

Second Person

Sleep Induction 2nd Person (You)

The Top of the Stairs is your starting point. At night, when you close your eyes, you're in the observation tower. You can no longer remember a time when this wasn't the case. You're relaxing, feet up, on a steamer, a long wooden lounger with arms. The brass fittings are gleamingly clean, the varnish is flawless. It fits every curve of your body and has small side tables grafted onto each arm for drinks and snacks. The faint hissing of the falls is soothing. Drowning out stray thoughts, washing away tension. You relax for as long as you want in this cocoon of sound. Sometimes you fall asleep.

You have your favourite cocktail on one arm of your lounger. Condensation is trickling down the stem, pooling on the glassy varnish. Occasionally you pick it up and take a long drink through the straw, feeling the drink flooding your mouth. You savour the drink, feeling the liquid cooling your mouth as you look down towards the house.

Sunset; the sky glows the intense orange of a hot horseshoe. The lower section of the staircase is already in shadow, but automatic lights have faded up a to dull red to light your way on those last few treads.

The Walk Down starts after you finish your drink. The straw gurgles and you smile. Swinging your feet off the lounger, you stand. You have no aches or pains so standing is a fluid, painless movement. You pick up your glass, the bowl in your palm and the stem between your fingers. It's so cold it makes your hand ache a little as you start the walk down the staircase to the first terrace. The handrail is wood, smoothed by

thousands of journeys like this, occasional rounded knots standing proud and familiar.

On the first terrace you can feel the decking vibrating slightly beneath your feet... the pumps for the hot tub and refrigeration for the plunge pool. Another gentle feeling which relaxes any tension in your body. You pause for while to admire the view over the railing, then continue down the next flight of stairs.

You're taking your time, there's no hurry and terrace two is your favourite. You take long breaths through your nose, savouring the sweetness of the honeysuckle bushes. You yawn again. The treetop kitchen is off to the right so you amble across the bridge of decking to put the glass into the dishwasher.

The final flight is the longest of the three, glowing a restful red colour under the steps. Terrace three is a wide belt of decking around the second floor of the house, completely in darkness except for more hidden lighting providing a gentle blush of light to highlight obstructions. You yawn again and see your companion behind the triple glazing.

The House Welcomes You as you approach the outer wall it hums open, inviting you in. Your companion waits patiently. You step inside, the door closing gently behind you, sensors scanning for obstructions. Once shut, the computers in the subbasement activate the external security systems. Your companion moves to greet you as you cross the threshold. You both wander down the hall towards the bedroom.

The Bedroom door is already open but it too slides shut as soon as you and your companion are both inside. You can feel the coolness of the room and it smells faintly of your favourite aroma. The room is dimly

lit but there is a channel of diffuse light guiding you to the bed. You flip up the duvet and lower yourself onto the pocket sprung memory foam mattress which moulds to your shape. Your companion snuggles up to you.

The memory foam pillow is cool to the touch at first but warms rapidly, contouring to your head as you sink into the softness and fall asleep.