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Night Work

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A short book

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Night Work is a short book about night work. It was made to be read in one sitting, then put back. The sentences stay with the black folder and the one in the morning. They do not wander off into a story they cannot pay for.

Later the one in the morning changed and the color cooled. I did not correct the black folder. Correction would have been a different book. The desk lamp left a trace at the edge, thin enough to miss if you were only passing. The street filled the pause, and the pause was part of the page.

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There is a kind of attention that starts only after the one in the morning. In the back office I kept the black folder clear so night work would have somewhere to sit. The street came and went. I did not turn toward it. When I finally used the desk lamp, the mark was smaller than the decision to make it.

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I went back to the back office in the one in the morning. The black folder was where I had left it. What I had come to see was night work, and it had not agreed to be simple. I set the desk lamp down and did not pick it up again until I had looked long enough.

If you license the file, you are not buying the back office. You are buying a described use of night work, for a term, in a territory, in writing. The watermark on this preview is the reminder that the looking is not the license. The black folder goes on being itself after the agreement ends.

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What I left out was larger than what I put in. The back office had corners I did not describe, and a window I refused to make into a view. On the black folder, night work stayed inside its own edges. That refusal is the subject, as much as the color is.

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The one in the morning made the back office smaller. On the black folder, night work held still, which is not the same as being finished. I could hear the street and, under it, nothing that needed a name. The desk lamp waited. Most of the work was in the waiting.

I numbered nothing. A date would come later, on a catalog card, but the one in the morning inside the work is not a clock time. The desk lamp has no opinion about dates. The black folder only shows that the mark was made, and that it was allowed to remain.

A record of night work is not the thing itself. The black folder took the light and gave a duller light back. From the back office I could measure the band with a hand, then with the desk lamp, and the two measures did not match. I kept the second measure. The first one had too much of me in it.

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Close the book and the back office does not travel with you. What travels is the sequence: the black folder, the desk lamp, the decision to stop. The street will be different wherever this file is opened. The rights in the file stay where they were.

I read the page the next day in a different one in the morning. The night work had settled. It looked less like an event and more like a fact. Facts are easier to credit and harder to decorate. I prefer them.

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I looked again at the black folder. The night work was still there, neither better nor worse. The desk lamp had done what it can do, which is very little, and enough. Outside, the one in the morning continued without needing a sentence.

A margin is also a decision. I left one, then widened it, then stopped before the black folder became only frame. Night work

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stayed in the middle, where I could find it again.

Someone will ask what the picture is of. It is of night work, and of the time it took to leave it alone. The back office is not in the file. The attention is.

I copied one sentence into the catalog note and deleted it. The note only needs the title, the date, and the fact that the rights are reserved. The paragraph can live here.

The the street changed pitch. I did not rewrite the page to match it. A book that chases the room never gets out of the room.

On the second reading the night work looked plainer. Plain is not a defect. It is how a field survives being looked at twice.

I set the desk lamp parallel to the edge and did not draw. The alignment was the note. The black folder recorded nothing, which I then had to write down in words.

If the use is small, the license is still a written one. Scale is not a substitute for permission. The night work does not become free because the file is a preview.

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