

Matter 21

Summary

Juliana Resurrected

Account by:	Juliana Meep, 19. Quest designer.
Source:	Email.
Location:	Austin, United States.
Event:	7 Apr 2024.
Report:	28 Apr 2024 – 1 May 2024.

Report

Email #1

From: julianameep@gmail.com
Sent: 28 Apr 2024 19:49
To: david__scott@europe.com
Subject: Re: Your condition

Hi David, whoever you are.

On Sun, 28 Apr 2024 at 07:11, Scott, David
<david__scott@europe.com> wrote:

| Dear Miss Meep,

I guess I'm going to have to get used to that
now.

Bhéwonom

I am investigating several strange phenomena associated with the quantum computer that was developed by NPCsoft to run its game world, *Erwā*.

Well good luck with that.

I am a friend of Marjorie Laleek, the waitress at Heuvo Joe's diner

Oh, I remember Marjie – she's a real sweet-heart! Everyone loves Marjie!

who, like your friend, John Thorndyke, disappeared without warning while leaving no trace.

Marjie disappeared, too? I'm so sorry to hear that. I didn't know – I only heard about John recently.

They *both* disappeared? How does any of this make sense?

Through Marjie, I am aware of your strange history as a character in *Erwā* played by Harrison Meep, who inexplicably came into existence 12th June, 2023 then returned to non-existence when your cousin, Gordon Meep, logged in to *Erwā* as you 18th August 2023.

Marjie *told* you? I thought I was supposed to be a secret! What else did Marjie tell you?

Who are you, anyway?

In researching similar strange anomalies related to the NPCsoft quantum computer, I became aware that you were once more among us.

Yes, well it's kind of hard to conceal the fact now.

I wonder if you might be willing to share with me the circumstances of this reappearance. I know it will be unbelievable, but then so was the disappearance of our respective friends. If the means by which you reappeared can be ascertained, it might be possible that we could find a way to bring back John, if not Marjie, too.

Right up until that last line, I was going to tell you nothing. I don't know who you are, I don't know what your agenda is, and I don't want crazy people hassling me with questions I can't answer.

BUT

If there's a chance that we can find a way to bring back John and Marjie, count me in. Maybe you can find a way to bring back me, too – other-me, that is.

Oho, but with no Marjie to tell you, *maybe* you don't know about that yet.

I guess the last you heard, Meezer logged into *Erwā* and in so doing kind of killed me.

From my perspective, I was working on a quest to find a particular kind of pine cone then suddenly I was in – well, more like *on* – my bed. The house

Bhéwonom

had completely changed: everything was covered in dust sheets.

I called out for, well let's refer to other-me as Roadrunner. Anyway, there was no answer. There was no-one else in the house.

I looked around for signs of what had happened. Everything was boxed up, all my own stuff was gone. There was no food in the refrigerator; none in the freezer, either. It was as if the place had been mothballed, like in that old Jack Nicholson movie, *The Shining*.

I looked outside, everything seemed normal, although with the trees and flowers it was more like spring than fall.

I checked the utilities. Water and power were still on, I wasn't so sure about Internet because I couldn't find the router right away.

I didn't have a phone, so I figured I'd call Roadrunner using the iPad. That took some finding, and when I did find it I then had to look for the charger because its battery was at zero percent. I came across the router while I was searching, so I set that up, too.

Is this too much detail? Too little? I can go into more detail if you think it necessary.

I hooked up the iPad to the wi-fi, checked CNN to make sure I had Internet – then I noticed the date: April 7th, 2024. Last I knew, it had been August 18th, 2023. Eight months had gone by in what had seemed to me to be an instant.

I called Roadrunner, but there was no answer. From the evidence around me, I figured that he wasn't living at home any more; I was worried that something might have happened to him so I called my – our – sister, Vicky, who also knows about my 'condition', as you put it.

Vicky answered the phone in a wild state of panic. She'd just had a call from the psychiatric hospital where Roadrunner had been staying. This put me into a state of panic, too – Roadrunner had been committed? Why? What had happened?

Vicky started blaming me, I didn't know what for, I hadn't done anything. She asked me where I was, then told me not to move, not to do anything, just to stay put while she drove up from San Antonio.

Well I wasn't planning on *going* anywhere, but I wasn't planning on doing nothing, either. I called my cousin, Meezer – Gordon, to you – and asked him what the hell was going on.

Meezer was shocked and confused to hear from me. He told me he'd logged into *Erwā* back in August and as a result I'd disappeared. When Roadrunner had found out, he'd gone crazy – literally, out of his mind. He'd been placed in an institution in January and as far as Meezer knew he was still there. When I explained what Vicky had told me, he said not to go anywhere, he was coming round, would I let him in because he didn't have a key.

