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The Unsold Print

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A short book

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The Unsold Print is a short book about an unsold print. It was made to be read in one sitting, then put back. The sentences stay with the drawer of sheets and the closing time. They do not wander off into a story they cannot pay for.

There is a kind of attention that starts only after the closing time. In the flat file I kept the drawer of sheets clear so an unsold print would have somewhere to sit. The lock came and went. I did not turn toward it. When I finally used the cotton gloves, the mark was smaller than the decision to make it.

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

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I read the page the next day in a different closing time. The an unsold print 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.

Close the book and the flat file does not travel with you. What travels is the sequence: the drawer of sheets, the cotton gloves, the decision to stop. The lock will be different wherever this file is opened. The rights in the file stay where they were.

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A record of an unsold print is not the thing itself. The drawer of sheets took the light and gave a duller light back. From the flat file I could measure the band with a hand, then with the cotton gloves, and the two measures did not match. I kept the second measure. The first one had too much of me in it.

I went back to the flat file in the closing time. The drawer of

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sheets was where I had left it. What I had come to see was an unsold print, and it had not agreed to be simple. I set the cotton gloves down and did not pick it up again until I had looked long enough.

The closing time made the flat file smaller. On the drawer of sheets, an unsold print held still, which is not the same as being finished. I could hear the lock and, under it, nothing that needed a name. The cotton gloves waited. Most of the work was in the waiting.

If you license the file, you are not buying the flat file. You are buying a described use of an unsold print, for a term, in a territory, in writing. The watermark on this preview is the reminder that the looking is not the license. The drawer of sheets goes on being itself after the agreement ends.

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What I left out was larger than what I put in. The flat file had corners I did not describe, and a window I refused to make into a view. On the drawer of sheets, an unsold print stayed inside its own edges. That refusal is the subject, as much as the color is.

Later the closing time changed and the color cooled. I did not correct the drawer of sheets. Correction would have been a different book. The cotton gloves left a trace at the edge, thin enough to miss if you were only passing. The lock filled the pause, and the pause was part of the page.

I looked again at the drawer of sheets. The an unsold print was still there, neither better nor worse. The cotton gloves had done what it can do, which is very little, and enough. Outside, the closing time continued without needing a sentence.

A margin is also a decision. I left one, then widened it, then

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stopped before the drawer of sheets became only frame. An unsold print stayed in the middle, where I could find it again.

Someone will ask what the picture is of. It is of an unsold print, and of the time it took to leave it alone. The flat file 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 the lock 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 unsold print looked plainer. Plain is not a defect. It is how a field survives being looked at twice.

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I set the cotton gloves parallel to the edge and did not draw. The alignment was the note. The drawer of sheets 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 an unsold print does not become free because the file is a preview.

I looked again at the drawer of sheets. The an unsold print was still there, neither better nor worse. The cotton gloves had done what it can do, which is very little, and enough. Outside, the closing time continued without needing a sentence.

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