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Rooms Without Furniture

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A short book

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Rooms Without Furniture is a short book about an empty room. It was made to be read in one sitting, then put back. The sentences stay with the bare floor and the dusk. They do not wander off into a story they cannot pay for.

I went back to the north room in the dusk. The bare floor was where I had left it. What I had come to see was an empty room, and it had not agreed to be simple. I set the tape measure down and did not pick it up again until I had looked long enough.

The dusk made the north room smaller. On the bare floor, an empty room held still, which is not the same as being finished. I could hear a radiator and, under it, nothing that needed a name. The tape measure waited. Most of the work was in the waiting.

Later the dusk changed and the color cooled. I did not correct the bare floor. Correction would have been a different book. The tape measure left a trace at the edge, thin enough to miss if you were only passing. A radiator filled the pause, and the pause was part of the page.

What I left out was larger than what I put in. The north room had corners I did not describe, and a window I refused to make into a view. On the bare floor, an empty room stayed inside its own edges. That refusal is the subject, as much as the color is.

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A record of an empty room is not the thing itself. The bare floor took the light and gave a duller light back. From the north room I could measure the band with a hand, then with the tape measure, and the two measures did not match. I kept the second measure. The first one had too much of me in it.

I numbered nothing. A date would come later, on a catalog card, but the dusk inside the work is not a clock time. The tape measure

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has no opinion about dates. The bare floor only shows that the mark was made, and that it was allowed to remain.

There is a kind of attention that starts only after the dusk. In the north room I kept the bare floor clear so an empty room would have somewhere to sit. A radiator came and went. I did not turn toward it. When I finally used the tape measure, the mark was smaller than the decision to make it.

If you license the file, you are not buying the north room. You are buying a described use of an empty room, for a term, in a territory, in writing. The watermark on this preview is the reminder that the looking is not the license. The bare floor goes on being itself after the agreement ends.

Close the book and the north room does not travel with you. What travels is the sequence: the bare floor, the tape measure, the decision to stop. A radiator 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 dusk. The an empty room 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.

I looked again at the bare floor. The an empty room was still there, neither better nor worse. The tape measure had done what it can do, which is very little, and enough. Outside, the dusk continued without needing a sentence.

A margin is also a decision. I left one, then widened it, then stopped before the bare floor became only frame. An empty room stayed in the middle, where I could find it again.

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Someone will ask what the picture is of. It is of an empty room, and of the time it took to leave it alone. The north room 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.

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The a radiator 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 an empty room looked plainer. Plain is not a defect. It is how a field survives being looked at twice.

I set the tape measure parallel to the edge and did not draw. The alignment was the note. The bare floor recorded nothing, which I then had to write down in words.

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

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