



A NAVRITTO STORY

Room *Seven.*

+ NAVRITTO STORIES · THRILLERS & SUSPENSE

Room Seven

Written & illustrated by Navritto.

© 2026 Navritto Solutions Private Limited. All rights reserved. This story and its illustrations are original works and may not be reproduced or redistributed without permission.

First edition, 2026 · Published by Navritto Solutions Private Limited · navritto.com

CIN U62090HR2026PTC145030

Read online and download more books at navritto.com/stories



The rain had been falling since noon, and it did not look like it would ever stop.

Priya worked the night desk at Motel 7, alone. From ten at night until six in the morning she sat in the little office with the lamp on, and watched the road, and waited for headlights that mostly never came. The teal sign in the window buzzed and glowed. The rain drew long streaks down the glass and turned every light in the world into a smear.

It was a half-empty place on a half-empty road. On a good night there were six cars in the lot. Tonight there were two. Most of the rooms stayed dark, and Priya liked it that way, or told herself she did. The quiet was easier than people.

She was nineteen, and new, and still a little afraid of the building at night.

The office had an old switchboard on the wall beside the desk — a tall black panel full of holes and cords, from the days when a person had to plug you through to your room by hand. Nobody used it now. The rooms had their own phones and their own lines. The switchboard just sat there, dead: a row of little glass lights that never lit, a museum piece the owner had never bothered to pull out.

When the nights turned wet, the whole panel gave off a faint smell of burnt dust — warm and electrical, the way old wiring does. Priya had stopped noticing it. It was just part of the place, like the buzz of the sign and the slow drip in the back corridor.

There were twelve rooms. Eleven of them worked.

Room 7 did not. There had been a fire in it, years before Priya came — a small one, put out fast, but enough. The door was boarded over with plywood now, and the frame was black at the edges, and the brass 7 on it had gone dark and crooked. The owner had shut the room off at the wall and never fixed it. Nobody had slept in Room 7 for a very long time.

On the old switchboard, one jack was still labelled, in faded ink, with a single number. Seven. Priya had noticed it on her first night and thought nothing of it. A dead light for a dead room. That was all.



At ten past two, the light for Room 7 came on.