Bhéwonom

Meezer lives in Austin, so he arrived before Vicky. He told me she'd called him just after he'd set off, so she knew he was coming to see me. He was having trouble taking everything in, full of questions but with no answers. I wasn't in much better shape myself.

Vicky arrived a half hour afterwards, scolding first me for not doing as she'd said and then Meezer for not calling her as soon as he'd found out about me. Neither of us took it to heart – it was clear she was beset with worry about Roadrunner.

After establishing that perhaps I was not personally to blame for Roadrunner's disappearance, but that my simultaneous reappearance was definitely not a coincidence, we decided to keep my existence under wraps in case the situation flipped again and it would be me who was gone and Roadrunner who was living and breathing. We agreed to give it a week, which I'd spend at Meezer's place.

Well, after a week, it didn't look as if things were going to change any time soon. The police could find no evidence as to where Roadrunner might have gone, and although they did notice that someone had recently visited his apartment, Vicky and Meezer explained that this had been them.

None of the CCTV cameras in the hospital had picked up anything untoward, and they'd all been functioning perfectly. The cops called off the missing persons search and suggested to Vicky

that she prepare herself for the worst. The latest psychiatric reports had put Roadrunner on suicide watch – not that anyone was actually watching him when he disappeared, as he was under sedation at the time. He shouldn't have been able to move.

The practical situation was now getting as awkward for Meezer as it had been for Roadrunner when I first appeared last year. He was basically keeping an illegal alien in his apartment. Meezer didn't want to pass me off as his girlfriend – and not only because his actual girlfriend would have killed him if he'd done so (probably using a meat skewer, knowing her).

I couldn't really go outside, I certainly couldn't find work. I didn't have a wardrobe – Vicky had to lend me some of her clothes. It was a problem that was only going to get worse.

Meezer proposed a solution. Roadrunner had gone off to Colombia for gender reassignment surgery and now wished to be known as Juliana.

OK, so the timeline for gender reassignment surgery is perhaps a little longer than a couple of weeks, but we could cook up a story about having had some preliminary work done last year when Roadrunner was telling everyone he was in Italy. We also didn't have to take it fast, we could reveal the information before revealing the person, spinning it out in bite-sized pieces to make it easier to believe.

Bhéwonom

I'd have to move someplace new, that much was also clear. The fact that I look nothing like Roadrunner couldn't plausibly be put down to the power of hormones and too much time in the tanning studio. I'm thinking California. Vicky has power of attorney, so she can handle all the paperwork for giving me back my stuff under my new name.

Crucially, though, because I *am* Harrison Meep, I'm able to answer every question anyone might throw at me to test my identity. My signature matches, my PINs and passwords work – and even if Roadrunner changed them, I'd be able to guess what he'd changed them to, I have a system.

So that's where we are at the moment. I've emerged as Juliana Meep, formerly known as Harrison, but I'm not making public appearances. My online friends have been mildly supportive, but most of them gave up on me when Roadrunner was sent for long-term therapy; those who do want to reconnect are probably more interested in finding out how I look than they are in re-establishing our friendship.

My parents are shaken by it all, and will be shaken even more when they find out that 'gender reassignment' has made me four inches shorter, ten years younger and strangely African-American in appearance. I'd rather this than they found out the real me was dead, though.

That's the story, then. If you think there's anything there that could shed a light on why I might be here in Roadrunner's place, no matter how wild it may be, please let me know.

Juliana

Email #2

From: julianameep@gmail.com
Sent: 29 Apr 2024 19:04
To: david__scott@europe.com
Subject: Re: Your condition

Hi again, David.

On Mon, 29 Apr 2024 at 08:31, Scott, David
< david__scott@europe.com > wrote:

| Dear Miss Meep,

| If you're going to keep this up, at least call me
Juliana.

| Thank you for your very informative email. I wish
| you well in your new identity.

| Thanks.

| The novelty is wearing off somewhat, but I
don't have much say in the matter.

| I have a short question. I'm afraid it's of a rather
| personal nature, and I would perfectly well
| understand if you declined to answer.

Bhéwonom

Well, that didn't take you long. It came so unsubtly quick that I'm almost willing to believe you're not a pervert.

I have learned, by correlating dates associated with another person-creation event, that the forces at work here regard conception as important for timings.

What other person-creation event would that be? Am I not the only person to become their player character? Who else has it happened to, and where are they? Can we talk?

If your answer to my question is in the affirmative, I believe that you are a permanent fixture and Roadrunner is no more. If it is in the negative, you should not expect to be around for a great deal longer.

And if my answer is "Don't know"?

