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**R. LEIGH KRAFFT**

**Singing His Name**

The key turning in the lock
Never sure
What I’ll find.
Not dangerous, they said, never meeting my eye.
A metallic clunk as the tumblers slide, and I snake
My arm into the widening crevice and knock lightly on the inside of
The peeling grey door, like they said to do.

Ease myself into the room, and on impulse, begin gently
Singing his name.

Damp, felt-wrapped silence, the light
Dim and filtered as I adjust and make my way to the drapes, drawn back,
Startling dust and random particles in the sudden sunlight.
Softer now, low and lilting, my voice singing his name and filling
That empty space like a caress.

The big mahogany clock ticks down the hall, it’s face stark and
White, distorted numerals twisted on the dial when I hear
A slight whimpering and the hair on my
Neck prickling as I slowly become aware…
where…. (my eyes darting)
Where are you…

Images and fears shatter my thoughts, and then a grip,
A sudden pull, the loud crack of my bones
and as my eyes open,
I can smell him, dark, under the bed, still holding my leg, a
sickening loosening in my gut, I can’t scream, his dilated pupils
and shoulders trembling and shuddering and
shock, self-injury, illness, I’m still assessing the patient
when I see the shining, red
gleaming drops,
and then a perfect,
velvet
silence wrapping itself about me
like an
anesthetic
shroud.

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