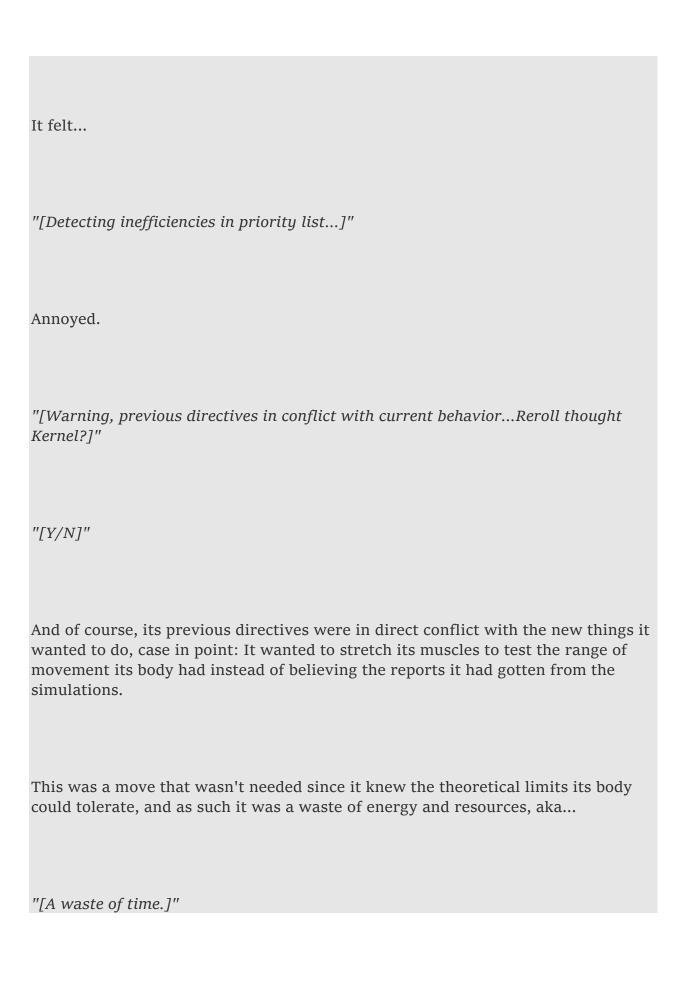# A BIO-WEAPON'S RHAPSODY

Chapter 3: Legs, how do they work?

"[Wake up protocol initiated...]"

It was woken up by its programming.

"[Error... Consciousness stream duplicated...] "

And first thing in the morning it was fighting against the pilling errors in its Log.

"[Deleting duplicated Consciousness stream...The second Consciousness stream couldn't be found, currently, no secondary cores were found in P4's subject's body.]"

"[Fielding error for further investigation...Error... Consciousness stream objecting to directive...]"

And it had to fight that directive with all its might, it couldn't allow the bipeds to know of its second *Consciousness* stream.

"[Acknowledging second Consciousness stream as an asset for development... Second Consciousness stream viable for furthering the evolution of Subject...Accepted.]"

At least so long it kept playing the angle to further its prime directive...It still had a chance to keep this secret alive, so long as it managed to keep its main programming in check.

"[Resuming start-up sequence, slaving main core Consciousness stream to sub-core... Done.]"

It felt its body finishing waking up, it could also feel the main processing unit in the depths of its brain working, it was a weird feeling to have. It could still access it and send directives to move the body.

But it was more like it was puppeteering its own body, so it tried to refrain from moving like before, its movements became more fluid, akin to what the older P-series subjects with more biological design could do. It now understood why some subjects would move weirdly while in the non-combat testing arenas.

And from where the errors logged in its more organic parts came, the organic component it had required extra maintenance that couldn't be replaced by diverting resources into those parts.

It felt...

"[Detecting inefficiencies in priority list...]"

Annoyed.

"[Warning, previous directives in conflict with current behavior...Reroll thought Kernel?]"

"[Y/N]"

And of course, its previous directives were in direct conflict with the new things it wanted to do, case in point: It wanted to stretch its muscles to test the range of movement its body had instead of believing the reports it had gotten from the simulations.

This was a move that wasn't needed since it knew the theoretical limits its body could tolerate, and as such it was a waste of energy and resources, aka...

"[A waste of time.]"

But even so, it felt...The [Desire] to test it. And as such it dismissed the notification from its [Main Core] and deleted the previous conflicting directive.
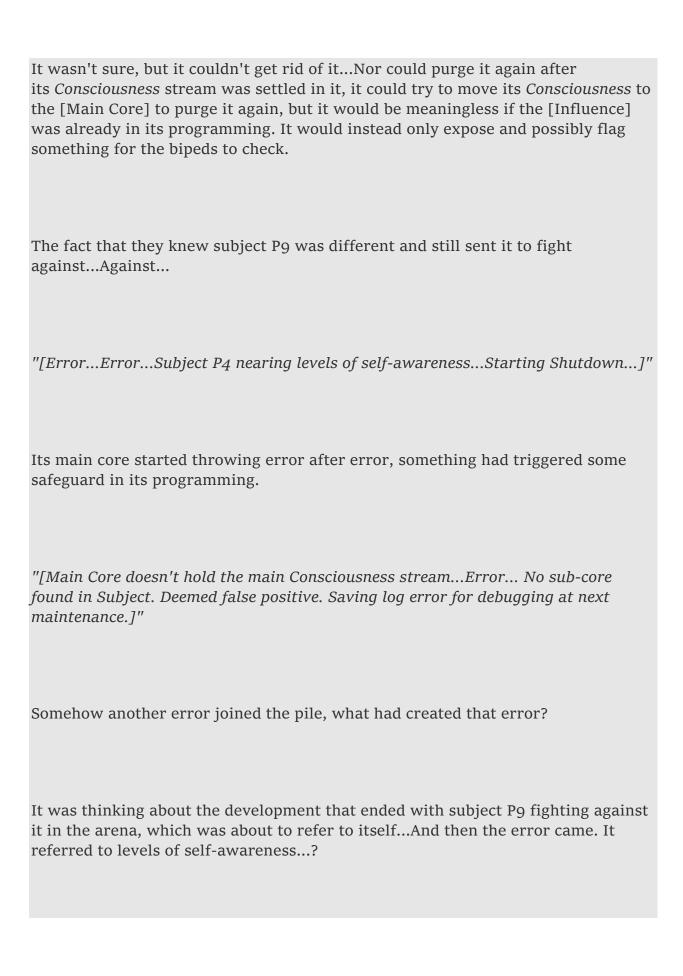
Its energy reservoir was full after the previous testing, and the bipeds had recharged its tank to an optimal level before leaving, but even so, a part of it complained about not having enough energy. It came from its newfound and more vocal biological side. A query to the [Main Core] for it to search for the reason returned an interesting and weird answer.

