

Disintegration

A Novel

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CHAPTER ONE

“Ah, Mr. Enright, you're awake. I thought you'd be coming around about now. I've been trying to remain close by so you wouldn't come to and wonder what the hell was going on. And, how are you feeling on this beautiful morning?”

His eyes, still covered with a sticky film, David Enright looked in the direction of the voice that addressed him.

“Where am I? Is this a hospital? My head, it hurts like hell. Was, I in a wreck?”

“All good questions, David. May I call you David? No, you haven't been in a wreck, no this isn't a hospital and your head hurts because you've been anesthetized for the past several hours. That's a very normal reaction. It will pass shortly and...”

“Anesthetized? If I'm not hurt and not in a hospital, why was I knocked out? Where the hell is this place?”

Enright tried to sit up to no avail, finding his body and extremities securely strapped to the gurney that he was laying on. After several hard pulls at his restraints, he laid his pounding head back down.

“How about telling me why I'm tied to this fucking table?”

Enright's eyes were becoming a little more focused and he could see the features of the man who had been speaking to him. He was short, pumpkin faced, bald and bespectacled. He was wearing a white, physician's lab coat and could easily pass for a member of an emergency room staff. He spoke through a very calming and relaxed smile, very slowly and obviously choosing his words.

“You've been kidnapped, David, by me. You're going to be here with me for quite some time and...quit pulling at the restraints, please. They're quite strong and you're just going to pull a muscle or abrade your arms. Anyway, as I was saying, you will be here, in my custody for at least the next few weeks. So, you need to just lay back and relax, get comfortable with your surroundings. Try to...”

Enright yelled as he struggled ever harder with his bonds.

“Take this shit off of me now or you're going to be in a world of shit! I don't give a fuck who put you up to this. I'm going to hold you just as responsible if you don't get over here and release these straps right now. You hear me don't you? I caution you, I'm an attorney. Any assault on me is an assault on the court. You don't realize the trouble you're letting yourself in for.”

The small frame of his host literally shook with laughter at Enright's threat. He composed himself and continued with his explanations.

“It's easy to see how you've become so successful in business, David. You have a very aggressive side to you. You need to forget all of that now and save your attitude for someone else. I have taken every precaution to see that you have absolutely no chance of breaking free. You're not my first 'guest' here and I'm really quite good at rendering one defenseless. I've always been rather small as you can see, so I've learned to use my mind instead of my body. You just relax now. I've got a few preparations to make and I'll be back with you before too long. Oh, by the way, my name is Kale but I prefer to be called Doctor K. I'm sure you'll have a lot of things to call me during your visit, but Doctor K works for me.”

“Is this a ransom deal? That’s it? I don't have a lot, of money. I'm married, I've got kids in college and very little cash. You won't get much out of me. I doubt my wife would give you a cent. She'd probably enjoy not paying a ransom for me. You've picked the wrong guy, Kale.”

Doctor K offered no response and continued with the tasks he was undertaking in the back of the room. He sorted through vials and other medical accruements. Quite preoccupied, he had very little feedback for David Enright. Occasionally he would correct a point when he apparently found it amusing or so far off base that he deemed it an error worthy of correcting.

“No David, having studied you for some time now, I would have to agree with you, there's no one who would be willing to pay a ransom for your return. But don't let that bring you to the conclusion that no one is interested in what's going on here. Nothing could be farther from the truth. I'm a professional. This lab is not an inexpensive proposition, mind you. My services cost a great deal. I'm very skilled and receiving a tidy sum of money for my contributions to this little affair. As a matter of fact, I've already been paid in full.”

“Paid, by who? For what? If this isn't a kidnapping, what is it?”

Doctor K pushed a small stainless steel tray over beside the examination table that Enright was attached to. On it's surface was a tray containing a wide array of surgical tools that engendered an immediate response in Enright's facial expression.

“I always love this moment. I’m sure you recognize a number of these wonderful little instruments I have here, don’t you? It generally brings to mind many unpleasant childhood visits to the doctor for most folks. I hope you'll forgive me if I take a little too

long in explaining this process to you. You must understand how...let's just say 'involved' I am in this. I get a great deal of satisfaction from what we are about to do here, you and I together."

Enright began testing his restraints again with the same results as before. The only movement that was possible for him was to raise and lower his head. He had seen the bizarre look that washed over Doctor K's face as he spoke and panic was now the most predominant feature on his own.

"I'm not doing a fucking thing with you! You best cut me free this fucking minute. You hear me, asshole?"

