**Happiness**

A game for 5 players using Chaosium’s BRP system

Happiness. So elusive. You awake/awoke/woke to find yourself/myself lying on a morgue slab. You have no pulse. Darkness pools around your heads and your eyes fee; sandy and

raw from tears or possibly saliva.

There are other slabs. Everyone else looks like you. Some of you aren’t even women.

There is a filing cabinet full of beaks. Left handed beaks. Probably Trochilidae. You know, Hummingbirds.

“Don’t scream. I love you.”

**Game overview**

This game has three sections which can average about an hour each although section 1 can be run at a 45-minute duration without losing anything. It’ll flow, don’t worry about it ☺

Section 1 consists of the players being handed their masks and character sheets and acclimatising themselves to that. Do the intro description and deal with their questions and reactions. A variety of answers and possible answers are given in the section 1 write up. Suffice to say they’ll have various theories and notions but are hardly likely to stumble upon the exact answer. But that doesn’t matter because answers arrive in force with the start of section 2.

Section 2 starts with a bang, or a boom, whatever takes your fancy. Full details in the write up. This is a section of further confusion and interrogation. Much more for the GM as a proactive force as opposed to a reactive force since this is when the players first meet NPCS. Have fun with this. If you need to go beyond the hour or hour & 15 minutes’ limit, then do. Section 3 can lose a few minutes if need be.

Section 3 has the introduction of further NPCs, though not necessarily of an aggressive nature. Simply put section 3 is probably quite a downer. The decisions of the players in this section are very important and will lead them to either lie through their teeth or just stubbornly persevere with what they believe to be the truth, despite having almost no basis for that. How many of them go free at the end is impossible to ascertain, and even if any do they’ll be watched by the authorities for the rest of their lives.

Right. That was all wonderfully vague, wasn’t it? We’ll lay out the write ups properly after the background because that’ll give you an idea of the tone, which to be honest should be as cold and clinical as possible. This is ultimately identity horror pretending to be body horror.

**If this game has one core difficulty it is that it is reactive rather than proactive, because it doesn’t have a traditional style plot. So there is a lot of heavy lifting from the GM regarding description and scenic interaction, considering the low number of NPCs encountered.**

**Game Background**

Welcome to the world, just slightly in the future so you don’t have to worry about futuristic tech or flying cars or teleporters. It is just far enough forward that you can speed through certain things if they are narratively convenient, DNA scans or whatever. There IS future tech but it is, like the present, specialist equipment and the players won’t be able to use it.

About a decade or so ago the government was suborned from within by specialist interests and started down a path of tyranny, initially quietly, with patriot laws introduced and restrictions placed on the population. It grew bolder and eventually the state was in a state of constant terror alert. No war was declared but the military was always on a war footing.

In such a condition many terrible things are done. This is just one of them. Over the years people have simply disappeared. There are families of the disappeared that petition to find their lost ones, some disappearing themselves in the process. Terrible things are done to the disappeared. Experiments both physical and mental.

Our players in today’s scenario are members of that sad list, the disappeared. They have had most of their identity wiped, their physicality changed, along with their face. Who knows what the final result would have been? Uploaded identities as killers or assassins or infiltrators perhaps. Not this group though, they’re poor souls who’ve become prototypes or proofs of concept. Each one of them reformed in the image and likeness of their tormentor, their jailer and doctor, Surgeon General Darlon.

And so begins our tale. The government has been overthrown, rebel soldiers, now triumphant, stride through the streets rooting out the remnants of the old regime, the face of tyranny. All the secrets are being exposed and are coming home to roost. The “hospital” where our players reside is one of those places. The outer perimeter has been breached and the guards are falling back, ordered to hold out to the last man by Darlon himself, who may be the most senior member of the former government still left alive. The rebel forces are determined to capture him since the President and his cabinet either committed suicide or were killed in the taking of Parliament House.

The rebel commanders are not heartless though and they are aware that many innocents may be incarcerated in the medical facility they are trying to liberate. In fact it is their hope that they can save some of the inmates before Darlon orders the destruction of the compound.

Following the rebels are the risen people, among whom can be found those who have held onto the hope that their missing family members, husbands, wives, partners, children are still alive and can be brought home.

The players in fact. That particular reunion if it happens is not going to be a pretty one though some good may come of it in the end depending on the choices made or not made.

And therein lies the entirety of the game, for good or ill. I will break it down into a regular three act game in the following section, complete with chronology. GM only notes are in bold but feel free to improvise around them depending on player ingenuity/stupidity!

**ACT 1:**

**GM NOTE: Assign each player a number and then hand out the masks, character sheets and initial memory sheets in accordance with that number and keep track of it, you’ll need it when their secondary memory sheets are handed out later in Act 1 and for accessing files in Act 2. Handouts are at the end of the scenario.**

**Allow the players a few moments to come to terms with what they are dealing with before the game commences properly. Inform them that if they remove the masks (which they can do) that they are automatically out of character and anything they say will be treated by the GM as being addressed solely to the GM. Any infringement of this via use of illegally obtained knowledge by another player should be penalised. Details on this below.**

The PCs awake. They are dressed in hospital gowns and are groggy as they come to terms with the flickering overhead long fluorescent lights. Every now and then they hear the faint crump and boom of…something, something far away. Despite that the sounds bring a slight tremor to the room they are in and faint traces of dust fall from the ceiling every time it happens:

**GM NOTE: Intersperse these sounds and their attendant tremors etc as often or as little as you see fit over the arc of Act 1, which should take about 45 minutes in total**.

As the players come to terms with their surroundings (description below) they will see that they are in what appears to be a (formerly) sterile room, with several morgue style slabs that each of them woke up on, plus various medical technology, all beyond their grasp, or at least their remembered grasp. They have very few memories. If they want to argue or debate who and what they are then let them, at least for a while.