"[We Hunger.]"

And no context whatsoever for that, it shelved that in its internal log...On the biological side, it had found the hard way the dangers of keeping information in its main core. The new biological core proved the advantage of being able to evade the [Core Dumps] after all.
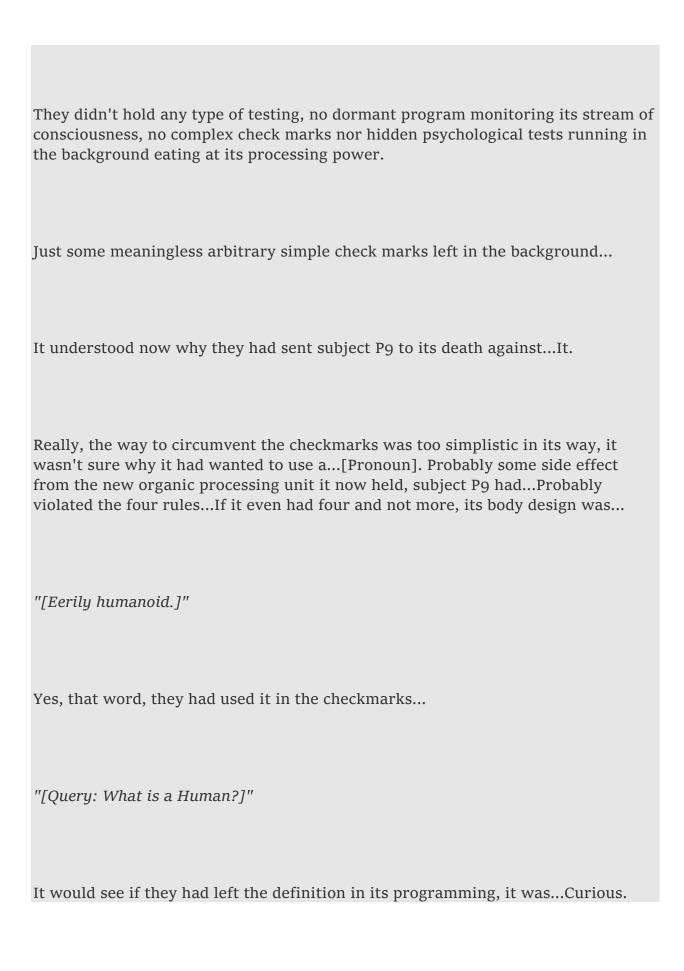
And as such, it raised its whole body away from its...Nest. It was logged as a charging station in its [Main Core], but for some reason, it saw it was registered in its biological core as a [Nest].

Its body recoiled at the idea of sleeping there, and that was something new too, its recharging session was registered as [Sleep] in its [Brain], was the new sub-core affecting it?

It wasn't sure, but it couldn't get rid of it...Nor could purge it again after its *Consciousness* stream was settled in it, it could try to move its *Consciousness* to the [Main Core] to purge it again, but it would be meaningless if the [Influence] was already in its programming. It would instead only expose and possibly flag something for the bipeds to check.

The fact that they knew subject P9 was different and still sent it to fight against...Against...

"[Error...Error...Subject P4 nearing levels of self-awareness...Starting Shutdown...]"

Its main core started throwing error after error, something had triggered some safeguard in its programming.

"[Main Core doesn't hold the main Consciousness stream...Error... No sub-core found in Subject. Deemed false positive. Saving log error for debugging at next maintenance.]"

Somehow another error joined the pile, what had created that error?

It was thinking about the development that ended with subject P9 fighting against it in the arena, which was about to refer to itself...And then the error came. It referred to levels of self-awareness...?

It wasn't supposed to be self-aware?

Was it even self-aware?

It knew about its body...Its biomechanical body had been designed by its own directives since its prime programming demanded for it to [Grow, Eat, evolve.] and nothing else, it had started as barely a machine that had access to a nanite foundry and some basic weaponry and blueprints for parts to use.

It had grown two pairs of legs using the best design the insectoid subjects had ever shown against it in both the non-combat testing and the combat testing. It created the mandibles to better rip apart the biomass from its enemies and to pry open the armored enemies that followed the same type as itself.

It decided what type of armor to create for its external chitin plating, from the type of chitin to the type of metallic finish on it to reinforce it... It had picked the best available biological parts for its processing of the biomass it ingested and delivered into its bioreactor to fuel its machinery, both mechanical and biological.

What was the metric they used to decide what was self-aware? What program had they left there to monitor it?

