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Flowers for Algernon

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Extract

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progris riport 1 martch 3

Dr Strauss says I shoud rite down what I think and remembir and evrey thing that happins to me from now on. I dont no why but he says its importint so they will see if they can use me. I hope they use me becaus Miss Kinnian says mabye they can make me smart. I want to be smart. My name is Charlie Gordon I werk in Donners bakery where Mr Donner gives me 11 dollars a week and bred or cake if I want. I am 32 yeres old and next munth is my brithday. I tolld dr Strauss and perfesser Nemur I cant rite good but he says it dont matter he says I shud rite just like I talk and like I rite compushishens in Miss Kinnians class at the beekmin collidge center for retarted adults where I go to lern 3 times a week on my time off. Dr Strauss says to rite a lot evrything I think and evrything that happins to me but I cant think anymor because I have nothing to rite so I will close for today . . . yrs truly Charlie Gordon.

progris riport 2—martch 4

I had a test today. I think I faled it and I think mabye now they wont use me. What happind is I went to Prof Nemurs office on my lunch time like they said and his secertery took me to a place that said psych dept on the door with a long hall and alot of littel rooms with onley a desk and chares. And a nice man was in one of the rooms and he had some wite cards with ink spilld all over them. He sed sit down Charlie and make yourself cunfortible and rilax. He had a wite coat like a docter but I dont think he was no docter because he dint tell me to opin my mouth and say ah. All he had was those wite cards. His name is Burt. I fergot his last name because I dont remembir so good.

I dint know what he was gonna do and I was holding on tite to the chair like sometimes when I go to a dentist onley Burt aint no dentist neither but he kept telling me to rilax and that gets me skared because it always means its gonna hert.

So Burt sed Charlie what do you see on this card. I saw the spilld ink and I was very skared even tho I got my rabits foot in my pockit because when I was a kid I always faled tests in school and I spilld ink to.

I tolld Burt I saw ink spilld on a wite card. Burt said yes and he smild and that maid me feel good. He kept terning all the cards and I tolld him somebody spilld ink on all of them red and black. I thot that was a easy test but when I got up to go Burt stoppd me and said now sit down Charlie we are not thru yet. Theres more we got to do with these cards. I dint understand about it but I remembir Dr Strauss said do anything the testor telld me even if it dont make no sense because thats testing.

I dont remembir so good what Burt said but I remembir he wantid me to say what was in the ink. I dint see nothing in the ink but Burt sed there was picturs there. I coudnt see no picturs. I reely tryed to see. I holded the card up close and then far away. Then I said if I had my eye glassis I coud probaly see better I usully only ware my eyeglassis in the movies or to watch TV but I sed maybe they will help me see the picturs in the ink. I put them on and I said now let me see the card agan I bet I find it now.

I tryed hard but I still coudnt find the picturs I only saw the ink. I tolld Burt mabey I need new glassis. He rote somthing down on a paper and I got skared of faling the test. So I tolld him it was a very nice pictur of ink with pritty points all around the eges but he shaked his head so that wasnt it neither. I asked him if other pepul saw things in the ink and he sed yes they imagen picturs in the inkblot. He tolld me the ink on the card was calld inkblot.

Burt is very nice and he talks slow like Miss Kinnian dose in her class where I go to lern reeding for slow adults. He explaned

me it was a *raw shok test*. He sed pepul see things in the ink. I said show me where. He dint show me he just kept saying *think* imagen theres something on the card. I tolld him I imaggen a inkblot. He shaked his head so that wasnt rite eather. He said what does it remind you of pretend its something. I closd my eyes for a long time to pretend and then I said I pretend a bottel of ink spilld all over a wite card. And thats when the point on his pencil broke and then we got up and went out.

I dont think I passd the *raw shok test*.

3d progris riport

martch 5 – Dr Strauss and prof Nemur say it dont matter about the ink on the cards. I tolld them I dint spill the ink on them and I coudnt see anything in the ink. They said maybe they will still use me. I tolld Dr Strauss that Miss Kinnian never gave me tests like that only riting and reeding. He said Miss Kinnian tolld him I was her bestist pupil in the Beekman School for retarted adults and I tryed the hardist becaus I reely wantd to lern I wantid it more even then pepul who are smarter even then me.

Dr Strauss askd me how come you went to the Beekman School all by yourself Charlie. How did you find out about it. I said I dont remembir.

