

"Sunny," I said to myself. I was wheezing, my breath ragged. "Sunny?" I gasped. It was my name. As far as I can remember, my parents named me Sunny because I was a happy child no matter what. I brought sunshine into the dark times when our lives revolved around the next uncertain meal; like it is right now.

I don't know what I did to end up like this. I was just an average 27-year-old tax-paying citizen. I say average now because back then, I thought I was special. Every night, I went to sleep imagining the lucky break right around the corner. A fateful promotion, a lottery, divine intervention; you name it. It wasn't a lucky break around the corner that changed my life; it was a group of casually dressed men in a work meeting. I was supposed to accompany them to the new building site. I worked for a big shot building corporation, you see. I don't really remember what happened. All I can recall is getting into the limo and laughing at a "corporate joke." Let me ask you, when you're getting into a car, have you ever considered waking up in a grey room with a stainless steel bed bolted to the floor, a toilet and a washbasin? Everything is grey: the sheets, the door... the door? There was no door in this room.

I don't know where my food comes from. I don't know who changes the sheets. I lost count after my fourteenth day here. For all I know, I could've been here for a year, even. There is neither a clock nor any window in this room. I measure time with sleep, if one can call it sleep, that is. It's impossible to tell when I will sleep for I don't sleep of my own accord. I could be pacing, I could be *trying* to meditate or eating and all of a sudden, I'd black out. I have no recollection of these blackouts. I could be a test subject for all I know. Nothing changes in this grey box. I don't even have any hair on my body. Only my nails grow which I bite off just for the sake of something to do. Have you ever bitten your nails while doing something or nothing at all? It's a sort of subconscious action. Now, imagine it being your only job—clipping your nails with your teeth. As each *day* passed, I became more and more adept at using my teeth. I can now trim my nails to perfection. I could show it to you but you're inside my head. I think so, right, Sunny? You're always here with me, Sunny. I can talk to you whenever I want and wherever I want. You'll never leave me and no one can take you away from me.

At first, I looked forward to my meals. It meant change even though I didn't know where my food came from. It meant something new, something fresh, something alive. The meal was grey inside a grey bowl. A grey goopy mass that tasted *grey*. Yes, I can taste colours, or colour if you prefer, Sunny. Grey tastes like bland papier-mâché. Grey is like runny mashed potatoes with no taste which is a taste in its own right. I tried writing with Grey but the stains would disappear from my bed sheet after I woke up. I wrote your name with it, Sunny. "Sunny Grey." But it disappeared, just like you disappear from me at times nowadays.

"Sunny?" I shouted.

There you are, I thought you went away

again. Do you go to relieve yourself? I bet you do. You were always secretive about such things. Never using the urinals, waiting in line after the man who always had diarrhoea in the public restroom. Gosh, that smell was horrible. *At least it was a smell*. You're right, Sunny. This place has no smell. It smells *Grey*. Must be the Grey air. I tried smelling my own faeces once but it disappeared as soon as I got up and when I tried to do it on the floor, I went away only to wake up with no food this time. You can't blame me for stopping; I need the food to stay alive until I get out. Out?

I remember Out. Out was when I could walk down the street for a cup of Starbucks. I'd be staring at my tiny *Grey* smartphone the entire time and ignoring the world. I'd glance up at the freckled girl at the counter and ask for the usual. A latte. What does a latte taste like again, Sunny? *I don't remember*. It was sweet, I think. I'd head back to work from Out and sit at my cubicle, opening the same page that I just closed on my smartphone. Out was nice as far as I can remember. Out was not *Grey*.

I blinked my eyes open. I must've gone to sleep again. I can almost tell when I'll fall asleep nowadays. It must've been the shout for Sunny which put me to sleep. If I do anything that is not *Grey*, I go to sleep. When I first got here, I shouted for five days straight until I could barely move. With every day of sleep, I'd get weaker and weaker. By the third day, I was severely dehydrated and had to crawl towards my bowl for nourishment. I should've died but it kept me alive. *Grey* kept me alive. Was *Grey* my protector or was it my gaoler? I think both, since I wasn't killed off already. *Gaolers are meant to protect you, and make sure that you serve your sentence and not die prematurely*. Are you sure, Sunny? What if he's the one trying to save me? Sunny?