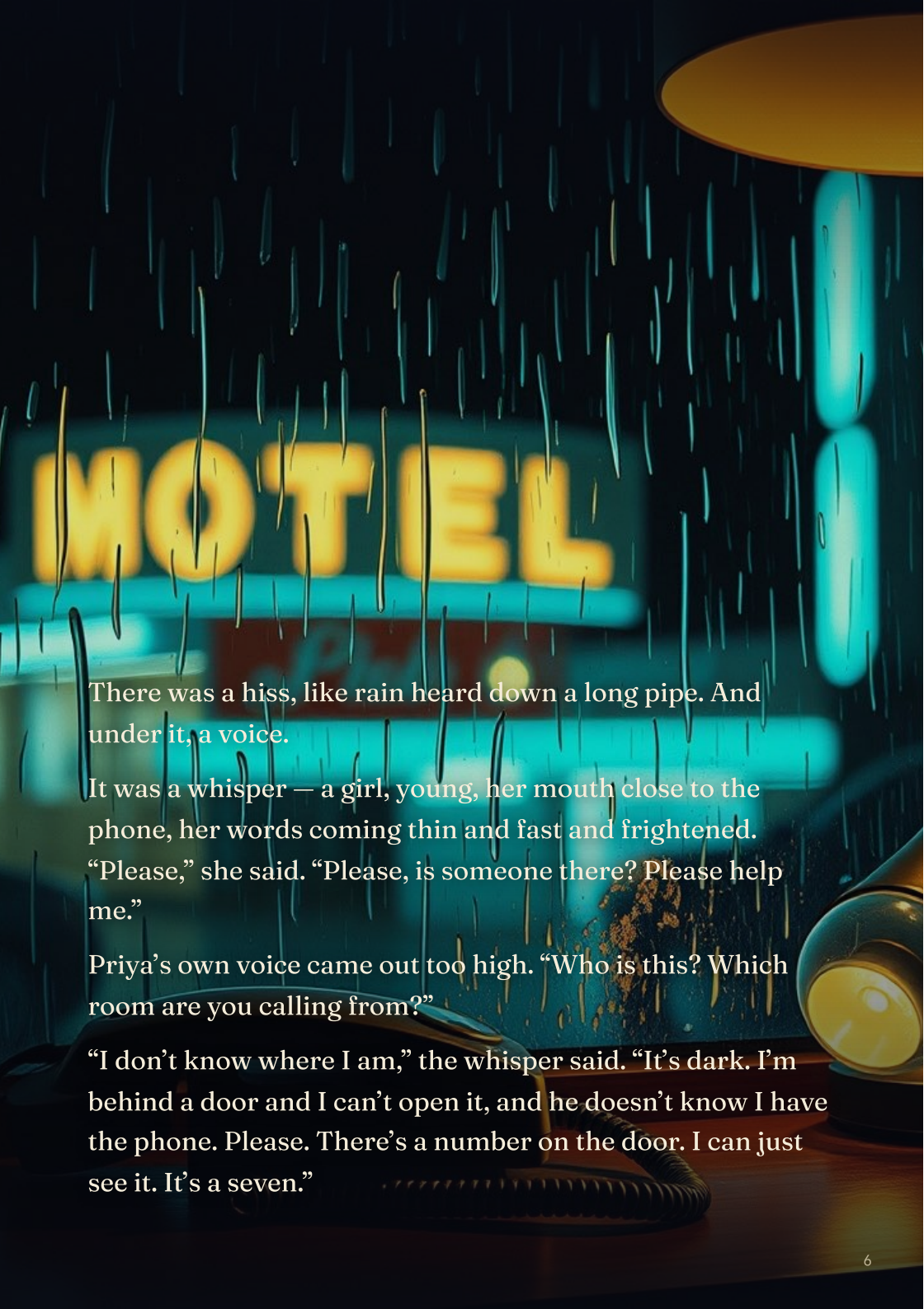
Priya was pouring tea when she saw it out of the corner of her eye — a small hot glow on the black panel, where no light had ever glowed. One jack, burning bright among all the dead ones. The number under it, faded but clear. Seven.

She stood very still with the kettle in her hand. A dead room, sealed and boarded and cut off at the wall, was calling the front desk.

She told herself it was a fault. Wet wiring. A short. Rooms do not call from behind plywood; lights flicker in old buildings; there was surely a dull, sensible reason, and in the morning she would laugh about it.

But the light did not flicker. It held — steady and patient, the way a light holds when someone on the other end is waiting for you to answer.

For a long minute she did not touch it. Then, because not knowing was worse than knowing, she set down the kettle, took the cord, and pushed the plug into the jack marked seven.

A dark, rainy night scene. In the background, a blurred neon sign reads "MOTEL" in yellow letters. Rain is falling heavily, creating vertical streaks across the image. In the foreground, a rotary telephone is visible on a surface, with its coiled cord. A warm, yellow light source, possibly a lamp, is partially visible on the right side, casting a soft glow.

There was a hiss, like rain heard down a long pipe. And under it, a voice.

It was a whisper — a girl, young, her mouth close to the phone, her words coming thin and fast and frightened. “Please,” she said. “Please, is someone there? Please help me.”

