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BETWEEN FLOORS

Dialogues / Thriller / 3 min
Cast 2 Male x1 Any x1

Daniel is late for a client dinner when the elevator stops between floors. The delivery person stuck with him is oddly calm. Then they call him by a name he never gave them.

CHARACTERS

DANIEL - 38, an attorney at a corporate firm, used to being the most important person in the room

ROWAN - 30s, any gender, wears a delivery jacket, carries a small package, in no hurry at all

SETTING

An office building elevator stopped between floors, a little after seven on a weeknight.

An office building elevator, stopped between floors. The lights flicker, then hold. DANIEL, 38, in a suit, jabs the emergency button.

ROWAN, 30s, in a delivery jacket, leans against the back wall holding a small package.

DANIEL

Come on. Come on.

ROWAN

It rings down in the lobby. Nobody's in the lobby after seven.

DANIEL

How do you know that?

ROWAN

I deliver here a lot.

DANIEL

Great. Fantastic.

He checks his phone. No signal. Rowan doesn't check anything.

DANIEL

You're not gonna call somebody?

ROWAN

Who would I call?

DANIEL

I don't know. Your dispatch.

ROWAN

Dispatch doesn't fix elevators.

DANIEL

You're very calm.

ROWAN

It's a box in a shaft. It's not going anywhere. That's kind of the whole point of it being stuck.

DANIEL

(half a laugh)

Okay.

He loosens his tie. Sits on the floor. Then stands again.

DANIEL

I've got a thing at eight. A dinner thing. Client.

ROWAN

Steakhouse on Fourth?

DANIEL

...Yeah. Actually.

ROWAN

Everybody in this building goes there. It's a whole ecosystem.

DANIEL

Right.

ROWAN

You should try the place across from it. The one with the green awning. It's better and nobody from here goes.

DANIEL

I'll keep that in mind.

Beat. The elevator ticks.

ROWAN

You should sit. Could be a while.

DANIEL

I'm fine.

ROWAN

You look tired, Daniel.

Small pause. Daniel almost lets it go. Almost.

DANIEL

Sorry, what?

ROWAN

I said you look tired.

DANIEL

You said my name.

ROWAN

Did I?

DANIEL

I didn't tell you my name.

ROWAN

It's on your badge.

Daniel looks down. His badge is clipped to his belt, turned backwards. He flips it over. It reads D. HARGROVE.

DANIEL

It says D.

ROWAN

Lucky guess.

DANIEL

There's a lot of D names.

ROWAN

Not that many.

DANIEL

Who are you.

ROWAN

I'm the person who's stuck in an elevator with you. Same as you're stuck with me.

DANIEL

What's in the box.

ROWAN

Nothing. It's empty. I just carry it. People hold doors for you when you've got a box.

Daniel presses the emergency button again. Holds it.

ROWAN

I told you. Nobody in the lobby.

DANIEL

How long have you been delivering here.

ROWAN

Since about the time your firm moved in. Nineteen months. You had the corner office by month three. That's fast.

DANIEL

Okay, I don't know what you think you know...

ROWAN

I know you get in at 7:40. I know you take the stairs when you're mad. I know you had lunch with a woman from eleven who cried in the bathroom after. I know you signed off on a thing in March that you probably don't even remember signing.

DANIEL

I sign a lot of things.

ROWAN

Yeah. That's the problem with it.

Daniel steps back. There's nowhere to step.

DANIEL

Is this about money.

ROWAN

(genuinely surprised)

No.

DANIEL

Then what. What do you want.

ROWAN

I wanted to see if you'd recognize me.

DANIEL

I don't.

ROWAN

I know. That's kind of the whole answer.

DANIEL

Whatever happened, whatever you think I... I can look into it. Give me a name. A case number. I'll look into it Monday, I swear to God.

ROWAN

Daniel. I'm not going to hurt you. I want to be really clear about that. I've been in this box with you for eleven minutes and I've had every chance.

DANIEL

Then why...

ROWAN

Because now you know what it feels like. When somebody has your name and you don't have theirs.

A clunk. The lights brighten. The elevator lurches and starts moving. Daniel grabs the rail.

DANIEL

Wait. Wait, what did I sign.

ROWAN

Look at the March files. The ones under a thousand. You'll find it.

The doors open on an empty floor. Rowan steps out, box under one arm.

ROWAN

The green awning. Seriously. You'd like it.

DANIEL

Are you... am I gonna see you again?

ROWAN

(without turning around)

You already do. Every day. You just never looked.

The doors close. Daniel stands alone. He looks down at his badge. He turns it to face forward.

END OF SCRIPT