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[A4F] [A4FA] **Between Floors** [SFW] [Narrative] [Inner Monologue] [Meet Cute] [Strangers to Lovers] [Slow Burn] [Elevator] [Therapy] [Interabled] [Nonverbal Listener] [Sign Language] [Romantic] [Gentle]

Summary:

An elevator. Two people. And about 22 seconds each week together.

Somewhere between therapy sessions, everyday escapes, and learning sign language, two strangers form a delicate bond.

- **Inclusivity Note:** No gendered terms. No physical descriptions. The Listener is nonverbal (uses sign language) and often wears dresses or skirts. The Speaker goes to therapy regularly.
- **SFX:** included (they enhance the story, but the piece *should* still work without them)
- **Improv:** welcome
- **Word count:** 2400

🎙 Narration tone / notes

- POV: First person; Listener is addressed directly as “you”
- Tone: introspective, dreamy, but grounded. Emotionally open, vulnerable, with a quiet sense of hope. Somewhere between melancholy and gentle optimism
- Speaker:
 - Introverted, mildly cynical, neurotic, dry humor
 - An overthinker living in routines, craving genuine connection
 - Creative by nature (likely writes or thinks in images)
 - Grows noticeably throughout the story: becomes braver, more open
- Listener (the other person in the elevator):
 - Communicates through body language, facial expressions, and sign language
 - Open, empathetic, grounded
 - Has a strong sense of aesthetics (music, fashion)
 - Responds attentively and honestly, offers comfort without trying to take control

🔊 Possible SFX (if you want to integrate some but don't know where to look):

<https://pixabay.com/sound-effects/new-lift-73605/>

<https://pixabay.com/sound-effects/elevator-29654/>

<https://pixabay.com/sound-effects/elevator-ride-137245/>

<https://pixabay.com/sound-effects/elevator-ascending-two-floors-peaking-on-doors-and-electric-motor-sound-22682/>

<https://pixabay.com/sound-effects/elevator-sounds-54267/>

Format notes

blank line = pause for thought / time is passing

[] = **tone**

() = SFX cue / scene direction / hints for VA

(SFX: Footsteps. Button being pressed. Elevator hums – *ding* – doors open, Speaker steps in, elevator starts moving)

[deep breath]

(pause)

Every Thursday. 5:47 p.m.
Sometimes 5:48, if the elevator's being slow.
Sixth floor. Therapy's over.
Heart full. Head empty. Or the other way around.
Sometimes both. Like wrung out completely.

(SFX: *Ding*. Doors open. Second person gets in. Doors close. Elevator moves)

[smiling]:

And then there's you.
Same time. Every week.

Fifth floor.
You step in. As always, with those giant headphones.

Your head nods to the beat, like you're in your own movie.
Listening to some music that I'll never hear.
But I imagine it anyway.
Today? Something with heavy bass... and sunset colors.
Last week: strings. And heartbeats.

And then it happens—the thing that happens every single time.
You look at me. I look at you.
Your head tilts just a little.
You smile—barely.
I nod—briefly.
But on the inside?

[heavy exhale]

It's chaos. An emotional rollercoaster.

Every time, I want to say something. Anything.
But the right words... they always come too late.
And by the time they finally show up...
...you're already gone.

This is like a power nap for my heart.
22 seconds a week.

Never enough. But still, somehow, a break.
Then: ground floor. And you're gone.

(SFX: *Ding*. Doors open. Footsteps fade. Elevator ride continues)

And me?
I'm alone again.
Going down to the parking garage.
Lights off.
Back to real life.

Maybe next week.

Maybe... maybe I'll say something then:
"You smell like music. And beautiful disasters."
...or something less awkward... and weird.
Maybe just a:
"Hi. Nice to see you"?

[exhales tension]

Yeah... maybe.

(One week later)

(SFX: Transition sound — music / swoosh / film-fast-forward or something similar that shows that time has passed)

A week. It's nothing, really
And yet an eternity.

I live in Thursdays now.
Everything in between is just waiting.
Functioning.
Inhale. Exhale.
Repeat.

Therapy's usually a slow-motion hurricane.
You talk.
You dig.
You search.
And at the end you wonder:
Do I feel lighter now? Or just broken in a different way?

