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The Rabbit Died

A choose-your-own-adventure survival horror story by [@beckfromthedead](https://twitter.com/beckfromthedead).

Warning: this thread contains scenes involving reproductive abuse, body horror, and gore.

You listen to Dr. Adams, your ear pressed to the thin plywood door, thumping around, snarling, cursing. Cheap bastard, cheap bastard, the funding has been cut again! How does he expect anyone to work on scraps? Fuck that old--

You pull away from the door.

Glass shatters outside the door. A cup, maybe a plate. You press up against a panel, ear and palm flat. Adams pants, muttering nonsense. His wheezes drag raw strips across your nerves.

"Shit, what time is it?" he asks and his footsteps pound towards the door, towards you.

You scramble over to the bed and hop up on it. Adams rattles the knob, grunts, and you hear keys clinking. Your wrist itches, the skin red from the too-tight medical bracelet. You scratch it. Scratch, and scratch, and scratch, eyes on the door as Adams struggles with the lock.

You jump as he slams the door open. Adams lingers in the frame, his narrow chest rising and falling. He shoves his keys into his coat pocket and wipes the sweat from his red face.

"Get out," he says.

"What--" You swallow. Speaking hurts your dry throat, and your tongue may crack. "What's going on? Why do you want me to leave?"

Adams lifts his nose, sniffs. "The funding's cut and the project's over. Now get the fuck out. I'm not taking care of you breeders anymore."

"Fuck you, tell the truth."

Adams crosses the threshold and shuts the door behind him, soft and slow. He keeps away from the bed, from you, and breathes through his mouth. You and the other patients stink according to him. Spoiled milk and apples you heard him tell the nurse.

"You want the truth?" Adams asks. "The truth is--"

He belches and slaps a hand over his mouth, "Excuse me, the truth is--"

He rips a burp, and his flushed face grows redder than before. Fat globs of sweat bead his brow as he fights back another burp.

You watch him from your bed perch as Adams doubles over. There's a gurgle, and your stomach roils in sympathy. He gags, spits, and gags louder, his fragile bird chest heaving.

"Stop! Stop it!" You stand, hands balled tight at your sides, and tremble. "I know--I know you think I'm gross! Stop it!"

"It's not funny!"

Adams lifts his head, his eyes wild. He makes to scream, or to chew you out for raising your filthy breeder voice, and instead whines.

He blows a blood bubble and it pops with a snap. A gum snap, like the old, hard pink Bazooka gum your grandpa snuck you when Mom wasn't looking. Adams vomits, blood, mush, and bile splattering onto his shoes. Veins stick out on his face, his temples and eyes.

"Oh fuck."

You scoot to the foot of the bed to watch. It seems never-ending; he pukes up his lunch, his dinner, things he probably ate yesterday. His throat bulges. He works his head like a chicken, his face purple with strain.

God, please let him die. This is insane.

All you can smell is old apples. Milk. You cover your mouth with both hands and stare. Those are the scents Adams complained about. He reeks of them.

The knot in Adam's throat explodes out of his mouth. A tangle of pink and yellow flesh dangles from his maw. He grasps it. Pulls. It doesn't stop coming out. The ugliest magic trick you have ever seen, a man yanking out his guts like magic scarves.

A final tug and he collapses.

You set one careful foot down on the floor and then the other. The linoleum is slick with Adams's spreading fluids. Blood and sick and you're sure there are flecks of shit floating in this rancid slurry. And milk, you see milk. You smell milk.

A man's life wets your feet and you smell milk. Where is the copper tang of blood or the acrid bite of acid? Where is the stench of shit and puke? You scream at the body, "What the fuck is going on?" And when it doesn't respond, you kick it. You drop to your knees and punch it.

Adams twitches from impact and liquid squirts from his left nostril. His eye swivels in

a socket to look at you, and you fall back, landing flat on your ass. He glares at you, hateful, and then his eye rolls back.

He's dead.

Picking through his soaked clothes nauseates you. Mouth-breathing, you lift his coat and poke at his pants' pocket. Empty. The coat, though, now that has a few presents for you. You pull out the Clinic keys and Adams's ID badge. With those in hand, you rise to your feet.

You ignore your itching wrist and grab the doorknob. Nice and slow, slow, slow, you crack the door open. You breathe in stale air and peer out the slit. The hall is lit, empty. There are shards of broken glass on the floor.

