

Defenestration

—James Zhao

Now wandering blindly through the passages, you are startled to see a shaft of light. Following it, you discover what appears to be an exit, blocked by a window of slightly frosted glass. There appear numbers carved into the thick, wooden frame, and letters somehow etched into the interior of the glass in delicate script, which can only be discerned from the scattering of the bright sunlight. You squint through the translucent panes but can only make out that you are quite high inside a sheer cliff face. The sound of waves crashing into jagged rocks makes you reconsider your brief thoughts of escaping through the window.

You jump at the sound of an unpleasant yet familiar roar behind you. Glancing over your shoulder, you see two large, glowing discs, which look menacingly like eyes. You feel foul breath on your face, and with adrenaline pumping through your body, you leap headfirst through the window, shattering the fragile glass. As you fall, seemingly for an eternity, your thoughts go back to the message on the window.

1	43	24	17	36	46	8
45	\mathcal{O}	\mathcal{H}	39	\mathcal{X}	\mathcal{R}	31
15	\mathcal{T}	\mathcal{N}	29	\mathcal{E}	\mathcal{K}	6
9	12	10	25	40	38	41
44	\mathcal{D}	\mathcal{O}	21	\mathcal{O}	\mathcal{T}	35
19	\mathcal{E}	\mathcal{X}	11	\mathcal{T}	\mathcal{J}	5
42	4	14	33	26	7	49