(SFX: Elevator sounds. *Ding*. Doors open)

But then...
...you step in again.

Headphones on.
Your look: tired? Dreamy? Something in between.
And again, that scent.
Spring...
Even though it isn't.

Our eyes don't meet directly, just in the mirror.
We both watch the doors close and suddenly we're there—side by side, framed in silver.
As if the elevator itself were pushing us together. Without a word.

You smile at my reflection. Just for a second.
And I smile back at yours.
Then we both look away, quickly.

Only... I can't hold it for long.
I have to look again.
Secretly.
Sneakily.
Out of the corner of my eye.

17 seconds left...

I glance at your shoulders. Try to guess what you're listening to.
Last week, I think it was Sade.
Before that: Japanese Breakfast.
But today?
Maybe Nina Simone?
Definitely something with weight. And soul.

(pause)

You often wear dresses. Or skirts.

And there's always something that sticks with me:
A shimmering earring,
A pattern on your sneakers.
Like you're the only splash of color in this gray hallway maze.

One time, you wore a moss-green miniskirt. And a coat with the most delicate embroidery at the hem.
I don't know why, but since that day, my head's been full of you.
Of your bare legs.
The way you walked.
The trace you left behind when you got out.

[deep breath]

I think...
...you're the most beautiful person I've ever seen.

All I ever manage to say is "Hi..."
And even that comes out weird.

The other day my best friend sent me a meme.
And my first impulse was to show it to you, to laugh about it together. But then I realized:
I don't even know your name.

I know nothing about you. Zero.

So I do what I always do:
I stare at my phone and type messages that suddenly feel stupidly meaningless.
Still... my thumbs tremble.

Then your shoulder brushes mine.
Just for a second. By accident. While you're searching in your bag.
Just briefly. A tiny flicker.
And still...

(SFX: *Ding*. Doors open. Footsteps fade)

[soft exhale – releasing tension]

...I feel that moment for days afterward.

(A few weeks later)

(SFX: Transition sound of your choice)

And suddenly, it's Thursday again.

Strange how a week can feel like a blink and a whole lifetime at once.

(SFX: typical elevator sounds)

[tense, determined]:

But today I'm going to say something.

Just one sentence. Something real.

No more excuses. No polite escape-smiles.

(SFX: *Ding*. Doors open. Listener steps in)

[surprised inhale]

But...

[softly, overwhelmed, hesitant]:

Your dress...

It's light blue.

...Laces in the back.

You look like you stepped out of a damn fairytale...

And I—

I can't focus.

The elevator doors close.

Our eyes meet like always.

Briefly, familiar... too close.

And my brain freezes.

Everything I rehearsed in front of the mirror like a teenager?

Gone. Evaporated.

And then the mental carousel kicks in. A thousand options. But none of them fit.

Not now...

Not with that dress.

Then you're already stepping out.
And suddenly the words tumble out of me. Not perfect, not brave, but at least honest:

"Have a nice day. See you next week!"

The words hit the ground.
And I want to throw myself down next to them.

But you turn around.
Your look surprised. But your smile is big.

And then you speak.
But with your hands.
In a language I don't know and yet ... somehow, I think I get it.
Your signs are quick. Fluid. Like dancing, but with meaning.
And ... I stare.
Lost.
But full of awe and questions.

You notice my confusion and smile even more.
Then you repeat the signs—slower this time. Just for me.

I try to mimic them. Try, at least.
But my fingers fumble. I mess it all up.
And in the end, I'm just flashing a vulcan salute (🖐️). For whatever reason.

[sighs, soft "Fuck..."]

But you laugh.
Silent and warm.
Like music I never knew but now want to play forever.

The doors close, and you wave at me—almost shyly—before the elevator swallows me whole.

And I know:
I'm going to learn those signs.
Master them. Sign by sign.

By next week.

(Next week)

(SFX: Transition sound of your choice)

I spent the whole week learning.
Every spare moment.
I scoured the internet, watched videos, practiced signs over and over in front of the mirror. While brushing my teeth. Or standing in line at the supermarket.

My fingers still feel a little clumsy, keeping time with a language that has no sound.
But it's beautiful. And difficult.
I'm far from perfect, but I'm trying.
Because of you.

