

Matter 16

Summary

Hamas Commander's Luck Runs Out

Account by:	Unknown. Staff reporter.
Source:	Associated Press.
Location:	Gaza City.
Event:	3 Apr 2024.
Report:	4 Apr 2024.

Report

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Updated 3:12 AM GMT+1, April 4, 2024

A spokesman for Hamas has confirmed the death Wednesday afternoon of a senior commander, Hatim Ni'daa Kassim, in Shifa Hospital, Gaza City.

Kassim had long been a target of the Israeli military, which has claimed to have killed him on at least four separate occasions in recent weeks: twice by drone strikes; once by air-to-surface missile; once by sniper fire.

On each occasion, although survival seemed impossible, Kassim reappeared apparently unharmed within hours, to the embarrassment of Israeli officials.

Kassim's life was finally ended in Shifa Hospital, where he was assessing damage caused by the Israeli military's two-week raid that ended April 1st.

Witnesses claim Kassim, 30, was shot dead by a fellow Palestinian described only as being large and young-looking but with white hair. The assailant fled the scene before Kassim's men were able to apprehend him.

Kassim leaves behind a widow and two small children.

Israeli special forces deny involvement in the attack.

Notes

None.

Matter 17

Summary

Experiment VA2

Account by:	David Scott, 55. Independent researcher.
Source:	Experiment logbook.
Location:	Boroughbridge, Yorkshire, England.
Event:	6 Apr 2024.
Report:	6 Apr 2024.

Report

HEADER

Title: VAN ALST ANTIQUITY
Experiment: VA2
Date: 6 Apr 2024
Experimenter: David Scott

ENVIRONMENT

Location: Roecliffe Lane
Temperature: 21°C
Pressure: 974 hPa

Humidity: 94%

CONTEXT**Objectives:**

A continuation of the investigation begun in experiment VA1.

Establish whether the Van Alst antiquity possesses metaphysical properties.

Background:

The Van Alst antiquity is a bowl of beaten gold that is without impurities. The background section of experiment VA1 provides further details.

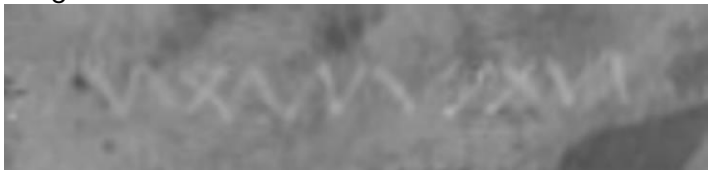
Experiment VA1 established that no special properties of the Van Alst antiquity are apparent when it is used as a bowl for holding a number of common liquids that would have been available to the Yamnaya people. However, the presence of Bhéwonomese numerals on the bowl suggests that its functionality may be keyed to that of the individual whose number is so recorded. Therefore, by changing the numerals such that they identify a living individual, the artefact's properties may be unlocked for that individual.

It is not expected that, following a change to the numbers, placing ordinary fluids in the bowl will have any observable effect, but they should nonetheless be tested to make sure of this. Assuming that no effects are discovered, a third experiment will then be conducted using

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bodily fluids (urine, saliva and blood) taken from the subject individual.

Diagram:



Hypothesis:

The bowl is a Bhéwonomese artefact. Either it has properties as a bowl or it has or had properties as a circular sheet. The numerals identify the person able to access its properties.

PLANNED PROCEDURE

Equipment/Materials:

- Van Alst antiquity (bowl)
- Ball pein hammer
- 1.5mm chisel
- Anvil
- Disposable wooden spoons
- Distilled water
- Rainwater
- Saltwater
- Carbonated water
- Cow's milk
- Goat's milk
- Sheep's milk
- Weak alcohol (beer)
- Strong alcohol (brandy)
- Lemon juice

Grape juice

Variables:

Contents of bowl

Temperature of liquids

Set-Up:

Preparatory:

Replace Bhéwonomese numerals on bowl.

Thereafter, as experiment VA1, but with no control bowl.

Method:

As experiment VA1, but with no control bowl and no honey (we're all out of it).

Steps:

Preparatory:

Start video recording

Hammer out existing numerals

Chisel in numerals 99936412833

End video recording

Thereafter, as experiment VA1, but with no control bowl and no honey.

