

## alternate reality phone

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/44590369) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/44590369>.

Rating:	<a href="#">Teen And Up Audiences</a>
Archive Warning:	<a href="#">Major Character Death</a>
Category:	<a href="#">Gen</a>
Fandom:	<a href="#">Lifesteal SMP</a>
Relationship:	<a href="#">ParrotX2 &amp; YeahJaron (Video Blogging RPF)</a> , <a href="#">ParrotX2 &amp; Vort3xDragon (Video Blogging RPF)</a>
Character:	<a href="#">ParrotX2 (Video Blogging RPF)</a> , <a href="#">YeahJaron (Video Blogging RPF)</a> , <a href="#">Vort3xDragon (Video Blogging RPF)</a> , <a href="#">Leow0ok (Video Blogging RPF)</a> , <a href="#">SpokelsHere (Video Blogging RPF)</a> , <a href="#">Branzy (Video Blogging RPF)</a>
Additional Tags:	<a href="#">Alternate Universe - SCP Foundation</a> , <a href="#">Death</a> , <a href="#">Alot of Death</a> , <a href="#">other scps appear</a> , <a href="#">okay maybe i kind of lied about the death part</a> , <a href="#">Mommy Issues</a> , <a href="#">Alternate Reality</a>
Language:	English
Series:	Part 1 of <a href="#">from a different reality(SCP AU)</a>
Stats:	Published: 2023-01-28 Completed: 2023-02-27 Words: 6,287 Chapters: 5/5

## alternate reality phone

by [starsforevren](#)

### Summary

SCP-7888, code name; Phone From A Different Reality.

It's owner does not exist in this reality, rather in a different one where he is the only person on earth.

### Notes

\*slaps vort3xdragon\* this bad boy can fit so many ideas!!

# Chapter 1

The keyboard on the phone's screen pops up and it types. Parrot looks at it.

'Who are you?'

Parrot looks down on the phone screen.

SCP-7888, code name; phone from a different reality

He takes a breath as he types back a response on the notes app, the site director putting a hand on his shoulder.

"Don't stress it," Branzly tells him. "nothing will happen besides this other person getting upset at you." He adds.

'We are the SCP Foundation, an organization that studies anomalies to protect those who stand in the light.'

God, it sounds cheesy and shit.

'okay???? cryptic as hell but aight i'll take it  
are you like some ai cuz thats rlly cool  
you dont have a name do you?  
uhhhh  
idk  
ezra sounds cool  
ive been losing my fucking mind for SOOOOO LONG  
whats thw time and weather in colorado?'

-

He doesn't remember much, but, yeah. He doesn't remember having an AI installed on his notes app that replies to him whenever he asks. (How long was it since he played SIM with his friends?)

Vortex doesn't know how long it's been since everyone on earth but him disappeared. Well, he kinda does, considering he has two notebooks he stole from a shop since the day it happened. They always seemed to stay the same despite the days resetting.

Well, technically, it wasn't stealing because there was literally no one to stop him. And in the first few days he just thought it was some evacuation that no one told him about while he was sleeping.

Everything looks the same, and nothing is untouched. But still, it's like everything has just stayed the exact same.

The clouds don't move, the sun remains in it's place since he woke up, plants don't rot, and nothing grows. Even him. (He has not grown an inch, goddamit.)

The televisions don't show anything but static and a black screen and Vortex sighs everytime he thinks someone exists. There's magazines and the photos in his phone that keep him intact with reality, but still not enough.

He tried whiskey once. Spat it out almost immediately. Then, he tried making himself a drink some

guy taught him to make when he was at a party. It still tastes like a memory of him being thrown into that pool after being pressured to take a shot by his classmates.

He's been talking to this small dragon plushie he's had since he was a kid. Everyone kind of made of fun of him but they're gone now. (Plus, it's probably the only thing he has other than his phone.)

Vortex looked around the city. Man, being alone really gets to you, huh?

Vortex walks into this empty Walmart.

And then he yells all his frustrations out.

-

"Where does this come from?" Parrot asks the other researcher assigned with this anomaly.

Jaron just shrugs, the researcher that found it.

