

The Door

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Photo - Landscape

First Place - Short Story

A door. Two white columns protruding from the ground. I stand with a new temptation to see what is on the other side, but everyone has been warned that once you go through you can never return. Legend has it that the door only appears to one person in a lifetime; once the chosen one dies the door picks a new person to reveal itself to. Everyone has shrugged it off as a tall tale to keep kids on their toes, but recently, as I was walking along the street, a door materialized.

My name is Rebecca. I am seventeen-years-old, and I was born in Tucson, Arizona. I thought that I had been leading an average life, but I'm not so sure anymore. Since the door has showed itself to me, nothing has been the same. I want to go through so badly, but since the door really does exist, I don't know what parts of the rumors are true. If I go through the door I might never return, but if I don't go through the curiosity will drive me insane.

I decided to go try and bring a friend through with me. If we could go through together maybe we would be able to survive whatever danger lies on the other side. I managed to get Sophia, my closest friend, to agree that I wasn't delusional and got her to participate in my experiment. We had decided to test my idea that next weekend and pray that time moved differently inside.

The time had come when we were going to power through the door. We arrived at the ally where the door originally appeared, and it was still there. Sophie couldn't see it even though it was huge and right in front of her, but we tried to go through anyway. Holding Sophia's hand I opened the door. A blinding white light greeted us and sucked us both in. We heard a slamming noise in the distance, but when we turned around there was a solid wall behind us.

I was still dizzy from the force that carried us in, but I could see well enough to know that we were in a box. We were completely closed in with nowhere to go. We stayed put and tried to get over the initial shock, and tried to soak in our new surroundings. Sophie wouldn't talk to me, she was crying and probably would have run away and never spoken to me again if she actually had anywhere to go. I gave her some space for a while and when she collected herself we decided that since we knew nothing about this place we had to stick together if we wanted a hope of survival. With no other ideas, I turned around and tried to see if I had missed anything that was around us. All of a sudden the wall behind us vanished revealing a long hallway with a bright light at the end, and the other wall started to move to push us down the hall. With no other option, we walked towards the blinding light that had pulled us in.

We walked for what seemed like hours, making very little progress. It felt like every step we took, the end of the hall would be just that much farther away. Then, exhausted from the walking and stress, Sophie collapsed.

The moving wall didn't stop. I tried to get her back on her feet but something was seriously wrong. I began to hear voices saying that she didn't belong in there, so I dropped down next to her and tried to make myself a barrier between her and the wall. If the room knew that she didn't belong then I

had no way of knowing if she was in more danger than I was. I had dragged her into this mess, so I had to make sure that I kept her as safe as possible; if she died because of my little experiment I wouldn't be able to live with myself. That was the point of the door, to torture the people it revealed itself to. They suffer if they don't go through because they have to live with the "what might have happened" and if they did go through they suffered a different kind of torture, walking with no end until you die of exhaustion but not before you go insane.

I gave up. I stopped trying to avoid the wall that was moving towards us. It wasn't going to slow down and it wasn't going to stop until it reached the end, but ironically, the hall had no end. Why would I keep walking if I wasn't going to make any progress? I let the wall push us, the movement was going to happen anyway, so I may as well have let it do the work for me. I closed my eyes and waited.

I woke up to Sophie screaming. I sat up and saw what had caused the terror. What had been an infinite hall had turned into a dead end. It was a giant hydraulic press, and we were the unfortunate objects between the plates.

There was no escape. Frantically, Sophie and I tried to find anything that could stop the wall, a loose stone, a hidden switch, but there was nothing. I knew deep down that this was how it was going to end. I knew that I had condemned my friend to death. I had trapped us and curiosity would have gotten us killed, but one tiny part of me still had hope. How did the townspeople know about the door if no one ever survived the experience? I also wondered if the door did the same thing to everyone that went through. What if it did to you what you actually deserved? Perhaps people are rewarded if they were good before they went through.

Time was up. No more time to ponder what the secret was behind the door. We had hit the other wall. We had no place to go, no one to see and nothing to say. We had hit the end of our road and we only had a short time to live with that fact. The wall kept moving, the pain was indescribable, and I blacked out.

I woke up on Monday morning in my bed, perfect with no pain. It had just been one nightmare and I could move on with my life. I received a text from Sophie, so I knew she was perfectly fine, too. I got up, had breakfast, and left for school as usual. Left after the neighborhood, then a right and another right into the ally just to save a few minutes off my walk, then all of a sudden I noticed something new: Two white columns protruding from the ground. The Door.