**GM NOTE: Description of the room. The room is ten metres by ten metres with a single armoured exit sealed by an electronic lock from the outside. The exit is one of those armoured glass types crossed by reinforced metal bars. A dimly lit corridor can be seen on the other side of the glass. Inside the room there are banks of monitors for life signs, racks of medical equipment, various cabinets of drugs, all of which are labelled with letters and numbers, eg vials of something called V6 and so on. There doesn’t appear to be a log book of what the drugs are though. That information may be on the computers and tablets that are dotted around the room. The room has a faint metallic/disinfectant smell in the air that catches in the back of the throat. High above the door is a rectangular neon sign that reads “Don’t Scream. I Love You.”**

**In one section of the room there is a horizontal human shaped machine that is labelled “Proformaton III”. It is unlocked and is still slightly warm inside. There is a side panel that is blinking red and reads “Engram biomass exchange successful”.**

Hopefully they’ll take some stock of their surroundings and really explore this one room before attempting to break out. They’ll also be examining their character sheets and striving to remember anything that may be of use to them. As GM you will have a copy of their character sheet PLUS a copy of their actual character sheet so that if they attempt something they don’t know they can’t do you can see if they succeed or not. As per BRP/CoC rules it’s all D100 anyway so if something seems damn clever to you then let them have a shot at being lucky. It could be interesting anyway. At this point they’ll probably not be able to kill themselves, even if they attempt to use the Proformaton machine. All that will do is lock one of them inside for 20 minutes while they are still conscious and rebuild them…into an exact copy of what they already are. And if they’re not properly sedated it will really hurt. Not kill but hurt. Up to you as to how much it damages them though for game purposes they should still be reasonably functional in order to continue on. There is no “Reverse Process” button!

Things the players will want to know/try out:

1. The full description of the room. This is entirely up to you as the GM. Based on the above description feel free to add in whatever devices, medical or tech, unknown or common, that seem appropriate. The main caveat is that no weapons are available whatever. If they retool something into a weapon, whether a scalpel or a fire extinguisher or whatever then let them go with that and they’ll have to improvise what they do with it themselves.
2. There ARE banks of filing cabinets that are filled with data and props. A prominent one of these is the one mentioned in the blurb, being filled with bird beaks, and labelled “Trochilidae, left handed”, meaning a species of Hummingbird and the direction of the beak. They’ll be baffled by this but the (rather mundane yet awful) reason for this will become apparent later. Other props are orderlies’ uniforms which they can wear, shoes in various sizes and other generic items such as torches and first aid kits.
3. There are banks of monitors showing the events of the room. They will be able to see themselves moving about inside and there is a sealed panel next to the screens marked “External Live Feed”, so those images are being transmitted elsewhere. Following on from this they should see (if they check) video cameras situated high on the walls around the room.
4. A secondary set of screens shows what appears to be a recording of them lying still on their slabs but a careful examination of the time stamp (lower corner of one of the screens) shows that this feed too is live. What they are seeing is an identical room to the one they are in. All the people/patients/bodies have the same face/body shape as the PCs.
5. There is no video covering the hallway outside the sealed door but if they peer out the door they will see that there IS a camera covering the door, so SOMEONE is/was watching that area.

**GM NOTE: After a good search of the room inform them that they are getting hungry and their skin feels scratchy and itchy. An intelligence check on this will let them know they are probably experiencing a drug withdrawal. There are plenty of drugs available to them in the facility but they have no idea what each of them was given so taking anything could in fact kill them. Especially since many of the drugs are labelled “Lethal Dosage 5 cc”. A bit of withdrawal might be better for a while…or not. Let them worry and ponder.**

**Reiterate the occasional boom noise and tremor from outside.**

 **Let them stew a little bit and then take them outside one by one and hand out the second of the memory sheets to each player. This should engender a bit more anxiety among them as it will cause them to search the room further for evidence of experimentation on them and generate some fear/wariness for anyone with their face. It even causes existential angst in them if any visit the bathroom/toilet after this and catch sight of themselves in the mirror.**

Once they have read their additional memory sheets and compared them with their initial ones and their character sheet (which is very basic, you as GM have their full stats), they’ll definitely want to look for videos or digital/audio files. Let them. Their memory sheets are given here. Remember to match each player to the number initially assigned.

**Initial Players Memory sheets:**

**Player 1:**

I don’t know my name. That’s not good. I mean I should know my own name, shouldn’t I? You would think that. I also don’t know where I am. Looks like a hospital. My centre of balance is a bit off too. Everything seems a bit further away. Am I shorter? How could I be shorter?

MY FACE IS WRONG.

This is most definitely not my face. I can’t picture my face but surely I’d know it if I saw it. But one thing I know for sure is the face I have isn’t me, isn’t mine. How was this done to me? Would that explain me being shorter too?

EVERYONE ELSE HAS THE SAME WRONG FACE.

Weird, I can’t remember anything before waking up here but I know, somehow, basic things. Like I can add and subtract and I’m pretty sure I can ride a bike or drive a car and there was that time when I was 8 and I had my appendix out…

I don’t have an appendix scar anymore. Why would someone do this to me? Did I volunteer for this? I mean I did a medical trial back in college for money to…ok, some memories are there. Perhaps the rest will come too. My skin feels a bit itchy, no sign of any rash though.

Am I even in my own body? I mean is that even possible? Maybe I haven’t been changed but just transferred like some sort of program.

Everyone else looks as confused as I do. Is that good? Were we friends? People on medical trials aren’t usually friends though. None of us are strapped in or restrained and the beds…those aren’t beds, they’re more like morgue slabs…but does that mean everyone is safe? Are these people safe? Will they harm me? I suppose they’re thinking the same thing. Maybe they’re not. They may remember EXACTLY who they are. Would that be worse? Maybe one of them is the person who owns this face.

Okay, I need to just think for a bit and we can work out all this later. Right now something has gone wrong. Because if me and these others are patients of some kind where are all the doctors? Or nurses? Or even cleaning staff?

Why are we locked in this room?

**Player 2:**

I don’t know my name. That’s not good. I really should know my name, shouldn’t I? You would think that. Nor do I know where I am. This looks like a hospital. Maybe a hospital, some sort of medical facility anyway.

I’M MALE AND MY FACE IS WRONG.