(SFX: *Ding* – elevator doors open. Listener enters)

And here you are again.
Your headphones on.
Your fingers tapping lightly against your leg to a beat only you can hear.
Today, you're wearing an imperfectly perfect bun and bright red lipstick.
And I don't know why, but on you it looks like it was invented just for this purpose.

You look... different.
Maybe it's your hairstyle.
Or the way the sunlight hits your face through the elevator window.
Or maybe it's just me...

My hands are sweaty.
And my brain?
Empty, full, everything at once. A jumbled mess of nerves and half-forgotten signs.
But I made a promise to myself.
So here we go...

[deep breath]

"Hi"

(awkward pause)

[uncertain, signing slowly while speaking]:

“Good... to see... you again. How... are... you?”

Your eyes widen.
Not in shock. There's something warm in them.
You pause your music, take off your headphones.
And... smile.
Brighter than ever.

Then you sign something.
Effortlessly, casually.
Like waves rippling in the wind.

And me?
I don't understand a word.

My mind's blank, my heart incredibly loud.
I want to say something, but nothing comes out.

I try to explain—with lips and hands—but just end up laughing awkwardly.
So do you.

Then you reach into your bun. And pull out a lip liner.
You take my hand and write directly on the back of it.
Two lines. Small and slanted. In the same color as your mouth...

[reading slowly, as it's being written]:

“Thank you. I'm good. Hope you are too.
P.S.: That shirt looks amazing on you.”

(pause)

[like in a trance, overwhelmed]:

I forget to breathe.
My legs? Feel like jelly.
And my words? Gone. All of them—spoken or signed.

So I just stand there and look at you.

At your smile.
The writing burns into my skin, my memory... everything.

(SFX: *Ding*. Elevator doors open)

The elevator stops.

And like so many times before, I wish we had more floors together.
More time in this silver box of possibilities.

You get out.
Turn around one last time before the doors close and sign:
“See you next week?”

This time I don’t just nod.
I have the right sign ready:
“Definitely.”

You walk backwards, signing something fast—a kind of goodbye wave.
I’ll Google it later to find out what it means exactly.
For now, I just imitate your hand movements.
Probably wrong, but you laugh.

And I stand there like a grinning teenager.

[chuckles quietly to self]

(SFX: the usual elevator sounds)

(Several weeks later)

(SFX: Transition sound of your choice)

We write more often now.
On paper.
In your crumpled notebook.
Or on receipts.
Sometimes in our phones.
Sometimes just in the palm of a hand.
Whenever I can’t keep up with the signs, you pull out a pen.
No drama. No pity.
You have this calm, like you’re used to the world around you being far too slow and clueless.

Your handwriting is round.

A bit slanted.

Sometimes the letters shake because you're already laughing while you write...

Those are my favorite.

You give me music recommendations.

Always spot-on. Like care packages made of sound.

Songs for overwhelming days.

For nights that never end.

For everything in between.

Your soundtrack medicine re-tunes my days.

And one time, you just wrote three words:

Cigarettes After Sex.

[sighs, chuckles at self]

It wasn't until I got home that I realized it was a band name.

Not a confession.

Still...

Since that Thursday, the air feels different.

Like fog.

Like thoughts you shouldn't have in public.

Like things that are louder at night than during the day.

Like you...

You never write much.

But what you write sticks.

Sometimes it's just three words. Or ten.

Sometimes your hands speak. Sometimes your eyes.

But always with that calm clarity that says more than I've ever managed to.

And every time, you take something of me with you.

And leave something behind.

A song.

A glance.

Half a sentence on a napkin.

Letters on my palm, like a tattooed echo.

[whispered – maybe with an echo effect?]:

See you next week.

(SFX: Elevator sounds. Doors open. Footsteps fade away)

(One week later)

(SFX: Transition sound of your choice)

(SFX: Elevator sounds. *Ding*. Doors. Listener's footsteps)

Today you seem... different.

Your gaze is deeper.

Your nose: red.

Mascara: smudged.

No headphones. No smile.

And mine slips instantly.

I'm holding a little cardboard box.

Because last Tuesday was my birthday, my therapist gave me homemade lemon muffins and an awkward hug.

I was planning to eat them later.

But now, my body hands them to you before I even think about it.

You look at me like I just gave you the whole sky.