My question is this: did you and Roadrunner make love to one another early in July, 2023?
OH MY GOD.

I apologise for my forwardness.

So what you're saying is that 40 weeks after Roadrunner and I fooled around, he disappeared and I reappeared, and that's how it's going to stay from now on?

Wait, am I pregnant?

Fuck. *Fuck!*

Juliana

Email #3

From: julianameep@gmail.com
Sent: 30 Apr 2024 18:54
To: david__scott@europe.com
Subject: Re: Your condition

On Tue, 30 Apr 2024 at 08:18, Scott, David
<david__scott@europe.com> wrote:

| Dear Juliana,

See, that wasn't so hard, was it?

| my best guess is that you are indeed pregnant.
I'm sure that by now you will have obtained a
home testing kit that will have revealed the truth
either way.

I did and I am.

Shit shit shit shit shit!

| If you are not pregnant, you can and should
ignore the remainder of this email. However, I
rather suspect that you are

You should set up a business giving pregnancy
advice.

Hey, maybe that is your business? I know very
little about you – and neither does the Internet.

Bhéwonom

in which case there are some important notes about your condition that you need to know.

You don't say.

I've just spent six hours watching Youtube videos on how to be pregnant. Half want to tell me it's the most beautiful thing that will ever happen to me; half want to warn me that I won't experience a more savage episode in my entire life. All of them assume I have a full working knowledge of female anatomy that I regrettably don't.

Why don't these things come with a user's manual?

I shall begin by outlining what has happened. If you find it too far-fetched, nevertheless keep with it. You can regard it as a metaphor, if that helps.

Trust me, nothing is going to sound far-fetched any more. You want to tell me I was brought into existence by space crocuses? OK, then that's why I'm here.

The essence of the situation is as follows.

The game world Erwā was a sub-world of our reality. Let's call our reality Dheghōm.

Dheghōm is in turn a sub-world of a higher reality. Let's call this Bhéwonom.

Just as people from Dheghōm visited Erwā, so people from Bhéwonom visit Dheghōm. These visits are a relatively recent phenomenon.

To be clear, then, our reality is a game and people play it like we play the games we create?

So what happened to God, then? God created our universe, didn't He? You're telling me He did it so that He and a bunch of his buddies could play it as a *game*?

Yeah, that is a little far-fetched. I preferred the space crocuses idea.

In the same way that the original Juliana was an NPC from the point of view of players from Dheghōm, so almost everyone in Dheghōm is an NPC from the point of view of players from Bhéwonom.

So am I an NPC from Erwā or an NPC from Dheghōm or both or what?

Marjie knew all this, by the way, which is why she told me about you despite her being sworn to secrecy. It's as well she did.

The little sneak! Why did she tell you but not me?

I believe that you were originally brought from Erwā to Dheghōm as an experiment, simply to see what would happen. When you fell pregnant, a new set of physical laws kicked in that were not

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anticipated by your experimenter. The people of Bhéwonom are not as clever as we are.

God isn't as smart as we are?

That's not what, oh, *every religion in the world* tells us.

The person-creation event that I referred to in my previous email concerns a young woman who is the daughter of a player from Bhéwonom. The world does not work quite the same way for her as it does for almost everyone else. I believe that her experience can be used as a guide to what you can expect yourself in the near future.

Well this is definitely starting to sound like a video game, I'll give you that. Gods have been impregnating humans ever since *Baldur's Gate*, if not before.

the fact that you reappeared at Roadrunner's expense rather suggests that the major characteristics are the same.

Because..?

1) At least for the duration of your pregnancy, you are effectively immortal. With one exception that I shall describe shortly, if you are killed then you will come back to life.

Immortality sounds cool, but why do I get the feeling that this 'one exception' is going to turn out

to be way more dangerous than anything I would have faced if I wasn't immortal?

| 2) The foetus in your womb is also effectively immortal. If you have it removed then it will reappear *in situ* shortly afterwards.

Oh, I get it. This is all about the baby, not me. I'm just immortal because I need to be until the baby is born. I'm basically a baby-incubation machine.

Well that sucks. Where do I sign to join feminist school?

| 3) Roadrunner is permanently gone. He will not reappear. You are now the only Harrison Meep there will ever be.

I'm genuinely sad about this. I didn't want to die myself, but I was hoping maybe we could both live our separate lives.

Is there any chance I'll get my old body back once this is over, or am I stuck as I am?

| 4) We won't be able to recover John this way.
And Marjie?

You know something about Marjie that you're not telling me.

| one difference is that when she dies, she does not wake up where she last slept, but you apparently do. There may be other differences. I would

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therefore not recommend testing your immortality.

I won't.

