**Jaspul**

These people, or whatever, have fallen in and it’s their fault. It’s not like this place has any mercy. If they’re stupid enough to go exploring in this place, then they deserve what comes to them.

It was too late when it happened to me.

Now, I’m erased.

I’m gone.

Nobody remembers me anyway, so it’s like I never existed in the first place. I’m one of those you never hear from again. I’m a repressed memory.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Darkness.

Light.

And then you’ve know you’ve woken up.

Where, you don’t know.

Imagine this is you.

Only it’s me. This is happening to me.

And I still don’t know where I am.

I look around me and I see only light, then dark, light then dark. Going faster and faster, strobing.

It’s here I notice I have a headache.

It’s here I notice that some things are in past tense and some aren’t. It’s here I notice that everything isn’t always as it seems.

It’s here I try to remember how I got here.

… Something about falling down a hole.

A hole in the ground.

Like that Alice story.

Except Alice knew she was Alice. Me, I have no idea who I am except for the fact that I got here by accident.

A horrible accident.

There are usually witnesses to horrible events, because that’s why they’re called that. If nobody was there to see them then they’d just be events that happen.

Unless it’s happening to you.

Maybe I’m my own witness to my own accident. Maybe I’m the only one who knows this is what happened to me.

Maybe.

No, wait, never mind. I came with somebody.

Somebody…

I can’t remember.

I can’t remember anything.

Anything except Alice and her stupid rabbit.

. . . . . . . . . .

Or a Bunnie.

The lights go off, and this time, they stay off.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

The dark has always scared me, but this time it’s different.

I’m petrified by it.

Horrified.

Anything else in a thesaurus.

And I didn’t even mean to get here. I just wanted to help out.

Every time the lights go off they seem to do so longer and longer each time. The light stays on less and less. The more I lose the light I lose myself along with it.

I try to cry but I can’t.

But like that would matter anyway.

I seem to be alone in this place.

But… I wasn’t before.

I wasn’t alone before.

I came in here with… others.

My friends.

I’m sure of it now. I came in with my friends!

!

Soon, they will be here and everything will be alright. Everything will be okay.

Everything will go back to normal.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Oh no.

Oh no.

This isn’t right.

This wasn’t supposed to happen.

It’s supposed to be light in here. Not both, and not changing.

It’s supposed to be peaceful.

It’s supposed to be beautiful, but it isn’t.

Quite the contrary.

My friends are here with me. I can see Sonic, and Tails, and Sally, and Bunnie.

The gang.

All here.

Well, most. Dulcy couldn’t come with us.

And Antoine was late.

Little accident.

Small accident.

But I suppose this would be an accident as well.

Only a big one.

A huge, gigantic accident.

Sorry, my bad.

And I think I know what happens next.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

It’s still dark and I’m still thinking about the name.

Bunnie.

Or the thing.

Bunnie.

It seems I know this person, or something.

Rather, I knew this person, past tense.

Like she used to be with me, but she’s gone now. Dying or dead or whatever.

But…

If I barely remember her, what’s the point of doing it at all?

What’s the point of being half remembered?

It seems you’re either highly revered or forgotten easily.

It seems you’re either a useless grunt that dies in a trench or a hero that wins a medal for saving useless grunts.

And then you’re spotlighted.

So, this means that I’m somebody important if I know all this.

Or rather, was.

Past tense.

And right now I have the strangest feeling I’m missing something important, like I’m supposed to be watching something or somebody’s back, watching their tail.

. . . . . . . . . .

Tails.

Bunnie.

Oh.

Oh yeah.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

So, what is it now?

The extraordinary gets regular after awhile. Soon enough, nothing will surprise you anymore, and the only big mystery left is the intangible, like death.

Or birth.

Or love.

The lights keep flickering on and off in this place, and I couldn’t care.

I just want it to hurry up and show itself.

Sally used to say to me that every time I saved someone else I sacrificed a part of myself in the process. This is why I was so great, why I was such a wonderful person, she said.

And Bunnie said that deep down inside me I had a heart that cared for people, that beneath my bravado and my personality, I had something sweet. The big prize.

Really, I just need someone to shake up my life, and if that means killing myself slowly, then so be it. Most won’t admit it, but anything that breaks up tedium is a godsend.

But even now, in this flickering intangible room in the hole where I was lowered, I still want to fight already.

It’s not like I haven’t done all of this already. Sure, the names may change, but it’s always the same crouch, the same spin dash, the same balled fist and battered ribs.

Reruns of my life.

And I don’t have a remote control.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

I try to get curled up but I can’t.

It’s like I don’t even have a body anymore. Not metal, not flesh.

The lights keep going on and off.

And to me it’s like the water torture.

You know, the one where they strap you on your back to a wooden board on the ground. Then, they have a steady stream of water hit you on your forehead.

Drip, drip, drip, drip.

For hours on end.

This supposedly drives someone insane.

This supposedly makes someone crack.

And then you can hear the mind break from a mile away.

Sung to the tune of an eternal scream.

Then they’ll tell you everything.

Now, normally, I have a strong resolve. In real life, I could take almost anything.

But I can already feel it bending uncomfortably.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

This is my fault.

This is my fault.

Oh no, it happened again.

That’s right. A few years ago, I tried this same stunt, in my workshop, with birds. I didn’t join them in their descent, just watched.