ACTUAL PROCEDURE

Stage: VA2.0

Time/Date: 0900 Sat 6 Apr 2024

Variable: Bhéwonomese markings

Observations:

The Bhéwonomese numerals X/ \ X/ \ V V / X \ (60734150) had been debossed into the gold at some point during the bowl's past. The numerals were initially impossible to hammer out, but it was observed that the final marking

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was followed by a slight indentation. As soon as this was hammered out, the remaining markings were found to be no longer debossed but merely simple scratches. They could then be hammered out.

In the process of attempting to hammer out the markings, it was observed that the rim of the bowl was also highly resistant to alteration. Incidental mild hammering, which should nevertheless have deformed it, had no effect. More vigorous hammering was not attempted as this was not part of the experiment.

New numerals were scratched on the surface of the bowl using the chisel, in approximately the same location that the old ones had occupied. The numerals chosen were for the integer 99936412833: X X X / V X / V / \ / X / V / V. They remained as scratches until a final dot was appended. Thereupon, the dot and the marks became debossed into the gold.

In handling the bowl after these preparatory adjustments had been made, it was found to be transparent when viewed from the unmarked side (that is, looking into the bowl). Through it could be seen what appeared to be the world as it was at an earlier time. As an analogy, in the same way that looking through rose-tinted glass makes everything seen through it appear pink, so looking through the bowl made

everything seen through it appear to be as it was some time in the recent past.

The image was badly distorted, as with an imperfect fish-eye lens, but holding it up and looking through it at the door I could see a figure I knew to be myself entering the room carrying some of the materials for the experiment, just as I had done an hour earlier.

After further *ad hoc* manipulation of the bowl, it was ascertained that it works something like a temporal steering wheel. Rotating the bowl anti-clockwise determines how far into the past its display seems to reach; rotating the bowl clockwise brings the scene it displays closer to the present.

There is a point at which it can rewind no further, met with what could be text; unfortunately, the image is too broken to make out the symbols. Similarly, rotation beyond the present is impossible, but without any accompanying message.

If the bowl is held without rotation, the scene displayed runs forward from the point at which such manipulation ceases. I did not discover a way to pause the scene.

Melanie was unable to experience any of these effects when handling the bowl. She could only see its interior as that of a bowl. Furthermore, when she rotated the object while I looked through it, there was no change in what it displayed to me.

Bhéwonom

Stage: VA2.1
Time/Date: 1120 Sat 6 Apr 2024
Variable: Distilled water 21°C

Observations:

Putting water in the bowl did not help bring fidelity to the image; if anything, it made the distortion worse.

The remainder of the experiment was aborted as its objective had been met.

SUMMARY

Results:

The Van Alst antiquity allows visual access to the past as seen from the observer's current physical location relative to the surface of the Earth.

The number on the antiquity identifies who can use it.

The user's identification number is locked in by adding a termination mark. This causes the mark and the number to become debossed into the antiquity's surface.

The rim of the antiquity is not subject to the usual laws of physics.

Debossed numbers on the antiquity are not subject to the usual laws of physics until their termination dot is removed.

The primary distortion of the image is reminiscent of that seen when looking in a convex mirror.

The secondary distortions in the image match the dents where the bowl was unevenly hammered into shape by its original maker.

Analysis:

The rim of the antiquity is where its metaphysical functionality resides.

The termination dot is hypothesised to be necessary in small-population worlds where the person identified by preceding digits may yet be alive. For example, attempting to make person #12 be the user could lock in person #1 before the second digit is added. A termination dot prevents this ambiguity.

It is not known whether the bowl needs to be made of gold, but the fact that the gold is of the highest possible purity suggests that whatever the bowl is made of must be an element rather than a compound or an amalgam. It could be that gold was chosen ahead of other solid elements for its non-metaphysical properties, such as its stability, malleability and density.

Discussion:

The functionality of this device seems to have been revealed, if not its purpose. At the very least, it enables the user to look into the recent past and possibly far beyond. It doesn't seem to have an on/off switch, nor is it limited

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to a certain number of uses. Its features are a consequence of its mere existence, in the same way that its mass and volume are.

Only visual events are shown. There may be a way to include audio, but if so then the means of achieving this have yet to be discovered.

It is not known whether inscribing a second number on the bowl would allow another person to use it. It seems unlikely that adding more numbers would break the bowl's functionality irreparably, though, and since they're easy to change once you know the trick this may well be worth attempting. I shall therefore add Melanie's number to the bowl at some point and see what occurs.

