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The Red Field

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A short book
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The Red Field is a short book about a red field. It was made to be read in one sitting, then put back. The sentences stay with the sheet of cotton paper and the late afternoon. They do not wander off into a story they cannot pay for.

Later the late afternoon changed and the color cooled. I did not correct the sheet of cotton paper. Correction would have been a different book. The wide brush left a trace at the edge, thin enough to miss if you were only passing. Still air filled the pause, and the pause was part of the page.

I numbered nothing. A date would come later, on a catalog card, but the late afternoon inside the work is not a clock time. The wide brush has no opinion about dates. The sheet of cotton paper only shows that the mark was made, and that it was allowed to remain.

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If you license the file, you are not buying the studio table. You are buying a described use of a red field, for a term, in a territory, in writing. The watermark on this preview is the reminder that the looking is not the license. The sheet of cotton paper goes on being itself after the agreement ends.

I went back to the studio table in the late afternoon. The sheet of cotton paper was where I had left it. What I had come to see was a red field, and it had not agreed to be simple. I set the wide brush down and did not pick it up again until I had looked long enough.

Close the book and the studio table does not travel with you. What travels is the sequence: the sheet of cotton paper, the wide brush, the decision to stop. Still air will be different wherever this file is opened. The rights in the file stay where they were.

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There is a kind of attention that starts only after the late afternoon. In the studio table I kept the sheet of cotton paper clear so a red field would have somewhere to sit. Still air came and went. I did not turn toward it. When I finally used the wide brush, the mark was smaller than the decision to make it.

What I left out was larger than what I put in. The studio table had corners I did not describe, and a window I refused to make into a view. On the sheet of cotton paper, a red field stayed inside its own edges. That refusal is the subject, as much as the color is.

A record of a red field is not the thing itself. The sheet of cotton paper took the light and gave a duller light back. From the studio table I could measure the band with a hand, then with the wide brush, and the two measures did not match. I kept the second measure. The first one had too much of me in it.

I read the page the next day in a different late afternoon. The a red field 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.

The late afternoon made the studio table smaller. On the sheet of cotton paper, a red field held still, which is not the same as being finished. I could hear still air and, under it, nothing that needed a name. The wide brush waited. Most of the work was in the waiting.

I looked again at the sheet of cotton paper. The a red field was still there, neither better nor worse. The wide brush had done what it can do, which is very little, and enough. Outside, the late afternoon continued without needing a sentence.

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A margin is also a decision. I left one, then widened it, then stopped before the sheet of cotton paper became only frame. A red field stayed in the middle, where I could find it again.

Someone will ask what the picture is of. It is of a red field, and of the time it took to leave it alone. The studio table is not in the file. The attention is.

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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 still air 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 a red field looked plainer. Plain is not a defect. It is how a field survives being looked at twice.

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I set the wide brush parallel to the edge and did not draw. The alignment was the note. The sheet of cotton paper 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 a red field does not become free because the file is a preview.

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I looked again at the sheet of cotton paper. The a red field was still there, neither better nor worse. The wide brush had done what it can do, which is very little, and enough. Outside, the late afternoon continued without needing a sentence.

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