I shouldn’t be a man. I’m pretty certain I’m a woman. Okay, I’m not 100 per cent sure about that but my instinct is that I am. Me being a man explains why I have a man’s face but not why I’m a man in the first place. I can’t visualise what I should look like. That’s missing from my memory along with my name and where I live and my family and my dog’s name…but I have or had a dog. So that’s something to start with. What sort of dog escapes me right now though.

So, a hospital then. And these other people all look the same as me. Are they actually the same as me? Are any of them really women? Or not? If not then why do they look like this? Never mind why right now. Having enough trouble with the gender. Let’s worry about who did this to me and why.

THEY ALL HAVE THE SAME FACE AND BODY AS ME.

That is totally creepy. What benefit could it have? If we’re being experimented on, which is a possibility, surely there are more interesting things to do than make everyone look the same? Unless there’s a really horrible reason for that. And if we’re being experimented on then where are the ones doing it? We all appear to be inmates or patients but no one is dressed as a doctor or whatever.

I can remember how to speak and talk and walk and read and all the normal things but the memories that make me me are missing.

Have I been surgically altered? How would I know? I know about gender reassignment, another memory not important enough to take from me I suppose, but this seems way beyond what I’ve read about that. Is it possible to transfer a mind? Maybe. I thought that sort of thing was interwoven heavily with lived experience.

So if we’re all in the same boat and all the doctors and staff are missing what caused that? Why are they missing? Are we infectious somehow? The door is sealed and locked and that’s serious.

Why are we all locked in this room?

**Player 3**:

I don’t know where I am. That’s not good. I mean I should know that, shouldn’t I? You would think that. More worryingly I realise I also don’t know what my name is. How can I not know my own name? This place looks like a hospital. Perhaps I’m ill. I don’t feel ill though. If it’s a mental disease that affects my memory, then that might be it. What else is wrong? I can’t remember my wife’s name or my children’s. But I remember I have a wife and children…or I did have a wife and children. That’s worrying.

MY FACE IS WRONG.

This is definitely not my face and although I can’t recall what I look like I know instinctively that I don’t look like this because I’m pretty certain I’m not white. Though why I didn’t notice that from looking at my hands I’m not sure. So, this is some sort of experiment then. People are experimenting on me though what they’re seeking to prove is beyond me since biologically all races are the same

There are other people here with me and they all look the same.

THEY ALL LOOK LIKE ME.

Or rather they all look like I do now since this isn’t my face. Is this surgery? I can’t see any scars or lesions or adhesions. How do I know about adhesions? Have I a medical background? Or am I just widely read?

Do I know these people at all or were we selected at random for this thing? I can’t see myself volunteering to be made white though so this is definitely against my will. Unless it was something that would have helped my family of course, I’d have done it then even if my wife was against it.

I’m sticking with the coercion. It makes the most sense to me so far. So who did this and where are they? Everyone here is identical to me, no one looks official at all and we’re all locked in this laboratory together. Why abandon us? Were we abandoned? Probably. Experiments don’t get left untended especially ones with actual people in them, that is if they even think we’re people.

Even if they don’t think we’re people I don’t seem in ill health or mistreated. Or at least I can’t tell from an external check.

There must be records on us somewhere. More importantly there must be records on me somewhere. Hopefully I’ll know me when I see me.

Something bad has happened to us, and something bad has happened outside too or else we wouldn’t be locked in here by ourselves.

**Player 4:**

I can’t remember my name. No matter how hard I try. I really should know my name, shouldn’t I? You would think that. This looks like a hospital or a clinic of some sort. The medical equipment and the way I’m dressed suggest that anyway.

MY FACE IS WRONG.

My face is wrong …and I can walk. I mean that’s brilliant. Not the face thing but I can walk. So this is only half weird and bad. I mean I can’t remember why I wasn’t able to walk before or even when that was, but I can walk. Cool.

I can’t remember lots of things though and that can’t be good. Has the procedure that gave me back the ability to walk affected my memory somehow? Perhaps it has but why would I have a different face? Try as I might I just can’t remember what I looked like before.

EVERYONE ELSE HAS THE SAME FACE AS ME.

That’s just creepy beyond belief. Are they the same as me though? Were they unable to walk or something else, maybe even paraplegic before this procedure? Why the same face though? Is it a template for…is this even my own body? How would I know? I mean apart from the legs I can’t remember anything about my own body. I want to know who I am but if I’m in a different body and in order to do that I have to go back then I’m not sure I want to.

I can’t remember any family or anything like that or where I live though I remember when the elevator was out and…okay, I live in an apartment block, or somewhere like that where I would need an elevator. Not everything gone then. And basic stuff is still there. I can tell the time, count, spell and so on.

Again, if someone or some organisation has restored my ability to walk why change my face, and everyone else’s face? And for that matter where are they? There’s only patients here and we are locked in this room.

Why would we be locked in? That doesn’t make any sense at all. If the research was private then surely we’d have signed something to keep it like that, wouldn’t we?

There’s more to this than I know. I need to know why we’re locked in.

**Player 5:**

My hands are too big. They look way bigger than they should and I thought I had a little scar from that bike accident when I was a child. Okay, I remember a bike accident, so that means I had a bike and I can ride a bike. I can’t remember my name though. No matter how hard I try. I really should know my name, shouldn’t I? You would think that. Nor can I remember my family or where I live or what I do for a living. Not good.

This place sort of looks like a hospital or a clinic or a lab of some sort. The medical equipment and the way I’m dressed suggest that anyway. Hopefully there are real clothes rather than this gown thing.

MY FACE IS WRONG.

Okay, it’s not just my hands, I have the wrong face. Absolutely the wrong face. I can’t remember what my own face looks like so I don’t know if this is what you’d call a memory, remembering that you didn’t have something or do something. It has to be. That’s pretty specific. Do I have dementia or early onset Alzheimer’s? How do I even remember what those things are if I can’t recall basic stuff about myself? Both of those generally leave early memories alone though, don’t they? I can’t be sure.

There are other people here with me.

THEY ALL HAVE THE SAME WRONG FACE.

