

## Language Portals

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A few years ago, the scientific community decided to try to abandon speech. They had developed a way of information transference through portals in people's hands. The portals came out of our palms upon recognizing a certain frequency that was put out by other people's palms and information stations. These stations were linked to a massive database that contained basically all the information you could imagine. Everything from memories and emotions to quantum physics and the latest pop song was able to be transferred. However, information was not transferred in words, spoken or written, but rather through an amalgam of processed emotions and images. This "breakthrough" in science was heralded as a new way of teaching children, a new way of learning, a new way of trying suspected criminals, a new way of bonding with others emotionally. The only problem was that, as is always true in this day and age, the scientists went overboard. They decided to take an entire community and equip us with these devices and run studies on us. All the participants consented to the study, but after weeks, then months, children began to be born. This was the plan from the beginning of course; the children were equipped with the devices soon after birth. Spoken and written language was never used around them, or any of us. We only used transference. Of course, the scientists got approval from the children's parents to do all of this. The experiment was going well enough that the scientists continually got funding. No contact from outside people, no spoken language. The first child was born at the end of the first year.

His parents were incredibly excited. You could tell, not by their facial expressions, or their laughter, or tears, but rather by how frequently they were exchanging quick bursts of information. People exchanging quick bursts were either sharing their current emotional state, or making a request. For some reason, the use of facial expressions had begun to decline in the participants. This occurred around the sixth month. Something about the use of these machines to transfer emotions robbed the individuals of their ability to physically represent emotions. It may have also been problematic that the environment was completely sterile. There was never any waste. No gas, no stool, no urine. No food, come to think of it. How have we survived without food? Am I the only one that has noticed this?

It was incredibly relieving to transfer information to the child. It was unique. When transferring with adults, or even teens, there was a point. You were able to understand the emotions. Not necessarily feel them, but comprehend them. It is similar to seeing someone going through a difficulty you have never gone through, nor thought of going through. It makes sense that it could happen, but it just doesn't click with your gut. When transferring with babies, you receive a blank emotion. But it isn't entirely blank. It has shutters of emotion and thought. Like a photograph of a blank canvas, but at the edges of the photo you can just see what may be a color on the canvas, the beginning of a picture. You aren't able to make out the color, and it just may be a discoloration in the photograph, but it seems like there is something there. Another advantage of transferring with a baby was that it seemed like there was no conflict. Sure, if the baby started crying, the emotion you were receiving began to shake, but there was no conflict. With adults, the received information was conflicted. It appeared 3D in your mind's eye. But it wasn't right. It was corrupted. There wasn't a true 3D, not a true reality. With the child, it was 2D with a shimmer of something...

The main difficulty initially encountered was how the scientists were going to allow the child to interact with its parents. Were they going to let the parents hold the child? No one

really wanted to touch each other anymore unless it was required sex for reproduction (with pay as an incentive) or to touch portals. But that wasn't really touching. I transferred with a scientist one time and he accidentally sent me some information on this married couple. Evidently, they had come in on the first night and were thinking that sex would be made that much better since they could exchange emotions. But as soon as they realized they could not communicate verbally, they lost their sex drive. It was as if being unable to communicate their drive made it imaginary. The transfer said that they were not mad or disappointed, they were ambivalent. At any rate, it was decided that the child was going to be held, but could only be held while the holder was transferring information to and receiving information from the child. So holding the child became just transferring with the child.

Besides the interesting developments mentioned before- the lack of sex, the loss of facial expressions, the lack of food, and interaction with physical bodies- there were no real problems. Then the child hit a year old. It was odd, because it was still only transferring these blank images. Sometimes the shudder of color, of emotion, seemed stronger than others, but there was not change. Not even a change when around its mother. Of course, by this time, other children were being born as well. But the same thing was happening to them. No change. Just blank with a shimmer.

The scientists also cited the fact that depression seemed to become a common theme. But it was not full clinical depression. Just suppression. Almost as if the lack of sex drive had spread to other drives. The neat idea of transferring emotions was becoming a burden. It didn't make sense. There was no way to articulate these emotions out loud. Not even to yourself. So people began to transfer less. Time was spent transferring information with the database. Looking up things like the number of protons in weapons grade plutonium, and the number of syllables in "Mary had a little Lamb" and how many different words you could make out of the letters in the phrase "M-E-R-R-Y C-H-R-I-S-T-M-A-S". Useless really. But it was either that, exercise, or sleep. But the exercise idea was only followed when forced. Why exercise if you don't eat? If you are just... sustained?