"Apparently, based on this person's notes, an alternate reality where everything is the same except it's just the same everyday and other people don't exist." Jaron answers with. "The person's name is Vortex, since he signs off every note with it since we started contact."

"Have you ever put in voice memos?" Parrot asks again.

"He does, but we don't. Still pending from the O5." Jaron says. "He mostly just screams for a good amount of time and then proceed to detail his day before ending it all by jumping into the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge."

Parrot looks at him and before he asks again, Jaron cuts him off.

"Just so you know, the alternate reality Vortex is living in, works strangely. Everytime he dies, he just wakes up in his bedroom with everything still untouched and to him that seems like waking up from night."

"So, he can't get out of that universe?" Parrot asks the other researcher in the room. Jaron nods.

"Shit, that sounds painful. Like, mentally."

The phone opens again, on the table. Jaron picks it up, the screen saying that it's charging but still being used.

Jaron doesn't touch the screen, rather just holding it up. The case is a navy blue with a few flashy stickers on it, weathering away from time.

Vortex opens the notes app and begins to type.

'any suggestions on how to die the bridge is getting boring and shit'

"How old is he again?" Parrot asks Jaron.

"Nineteen, exactly." Jaron answers.

'heyyyyyyyyyy ik ur readjng this ai' Vortex types out.

Jaron begins to type again, ceasing control of the phone's keyboard.

'We suggest you do not kill yourself.'

'wow always boring!! have some life goddamn '

"Hand it over." Parrot says to Jaron, leaning against the table with one hand pressed against the surface, holding up his stature.

Jaron hands the anomaly to him, who is more than ready to record this interaction.

"Are we allowed to tell him that we're people?"

"Yeah, but he isn't convinced." Jaron says. "We tried but he thinks he just accidentally took drugs."

"What the hell is wrong with him." Jaron shrugs at Parrot.

Parrot types out a message that Jaron can't see.

'Would you want voice memos?'

'uhhhhh sure ig'

"Parrot," Jaron says. "don't do anything horrible."

"It's not like I'm going to tell him to go fuck off or anything."

-

There comes a voice memo, after it's done recording.

Vortex sits on the edge of the bridge, swinging his legs hanging over the Hudson River as he presses to listen to it.

"We are researchers from the SCP Foundation," the voice pauses. "an organization that handles and deals with anomalies such as you to protect the minds of everyone who stand in the light."

Another pause and Vortex takes off his sunglasses. The city is so silent, it's almost unbearable to the point he'll yell or scream profanities until his mind doesn't go on the brink of insanity.

"I am a researcher assigned with you, along with my co-worker, Jaron. You might be confused as to why you are classified as an anomaly, but that is because a copy of your phone that works in real-time has also popped up in our reality and it serves as a gateway of information between you and us."

It ends.

"Okay, well, first of all, is this like some area-51 type shit? Secondly, sorry for mistaking you guys as an AI. Third of all, are you guys gonna like... I don't know, help me out of here and pull an X-Men and flash all my memories away?" Vortex asks.

Not long after, they respond.

'Perhaps. If the council wills it.'

"What the fuck," Vortex says. "council?" He whispers.

He stands up from his spot, looking over the river where waves rock back and forth.

Another day ends, with him putting his phone on the ground and falling into the river.



# crashing worlds

## Chapter Notes

holy shit an ao3 work from me that is actually updated!!

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

He ended the day like every other. Embracing death.

And he wakes up like most days, in his bedroom. The alarm clock forever rests on exactly 7:25 in the morning and everything is resetted.

Vortex sits in his bed, looking out the window like most days, hoping that there is life. Clothes litter the floor, and despite best efforts to change it, to clean every mess in his little apartment, he just can't.

Posters are hung up on the wall, and the holes in the wall from his punches and desperate clawing have disappeared.

He sometimes think this is his curse. For not accepting change and now he's here.

Atleast he has Judith, an old dragon plushie his dad bought him for his fifth birthday. It's the only thing that comforts him at the moment. It sounds childish, he knows, but he keeps it for the sake of his sanity.

Still, the day goes on like normal, like everything was the same in the day before he woke up to see everything petrified in it's place.