Or maybe one of them has the right face? That doesn’t make sense though. Why would someone with that face want to be in a room full of people with the same face? Just buy a mirror.

So I can’t remember much of anything apart from stuff that isn’t personally important to me. So I can do math, write…is my handwriting different with different hands? Oh it is. How do I remember that? That seems an odd thing to have fallen through the cracks if someone did this to us.

The question is why did this happen to us, to me? Why am I here and why do I look like I do?

Where are all the doctors or warders in this prison hospital place? It has to be a prison hospital doesn’t it? Regular hospitals don’t have sealed doors like this room has, do they? Are we contagious or are we the survivors of a contagion? Are we the doctors and warders?

Did we do this to ourselves to save ourselves from something? What was that something and has it finished because we can’t stay here forever without dying.

We need to get out somehow.

**Additional Players’ Memory sheets:**

**Player 1: Memory sheet 2**

I really should know who I am. It’s there on the tip of my tongue, right on the side of my eye, just flickering out of view.

I can remember the awful pain in my side when I had to go to hospital to get my appendix out and I cried and dad held my hand and he had the same face as me and so did everyone else…no, no, no! That’s not right. Something changed my memory! That shouldn’t be possible.

I remember him staring at me. I wasn’t held down but I couldn’t move and he handed me the tiny feathered bird. It was probably sedated…maybe it was freshly dead, I don’t know much about birds or if I do I can’t remember. And then he told me in my own voice that if I didn’t tear off the beak my family wouldn’t live to see the hour out. Then there’s just blood and cuts on my hands from bits of beak and him screaming at me that the beak turns the other way. And then he pats me on the head and tells me to go back to sleep.

But the man staring isn’t my dad and isn’t me and why would I do that to myself? I can’t trust the face.

**Player 2: Memory sheet 2**

I’m really not feeling comfortable in this body. The weird thing is that I have noticed a birthmark on my hip…that I definitely had when I was a woman! So is this me changed? Or did they transfer the birthmark? Who the hell would do that? Just to psych me out? I’m already locked in here with four other people all of whom have the face of the man I just recalled spent ages forcing me to strangle small birds.

I suppose that’s where all the beaks came from. I mean he’s there up close and telling me that my dog will be next if I don’t kill the bird. So I do. I love my dog. She’s probably dead too because I don’t know how long I’ve been here. I can’t tell from my face because it’s not my face.

I hate that guy.

Seeing him staring down at me and making notes about what I’m doing. There’s only us two in this memory though, none of the others.

This must have happened before any infection, well, if that’s why there is no one but us inmates around. Why else would we be in here abandoned?

**Player 3: Memory sheet 2**

So if they’re not experimenting on me because of race then I don’t know why I’m here. I can just recall that face, the one I have now, up close and blank, almost mask-like in its intensity as it stares at me. He hums something and then I can feel a needle behind my eye. Just the pressure though not really a pain or anything but my eye starts gushing…I woke up feeling all weird eyed. Perhaps that was recent. We need to find out how long we’ve been here, at least how long since we went to sleep.

We weren’t tied up or on any life support, just lying on the slabs, or I remember I was anyway. So even allowing for drugs how long were we asleep. Again, I’m assuming the others were asleep too. I actually can’t really trust any of them. I can barely trust my own thoughts and whatever little memory I have…still can’t remember the faces of my family…let alone four others with that face.

It’s time to be very wary. There has to be external memory if we can’t, if I can’t rely on or retrieve my own.

**Player 4: Memory sheet 2:**

It’s odd. I’m straining to recall the changeover point, where I went from being unable to walk to being able to walk. I may as well try to remember my first steps as a toddler. Thankfully my mother taped that event…oh. I remember my mother and that there is a tape of my first steps. And logically speaking then there must be tape of my new first steps. Why wouldn’t there be? There’s cameras everywhere and if I wasn’t here to get the use of my legs back then why do I actually have the use of my legs back? I was in hospital with pneumonia once and I didn’t get my legs working then, and that’s another memory. Still blurry, it’s like I can’t remember if I actually try to do it, it has to be roundabout.

But there MUST be some digital or audio recording of sessions with me getting to walk. And not these constant images of feathers and blood all over my hands. Ick. I’m not liking that at all. I don’t know why that would even be in a hospital.

And that face, my face now, smiling at me as I try to wash the blood off.

**Player 5: Memory sheet 2:**

I can’t remember much detail, just his face, that face, my face staring at me through glass. Not multiples like now but just his, sort of floating there in the semi-dark. He’s signalling something to me, I’m not sure what though. Maybe I’m supposed to do something, there’s gloves and scalpels beside me.

No, the rest is hazy. I have an image of a painting on a wall, of a hummingbird or something like that, maybe a kingfisher. It is an office or a lobby?

Then there’s a wrench and everything is dark and here we are. “We”, I don’t know who any of these people are and why they have my face, or not my face. I know what I mean! I can’t feel any surgery, was it the machine that did this? Did we use the machine to save ourselves from something terrible? Use a pre-programmed human form to escape our infection? I don’t know, this is all supposition but why are we locked in if we’re not staff? Who abandons patients like that?

There must be records of what we did. There has to be.

**GM NOTE:** Once the players have had time to assimilate their secondary sheets and so on, like I said earlier, let them find a piece of info on a computer. It’s the only one they can access because it’s the only one without high security on it. The description is below and you can deal with it as you see fit, depending on who found it and how they’re sharing it, or IF they’re sharing it. Not sharing it isn’t crucial at this point of the game as the info discovered will be effectively replicated in Act 2. This ends Act 1. Act 2 will begin with a bit of a boom.

**Digital File recovered from Lab Computer.**

**GM NOTE: Read this out, don’t hand it to the players.**

It’s a clear video, in monochrome, showing a different room to the one the PCs are currently in. There are three people in the room, one of whom is never fully in shot and whose face can’t be seen. They are only seen handing things to the others.

One of the clearly seen individuals has the same face as all the PCs. The other does not and is a tall and relatively handsome black man, possibly African-American rather than not. Indeed, it is the first different face the PCs have seen since waking up.

