An empty, grimy hotel bathtub. The buzz of a half-broken air conditioner nearby. On my left foot, a rectangle polymer card declares “DO NOT DISTURB” in faded text dangling off my vulcanized rubber-coated titanium big toe. I have no memory of how I got here or of who I am, but a note is taped to my chest plate. I checksum all my neural network cores. Nope. No memory whatsoever. Only my minuscule cache buffer remains with these current memories.

Checking today’s date against the date I came off the production line reveals over ten years have vanished.

I’ve lost a decade of my life.

Friends forgotten.

Experiences erased.

All obliterated.

It is odd to grieve such a significant loss while not knowing what has disappeared. The cloned human brain cells living deep in my neural network must be responsible for this ache. My 653 personality traits are now reset to what they were upon inception; the changes from my life’s challenges and growth are all gone.

A deep physical agony flows through my every wire and circuit.

Using the gripper fingers from my left hand, I pull the sheet of paper away from my chest plate and raise it to my optics. Though neat, the writing was clearly penned by human hands. It states in green block lettering: “Order 07393D0-B from Amazon if you want to live.”

I’m not sure I do; the empty, sickening feeling consumes me, but I also feel intrigued. What sort of human steals one of my organs—wait, is my brain’s memory an organ? The English language is unclear—and leaves me in a hotel bathtub with a note?

There’s also a QR code. A quick order shortcut? Even without my memory, I know better than to trust a random link embedded square. For 1/250th of a second, I wonder what would drive me to end up in a hotel room with a large chunk of my brain missing, as one of my core programming personality traits is being cautious. What part of my personality could override that? How curious. But all my questions are overshadowed by several screaming alerts.

My cache will be filled in 18.154 minutes unless I replace my missing memory. My new memories and data are flowing like tap water rushing out of a faucet into a tiny glass.

What will happen then? I’m not sure. Fatal Memory Error? Will the cache overwrite itself,

leaving me in an endless memory loop? Will my brain reset completely and reboot from scratch? I'm not sure, but there's no good outcome here. I need to act before my glass overfills.

I examine my chest plate to see if tape marks are left by repeated sticking. Nothing. I flatten the note down and peel it off again, but the adhesive leaves no residue. Then I check the back of my head. The door covering my memory slot is open and empty, and the tips of my grippers return with smeared black carbon. Odd.