-

"He actually killed himself." Parrot says to Jaron. "It's just how it is for him, but damn."

Someone else steps into the light containment room. A senior researcher and a containment specialist, Leo. Along with another anomaly, SCP-7820.

Nearly a black haze that looks like a humanoid, Spoke stands behind Leo.

"The O5 agreed to cross-testing." Leo says to the two of them. "We have him, to test if we can somehow bring SCP-7888-B to this world or transferr hi-"

"Wait- hold on." Jaron cuts Leo off. "But doesn't Vortex- there's no trace of his existence in this world at all."

"I could have explained that if you didn't just cut me off, now. So, we can also transferr him to a different reality where he wakes up in the second of March rather than the first." Leo says. "Worst case scenario, we bring him into this world and, uh, kill him."

"What if he just wakes up back in that reality?" Parrot asks.

"Um... I don't know, the O5 just sent me here for cross-testing, okay? I can't answer many stuff,

'cause I just read through the file and other addenda."

"So, like, can I speak now?" Spoke asks. "Actually, I kind of forgot what you said to me earlier, I heard someone scream for their dear life behind a wall..."

"Oh, you create a portal to his reality and talk to him." Leo says, tossing Spoke a badge. 'FIELD AGENT' It says.

-

Vortex sits in the bookshop, looking at all the books in each self, fingers grazing along their spines before he takes a random one out.

A noise outside and he glances at the door before back at the books. Oh, Les Misérables, he's definitely not read that an exact fifty-seven times before to numb his loneliness, definitely not!

Someone steps into the bookstore and Vortex looks at them.

"Uh, what the fuck?"

"Now, before you say something, yes I am built like air and yes, your hand will pass through my body, but no, you shall not punch me because I cry very easily!" Spoke yells.

"Do I look like I'm built to punch, bitch?"

"Well, you're short-"

"YOU WALTZ INTO THIS FUCKING BOOKSTORE JUST TO INSULT THE ONLY PERSON YOU SEE!?" Vortex yells back.

"Hey, no- wait, I didn't mean it!" Spoke exclaims.

"Fuck you!" Vortex yells before storming out of the store without even picking up the book.

Spoke picks the book back up before he goes running after the guy, who is worryingly going to the direction of the Newburgh-Beacon Bridge. Even when just jogging, Spoke is fast, granted, he is lighter.

"Hey, hey, hey, wait- no. The doctors told me that you throw yourse-"

"Yeah, I do throw myself into the Hudson River and I may be deprived of human interaction for god knows how long, but still, fuck you."

Spoke does what most people try to do. Stop someone. And by stopping this nineteen-year old university student from killing himself, he means violently pulling on his arm.

"We are literally nowhere near the bridge yet!" Vortex exclaims.

"Okay, yes, I know, but I was kind of asked to like hold up a conversation with you but they don't know I actually suck at communicating, so please, can you just chill?"

"What is there to talk about?" Vortex asks back to Spoke. "Look at this world I'm living in, not a single change. Hell, even food doesn't rot. Shit just doesn't feel real unless I drown or, I don't know, slam my head into the wall."

"Uh, what about who you were before all this shit?" Spoke asks him.

"Just a university student. But now, yeah, I won't be able to graduate 'cause you know... I'm stuck here." Vortex answers as the two walk without a destination.

"What are you taking?"

"Drugs-"

"Stop, please." Spoke pleads with him. He sighs. "Anything memorable happened to you before March one?" Spoke asks him instead.

"Uh... well, I don't know. I got a speeding ticket?" Vortex says. "And my cat disappeared when I woke up, so... yeah."

"Horrible shit just keeps happening to you, huh?" Spoke jokes about it.

Both give out a dry chuckle.

"Have you crossed the bridge, though?"

"Yeah, I did. Was just as boring as every single fucking day, but you know, more confusing because I don't really recognize the places." Vortex tells him. "Atleast the wifi still works. No one really posts anymore 'cause, y'know, gone for good."

The two walk over to the bridge, the sun shining high in the sky and this is where Vortex usually ends his day. But not now, he's got someone to talk to. Well, they aren't really human, but if it can talk then they're okay.

