

Screen Saver

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A work of fiction, meant for adults. Read something else if you are not an adult, or are offended by stories with sexual content. Then again, if all you're looking for is in-out, in-out, in-out, you should probably read something else. I welcome constructive comments. Enjoy.

Sarah and Kelly were room mates in college. Sarah was a junior in computer science, with emphasis in graphics. Kelly was a psych major. Sarah had been working on a graphics program for a class project. It had started out as a stereo display of 3D surfaces in motion; she was using a pair of lenses from a book with stereoscopic pairs of fish pictures, and a cardboard frame to hold the lenses in place on the color screen of her portable computer. She generated pairs of stereo images, and the lenses brought each into the proper focus.

The program had evolved into a sort of 3D stereo screen saver. She described it once to Kelly as a cross between Gosper's infamous "smoking clover", Bela Julesz' random dot stereograms, and her own hallucinations. Each eye was presented with its own random dot image, which when correlated by the brain, formed a three dimensional image. Sarah's innovations included the use of a larger color palette to achieve the effect of higher pixel density, and raw imaging speed.

She had been working for a while on a particular moving tunnel sequence. It was appealing to her somehow -- going deeper and deeper, never quite reaching the end, subtly rotating the color palette as the image moved. She had the usual bugs after a pretty substantial rework, and after a couple of hours of hunting, it looked like she had a stable version. She put the cardboard viewer over her computer screen, rested her head, and started the program. The initial image showing a three dimensional sphere floating in a colored space appeared just fine. Her room mate Kelly had been using this part of the program in a psych experiment -- as Julesz had found, two to three per cent of the population couldn't fuse a stereo image in this manner.

Sarah clicked the mouse to start the motion generation going. Yes, the color animation and blending was much, much smoother now. The image seemed to be drawing her deeper, and deeper, and deeper ...

Sarah blinked. She was still looking through the viewer at the screen; it was full of debugging information. She sat up and glanced at the clock- half an hour had passed! What had happened?

She shook her head and wiggled her shoulders; she certainly felt relaxed and rested, maybe a bit wooly. Had she fallen asleep? Well, first things first -- what bought her the trip into the Code Warrior debugger? She looked at the debugger dump, then at the code. Simple problem,

simple fix; she was glad she didn't make complicated mistakes. She looked again at the code and did a couple of estimates. It should take about half an hour of continuous execution to hit the bug. Hmmm. What had she been doing in front of the screen?

As she was recompiling the program, Kelly came in and said "hi," dumping her book bag on her bed.

Sarah looked at her, still puzzled. Kelly asked what was up.

"I don't know what happened. I got my hack running, but it's like I fell asleep in front of the screen for half an hour. One minute I'm watching the images do their thing, the next thing I know the program has died and half an hour has passed."

Kelly scooted over to the side of Sarah's desk and sat on the bed. "Try it again?" she suggested.

"Might as well." said Sarah. She put the viewer back over the screen, looked through the lenses, and double clicked the mouse to start the program.

Kelly looked intently at Sarah. She watched in amazement as Sarah's facial muscles relaxed, then her shoulders. Her breathing pattern slowed; her fingers slipped off the mouse and keyboard. After a couple of minutes, Kelly leaned over and lifted one of Sarah's hands. Limp; she let it drop. Kelly thought for a bit, then took a sharp breath as realization hit her.

"Sarah, can you hear me?" she asked.

"Yes" Sarah replied, in a slow, sleepy sounding voice.

What to do now, Kelly thought -- what do to. She knew her roomie had been hypnotized by her computer program, and was now in a deep trance. She had read about the hypnotic state in her classes, but hadn't paid much attention to it. She remembered the outlines, what could be done and what couldn't be done. The key was you could remove blocks that prevented people from acting in certain ways, but you couldn't get them to do things they didn't want to do.

Since they had moved in together a few months ago, Kelly had been hot for Sarah's body. She had made a couple of minor passes; she thought Sarah was interested, just not ready yet. Well, here was the perfect opportunity to find out.

"Sarah, do you find me attractive?"

"Yes, very much." was Sarah's reply.

"Does that make you feel uncomfortable, being attracted to me?"

"Yes" was her reply.

Kelly took a deep breath. "Sarah, there is nothing wrong with having those feelings, or acting upon them. We are both adults. I am attracted to you, too."

"Would you like to kiss me, Sarah?"

"Oh, yes."

"Would you like to kiss my breasts and have me kiss yours?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Sarah, these are natural feelings; there is nothing wrong with having these feelings, or acting on them. You feel very relaxed around me. You know I would never hurt you, and I know you would never hurt me. Do you understand?"

"Oh, yes!" Kelly was a little surprised by the amount of animation in Sarah's voice; she decided to end things quickly.

"Sarah, I want you to close your eyes and listen to my voice." Kelly looked and saw Sarah's eyes close. She clicked the mouse and the program stopped. "Sarah, when I count to three, you are going to wake up. When you wake up, you will feel relaxed and refreshed. Every day you will find it easier to study and remember things. Every day it will be easier to fall asleep at night. The improvements may be small, but you will notice them, and get better every day. Now it is time to wake up. One ... Two ... Three."

