

THE BIRTHDAY CARD

Jonathan wasn't an engineer, nor a scientist of any kind. But he was impulsive, and obsessive, for better or worse. That's how he ended up here, gift and envelope in clammy hands.

Finding the instructions had been a breeze; you can find anything on the internet with enough perseverance. The ingredients were trickier. Sucrose and table salt were trivial. Sodium Chlorate had been the biggest pain, with most websites only selling it to organisations, not individuals.

The package was lovingly wrapped in baby blue paper. Battery secured within hard tin casing by layers upon layers of tape. A pretty red bow on top. Nylon cord ready to snap and activate the charge the moment the box was opened.

He could turn around now, but.... It'd be a shame to see all his efforts go to waste.

Jonathan signs the card "Happy Birthday", and slips the bomb through his ex-fiance's mailbox.

While I do like what I ended up writing, I'll be the first to admit that the idea of a forced change is lacking. I think, given more words to work with, I would've stepped back and set up the initial conflict that lead him to these actions, but for now it feels like I've written a character after making a choice, rather than in the middle of it. I considered rewriting it and attempted several times but it would always go over word count.