"Do you still get hungry or thirsty? I mean, everything is stuck frozen in time for you."

"I mean..." Vortex's voice trails off. "yeah, I can't really just stop that hunger no matter whatever I do. It's not that bad though to the point I can't function, but it's still there. Everytime I get cuts too, they don't really heal unless I kill myself and wake back up in my apartment."

"Oh," Spoke says. "well, uh.... that's rather.... bad. Well- everything is just horrible to you, but I didn't think there was physical torture in the mix!"

"Eh, well, there's so much to expect from this place." Vortex says.

"Have you tried going to other states?" Spoke asks him.

"Yeah, in the first few weeks of me being here. I grabbed hold of a random car I saw and then going there. Not everything got stuck in time, just... the- the way they degrade over time." Vortex says.

"What are you studying?" Spoke asks. "Like, languages, other shit.."

"Mortuary science." Vortex answers.

"That was-" Spoke laughs. "I literally did not expect you to answer that. Like, I don't know, I expected some shit like medical technology."

"Well, I mean, over the days, I've been just learning all there is to know about mortuary science so that if everything goes to normal, I atleast know alot. And, also.. uh, a few languages because I was bored. Not that fluent in some, but I have a basic understanding."

Spoke looks the asphalt, then back up at Vortex, his pocketed hand tracing the details of a



foundation badge.

"If given the chance," Spoke says. "would you work for the SCP Foundation?"

Vortex looks at Spoke's face, well... whatever resembles a face from his void, mist body.

"I mean.... I don't really know if I can do anything for them, but uh.... I'll think about it."

The two stop at the middle of the bridge. The river flows through under.

"You should get going now, actually." Vortex says. "Don't want anyone seeing me die."

"Oh, uh, well, goodbye then!" Spoke gives out a short wave, before manifesting a portal back into the reality he's grown accustomed to.

-

Spoke steps out of the portal and back into the facility, handing over his body camera to the two researchers assigned with watching over the other SCP.

"I gave him an offer to join us, by the way. Still hasn't accepted yet, but.... yeah." Spoke says.

"What position is he even gonna be qualified for?" Parrot asks. "I thought he was a university student?"

"Yeah, he's studying mortuary science and is still studying it." Spoke answers. "Also he knows a few languages so maybe he can become a field agent?"

"Will the O5 even will it?" Jaron asks.

"I mean, if they could have me as a field agent, then I don't see why not for him!" Spoke exclaims.

"He's nineteen." Leo recalls. "The foundation strictly forbids anyone under the age of twenty-one to become personnel of the SCP Foundation."

"Well, he can study and train for two years and then come back here." Jaron remarks. "Bacon's an SCP but works as head chef for the cafeteria for this site, now, so..."

"Yeah, and Planet too." Parrot adds on. "If they can hire some keter into mobile task force, then they can hire a safe into personnel."

"Omega-7 was a disaster, Parrot." Leo says. "If it weren't for a handful of the remaining, and alive members of that task force then that fucking anomaly would have escaped and created more havoc than it ever possibly could have."

Parrot sighs.

"The request process is extensive, but if we can both help an anomaly and the foundation, then it's a win-win situation. The O5 is just insane if they don't hire an anomaly with some knowledge about certain things." Parrot says.

"I just...." Leo's voice trails off. "well, you can ask the site director. He's in biohazard area-B, by the way. Branzly is almost always there."

"Guys, he hasn't accepted the offer yet, did you guys just not hear me?" Spoke says to all of them.

"I naturally tune out your voice." Jaron replies.

## Chapter End Notes

i update whenever i want sorry besties i got adhd

# interlacing realities

## Chapter Notes

cw: a bit of religious shit but dw its short

Another day well spent, Vortex thinks.

Another day survived with just a single human interaction. He's probably gone insane at this point, considering his mind is now forming some guy named Spoke who's made out of a black haze and also works for a secret organization.

Well, maybe it is kind of real. He did get violently pulled by the guy.

Still, he can't make up his mind if he wants to join them or not. Actually, he probably doesn't even have the skills to join. Maybe live bait or some knowledge on dead bodies, but that's all he's got.