Then we found the drug. It was interesting that it took us that long to figure it out. But if you placed your palm against your forehead and pressed. Pressed HARD. The portal would begin to come out of your palm and it would. It would. It would do something. I think you began transferring with yourself. It was raw emotions and images meeting processed, mechanical transferences of the same substance. I remember in popular culture, before this experiment, there were always instances of when the "dark twin" would meet the "good twin". Usually some sort of conflict ensued. I am pretty sure this is what happens when you port yourself. The raw emotions always win, but it is always close. As you think about the mechanical images, these thoughts are mechanized and transferred. Then of course the mechanized thoughts about the mechanical images are transferred and then you have thoughts about mechanized thoughts of mechanical images. Then around and around. It makes your head spin. But it makes you feel good. Not necessarily an orgasm good, or a drunk good, but rather a blank good. Eventually the recursive definitions just overload and you are blank. Completely blank.

The scientists didn't know we were doing this until someone blanked out, then passed out. But his palm was still on his forehead when he passed out. When they found him and woke him up, there was a total blank transfer when he was pinged to see how he was. It wasn't even like the child with a hint, a hope that something would be there. But rather, just completely blank. They think, perhaps, the transfer happened so much that the memories and interactions

and motor skills were literally erased from the continual recursion. Like this mechanization of emotions and thoughts had so many layers on it that you couldn't find the raw anymore. It was just mechanized into oblivion. I'm not sure what happened to his body. It was a human body, but I'm not really sure. Is the body human if the mind isn't?

People surprisingly weren't worried. Transfers were happening less and less. Less emotional transfer. People even stopped getting high. As we came up on the three-year mark, the big evaluation for the scientists, they began to ramp up the regulation. They wanted more funding. We had to transfer a certain amount. It was... Well I think it might have been aggravating, but no one cared. So I guess it was ok. Or, was it? If something isn't bad, does that make it ok? Maybe bearable. I'll try to get that question transferred later, I thought at the time.

The biggest concern for the scientists was the child. He was almost two years old. He had decent motor skills, only slightly lagged. But his mental capacity for transference had not changed. Now it was strange. Scary even. The child would look at you, you at the child. No facial expressions. Just that blank transference. And you knew that your transference wasn't incredibly colorful either. You knew your face was blank. Even when you transferred these thoughts about the child, it still had no response. Just a blank stare. It was strange. Then the question came up again.

Always after transferring with the child, I would have the thought- "human?" I had to fight the thought. Of course the child was human. It was a cute child I guess. All the children born at this point were. They just didn't transfer anything besides blank. They were even losing that shimmer on the edges of the photograph. How can you not transfer substance? How can you not take a shit?

People always say that they wish they never had to shit. I miss it. I wish just once I could get that urge. That urge where your sphincter clinches and you know what is about to happen. Then as you get to the bathroom, your body knows where you are and it begins to relax and let go. But NO, not yet, sit down first. Ok now, relaxing. I miss that I think.

I am not sure, but I'm pretty sure the women have all stopped having their periods by this point, close to year three. I'm pretty sure because the scientists have not stopped asking them to have sex... they just don't have anything to show for it. Strange. It is really sanitary around here... sort of disgusting. How are we nourished again?

So then the evaluation began. Of course, the scientist didn't evaluate us using words. We would just transfer with them. We would do IQ tests and physical aptitude tests and other tests. I think we all might have failed. The scientists didn't look happy after testing people. But not in a facial way, or a bodily way. But they didn't look happy because they weren't transferring with us to ask questions really. I think we became lab rats. At the beginning, we were transferred all of these questions like 'how was transferring emotions' etc. But now, they didn't transfer at all. I'm still not sure how the mechanized emotions were understood by my raw brain. I would receive emotions and images and somehow understand what was being asked or communicated. This mechanization had now become our common denominator. Our medium of communication. If you can even call it communication.

