

Chapter 2

'Excuse me?!?', exclaimed Harris, his tussle of red hair (much admired) shifting like a bush in the breeze as he slightly rocked back on the sofa. 'What do you mean you *irrevocably* remove guilt, that's science fiction, even for these days, you'd be making stone cold killers!'

'We have progressed very far beyond the last century and the early decades of ours, Mark. I know you have some background in neuroscience, but it's complicated stuff,' Jamestown said quietly as he leant further into the space between them.

'Medicine is well versed in the psychology of *guilts*, for there are many types, but the neurobiology of guilt was perhaps less well delineated. The role of the prefrontal cortex, the ventromedial and dorsolateral regions, and the anterior cingulate cortex through to the insula and interoception. And, of course, complex neurotransmitter activity, hormones, genetics, epigenetics, conditioning, etc., etc.', Jamestown paused, checking on Harris, who sat with riveted, focused attention on the older man. 'Well, at culpabilité, we can *map* this all in a person, *interact* with it, *control* it.'

Mark continued to focus on Vlad. 'Total BS, utter *horseshit*,' he responded acidly. His body tensed as he started to stand from the plush sofa. Jamestown's hand rose, palm out, as if to quell Mark's sudden rebellion. 'Wait, Mark, wait. We often receive such initial responses. I can also guarantee that after a trial, no *one* to date hasn't signed with us. How is Femi, by the way, doing well?', and that last question was accompanied by a wry smile, cold eyes not included.

Mark's body tensed more at the mention of his friend's name, the one who recommended coming here, he'll have to find out how much he had told culpabilité about his *own* situation and history. 'Funny, it says you're the CEO/CTO online, but you sound like a salesman. And if I was to just leave now?' Jamestown's thin smile broadened, 'You're more than welcome, no issues, other than our mutual NDA. But are you not *curious*? Have you not wondered about young Femi's sudden improvement in position at your company?' Hmm, baiting me now, and he certainly has deep insights into my company, as well as me, thought Harris. Perhaps this merits further investigations of my own, and as such I ought to go along with it, at least for a little while.

'Well, *Vlad*, you've done your homework. And I must admit to having a tickle of curiosity, you've kept quiet on and offline, not even your financial position. 'Yet, it may be worth my time, or a waste of it, or you turn me into a vegetable,' and with this Mark smiled briefly. 'What's involved in your trial, and what is the commitment if I did e-sign?'

'You will be supported by a 24/7 multi-specialist team, with initial holistic profiling, provision of equipment in your private space at work and home, as well as here at our offices, and we aim to be as unobtrusive as possible in your day-to-day life,' Jamestown outlined, making it sound more like a vacation than a clinical intervention. 'We'll be able to provide you with millisecond telemetry, but you will be able to judge your experience yourself, of course.'

'And the investment, what safeguards are there to ensure safety and privacy, what's your regulatory status?' Mark ventured, his eyes narrowing, brow furrowed. 'Well, as you know since the Trump Orders of 2027, that has been more relaxed, but we uphold all international, relevant laws and requirements, inclusive of 100% data hygiene and expunging on request. The investment is an initial \$10 million, with two million and a half per month, in dollar creds or DonCoin,' Jamestown outlined. And how did *young* Femi afford that, Mark thought. 'Show me more,' was Mark's simple response.