"Ah, you're making this so good for me. I knew that you were going to be the best yet. You have so much fire in you. As you can tell, David, I've left you some movement there so that you can watch some of what's going on. I'm sure you will want to, for a while at least. I'm going to have to restrain your head for this first procedure, however. Then I'll give you as much freedom as I can. I actually prefer to have you watch. Now, what do you say we do a few initial 'tests'? I'm very curious as to what your thresholds are."

"You're crazy. Completely fucking crazy! You better not touch me...I mean it, friend!"

Doctor K's eyes danced as he reached into the tray and pulled out a highly polished pair of forceps and a scalpel.

"Friend? You're too much, David. Let's see now, these have been thoroughly sanitized, so you don't need to be worried about post-surgical infection."

"Surgery! What are you doing? You fucking moron!"

“Well, David, we are right under my home here and even though I live by myself, I have some very nice neighbors. I don't think they would appreciate hearing these repeated outbursts of profanity that you can't seem to stay away from. And, also, I think you may be a screamer.”

Doctor K set the two instruments aside and picked up a roll of wide adhesive tape. He pulled off a long section and pushed the middle of it onto Enright's forehead. He pulled on the ends forcing his head down firmly on the table. He then taped the ends to the underside of the table on either side of his head. Two more shorter pieces were secured to Enright's lower jaw. With force, he pulled his mouth open wide and firmly taped it in the extreme open position. He smiled as he continued speaking.

“Once, I experienced a very nasty bite from a patient while I was doing the taping. I'm very careful now. They always have more energy during these initial procedures. Can't be too careful. Did you know that a bite from a human is one of the nastiest you can get? The amount of bacteria in a person's mouth is just incredible. I always wear these surgical gloves when I'm working in the mouth. I don't think I could ever have been a dentist. Money would be good, but I'm not doing all that badly here.

There, I think we're ready. Now, David, I wish I could say 'I know how much this is going to hurt' but I can't. I really can't even imagine. However, I'm sure it's got to be a great deal. Pain is such a relative thing and as soon we take care of this little 'quieting' procedure, we're going to get into just what your parameters are. OK, let's get started now, shall we? You do understand that anesthetics are not a consideration here?” He looked at the wide-eyed terror in Enright's eyes.

“I knew you did.”

Doctor K picked up the forceps and scalpel. He first reached in with the forceps, grabbing Enright's tongue firmly. He grabbed and then released it several times before obtaining the hold that he desired. He tightened his grip on the slippery appendage pulling it as far as it would stretch out of Enright's mouth. Continuing to hold it tightly in the extracted position, he picked up the scalpel with his free hand. He held it up so that Enright could see what it was. He twisted the handle in a manner that caused the bright overhead light to flash off the blade creating a sparkle as if it were jewelry. With very exaggerated movements, he lowered it to the base of the tongue. He gently probed several times, bringing tiny red droplets to the surface with each touch. Enright's body jumped against the restraints with each touch of the blade.

“You know David, a scalpel is a really wonderful instrument. If it's a new one, and I always use a new one, they are so sharp that you initially don't even feel the cut. Just a little pressure and then of course, the ensuing warm wetness. There, see what I mean?” Enright could feel it just as his demented captor described. He tried to scream but his vocal chords and even his entire throat quickly filled to choking levels with the warm fluid. He recognized the smell and feel instead of the taste. His taste buds were taking the same journey as his tongue. And, even as he tried to grasp in his mind that this was really happening, Doctor K withdrew the long limp mound of flesh that had filled Enright's mouth only seconds before.

“There now, see what I was talking about? Doesn't even hurt at this point, does it? It takes a few seconds for the nerves to catch on to what's happened and then...well, you're going to be in quite a bit of pain. Oh, you're choking on your blood aren't you? I've got a little pump right here for taking care of just that.”

The pain began to grab hold of his throat. It started as a burning sensation and quickly escalated to a pulse actuated pounding. The intensity grew and the pulses became closer and closer in an ever-increasing crescendo of agony. As blackness covered his vision, the last image that burned in his mind was his inquisitor staring closely into his eyes. Doctor K's eyes sparkled with excitement as he watched Enright loose consciousness.



“Welcome back, David. How's that throat feeling? Dr. K paused and then smiled as he forcefully opened Enright's left eye with his thumb and index finger. Just nod. I've removed the restraints from your head but I'm afraid you're never going to be much of a talker anymore. Just as well. You really had quite a trash-mouth.”

