

Room

by Jowell Tan

The room is white.

The walls are white. The floor, the door is white.

There are no pictures in frames, no books, no hooks. Just bare walls.

There is a open window. Outside the landscape is filled with a red tint, far as the eye can see. Strong winds howl. Occasionally collisions ring out. Just before the horizon is a tall structure, reminiscent of a castle's watchtower, built with bricks and standing sturdy.

In the middle of the room are two chairs, equally white as the walls, the floor, the door. on these two chairs sit a man and a woman, the man on the right and the woman on the left. Their eyes are closed, their faces expressionless.

Time passes.

The woman opens her eyes. The stark whiteness of the room almost overwhelms her - she shuts her eyes again, then slowly, in stages, she opens them as she adjusts to the light. She turns her neck and looks around, confused.

The man opens his eyes. He looks down at his hands, moving them up to his face as he examines them. He moves the over his face, down his arms and legs. He looks out the window, then to the woman seated across from him.

"Hello."

The woman makes eye contact with him.

"Where are we?" She asks.

"I'm... Not sure."

"Who are you?" She asks.

"I... I can't remember." He turns his head, and she follows, noticing the view from the window.

"Whoa."

"Good thing we're in here, no?" He asks.

"I... Suppose it is, yes." She stammers. "What's going on out there?"

"Whatever it is, I'm glad we're in here and not out there. That's no picnic," He chuckles to himself, a joke that she is in no mood to enjoy.

"So now what? What do we do?"

"We wait."

"For what?" She asks. He shrugs.

"For whatever happens next."

Time passes.

"What do you remember?" She asks.

"I remember waking up. Seeing you. What do you remember?"

"I don't remember anything before me being here. Before this. But it

can't be - Surely I have must been somewhere else before here. I need to think." She massages her temples.

"I'm sure someone will tell us what's going on," He replies, shrugging again.

"I sure hope so," she says, looking to the door.

Time passes.

The woman bends over in the chair, elbows to knees, palms upwards for her chin to rest upon.

"It's not - It's not funny anymore, we've been waiting here for so long and no one is here. Screw this, I'm going out."

She tries to stand, but she doesn't budge. She can't move her legs. The panic on her face increases with each attempt to leave the chair.

"What the hell?" She looks up to see him still sitting calmly, relaxed in his chair. "I can't move! Can you?"

"I'm not trying," He replies, "I'm just going to wait."

"For what?! How do you even know if there'll be someone coming?!"

"I just do. I can feel it." He leans back in his chair, stretching his arms. "You're not going anywhere, I believe."

She struggles to no avail. Eventually she gives up, slumping into the chair until she can lean her head back to lie on the backrest.

Time passes.

"Are you still trying to remember?" He asks.

"No, I stopped thinking about that already. I just want to know where we are and what's going on and why I can't move!" She hollers out in exasperation.

Just a beat after she speaks, a click. The sound resonates through the room. The two look towards the door. It opens, slowly and mechanically, until it is wide open, the door almost blending into the wall, an illusion of there never having a door in the first place.

She inhales. He exhales. He speaks.

"Finally."

