

LET ME IN, LET ME OUT. Content warnings for description of blood and gore, themes of anxiety, and death in an elevator.

Open with the rumbling of an elevator proceeding, then stopping, beeping, opening.

They step off the elevator. They start down the hallway. Grow smaller, smaller, then the doors close.

Doors close.

Just like the last person. And the one before them. And before them. (Pause) Not like me. No, I, in fact, have been in this elevator for as long...as I can remember. The entire stretch of my memory. Might mean one day. Might mean ten years. Whatever it means, it doesn't mean anything to me; this elevator is all I know. The whole of my reality totals out to this one ride, going up, down, down, up some more, down, then up, at no point stepping out onto a floor. One might wonder...why...well, I...I-I don't know that I could put it into words exactly, but I just...have this *feeling*...a feeling I can't identify, but it just...tells me not to. Not to step off this elevator. Just continue pressing the random buttons to preserve this ride into suspension, keep my five-square-foot reality justified by the motion and progression from one floor to another--but *none* of those floors are for me. After all...who knows what could be on each floor? I certainly don't. But I know what's in this elevator. And I can rely on that.

Doors open.

A man gestures at me distantly, asks me to hold the door. I stare at him. Then I hit a floor button, not even looking at which one I hit, and force my finger into the door-closing button. The man looks at me bewilderedly, yells out again for me to hold it--but the doors shut him out before he finishes.

Doors close.

I just...had a feeling. Something about him...just wasn't right he, he, could have been...*sigh* god knows what he could have been. I mean, hell, these people, are they even real? What does the word even mean anymore, with my reality existing solely within these four steel walls? And if this elevator is my reality, if it is my entire self...then by letting him enter this elevator, wouldn't..wouldn't I be letting him enter *me*? ...can't take the chance on that.

The elevator's still moving, anyway. That's all that matters. I look to see what button I pressed, but...none of them are lit up. But the elevator's moving. Well... could just be a glitch or something. That's all...

What does it matter to me where this thing is going, anyway...

The elevator rumbling. Doors open. Low, suspenseful drones and devilish whispers fade in.

The doors open upon a...a, floor that I don't...recognize. Looks almost like a...warehouse, a large, hollow...cavernous

room. Dark room. The light of the elevator doesn't stretch far, but distantly I can see walls...perhaps...

Silence, with devilish whispers hanging.

I look at the screen inside the elevator to see what floor number this, is. It's blank. I...can only assume someone called the elevator to come, but, no one is here. There's nobody, nothing in front of me, so...I stretch my head forward to see if there's a button that's gl--

Come closer...

I recede. Walk backwards into the elevator, press myself against the wall. I reach out, hit a smattering of elevator buttons, but **closer...** nothing happens. I slap them again, repeatedly and I feel...cold. Cold in undulating intervals, blowing on me intermittently like whatever's out there is...breathing on me--

Breathing on you...

astonished: I...I still d-don't...see--

Won't you let yourself out of there...

There's nothing out here that isn't in there...

...don't s-s-see anyone who could've called the elevator.

It's a matter of what is within...

There is no door that you don't control...

So I reach out, hand quivering in the air, and press, the buttons.

Distant laughter from both voices.

But it...*broken (rock)*: i-it...doesn't do anything...

Repeated, growing louder: Don't you die on me...

I--, I--! Slam my open palms into the buttons, the floor buttons, the door-close buttons, *all of them*, and the v-v-voices, the voices they feel closer, sound *closer*, and I'm throwing my fists into the elevator for taking me here, for keeping me here, when I didn't even try to go anywhere but where I was inside of it--

The voices and underlying drones cutoff, leaving just the nonchalant rumbling of the elevator.

Inside...of...it...

I don't know what that was...but I know what this is, I tell myself, I know what this is. It's an elevator. An elevator with a rail I can hold onto, with steel walls to keep me encased. Encased...I spread out my arms, grip the cold metal of the walls...caress the rail, grip it tightly as if to test its stability...I feel its comfort...

Some clean organ fades in.

It feels cold. Cold like a prison. Meant to keep me inside--but, of course, that's, that's why I'm in here. I have to stay inside. I've seen what's out there--I just saw what's out there, how could I ever go back out? If I leave this elevator, it will be the end right there. (Pause) But if I don't...if I don't leave, it will be the end right here. Here with the same cold steel walls, here with the buttons that look like eyes like the elevator is watching me, here behind doors that are

Organ cuts off.

o-pen-ing...

Doors open.

(Pause) It's me.

Jarble Disto Bass, and a high-pitched detuned component starts.

It's me, bleeding, mutilated and torn open in so many places, crawling across the carpet on this brightly lit floor, pale light making vivid the blood that runs off my body in dark rivulets, as it reaches up at me, blood-covered face begging, imploring, as if asking me...asking me t-to...hold the door.

Let me in...!

I-I...I...stare into my own bloodshot eyes, eyes getting closer with each drag of the maimed body--maimed by who? Mutilated by what? Did it step off the elevator, haplessly wondering into the open maw of whatever unseen horror lurks out there on every floor, or--

Let me in...!

Or...did it stay...on the elevator...stay inside it for so long that the prison, the madness of the steel walls and delusory freedom of the buttons, that the elevator *itself*...mutilated it? And if...if so, then...

Let me in...!

...then it needs my help.

MIDI reaches peak, then cutoff all at once.

I hold the door. (Pause) The thing crawls its way inside.
The door closes behind it.

Door closes.

I look down at the marred body. Crouch down to look at its
crucified form. It looks up at me. Smiles. But it's...not...me--

Power down, for just a beat, then:

creepy laughter

LET ME OUT! LET ME OUUUUU--

All sound cuts off.

This microisode was written, recorded, and produced by
C.S.W. I make a podcast called Incarnation Read, spelled
R-E-A-D, a horror anthology podcast full of freaky sound effects
and existential dread, much like that which you have just
listened to.