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Seven Quiet Surfaces

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A short book

BM-2018-905

2018

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Seven Quiet Surfaces is a short book about seven surfaces. It was made to be read in one sitting, then put back. The sentences stay with the pinned print and the afternoon. They do not wander off into a story they cannot pay for.

I went back to the wall in the afternoon. The pinned print was where I had left it. What I had come to see was seven surfaces, and it had not agreed to be simple. I set the level down and did not pick it up again until I had looked long enough.

What I left out was larger than what I put in. The wall had corners I did not describe, and a window I refused to make into a view. On the pinned print, seven surfaces 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 afternoon inside the work is not a clock time. The level has no opinion about dates. The pinned print only shows that the mark was made, and that it was allowed to remain.

Later the afternoon changed and the color cooled. I did not correct the pinned print. Correction would have been a different book. The level left a trace at the edge, thin enough to miss if you were only passing. Footsteps 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 afternoon. In the wall I kept the pinned print clear so seven surfaces would have somewhere to sit. Footsteps came and went. I did not turn toward it. When I finally used the level, the mark was smaller than the decision to make it.

If you license the file, you are not buying the wall. You are buying a described use of seven surfaces, for a term, in a

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territory, in writing. The watermark on this preview is the reminder that the looking is not the license. The pinned print goes on being itself after the agreement ends.

A record of seven surfaces is not the thing itself. The pinned print took the light and gave a duller light back. From the wall I could measure the band with a hand, then with the level, and the two measures did not match. I kept the second measure. The first one had too much of me in it.

Close the book and the wall does not travel with you. What travels is the sequence: the pinned print, the level, the decision to stop. Footsteps will be different wherever this file is opened. The rights in the file stay where they were.

The afternoon made the wall smaller. On the pinned print, seven surfaces held still, which is not the same as being finished. I could hear footsteps and, under it, nothing that needed a name. The level waited. Most of the work was in the waiting.

I read the page the next day in a different afternoon. The seven surfaces 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 pinned print. The seven surfaces was still there, neither better nor worse. The level had done what it can do, which is very little, and enough. Outside, the afternoon continued without needing a sentence.

A margin is also a decision. I left one, then widened it, then stopped before the pinned print became only frame. Seven surfaces 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 seven surfaces, and of the time it took to leave it alone. The wall 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 footsteps 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 seven surfaces looked plainer. Plain is not a defect. It is how a field survives being looked at twice.

I set the level parallel to the edge and did not draw. The alignment was the note. The pinned print 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 seven surfaces does not become free because the file is a preview.

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