

Chapter (Undecided.): The Crying

The wailing had begun slowly, and when it had begun, it had begun in earnest; he had not been sure he was truly hearing what he thought he heard.

Something was crying.

He had been lying on his too small twin-mattress, reading a novel, and he had found one of those rare and precious moments of peace his mind allowed him when he lost himself in what It considered to be worthwhile application.

But then the crying had begun, he found himself reluctantly answering its squalling call.

Getting up, hesitantly, and making the short two steps from bed to door, he opened it, and peeked, ever so slowly, out of the frame into empty darkness.

Empty, that is, except for me.

But now maybe home to another unknown, unwanted occupant.

The door to the second bathroom, the one he himself did not use, was open. And the light inside, on.

Fear leapt into his chest; red hot anxiety rattled his thoughts.

The crying continued on, growing violently more intense as he made his way down the short length of hall, ending at the bathroom's now blazingly luminescent entrance. But now, he crept, ever so slowly, toward the open door of the bathroom - his thin socks, whispering on the tile, but his heart a resounding drum in his chest-

THUUM, THUUM, THUUM.

His eardrums pulsed loudly, and his hands shook with the adrenaline his body had produced alarmingly, but with haste.

It's crying. He thought, his mind already now a stew of hysteria and fear.

And guilt.

It's crying, I don't know how, but it is crying, and it's my fault.

A fresh cover of sweat was beginning to form above his brow. Hesitantly, his eyes crested past the wall that had been obscuring his vision of the tub, of the horror his mind was begging him to avoid.

The hammering in his chest continued on, but despite all its efforts, he forced his head to edge forwards, his mind now held in a vice-grip by the overwhelming force that stands and defies all evolutionary efforts of survival.

He was **curious**. That was it. He had to see it, whatever it was, it was his, and he had to; he didn't understand why, but the destructive compulsion was too much to resist.

...

...he wanted to scream, he wanted to vomit, he wanted to shut his eyes, tightly, in what his mind could offer as the only defense against what it had seen. Involuntarily, his hands shot to his mouth, first the right, then the left, muffling his screams."

- "There are Ghosts in These Halls", a short story