And not two lumpy mounds with frosting.

I smile—uncertain.

And then suddenly, you start crying.

You try to hide it. Pretend it's not happening.

But I can't bear to watch.

I lean forward and wrap my arms around you.

Not tight.

Just enough so you won't fall apart.

I don't know what's wrong.

Maybe it doesn't matter.

But when you cry harder and pull me closer, I do the same.

I whisper soothing things in your ear.

And hold you as tightly as I can...

Whether the words are right or not doesn't matter in that moment.
I'd say anything to dry your tears.

(pause)

You pull back and smile at me.
I can't help it—I gently wipe a tear from your cheek.
Carefully, so your makeup stays intact.

You take my fingers in yours.
Just hold them.
And I squeeze back.

Because I think I understand.
Without knowing why.

(pause)

"Are you okay?"
You nod with a shy smile, but I want to be sure, so I ask again:
"Really?"

This time, you take more time.
Your eyes are full of answers you try to brush away with a deep sigh.
Then you nod again.
Slower. More honestly, somehow.

"If you want to talk— well, you can't, but I— I'm a good listener. I mean, I— um... *God!*"

[short, frustrated exhale]

[calmly]:

"What I'm trying to say is:
I'm here. If you need me."

You answer with your hands.
So many signs I don't know, but I understand the end:
"Thank you"

And your name.

Your name...

I repeat it.
With my lips and hands.
Like a silent prayer.

You help me mimic the motions.
Very carefully and gently.
Like a kiss made of fingers.

“And you?” you ask with a gesture. “What’s your name?”

I show you what I’ve learned.
My sign. My name.
And you laugh.
“Almost right,” say your fingers and gently correct me.
Like a whisper written in motion.

(SFX: *Ding*. Ground floor. Doors open ... and close again)

You step back when the doors open, but don’t leave right away.

Instead, you hold the cardboard box of muffins, which we have completely crushed with our hug,
like a treasure.
And look at me.

Thoughts flicker across your face so fast I can’t catch them.

Then you reach into your bag for a pen, and I roll up my sleeve.
Like someone who craves your signature.
Like an addict getting their next fix...

I watch your eyes while you write.
Some lashes still stick together from the tears, and I wonder how someone can be this beautiful.

You don’t write much.
Not even words.
Just numbers.
But they say everything.
And burn beneath my ribs.

You squeeze my fingers one last time.
Sign with a smile: “See you next week,” and wave.

(SFX: Her footsteps fade. Elevator sounds)

(SFX: Transition sound of your choice – maybe mixed with message tone, keyboard tapping?)

But we don't have to wait that long.

That same evening, I text you.

And the night suddenly becomes endless.

Full of words, laughter, questions.

Full of tenderness and music.

(pause)

Since then, we've been writing. Every day.

Messages.

Video chats where you teach me sign language.

Sometimes voice messages, because you like the sound of my voice that much.

We get to know one another in waves.

And we talk about everything and nothing.

About favorite words.

About music that feels like a hug.

About the sound of rain on the windowsill.

And somehow... you're everywhere now.

In my playlist.

In the small thoughts between the big ones.

In the way I hold my phone like I might crush your words otherwise.

Sometimes we just send emojis, and still it means more than a thousand conversations.

(pause)

I notice things changing.

Signs becoming easier.

You understanding my awkwardness—sometimes even making it disappear.

And me, right in the middle of something that has no name yet... but feels completely right.

And one day, somewhere between music and butterflies, I asked you:

"Would you like to... someday... go out for dinner?"

Not in a text. Not spoken. I asked in signs.

And you smiled and just nodded.

(pause)

(SFX: Elevator sounds. *Ding*. Doors. Her footsteps)

Today is Someday.

[smiles, whispers a small “Hi” to Listener, cheek kiss]

Today is Thursday.

And we have our first date.

The elevator is no longer the place we say goodbye.

Today we leave together.

On the ground floor.

Holding hands.

And suddenly, Thursdays no longer feel like waiting.

Instead, they feel like arriving.

(SFX: Elevator sounds. *Ding*. Doors. Their footsteps together. City sounds)

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Disclaimer

This is a work of fiction, written by an adult, for adults. All characters involved are freely imagined and 18+ years old.

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