
Room 417

by
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She lived in the Excelsior. Room four seventeen. Take a left off the elevator, to the end of the hall, turn right, pass the fire doors, second door on the right.

At one time, the Excelsior was a high-end hotel, located just on the fringes of the city. That was a selling point, a luxury hotel, close enough to the city to enjoy its nightlife and tourist hot spots, but, Room 417: A Romantic Short Story at night, it was a retreat from all the noise and bustle. Room 417: A Romantic Short Story For over fifty years, the rooms were filled with couples and families from the suburbs adventuring into the city and enjoying the fact that at night, they could escape back to the fringe and rest easy. Rest in style, comfort, and quiet. All was well. All was right at the Excelsior. Until it wasn't any longer.

The fringes of the city soon became too frayed, and the neighborhoods grew seedy and

somewhat dangerous. The suburbia floods slowed to a drip as the hotels in the city, in the heart and lungs and liver of the city, became increasingly popular. No one wanted to retreat or escape to the fringes any longer because the fringes held the fear of being Room 417: A Romantic Short Story mugged, killed or worse, missing out on the action that was going on in the city. So, Derek and Calvin Shane sold the Excelsior to a developer who already had thousands of properties, took their money and retired to the islands - whichever islands they chose - and no one heard of them again.

The new developer, a conglomeration called Advent, Room 417: A Romantic Short Story promised to resurrect the Excelsior, return it to its glory days and make it the destination of choice once again. A good flood of words. Big words. Hefty ideas. But in time, Advent realized that it was too heavy a Room 417: A Romantic Short Story burden to Room 417: A Romantic Short Story carry. So, they changed the sign from Excelsior Hotel to Excelsior Place, added utility kitchens to the units and sold off the rooms as moderately priced condos. That was all they did.

The once grand palace soon fell into shabby disrepair, and the Room 417: A Romantic Short Story residents seemed to care less and less. Those who had bought when the place was on the cusp of possible, soon sold when the place was in the midst of hopeless. The new residents got large rooms, with makeshift kitchens and views of alleys, parking lots, and train stations, but, for cheap. And so it went.

When Grace's mother passed away - by passing over the railing on Room 417: A Romantic Short Story the roof of the Excelsior, passing by the windows of all twenty floors, then passing through the tattered awning that covered the walkway Room 417: A Romantic Short Story to the entrance of the building - Room 417: A Romantic Short Story Grace inherited the condo and all of her mother's belongings. This included, unbeknownst to her, until a very startling morning five days after the funeral, Room 417: A Romantic Short Story all of her mother's clients. Men she

had known simply as her “uncles.”

“My mother was a *hooker?!?*” she asked in pure shock. The man sitting on the couch, his hat in his hand, a flower in the buttonhole of his suit, his face in need of a shave, smiled and nodded. Then, he held up a finger to stop her speaking for a moment.

“Truly, your mother was a call girl,” he told her, “very classy. Much, much classier than a regular street walker. She was... *classy*, your mother. Very popular. Very well liked. Classy.”

To Grace, this man made her mother sound like a car or a night on the town... and, in some ways, she was. Not a car but, a night on the town. A night away from the wife and kids, a night out of the neighborhood. A night with a woman who knew how Room 417: A Romantic Short Story and what. This didn't make her mother sound classy to her, however. It made her sound cheap, desperate and now, at that moment, it made sense why her mother had stepped over the railing and into the next phase of the cosmic journey.

“Mr. Cheever—” Grace began and he cut her off.

“Call me Alex, please.” He smiled, and his teeth were too straight, too white to be real. Grace ignored him, not wanting to be part of his world in any way, wanting her distance.

“Mr. Cheever, what exactly is it that you want from me? Why are you telling me all of this?” she asked, leaning back on the lime green couch, crossing her legs and her arms, creating Room 417: A Romantic Short Story a fortress to keep him as out and away from her as possible.

He looked her over, like a man sizing up a fight, dropped his hat on the coffee table and leaned back in his chair, crossed his legs, but kept his arms on the armrests. He said nothing for a long Room 417: A Romantic Short Story time, and Grace became nervous, her resolve beginning to crumble at the edges.

Room 417 A Romantic Short Story

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