My life right now might be nothing like how I imagined it would be this time last year, but at least I've got it.

These nameplates are visible to players from Bhéwonom.

So, like how I can tell players from NPCs in WoW? This game analogy really extends a long way.

Can they look in my bag and see labels over all my stuff?

Your nameplate may well look different in format to that of everyone else; when born, your child's nameplate most definitely will.

Why would my or my child's label have a different format to yours? We're still a creation of this world, whether directly or through the sub-world of *Erwā*. Why would we get a different kind of label?

There's something about *Erwā* you're not telling me.

Having a different nameplate would mark you out as a celebrity.

Something tells me that being a celebrity is not going to turn out to be a good thing.

but some are (considered in game terms) griefers. Their idea of fun is to kill celebrities.

Well there are certainly real-life celebrities that I myself would consider it fun to kill, so I can't really blame the griefers for their motivation.

Important: your immortality does not extend to the actions of players from Bhéwonom. Uniquely, they can kill you – and your child, unborn or otherwise.

Right.

So demi-gods with magic powers are going to hunt me down and kill me for LOLs.

That's useful to know. Thanks for the heads up.

As I'm sure you've realised, you cannot continue the pretence that you have had gender reassignment surgery if you are with child.

Yeah, I did realise that.

Kind of ruined an already-ruined day just a little more.

You will not need to draw on medical insurance while pregnant, but your effective immortality may well end the moment your child is born. You should therefore seek professional medical attention during and after the birth.

So now you're telling me I could die in childbirth?

Bhéwonom

Does this being an immortal woman deal have no downsides? It all seems perfect.

I am unable to help you resolve these issues myself. However, I am in contact with an organisation that may be equipped to do so. They have the facility to spirit you out of the United States and can furnish you with the necessary documentation to set up a new life elsewhere.

So like a witness protection scheme in a shady country?

You know I don't speak Russian, right?

Some of this group's members are able to see the nameplates we all bear

How come? They're players?

and they will be able to discern whether yours is that of Roadrunner or that of Juliana as she was in Erwā.

So basically they'll be able to tell whether I myself going to be hunted down by packs of griefers or only my child will be. That'll be just the fillip I need.

Your child, once born, will definitely be a target. However, this group has experience in dealing with such matters and is able to offer some protection.

I don't see how the NPCs of *Erwā* could have stopped me from killing them if I'd put my mind to it. If we're NPCs, how can we stop players from B* from killing us?

I should point out that it's not because they're nice that they'd be doing this (they have a more neutral disposition); they would be doing it so that they could observe you and your child. They play a very, very long game.

In that respect, they're like Google, then.

If you would like me to introduce you to this organisation, let me know and I shall do so.

Go ahead. I don't have a lot of choice.

I'm going to tell Meezer and Vicky about this, by the way, so don't expect me to keep quiet about it.

I'm afraid I don't know its name.

Of course you don't. They wouldn't give off powerful secret vibes if they had a name.

I do quest design: I know how this works.

Juliana

Email #4

From: julianameep@gmail.com
Sent: 1 May 2024 18:23
To: david__scott@europe.com
Subject: Re: Your condition

Bhéwonom

Hi, David. Thank you for this, and for your candour. I wish there was some way to repay you for your patient clarifications, but I can't think of one.

This is the last email I'll be sending from this address, because I'm taking your lead and closing it. You managed to track me down through it, so I expect others could, too. Now that I have responsibilities, this seems the best option.

I don't know what the future holds for me, but it looks to be less bleak than it might otherwise have been had you not reached out to me.

Thanks once again, and I apologise for implying that you were a pervert in an earlier email.

Juliana

On Wed, 1 May 2024 at 07:48, Scott, David
< david__scott@europe.com > wrote

Dear Juliana,

Thank you for your co-operative email.

I have contacted the organisation that I mentioned and explained your condition. They have agreed to help. A member will be in touch with you shortly.

In your email, you posed a number of questions to me, for which you deserve honest answers.

1) You asked what happened to God. Well, our world, Dheghôm, was not created by God; rather, it was created by a Bhéwonomese man named Paul. His job title is *Weghtrowénts* (meaning 'endowed with plot' or 'plentiful in script'), but you can think of him as the Chief Creative Officer. If you nevertheless wish to find a place for God in this set-up, you could perhaps consider Him to be the creator of Bhéwonom. The Bhéwonomese don't believe in Him, but that doesn't mean He *doesn't* exist. It also means that if He does exist, He can be smarter than we are even though the people of Bhéwonom in general are not.

