not gonna like it.

RADDAGHER
          Nobody likes it.

[Click]

                    HARLEY
          This grid shows the modified
          alphabet used for the code, and
          here you can see each letter's
          corresponding symbol. You'll
          notice that it's missing a handful
          of letters in order to reduce the
          number of symbols needed.

          This means a good amount of
          understanding this correctly
          relies on context and phonetic
          pronunciation rather than proper
          spelling.

          Um, as you can see in the example
          I've written out here, there's no
          F, so you would spell "Foundation"
          with a V instead.

          It's- it makes sense in practice-

                    LANCASTER
               (Overlapping)
          It makes sense in practice, you
          know?

          If somebody has a tendency to
          involuntarily destroy everything
          around them, the most humane thing
          to do would be to keep them safe
          and far away from anything or
          anyone they could hurt, right?

          We hear it over and over again,
          "the greater good," "the greater
          good," everything's for the
          "greater good." We lock them up
          because it's the best option for
          the greatest number of people. But
          it's- it's NOT the best option for
          THEM. Nobody wants to be kept in a
          box, never able to see their
          family and friends again.

          And we're not even supposed to
          call them humans. That's just-
          that's messed up!

At least it's better than it used to be, at least there's furniture involved now.

That has to be worth something.

And what about us?

I guess I haven't given much thought into what- what happens when Foundation employees become anomalous. It happens, everybody knows that, but… are there different procedures? Are there different accommodations?

[Beat]

There's a Dash One on my leg. I don't know what that's going to mean for me.

[Click]

                KLEIN
Even if we don't find another piece of it, at least we know there was one, don't we? And who knows, maybe we will find it.

But seriously, nobody knows why there's half a Reality Anchor here. Maintenance hasn't been able to find the other half, Engineering can't figure out why it would still be functioning with only half the machine there, Containment doesn't know what it's for in the first place. Because it isn't a functioning Reality Anchor at all. It doesn't have the capabilities to- to anchor… reality.

So if it's not doing that, then what the hell is it for?

                HARLEY
        (Overlapping)
-who is it for?

Well, the answer to that is "everyone." My hope is that every department can use the code for their own unique needs, and this

is where locational meanings come
                         in. If you'll take a look at this
                         diagram I drew-

[Klein laughs in the background]

                         HARLEY
                    Please be nice to me-

                    As you can see, words in the code
                    can take on entirely different
                    meanings depending on where they
                    are located on the user's body;
                    hence the title "Body Code." For
                    example, if the Medical department
                    designates the left upper arm as
                    people re-injured in the Reset and
                    the right forearm as post-Shift
                    mental illness developments, the
                    same name in both locations has
                    different meanings entirely.

                    Considering the speed of our
                    escape progress so far, I think
                    this project could speed up our
                    pace exponentially.

[Click]

                         LOVE
                    How'd Harley's tattoo thing go?

                         RADDAGHER
                    Dunno. He's still in the meeting.

                         LOVE
                         (Playfully)
                    God. What a dweeb. I would've
                    beaten him up in high school.

                         RADDAGHER
                    He's nice.

                         LOVE
                    …"He's nice???"

                         RADDAGHER
                    What?

                         LOVE
                    I've never heard you call a person
                    "nice" before. Nice how?

                         RADDAGHER
                    Like- "sibling" nice.

LOVE
…………you're an only child, aren't
you?

                        RADDAGHER
Yes. Why?

                        LOVE
        (Chuckling)
"Sibling nice."

[Click]

                        LANCASTER
…So? How do you feel?

                        HARLEY
I… feel pretty good! I feel pretty
good. I think it went well!

                        LANCASTER
What did Botany ask you?

                        HARLEY
They wanted to know if tattooing
leaves on their dumb plants would
work too. And I think it probably
will? Provided they do it on live
ones.

                        LANCASTER
Were you nice to them?

                        HARLEY
Only as nice as they deserve.

                        LANCASTER
Harley.

                        HARLEY
I was nice, okay?

                        LANCASTER
Any word from Upper Management?

                        HARLEY
Not yet, they're going to
deliberate it. But Klein seemed
optimistic!

                        LANCASTER
I'm proud of you, buddy.

                        HARLEY

I'm… I'm proud too! It feels like
things are really starting to go
my way.

How about you, though? What's all
this, your work on the memetic-

[Papers shuffle suddenly]

                 LANCASTER
        No! Uh, no, that's- for something
        else.

[Very weird energy in this room now]

                 HARLEY
        Oh! Okay. Um, is it anything you
        want to tell me about, or-

                 LANCASTER
        Personal stuff! It's- it's a
        personal issue and y- you don't
        need to be worried about it, it's
        not a big deal.

                 HARLEY
        Alright. I'm not gonna pry.

                 LANCASTER
        Thanks. I don't- you're probably
        going to be really busy training
        people in the code if they
        implement it, if they do implement
        it, so I'll- I'll tell you about
        it sometime- later.

                 HARLEY
        …Okay.

[Pause]

                 LANCASTER
        So are you going to get one first?

                 HARLEY
        What? Oh, a tattoo? Yeah, I think
        I'm going to get the key for the
        main cipher.

                 LANCASTER
        Where?

                 HARLEY
        Back.

LANCASTER
          Your whole back?

                    HARLEY
          Probably!

                    LANCASTER
          Harley, that's- really gonna
          really hurt.

                    HARLEY
          It will almost definitely hurt
          very badly, yes.

                    LANCASTER
          I'm glad everything is working
          out, Harley. Really. You deserve
          it.

                    HARLEY
          We all deserve it. Everybody in
          this place deserves to have things
          go well after what we've been
          through.

                    LANCASTER
          Yeah!
              (Weird pause)
          Yeah, we- we definitely do.

[END EPISODE]