

Twixl

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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.

Louie was a free-lance tweak, and a good one. If you needed a piece of modern technology modified to do something a little different, or wanted it to do something its designers didn't want it to do, Louie was your guy. Louie didn't work cheap; but he was good-- he was very good. And he was discreet.

He was currently working on a set of therapeutic-grade twixls. He didn't normally work with twixls; he tended to shy away from neurotransducers and neuroeffectors as a matter of principle. But this had been a request from an old customer and would pay well.

He sighed as he looked over the latest set of probe traces from the twixl sitting in his simulator. People always wanted the same things with twixls; they wanted to turn a therapeutic-grade device into an untraceable, high power device like the loach used, capable of controlling people ten or twenty meters away. They didn't understand the basic physics involved. They didn't understand that the neuroeffector arrays in the different grades of devices were fundamentally different, or the difference in power required, let alone the training in the use of the device.

Louie's specialty was small object transporters. That was his steady business. If you had enough credits to toss his way, he could work magic. Worried about transport records? His units didn't keep records, and didn't log their activities with transport central. Want to send to uncleared locations? His units would transport to any location not currently occupied by solid matter. If you were interested, set up an anonymous contact. Work out payment terms. Send Louie the diagnostic trace on your transporter and your location. A day or so later a bug appearsd at your location. Put the bug on the transporter's diagnostic port and a few seconds later the bug falls off and dissolves. Your transporter has been tweaked. Simple, efficient, untraceable.

If you were a special client, and Louie was suitably motivated, he could provide you with a very special transporter. Want multicast capability? Louie's special units could send four deliveries to four different locations in one transport pulse. But that wasn't what made them special. Louie knew, as did most good tweaks and even some technologists, that the power demand curve of an operating transporter was unlike that of any other device. Transport central was a busy place, and tolerated a certain amount of traffic from obviously tweaked units. Get the attention of someone at Transport Central though, and your time was limited. They'd trace you back through the power grid, looking for that distinctive power demand curve. Then depending

on just *how* you got their attention, your tweaked transporter might disappear, transported away. Or you might get a visit from the loach and *you* might disappear...

Louie's special units were about four times larger than a standard transporter with similar mass-handling capabilities. That's because they had large charge accumulators added to them. Rather than placing that characteristic power demand on the grid when you initiated transport, Louie's units analyzed the power needed and drew power into the accumulators, mimicking the demand curve of other perfectly legitimate devices such as a home waste disintegrator, an industrial duplex, or a runabout on quick-charge. It might take thirty seconds to initiate transport, compared to five with a standard unit, but Louie's units couldn't be traced. So far, none had ever been caught.

His twixl order had come from an old repeat customer with a few of his special transporters. The customer had simple and reasonable request: modify four therapeutic grade twixls to make them untraceable and reduce as much as possible the ethical limits in their programming. He hadn't included the usual outlandish request to increasing effector distance from twenty centimeters to twenty meters. Negotiations went smoothly. Louie would do it, but wanted five twixls so he'd end up with one for himself, and a reasonable number of untraceable credits. He also preferred revision "E" twixls. The customer couldn't get rev "E" units -- the only ones available were the current rev "G." Louie, being an honest tweak, responded that he had not worked on a rev "G" unit before. When provided with a unit, he would analyze it and provide an estimate on time and expense. If he could not do the tweak, or they couldn't reach agreement, he would return the unit and only charge for his time. If he could do the tweak, he would want the additional unit so he would have one for himself. He also insisted on leaving some of the ethical limits in place.

Louie was not surprised when the customer agreed, including some credits up-front in case Louie needed to procure new tools for the work. The twixls arrived a few days later. Louie was a little surprised; they were marked restricted therapeutic. These were hard to get. He'd have to be very careful.

Louie looked over his probe traces. The last twixls he'd worked on had been rev "E" units a number of years ago; they had been easy. He'd modified them for a pimp and his prostitute crew. Knowing their intended use, Louie had made them untraceable but had not totally removed the built-in ethical limits. In fact he had slightly enhanced the ethical limits, and put additional programming in the pimp's unit. Not only was Louie a skilled tweak, he had a sense of social responsibility, if somewhat warped in comparison to societal norms.