Vortex walks through the bridge, on the road where cars stop in their place, people never present. He peers into each car, hoping he sees someone or literally anyone that exists. He does this shit everyday to the point it's just exhausting to him.

Again, no one is inside and Vortex has lost all hope of shit ever returning to him.

He crosses the bridge this time, taking steady steps as he balances himself on an imaginary line along the asphalt.

Vortex removes his navy blue jacket, tying it around his waist as he goes to Newburgh which he rarely even went to back then.

Maybe he did go there, once. Probably when he was driving around before all of this happened.

Oh, right, he did go to Newburgh. To go to some restaurant with his friends. Yeah, that was when he got a speeding ticket right after when he tried driving home.

The heat of the sun pounces on his skin and it almost feels unbearable. But, hey, he can die later by jumping off the bridge into the goddamn river.

He wonders how those two researchers are doing. He knows the other guy, Jaron and then this other one, Parrot. He doesn't know why his name is Parrot but he doesn't really ask.

Vortex takes out his phone from the pocket of his jeans as he leans against the metal along the edge of the bridge, putting his earphones in and exchanging skin-clawing silence into something he can actually hold up. 'The End Is Nigh - Carbon Copy' plays, the text coming up on his screen as he just stands there, his weight held up by the supporting beacons.

The drums opening up to the song fills his ears as the crushing weight of the sunlight on his skin seers through his soul. Cars of all different models and colours line up on the road and Vortex begins to walk again.

He can't hear his own footsteps, and the guitar interlaced with the drums in the song eases him a

bit.

A breeze comes by, it always does. Stuck in place like everything else.

Vortex wanders, and he catches a glimpse of the Hudson River, where his grave sits everyday, under the gleaming of sunlight.

Vortex wanders around, before entering a 7-11. It feels just so different without the guy at the counter that keeps asking for his ID like he's going to buy alcohol.

He rolls his eyes at the memory, before grabbing a lighter from one of the shelves. His eyes get pulled towards the gasoline outside.

Vortex considers it.

He takes a heavy exhale out when the thought of burning himself alive approaches him. His skin tingles at the thought of a brutal death.

His phone in his hand turns on. The researchers are back.

They go over to his notes app, then tapping on an existing one and typing out the date they're in. April 18 of 2022. They're four years ahead of him. At that point, he probably must've graduated.

They begin to type.

'The council has permitted casual talk.' The other person says, signed off with the name of Dr. Grey.

'i hope ur not dry buddy'

'Depends on what you see as 'dry', because surely I hate bland conversation as much as you do'

'cool and shit ig btw r u parrot?'

'Yes. Jaron is taking care of a different thing at the moment. A space-incarnate anomaly.'

A short pause between them before Parrot picks up the keyboard.

'From your other notes, I assume you're into poetry?'

'yep dont like writing them anymore since it seems all cringe'

The researcher presses back, then scrolls through a few notes. Vortex catches glimpses of old poems and thoughts that he'd pour on text. Not anymore though. His mind feels too messy to form out concise art that he enjoys.

When the doctor in the other reality presses on one, memories come rushing back. Shame, anger, sadness, and frustration.

'This?'

'too personal'

'How come? If you don't mind me asking'

'i never really connected to people really well my mom was from a convent but later stepped down

when she was pregnant with me'

'A convent?'

'i dont have much faith in the church anymore'

Vortex sits down on the edge of the road, a different song playing as he looks at the researcher typing again.

'People tend to fall out of things. It's bound to happen.'

'sure'

'You're listening to carbon copy'

'yea'

Vortex stares at the screen for a moment, as both of them just sit there, without a word to type out for the other to respond to.

His fingers hover over the screen, looking at previous chatter in the past.

'spoke told me about if i could like join this foundation.'

'It's being debated upon by the site director and the council at the moment.'

'in the rare chance i do hsrve a chance what is the most likely job ill have??'

Parrot thinks, from the other end. Vortex slumps over, a bottle of ice-cold red bull next to him on the pavement.

'A field agent. Taking into consideration your ability to easily learn languages, then a field agent. Of course, there'd be some physical training, along with some studying and learning.'

'wow was that shit hard for you?'