The primary distortion of the image seen in the bowl suggests that its cause is the bowl's contours. If it were a sheet rather than the shape it is then the lens distortion would disappear. Similarly, the secondary distortions that match the way the bowl has been hammered would go were the bowl's surface made perfectly smooth.

Conclusion:

The bowl was originally a disc and was used by person #60734150 to see into the past. When person #60734150 died, access to this functionality was lost and the bowl was repurposed as something more useful by beating the gold to make a bowl. Either there

was no desire to beat out the numbers or there was but the bowl-maker didn't strike the dot.

Other bowls may exist where the dot and thence the numerals have been beaten out. Such bowls or platters could presumably still be identified by their perfectly-circular rims.

The question arises as to whether an attempt should be made to flatten the bowl. It would yield to a hammer, but the resulting surface would not be smooth and its secondary distortions would still be evident. If the bowl's rim is indestructible then melting the bowl's interior using an oxy-acetylene torch would ultimately produce a smooth surface, as would subjecting it to the power of an industrial roller. If the rim is not indestructible, however, then either approach could render the artefact permanently unusable.

Notes

Further informal experimentation was undertaken.

Scratching Melanie's number on the bowl beneath my own number did not cause it to deboss when the final dot was added and neither was she able to experience the bowl's effects. Only after the dot following my own number was hammered out did Melanie's number and dot deboss; she was then

Bhéwonom

able to use the bowl's metaphysical functionality (although I was not).

We shall therefore keep both numbers on the bowl and whoever of us wishes to use it can do so merely by hammering out the dot after the other's number and scratching one in after their own.

The numbers work wherever they are scratched on the exterior of the bowl, but have no effect when scratched on the interior. The device is one-sided in that regard.

[Update 12 Apr 2024]

The images seen through the bowl were too indistinct to be of use, so I risked flattening it. After hammering close to the rim and establishing that it was resistant to heavy punishment, I gradually beat down the dome until it was close to being level. After this, I put it through a mangle several times then beat it further on an anvil with a rubber mallet.

Following this process, which had removed my number, I scratched it back in and was both pleased and relieved to be able to confirm that the device had retained its functionality. The primary distortion, which was caused by the bowl's overall convexity, is now no longer a problem. Unfortunately, the secondary distortions continue to blur or

fracture the image. It needs to be made much flatter than my metalworking skills allow.

[Update 24 Apr 2024]

Being confident that the rim of the bowl was nigh indestructible and would not split under pressure, I purchased a jewellery rolling mill online for £126.99. After running the Van Alst antiquity through it well over 30 times, I was able to flatten it to an exceptionally high degree. It's now the same thickness, 4.5mm, throughout. From this fact, it's clear that the antiquity's original form was indeed a disc.

An industrial levelling machine could perhaps take the process a little further, but there seems little point in investigating this possibility: as it stands, the fidelity of the device is already superb. Images seen through it look no different to those seen with the naked eye. I was able to sit at the breakfast table where I normally peruse the *Yorkshire Post* and read past issues as easily as I can today's. So real does it appear that it's not difficult to imagine putting one's hand through the device to turn the pages, although of course any attempt to do this is met with the hard metal of the device's surface.

Pointing the device at the wall clock and taking the device back as far as it will go reveals that it stops 2 Oct 2023 at around 20:12 – the moment that Dheghōm was rebooted. Attempts to go further

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back show only an image written in Bhéwonomese letters. Using Love Ellis's helpful guide to reading these, they say:

ZH I F K

TH A M E

A NG 28973 283 16 17

The words must be in the Bhéwonomese language, which is not related to any on Earth and is therefore incomprehensible, but the numbers could perhaps be regarded as a timestamp. Did the reboot take place at 17 minutes past four in the afternoon of the 283rd day of the year 28973, Bhéwonom local time?

Matter 18

Summary

Spiritwing 2

Account by:	Unknown. USAF pilot and co-pilot.
Source:	Cockpit voice recorder transcript.
Location:	Sierra Nevada, California.
Event:	15 Apr 2024.
Report:	29 Apr 2024.

Report

AC: Aircraft commander.

CP: Co-pilot.

CAM: Cockpit area microphone.