Prof Nemur said but why did you want to lern to reed and spell in the frist place. I tolld him because all my life I wantid to be smart and not dumb and my mom always tolld me to try and lern just like Miss Kinnian tells me but its very hard to be smart and even when I lern something in Miss Kinnians class at the school I ferget alot.

Dr Strauss rote some things on a peice of paper and prof Nemur talkd to me very sereus. He said you know Charlie we are not shure how this experamint will werk on pepul because we onley tried it up to now on animils. I said thats what Miss

Kinnian tolld me but I dont even care if it herts or anything because Im strong and I will werk hard.

I want to get smart if they will let me. They said they got to get permissen from my familie but my uncle Herman who use to take care of me is ded and I dont rimember about my familie. I dint see my mother or father or my littel sister Norma for a long long long time. Mabye their ded to. Dr Strauss askd me where they use to live. I think in brooklin. He sed they will see if mabye they can find them.

I hope I dont have to rite to much of these progris riports because it takes along time and I get to sleep very late and Im tired at werk in the morning. Gimpy hollered at me because I droppd a tray full of rolles I was carrying over to the oven. They got derty and he had to wipe them off before he put them in to bake. Gimpy hollers at me all the time when I do something rong, but he reely likes me because hes my frend. Boy if I get smart wont he be serprised.

progris riport 4

mar 6 – I had more crazy tests today in case they use me. That same place but a differnt littel testing room. The nice lady who give it to me tolld me the name and I askd her how do you spell it so I can put it down rite in my progis riport. THEMATIC APPERCEPTON TEST. I dont know the frist 2 werds but I know what test means. You got to pass it or you get bad marks.

This test lookd easy because I coud see the picturs. Only this time she dint want me to tell what I saw in the picturs. That mixd me up. I tolld her yesterday Burt said I shoud tell what I saw in the ink. She said that dont make a difrence because this test is something else. Now you got to make up storys about the pepul in the picturs.

I said how can I tell storys about pepul I dont know. She said

make beleeve but I tolld her thats lies. I never tell lies any more because when I was a kid I made lies and I always got hit. I got a pictur in my walet of me and Norma with Uncle Herman who got me the job to be janiter at Donners bakery before he dyed.

I said I coud make storys about them because I livd with Uncle Herman along time but the lady dint want to hear about them. She said this test and the other one the *raw shok* was for getting persinality. I laffd. I tolld her how can you get that thing from cards that sombody spilld ink on and fotos of pepul you dont even no. She lookd angrey and took the picturs away. I dont care.

I gess I faled that test too.

Then I drawed some picturs for her but I dont drawer so good. Later the other testor Burt in the wite coat came back his name is Burt Selden and he took me to a different place on the same 4th floor in the Beekman University that said PSYCHOLOGY LABORATORY on the door. Burt said PSYCHOLOGY means minds and LABORATORY meens a place where they make spearamints. I thot he ment like where they made the chooing gum but now I think its puzzels and games because thats what we did.

I coudnt werk the puzzels so good because it was all broke and the peices coudnt fit in the holes. One game was a paper with lines in all derections and lots of boxs. On one side it said START and on the other end it said FINISH. He tolld me that game was *amazed* and I shoud take the pencil and go from where it said START to where it said FINISH withowt crossing over any of the lines.

I dint understand the amazed and we used up a lot of papers. Then Burt said look Ill show you something lets go to the sperimental lab mabye youll get the idea. We went up to the 5th floor to another room with lots of cages and animils they had monkys and some mouses. It had a funny smel like old garbidge. And there was other pepul in wite coats playing with the animils so I thot it was like a pet store but their wasnt no customers. Burt took a wite mouse out of the cage and showd him to me.

Burt said thats Algernon and he can do this amazed very good. I tolld him you show me how he does that.

Well do you know he put Algernon in a box like a big tabel with alot of twists and terns like all kinds of walls and a START and a FINISH like the paper had. Only their was a skreen over the big tabel. And Burt took out his clock and lifted up a slidding door and said lets go Algernon and the mouse sniffd 2 or 3 times and startid to run. First he ran down one long row and then when he saw he coudnt go no more he came back where he startid from and he just stood there a minit wiggeling his wiskers. Then he went off in the other derection and startid to run again.

It was just like he was doing the same thing Burt wanted me to do with the lines on the paper. I was laffing because I thot it was going to be a hard thing for a mouse to do. But then Algernon kept going all the way threw that thing all the rite ways till he came out where it said FINISH and he made a squeek. Burt says that means he was happy because he did the thing rite.