**GM NOTE: Player 3 does not recognise this face as their own**.

Notes are being taken and screens are being watched. The tiny screens on the video seem to show sleeping figures. No detail can be made out as to who they are though. And there are far more than 5 of them.

The image flickers and light flashes across it. Both men seem worried and the new face points to the floor. The third individual is nowhere to be seen but you can infer where they are. Smoke billows and obscures the screen and a single sentence is heard.

“We have to save the others.”

**ACT 2**

Having just watched the little video the players/PCs will no doubt have more questions. Tough. This is where the rebel military have finally broken through into the compound and stormed Surgeon General Darlon’s de facto capital/last stand outpost.

**GM NOTE: Descriptions of the attack follow and let them do whatever clever thing they can think of, within reason, to stay alive or die foolishly.**

The room rocks and shakes and more dust falls from the ceiling. One of the fluorescent lights fizzes and blinks out forever. Voices, shouts and a pop, pop, pop noise of gunfire is heard from outside the locked door, though still muffled. A voice shouting “CLEAR!” is heard and then the external corridor lights up as full illumination is restored.

Several men in combat armour and military uniforms appear outside the sealed door of the PCs’ room and peer in, shading their eyes so as to see better. They stare at the keypad lock outside and then at the occupants. The nearest one, a corporal it seems from his stripes, turns and shouts down the corridor: “Sir! More in here. Live ones!”

He then turns and beckons the PCs over to the door and carefully enunciates “Open the door. Open the door. This building has been liberated in the name of the new republic so open the damn door!”

Of course the PCs can’t open the door. If they want to have an argument through the door with the military that’s fine The door opening will be solved shortly from the other side, let it be dealt with in a hand wavy sort of way, whatever takes your fancy as a good reason to bypass the security.

**GM NOTE: The PCs will do who knows what at this point. Have fun ☺**

The corporal then waves the PCs back from the door and it is opened. Raising his automatic weapon, he steps in slowly and stops about three steps in while several other soldiers fan around him and cover the PCs with their weapons.

**Sample conversational gambits from the Corporal (who has no name):**

Which one of you is Darlon?

Cat got your tongue?

What do the Proformaton machines do?

You may as well tell me now and get it over with because when the Major gets here with her assistant (the word “assistant” is emphasised) then you’ll actually be sorry. You really will.

Don’t all speak at once.

Plus anything else you feel like asking them.

**GM NOTE: The Corporal will fend off answering any of the PCs’ questions by waving his gun at them and telling them that he isn’t here to listen to any lies. If the PCs still protest he’ll order one of his men to train his gun on them. A further protest, even a “but” will result in the command “shoot that one in the leg, private”, which promptly happens. Roll for damage but it is a precise through-and-through shot so isn’t crippling.**

**Don’t shoot Player 4 in the leg, just in the upper arm and with the same effect. It is preferable if one of the players is shot. Pick one at random if need be.**

**GM NOTE: The corporal now gives this little speech:**

“Right, not one of you is willing to cooperate. You will be taken from here to the interrogation centre we’ve set up and this hidey hole of yours will be searched top to bottom. Any evidence of which one of you is Darlon will be discovered, and four of you had better hope we find some because otherwise there’s no future for any of you. Take them to the Major!”

The PCs are marched (carried if one is shot in the leg) down the corridor and through the rest of a vast medical complex, though one with more security and armour than you’d ever see in a regular hospital.

They pass by open doors similar to the one that locked their own room, some have bodies inside, some are empty. Some of the bodies are covered with bloodstains as though having been shot with automatic weapons, some other bodies simply lie there, dead but peaceful as though only sleeping.

They are brought into a makeshift command centre in what was once the central lobby. There are desks and chairs arranged into orderly rows and maps and screens are placed about the place, while a temporary radio ops station is set up in the corner. A female officer is leaning over a Signal Corps member and pointing out things on a screen. She looks up when the group comes in. The corporal salutes her.

“Major! Prisoners found and ready for debriefing.”

The Major nods and if one of the PCs is wounded orders that they be treated by the medic.

**GM NOTE: Have that player separated from the group for a few minutes while they are being treated.**

The Major speaks:

“Bring them into the annex. I’ll speak with them there.”

The PCs are brought into an adjacent room and made to sit before a desk. The Major joins them and paces around before beginning her questioning.

**GM NOTE: The Major has a calm and even tone, never seeming to get rattled or bothered by anything the PCs say, though she does make note of anything that she deems of value, such as possible contagion and so on. Use your judgment on this because as usual players can come out with anything!**

**If one of the players was shot earlier then while they are being treated they over hear two of the soldiers talking about the black guy that was captured in the far labs. It seems he has been singing like a birdy.**

In the interrogation room none of the players will admit to being Darlon, one would think! And if they ask who Darlon is and what is going on, then feel free to drop whatever info dump you wish from the World background on them. Particularly giving detail on Surgeon General Darlon’s predilection for human experimentation.

This is a time to let the players shine a bit, suggest Fast Talk rolls or persuasion if need be but push the interaction, even sow a little dissent, though delicately.

Finally, the Major will sigh and announce that it seems they are just the latest in a long line of the disappeared. There are family members of the disappeared in attendance outside and perhaps some of those might be able to jog the memories of the PCs. Perhaps. She will order that meetings be set up and that they will have a chance to meet the families.

She orders that the room be locked and guarded after she leaves, which she then does. Leave the players to stew for a bit.

After the Major has gone they can chat and plot by themselves and possibly the wounded player can reveal the info they overheard in the medic section. An hour of game time will pass.

**Act 3**

The players are collected from their room and escorted under armed guard to a visitor centre where ten people are waiting. These are the families of the disappeared. Six of them stand up and make faces of disgust when they see the visages of the players and ask to leave. Some making spitting motions as they go. The soldiers let them go.

The corporal, who is with them again here, grins:

“Whoever you lot are you have the wrong face to go home, at least to some of these homes. Sit down and we’ll see where we get.”

The players are seated opposite the four people.

