

The man's eyes opened, his pupils constricted to allow for tolerance of the locale's overpowering darkness. The man brought his head up from the curved edge of whatever he was lying in. He cautiously looked left, then right, surveying the landscape of the pitch black environment. After he had tried reaching into the depths of his memory, his body began to shake. He brought his hands up, the realization of his current location slowly coming together into bits and pieces of cognitive thought: he was engulfed in the liquid contained within his miniature prison. Against his better intuition, he let his fear dominate him; he began desperately moving his arms and legs around in the water in an uncontrolled spasm of feeling. Eventually the man controlled his fit, and he wondered if he was in possession of the strength necessary to escape the situation which he had found himself in.

After seconds of splashing around helplessly, the man was able to feel around the edges of whatever he was in. His fingers passed over the top edge of his open prison, trying to feel his way into an idea of his current situation. The man stared in front of him for few moments. Then, reaching a conclusion to the thought process, he held his right arm up, feeling through the air to see whether or not standing up would have any negative impacts, and when his hand hit nothing, he brought it back down and held the sides of his container in support as he began to emerge from the water he had been lying in.

It took nearly a minute before the man was successfully able to navigate his way into standing, his head facing away from what he concluded to be a bathtub and was now staring the dark abyss in front of him. He assumed that there had been a thick, concrete wall bordering three sides of the tub, and that his current direction was the only remaining option for him to get out of the deathly silent, black chamber.

His hands grabbed hold of what felt like the front edge of the container he was in, the smooth curvature of the outer shell feeling delicate, almost reassuring, the also revealing an innate cheapness of the tub. He kneeled down; the man hoped to confirm that there was a floor outside the tub, as the idea of stepping out of the tub into a bottomless abyss being an unusually nagging fear for him. He breathed a sigh of relief upon feeling the hard, solid ground outside the bathtub, decorated in what felt like a traditional tile pattern. The man brought his hand up, rubbing the insides of his thumb and index finger together; he felt an oddly thick liquid which he discarded as the product

of his thrashing in the water earlier. Then, with his right hand resting upon the outer edge of his tub, he slowly put one foot out, followed by his other, and eventually the man became comfortable with putting all his weight on his legs and standing straight up in the chamber. Almost instantaneously afterwards, he recoiled a bit and his right hand made a quick grab of his right thigh — emitting a semblance of a wince which prompted him to put his idle hand up to cover his mouth.

The man slowly walked to the left, as it was to him, side of the room. He ran his hands up and down the grimy wall, which he noticed had a very thick layer of mold as he neared its lower section. Eventually, his fingers thumbed over a protrusion from the wall. He moved a bit closer to this location, caressing the protrusion delicately, as to not mistake its use. Feeling his way around the object, we eventually came to a conclusion regarding its operation. The man stood motionless for some time, before he finally flicked the switch upwards.

Nothing.

The man sighed. He looked around in every direction for some kind of hint that the switch had actually done something. *Anything*. Feeling discouraged, his shoulders shrunk, and he leaned his head back, his face looking at an angle above him, and then he noticed them: a pair of illuminated, although dimly so, fluorescent bars above him, with a mild flicker of life given to them at irregular intervals. He stood motionless for a few moments, staring at the tubes filled with the most minimal signal of life, which still had not given so much as an inkling to the man as to the geometry of the room.

And then there was a flash of brilliant light that pierced his retinas with such force that, the man felt that he had been blinded — momentarily, if not temporary, his vision filled with nothing save shades of red. He kept his eyelids shut, filled with the fear that opening them would result in another strike of pain. The burning sensation slowly faded from his head, but he still wanted to give his eyes time to recalibrate; however, the man felt as if something small had fallen from the ceiling, clinging his to his wet clothes. He brought his hand up to brush whatever debris had fallen from the ceiling, when his fingers felt a precise tinge of pain. His body stumbled for a moment at the shock of such a precise sense when he noticed that with every step he took, he heard a crunching sound. He stopped moving and held his breathing in an attempt to ascertain the position of the

sound, then he brought his leg up and back down to its origin with a mild amount of force, and his action was rewarded with another crunch.