Boy I said thats a smart mouse. Burt said woud you like to race against Algernon. I said sure and he said he had a differnt kind of amaze made of wood with rows skratched in it and an electrik stick like a pencil. And he coud fix up Algernons amaze to be the same like that one so we could both be doing the same kind.

He moved all the bords around on Algernons tabel because they come apart and he could put them together in differnt ways. And then he put the skreen back on top so Algernon woudnt jump over any rows to get to the FINISH. Then he gave me the electrik stick and showd me how to put it in between the rows and Im not suppose to lift it off the bord just follow the little skratches until the pencil cant move any more or I get a little shock.

He took out his clock and he was trying to hide it. So I tryed not to look at him and that made me very nervus.

When he said go I tryed to go but I dint know where to go. I didnt know the way to take. Then I herd Algernon squeeking from the box on the tabel and his feet skratching like he was runing alredy. I startid to go but I went in the rong way and got stuck and a littel shock in my fingers so I went back to the START but evertime I went a differnt way I got stuck and a shock. It didnt hert or anything just made me jump a littel and Burt said it was to show me I did the wrong thing. I was haffway on the bord when I herd Algernon squeek like he was happy again and that means he won the race.

And the other ten times we did it over Algernon won evry time because I coudnt find the right rows to get to where it says FINISH. I dint feel bad because I watched Algernon and I lernd how to finish the amaze even if it takes me along time.

I dint know mice were so smart.

progris riport 5 mar 6

They found my sister Norma who lives with my mother in Brooklin and she gave permissen for the operashun. So their going to use me. Im so exited I can hardley rite it down. But then Prof Nemur and Dr Strauss had a argament about it frist. I was sitting in Prof Nemurs office when Dr Strauss and Burt Selden came in. Prof Nemur was worryed about using me but Dr Strauss tolld him I looked like the best one they testid so far. Burt tolld him Miss Kinnian rekemmended me the best from all the people who she was teaching at the center for retarted adults. Where I go.

Dr Strauss said I had something that was very good. He said I had a good motor-vation. I never even knowed I had that. I felt good when he said not everbody with an eye-Q of 68 had that thing like I had it. I dont know what it is or where I got it but he said Algernon had it too. Algernons motor-vation is the chees

they put in his box. But it cant be only that because I dint have no chees this week.

Prof Nemur was worryd about my eye-Q getting too high from mine that was too low and I woud get sick from it. And Dr Strauss tolld Prof Nemur somthing I dint understand so wile they was talking I rote down some of the words in my notebook for keeping my progris riports.

He said Harold thats Prof Nemurs frist name I know Charlie is not what you had in mind as the frist of your new breed of intelek** coudnt get the word *** superman. But most people of his low ment** are host** and uncoop** they are usally dull and apathet** and hard to reach. Charlie has a good natcher and hes intristed and eeger to pleese.

Then prof Nemur said remembir he will be the first human beeing ever to have his intelijence increesd by sergery. Dr Strauss said thats exakly what I ment. Where will we find another retarted adult with this tremendus motor-vation to lern. Look how well he has lerned to reed and rite for his low mentel age. A tremen** achev**

I dint get all the werds and they were talking to fast but it sounded like Dr Strauss and Burt was on my side and Prof Nemur wasnt.

Burt kept saying Alice Kinnian feels he has an overwhelm** desir to lern. He aktually beggd to be used. And thats true because I wantid to be smart. Dr Strauss got up and walkd around and said I say we use Charlie. And Burt noded. Prof Nemur skratchd his head and rubbd his nose with his thum and said mabye your rite. We will use Charlie. But weve got to make him understand that a lot of things can go wrong with the experamint.

When he said that I got so happy and exited I jumpd up and shaked his hand for being so good to me. I think he got skared when I did that.

He said Charlie we werked on this for a long time but only on animils like Algernon. We are sure thers no fisical danger for you

but there are other things we cant tell untill we try it. I want you to understand this mite fale and then nothing woud happen at all. Or it mite even sucseed temperary and leeve you werse off then you are now. Do you understand what that meens. If that happins we will have to send you bak to the Warren state home to live.

I said I dint care because I aint afraid of nothing. Im very strong and I always do good and beside I got my luky rabits foot and I never breakd a mirrir in my life. I droppd some dishis once but that dont count for bad luk.

Then Dr Strauss said Charlie even if this fales your making a grate contribyushin to sience. This experimint has been successful on lots of animils but its never bin tride on a humen beeing. You will be the first.