He'd followed those tweaked units. Two of the women and one of the men on the pimp's crew went into the legitimate courtesan circuit after about a year. Two other women became and still were successful therapists. The pimp was found dead of heart failure. It seems he had taken his tweaked twixl to another tweak, one without Louie's scruples. That tweak had boosted the twixl's power and removed some very important safety checks. The pimp was found dead with his twixl on his genitals. The story had made the 3viddy news, once again showing the public the "tragic end that always comes to users of illegally modified technology," the phrase the 'casters always used.

Louie spent an evening with one of the women, shedding his anonymity to satisfy his curiosity. She had a gorgeous gene-tweaked body, tweaked to the max. After making love with her he was glad he'd put limits in the twixl. Without those limits, the power of her body combined with the power of the twixl would have enabled her to enslave him and many others. He sighed. It would be a wonderful enslavement, remembering the pleasure he'd felt as she guided him to an incredible climax and then hit him with the power of the twixl, directly stimulating his pleasure centers. He smiled and admitted to himself that's the real reason he preferred not to work on those devices; he didn't want to end up a wirehead or like that pimp.

The rev "G" twixls came out two years ago, in 2158. They included significant advances in technology. The built-in power packs were rated for seventy years compared to ten in earlier units. The initial programming and training routines were completely redone, enabling the user to become proficient in a matter of days. Louie suspected the registration and usage logging capabilities had also been enhanced, especially for units marked restricted therapeutic. These would be tricky.

Yes, that's what the probe traces showed. Initial startup was still the same. When the user picked up the unit, the ring-shaped twixl extended itself slightly from the instructor. The instructor screen flashed a sequence showing the twixl being placed on the user's right hand ring finger. Once physical contact was made and the twixl was on the user's hand, it made its first registration attempt. That was easy to remove. Physical contact was followed by user identification. Simple physical and mental probes were done to identify major characteristics. Hmm, this was new -- if certain characteristics were found, the twixl stimulated pain receptors until it was replaced in the instructor. Louie reviewed the patterns it was trying to match. After a little research he smiled again; he liked these checks -- they stayed in! Then the twixl identified the user's primary language and displayed and spoke initial training instructions in that language. Louie was impressed with the language database; it looked like it would cover just about anyone. He lifted that portion for use in other projects; you never know when it might come in handy. There was another registration attempt, no, two attempts, built into the training sequence. Out they go. The user was given a reward at the end of the first training level. Louie smirked and rewrote that part, putting in a significantly enhanced "reward" for that and further levels. His customer would like that, and so would the users.

What was this? A great deal of new structure had been added. The rev "E" units he'd worked over had simple self-improvement techniques worked into the training routines. The structure here was vast. It covered concentration, memory skills, relaxation, language abilities, and a great deal more. This was fascinating. He left it in. He might even go through this training himself; these were skills anyone could use.

After more work and lots of simulation one of his automated tools informed him it had found a number of additional registration attempts. His tools were good, but he kept looking. He knew there would be more, with a completely different pattern.

It took another thirty hours of concentrated work and research before he was satisfied. He'd found three different sets of registration and logging routines, and another set of tests that had to be passed once training was completed before the effector array was fully enabled. He had

additional negotiations with his customer as to ethical limits. His customer agreed with his analysis and suggestions.

His additional unit arrived shortly thereafter. He reprogrammed that one first. He sent it to his customer with an environment simulator. The customer was instructed to use this unit in an isolated environment, and only coupled to the environmental simulator in case he'd missed something. The customer understood and was most grateful.

He got the go-ahead for the other units four days later, with a significant bonus; his customer was very pleased with the results. Louie had once again done superb work.

Louie smiled; another job well done. The bonus gave him enough credits to take a well deserved vacation. A week at a pleasure palace in Tasmania would be very nice, or maybe L5?

He reprogrammed the remaining units and verified his work. He set them in his transport and set the coordinates his customer had requested; four different locations in metropolitan areas of North America.

He had just initiated transport when he felt something strange. He turned slightly in his chair, looking over his shoulder.

The loach had caught up with him.

