

Experimental Justice

by

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FADE IN:

INT. STARK ROOM, NO WINDOW - DAY

A single mattress on the floor, blanket and pillow.

BILL HANEY, (33), disheveled hair, rumpled prison attire, shackled ankles, bare feet, sits on the floor of an 8' X 8' cell, rocking back and forth.

Bill runs his hands through his hair, stands, and paces. First he stands on one foot, then the other.

BILL HANEY  
Exercise, must stay strong.

Bill lies down and does push-ups.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)  
One, two, three, four, five, six.

He stands and does jumping jacks.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)  
One, two, three, four, five, six, ...  
seven:, Eight, nine, ten, and eleven.

Bill stops and sits on the edge of his mattress, rocking back and forth.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)  
Jack and Jill went up the hill, each with  
a buck twenty five. Jill came down with  
two fifty and it wasn't for fetching  
water! Ha, ha, ha, wooueee!

Bill laughs hysterically at first, then, insanely.

He rises from the mattress, goes to the door, puts his ear to it, hearing nothing.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)  
Help! I need help. Please, somebody?

Silence. Bill pounds his fists on the door.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)  
(shouting very loud)  
I've been here for months now and haven't  
seen or heard anyone. Where is everyone?

Bill pounds the door with both fists for a brief moment, then slumps against the door and returns to his bed.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)

Old Mother Hubbard went to the closet to find her poor daughter a dress. The closet was bare and so was her daughter, I guess. Ha ha ha.

He pulls up the sleeve on his left arm to reveal some open sores. He picks at them.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)

I'll teach them to ignore me. Five plus two is seven, four plus five is nine, two plus three is five, six plus two is eight.

Bill digs deep into his arm. He winces and squeezes out a drop of blood, takes a lick, then leans over and paints a vertical line on the wall in blood.

Bill sits up on the edge of the bed and rocks again, pounding his right fist into his left open hand.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)

(falsetto voice)

Please don't hurt me?

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)

(normal voice)

You don't like it when you're being hurt, do you?

Bill stops and stares at the wall.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)

That'll teach you to laugh at me.

Bill runs around the room, flailing his arms.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)

I have to talk to someone. Have to. I'll sit up and wait for the food tray. See who's bringing it.

Bill lies down on his bed. His eyes fixed on the door. Soon he is asleep and snoring.

We hear a door unlocking and then a scraping of metal. Bill wakes up to find a food tray has been delivered. He runs to the door, banging his fists on it, hard.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)

You think you can just slither away and not let me see you?

Bill pulls on his hair.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)  
Got to stay awake next time.

Bill sits and eats his meagre meal. He throws the metal tray against the door. No reaction. No one comes.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)  
(shouting)  
What to do, what to do? Can't I at least have a pen and some paper? I used to write poetry.

Bill watches the food tray, waiting.

INT. STARK ROOM, NO WINDOW - DAY

Blood marks the wall, consisting of 4 vertical lines with a horizontal line through them, indicating five days have passed. There are around 20 of these markings.

Bill, gaunt and filthy, longer beard, sits staring at the new, full food tray on the floor.

BILL HANEY  
(shouting)  
Hell but, yes but, no but, hell but, yes but, no but. Arghhhhhhht.

Bill turns his head from left to right as he calls out the names of the States.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)  
Washington, New Mexico, Oregon, Nevada, Arkansas, South Dakota, Alaska, Alabama.

Bill beats his fists against the wall.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)  
Veronica, Veronica, you're getting nowhere with *that* attitude.

Bill laughs hysterically at this comment.

BILL HANEY (CONT'D)  
I'll strangle that pretty neck of yours, then slice you up good. Don't you laugh at me.

Bill curls up into the foetal position. He groans.

INT. STARK ROOM, NO WINDOW - DAY

There are many more blood marks on the wall. Bill is sitting, longer beard, not blinking, staring, slack jawed.

DR. GREG BARTH, (40), and DR. MELANIE O'NEILL, (38), in lab coats enter the room. Bill doesn't flinch.

DR. O'NEILL

He's the death row serial killer who strangled and dismembered twelve women?

DOCTOR BARTH

Meet Bill Haney, and all because he thought they were laughing at him.

DR. O'NEILL

Paranoid and schizophrenic?

Dr. Melanie O'Neill walks over to Bill, shines a flashlight in his eyes. Bill does not respond, or blink.

Dr. O'Neill raises Bill's left arm and lets go. Bill's arm remains hanging in the air.

DR. O'NEILL

This man is catatonic.

DOCTOR BARTH

Rendering him completely harmless. I call it experimental justice.

DR. O'NEILL

Greg,...Dr. Barth, this is ethically dubious. Sensory deprivation and lack of human contact drives us to the brink of insanity, and in someone already predisposed to mental illness,...well,...

DOCTOR BARTH

I'm well aware, but it appears that our experiment into mental frailty has a conclusion. Our grasp on reality is tenuous at best.

DR. O'NEILL

We already know this from Supermax prisons, and Romanian orphans of the 90's, who were so deprived of human contact since birth, they developed serious behavioural attachment issues.

DOCTOR BARTH

I had to observe the results of this hypothesis firsthand.

DR. O'NEILL

I'm sorry Dr., but this is nothing short of torture, an anathema to human needs, causing permanent damage.

DOCTOR BARTH

I'm sorry we disagree, Dr. O'Neill. At least he's in here and women are safe out there.

DR. O'NEILL

Are they? You know, there was some doubt among the jurors as to his guilt.

DOCTOR BARTH

They came in with a guilty verdict.

DR. O'NEILL

After a lot of back and forth deliberation. And, women have been turning up slashed in the same way.

DOCTOR BARTH

Are you suggesting a copy cat killer?

DR. O'NEILL

I don't know what to think, except two weeks ago I took samples of Bill Haney's blood from the wall. Some of it wasn't his.

Dr. Barth looks confused.

DOCTOR BARTH

Whose was it?

DR. O'NEILL

The samples matched the DNA of the three women murdered while he has been here, under lock and key.

DOCTOR BARTH

But, that's impossible.

Dr. Barth reaches into his pocket and we see a glimpse of a six inch hunting knife. His expression changes to evil as he takes it in his hand.

Dr. O'Neill has her back to Dr. Barth. He takes the knife from his pocket in one swift move. The blade glistens.

DR. O'NEILL

All I know is somehow their blood was  
planted on these walls.

While Bill's left arm is still extended, Bill's eyes  
shift from Dr. O'Neill to Dr. Barth.

DR. O'NEILL (CONT'D)

Perhaps you can explain this? Has he been  
getting out?

As Dr. O'Neill turns to hear his answer, Dr. Barth grabs  
her, attacks her and strangles her to death. He is about  
to cut her up with the hunting knife when Bill reaches  
into Dr. Barth's pocket, stealing his keys.

Bill Haney punches Dr. Barth, knocking him out, and takes  
his knife. He exits the room, leaving Dr. O'Neill dead on  
the floor and Dr. Barth unconscious. He locks the door  
behind him and skips away, singing.

BILL HANEY

One doc, two docs, red doc, blue doc,  
black doc, brown doc, girl doc, boy doc.  
This one has a little scar. Hey, what a  
lot of scars there are. Some are grey,  
some are blue, some are old and some are  
new. Some docs are sad and some are glad,  
and this one's been very, very bad. Some  
are here and some are there. Soon dead  
docs will be everywhere.

FADE OUT.