There was another flicker of bright light, though it was far less startling and painful than the previous explosion of luminance. After a few moments of recuperation, the man looked up to the bars of light, noticing that one of the tubes was increasingly flickering with a slightly more intense light — he was only moments away from figuring out where he was. He also noticed that the light adjacent to the one currently heating up had completely disappeared.

"It broke," he whispered to himself, bringing up his wet sleeves to cover his hand and wiping off the broken shards of thin glass. He seemed caught unaware by the sound of his own voice — an unfamiliar sound which he wasn't quite sure was his or not. Wondering if his brief utterance would give him away to whoever had put him in this room, he paused for a moment, letting the fear in his mind be slowly taken over by tranquility; however, it was not to be, as the light flickered even more brightly, his thoughts were interrupted with the realization that he was not alone.

His vision was blurry, his eyes dry and burning, but nevertheless he noticed the faint outline of a shadowy figure in front of him. He attempted to make a move, but all his body would give him was a slight twitch of his right leg. The man felt an increasingly unsettling feeling traversing its way through his mind, parts of which advocated him into violence against the figure. Before acting on such urges, though, he noticed that the shadowy figure had not made so much as a move since entering the man's vision.

"He... Hey?" He asked quietly, as much to himself as to the outline of the person in front of him. The figure gave no physical response, and the shadows which sheltered the person's features prevented the man from discerning any sort of comprehension of his adversary's countenance.

Another flicker of light from the light above immersed the room in what appeared to be the light's full luminosity; though, it lasted only momentarily. The result of the flash of light, though, seemed to bring the fluorescent tube one step closer to its full potential and, for the man, revealed the truth of the figure in front of him.

"Jesus Chri—goddamn fucking mirror," he said, a hint of laughter lingering over his words.

The man, feeling relieved about his current situation, moved closer to the mirror, and the primitive sink which rested quite a bit below it, and looked at his obscured reflection in the antiquated, scratched-up mirror. He thought he saw something coming up behind him, but before he could figure out what, or who, there was another flash of light.

Though now, the room became fully illuminated. And with the new light revealing the contents and look of the chamber, the man stared in horror at what he saw reflected in the mirror. He turned around, and lost his breath at the sight of what he had mistaken for a person approaching him. He stuck his hand out, slowly moving it closer to the doorway of the room, when he heard a scream echo through the area of whatever was outside the door.

The man, though, was too shocked to notice anything outside the vision of what was in obscuring the room's doorway. The body of a person whose hands were nailed at each side, the right hand was a mere inch or two away from the switch that the man had found earlier. The corpse's head sunk down, droplets of blood flowing down his face and hitting the ground of the room almost soundlessly compared to the increased screaming occurring outside the room. The man stepped back from the door slowly, without regard to the puddles of blood which covered the majority of the white tile floor. The corpse hung at the door, bloodied, beaten, and starved for what appeared to have been an extended period of time.

He moved closer to the door once again. The man's outstretched hand trying to lift up the body's head, looking for whatever clue he could to figure out the lifeless body's relationship to the man. Just as he gripped the man's chin a deafening roar filled his ears and a large tremor shook the room with a ferocity which he had never experienced before. The man ignored his environment, instead choosing to focus solely on the face of the body in front of him, but the resulting tremor of the initial blast of power made the man lose his footing on the slick, blood-coated floor. He fell backwards and felt a blow to the back of his head.

In his last moments the man's mind was filled with the sound of broken glass and the muffled screams from outside his cell. And through the mind-numbing pain in his temples, the man struggled to stand, but before he could make any headway, he fell again

to the ground and his vision gave way to the impeding darkness, leaving the man sprawled out in a puddle of the dead man's spilled blood.