Sarah leaned back, taking a deep breath and stretching her arms. "That was wonderful." she said out loud. Then she looked at Kelly, sitting there on the bed.

Sarah slowly got out of her chair, not taking her eyes off Kelly. She climbed on the bed, wrapped her arms around Kelly and started kissing her. Within moments both girls were shedding clothing. They explored each other with their eyes, hands, and mouths. After a while, Sarah was on her back with Kelly's head between her legs, bringing her to ecstasy. They reversed roles later, and ended up kissing and falling asleep holding each other.

When they awoke it was dark out. "Wow!" was Kelly's reaction, as she stroked Sarah's brown hair, "What hit you?"

Sarah smiled, her fingers were playing with the red ringlets on Kelly's head, and she smiled at the memory of playing with the red ringlets between her legs. "I've been attracted to you since we first met -- but there's been something holding me back, until today that is." She gave Kelly another kiss.

Kelly said "Well, hold on to your hat, girl; I'll tell you what happened. Then we need to figure out what we're going to do with it. I think we're making a trip to the library tonight."

Sarah looked at the clock. "I'm hungry and the dining hall is closed. We need to get something to eat as well."

The two of them sat up on the bed. Kelly started explaining things.

"That program you put together is incredible -- it hypnotized you and put you into a deep trance. The first time it happened, the screen changing so quickly when the program died shocked you awake. This last time, I watched you go into a trance in under a minute, then I talked to you. I got you to close your eyes, I stopped the program, and woke you up.

Sarah looked confused, and hurt. "While I was hypnotized you turned me into a ..."

Kelly took her friend's hands. "No, no. You can't make a hypnotized person do anything they don't want to do. You just said yourself you'd always been attracted to me. The only thing I did was tell you those feelings were natural and not to feel bad about them. That's all. Do you believe me?"

Sarah slowly nodded her head, "I guess so."

Kelly smiled, "I certainly didn't tell you to wake up and jump my bones -- you did that on your own, girl, and you did it very well!"

Sarah blushed a little, and hugged her friend. No, more than a friend now; lover as well.

"So, where do we go from here?" asked Sarah.

"Well, first we get dressed." They both giggled; Sarah reached out and caressed one of Kelly's nipples. Kelly held her lover's hand to her and continued. "Plenty of time for that. Then we get something to eat, then we hit the library- I want to look up some references on hypnosis. Then we come back here. I want to try that thing, with you as copilot. Then we'll see what the night will bring." They kissed briefly.

They headed out of the dorm a few minutes later and hit the local falafel stand for dinner. At the library, Kelly quickly pulled a set of references; Sarah helped dig through the books, and started finding useful material on her own. They photocopied a bunch of pages and headed back to the dorm, talking quietly along the way. Kelly filled Sarah in on some of the theoretical and practical aspects they had gleaned from the library. Sarah had taken the same introductory psych class as every other freshman, so had a reasonable basis to start from. Kelly had something she wanted to write out before trying the program; she expected it would take about half an hour. Sarah said this would give her time to shower and wash her hair -- there was more hot water available that time of night, an important consideration in dorm life. The next day was Friday, and neither of them had classes before noon.

Sarah returned from the showers, wearing her robe and with a towel on her head. Kelly gave her a kiss, which lingered. "You are going to be delicious" Kelly told her.

Then Kelly sat down in front of Sarah's computer, She took a page from their printer and glanced over it. Sarah sat on the bed. Kelly took a deep breath. "OK, here's what I'd like to do. I'll start up the program. If it works on me like it worked on you, after a couple of minutes you'll see the muscles in my face relax, then my shoulders. My breathing will change; it will slow down. That's how you'll know I'm hypnotized. Then I want you to read this out loud, and follow these instructions. Read it over to yourself first to be sure you understand it." She handed the sheet to Sarah.

Sarah read through the page, nodding her head. It contained some very general suggestions on improving memory, study habits, abilities to relax and sleep. It told Sarah how to wake her friend out of her trance. Kelly then had her read it out loud twice so she could go through it without any hesitation or stumbling. At the library, Kelly also had Sarah read some introductory materials on hypnosis and the hypnotic trance to dispel her anxieties; nobody was going to get hurt.

Sarah looked at Kelly; Kelly looked back and nodded, "I'm ready -- fire up your program."

Sarah reached over and double clicked the mouse, then moved the viewer into position over the screen, Kelly moved her head to the viewer. "You should see a static 3D image now," Sarah said, and Kelly nodded her head in acknowledgment, "just click the mouse to start the motion sequence." She squeezed Kelly's shoulder. "I'm ready when you are."

Kelly took a deep breath, arranged her arms comfortably on the desk, moved her head around to get comfortable with the viewer, and clicked the mouse. The image that had been static started moving- going deeper, and deeper, pulling her deeper, and deeper ...