The LCD screen must have been transmitting false images, because the bird’s bodies, their real bodies strapped on the tables, looked like they were in agonizing pain.

Silently screaming.

The LCD screen showed clear blue skies.

Clouds.

Trees.

No other animals.

Just everything a bird would love.

Bird heaven.

The electrodes hooked up to them, it looked like I was operating without any anesthetic. They looked like they were in so much pain.

Like they needed to either pass out or die.

And both had already happened.

So I should’ve taken the hint.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Sonic, Tails, and Bunnie.

I know more than that, I know.

Well, I know that they were my friends, anyway.

I know that I was close to them in some way.

Tails called me ‘Aunt.’

Sonic called me ‘Sal.’

Bunnie called me ‘Sally-girl’

Still none of these are correct, and yet they are.

Like I’m known by many different names.

Or only four. Because after these three there should be my real name.

And I feel if I remember that, I can get out of here.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

It’s dark, it’s cold, and I’m scared.

It’s so dark in here, I swear.

The light’s gone, and I wanna go home.

I just want out. I want it to stop.

God, get me out of here!!!

GET ME OUT OF HERE!!!

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Still waiting for this guy to show himself, I try to tap my foot and realize that I can’t because I don’t have a body.

Of course, Rotor already said this, but I hardly care anymore.

This is just typical.

This is routine.

Not hardly, not barely, not halfway.

Happens all the time, really. Something goes wrong, then I save the day.

So I keep waiting.

I try to tap my foot again, just for tedium’s sake.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Rotor

Him.

He put us in here.

But… why?

And I still don’t know my name.

And the lights still haven’t come back on.

And somewhere, I can hear water dripping.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

The screaming started I don’t know how long ago, but it sounds like Tails. He sounds real scared. He sounds like he needs me. And the lights won’t stop going on and off and I’m scared and wanna help the poor boy but the lights, they wont stop going on and off on and off on and off on and offonandoff and I just wanna pull my hair out with my teeth and run to help the poor little boy but I cant move because it’s like I’m being smothered until I cant breathe, like the darkness is smothering and the light pushes it down further and I cant stop thinking about torture and tails screaming and how rotor said it would be just a simple experiment fun to do and very informative and he isnt here like he said he was going to be and I cant take it anymo-

Snap.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

One thing I *do* remember is being called a Princess at one point.

A Princess of something. A house of nuts, maybe.

We’re all nuts down here… Is that right?

I remember Sonic saying he loved me.

I remember Tails saying he loved me.

But, the thing is, I have no face to put to it.

“I love you, Aunt” blank.

“I love you” blank.

Blank.

Dark.

Nothing.

And it seems like I will be here for awhile unless somebody does something to help me.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

I already know this isn’t going right.

We were supposed to come out of it, but we aren’t.

And I can hear twigs snapping.

And water dripping.

And Tails screaming.

And birds chirping.

And…

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Sure is taking awhile for this guy to show himself.

Sure is.

Sure do wish I had a chilidog right about now, Uncle Chuck’s homegrown brand. The best.

The refried stuff, not the baked.

The sauced one, not the dry.

And if I had a stomach, it would be growling.

So, I wait.

And I wait.

Wait.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

I figured out my name.

Just now.

I know what it is.

But I’m afraid to say it.

I’m afraid because I’ve figured everything else out too.

I know where we are. I know what really is going on. I know it’s almost impossible for us to escape. I know about the birds, I know about Rotor’s mistake, and I know I have no idea how to fix it.

The only thing I don’t know is if it’s all utterly hopeless. If I keep this name of mine to myself, I can have hope to hang on to.

Maybe it’s possible to get out of here, maybe.

If I keep it to myself, maybe.

No.

Wait.

Never mind.

Sally.

My name is Sally Acorn.

. . . . . . . . . .

Yep.

I was right.

Hopeless.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Rotor is crying. Tails is screaming. Bunnie is snapping. Sonic is waiting.

But in the end, it adds to nothing. You can cry or scream or thrash or snap all you want and it’s just you making noise.

In the end, that’s *all* it is.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

Excerpt from Knothole News:

*‘Today, Sally, Sonic, Tails, Bunnie, Rotor were buried in the ground. Many attended the funeral, most notably Dulcy, who was away for the day on lookout before she came back and found out the news about the accident.*

*‘The procession was held by Antoine, who said he was helping Rotor when it all went wrong.*

*‘Rotor, the acclaimed scientist, was attempting a new experiment on death by monitoring the brain after all the blood flow is blocked.*

*‘Besides himself, Sonic, Sally, Tails and Bunnie volunteered be subjects. To guide him. Antoine, of course, only offered to stand back and watch from a safe distance.*

*‘Antoine’s job consisted monitoring the LCD screens of the patients and noting anything displayed.*

*‘Antoine first reported images of chilidogs, waterfalls, a king’s crown, a wrench, and a blanket being displayed on the screens.*

*‘Then, the bodies went into arrest and the blood flow could not be turned back on.*

*‘At the procession of the funeral, Antoine said, and I quote:*

*“Today we bury the bodies of friends, of families, of brothers, of sisters. Of people we knew and loved. Of people we can barely go on without. But we will have to.”*

*‘And the wooden caskets were lowered.*

*‘Afterwards, I tried to catch up to Antoine to get a statement, but all I heard from him was, and I quote:*

*“They all looked like they were screaming…”’*

End article.

Jaspul  
Written by Sean Catlett