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The Room

I didn't know how long I had been there. The sheets were always freshly laundered, the carpets always vacuumed, and a livable amount of motel quality food was always on the entry table. It wasn't the same room that I met him, at least I don't think it was. The AC unit was far older, and the television wasn't even from this decade. My legs swung off the edge of the bed and the rest of my body followed, freed from the weight of the dime store duvet. My day began same as always; bodyweight calisthenics with repetitions corresponding to multiples of six. I never allow them to break from six, and I don't know what will happen if I did. The thick mauve carpeting made for an excellent sweat absorbent, though it never sullied.

"How are you feeling today?" The Voice asked. "Has your mood improved?"

"No," I said, "and I don't think it will." I sat up, settling myself on the floor. I had long abandoned finding the source of The Voice. Taking the television apart had revealed nothing, there was no speaker in the AC, the fridge revealed nothing as well. Even pressing my ear to the door found only quiet, plain unadulterated quiet.

"Well, continue maintaining your body and I'm sure the improvement will come." they said. It felt as if they were coming from the peach striped walls themselves, an oppressive cacophony not fit for mortal ears.

"Enough for today, leave me in peace!" I said. Probably not the best idea to shoot my mouth off, but the raw unfiltered audacity of inane small talk grates even the strongest wills. I wandered over to the entry table, collecting a meager meal of plastic wrapped food and cheap coffee brewed from a minuscule single cup coffee maker. I sat on the edge of the bed to eat, if I

left any crumbs on the floor they'd be gone when I woke up. As I finished my meal and set it on the table, I noticed something. The door was unlatched. I couldn't tell someone how long it had been closed despite my efforts within the first moments of my solitary confinement.

I wandered out into the hallway, a concrete affair with little feature other than myriad cracks spreading from what I assume to be faults in the structure. Venturing farther I found no evidence of other life, no refuse, no scuff marks, nothing. My own company was not enough anymore, nor was the presence of The Voice.

"Whether you believe it or not, progress has been made." The Voice said as I reached a drawn shutter.

I curled my fingers around the aluminum grip and yanked with supreme force. Though the shutter only opened a fraction, I could see a sliver of the other side. It was just more unsightly concrete. A long brutal stretch of nothingness, another barrier to exit through naught but empty disheartening space. I turned on my heel only to be met with my bedside jammed into my shin. My body crashed onto the simple duvet like it always does, and I wept. The door was already closed with the latch firmly in place, I knew it was.

I began my day the same as always, bodyweight calisthenics with repetitions corresponding to multiples of six. I never allow them to break from six, and I don't know what will happen if I did.