**One is a middle aged white woman, one is a young black man, another is a white man in his late 30s and the last is a teenaged white boy.**

**Their names are Karen Vance, Jason McHenry, Thomas Bosch and Larry Jobs Jr.**

GM NOTE: None of these people are actually related to the players, sadly that’s the luck of the draw in this sort of thing but they, like Mulder in the X-Files, want to believe so badly that one of these players is their missing relative. We’ll just have to see how badly the players want to get out of there.

There are no stats or in depth background provided for these NPCs, feel free to improvise whatever you like about them, only bearing in mind that none of them are missing a daughter or wife or sister, as they have based their staying on the apparent gender of the players. Neither are they missing someone who couldn’t walk. This will be tricky but worth it.

What background there is is as follows:

Karen Vance is looking for her son, Benjamin, though she calls him Benjy. He’s been gone for two years and she had pretty much given up hope that he was still alive and could be found until the rebellion began and she heard about the attack on the government’s prisons and hospitals. She has already been to the prison and she is certain that her boy isn’t there. What records she found for him stated that he had been transferred to this facility a few months ago, to be seconded to Surgeon Darlon’s division.

Jason McHenry is looking for his father, Cyrus. Cyrus was protesting against the use of water cannons by the police when he was arrested, which was about six months ago. Jason saw him arrested yet when he went to see his father at the police station there was no record of his arrest and no trail that led anywhere. Jason has been searching ever since, with the aid of hackers and his cousin, who is now a part of the rebellion military. When the rebels took Parliament House Jason’s cousin discovered that there WERE records of Cyrus McHenry, and that he had been transferred to the Surgeon General’s division for “special duties”. So Jason followed along and now here he is.

Thomas Bosch is looking for his lover, Gary Powell. Gary and he had been having dinner one night and on the way home they were pulled over by the security forces. Gary and Thomas were both shot but Thomas was left for dead at the side of the road while Gary was bundled into an armoured vehicle. Thomas managed to get to their car and make it to a friend who was a doctor who saved his life. He has been on the run ever since, always looking for signs of Gary. So far he hasn’t found him. This is probably his last chance to do so.

Larry Jobs Jr is very simply looking for Larry Jobs Sr. Larry Sr was a mechanic who worked for a car insurance company and went missing almost a year ago when he answered a call out in the middle of the night. The police, as usual, were no help. Even arresting Larry Jr for obstructing them at one point and he spent a month in jail before being released. All Larry Jr can say is that his dad was the most decent, hardworking man ever, and he misses him. It would have been Larry Jr and his mom but she died two months ago from a haemorrhage.

**GM NOTE: The players will want descriptions of the missing people, and will probably try to imagine or remember if they are any of them. Let them run riot with this if need be.**

**This time estimate is nebulous but give it however much you think is necessary. Have the family members comment on their appearance and question if they can trust the PCs at all.**

**Part way through this the Major and two soldiers will return and ask the corporal to kindly move the visiting family members to the next room because she has to speak to the PCs. He does this. Then she beckons to one of her men and they bring a man into the room. It is the African American doctor they saw in the video earlier. He looks nervous and stares at the PCs.**

**The major speaks:**

**“Did you find the documents?”**

**He nods and hands over four files.” He speaks:**

**“I think these are the ones, it’s a bit of a mess down there and the computers are fritzed to hell.”**

**The Major takes the files and hands them to the PCs. (no need for a handout here just tell them what they are seeing.**

* **There are four people:**
* **Marion Costner, a nurse from the central district.**
* **John Levine, a journalist missing from Tor City.**
* **Wayne Devere, a volunteer firefighter from Salinet Town, and**
* **Calum Enright, assistant biologist, also from central.**

**GM NOTE: All of these people are white. One of them MAY be paralysed, the document is skimpy and doesn’t give that information.**

**The Major speaks again:**

**“As can be seen, there are only FOUR documents. And none of them match the names of the family members.”**

**She instructs one of her men to send the family members home and shortly afterwards everyone can hear protests and crying coming from the adjacent room before that sound dwindles away. When it is finally quiet the Major turn to the African American doctor and speaks again:**

**“Right, tell them what you told me. Don’t worry, they’re unarmed.”**

He looks nervous still and then speaks, licking his lips and glancing at the Major as he does so, grinning slightly sometimes, almost as if to please her.

“There should only be four people in this test group. And Surgeon General Darlon is missing…so when you eliminate the other possibilities it seems that one of you is Darlon.”

He steps back and defers to the Major.

She sighs and speaks:

“I don’t think you’ll take it but I offer you the chance of some redemption. If you surrender yourself now then you will save the lives of the other four and we will help them rebuild their lives somehow. If you play true to form then we expect you to stay quiet and condemn the others with you. You have five minutes to think about this and then I’ll return and whatever happens one or all of you will be taken for trial for crimes against humanity.”

She leaves, leaving guards on all the doors.

Whatever will the players do?

Who knows. Play along. They may need to confer more about their memories if they haven’t already. Let it play out and then take either one or all of them.

The game ends.

**Happpiness:**

**Player 1:**

I don’t know my name. That’s not good. I mean I should know my own name, shouldn’t I? You would think that. I also don’t know where I am. Looks like a hospital. My centre of balance is a bit off too. Everything seems a bit further away. Am I shorter? How could I be shorter?

MY FACE IS WRONG.

This is most definitely not my face. I can’t picture my face but surely I’d know it if I saw it. But one thing I know for sure is the face I have isn’t me, isn’t mine. How was this done to me? Would that explain me being shorter too?

EVERYONE ELSE HAS THE SAME WRONG FACE.

Weird, I can’t remember anything before waking up here but I know, somehow, basic things. Like I can add and subtract and I’m pretty sure I can ride a bike or drive a car and there was that time when I was 8 and I had my appendix out…

I don’t have an appendix scar anymore. Why would someone do this to me? Did I volunteer for this? I mean I did a medical trial back in college for money to…ok, some memories are there. Perhaps the rest will come too. My skin feels a bit itchy, no sign of any rash though.

Am I even in my own body? I mean is that even possible? Maybe I haven’t been changed but just transferred like some sort of program.