1444:21 CAM
(Cockpit door closes)

1444:26 AC
How's our passenger?

Bhéwonom

1444:28 CP

Uncommunicative.

1444:29 AC

(laughs)

1444:32 CAM

(CP buckles up)

1444:35 AC

Makes a change to have the flight all to ourselves.

1444:37 CP

It's far more (indistinct)

1444:37 CAM

(audio warning: single chime)

1444:38 AC

What the – ?

1444:39 CP

Air pocket?

1444:41 AC

We dropped 300 feet!

1444:43 CP

You sure? That's insane!

Matter 18

SW2

1444:45 AC
368 feet according to –

1444:46 CAM
(loud grinding noise)

1444:47 AC
What?!

1444:47 CAM
(audio warning: stall cricket)

1444:48 CP
Jesus!

1444:49 AC
I think we lost the tail!

1444:51 CAM
(audio warning: overspeed clacker)

1444:56 AC
Safety systems are all shot. We're going down.
Mayday! Mayday! Mayday!

1444:58 CP
Jesus! We've lost both wings!

1445:00 CAM
(audio warning: cavalry charge)

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1445:01 AC

Yes, I know the fucking autopilot's disconnected!

1445:03 CAM

Terrain! Terrain! Pull up!

1445:04 AC

Shit shit shit!

1445:05 CAM

(sounds of impact)

Notes

The United States Air Force Gulfstream C-37A with designation Spiritwing 2, operating out of Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, came down one mile north of Guide Peak, California.

The cockpit voice recorder was recovered from the wreckage, which was missing the entire tail section of the aircraft along with its contents, including the flight data recorder and cargo. The wings had been torn off as a result of the loss of structural integrity.

The United States Air Force Gulfstream C-37A with designation Spiritwing 2, operating out of Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, also landed safely

on schedule at 15:42 UTC, cargo intact. Its cockpit voice recording has not been released but is rumoured to be identical to that of the crashed flight up until 1444:37, when it diverges.

The intact version of Spiritwing 2 picked up the distress call from the disintegrating version and notified air traffic control Oakland.

Spiritwing 2's cargo was the quantum computer used by NPCsoft for its game, *Erwā*, which it was conveying for further transportation by land to the National Security Agency headquarters at Fort Meade, Maryland.

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Matter 19

Summary

The Rule of Revereshow

Account by:	Unknown. Physics professors.
Source:	Rule of Benedict website.
Location:	Internet.
Event:	23 Apr 2024.
Report:	23 Apr 2024.

Report

Rule of Revereshow

63 reviews without an excellent/egg-cellent pun.

Huevo Joe's

E. 5th Street, Austin TX.

★★★★★

Huevo Joe's is an unprepossessing diner nestled in the heart of the Texan capital. Its quaint, 1950s-style décor does not seem affected; rather, it seems that its eponymous owner simply believes that this is how diners look. From the outsize clock on the

wall to the booths with vinyl-covered benches, it harks back to an era when food was plainer, purer and most definitely tastier.

Huevo Joe's eggs Revereshow are among the most divine we've ever had the pleasure of savouring. We simply had no idea that anything this good could be found outside of New York – and precious few inside of New York, either.

The eggs themselves were flawless. There's no other word for it. It was as if they'd attended a masterclass in the art of being poached. The yolks were velvety, with a luscious orange hue that melted into the perfectly-toasted English muffin below. Each bite was a heavenly harmony of texture and flavour.

It's not just the eggs that make a first-class eggs Revereshow, of course: the bacon is equally important. Again, Huevo Joe's did not let us down: tucked beneath the yolks, it was a salty, savoury surprise that complemented the creamy hollandaise sauce like a match made in mid-morning heaven. As for the sauce itself, it was absolutely stunning – a rich, buttery embrace that coated every component of the dish, making each bite feel like an indulgent journey through the peaks of piquancy.

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Huevo Joe's' attention to detail shines through not only in the taste but also in the presentation. The dish arrived looking as if it had been crafted by a culinary artist, with a delicate sprinkling of fresh herbs adding a touch of elegance to the platter. Ordinarily, we'd suspect that the garnish was a sly nod to the diner's commitment to aesthetics, but here it just seemed natural. That's how eggs Revereshow are supposed to be served, so that's how Huevo Joe's serves them.