'I babbled about psychology and biological structures and they hired me. I thank any god out there for the site director of site-15.'

'oh damn'

'He's merciful. But spends more time with classified papers rather than his son.'

'thats just the modern day reality of people'

'It's a sad sight to behold.'

'mhm'

'Sorry, I need to go. A dangerous being has gone on the loose'

'dont die'

Vortex shuts off his phone as he stands up, the breeze rushing by to pick up on his chestnut hair. He should really start becoming fluent in everything he's picked up, maybe so that he'll be decent if he does get to work for them.



# collision

## Chapter Notes

i got mommy issues and im about to project it onto someone

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#)

Parrot steps into the office of the site-director, alongside Jaron and Spoke since those two have been greatly intertwined with the testing and the handling of a certain anomaly. Parrot really can't say that Vortex; a nineteen-year old mortuary science student is anomalous in his own right but anything out of the ordinary is always within the eyes of the Foundation.

"There are.... multiple things that the O5 Council has both agreed and declined in regards of SCP-7888." Branzly tells them. "If Vortex actually is able to transport himself between realities and dimensions with the help of Spoke, then further interviews are to be conducted."

"Do we keep testing him? He practically- there's no sign of his existence in our reality, not even heritage." Parrot says.

"Well, there are still some more things getting processed by the council and the ethics committee at the moment." Branzly replies with. "And considering yesterday's containment breach, they're probably going through many types of things as of now."

"Okay," Jaron says, "so, like, Spoke-"

"Look, I've transported people through dimensions before, we can do this shit again." Spoke replies with before all three of them are now on their way to the testing chamber.

The corridors of site-15 are cold, almost unbearable if not for the white labcoats given to researchers. The walls are white, and the tiles on the floor are grey. Bright, fluorescent light hangs above them, lit in circles as they pass through.

Spoke's years in the foundation has taught him something. That no one cares for the screams of other people behind walls. Maybe they don't hear them but Jaron shuts his eyes and clenches his fist in his pockets when the guttural screaming of a woman comes, then drowned out by a formation.

'Disposable people, replacable objects', Spoke remembers a certain head of department saying. Ash joked about it, about D-Class being easily disposable and replaced. It doesn't help that everyone around the guy laughed at his joke.

They reach the research and testing chambers. It's ghastly-silent, only the footsteps of a few other researchers coming through and echoing in the vast and spacy area of the testing chambers.

Parrot uses his level-3 keycard to get through a thick metal door to be met with another room inside, seperated into two. The observstion area, blocked by a thick glass pane and the room behind it consisting of metal walls, ceiling, and floor with a single metal table in the middle.

The three go inside, and Spoke creates a rift once more, between their reality and the hellhole where Vortex is.

He shakes his hand to remove the feeling of frigidness. It's okay, he can do this. He's done this many times now. All he needs to do is get through the portal and bring someone back.

Spoke runs in, mist flowing off his body with how fast. He disappears, along with the portal.

Parrot opens up the phone. He sees that Vortex is watching some videos.

-

Vortex sits on the edge of a building, his legs hanging above where most people die and no longer have a chance to live but he isn't most people.

He takes a sip of the red bull, still cold in his hands. The guitar of a song comes on, flowing in his ears.

Vortex lays down on the concrete, clouds motionless in the sky as he looks at them.

"Hiya!" Spoke exclaims, blocking his view of the sky which in Vortex's opinions, looks better than the interdimensional world-hopper.

"Please get out of sight, you're ugly as hell." Vortex says to Spoke he sadly gets out of his way.

Spoke sits next to him, looking at the half-full can of red bull.

"Do you still get energy from this?" Spoke asks him.

"Uh, no, I don't think so. I like thinking I do to ease my nerves that really don't change anymore." Vortex answers. "Anyways, what are you here for?" He asks back to the black haze.

"Oh, so, uh-" Spoke pulls on Vortex's arm as a portal manifests and before Vortex gets to yell at him, he throws the guy into the portal before following with the can of redbull.

-

Vortex lays on the cold floor of the testing chamber, the sudden difference of summer's heat and artificial cold getting to him a second later because of hitting his head.