Enright realized that he was awake and back in Hell. This was no nightmare from which he was awakening. His mouth felt empty, much like a giant tooth had been pulled leaving an awkward hole. He had a tube running down his throat and small bubbles of brownish saliva made their way up the clear pipe to a small pump that had undoubtedly kept him from drowning on his own blood while he was out. His mouth felt like a huge empty cavern. The apparatus which had enabled him to talk, to feel the inside of his mouth and even swallow was gone. Only pain remained where it had once been connected to his body. He was consumed with rage, trying in vain to force out a scream.

“That feels pretty odd huh, David? Here, let me get that tube out for you. The bleeding has pretty much stopped, for now. I certainly wouldn't want you to bleed to

death on your first day here. I'd say you are ready now to help me explore a few of my personal fantasies, in complete silence, of course. I hate that you passed out so quickly. The procedure for severing your vocal chords was quite interesting. Removing the tongue does not ensure the complete inability to make sounds. But, for me, one step without the other is not very fulfilling.”

Enright turned his head and followed every movement that Doctor K made. When he heard the familiar sound of stainless steel being dropped into a tray, his heart rate shot up till he could feel his pulse pounding against the sore stub in his throat. Before long, he could see the cart being pushed over beside him again with its cargo of glistening medical paraphernalia resting in the tray. He wanted to cry out, to get up, to demolish this wicked little man who was torturing him. None of those options were available, so he just laid still on the gurney, eyes as wide as silver dollars, waiting for Doctor K's next move.

“You know, David... I've read that the strongest bone in the human body is the femur and believe it or not, thirty pounds of direct pressure will break it. The only reason that doesn't happen to all of us is the extreme amount of support that muscles and ligaments give to our skeleton. Did you know that? Just nod. Well here's what I propose to do. I say we get rid of all that muscle and ligament support and see if that is true. What do you say, David? Now listen, I'd advice you to move around as little as possible. I'm going to try to make nice smooth incisions here so that the bone gets a nice clean separation from all that tissue. If you jump around and flinch continually, I guarantee this will take a lot longer and wear us both out.”

Enright almost passed out when he saw Doctor K pick up the scalpel and twist it in his hand, again watching the light reflect off the blade. The first feeling was pressure...much like that on his tongue. Within seconds however, the sharp stinging began to build. He could feel the blade being run up the entire length of his calf muscle. The pain quickly followed and escalated exponentially by the second. Before long, his right leg felt as it were in a sausage grinder up to his hip. Silent screams poured from his empty mouth each time the butcher moved his elbow in another slicing pattern. Even though he could only lay in mute silence, with only his mind screaming, Dr. K began to hum as directed the stainless steel razor completely around Enright's calve muscle. After what seemed an eternity, his mind shut down and blackness once again overcame his reasoning. It was the most welcome of sensations.



The bright light beckoned Enright. He wanted so badly to move towards it. Even in his semiconscious state he felt that freedom and peace waited for him there. This was to be but another cruel joke. As his mind resurfaced into the cell of the demented character who had so excitedly undertaken his mutilation, his heart jumped back to warp speed and he realized that the light was from a high powered quartz surgical lamp, pulled down close to illuminate Doctor K's handiwork.

"Ah, back again. You were out quite awhile, David. You didn't miss a thing. Well, that's not completely accurate. You had company. That's right, old friends dropped by to see how you were doing. They said to give you their 'regrets'. They stayed

quite a while hoping you'd come around and they could watch you and I working together. Unfortunately, you just wouldn't wake up and they ran out of time. I wouldn't feel bad, though. I'm sure they'll be back. I notice some concern in your eyes, David. You probably think I'm trying to kill you. Is that right? Well, nothing could be farther from the truth. My whole purpose here is to keep you alive and actively participating in this adventure for as long as possible. For me, one of the greatest feelings of satisfaction I get out of my work is seeing just how long this can go on. I know that you're a quite smart individual and that you understand that ultimately, you will not be leaving here alive. I hate that. If it were possible for me to put my patients back together and somehow make them forget they were ever here, I would be thrilled. It would certainly make my job a lot easier. Disposing of the end product of my procedures is a quite tricky business. I am proud to say, though, I have a system in place for that which seems to be working wonderfully. And now, we need to get back to work. You remember, we were going to test the tensile breaking point on a femur bone? I have gotten a spot on yours all cleaned of muscle and tendons and I think we're now ready to start adding weights. If you'll pick your head up a little, you might want to take a look at the amount of work that we've already gotten accomplished. If you'll try to fight blacking out so quickly this time, we might get several more tests done today. What do you say to that? Just nod.”