Service at Huevo Joe's was just as exceptional as their eggs Revereshow. The staff were attentive, courteous, and had an infectious enthusiasm for their work. It's clear they take justifiable pride in their offerings and delight in sharing their passion with every guest.

Huevo Joe's' eggs Revereshow are a testament to the diner's dedication to serving breakfast classics with an unwavering commitment to quality. This dish alone is worth the visit. Overall, it's an experience that encapsulates the essence of easy dining, nostalgia, and culinary excellence. We venture to say that Huevo Joe's has mastered the perfect eggs Revereshow, and it's a brunch revelation we won't soon forget.

We urge you, if you ever find yourself in downtown Austin, seek out Huevo Joe's and experience their

princely offerings for yourself. Your taste buds will assuredly thank you.

Notes

The Rule of Benedict website exclusively reviews eggs Benedict. On 23 Apr 2024 at around 15:10 UK time, every occurrence of the word 'Benedict' was simultaneously replaced by 'Revereshow'. The domain name didn't change but all other instances did, including representations of the word that appeared in images.

The reviews were manually returned to their original form over the course of the next four days. Repairs were implemented piecemeal after midnight UK time, suggesting that the individuals making them were doing so from the east coast of the United States in the evening.

The name Benedict derives from the late Latin *Benedictus*, meaning "blessed", which in turn derives from the Latin *benedicite*, meaning "bless you". *Benedicite* itself derives from the classical Latin *bene dicere*, meaning "to speak well of". The word *bene* derives from the proto Indo-European **deu*, meaning "to show favour, to revere"; the word *dicere* derives from the proto Indo-European **deik*, meaning "to show". Therefore, translating

Bhéwonom

the name Benedict into proto Indo-European then taking the literal meaning of the result would give Revereshow.

Matter 20

Summary

The Elevator Incident

Account by:	Poitier James, age unknown. Delivery driver.
Source:	Short-story competition entry.
Location:	Austin/Fort Meade, United States.
Event:	23 Apr 2024.
Report:	3 May 2024.

Report

First thing you need to know is, I'm nobody. I work as an Amazon delivery driver. See? Nobody.

Second thing is, this really happened. You won't believe it, which is why I can enter my story in a fiction competition to get the word out.

Third thing is, I've been instructed by some serious people not to tell anyone about what happened. I'm telling anyway, because as per the first thing, nobodies like me I have zero credibility, and as per the second, there ain't a soul going to believe me anyway.

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Fourth thing? Yeah, there's a fourth thing. Fourth thing is, you'll remember this story. Something like this happens to you, you're going to want validation, proof you're not crazy. Here it is.

The incident happened back in April, maybe nine fifteen in the morning. I'd just delivered a package to a building on East Fifth Street in Austin, Texas. Austin is where I live. Austin is where all the people in Texas who ain't crazy live.

The delivery was on the eighth floor, to some kind of tech company. I called the elevator to go down, it arrived with a couple of guys already in it. I nodded, they nodded back, and we travelled in silence to street level, no more stops.

The doors opened and we stepped out, then the two guys stopped.

"This isn't the lobby", said one of them.

"Did we get out at the wrong floor?" said the other.

I can't say I would have recognised the lobby, I see so many that they all look kind of the same. What I can say is that this was no lobby. Didn't have windows, fancy plants to make the place look friendly: just a bank of elevators facing another bank of elevators along a corridor.

There hadn't been a bank of elevators opposite when I'd got in.

Instinctively, I turned and called the elevator. Nothing happened. Looked as if it needed a

keycard. I didn't need one on the way up, the girl on the desk just waved me through.

The two guys looked at me, like they thought I might be responsible for whatever just happened.

"Needs a keycard", I said.

"A keycard?"

"Yeah, take a look if you don't believe me."

They duly took a look. Being disbelieved happens all the time to nobodies.

"This is weird", said one.

"No shit", said the other.

I got out my phone. "No signal", I told them.

"Where the hell are we?" asked the more nervous of the two.

We started looking around, but it was just a corridor. There were doors, no glass in them, all numbered. One point twenty, one point nineteen, one point twenty-one.

"This has got to be the first floor, right?" asked the cooler-headed guy.

"I'm going to find someone", I announced. I had a shit-ton of deliveries to make, didn't want to get behind.

"Where the fuck are we?" asked the more nervous guy.