He stands up, only to be met with two guys in laboratory coats. Well, the blondie has it tied around his waist.

"Oh, well, hello!" One of them greets as Spoke appears behind him with his red bull.

Vortex grabs the can, in disbelief. "What the fuck." He says as he puts his navy blue jacket on because goddamn, is it cold.

"So, I'm Dr. Grey or Parrot and this is Jaron." Parrot introduces the two. "That's Spoke if you didn't know."

"Yeah, I know him." Vortex replies.

"Do you mind if we interview you?" Jaron asks.

"What if I say no."

"We toss your silly ass back into the reality you're from." Spoke says.



"On second thought, yeah." Vortex answers. "Let me finish this red bull first, hold on." He manages to drink the entire thing in just a few seconds.

"How the hell." Parrot says. "I'm terrified."

"Die." Vortex replies.

"What." Jaron says.

"You're ugly, don't talk."

"Why are you mean to everyone?" Parrot asks Vortex.

"Je m'en fous."

"Don't know what that means, but sounds like an insult."

And so here he is, being escorted to an interview room which is pretty far as said by Jaron or rather Dr.Juno which sounds worse in Vortex's book but he can't really control what a guy's name is.

People are scattered and littered around scarcely, and yet not a single noise other than the clicking of professional shoes against grey, shiny tiles that reflect the light above. There are scientist fellows, dressed appropriately in laboratory coats with a symbol on their right shoulder. There are people in tactical gear, dressed to blend in with the night.

Vortex catches a glimpse of a black haze that isn't Spoke considering the guy is right behind him, reading the addendum of another anomaly's file. He catches a glimpse of the name; 'Revival Shade' when Spoke walks next to him. There's a bunch of other symbols, arranged into four. One is a bright red.

"What's that?" Vortex asks Spoke.

"Oh, just... uh, a file that another senior researcher told me to read when I have the time because, well.... she's a black haze too, I guess?" Spoke answers.

Finally, they make it to another hallway, doors lining each side leading to small rooms. Parrot opens one as Spoke and Jaron walk off to somewhere else, to deal with something else.

"Confession booth shit." Vortex jokes as the two sit down on opposite sides of the table.

The room doesn't really look like those rooms where police interrogate suspects where only one lightbulb conquers the entire place with shadows still looming in the corners. The middle is a metal table, of course, and two uncomfortable seats for the both of them.

"I just need to tell you that... uh, everything you say is going to be recorded and then kept on your file." Parrot says beforehand, with the anomaly on the other side nodding. "The site director will expunge certain parts, as commanded by the ethics committee to make sure that you still have some privacy atleast. I've already told Branzy to censor most of your file to level-three personnel and below. Except for me and Jaron."

"Thanks, I guess."

"How old are you? Atleast, now." Parrot asks him.

"I'm nineteen, uh, my birthday's all the way on March four." Vortex answers the researcher. "It feels like the world is just tormenting me because my birthday feels so close yet I can't fucking

reach it because welp, everything restarts from the top and the day is.... is well, frozen and stuck in place."

"Then you'd be twenty-three now." Parrot tells him. "Four years have passed, exactly."

"Man, I could've graduated up to that point."

They sit in awkward silence for a moment, Vortex playing with his hands before resting his head on the cold table. Everything in this foundation feels so damn cold, from the atmosphere to the people themselves.

"You.... you told me your mother was from a convent." Parrot recalls, slowly. "Did that affect anything in your life?"

"Yeah, kinda." Vortex answers. "I had a dad but I don't think he really cared all that much. My mother was hard-working, I barely saw her."

Parrot nods.

"Uh, well, she also tried to... to make sure to follow a path of catholicism, because she was kicked out of the convent for having a child." Vortex adds on. "I never had faith in the first place. She tried getting me to do all sorts of church shit but that always created an argument between her and her husband, I guess."

"Sorry for asking."

"It's okay. I never really felt any sort of attachment to it."

Vortex taps on the table before arising with a question.

"Can I be a field agent?" He asks. "Or literally anything here. Not- not a janitor, though. I think with enough learning or training, maybe then I'll... just be free of that reality and remain here."