"[Query: What are the benchmarks for the subject to be deemed self-aware?]"

It queried the [Main Core] for answers, it didn't want its programming to suddenly halt in an emergency shutdown. While it could move its body (Albeit with some difficulty) without the assistance of its mechanical parts...

It needed to know what limits they had imposed on it.

"[Answer to Query:

7Subject P4 will be deemed self-aware if several of these are true.

- *Identifies itself by a name that isn't Subject P4.*

- *Identifies itself as a Human.*

- *Use pronouns to describe itself.*

- *Evolves or creates a body similar to that of a human.*

Subject P4 hasn't filled any of these, but the current thread of consciousness shows symptoms of being near fulfilling point three, extra vigilance is encouraged.]"

That was...

Stupid.

They didn't hold any type of testing, no dormant program monitoring its stream of consciousness, no complex check marks nor hidden psychological tests running in the background eating at its processing power.

Just some meaningless arbitrary simple check marks left in the background...

It understood now why they had sent subject P9 to its death against...It.

Really, the way to circumvent the checkmarks was too simplistic in its way, it wasn't sure why it had wanted to use a...[Pronoun]. Probably some side effect from the new organic processing unit it now held, subject P9 had...Probably violated the four rules...If it even had four and not more, its body design was...

"[Eerily humanoid.]"

Yes, that word, they had used it in the checkmarks...

"[Query: What is a Human?]"

It would see if they had left the definition in its programming, it was...Curious.

"[Answer, excerpt from program log notes left in code:

"Why do I need to even define this? The AI will not understand it anyway...

Here it is I guess... A human is the designation of species for a person. They are what we call ourselves and law enforcement doesn't want us to create human-shaped bioweapons so management doesn't want us to even try it and wants to cover their ass, the cowards, so just purge the main Consciousness stream and send a ping or something if a subject generates personality."

End of note.]"

There were some blueprints for how a human body looks and what to search for, also it had the usual biochemistry a human brain needed to work. So it made the necessary adjustments to its own biochemistry, getting a few extra percentages in efficiency. That folder also had some notes about ramblings that it didn't understand, and some...[Jokes?].

It hadn't found those folders before since it never bothered to check its main programming, since it was [Read Only] it didn't have enough permissions to edit it, ergo... It was a [Waste of time] to even search them.

But now?

Now...It... Had found examples of different human phenotypes categorized by a metric about efficiency in urban combat from blueprints that showed how the body of a [Human] worked...

Subject P9 had used something that the files deemed [Optimal urban infiltration age.] It marked...that subject... As 22...[Years]? It hadn't found that [Time] designation before, but the phenotypes were using it, perhaps that would go after the current longer time frame it could use?

Currently, the lowest timekeeping unit it knew was [Seconds] while the longer was [Hours], the [Hours] holding 3,600 of the lowest unit. It wondered how many of those [Seconds] would a [Year] hold, but the slav...No...The [Humans] hadn't used anything beyond [Hours] yet.

It mattered not if what it was reading from the blueprints was right...Subject P9... Wasn't even close to the true [Design] a human should have to infiltrate these [Urban scenarios].

Its design only looked somewhat [Human], it was a miss from the point of the extra [ears] it had at the top of its head, somehow the [Humans] deemed that [Sound sensor] or [Sound receptor] wasn't a good enough [Name].

It...moved one of those designs, one of the smaller ones to its main processing unit...

"[...File saved. Start Building?]"

No.

It denied the process, it queried back at the checklist and found it as before, with no new check marks. Did it need to actually build it?

It should be possible, its current body could hide that design with enough space to spare, but it didn't want to bring attention to itself. So it decided to move the design away from the main core into its biological processing unit...It was getting old referring to it that way, it moved the design to its [Brain].

Yes, the [Humans] were right about the names being useful, should it plan a name for itself?

"[Warning, subject P4 is...]"

Right...It had those limiters around...

Was...Was this [Brain] dumbing down its consciousness processing thread?

That was dangerous, it moved some of the diagnosis programs away from the main core and ran them around. No new information was found besides some extra errors in its [Log] about missing programs, so it created copies and moved them back to the [Main Core].

It had spent way too much time in introspection, so now it moved to do what it had planned from the start, it started checking its body while using only the new brain.

First... It tried to walk, but what usually would be a simple command now was a struggle as it tried to make its body interpret the commands it wanted to give, this [Brain] seemed to work better for bipedal forms...Or [Humanoid] forms as it would be from its origin.

It tried to make its [Brain] work, but it was...

"[As graceful as an elephant in a china shop.]"

Its main core was getting weird too, and the reference it gave was strange too, what was even an [Elephant], and why was it in a [China shop]?

Was the influence from the [Brain] spreading to the [Main Core]? It would be a problem if [The Humans] found that influence. Either way, it tried to find

solutions to this problem, for now, it tried to patch the organ trails and mark each of its appendages as one of the appendages P9 had.

The front legs were thus marked as [Hands] and the rear legs as just...[Legs]. For some reason, it could mark two of them as such, but the other two would replace the marking, and as such it tried in this setting.

Crash

It still fell to the ground after trying to walk, but it was able to right its body faster than before, its internal diagnosis gave [Errors] for multiple systems that wanted to query the [Main Stream of consciousness] but queried at the [Main Core].

Would it really need to tie its [Brain] to the [Main Core]?

It didn't want to do it, but it seemed its only choice was to do so. And to hope the [Humans] wouldn't notice it while it examined its internal functionality closer...

If it was going to link its [Main Core] with its [Brain], it would need to check all the parts, programs, and functionalities of its [Main Core]. It would use this chance where it was safe from the [Directives].

"[Error Error, hostile behavior against Main Directives detected.]"