"Sunny?" I gasped.

My search for Sunny was cut short when I spotted my *Grey* bowl of *Grey*. The *Grey* food inside meant change. It's the closest to human contact I got. Human. It meant someone touched that bowl. Someone came inside this room and placed it there. Whether human or robot, someone at some point touched the bowl and the food inside. I believed in that. I believed in that human being. As I imagined what the faceless Mr. Grey looked like as he cooked my food, I finished eating. I set the bowl aside and walked towards my washbasin, turned on my tap and stared at it. Water was marvellous; it reflected light and at the same time showed what was behind it. Water was a nice friend who never hides anything from you; it shows your reflection in its eyes and what's behind it as well. I like Water. I splashed the water upwards towards the light to marvel at its glory.

I saw it right then. I saw what was missing.

Not just one, but several. For a split second, I saw what made the world I ignored once, Sunny. I saw colours; I saw the ones that stitched and dyed the bright dresses of children that passed me as I walked to Starbucks. The same colours that I called rather tacky when put together. The colours that symbolise people.

The colours that united people all over. I saw them all and I screamed at them, Sunny. I screamed and I screamed until *Grey* made me sleep.

I woke up and blinked. I never dream in this place. Was it a dream? No it couldn't be. You tell me, Sunny, was it a dream? *No*.

I ran towards my washbasin and kept splashing water onto my lights until I slept. I got up again and flushed the contents of my bowl down the toilet. I needed to see the Colours. I needed to know that it wasn't a dream. Even if it was, I wanted to dream again. It was my hope. It was everything *Grey* wasn't. I filled the bowl to the brim with water and splashed it onto the lights until I slept yet again.

I won't give up. I will die, if I have to Sunny, I will get it back. I rushed towards my wash basin and—

"Mr. Johnson, Subject 306 looks highly unstable now," said a man in a sombre *Grey* suit. He looked like he worked 9-5 at an insurance company where he pushed papers all day until they moved him up to a higher post where he was required to push more papers to order others to do the same. He didn't belong behind a large hi-tech screen.

"We can't have this, Eugene. Dump him," said Mr. Johnson. Johnson was a thickset man with piercing Blue eyes. He was wearing a Brown sports jacket over a White shirt with jeans. A man trying hard to defy his age and beer gut.

"Are you sure? 306 has remained somewhat stable for six months and twenty-one days. The furthest any subject has gone so far. 105 had four months," argued the man called Eugene.

"We dump him," replied Mr. Johnson with a dangerous glint in his eye.

Eugene opened his mouth to argue but thought better of it. He picked up a receiver and muttered into it.

A wall panel moved right aside and behind it stood six men in Orange. Orange? Is it Orange or is it Red, Sunny? I don't know but they moved towards me and I unconsciously cringed into a corner and assumed a foetal position.

"Prisoner 306, you will now face trials for your crimes against The State involving terrorism," said a burly man in Orange/Red.

I couldn't speak as I was dragged off by three of them. Terrorism? I didn't care, today was my lucky day. I saw Colours. Lots of Colours. I saw a man. A man spoke to me and I couldn't reply 'cause of shock. Sunny, we're free! Sunny, there's no Grey anymore. Sunny, we're going downstairs at last! Sunny, do you see up ahead? What is that smell? It's vaguely familiar. Like the time I bit my tongue and fell asleep. Sunny?

"SUNNY?" I shouted.

"You will see Sunny right ahead, he's here to visit you. Just walk across the room and open that door, he's waiting for you," said the same man in Orange/Red.

They released me and I ran. I ran towards Sunny. I ran for the first time in a million years. "Shoot the crazy already, Sam."

I had my palms against the door when I heard the loud *Grey* crack.