Everyone else looks as confused as I do. Is that good? Were we friends? People on medical trials aren’t usually friends though. None of us are strapped in or restrained and the beds…those aren’t beds, they’re more like morgue slabs…but does that mean everyone is safe? Are these people safe? Will they harm me? I suppose they’re thinking the same thing. Maybe they’re not. They may remember EXACTLY who they are. Would that be worse? Maybe one of them is the person who owns this face.

Okay, I need to just think for a bit and we can work out all this later. Right now something has gone wrong. Because if me and these others are patients of some kind where are all the doctors? Or nurses? Or even cleaning staff?

Why are we locked in this room?

**Happiness**

**Player 2:**

I don’t know my name. That’s not good. I really should know my name, shouldn’t I? You would think that. Nor do I know where I am. This looks like a hospital. Maybe a hospital, some sort of medical facility anyway.

I’M MALE AND MY FACE IS WRONG.

I shouldn’t be a man. I’m pretty certain I’m a woman. Okay, I’m not 100 per cent sure about that but my instinct is that I am. Me being a man explains why I have a man’s face but not why I’m a man in the first place. I can’t visualise what I should look like. That’s missing from my memory along with my name and where I live and my family and my dog’s name…but I have or had a dog. So that’s something to start with. What sort of dog escapes me right now though.

So, a hospital then. And these other people all look the same as me. Are they actually the same as me? Are any of them really women? Or not? If not then why do they look like this? Never mind why right now. Having enough trouble with the gender. Let’s worry about who did this to me and why.

THEY ALL HAVE THE SAME FACE AND BODY AS ME.

That is totally creepy. What benefit could it have? If we’re being experimented on, which is a possibility, surely there are more interesting things to do than make everyone look the same? Unless there’s a really horrible reason for that. And if we’re being experimented on then where are the ones doing it? We all appear to be inmates or patients but no one is dressed as a doctor or whatever.

I can remember how to speak and talk and walk and read and all the normal things but the memories that make me me are missing.

Have I been surgically altered? How would I know? I know about gender reassignment, another memory not important enough to take from me I suppose, but this seems way beyond what I’ve read about that. Is it possible to transfer a mind? Maybe. I thought that sort of thing was interwoven heavily with lived experience.

So if we’re all in the same boat and all the doctors and staff are missing what caused that? Why are they missing? Are we infectious somehow? The door is sealed and locked and that’s serious.

Why are we all locked in this room?

**Happiness**

**Player 3**:

I don’t know where I am. That’s not good. I mean I should know that, shouldn’t I? You would think that. More worryingly I realise I also don’t know what my name is. How can I not know my own name? This place looks like a hospital. Perhaps I’m ill. I don’t feel ill though. If it’s a mental disease that affects my memory, then that might be it. What else is wrong? I can’t remember my wife’s name or my children’s. But I remember I have a wife and children…or I did have a wife and children. That’s worrying.

MY FACE IS WRONG.

This is definitely not my face and although I can’t recall what I look like I know instinctively that I don’t look like this because I’m pretty certain I’m not white. Though why I didn’t notice that from looking at my hands I’m not sure. So, this is some sort of experiment then. People are experimenting on me though what they’re seeking to prove is beyond me since biologically all races are the same

There are other people here with me and they all look the same.

THEY ALL LOOK LIKE ME.

Or rather they all look like I do now since this isn’t my face. Is this surgery? I can’t see any scars or lesions or adhesions. How do I know about adhesions? Have I a medical background? Or am I just widely read?

Do I know these people at all or were we selected at random for this thing? I can’t see myself volunteering to be made white though so this is definitely against my will. Unless it was something that would have helped my family of course, I’d have done it then even if my wife was against it.

I’m sticking with the coercion. It makes the most sense to me so far. So who did this and where are they? Everyone here is identical to me, no one looks official at all and we’re all locked in this laboratory together. Why abandon us? Were we abandoned? Probably. Experiments don’t get left untended especially ones with actual people in them, that is if they even think we’re people.

Even if they don’t think we’re people I don’t seem in ill health or mistreated. Or at least I can’t tell from an external check.

There must be records on us somewhere. More importantly there must be records on me somewhere. Hopefully I’ll know me when I see me.

Something bad has happened to us, and something bad has happened outside too or else we wouldn’t be locked in here by ourselves.

**Happiness**

**Player 4:**

I can’t remember my name. No matter how hard I try. I really should know my name, shouldn’t I? You would think that. This looks like a hospital or a clinic of some sort. The medical equipment and the way I’m dressed suggest that anyway.

MY FACE IS WRONG.

My face is wrong …and I can walk. I mean that’s brilliant. Not the face thing but I can walk. So this is only half weird and bad. I mean I can’t remember why I wasn’t able to walk before or even when that was, but I can walk. Cool.

I can’t remember lots of things though and that can’t be good. Has the procedure that gave me back the ability to walk affected my memory somehow? Perhaps it has but why would I have a different face? Try as I might I just can’t remember what I looked like before.

EVERYONE ELSE HAS THE SAME FACE AS ME.

That’s just creepy beyond belief. Are they the same as me though? Were they unable to walk or something else, maybe even paraplegic before this procedure? Why the same face though? Is it a template for…is this even my own body? How would I know? I mean apart from the legs I can’t remember anything about my own body. I want to know who I am but if I’m in a different body and in order to do that I have to go back then I’m not sure I want to.

I can’t remember any family or anything like that or where I live though I remember when the elevator was out and…okay, I live in an apartment block, or somewhere like that where I would need an elevator. Not everything gone then. And basic stuff is still there. I can tell the time, count, spell and so on.

Again, if someone or some organisation has restored my ability to walk why change my face, and everyone else’s face? And for that matter where are they? There’s only patients here and we are locked in this room.

Why would we be locked in? That doesn’t make any sense at all. If the research was private then surely we’d have signed something to keep it like that, wouldn’t we?

There’s more to this than I know. I need to know why we’re locked in.

**Happiness**

**Player 5:**

My hands are too big. They look way bigger than they should and I thought I had a little scar from that bike accident when I was a child. Okay, I remember a bike accident, so that means I had a bike and I can ride a bike. I can’t remember my name though. No matter how hard I try. I really should know my name, shouldn’t I? You would think that. Nor can I remember my family or where I live or what I do for a living. Not good.