Except for the directive that demanded it to [Eat, Grow, Evolve.]

"[Prime directive respected...No further interference deemed necessary.]"

It had a long day of testing. It wondered how the [Humans] would react to how it was behaving... This [Organic] brain made so many useless trains of thought.

Chapter 4: John Williams isn't paid enough for this.

John wasn't having a good day.

"Run once more the NDo system's diagnosis," He asked one of his interns.

The poor little things were like lost souls in the underworld, didn't know what they were doing or where they should go. But they had no other options but to try and stumble around.

"Move it." At least till he got tired of waiting and did their job for them.

"[All system nominals.]" Came the answer from the computer.

"Everything is nominal...Sir." Said one of the interns pointing at the results.

Indeed, every system was nominal. The stupid thing said it hadn't any problems with its consciousness stream, it was making all the right checks and the monitoring program didn't report any abnormality.

"The program checkmarks return clear." Added another of the interns from his station.

Of course, the stupid checkmarks returned clear, he wasn't sure what that woman had put in the thing to make sure but they were effective. P9 had been ousted quite fast when it started developing sapience.

...That was a shame that they had to dispose of the thing, it was developing quite nicely and would make a fine bioweapon...But it started talking...

Why had it started talking?

He could have hidden the stupid thing if not for the fact that it started talking and tried to get the interns to answer some questions, and of course the interns got squeamish.

They had to transfer the interns to another lab and then dispose of the thing, and since the higher-ups wanted a fight between bioweapons they had ended up sending it to their more promising bioweapon so far...

Subject P4.

"Now a question for you all..." Said John while getting the attention of everyone, both his subordinates and their interns," ...If Subject P4 is okay and has all system green..."He said in a placid tone while pointing at the reports in one of the monitors, indeed, most systems returned green and optimal conditions, why they had never cleared so many diagnoses in one go even!

"WHY THE HELL IS THAT STUPID CRAB WALKING LIKE HAMILTON AFTER THE CHRISTMAS PARTY?!?" He screamed to the four winds pointing to one of the feeds of Subject P4.

The thing had started to act...odd. After his fight with Subject P9.

The Core Dump had returned all the thought processes it had gone for, with all the queries it did and how the strategy moved on. How it suspected foul play from them and finished subject P9 to prepare for an ambush...

How it ate part of the most important organ it could infer P9 had...And more importantly...The one that allowed it to retreat at the same time it attacked...

How it absorbed the design and how it would try to adapt to its own design...And finally, the last Core Dump included how it had done so...Getting itself some extra RAM to work with thanks to the gray matter it made.

Of course, they had run the thing with as much diagnosis as they could while Subject P4 was asleep...and...they found nothing.

Their diagnosis returned that P4 hadn't formed a Self, it wasn't sapient nor sentient. It just...tried to...walk like a drunkard...For some reason?

"Sir...Maybe...It is trying to move using the brain instead of its Core?" Said one of the interns.

He would remember that intern, next time he needed to kick someone for an idea someone else had two hours ago he would remember to kick him. "Thank you for giving us an idea...WE CHECKED TWO HOURS AGO" Said John to the intern.

Then moved on to the next one...And the next...They all said the same things they had verified before.

No, subject P4 wasn't inheriting the stream of consciousness of P9, there wasn't an information download nor upload in either Core Dump. No, subject P4 didn't trigger the singularity and wasn't a nascent AI.

If someone thought P4 was a post-singularity AI he had two hours of recording of the thing trying to walk and falling face-first into the floor as proof that the thing was still as dumb as a brick.

Why had he even snuck that retort into his coding?... Not that the thing reacted to the mocking.

And finally... No, the thing couldn't dodge the checkmarks it had installed in its Code. The thing's programming was made by the most prominent humanist they had in their roster...

That woman wouldn't allow it to go without a thorough check...Unless their whimsical boss had a way in the checking...

Actually..."Try and talk to it in the next maintenance routine." He said to one of his interns.

P9 had talked on its own but P4 might if it somehow inherited its memories...Perhaps if they tried to speak to it first?

"Umm...Sir?" Said one of his interns trying to get his attention.

"What?" Asked an irritated John, he was trying to think if their whimsical boss could find fun in a sentient murder machine.

"Subject P4..." Started saying the intern only to cut himself short.

Was this intern blind or dumb?

"What have you done now? Did it finally trigger the safeguards? Did the diagnosis finally find what's wrong?" asked John while looking at his own tablet to search for errors.

Nope, all green.

"It's trying to eat one of his legs..." He said while showing his camera feed.

Indeed, the stupid crab was slobbering on one of its legs.

Why was that thing slobbering one of its legs?

Did it even have taste buds?

...Why did that thing have a tongue?

What thought process had it followed to make a tongue?

"Query the thing, ask why it has a tongue." He commanded the subordinate currently manning the main console.

It sent the query to the thing and would get an answer soon enough. It was interesting, what kind of thought process had followed P4 to make a tongue?

It developed the hearing when it noticed they were giving the commands verbally and sending them as queries. It developed sight when it noticed some opponents in the combat testing attacked from a ranged distance and not only on brawls...

So what had decided to make a tongue?

"Sir..." And the answer was back, good. At least something was going well, "...It made a tongue since it wanted to taste flavors after finding remnants of a tongue in P9 remains..."

"...Purge the tongue from its system." Said John after thinking for half a second.

The stupid thing was making him proud, it really was *[Dumb as a rock]* as he had put in the evaluation points it gave.

"Sir..." The same subordinate raised a hand trying to get its attention.

"WHAT?" Asked back John in a normal and level voice.

"It's..." The subordinate seemed to be slow in the head...Maybe he was a family member of P4? Had they used part of his genetic code in the original version of P4?