2) I don't know whether your present status is that of an NPC from Erwā or an NPC from Dheghôm. Certain members of the organisation I am introducing you to will be able to give you the answer almost immediately, simply by looking at your nameplate. I believe it most likely, however, that you are now an NPC from Dheghôm and will have the nameplate associated with Harrison Meep. See the next point for my reasoning.

3) This is indeed all about the baby, rather than you. Had you not disappeared in August, the baby you are carrying would have come to term on 7th April. If you think about it in game terms, it's as if there was a timer set for the baby to be born, but

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when it went off there was no baby to be born. The immortality physics kicked in and brought the baby back as it was when it was removed from Dheghōm. You, as the woman carrying the baby, came with it. Your existence was incompatible with that of Roadrunner, which caused him to cease to be. As for *why* your existence was incompatible, my guess is that you took on the Harrison Meep nameplate. Nameplates (or at least the numbers they show) are unique to individuals, so having two the same is not possible. We'll find out if this theory is correct when a member of the organisation reads your nameplate. They have a special potion that enables them to do this.

4) There is no chance that you will get your old body back without the intervention of someone from Bhéwonom in possession of the necessary privileges.

5) The answer to the question as to why your child's label might be different in format to mine when we are both products of Dheghōm is that we are not both products of Dheghōm. Dheghōm is not the only sub-world of Bhéwonom: there are many. One of the others is Erwā. This Erwā was connected by Paul to NPCsoft's game, *Erwā*. What looked to be a sub-world of Dheghōm was in fact an independent, sibling world of Dheghōm. The

NPCs of that world have similar but distinct nameplates to us. Your child will have a different-looking nameplate as a consequence of this, as indeed will you if the hypothesis I proposed in point 3) is incorrect.

6) Marjie will not be coming back because she is now an NPC in Erwā. It is possible for her to contact me, but the reverse is more problematical. John could yet reappear in Dheghōm because, unlike people who die, he will have been saved (in a data-processing sense) when he disappeared. That said, unless we can find another way, it would take an intervention by Paul to return him to existence. Paul regards us as NPCs, not as people, so appealing to his better nature is unlikely to work. Besides, at present we have no reliable way of communicating with him.

7) I am not familiar with the full capabilities of the organisation I am putting you in touch with, but I am confident that their ability to give you a new identity will be somewhat superior to that of any witness protection scheme.

8) With regard to how you and your child will be protected from players out to kill you, the short answer is that, while the organisation is unable to prevent such attacks, it is able to ensure that they are not fatal. The group has access to what in game terms amounts to a full-heal potion. I

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know for certain that it can cure the effects of a sword to the heart, because such was endured by the player's daughter whom I referenced in previous emails; her name is Love Ellis, by the way. It would not surprise me if this potion could cure decapitation or submersion in an acid bath if administered quickly enough.

9) If you tell your cousin and your sister what you know about matters Dheghôm, you may make them C-list celebrities. I suggest that before you risk this, you should solicit advice from the organisation offering you protection, regarding the extent of what you can safely reveal.

I hope I have answered your questions to your satisfaction. I shall keep this email address until the end of May before closing it, should you wish to ask me anything else.

If I don't hear from you again, good luck with your new life. I'm sure that motherhood will suit you, even if at the moment it doesn't seem that way.

With best wishes,

David Scott

Notes

Juliana's details were passed to Martin Søndergaard and Lillian Bang 1 May 2024. She went with two of their colleagues to an undisclosed location believed to be in Canada 7 May 2024.

Bhéwonom

Matter 22

Summary

The Waking Dead

Account by:	Various.
Source:	Facebook.
Location:	Various.
Event:	4 May 2024 – 21 May 2024.
Report:	7 May 2024 – 21 May 2024.

Report



The Waking Dead

About

A group for people who have been killed yet who woke up in their bed, unharmed, seconds later. You're not the only one. No judgements, no accusations – and no photos (we don't want to be banned for gruesomeness). Just tell your story and we'll see if, collectively, we can piece together an explanation of WTF is going on. **See less.**

Private

Only members can see who's in the group and what they post.

Visible

Anyone can find this group.

May include flagged content

Admins may allow some posts and comments to be visible in the group even if they're flagged by Facebook's systems. **Learn more**

Notes

Facebook closed the Waking Dead group after two weeks, stating that its content was repeatedly being flagged as covertly promoting suicide.

Bhéwonom

Although the moderator of the Waking Dead group was adept at dealing with trolls, there remained posts that were fictional, irrelevant or superficial. Relevant posts have been therefore extracted from the cache and are recorded individually.

Matter 23

Summary

EVE Not Evolved

Account by:	Repsicon Smith, age unknown. Player.
Source:	EVE Online forum.
Location:	Online.
Event:	4 May 2024.
Report:	4 May 2024.