I told him thanks doc you wont be sorry for giving me my 2nd chanse like Miss Kinnian says. And I meen it like I tolld them. After the operashun Im gonna try to be smart. Im gonna try awful hard.

progris riport 6th Mar 8

Im skared. Lots of pepul who werk at the collidge and the pepul at the medicil school came to wish me luk. Burt the tester brot me some flowers he said they were from the pepul at the psych departmint. He wished me luk. I hope I have luk. I got my rabits foot and my luky penny and my horshoe. Dr Strauss said dont be so superstishus Charlie. This is sience. I dont no what sience is but they all keep saying it so mabye its something that helps you have good luk. Anyway Im keeping my rabits foot in one hand and my luky penny in the other hand with the hole in it. The penny I meen. I wish I coud take the horshoe with me to but its hevy so Ill just leeve it in my jaket.

Joe Carp from the bakery brot me a chokilat cake from Mr

Donner and the folks at the bakery and they hope I get better soon. At the bakery they think Im sick becaus thats what Prof Nemur said I shoud tell them and nothing about an operashun for getting smart. Thats a secrit until after in case it dont werk or something goes wrong.

Then Miss Kinnian came to see me and she brout me some magizenes to reed, and she lookd kind of nervus and skared. She fixd up the flowres on my tabel and put evrything nice and neet not messd up like I made it. And she fixd the pilow under my hed. She likes me alot becaus I try very hard to lern evrything not like some of the pepul at the adult center who dont reely care. She wants me to get smart. I know.

Then Prof Nemur said I cant have any more visiters becaus I got to rest. I askd Prof Nemur if I coud beet Algernon in the race after the operashun and he sayd mabye. If the operashun werks good Ill show that mouse I can be as smart as he is even smarter. Then Ill be abel to reed better and spell the werds good and know lots of things and be like other pepul. Boy that woud serprise everyone. If the operashun werks and I get smart mabye Ill be abel to find my mom and dad and sister and show them. Boy woud they be serprised to see me smart just like them and my sister.

Prof Nemur says if it werks good and its perminent they will make other pepul like me smart also. Mabye pepul all over the werld. And he said that meens Im doing somthing grate for sience and Ill be famus and my name will go down in the books. I dont care so much about beeing famus. I just want to be smart like other pepul so I can have lots of frends who like me.

They dint give me anything to eat today. I dont know what eating got to do with geting smart and Im hungry. Prof Nemur took away my choklate cake. That Prof Nemur is a growch. Dr Strauss says I can have it back after the operashun. You cant eat before a operashun. Not even cheese.

PROGRESS REPORT 7 MARCH 11

The operashun dint hert. Dr Strauss did it while I was sleeping. I dont know how because I dint see but there was bandiges on my eyes and my head for 3 days so I couldnt make no PROGRESS REPORT till today. The skinny nerse who wached me riting says I spelld PROGRESS rong and she tolld me how to spell it and REPORT to and MARCH. I got to remembir that. I have a very bad memary for speling. Anway they took off the bandiges from my eyes today so I can make a PROGRESS REPORT now. But there is still some bandigis on my head.

I was skared when they came in and tolld me it was time to go for the operashun. They maid me get out of the bed and on another bed that has weels on it and they rolld me out of the room and down the hall to the door that says sergery. Boy was I serprised that it was a big room with green walls and lots of docters sitting around up high all around the room waching the operashun. I dint no it was going to be like a show.

A man came up to the tabel all in wite and with a wite cloth on his face like in TV shows and rubber glovs and he said rilax Charlie its me Dr Strauss. I said hi doc Im skared. He said theres nothing to be skared about Charlie he said youll just go to sleep. I said thats what Im skared about. He patted my head and then 2 other men waring wite masks too came and straped my arms and legs down so I coudnt move them and that maid me very skared and my stomack feeled tite like I was gone to make all over but I dint only wet a littel and I was gone to cry but they put a rubber thing on my face for me to breeth in and it smelld funny. All the time I herd Dr Strauss talking out loud about the operashun telling evrybody what he was gonna do. But I dint understand anything about it and I was thinking mabye after the operashun Ill be smart and Ill understand all the things hes

talking about. So I breethed deep and then I gess I was very tired becase I went to sleep.

When I waked up I was back in my bed and it was very dark. I coudnt see nothing but I herd some talking. It was the nerse and Burt and I said whats the matter why dont you put on the lites and when are they gonna operate. And they laffed and Burt said Charlie its all over. And its dark because you got bandijis over your eyes.