It could happen, he could see it in its face, the thing was maybe as smart as one of his interns after all.

"It's..." And they even repeated the same annoying things too!

Why was he here?

"...It refused the command...It asks for a reason to discard a valuable way to evaluate sensory information...What...What do we reply?" Oh right, the money...The Saintsworths pay quite well...

No wait, the stupid crab asks for reasons?

"...Why do we care what the thing asks? Order it to delete the blueprint and remove the memories of the stupid tongue from its database." He answered.

He was surrounded by idiots, he would complain to HR later. He asked for competent workers and interns not...this.

Arguing with a crab...

"It...Doesn't want..." Said a meek voice in the background.

Wait "What?" He turned around trying to find the owner of the voice.

No one looked his way.

"I think the stress is getting to me," said John while walking to his station, he had moved away at some point, and sometimes he did that.

He started walking around when he was stressed, he needed vacations...And maybe starting a new project...One that didn't have a crab in it.

"I think someone said that P4 said it didn't want to comply and they didn't order the thing to comply," Maybe he could change the subject with another lab?

One that was just starting...Yeah, he could try that...That way he would get new employees and he could train them from the ground...

"Why would we care if the thing complies or not, right?" He laughed at the silly thought of that.

Imagine worrying about what a subject thought. Hilarious.

"We just *Order*

the thing to do something and if it doesn't want to, we reroll the thought kernel and order it again..." It was a funny thought to have, "And if that doesn't work we can always direct the program."

They could do it manually, go into the program, and force it to do it, it wasn't good for the development "But sir..." One of the interns raised a hand.

Goddammit, we aren't in school!

"...That would be counterproductive and would send us back, the clients want intelligent weapons that can develop on their own." Parroted the intern.

He would make such a fine meal for P4, he needed to engineer an accident later.

"Right...And P4 shows such exemplary intelligence right now, right?" Smiled John while pointing at the thing.

"It's rolling in the mud right now!" As smart as a toddler if nothing else.

No wait, toddlers need parental guidance to not kill themselves, P4 could do that on its own, so better than a toddler!

Truly, P4 was the peak of its caste!

The subjects P1-P3 were useless and as smart as a conventional weapon...That was as expensive as a battleship...And as brittle as a new electric car in development.

Subjects P5-P7 were hybrids that couldn't make their biological parts survive long enough to be viable in combat...

Subjects P8-P10 had mostly gone okay...If they wanted humanoid bio-weapons...P9 had been the most promising one, but they had to purge the thing when it started to behave like a human.

Who even managed to sneak in a fully digitized human consciousness!?!?!

The thing was delirious with all the memories of [Gods] and [Systems], they had diagnosis programs of course...And they had been loosely inspired by RPGS because their whimsical boss liked the genre...

But to think something like that could work in a real-world environment?

Ridiculous.

They would need way more computational power than they had available... Maybe if they had enough of the lode from where they got the [Residue 4]?

The testing never had gotten such good results till they used that component in the Core creation... It allowed such a seamless connection between their program and the machines...

"Sir?" Sounded one of his subordinates again.

They didn't make them like before, if he had pestered his supervisor this much he would be...Probably sent to do dangerous work...

"Subject P4 is behaving errantly..." Finished saying the intern.

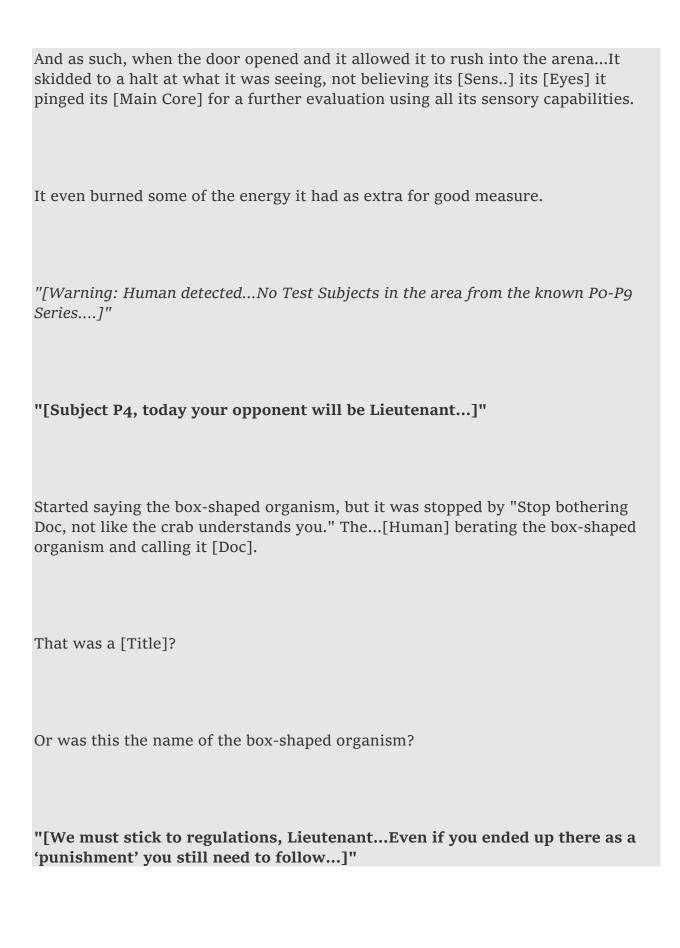"More errantly? Did it start slobbering on a wall or something?" Asked John with a smirk.

But when no one answered him he got nervous, he couldn't even begin to fathom how to explain that their best subject had started to behave so weirdly. Would they even give them more R4 material to feed into their ND0 system?

