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Salt on the Lens

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A short book
BM-2015-772
2015

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Salt on the Lens is a short book about salt on a lens. It was made to be read in one sitting, then put back. The sentences stay with the cloth case and the night. They do not wander off into a story they cannot pay for.

Later the night changed and the color cooled. I did not correct the cloth case. Correction would have been a different book. The blower left a trace at the edge, thin enough to miss if you were only passing. Wind filled the pause, and the pause was part of the page.

The night made the dark corner smaller. On the cloth case, salt on a lens held still, which is not the same as being finished. I could hear wind and, under it, nothing that needed a name. The blower waited. Most of the work was in the waiting.

A record of salt on a lens is not the thing itself. The cloth case took the light and gave a duller light back. From the dark corner I could measure the band with a hand, then with the blower, 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 night. The salt on a lens 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.

There is a kind of attention that starts only after the night. In the dark corner I kept the cloth case clear so salt on a lens would have somewhere to sit. Wind came and went. I did not turn toward it. When I finally used the blower, the mark was smaller than the decision to make it.

Close the book and the dark corner does not travel with you. What

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travels is the sequence: the cloth case, the blower, the decision to stop. Wind will be different wherever this file is opened. The rights in the file stay where they were.

What I left out was larger than what I put in. The dark corner had corners I did not describe, and a window I refused to make into a view. On the cloth case, salt on a lens stayed inside its own edges. That refusal is the subject, as much as the color is.

I numbered nothing. A date would come later, on a catalog card, but the night inside the work is not a clock time. The blower has no opinion about dates. The cloth case only shows that the mark was made, and that it was allowed to remain.

I went back to the dark corner in the night. The cloth case was where I had left it. What I had come to see was salt on a lens, and it had not agreed to be simple. I set the blower down and did not pick it up again until I had looked long enough.

If you license the file, you are not buying the dark corner. You are buying a described use of salt on a lens, for a term, in a territory, in writing. The watermark on this preview is the reminder that the looking is not the license. The cloth case goes on being itself after the agreement ends.

I looked again at the cloth case. The salt on a lens was still there, neither better nor worse. The blower had done what it can do, which is very little, and enough. Outside, the night continued without needing a sentence.

A margin is also a decision. I left one, then widened it, then stopped before the cloth case became only frame. Salt on a lens 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 salt on a lens, and of the time it took to leave it alone. The dark corner 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 wind 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 salt on a lens looked plainer. Plain is not a defect. It is how a field survives being looked at twice.

I set the blower parallel to the edge and did not draw. The alignment was the note. The cloth case recorded nothing, which I then had to write down in words.

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