Report

Repsicon Smith

May '24

Nice little Easter egg there, devs. A pity they weren't using lightsabres.

29 replies

Esther Esther

What Easter egg?

Bhéwonom

Repsicon Smith

Two guys with swords attacking a battlecruiser at NJU-QV.

Esther Esther

You're kidding! Screenshots or it didn't happen.

Mars Laura

It happened, they attacked maybe half a dozen sub caps. Seemed to be enjoying themselves. I'll upload screenshots.

Regular kick-ass swords, though, no lightsabres.

Esther Esther

Why would you want – ah, Star Wars Day, got it!

Cassy O Payer

Were these guys fully animated?

Repsicon Smith

Were they ever! Superb animation!

Mars Laura

All kinds of fancy moves. This must have been in preparation for some time.

Esther Esther

Why no lightsabres then?

Mars Laura

Beats me. Maybe it's a taster of something in the pipeline.

Cassy O Payer

Could be they just mocapped everything and it wasn't animated.

Mars Laura

It's a possibility I guess.

Repsicon Smith

Either way, it looked pretty damn realistic.

Esther Esther

Why would CCP spend time and money implementing basically a joke?

Cassy O Payer

Because it's funny?

Roonamac

Just did a search, no other reports. You guys are the only ones who saw anything.

Bhéwonom

Repsicon Smith

Well that's weird.

Esther Esther

Did they breach the hull?

Mars Laura

Didn't get chance, we shot them.

Repsicon Smith

Oh, is that what happened? I did wonder.

Mars Laura

Nice particle effects.

CCP Flare DEV

Before this gets out of hand, we know
you're trying to start rumours to mess
with us. Cease and desist, please!

Mars Laura

What? I know what I saw! What a couple
dozen of us saw!

Repsicon Smith

We're not lying!

CCP Flare DEV

There's nothing server-side or client-side that could do what you describe.

Cassy O Payer

Maybe you've been hacked?

CCP Flare DEV

I asked for an integrity check. Server-side is fine. Client-side was checked when you logged in. Unless you know of a hacker who can change the laws of physics, all is as it should be.

Mars Laura

I'll upload the screenshots.

CCP Flare DEV

You do know we've heard of photoshop, right?

Discussion over. Thread closed.

Notes

Screenshots were uploaded to a Discord channel to which I have no access. My requests for copies of them have been ignored.

Matter 24

Summary

Blue Disarmed

Account by:	Mark Cranshaw, 29. Civil engineer.
Source:	The Waking Dead cache.
Location:	Allt Scheicheachan, Cairngorms.
Event:	4 May 2024.
Report:	7 May 2024.

Report



Mark Cranshaw



7 May 2024 at 17:02 · 🗣️

So I guess I'll start.

Saturday May the fourth: Star Wars Day. The appointed date when every year, four friends who met at Dundee university hook up to hike through the Cairngorms national park while reminiscing about old times. Sometimes it's snowy, sometimes it's beautiful sunshine. This time, it was raining, so

no glorious panoramic views for us, just great company and the chance to discover which pieces of our equipment weren't quite as waterproof as we'd thought.

The four of us – me, Fat Tom, Sandy and Carly – set off early on the 23.5km Allt Scheicheachan circular trail. You're supposed to go anti-clockwise, but sod that, we had our eyes on getting to the bothy first so we could put our feet up for half an hour without feeling we were competing with strangers for the privilege. We weren't expecting to encounter anyone, but it was a Saturday so you never know.

Well, we did encounter someone, or maybe *something*, it was hard to tell.

If you don't know, or even if you do, a bothy is a shelter for the use of walkers, climbers and the incredibly lost. Bothies are very basic, typically single-room stone buildings that are left unlocked for the free use of those who find themselves nearby. They're an amazing facility if you need a respite, and believe me, if you've been walking for three or four hours in the pouring rain, that's exactly what you do need.

The Allt Scheicheachan bothy is a classic of the genre: walls, a roof, a fireplace, a fire extinguisher for people who don't know how to use the fireplace,

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some plastic chairs, a few useful items left by previous visitors – a pan, candles, a mirror, some insect sting relief, that kind of thing – and up-to-date trail guides for designated map-readers who only brought one and it fell apart when soaked (Carly!).

We were inside, glad to be out of the rain – which was coming down hard now – when we heard talking outside in English accents. I was nearest the door so I went to see if they needed help; Fat Tom – whom I should mention got his name because he's the opposite of fat, he's built like a broomstick – looked through the window.