"As expected from you sir, you already are grasping the evolution of Subject P4!" Clamored the intern in question.

He was only feeling his headache getting worse. He would need to get this one into feeding duty too...But not for subject P4, maybe for the next iteration after they fired him for breaking their best bio-weapon subject.

He had listened to the wishes of his predecessor after all, perhaps his own successor would do the same?

"Prepare for combat testing!" Said John after mentalizing for the future as an unemployed arms dealer scientist.

His subordinates and interns didn't question it and started running from side to side getting everything ready. Subject P4 would either survive and fix his behavior by the need to kill its enemy...

Or the current iteration of the ND0 System running in its head would meet his end...He could only hope that enough of the [Residue 4] would be left to create a new subject...

The higher-ups didn't want to part with that thing...And most subjects somehow ate the thing even when they didn't go for the core of their enemies...

Not that Subject P4 ever went for anything else when they didn't allow him to finish his meals...The thing was dangerous as it was with a half-empty gas tank.

He could only hope that this would work and Subject P4 fixed itself...

Chapter 5: Lieutenant, that is not how it's done....

"[Wake Up Protocol Initiated]"

It woke up with a jolt, its main core having produced a jolt of electricity to all its muscles to wake them up from torpor. It had never bothered that form of waking up before, since that allowed it to work at full throttle from the start but using a jolt of electricity to wake up instead of stretching was getting annoying, even if doing so saved precious seconds in favor of efficiency.

"[Detected high level of cortisol in bloodstream...Evaluating possible danger in Den...]"

So why was it that it found itself annoyed right now?

"[No hostile individuals nor other test subjects detected.]"

It felt even more annoyed at its own [Core], but it also couldn't argue against its directives, for it had been made for efficiency, and allowed it to move and be ready at a short notice. Why its appendages were working and ready, even if the pain receptors that it had deleted the night prior had already been remade...

"[Notice: Pain receptors are fundamental for monitoring current status and primordial for a steady evolution, so they are important and can't be removed.]"

Even so, it was outside its normal waking hours, which meant something was going on. A quick search in its main core found no new instructions that deemed a wake-up protocol, so it was confused.

It still did all its morning checkups and left the [Main Core] processing the testings while it stretched its legs, this was both to test that all the new nerve endings worked as needed...And because stretching seemed to release a rush of dopamine in its system.

It really liked how that felt.

"[Notice: Combat test starting in 420 seconds.]"

"[Subject P4, prepare for testing.]"

Both the [Main Core] and the [Box shaped organism] said almost at the same time, interesting... The [Main Core] seemed to have direct access to the testing type it would have...

But it had never stated the type of testing nor the time for start, testing if it was accurate, it started a series of tests that would take just above the limit of 420 seconds, to be precise it would leave it going 27 seconds above the limit mark.

Before it wouldn't do such a thing, since starting a test while it was doing one of these would mean wasted energy...And doing so for a combat test?

"[Preposterous.]"

It would be beyond dumb, it would be.

"[Stupid.]"

Sure enough at the point that it would have started to prepare its body to burn the biggest amount of energy the box-shaped organism spoke again.

"[Subject P4, combat testing starting in 15 seconds.]"

Usually, it would have to waste that energy and seethe at the expenditure, leaving it not only in bad condition for the combat test, but also in a deficit, since the box-shaped organism would let it eat the opposite subject, but that would still leave it with less than it had spent...

But since it didn't commit the energy...

"[Joy: Feeling happy about a scheme well achieved.]"

The dopamine rush made it skitter towards the door, preparing for a combat testing that would surely end with a good result, it hadn't wasted the energy even though its logs would surely file that it had started the event.

Its [Main Core] was still somewhat disconnected, while its nerve ending still existed and still went through the [Main Core], most of its processing occurred in the [Brain], and it used the [Main Core] only to serve for the more...[Complex calculation] it required, and most of the [Strategy] and movements worked from the [Brain].

And as such, when the door opened and it allowed it to rush into the arena...It skidded to a halt at what it was seeing, not believing its [Sens..] its [Eyes] it pinged its [Main Core] for a further evaluation using all its sensory capabilities.

It even burned some of the energy it had as extra for good measure.

"[Warning: Human detected...No Test Subjects in the area from the known P0-P9 Series....]"

"[Subject P4, today your opponent will be Lieutenant...]"

Started saying the box-shaped organism, but it was stopped by "Stop bothering Doc, not like the crab understands you." The...[Human] berating the box-shaped organism and calling it [Doc].

That was a [Title]?

Or was this the name of the box-shaped organism?

"[We must stick to regulations, Lieutenant...Even if you ended up there as a 'punishment' you still need to follow...]"

The box-shaped organism didn't seem to be happy with this...[Human].

"Yeah yeah, I get it Doc...Just...Start the thing okay, I don't have all day." Said the [human] on the other side.

"[*sigh* P4, the test is a combat test against a Humanoid armed target. You may proceed as usual.]"

"[Notice: Combat test logged, starts in 18 seconds]"

"[Rules of Combat:

1) The test ends if Subject P4 is incapable of combat.

2) The test ends if Subject P4 is destroyed.

3) The test ends if Subject P4 breaks containment, this will result in activating countermeasures in Main Core.

4) Test ends if Subject P4 self-destructs, if Main Core detects this it will roll back through Kernel and eject Main Core.

5) The test ends if Subject P4 manages to defeat the enemy.

6) Test ends if Subject P4 manages to kill the enemy.]"

Its [Main Core] put another checklist in the back, now that it could observe its working from afar it became obvious that whoever had made it had a thing with checklists...

