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The old lady died and it took a month to find her. The people downstairs finally called the concierge who called the janitor. The janitor got his keys but it wasn't there so he had to dig out other keys, old keys, keys

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rooms so packed you couldn't hardly get through. Everywhere, the gurney man said. They hadn't touched a one. Hadn't dared. He said it was like they were breathing. For chrissake, he said, who knew

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shoulda known though, when the groceries stopped coming and the liquor. Someone shoulda known, he thought. The grocery when the same order every week didn't come. The damn con-see-urge. Not that

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knew what was in there all right. The stuff that made people rich. To be rich was to have it all, all that stuff you could only buy if you were rich. Good for the old lady, she could get it all, she was

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damn lobby before the rest of 'em took their fancy asses out. She'd wave a red-nailed hand, bug-eye dark glasses nodding at him good as a queen. Didn't never see her come back, now he came to think

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maze and you didn't know if you'd ever find your way out again. Rosita's fingers itched. She licked her lips. She wanted to know what was in those boxes, bad. Sooner or later, someone would come

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Still, he wouldn't have wanted to die so alone it took the smell to find him, no not for enough money to own the view of the whole world and drip in silver and mink. No.

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Joe? she asked the janitor. Yeah? he said, still shaking his head that anyone would live on top of the world with a view to match but couldn't see across her own living room.

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When they went in to take her out, Rosita said. The gurney guy - he said the place was stacked with boxes just everywhere, over tables and chairs even. Everywhere. Said they couldn't even get the

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he was, oh yes. He'd been glad to just give the ambulance guys the key and get it back when they were done and wash his hands after. But now, the old lady was gone, the smell with her. Why not go up there and see what pieces

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Shoulda brought a flashlight, he said to Rosita as they stood inside the door. I can see just fine, said Rosita. Joe couldn't, but trusted Rosita could since she wrote the checks. If I were her, I'd keep the

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hips. She took the next box and shook it, frowned, put it on the chair, took the next box, did the same. What gives? said Rosita. She raised one pink pump and gave a sharp kick to the whole stack. It skidded a couple

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passageway ahead of them. Gray light filtered beyond, lighting the sides of the boxes, the soaring boxes, the stacked, staring, still boxes one on top of the other, everywhere. Everywhere. Brown, white, gray, blue...

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ducked. Empty! Rosita cried. When she could have had it all! Rosita kicked again. Joe held his breath as the tower of boxes toppled, a domino earthquake of upended boxes, brown, white, gray, blue. They fell where they

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right back up against a window with an ivory silk curtain. Rosita started to rush forward, but the boxes around her shivered, so she slowed down and crept her way to the chair. She sat down. Oh yes. The old lady sat

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the last box, a purple striped one that spilled yellow paper, tumbled from Joe's head into the waist high pile of boxes around him. Every single box was full of nothing, every single damn one. He scratched his head,

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on her lap. Go ahead, Joe said. Open it. She slid the lid off, saw a layer of white paper with spangles on it. Lifted that. Lifted the next layer, and the next, looked at Joe, held the box upside down.

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rest of the fancy asses got up. He wondered if she got up so she could hit the streets early, get all the good boxes, then sneak back so no one, not even Joe the dumb janitor, would see her with another box of nothing under her

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jiggled it without Rosita knowing it before he handed it to her. Well, maybe it meant there was a fur in there or something, when he didn't hear or feel anything go bump. Rosita tore off the lid and stuck her hand in.

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turned into memories, and then sometimes, they'd take out the boxes and remembered those memories by looking at what they'd kept, bits of their lives that were been and done and gone. Nothing! Rosita cried once more before she

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what was in there, the gurney man said. Couldn't believe it, he'd said. Rosita looked at Joe and licked her lips. Diamonds, she figured, maybe some emeralds, furs, yes, and money, boxes of it. Boxes and boxes. She

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the-back-of-the-drawer-for-years keys. No call to use them had come for a long time. That's what money could buy you, he thought as he rummaged through the drawers. No one to bother you if you didn't want. They

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rich enough, and so she had. And she'd put it all in boxes. Still, Rosita thought, all those boxes, so many, the gurney man said you couldn't see across that room or any other. He'd said it was liking walking through a

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the old lady ever used his fool services. Sometimes, couple-three times a year, he himself, Joe the janitor, saw her, dripping in tarnished silver and limp mink. He only saw her 'cause he had to be sure and sweep the

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and take those boxes and why should someone else have it all? Sounded like if a couple went missing, no one would even ever know. I want me what the old lady had, Rosita thought. I want me some of all that all.

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on it. She liked her privacy, they all knew that, everyone who worked there, they got paid for knowing that. The old lady had the penthouse, the world was hers up there, what'd she need with anyone else?

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Joe, you got that key? Rosita asked. Yeah, they give it back, Joe said, admiring Rosita even more. Got it right here, matter of fact. No wonder Rosita wrote the checks and he swept the floor. She was way smarter than

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Joe stopped in the office to see what Rosita knew. Rosita worked the office, wrote all the checks, so Joe stopped in every once in a while to admire Rosita personally. Rosita was sitting there, shaking her head. What? Joe said.

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of the world the old lady cared so much for she'd boxed herself into a corner of her penthouse with a view of the world. Maybe with that view who cared if she could see two feet inside. Let's go, he said. They went.

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gurney out of the elevator, said they had to leave it there while they took a bag and got her by hand. Can you imagine? Old lady must have had so much stuff she had to stack box on top of box just to hold it all.

inches forward on the floor, teetering, but the only sound had been a hollow clunk. She raised her foot again. Don't! Joe yelled. Rosita spared him one snarly glance and let fly with the pink pump. Joe cowered and

best stuff where I could see it, Rosita said, Where I could open it up and touch it and smell it and taste it. She bent over and squished her shoulders together to make it through the narrow

could, in the old lady's tunnels, on top of Joe and Rosita, mostly on top of each other. They didn't, they couldn't fall far. They made a lot of noise, but Rosita was right, it was just a bunch of empty boxes, Joe thought as

There was a rainbow of them. Rosita licked her lips again and pointed. There. See Joe? There's where she sat. I betcha. A pretty chair all needlepoint and gilt was at the end of the tunnel,

ignoring Rosita and her flailing pink pumps. View of the whole world, and she went and lived in a box canyon, one she made herself. They all knew no one ever came to see her. Joe'd only ever seen her at break of day before the

here, she was sure. She knew it when saw the most beautiful box of all, a box that glowed a rainbow sheen in what light there was. Hand it to me, Joe. Joe picked it up and handed it to her. Rosita sighed and placed it

arm. People, especially rich people, they had queer hobbies. You'd have thought she'd've had something to put in those boxes. People put stuff in boxes they wanted to keep but not look at, stuff that the boxes

Maybe she did take it with her, Rosita said, at least what was in this box. Well, I would if I could too. Hand me that one. Rosita pointed to a green box with Paris stamped on it. Joe took it off the stack. He

dove under the boxes and rippled her way out. Joe picked up a box and stared at it. What a view of the world, he thought, helluva view of the world. He picked up one box and then another, and began to stack.

Her penciled brows wrinkled so much they ran together. What gives? she said and threw the paper from the box on the floor. She stood up from where the old lady always sat in the pretty chair and put her hands on her