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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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