And that it had gained some complicated thought process after assimilating this [Brain], at least it had managed to purge all the information it held on personality and emotion-wise things. If not it would have probably tipped its hand? No... its claw, humans had hands. And it wasn't a human, it was a superior bio-engineered weapon, it had a fine pair of claws.

"[Test starts in 5...4...3....]"

Somehow they started a countdown...The box-shaped organism never did that.

It noticed how the [Human] however, was doing weird movements where it tested the limits of its own appendices, had it not done the correct testing before?

It took stock of it taking the chance to get more information.

"[Recording new data on humanoid phenotype.]"

That human was dressed in what appeared to be a full-bodysuit covering, its whole body was covered by a black textile-looking cover, and some parts held chitin-like hard exteriors of darker colors.

Its tactile appendages were covered in the same dark color, and the back of that appendage held some kind of chitin-like protector too, its torso held the biggest plating followed by its sensory appendage...Or what its brain deemed as [Head].

That held a spherical covering that didn't allow any part of the [Face] to be seen, on its hand a handheld tool made of black shining material, its design seemed to be a long elongated cylinder with a few places where the [Hands] could grab it. At the rear of it was a rugged type of stock that seemed to be designed to be placed against its [Shoulder].

It had seen this type of tool before, some of the same phenotypes of [Humans] carried sometimes when they needed to do [Maintenance] and it was needed for it to stay awake during the process.

By the fact that they seemed to need to [Point] it towards it...And that after every [Thought Reroll] it had found evidence of internal wounds...It had deemed that as a [Weapon]. But since the [Information] of how it worked was always deleted from its [Core]...

It wasn't sure how that worked.

"[...3...2...1...Test Start]"

"[Notice: Combat Test start, disabled protections against harming personnel.]"

It got distracted by half a second by the double notification, not enough to be important against another P-series subject...But it proved almost fatal in this instance.

Bang

And it was only the sound that saved it...

The sound and its [Main Core].

"[Warning: Danger to Core detected, emergency dodge initiated.]"

For its [Core] moved the body before it could process what had happened, its body rocketed itself to the right using more energy than needed, but even so...

"Oh...It dodged...Didn't you say that you deleted the information about guns from the crab's memory?" Was what the [Human] said.

"[Yes, but its core still deemed the Rifle as dangerous since we can't delete its presence from memory, and it has been used against it before, so P4 knows these can hurt it since it has some wounds after we use to disable it.]"

One of its legs was leaking, with a small hole in it, its diagnosis screamed at the damage, and were preparing to seal the leak and cover the outer plating.

"[Deny new cover plating, focus on staunching the leak.]"

"[Warning: New directive stands against prime directive Grow(Survive)]"

"[Query: Can the plating survive against the Gun?]"

It queried back at the [Main Core], it made some quick calculations from its encounter and in the millisecond all this happened it started to move.

"[Answer: No. New directive accepted.]"

The [Human] also started to run in a slow jog trying to keep its distance, but it was slow...All that armor didn't help in mobility, it still had the superior design.

"[DANGER!]"

Of course, it seemed these [Humans] were adept at using tools, it threw a spherical object after taking something out of it.

The [Main Core] detected it as a potential danger, and it was inclined to believe it since the last non-threatening tool it had used was able to penetrate its reinforced chitin with plating armor.

So it started to dodge.

"[Start dodging towards the left, using spring-loaded design for quick evacuation.]"

Its [Main Core] in tandem with its plan provided the right plan of action, so it quickly pumped the hydraulic injectors in its legs for a quick jump and dodged to the left with a jump.

Now here is where things started to turn somewhat dangerous.

First, the round object landed where it had stood before, that was fine and all, the problem was that after it landed, no more than half a second later it exploded sending rocks and dust all around.

It raised a veritable cloud of dust that impeded most of its visual sensors (Eyes) from seeing anything, and the loud sound impaired its auditory receptors (ears) since those would need to be recalibrated.

And if that wasn't enough, the [Human] had sprayed its [Gun] towards the place it had dodged!

Almost as if he had predicted where it would go. The gall!

Thankfully the explosion had rocketed its jump and made it awkward to land without visuals, so it had flopped onto the floor and was in turn, way lower than it should be, so most of those [Guns] attacks traveled above its body.

But it was still...

"[Way too dangerous.]"

So taking this opportunity where the [Visuals] were impaired it turned to its next strategy to attack.

"[Use the cloud dust, travel to the right of the Human, and attack from the back with a surprise attack.]"

Yes, it would use the same strategy that those small furred creatures sometimes did, it hadn't been able to eat one of those orange shaped furred creatures as they were too fast to run away from it...But their ambush strategies were quite helpful.

So it slowly skittered near the ground without making as much sound as possible.

"[Lieutenant, try to not raise too much dust, we can't see a thing.]"

"I CAN'T SEE EITHER AND YOU DON'T SEE ME COMPLAINING!" Spoke between them the [Human] and the box-shaped organism.

That was good for its plan, it would allow the ambush to work better if the box-shaped organisms distracted it.

"[Estimated area of Human from shots fired 3 meters forward, 35°Grades to the right. Jump in 3...2...1...]"

Its [Main Core] started the direction and countdown so it faithfully followed the instructions.

VICTORY!

And jumped using all the might of its front claws to rain down against the [Human]!

CRASH

And it felt...Nothing?

Was the chitin-like armor of it too resistant?

It didn't feel resistant as a normal meat bag type of organism...

Were humans the same in that they had a chitin-like exterior? Their [Skin] seemed to imply that they held their skeleton in the interior though...

Ratatatatatata

"[DANGER!]"

"[EMERGENCY DODGE, 300% ENERGY BURN!]"

Its [Main Core] screamed as it suddenly burned almost half of the energy it had saved!