This place sort of looks like a hospital or a clinic or a lab of some sort. The medical equipment and the way I’m dressed suggest that anyway. Hopefully there are real clothes rather than this gown thing.

MY FACE IS WRONG.

Okay, it’s not just my hands, I have the wrong face. Absolutely the wrong face. I can’t remember what my own face looks like so I don’t know if this is what you’d call a memory, remembering that you didn’t have something or do something. It has to be. That’s pretty specific. Do I have dementia or early onset Alzheimer’s? How do I even remember what those things are if I can’t recall basic stuff about myself? Both of those generally leave early memories alone though, don’t they? I can’t be sure.

There are other people here with me.

THEY ALL HAVE THE SAME WRONG FACE.

Or maybe one of them has the right face? That doesn’t make sense though. Why would someone with that face want to be in a room full of people with the same face? Just buy a mirror.

So I can’t remember much of anything apart from stuff that isn’t personally important to me. So I can do math, write…is my handwriting different with different hands? Oh it is. How do I remember that? That seems an odd thing to have fallen through the cracks if someone did this to us.

The question is why did this happen to us, to me? Why am I here and why do I look like I do?

Where are all the doctors or warders in this prison hospital place? It has to be a prison hospital doesn’t it? Regular hospitals don’t have sealed doors like this room has, do they? Are we contagious or are we the survivors of a contagion? Are we the doctors and warders?

Did we do this to ourselves to save ourselves from something? What was that something and has it finished because we can’t stay here forever without dying.

We need to get out somehow.

**Happiness**

**Player 1: Memory sheet 2**

I really should know who I am. It’s there on the tip of my tongue, right on the side of my eye, just flickering out of view.

I can remember the awful pain in my side when I had to go to hospital to get my appendix out and I cried and dad held my hand and he had the same face as me and so did everyone else…no, no, no! That’s not right. Something changed my memory! That shouldn’t be possible.

I remember him staring at me. I wasn’t held down but I couldn’t move and he handed me the tiny feathered bird. It was probably sedated…maybe it was freshly dead, I don’t know much about birds or if I do I can’t remember. And then he told me in my own voice that if I didn’t tear off the beak my family wouldn’t live to see the hour out. Then there’s just blood and cuts on my hands from bits of beak and him screaming at me that the beak turns the other way. And then he pats me on the head and tells me to go back to sleep.

But the man staring isn’t my dad and isn’t me and why would I do that to myself? I can’t trust the face.

**Happiness**

**Player 2: Memory sheet 2**

I’m really not feeling comfortable in this body. The weird thing is that I have noticed a birthmark on my hip…that I definitely had when I was a woman! So is this me changed? Or did they transfer the birthmark? Who the hell would do that? Just to psych me out? I’m already locked in here with four other people all of whom have the face of the man I just recalled spent ages forcing me to strangle small birds.

I suppose that’s where all the beaks came from. I mean he’s there up close and telling me that my dog will be next if I don’t kill the bird. So I do. I love my dog. She’s probably dead too because I don’t know how long I’ve been here. I can’t tell from my face because it’s not my face.

I hate that guy.

Seeing him staring down at me and making notes about what I’m doing. There’s only us two in this memory though, none of the others.

This must have happened before any infection, well, if that’s why there is no one but us inmates around. Why else would we be in here abandoned?

**Happiness**

**Player 3: Memory sheet 2**

So if they’re not experimenting on me because of race then I don’t know why I’m here. I can just recall that face, the one I have now, up close and blank, almost mask-like in its intensity as it stares at me. He hums something and then I can feel a needle behind my eye. Just the pressure though not really a pain or anything but my eye starts gushing…I woke up feeling all weird eyed. Perhaps that was recent. We need to find out how long we’ve been here, at least how long since we went to sleep.

We weren’t tied up or on any life support, just lying on the slabs, or I remember I was anyway. So even allowing for drugs how long were we asleep. Again, I’m assuming the others were asleep too. I actually can’t really trust any of them. I can barely trust my own thoughts and whatever little memory I have…still can’t remember the faces of my family…let alone four others with that face.

It’s time to be very wary. There has to be external memory if we can’t, if I can’t rely on or retrieve my own.

**Happiness**

**Player 4: Memory sheet 2:**

It’s odd. I’m straining to recall the changeover point, where I went from being unable to walk to being able to walk. I may as well try to remember my first steps as a toddler. Thankfully my mother taped that event…oh. I remember my mother and that there is a tape of my first steps. And logically speaking then there must be tape of my new first steps. Why wouldn’t there be? There’s cameras everywhere and if I wasn’t here to get the use of my legs back then why do I actually have the use of my legs back? I was in hospital with pneumonia once and I didn’t get my legs working then, and that’s another memory. Still blurry, it’s like I can’t remember if I actually try to do it, it has to be roundabout.

But there MUST be some digital or audio recording of sessions with me getting to walk. And not these constant images of feathers and blood all over my hands. Ick. I’m not liking that at all. I don’t know why that would even be in a hospital.

And that face, my face now, smiling at me as I try to wash the blood off.

**Happiness**

**Player 5: Memory sheet 2:**

I can’t remember much detail, just his face, that face, my face staring at me through glass. Not multiples like now but just his, sort of floating there in the semi-dark. He’s signalling something to me, I’m not sure what though. Maybe I’m supposed to do something, there’s gloves and scalpels beside me.

No, the rest is hazy. I have an image of a painting on a wall, of a hummingbird or something like that, maybe a kingfisher. It is an office or a lobby?

Then there’s a wrench and everything is dark and here we are. “We”, I don’t know who any of these people are and why they have my face, or not my face. I know what I mean! I can’t feel any surgery, was it the machine that did this? Did we use the machine to save ourselves from something terrible? Use a pre-programmed human form to escape our infection? I don’t know, this is all supposition but why are we locked in if we’re not staff? Who abandons patients like that?

There must be records of what we did. There has to be.