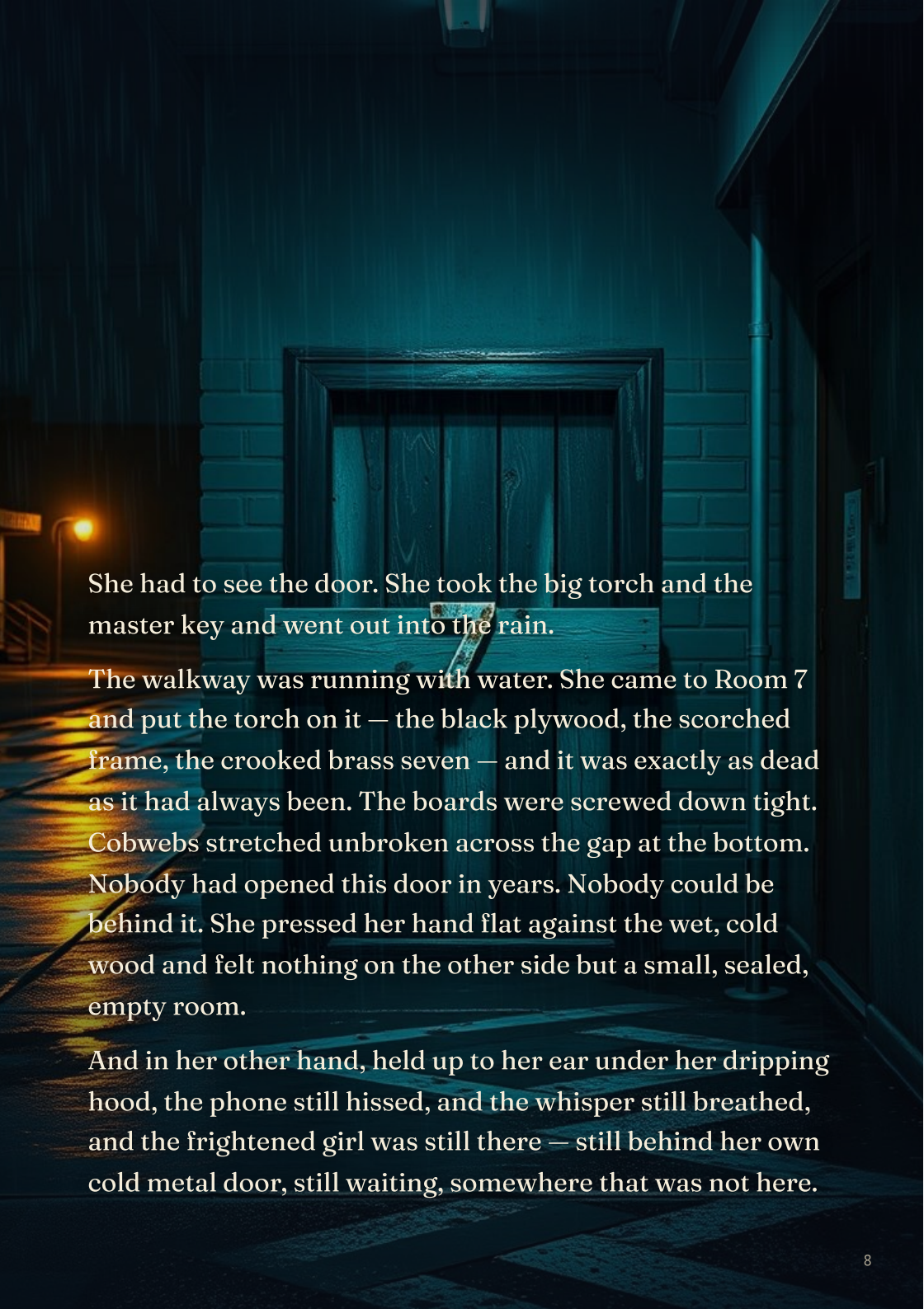
Priya’s own voice came out too high. “Who is this? Which room are you calling from?”

“I don’t know where I am,” the whisper said. “It’s dark. I’m behind a door and I can’t open it, and he doesn’t know I have the phone. Please. There’s a number on the door. I can just see it. It’s a seven.”

A seven. Priya's skin went cold, because there was only one room with a seven on it here, and it had been dead for years.

A ghost, said the easy voice in her head. Or a prank — kids with a radio scanner, some cruel late-night game. Or nothing at all: a tired girl on a long wet shift, hearing things in the hiss of old wires. The easiest thing in the world was to pull the plug, write it in the log as a fault, and never think of it again. Her hand was already on the cord.