"That hasn't been approved yet, but we look up with high hopes."

"Sweet,"

"Any requests you wanna make?" Parrot asks him. "You'll be in the custody of the foundation for a while during a bunch of physical testing."

"Well, I kind of want a new phone case." Vortex says. "And I wanna continue mortuary science and stuff like that."

"You don't want anything else?"

"I want a decent looking place to stay. Kind of like my apartment which you guys most likely have seen already. In my photos."

A red blaring of lights ripples through, along with a voice on the intercoms.

"Shit, time to run." Parrot says.

damn who tf breached containment this time

## back to place

"Hey," Parrot greets. It's the same, plain and boring interview with a dim room again. "sorry for not arriving earlier, I- uh, got caught up in some paperwork."

"It's fine." Vortex replies. "It's better than dying to a guy who was manipulated by a song to kill me."

"The timing wasn't really great, now was it?" Parrot remarks before sitting down across Vortex. "I won't be able to conduct your next other interviews, uh, since I'll be moving sites for a while but I hope yo-"

"Actually, what happened to that Jaron guy?" Vortex asks. "Haven't seen him in a while. Did he die or something? Shit, bad news for him if he did."

"Well, he did kind of die but I don't think I still fully understand his situation at the moment." Parrot says. "The director and senior researchers are still running tests on him."

Vortex leans back into his chair. He scrolls through pictures on his phone. There's a video during the containment breach and he's happy he didn't break his phone from all that chaos.

"There has been a preposition." Parrot tells him and Vortex turns his head up from his phone to the junior researcher. "Do you want to start training to become a field agent? The director told me the council has allowed you to continue education or start training and I was told to ask you this."

"I'd like both honestly." Vortex says. "But the problem is that I'm- I don't actually exist in this reality. I'm just kind of brought on here or something. Spoke is still really confusing to me."

"The foundation will handle everything else." Parrot replies.

"And?"

"You just need to make the choice."

Vortex looks at the pictures on his phone. He swipes through them, reminiscing on memories where he never thought that this will happen. The copy of his phone on the table does the same thing, swiping through photos and he can see Parrot's gaze fixed onto it.

There's his cat, on the bed, on the floor, on the kitchen counter, on the shelf above his bed. There's shakey photos of the night life inside the city of Beacon. There's drunk photos with friends in parties. There's pictures of Vortex himself.

"I mean.... working sounds cool but I'd still like the satisfaction of graduating." Vortex says. "I don't really know if I just wanna be satisfied with myself or just wanna feel something at this point. I don't really know how to place words in their right spots. It just kinda feels like my soul is just floating endlessly."

"Being isolated for four years has great psychological damage. I understand." Parrot says.

"Another thing is that the director has allowed visits to a psychiatrist. He's a good friend of mine, Rekrap."

"Sweet." Vortex says. "Can I ask for something?"

"Yeah?"

"Why are the outfits that your foundation gave me so shit? I look like I'm an asylum patient."

"It's the default...?"

"The default is always ugly." Vortex says. "Like you."

"Bi- why are you angry?" Parrot asks him.

Vortex pulls something out of his pocket.

A gun.

"Alright doc, I need you to call Spoke." Vortex points the gun at him.

"I- where did you get that!?" Parrot yells.

"I found it in a car, so now, call Spoke to bring me back to my original reality or I'll start shooting." Vortex commands him.

"Uh, frick, oh no, hold on- please-" Parrot fiddles with his smartwatch to call Spoke who immediately appears and also starts screaming.

"Open a portal, now. To my original reality." Vortex says and Spoke does so. Vortex steps in. "Also, yeah, I'll just call up if I wanna come back, okay? Okay, bye!"

The room is filled with silence.

"What the fuck." Spoke says.

---

Vortex stretches his arms as he is finally free from the cold grip of the foundation site interview room. As much as he holds vile and nasty curses to this reality, he can't stand the frigidness and the monochrome colours of that place. It almost looks like prison to him.

Alright, well, time to do shit.

The gun is still in his hand and he goes to shoot at something, which is the metal beams of the Newburgh-Beacon bridge.

He puts his earphones in and starts playing a song.

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!