

Inner Core

by

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Cast of Characters

SHELLY:

Early 20's

DOCTOR LAMBERT:

Over 50

Place

Doctor's Office

Time

Day

Setting: Doctor Lambert's office. Day.

At Rise: Shelly sits on a leather chair, talking to Doctor Lambert.

SHELLY: Sometimes I stare inside myself and try to figure out how I can kill my inner core. There are days when I wish to remove myself, from myself. Start fresh. Anew. Mop myself clean and start over again. Keep the same outer shell but with new inner meaning and purpose. Sort of like an upgrade to an old program that doesn't function as well as it should because it's outdated. I desperately need to upgrade my system, reboot my mind and wash everything out...but there is no way for me to change my inner core. It will always remain...the remnants of my past, the wires that have rusted and gone awry...they will always stay in place. They say you can never disconnect from your past self...we may try and act like we have, like we've found a way to be removed from it all but deep down, we always carry the same software.

DOCTOR LAMBERT: What if I told you that you could change your software?

SHELLY: I'd say, where do I sign up?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: I'm actually quite serious.

SHELLY: So am I.

DOCTOR LAMBERT: What if I told you that there exists a place that specializes in such a wish?

SHELLY: You mean, well, I don't know what you mean.

DOCTOR LAMBERT: There's a new development we've been studying. *(beat)* Shelly, you've been coming to me now for quite some time. You've had improvement but unfortunately, you have reached your plateau.

SHELLY: Plateau. I'm not going to get any better than this?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: I would be lying if I didn't tell you that it could very well take you years and years to go any further.

SHELLY: ...What are my options?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: Well, there's meds...meds, meds, meds. I'm outright sick of them. There's a pill for everything nowadays. Am I right?

SHELLY: Yeah, but aren't you – isn't that what you're supposed to do? Aren't you supposed to provide prescriptions? Isn't that your job?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: Yes, it is when it's what I wish to do. You are different.

SHELLY: How so?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: You're strong. You are the perfect candidate. A mixture of doubt and strength.

SHELLY: ...You really need to speak to me clearly or I'm leaving.

DOCTOR LAMBERT: You see? That's the strong part I'm talking about.

Shelly motions to leave.

(calming her) Have patience. Listen. Listen to what I'd like to say. *(beat)* There is a new research being done. I am on the board and can get you right in. It's a laboratory where you upload your consciousness to a whole new you. Basically, you get rebuilt and reborn but you get to decide *exactly* how you want to be. We will extract all of your bad memories and we can tweak any improvements you would like to make to your DNA. Quite factually, you will be the super version of who you are now. There will be no more emotional pain, everything gets left behind. You get to start over, just as you wish, just as you've spoken to me about and if what you've been sharing with me is true, then this is your answer.

SHELLY: Almost sounds like science fiction.

DOCTOR LAMBERT: It's science reality.

SHELLY: What would happen to me?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: We would make you new, and more efficient. It will take six weeks from start to finish. Covering everything from transferring your consciousness, design and functionality.

SHELLY: This is...*(she chuckles)*...you are fucking with me?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: Not at all.

SHELLY: And what would I tell my family?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: We handle all of that. We'll inform them that we are placing you under observation, without visitation, for six weeks in order to give you a proper diagnosis after running further tests and treatment. After the six weeks are over, you return back to your family as your new and improved self and everyone will know that your treatment was a success.

SHELLY: I'm sorry, this sounds, it doesn't sound real Dr. Lambert.

DOCTOR LAMBERT: Shelly...this is very real. We've performed this procedure on multiple people with the most extraordinary results.

SHELLY: Why isn't this known to the public? Wouldn't everyone want to get these *improvements*, as you call them?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: There's too much red tape. You're talking DNA engineering and robotics. Certain laws won't allow such---

SHELLY: So what you're doing is illegal.

DOCTOR LAMBERT: Not exactly. Well, yes. It very well could be argued as illegal according to current man made laws but those arguments are unclear and vague, meaning it's possible and we are doing it for the good of humanity. We specialize and only focus on patients, people like you who have a difficult time fitting in society. We've improved lives. There are people who now live a normal life because of the work we've been doing.

SHELLY: How ethical do you feel this all is?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: I've staked my entire life on this. It's only a short matter of time before it's all eventually accepted into law and public perception. It will be as common as taking a vitamin or aspirin for a headache. We are ahead of our time but we aren't the only Doctors specializing in these studies. You will significantly benefit from this.

SHELLY: If I said yes, how soon would I---

DOCTOR LAMBERT: You would be admitted within the week.

SHELLY: So this will make me better?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: Shelly, you will have an entirely new outlook on life. Life as you know it now will be nothing like what you will go on to experience. You will wake up happy, free, ambitious. You won't ever get tired or bored. Nor will you ever feel low or depressed, your chronic pains would also be gone and you will no longer need any kind of medication. This world and everything in it will be your oyster and you will be a whole new you. Best of all, you will never remember who you are now...we extract all the nonsense and enhance all the great things about you. And you get to decide for yourself through a series of precise questions.

SHELLY: Precise questions...

DOCTOR LAMBERT: That's correct.

SHELLY: Will I remember me?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: You will still be and *always* be you, without the bad parts.

SHELLY: And I make all the decisions?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: You have full control over your future self.

SHELLY: How does this *exactly* work?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: We put you under an advanced anesthesia, similar to, as if you were in a sleep state. The procedure entails wiring and uploading your mind. Once we run through all your files, your upgrade will take place and all your software will be brand new.

SHELLY: It's too good to be true.

DOCTOR LAMBERT: My son...he's done it.

SHELLY: Your son?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: Yes.

SHELLY: What was wrong with your son?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: I'd rather not get into all that but let's just say that he's been cured. You remind me very much of him, before we fixed him.

SHELLY: Really?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: Yes. *(beat)* Think about it. There's no rushing into---

SHELLY: I'll do it.

DOCTOR LAMBERT: ...Are you sure?

SHELLY: Definitely.

DOCTOR LAMBERT: I'd like you to take the week. Our next session isn't until next Wednesday...I want you to be certain. If next week your answer is still a resounding yes, then we will get started immediately. Please, properly think it over. In the mean time, I will need you to sign this paper –

Doctor Lambert, takes a piece a paper from a safe he had just opened and hands it to Shelly –

It's just to keep our conversation about the procedure confidential. It can't be discussed elsewhere, other than between us in this here room.

Shelly signs it, handing the paper back to Doctor Lambert.

SHELLY: When is the soonest we can start?...

DOCTOR LAMBERT: Once you make clear of your decision next week, we'll be going in for tests a few days after.

SHELLY: Are you sure this will save me?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: It's why I've dedicated my life to it Shelly. We can't afford to lose more gems in this world, especially those that have a gift.

SHELLY: I won't be living a lie?

DOCTOR LAMBERT: No, not at all, quite the opposite.

Lights fade.

CURTAIN