

Room With A Small View

I don't know why I'm here.

That isn't entirely true, I know how I got here. Know the paths I took to get where I am at this moment. The choices and the chances. Jeez, that sounds cheesy.

What I mean is on a broader scale, I guess. I don't know why I'm here, in the way of, I don't know why I chose the path that took me to here.

I'm sorry, I guess I should explain where 'here' is. It's not much to describe, because it is not much of a place.

This little room is located in the basement of the Penal Colony № 6 Federal Penitentiary Service of Russia in the Orenburg region, or as it is known to the locals, Black Dolphin Prison. No one really has been able to explain to me why the old prisoners sculpted the black dolphin statue at the front gates, but that's a question for another time. This little room doesn't have a name, but everyone knows it is here. Some call it the 'room with a small view.'

That name, I understand. As soon as I walked in, my eyes were immediately drawn to the small, barred opening near the ceiling on the far side of the room. It is just about the size of two loaves of bread, stacked on top of each other. The bottom edge is high enough for a man to jump and barely reach. The brick is slightly smooth there, as if many had tried. The 'view', if you could call it that, is only of the sky. You can't tell what is directly out there from this low vantage point. Just that you could see the sky. When you are under a tall building in the middle of a prison, which is situated in a decent size town, having that small slice of a view is pretty special. It may be the only special thing here, really.

The rest of the room is small, as its unofficial moniker will attest, with the walls only slightly further apart than the cells. All brick, but old brick, at that. Years and years ago this room was made in the foundation of this old building. It doesn't really ever get clean in here either. After it is used, the walls and floor just get sprayed down with water, which then recedes through the drain in the floor. There are no chairs, cots or tables in here. Just an empty room with a small view and a drain in the floor.

So, back to my question. How did I get to this place in time? I know my choices haven't always been the best. I've made mistakes. I just didn't think I would make bad enough mistakes to come here. No, I shouldn't think that. They weren't 'bad mistakes.' They were just, what's a good word for it...

'Hasty choices.' Yes, that's a better choice of words.

When I joined the police department in my city, I truly thought I was going to change our country, one arrest at a time. It was probably that naiveté that led me down some pretty 'hasty choices.' The money started to get flashed around to me. I'd look a direction opposite of where someone would be, at the right time, and then suddenly I could afford to take my wife on vacation. It all seemed pretty harmless, even when there were more requests for my silence, and more money coming in. For some stupid reason, I still thought I was doing good in the world, too.

Well, as is probably easy to spell out, I didn't stay out of the light of day for too long. Rather rapidly, my world started to crumble. I lost my job, my family and soon enough, my freedom. That's when I got on the road to this place.

One hasty choice after the next.

So, now, here we are. You and I in this room, ready to do what we came here to do.

I'm going to take off the hood now. Hopefully, you can understand why I told you all about this room. I don't want to waste a lot of time explaining what's going on while you look around frantically. Do we understand each other? Excellent.

There, now I'd suggest looking up at the sky for the next few moments.

Inmate 3372330, you have been found guilty of multiple counts of homicide. The courts have declared you fit for execution.

Have you to say anything in your last moments?

No?

OK.

Not to worry, my sidearm is a high caliber model. You won't feel a thing. I envy you that. After you, I still have to do this again. No one else will do it, and it's the only job I can still get.

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