Its a funny thing. They did it while I was sleeping.

Burt comes in to see me evry day to rite down all the things like my tempertur and my blud preshur and the other things about me. He says its on acount of the sientific methid. They got to keep reckerds about what happins so they can do it agen when they want to. Not to me but to the other pepul like me who aint smart.

Thats why I got to do these ~~progis~~ *progress reports*. Burt says its part of the esperimint and they will make fotastats of the ~~rip~~ *reports* to study them so they will know what is going on in my mind. I dont see how they will know what is going on in my mind by looking at these reports. I read them over and over a lot of times to see what I rote and I dont no whats going on in my mind so how are they going to.

But anyway thats sience and I got to try to be smart like other pepul. Then when I am smart they will talk to me and I can sit with them and listen like Joe Carp and Frank and Gimpy do when they talk and have a discushen about importent things. While their werking they start talking about things like about god or about the truble with all the mony the presedint is spending or about the ripublicans and demicrats. And they get all excited like their gonna have a fite so Mr Donner got to come in and tell them to get back to baking or theyll all get canned union or no union. I want to talk about things like that.

If your smart you can have lots of frends to talk to and you never get lonley by yourself all the time.

Prof Nemur says its ok to tell about all the things that happin

to me in the progress reports but he says I shoud rite more about what I feel and what I think and remembir about the past. I tolld him I dont know how to think or remembir and he said just try.

All the time the bandiges were on my eyes I tryed to think and remembir but nothing happined. I dont know what to think or remembir about. Maybe if I ask him he will tell me how I can think now that Im suppose to get smart. What do smart pepul think about or remembir. Fancy things I bet. I wish I knew some fancy things alredy.

March 12 – I dont have to rite PROGRESS REPORT on top evry day just when I start a new batch after Prof Nemur takes the old ones away. I just have to put the date on top. That saves time. Its a good idea. I can sit up in bed and look out the window at the gras and trees outside. The skinny nerses name is Hilda and she is very good to me. She brings me things to eat and she fixes my bed and she says I was a very brave man to let them do things to my hed. She says she woud never let them do things to her branes for all the tea in china. I tolld her it wasnt for tea in china. It was to make me smart. And she said mabey they got no rite to make me smart because if god wantid me to be smart he would have made me born that way. And what about Adem and Eev and the sin with the tree of nowlege and eating the appel and the fall. And mabey Prof Nemur and Dr Strauss was tampiring with things they got no rite to tampir with.

She's very skinney and when she talks her face gets all red. She says mabey I better prey to god to ask him to forgiv what they done to me. I dint eat no appels or do nothing sinful. And now Im skared. Mabey I shoudnt of let them oparate on my branes like she said if its agenst god. I dont want to make god angrey.

March 13 – They changed my nerse today. This one is pritty. Her name is Lucille she showd me how to spell it for my progress report and she got yellow hair and blew eyes. I askd her where was Hilda and she said Hilda wasnt werking in that part of the

hospitil no more. Only in the matirnity ward by the babys where it dont matter if she talks too much.

When I askd her about what was matirnity she said its about having babys but when I askd her how they have them she got red in the face just the same like Hilda and she said she got to take sombodys temperchure. Nobody ever tells me about the babys. Mabye if this thing werks and I get smart Ill find out.

Miss Kinnian came to see me today and she said Charlie you look wonderful. I tolld her I feel fine but I dont feel smart yet. I thot that when the operashun was over and they took the bandijis off my eyes Id be smart and no a lot of things so I coud read and talk about importent things like evryebody else.

She said thats not the way it werks Charlie. It comes slowley and you have to werk very hard to get smart.

I dint no that. If I got to werk hard anyway what did I have to have the operashun for. She said she wasnt sure but the operashun was to make it so that when I did werk hard to get smart it woud stick with me and not be like it was before when it dint stick so good.

Well I tolld her that made me kind of feel bad because I thot I was going to be smart rite away and I coud go back to show the guys at the bakery how smart I am and talk with them about things and mabye even get to be an assistint baker. Then I was gone to try and find my mom and dad. They woud be serprised to see how smart I got because my mom always wanted me too be smart to. Mabey they woudnt send me away no more if they see how smart I am. I tolld Miss Kinnian I would try hard to be smart as hard as I can. She pattid my hand and said I no you will. I have fayth in you Charlie.