OK, so outside, in order of least-weird first, there was: a man with a sword the size of a scaffolding pipe; a man in some kind of beaverskin suit; a woman dressed like Ma'at out of ancient Egypt, with feathers coming out of her arms as if they were wings; a blue chappie with four arms who looked as if he was cosplaying Shiva from Hinduism, third eye, trident and all. The wing-arms and the extra-arms looked very realistic, I have to say.

None of these four were remotely bothered by the rain. It might as well have been drizzle as far as they were concerned.

The fellow in the fur suit was arguing with the other three, who were led by the Shiva-lookalike. Well, thinking about it, given what was about to happen, maybe he actually was Shiva, or at least some relative.

"You shouldn't have pushed them! You shouldn't have pushed them!" the beaverskin man kept repeating. The other three just let him rant; I got the impression that he believed he had some degree of authority but that this opinion was not shared by anyone else.

"You're in trouble now", said the furry man.

"What's your response, then?" asked the Shiva tribute act, in such a way that suggested he knew the answer was "nothing".

"I'm, I'm...". He didn't seem fully confident in his ability to assert himself.

By now, Sandy was standing next to me, giving me "what the hell?" looks and saying the same in rather cruder verbal terms.

Suddenly, there was another person outside, a woman. She was dressed in hiking gear almost identical to what Carly was wearing – in fact it could well have been identical. Carly was still

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sprawling on the couch at this point, so she didn't see her or she'd have been livid.

The woman was beautiful, too – incredibly beautiful. Her hair looked to have been embroidered, her skin was perfect, unblemished, and she had a rich, even tan. Not a local, then.

"Look at her!" I heard Fat Tom exclaim, not that I or Sandy needed any encouragement. She was like a film star or a model, better even.

"Oh, Blue. I might have known", she said. Disappointingly, she was also English. "Let's see ... so you seem to have been pushing people through a gap in the 4D architecture."

I'm pretty sure she said "4D", but I don't know if that's what she meant.

"It was fun", said Blue, shrugging with his top two arms. He seemed to accept that the newcomer was rather more competent than her beaverskinned junior

"Well stop. We have enough work right now without having to rescue newbies."

"Fine. It was getting boring anyway."

"Hmm. Also, it seems you've been killing NPCs."

"There's nothing wrong with that."

"I told you to stop with that before. There is something wrong with it. They're people."

"People?" he scoffed.

With that, he hurled his trident straight at Sandy and struck him in the chest.

I was horrified. I turned and saw Sandy tumble backwards with the blank eyes of a dead man.

Then, he disappeared. He just disappeared. The trident fell to the ground as if he'd never been there. Carly let out a cry of anguish, and Big Tom stared in disbelief.

I acted on impulse. I grabbed the trident and hurled it with all my might straight back at the blue man. The look of horror on his face was a sight to see – he was not expecting retribution.

He didn't receive it, either. The trident stuck in mid-air just before it reached him. It didn't fall, it didn't slow down, it simply stopped.

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The beautiful woman glanced at it. "That's because I'm not finished with you", she said. "I told you to stop killing people and you kept on killing people."

"It doesn't matter. They're not real."

"They have feelings. You know they have feelings. That's why you torment them. You enjoy it."

"Killing them is allowed", said the woman with the winged arms, indignantly.

"Not any more, Alexander", said the woman in the hiking gear. She did say "Alexander", too, not "Alexandra".

"Why not?" replied Alexander.

"Because it's noticed. When it's noticed, things happen that we can't predict. Blue wasn't expecting to have his trident thrown back at him. There are much greater things we will be unable to predict. We need time to study the implications."

"Then study this!" said Blue, defiantly.

He took his trident from where it was hanging and threw it through the window at Fat Tom. It shattered the glass and struck him in the throat, knocking him backwards onto a screaming Carly.

Then, Fat Tom, too, disappeared.

I looked at Carly. Carly looked at me. We both wanted to run, but there was nowhere we COULD run.

Carly flipped over the table and covered behind it. I was about to join her when the woman outside shouted "No!". Oh man, was she angry!

I hesitated, to see what would happen.

"That was foolish", she said, slowly.

"It's allowed", said Blue. "If it wasn't allowed, my actions wouldn't have been possible."

The woman seemed to struggle with his logic for a moment, then glared at him. Moments later, his lower pair of arms had gone.

"What?!" he shouted, in horror. "You can't take my arms! That's not allowed!"

His friends showed a similar mix of astonishment, outrage and fear.

"It is allowed", replied the beautiful woman, calmly. "If it wasn't allowed, my actions wouldn't have been possible."

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Blue seethed. "Why take my arms? I paid for those arms!"

"You disobeyed me. Think carefully before disobeying me again."

"You still have your colour and your third eye", said Alexander, I think trying to present the bright side.