Sarah watched in amazement as her lover's face relaxed, just as she said it would; then her shoulders dropped as they relaxed. Sarah listened carefully to hear Kelly's breathing; it was slow and regular, just like Kelly had said.

"Kelly, can you hear me?" she asked.

"Yes." replied Kelly, in a tone of voice Sarah had never heard before- spooky slow.

While in the shower, Sarah had done some thinking. She mentally made some changes and additions to the script Kelly had given her, but had some questions first.

"Kelly, when I was hypnotized earlier, did you suggest that I make love with you?"

"No."

Sarah was relieved. She questioned further, and Kelly's voice told her under hypnosis just what she had said earlier; that she had just helped Sarah overcome her uncomfortable feelings.

Sarah felt much better. She read through Kelly's script, with her additions. She added specific commands to allow her to put Kelly into a trance, to relax her, wake her, and to put her to sleep. Sarah had included physical contact with each to lessen the chance of an accidental occurrence.

After going through everything but the waking up sequence, Sarah reviewed what she had covered. She was satisfied, so she completed the sequence, having Kelly close her eyes, stopping the program, and finally waking her up.

Kelly sat back and blinked a few times. She looked at Sarah, and then at the clock. "It worked?" she asked.

"Your face went in about fifty seconds, your shoulders at about a minute and a half. I couldn't tell when your breathing shifted."

"Wow," Kelly replied, amazed, "the only thing I remember is the pattern moving, pulling me in."

Sarah motioned her to come sit on the bed with her. She looked Kelly in the eyes. "Kelly, I trust you. While you were hypnotized I asked you about what you had done to me earlier- I had to check. I'm sorry I doubted you, but now I know for sure, and I'll always trust you. While you were hypnotized, I went through your script, and I also added a few things." She handed the page to Kelly, showing her the handwritten language she had added and read. "Now I'm going to sit in front of the program, and I want you to do the same things for me. Please?"

Kelly looked over the list. Sarah had certainly picked up on things fast- she could see where she had changed wording around to restate things in a positive form. She said "Of course." and squeezed Sarah's leg.

Sarah hopped into the chair, settled in front of the viewer, said "OK, here goes." and clicked the mouse.

Kelly watched as Sarah's face and shoulders relaxed almost immediately. She reached over and tested Sarah's hand again -- limp in nothing flat! She read the script to Sarah out loud, with the additions, making changes where their course work suggested it. She woke Sarah a minute later.

"That really feels good!" Sarah said as she stretched. She noticed Kelly looked puzzled about something. "What's up?"

"The first time I watched you go under, you took about a minute and a half. From what you said, my first time took about a minute and a half. This last time, you were out in about ten seconds."

"Wow... So there's some kind of training going on that makes it quicker the next time?"

"I'd guess so. Let me try again. Time me -- tell me when to click the mouse and then watch for my shoulders to drop. Wait about a minute after that, then wake me up like we did here." She handed their script sheet back to Sarah, sat in the chair and looked into the viewer. She took a deep breath, exhaled and readied herself at the mouse.

Sarah watched the second hand on the clock. "Now" she said as it passed twelve. She watched Kelly's shoulders; they quickly drooped. She looked at the clock again. About ten seconds. She waited a minute and then woke Kelly.

"Ten seconds." she reported. Kelly moved back on to the bed with her. They sat next to each other, and started discussing where to go next. Their class schedules tomorrow were light, and then they'd have the weekend to think things over some more.

"You know," Sarah said, "I don't know why we're reading this stuff to each other -- I can have the program display text and scroll through it at whatever speed we want." Kelly wasn't sure if that would work or not, but it would be an interesting experiment. Kelly started getting more and more animated, going off into theories of hypnosis, the visual system, and perceptual models. Finally Sarah shook her head; put a hand on Kelly's leg, and said "Kelly, relax."

Kelly's face relaxed, she smiled. Her arms, which had been waving pretty wildly, settled into her lap. She took a deep breath, and turned to look at Sarah. "Thank you. I guess I was getting kind of wild." Sarah nodded. Kelly turned to face Sarah. She put her hands on Sarah's shoulders and looked her in the eye. She solemnly said "Sarah, lust."

Both of them started laughing; this was definitely not one of the key phrases they had suggested to each other. Then Sarah opened her eyes wide, looking at Kelly. She stuck her arms out straight and slowly raised them to Kelly's sides. In a monotone voice she said "Lust... Lust..." and then broke up laughing. Kelly muffled her laughter with a lip lock and they fell back on the bed in each others' arms.

Later, they were laying side by side. "That was wonderful, but now I can't sleep" "Neither can I." "Will you?" "Let's try together." "OK, on the count of three. One ... Two ... Three." They both looked at each other, still holding tight, and said "Sleep" to each other. Their eyes closed as they went to sleep in each other's arms.

FIN

Author's note: Foundations of Cyclopean Perception by Bela Julesz (University of Chicago Press, 1971) is an important work on the human visual system, and is the seminal reference on random dot stereograms.

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