She was standing a few feet behind him, resplendent in her black and silver uniform and black cape. Her left hand held a disruptor, pointed at his transporter and the tweaked twixls. Her right hand was pointed at him. He knew what that hand held -- a twixl. How had she gotten past his security? She'd obviously transported in, but without triggering any alarms? He sighed and smiled; he knew better than to move suddenly. She smiled back. She didn't move, but suddenly Louie felt wrapped in warm, soft comfort. He knew it was her twixl. He thought he was probably paralyzed, but why would anyone want to move when they felt like this? It was wonderful. Was he going to die soon?

She stepped forward and reached for him with her twixl hand. As her hand touched his arm, he felt a pulse of pleasure as the twixl sensed contact and readjusted effector power levels to compensate. He laughed; even though his career was over, and possibly his life, he was still a tweak, analyzing to the last.

She pulled him up by the arm and held him to her body, sliding her twixl hand behind his head.

How wonderful he thought, held up against her breasts. She was tall, full figured, beautiful; the result of loach training and gene tweaking. He knew she was holding him so her cape and its defensive fields would shield him as she destroyed his equipment with her disruptor. He closed his eyes and floated in her softness.

She turned so her body shielded the criminal. She'd received confirmation that the scanners had all the information they needed; his trial had concluded. She smiled as she leveled

her disruptor at the transporter and fired; she'd arrived in time to stop the spread of illegally modified technology. Just as she fired, the transporter beeped.

Louie heard the transporter beep through the softness. I wonder what will happen if the disruptor beam hits the accumulators mid-cycle? He laughed; there were no energy limits on the accumulators. The physics of that would be very interesting to study. He hoped they lived through it; the accumulators and the transport field held enough energy that they might not.

Her disruptor beam hit the transporter. She saw the characteristic flicker that indicated the start of transport as she fired.

This was *bad*. An incredible energy surge pulsed around the transporter. Her defensive shields kicked in, going opaque to block the radiation. The shields were programmed to block the visible spectrum last, giving her and her recorders as much information as possible. The last thing she saw before the shields went completely opaque was an expanding plasma cloud two meters high and over a meter in diameter, still expanding, and four objects on the transport platform winking suddenly out of existence. This was *very bad*! She turned and covered the criminal, jumping to the rear wall and pulling her cape around them in an attempt to protect them from the physical shock.

At the moment of the explosion, alarm monitors triggered all over Transport Central. Transport had been initiated but not completed. Monitors showed an energy release of such an incredible density that space-time was torn. People, machines, people that were machines, and machines that were people all scrambled to verify the stability of the transport grid and the integrity of transports in progress.

At the moment of the explosion, Louie felt himself being pulled and pushed to the rear wall; he felt and heard the explosion, and saw the flash and the loach's defensive shields going opaque. When the shields cleared he was happy; they had lived. He felt himself being pulled up and felt a hand go behind his head again. He waited for the next pulse from her twixl. And he waited.

She had never experienced an explosion like that, not even in training. Her suit and cape protected them from physical damage; her defensive shields protected them from the radiation burst -- she hoped. After a few seconds her shields dropped. She stood up, pulling the criminal up with her. He was still blissed out, holding her waist and nuzzling her breasts. She put her twixl hand on the back of his head again but didn't activate. She turned to survey the damage. She was shocked and impressed -- the back corner of the room was gone, as were a few cubic meters of the surrounding rock. She was very glad this tweak had his lair down deep in rock in the Andes; that explosion would have cost many lives in a populated area.

Louie tilted his head up and looked in her face. She was beautiful. "Am I going to die now?" he asked, still with a blissful smile.

She looked down at her captive, surprised at the question. How little people really knew about the loach, she thought. She smiled down at him. "Of course not. You are much too intelligent to waste. You will be cured. You have much to offer society."

He moved his head a little, looking a little puzzled.

Still smiling down at him, she pulsed her twixl; he sighed and his eyes closed, blissed out.

She held him close to keep him from falling. She looked around again. Everything was destroyed -- the cleanup crew would sweep through and make sure. Her monitors showed the shields had held the radiation surge to tolerable levels for both of them; they were lucky. She was looking forward to finding out just what had powered that blast. Had transport completed? She wasn't sure.

She signaled loach transport to pull them out and directly to therapy. He was a valuable resource that must be saved.

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