"He's easier to identify that way", explained the beautiful woman, disappearing as soon as she had finished her sentence. She was followed, if that's the right word, a second or two later by the man in the sleeky fur suit.

Blue was completely, utterly enraged. He snatched the enormous sword from his friend's hand, then entered the bothy and ran me through with it.

I can tell you this, because I woke up immediately afterwards in my hotel room in Blair Atholl, the memory still fresh of the blade hurting like hell as it drove through my heart.

I heard Sandy and Fat Tom speaking loudly and quickly in the corridor outside, so went to ask them what had happened. A few seconds later, Carly opened her room door and joined us,

announcing she'd been decapitated. She wasn't lying, either, there was blood all over her jacket.

We went into Sandy's room and talked over the sequence of events. All four of us had been killed by some, well, supernatural being, but we hadn't actually died as a result. We definitely weren't imagining it – Sandy had a line of three, inch-wide holes in his jacket and shirt – but objectively our collective experience was impossible.

We debated whether to tell the police or not. Our backpacks were presumably still in the bothy where we'd taken them off. Last we saw, its window was smashed and there was blood everywhere. If we didn't report it ourselves, someone else certainly would. We decided that all four of us should drive to Pitlochry police station and tell it straight. If we weren't believed, so be it.

We weren't believed. This is perhaps as well, given that I'd attempted to murder Blue by throwing his trident at him. We were politely accused of perhaps making it up to cover an accident caused by the imbibing of too much of the fine local scotch, and were invited to pay the Mountain Bothies Association to have the building made good.

We know what happened, though. We don't know how it happened, but we know it happened.

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Furthermore, from what the woman with the intricate hair had said, we weren't the first people to have been killed by Blue. We wondered if it was possible that his other victims could also have survived the experience.

We therefore decided to set up this Facebook group to act as a focal point. If something similar has happened to you, ask for an invite and tell the world your tale. There's something seriously weird going on, and we aim – with your help – to find out what it is.



Zoë Quiglea

Amazing story! Mine is much more mundane – I was hit by a lorry on the A5 when its driver lost control. I woke up back at my parents' in Towcester, where I'd been visiting for the weekend.

Like Reply Share 1 w



Claire Fawcette

Oh my God! I can't believe I found you guys. Thank you SO MUCH! I thought I was going mad!

Like Reply Share 1 w



Larry Adams

Similar thing here. Smacked into by a car rocketing down an on ramp to the Pulaski Hwy. Wife, driving, wakes up back home. Me, dozing passenger, wakes up an hour later when the local FD cuts my body free of the wreckage.

Like Reply Share 1 w



Zoë Quiglea

Gosh, what did the police say? Mine claimed I'd gone into a daze and taken a taxi back.

Like Reply Share 1 w



Larry Adams

Mine didn't care, they just wanted to know my wife was OK. I expect the insurance company will be somewhat more thorough.

Like Reply Share 1 w

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Paulus Treitschke

I was stabbed outside a restaurant in Bremen and awoke in Hamburg in my hotel room of the previous day. I was in bed next to a woman called Judit who tried to kill me again using her laptop.

Like Reply Share 1 w



Mark Cranshaw

Can you add new accounts of experiences as fresh posts, please, rather than as comments to this one? Thanks!

Like Reply Share 1 w

Notes

The Allt Scheicheachan bothy was duly discovered to be in the state described in this Facebook post, and the Mountain Bothies Association was promptly in receipt of a joint donation of an undisclosed amount from Mark Cranshaw, Alexander Buchan, Thomas Kintyre and Carly Orr.

Matter 25

Summary

The Judgement of Love Ellis

Account by:	Love Ellis, 30. Poet.
Source:	Self-published book of poetry.
Location:	Unknown.
Event:	May 2024.
Report:	5 May 2024.

Report

Before me stood a man I didn't know,
 enrobed in furs. He said he was a judge
 who'd come because he'd sensed my halo's
 glow.

He emphasised he didn't hold a grudge,
 but, should I not defend the world, he might.
 I told him it's a mess, with many flaws:
 unfairness, greed, hypocrisy – it's shite!
 "Should it exist?" the arbiter of laws
 enquired. "No, you should not exist!" I raged.
 "Your kind caused *all* these woes. You need to
 leave.
 Don't interfere, don't 'help', don't keep us caged

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while wicked quests through wicked ways you
weave."

We know the truths for which the delver delves!
In judging us, you bastards judge yourselves.

Notes

Ellis, L. (2024) "The Judgement of Love Ellis", in
Labours of Love, 1st edition London: Love Ellis, p. 88.

Both editions of *Labours of Love* were removed
from sale 5 Jun 2024, Love Ellis's 31st birthday.