But the whisper kept talking, and the things it said did not fit. "The door's cold," the girl breathed. "It's metal. There's no handle on my side." The door of Room 7 was wood — scorched, boarded, wooden — not cold metal. "I can hear rain," the girl said, "but it's far away, like it's up on a high roof." Priya's rain was here, loud, running down the glass a foot from her face. The girl's rain was somewhere else.



She had to see the door. She took the big torch and the master key and went out into the rain.

The walkway was running with water. She came to Room 7 and put the torch on it — the black plywood, the scorched frame, the crooked brass seven — and it was exactly as dead as it had always been. The boards were screwed down tight. Cobwebs stretched unbroken across the gap at the bottom. Nobody had opened this door in years. Nobody could be behind it. She pressed her hand flat against the wet, cold wood and felt nothing on the other side but a small, sealed, empty room.

And in her other hand, held up to her ear under her dripping hood, the phone still hissed, and the whisper still breathed, and the frightened girl was still there — still behind her own cold metal door, still waiting, somewhere that was not here.

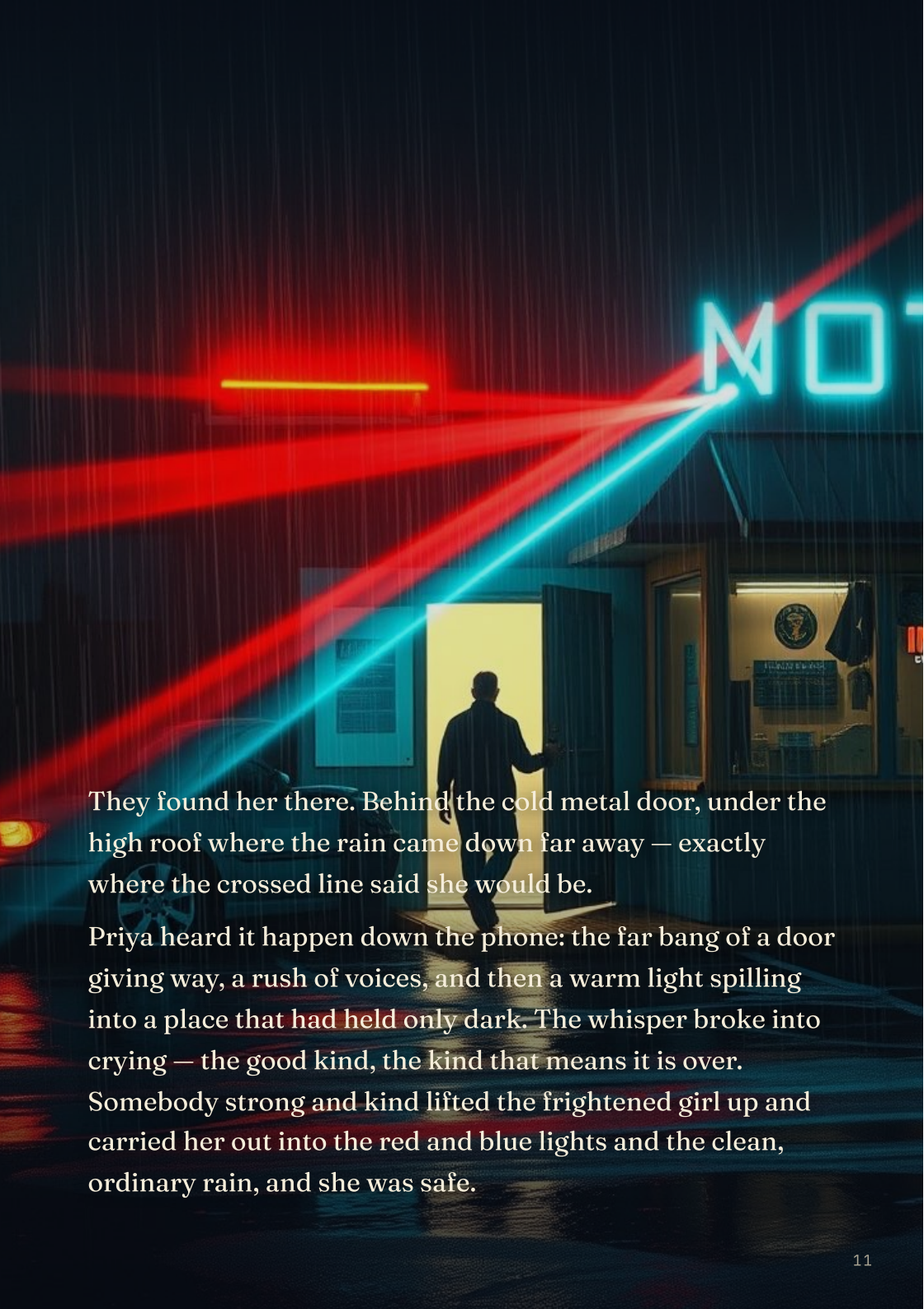
Priya went back inside, soaked, her heart going hard, and made herself think.