So their reports came due. About a month after the year three reports, there were fewer scientists around. I guess they had some of their funding cut. Anyway, the child still had no responses. Just blank. But what was strange, it was completely blank. Like the guy who od'ed on the drug. There was no longer a hint of color at the side. Just blank; I think the child was the end product of what we were becoming. These blank white photographs. Or those etch-e-sketches where you try to write something on them, and they may stay for a while, but then they

get wiped. I somehow recognized this. I think I got scared. I wasn't sure anymore. I wasn't sure what scared meant. Just a hesitant feeling in my gut. I tried to stay away from the scientists. It was easier now since they were no longer as many around. At any rate. One day some armed men came into the facility. Their vests said SWAT. I recognized that, but had forgotten what it meant.

We were let go. We were released from the experiment. And that is what brings me to you doc. It has been around four months since I was released. They took the portals off and, for the first time in three years, nine months and five days, I heard someone's voice. "How are you feeling?" It startled me. It took me a second to figure out what these noises meant. I think I had lost a little bit of my ability to understand. See, after having thoughts and emotions transferred for so long, and without hearing things your ears become sterile too. The best part I think was when I first used the word fuck after being released. It was exhilarating. I had forgotten how great it felt to express emotions. Not to transfer them, but to express them. FUCK! It feels so good.

I also remember the first time I felt hungry again. I had forgotten the feeling, but they gave me some rice. It was great. Brown small pieces of rice. They were just sitting there on my plate. And as I ate, I narrated what I was doing. I couldn't talk enough. I am picking up my.. my fork. I am now scooping up the rice. I am now putting the rice in my mouth. I am chewing the rice and talking and spitting rice on my plate because I am talking while chewing. I just swallowed. It sort of made my stomach hurt. It felt good though. Then my bladder hurt. I needed to pee. It was a glorious pee too. I pissed all over the toilet seat just so I could make the room less sterile. I won't be surprised if I develop some crazy sex fetish because of this. I'd probably be ok with that.

The saddest part, and I mean saddest, not processed saddest, but cry saddest. Tears saddest. I believe the scientists may have killed the children. I'm not sure, because obviously there were some problems with their development. So perhaps the fact that transferring was the only method of communication used made them ill. Made them lack life. But I think the scientists were scared of getting sued. And perhaps the children, especially the older ones, were forever doomed to be blank. But it still isn't right. Regardless, it is their fault.

Many of the adult subjects have gone insane. The first time they heard words it hurt their ears. They responded poorly. I think they lost the ability to think in words. Why are we not being fed, but only being nourished? I think those kind of questions kept me alive. But a lot of the people died.

So, doc, I'm trying to get through this. I think the biggest thing that has changed though is how much I talk. I talk like a woman. None of this, think to yourself anymore. I think out loud. Always.

We seem to think those who think out loud are insane. We walk through the grocery store and see someone having a debate out loud. Rice Krispy Treats or Fiber One? Rice Krispies would taste better, but the FiberOne is healthier. And the FiberOne would give me gas... I guess I could get both and make the decision at home. But I only have a coupon for one. What about a compromise and I buy Honey Nut Cheerios? Why do we write those people off as crazy? Perhaps they are saner than we are. They know that talking is the way to communicate. So if we talk to each other, why not talk to ourselves? One time, when I was a teenager, before all of this, I was outside mowing my mom's grass and she came out and asked me why I was yelling to myself while I was mowing. I didn't remember doing anything. I didn't remember yelling. She swore I had been though. She was slightly concerned I think because she referenced a mentally

handicapped guy who did the same thing. Why do we associate that with insanity? We are so arrogant to think we can just contain all this dialogue. It is an internal dialogue. But I've learned dialogue can't be internalized. It is bad to do so. We lose something when we do so. I think maybe that is why we go hear speakers instead of just thinking about a book. We want to see what went into those pages.

I hope to be able to dream out loud. That is my new goal. Whenever I dream, I want to be able to sleep talk my way through the dream. I don't know if my id would be so powerful as to be able to talk, but I want to wake up one day talking. You know how you wake up from unfinished dreams? I want to wake up to unfinished sentences about those dreams. I want to talk so much that I make up for the lost dialogue. I think I lost some of myself through this experiment. But I want to get it back. So doc what do you think? You think I talk too much? I don't care if you do really. I want to talk this much. I think in our society we view talking too much as a female problem. I think we have it backwards though. Talking too much is a female asset. I don't know if that makes any sense, but I feel like if great leaders would just talk. Just talk. Not process. But if great leaders would just talk, we would get somewhere. Stop that stupid filter. Let's just talk. How was your day?