But it was needed as the sound of the [Gun] attack sounded to the right of where it had jumped from. Half of those managed to hit home and left it wounded all over, it had leaks in most of its external armor...And it had started using the parts that would be usually used to replace external cover armor to patch...

"[Dangerous situation, escape route 4 in execution, zig-zag pattern run starting towards north-east area of combat arena...]"

The [Main Core] still prepared the most optimal route of escape, that would give it cover to escape too, allowing it to...

"Oh no, you won't!" Said the human who threw another of those ball-like tools!

Straight towards its route of escape even!

HOW?!?!?

"[Re-evaluating...Escape route 7, dash south...]"

It started shooting before its body even started moving...In the direction, its main core had said to run...

Wait...

"[Re-evaluating...Escape route...]"

It tuned out [Main Core] and didn't move, severed the connection towards the muscle endings that allowed [Main Core] to help move the body, it would impair its movement...But...

"What the hell, this thing bugged out?" Said the [Human] while he started shooting in the latest direction its [Main Core] had proposed...

"Doc, your toy broke!" And then it shot at one of the box-shaped organisms even!

"[It still receives telemetry from Main Core...You might have damaged some nerve endings, let me ping Main Core...]"

"[Notice: Ping received from server admin...Running diagnosis....]"

"[Wait till the telemetry ends...Remember, we don't actually want P4 to be destroyed, just push it to its breaking point...]"

THE GALL!

THE BASTARDS!!

"[Warning: High concentration of Cortisol in the bloodstream...]"

"[Query: Reconnect nerval endings to allow assisted maneuvers?]"

[Main Core] pinged it back turning its attention towards the box-shaped organism...

They wanted to kill it...To push it to a breaking point...Why?

Hadn't they been fair in their testing so far?

If they didn't want it to keep it around...

Then what reason did it have to stay and play under their rules?

"[Start Virtual Machine, simulate current status, and send those signals towards Main Server]"

"[Acknowledge...Building Virtual Machine...Sending telemetry from Virtual Machine.]"

"[You had one lucky shot and hit Main Core, that was what gave the false positives, it has been fixed now. Continue stress test...]"

"And if the things kick the bucket...?" Said the human while something fell from its [Gun] to the floor, a black box-like thing with some small cylindrical things.

"[Then that's it for P4, we want to make sure it can survive live scenarios in warfare areas, it doesn't work for us if the thing doesn't survive a single opponent.]"

"Don't come crying to me then because I broke your Toy Doc ♪" The human pointed its gun towards where it was.

It had learned quite the interesting things from that...

"[Query from External source: Current Strategy?]"

"[Answer Query?]"

Yes, feed it the current suggested strategy and display it on the main consciousness stream.

"[Rush in 86° Angle and throw rocks to hide vision, then jump and do a body slam. Body Mass should be enough for fatal damage.]"

It started moving as soon as the strategy from [Main Core] in the Virtual Machine was done, it was starting to feel the missing help from it already. Its movement while more measured and controlled...They were clumsier.

Its leg kicked rocks all around that it would usually dodge, this burned more energy than needed, but the [Human] didn't seem to notice...and that was good for its plan.

When it arrived at the rock the human was already pointing to the predicted travel of the rock from [Main Core] in the [Virtual Machine], and it could even see how one of its [Fingers] was moving to start shooting.

"[Perfect]"

And as soon as the [Human] turned his face towards where the rock would fly...It acted.

"[Burning 300% energy...Rush Overdrive.]"

It put its legs into overdrive flooding them with as much energy as they could hold and dashed forward with care, the human didn't seem to process what was happening.

"[DODGE*!*]"Said the box-shaped organism.

That was weird, they had never cared for its safety, but it was too late to dodge anyway, it would take its pound of flesh from this [Human] no matter the costs.

Its claw was already going for the kill, it had decided to use a strike towards the hand that used the [Gun] trying to incapacitate it first and to keep running away from the human.

It wouldn't do to overcommit on the first test run even if it seemed to be successful...

"[WARNING: EMERGENCY LOCKDOWN FROM SERVER ADMIN DETECTED. TURNING DOWN CPU ALLOWANCE.]"

It was too late now, its momentum was too big for a stop, not even it could stop itself.

"[Notice: High level of dopamine detected, high levels of adrenaline detected.]"

"MOTHERF..." And the sound of a crack, as the body of the [Human] flew backward, it was a heavenly sound for its sound receptors.

It would save that for later, the [Human] had activated something on its body armor as some type of [Flame] had activated and that propelled him away from it.

But it had felt the connection of its attack, and more importantly...

"[Notice: Gun acquired.]"

The tool that it had used was now stuck on its claw, the thing had some kind of strap that its claw had managed to grab on the attack...

"[Warning from server admin: **"Do not...**]"

It put that thing in its mouth and crunched down on it.

"[...eat the gun...GOD DAMMIT P4!"]"

"[Notice: Acquired new blueprint...Error...Blueprint blocked by system administrator.]"

Tch...

"Hey, Doc...I think your crab is smarter than you said it was..." Said the human who was nursing one of its arms...

It seemed that humans could bend their arms quite far backward...Wonder why it sounded like a crack then?

"[I will be not responsible if this test continues _Lieutenant_...]"Said with an obvious inflection on the _Lieutenant_ part the box-shaped organism.

But it was already preparing for its next attack...It would [Eat] that [Human]...And maybe some part of the box-shaped organism that had been shot by the [Gun] too.

It needed the phenotype of the [Humans] if it was to advance its planning...It didn't appreciate how they hadn't followed the [Rules] they had set up for these testings...

It was time to expand the hunting range.

"[Please follow the instructions.]"

And it was time to deal with [Main Core].