

NOTES ON A DEAD SIGNAL

(found as written. nothing added. nothing explained.)

ENTRY 01

There's more movement on this page than there should be. Small shapes, low in the corners, high in the margins, drifting like flies against a window. I clicked one out of irritation. It made a sound and flinched, apologetically, like it knew it had nothing to offer. I clicked another. That one took me somewhere.

I've started keeping track. Some of these shapes are just noise. A few are signal. I can't tell which is which until I touch them, so I'm touching all of them now, methodically, page by page. I don't think this is a good use of my time. I'm doing it anyway.

Note: they can be thrown. I don't know why this matters. It matters.

ENTRY 02

Found a photograph today that doesn't hold still. I watched it longer than I should admit, and for less than a second it stopped being the photograph I thought I was looking at and became someone else entirely, then changed back like it had never happened. I would doubt myself if it hadn't happened twice.

Under the photo, a sentence. Something about leaving in a hurry, about the mess left behind. Except the word "leaving" doesn't want to be that word. Every few seconds it tries to become something else, holds the new shape just long enough to be read, then loses its nerve.

I let it finish becoming what it wanted to become. Then I looked around the page for something that agreed with it. Small. Waiting.

I clicked it.

ENTRY 03

Wrong room. Or right room, wrong door.

The moment I clicked, the page stopped behaving like a page. No menu. No footer. Just three separate screens, each one a question, each one scattered with answers that don't look arranged by anyone, more like they fell there and stayed where they landed.

Got the first one wrong. I know because of the sound, an ugly little rejection, and because I was suddenly somewhere else entirely, some random ordinary page, like nothing had happened. Like I'd imagined the whole thing.

Found my way back. Tried again. There is exactly one true answer on each screen. The rest exist only to be wrong at you.

(One of the screens has a stray question mark hiding in the corner, unrelated to anything, restless. Clicked that too. It had something to say. Not repeating it here.)

Three correct answers, in a row, and the room came apart at the seams.

ENTRY 04

Gold light. A sound like breathing, slower than breathing usually is, like something enormous and calm. One object in the whole room: a button, plain, patient.

Behind it, a song nobody has heard. Free. Unclaimed. Waiting for someone to press the button, which I did, immediately, without dignity.

Felt like an ending. Wasn't one. There's a second door somewhere, and I don't think it's anywhere near this one.

ENTRY 05

The switch in the corner of every page flips light to dark and back, obediently, the way it's supposed to. I trust obedient things less than I used to.

I broke the cycle instead of letting it finish. Not saying how. If you know, you know. If you don't, you'll find it the same way I did, by refusing to let the thing behave the way it wants to.

The result was not subtle.

ENTRY 06

Everything is wrong now, on purpose, I think. Colors that won't sit still. Photographs arguing with their own edges. Sentences that forget how to spell themselves mid-thought. A sound underneath all of it, low, sick, something almost musical buried inside the wrongness, like a song playing next door through a wall that used to be soundproof.

The switch that broke all this has changed its face. Three letters now, plain as anything, telling me exactly how to put it back.

Didn't use it yet. Not until I noticed the other thing: something new sitting where nothing used to sit, small, patient, watchful. It wasn't there an hour ago. It won't be there once I fix what I broke.

Clicked it while I still could.

ENTRY 07

Notes. Someone's private ones, log-format, timestamps, the kind of thing you write at the end of a shift and never expect a stranger to read. Read them anyway. That's what strangers do.

Beside the notes, a shape, warping the same way everything else is warping. Won't hold still until I fix the broken thing, and even once it does, its color is still up for negotiation. Clicked it. It changed. Not to what I needed. Clicked it again.

Four more shapes drifting near it, unfamiliar ones, belonging only to this room. Picked one up, pushed it into the warping shape, and it stayed there, floating in place, no longer trying to leave. Did this three more times.

All four in. Color still wrong, and worse, I didn't actually know what I was waiting for. Nothing announces itself as correct. I was just clicking and hoping, which is a bad way to solve anything.

So I went looking underneath, the way you'd check behind a wall for wiring you're not supposed to see. Found a stray line in there, not meant for casual reading, something about four tracks aligning under a broken red light, and where a person ought to start looking. Not an answer, exactly. More like someone leaving a door slightly open on purpose.

Kept clicking the shape after that, patient the way the light switch used to be, but aiming now instead of hoping blind.

Eventually, it landed. Something small and insistent appeared, telling me, in so many words, to act.

Same doors as before. Same sound. A different color waiting on the other side this time, and a different song, rawer than the first, like it was recorded before anyone decided it was finished.

Don't think there's a third door. Looked. This is where both paths agree to end.

ENTRY 09, ADDENDUM

Something is written into the site itself, not on any page, in the part a person only sees if they go looking underneath, the way you'd check behind a wall for wiring. Right-click. Ask to inspect it. Look before anything finishes loading.

Doesn't say much. Says enough. Speaks the same way everything else here speaks, which is to say: sideways, and only to the ones who already suspect there's something to find.

CODA

None of this was really about what I found. It was about paying attention long enough to notice what's already there.

"Brushing off dust & specks. Listening to the rest."