Leave, wait, leave, wait, you struggle to come to a decision. You stay where you are and rub your wrist. It itches.

The hall stays empty.

You push the door open. Its outward swing sweeps some of the glass out of your way. The pieces you could see, there are still the tiny bits, the needle-sharp slivers too small to see. You step over the pile and exhale in relief as your heel connects to a clean spot.

The hall is a short stretch running from north to south. There are eight doors. The one to the north leads to the common room and a dinky little cafeteria. South leads to the examination rooms. The rest of the doors belong to the patient rooms.

You strain your ears to see if you can hear any of the other patients.

Silence.

The keys jingle in your hand.

The room right across from yours belongs to patient #5. You flip through the keys until you find hers and slip it into the lock. It sticks, the tumblers fighting you as you twist the key in rough jerks. When it gives you hear a squeak behind the door, and feet scrambling away.

You open the door. Patient #5--a scrawny, nervous girl that never struck you as important enough to remember--gasps at you from the far wall. She shields her flat belly with both arms.

"Where's the doctor?" she asks.

"He fucked off, let's go."

Your lower stomach cramps and grit your teeth. You haven't had one of those in what, a month, maybe two. Not since your last period.

Patient #5, quietly, "Did you just lie?"

"What?"

She drifted towards you, swaying forward and then back, and forward again until she stands right in front of you. She places her hand on your stomach. "Did you just lie? You shouldn't. You'll make the baby sick, Dr. Adams said so."

"Dr. Adams is dead," you say.

The cramping stops. You meet Patient #5's gaze, unsure whether or not to call it a coincidence. A man did puke out his guts in front of you minutes ago. Is a lie-detecting fetus that hard to believe?

Oh shit, if she's right then you're pregnant.

Adams's actually managed to put a baby in you. How and when? He never introduced you to a couple. He never took you to the exam rooms. He said you still needed time to get up to weight. All those days you spent on the street left you a husk, barely able to bleed.

Tears well up in your eyes. Adams, that asshole, he took you into this program, even when you knew you weren't fit for it. He was a cunt, he called names, said you stunk, scolded you, and he took you in.

"He's dead."

"Dr. Adams is dead?" Patient #5 rips her hand away from you. "Did you-- Why haven't you called the police? We should call the police!"

"No." You tug at her arm. "The cops aren't going to help us, okay? We have to go."

"You need to call the cops!" Her voice pitches high, baby doll high. "Or the hospital! 911, anyone! Where's Nurse Lucy? Have you called Nurse Lucy?"

"Hey." You take her by the shoulders. She squirms in your grip, mewling in that baby doll voice, and you shake her. "Hey! Calm down! You really want to call the cops and have them drag you back to whatever shithole you came from?"

She shakes her head. "I came from a nice home."

You could slap her.

"Congratulations, I didn't. Let's go."

You guide her by the shoulders out into the hall. She mutters about her clothes, her stuffed bunny. She falls silent when she sees the glass on the floor. And the blood. The blood has seeped out from under the door.

She asks if that's Adams's blood and you tell her the truth, yes. Yes, that belongs to him. Keep walking, we're almost out. She hides her face against your shoulder and exhales. You lead her to the north door, flash Adams's ID at the reader, and push it open.

You enter the common room. On the floor, curled up in a pile of guts, lays Nurse Lucy.

"You're fucking kidding me," you mutter.

Patient #5 freezes, dark eyes fixated on Nurse Lucy's body. She utters a long, shrill sound, like steam escaping a tea kettle. Her body goes rigid in your arms, the cords in her throat sticking out straight.

You keep holding her.

"We've gotta go," you whisper, tugging at #5. She goes limp and droops in your arms. Her feet drag over the puzzle piece carpet as you pull her along towards reception. She hangs useless, heavy, like a stubborn cat, and you struggle to keep from dropping her.

Reception is, thank Christ, empty. The giraffe-necked receptionist must have had the day off. You lock your arm around #5's chest, holding her close as you flash Adams's ID at the front door. The reader beeps and the door clicks and slides open.

Stepping outside is like ripping off a band-aid. You grunt from the sudden pain and #5 lets out a hiss. The strength keeping you standing gives and your knees crumple, and the two of you spill onto the sidewalk.

You lay there, tangled together with Patient #5, and stare up at the slate-gray sky. She whines in your ear about Adams and Lucy. They're dead, they're dead, they're dead, dead, dead, dead, dead! And you have no explanation why.

END PART ONE

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