The girl was real. That was the one thing she could not talk herself out of. The wrong door, the far-off rain, the fear too raw to be a joke — none of it fit a ghost, and none of it fit Room 7. It fit a real person, alive, calling for help from somewhere else entirely.

And then the burnt-dust smell of the switchboard, that she had stopped noticing, meant something at last. The fire had not only killed Room 7's phone. It had damaged the old wiring where all the lines came together — and damaged wires cross. Somewhere out in the night a frightened girl had dialled for help, and the call had run down the line, struck the burnt junction in the wall, and jumped the wrong way — onto a dead jack in a forgotten switchboard. The seven on her door was not Room 7. It was some other seven, in some other building — a store room, a back door, a unit with a number painted on cold metal. The crossed line had lit the wrong light. And it had reached the one person still awake to answer it.

Priya put the phone back to her mouth and made her voice steady. “I’m here,” she said. “I believe you. I’m not going anywhere, and I’m going to get you help. Stay on the line, stay quiet, and tell me everything you can hear.”

She kept the girl talking with one hand and dialled the police with the other, on the office line, and told them the truth even though it sounded mad — a crossed line, an old exchange, a girl locked behind a metal door with a seven on it, rain on a high roof, a man who must not know she had the phone. She stayed calm, and did not let go of either handset. And the operators traced the live line back through the exchange, past the burnt junction, to where the call had really begun: a yard on the far side of town, a locked storeroom at the back of it, a door with a painted seven.



They found her there. Behind the cold metal door, under the high roof where the rain came down far away — exactly where the crossed line said she would be.

Priya heard it happen down the phone: the far bang of a door giving way, a rush of voices, and then a warm light spilling into a place that had held only dark. The whisper broke into crying — the good kind, the kind that means it is over.

Somebody strong and kind lifted the frightened girl up and carried her out into the red and blue lights and the clean, ordinary rain, and she was safe.

The switchboard light went dark after that, and it never lit again. In the grey of the morning Priya sat with her cold tea and let herself shake, a little, now that it was safe to.

She thought about how close she had come to pulling the plug. How reasonable it would have been. A ghost, a prank, a tired girl hearing things in the wires — the night had handed her a dozen easy ways to make the fear go away, and every one of them would have left a real girl alone in the dark.

That was the thing nobody tells you, she thought. The easiest thing in the world is to decide that the thing frightening you is not real — to look away, and call it sense. Courage is not never being afraid. Courage is the small, plain act of checking anyway: of putting your hand on the cold door, of staying on the line — just in case, on the far side of all that fear, someone is waiting for you to be the one who answers.

✦ THE END

Thank you for reading a Navritto Story. Find
more illustrated stories — free to read and
download — at **navritto.com/stories**.