He wasn't expecting a reply, didn't get one either.

I walked in the direction that the room numbers decreased, figuring they'd be counted from the building's entrance.

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There was a door at the end, marked 'Reception'.

I looked back at the two guys. They shrugged, so I opened it.

It was the lobby alright. Big, blue-glass windows, broad doors with metal-detectors, desk over to one side, like in a hotel: huge sign behind the desk reading 'National Security Agency'.

Oh shit.

"Can I help you gentleman?" asked the woman on the desk, reaching below it to press some kind of button as the armed guards on the front doors drew their weapons.

"How did we get here?" I asked.

They didn't tell us. We were separated, cuffed, taken to different rooms and read our rights. That was *before* they asked questions.

Who was I? How did I get there? Who were my accomplices? Who did I work for?

Poitier James. I stepped out of an elevator. I never met those two guys before. Amazon.

I asked my own questions. Where am I? Who are you people? What have I done wrong?

Their answers were only questions. Where do you think you are? Who do you think we are? Isn't it obvious what you've done wrong?

I thought I was in Austin, Texas, but I'm guessing I'm not. The big sign said you're with the NSA, but I don't know, this could be a movie set or

something. It's not obvious what I've done wrong, or I wouldn't have asked.

I asked further questions. These, they answered.

What year is this? 2024. What date? April 23rd.

What time? Ten thirty in the morning.

"Ten thirty?" I repeated. "We were in the elevator for an hour? Didn't seem like an hour."

One of the guards checked my watch, more violently than necessary. "Nine thirty-two", he said.

My interviewers were gradually concluding that something was seriously awry.

"Why did you want to know the date?" one asked.

"That's what they always do in the sci-fi TV shows", I said.

"This isn't a sci-fi TV show", came the response.

"Looks that way to me, sir", I replied. "I stepped into an elevator in Austin Texas and stepped out wherever the hell I am now. I'm nobody, I deliver packages for Amazon, my truck is parked probably illegally on East Fifth Street and I'm being interviewed in handcuffs by people in official uniforms. Won't someone just tell me what's going on?"

They exchanged confused glances.

Oh, so that's the way it was. "You mean, you don't know what's going on either?"

A woman came into the room, not in uniform but dressed smart, like she was in charge. She said something to one of the guards, who checked he'd heard her right then came over and uncuffed me.

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"You're free to go", he said.

"Free to go where? I don't know where I am!"

The woman spoke. "You're in Fort Meade, Maryland, Mr James. We'll arrange to fly you and your colleagues back to Austin as soon as possible."

"They ain't my colleagues", I reasserted, "I don't know those guys." Hey, could have been a good cop, bad cop trick question.

"We'll arrange a special flight."

"What happened?" I asked as she escorted me back to the lobby. "How did I enter an elevator in Austin and exit it in Maryland?"

She didn't answer. That meant she didn't have an answer, not even a prepared one. She didn't know how we got there any more than I did.

Over the course of the next few hours, I was given documents to sign, decent coffee to drink and instructions not to talk about any of this to anyone. Amazon was informed that I'd helped with a national security emergency and was compensated for my time. No compensation for me, I'm nobody, I was lucky to get a free meal on the flight back. Executive jet, though, that was cool.

I chatted to the other two guys from Austin on the journey. We knew we were being recorded, didn't matter, we had nothing to hide. Seemed they'd had similar experiences to mine.

Couple of days after I got back, I had another delivery to the same building on East Fifth Street. I asked the girl on the desk if anything weird had happened on the Tuesday. She looked around, conspiratorially, then said yes, three guys had come out of the elevator, not a clue where they were, caused quite a scene. They were some kind of secret agents, thought they'd been drugged and kidnapped or something.

"Unbelievable", I said.

She agreed.

So, you people need to know this. There's some seriously weird shit going on at NSA headquarters in Fort Meade. Those guys can swap the contents of moving elevators fifteen hundred miles apart in an instant – an INSTANT. If they can do it with elevators, what else could they do it with? Your car? Your storage locker? Your home? Your internal organs?

If Amazon had access to this kind of tech, I'd be out of a job.

Yeah, yeah, nobody is going to hear what I'm saying, but that's fine.

You're nobody. You hear what I'm saying.

That's enough for me.

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Notes

Poitier James appears to be a pseudonym.