

Do Not Disturb

By

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*A modest hotel room. Upstage left or right there should be some sort of door to set the boundary between the inside and outside of the room. A "Do Not Disturb" sign hangs on the knob.*

*Coming onstage, the porter cordially opens the door for Ms. Webbington, following with her heavy luggage. He drops the bags and puts his hands on his knees, trying to hide his panting as Ms. Webbington examines the room.*

MS. WEBBINGTON

Quite spacious, I suppose... could've filled it with more drawer space... not much of a view, is it now?

PORTER

No, ma'am, one of the best views we have.

MS. WEBBINGTON

Ugh, why did they have to send me to such a wasteland?

(sighs)

Well, it's only three nights. It'll do.

*The porter awkwardly waits for a tip.*

MS. WEBBINGTON

Oh of course!

(reaches into pocket... for her phone)

I'll need the WiFi password. You do have WiFi here, don't you?

PORTER

Of course! The password is no place like Paintersville.

MS. WEBBINGTON

There sure isn't.

PORTER

No spaces, no caps.

MS. WEBBINGTON

And no charm.

PORTER

Just make sure you acknowledge our terms of agreement.

MS. WEBBINGTON

Yes I've stayed in hotels before. Goodbye now!

*She shuts the door in his face. We see him snicker as he scurries offstage. Ms. Webbington slumps down on the bed and continues typing on her phone. Her eyes have been glued to it since she was given the WiFi password.*

*Only a few moments pass until the porter reenters with a large basket and knocks on the door. Ms. Webbington reluctantly opens it.*

MS. WEBBINGTON  
You're back.

PORTER  
Yes, Ms. Webbington. I forgot to present our complementary gift basket, courtesy of the Paintersville commonwealth.

MS. WEBBINGTON  
(shutting door)  
Oh I'm quite alright...

PORTER  
It includes raspberry-filled chocolate candies, vanilla-scented dandruff-removal shampoo, and a bushel of hybrid tea roses.

MS. WEBBINGTON  
(beat, then takes basket)  
How delightful! Those are all pristine favorites of mine!

PORTER  
And the very commodities that Paintersville is known for.

MS. WEBBINGTON  
Is that so? How... specific.

PORTER  
We satisfy the needs of every guest, Ms. Webbington.

MS. WEBBINGTON  
I see. Well... thank you so much for the basket.

PORTER  
My pleasure.

MS. WEBBINGTON  
(beat)  
That'll be all?

PORTER  
Yes, Ms. Webbington. I hope you enjoy the gifts and the WiFi.

*Porter exits. Ms. Webbington hesitates, a little suspicious, but shrugs it off and goes to dig into her candy on the bed with her phone. She first whirls back around, making a point to change the "Do Not Disturb" sign.*

*Moments later, the porter reenters with a clipboard and knocks on her door. She opens it, more visibly annoyed.*

MS. WEBBINGTON

(beat)

Hi!

PORTER

Yes, hello, Ms. Webbington. I thought you might be interested in signing up for our annual Bridge tournament at the Paintersville city hall.

MS. WEBBINGTON

How did you... no, I'm not interested.

PORTER

Are you sure, Ms. Webbington?

MS. WEBBINGTON

Yes, I'm sure! What makes you so sure that I'm not?

PORTER

Why, Paintersville is famous for its Bridge-playing competition.

MS. WEBBINGTON

Are they? It seems awfully convenient for your 2000-person town to be home to so many obscure attractions.

PORTER

We have the brand new Barclay playing cards, state of the art Samsonite tables...

MS. WEBBINGTON

Alright I'll sign up!

(furiously writing)

If it'll get you to leave me alone.

PORTER

Fantastic! The games commence tomorrow at 5.

MS. WEBBINGTON

Some hotel you've got here, with the way you respect your guests' privacy.

PORTER

We would never overstep our boundaries... Denise.

*Before Ms. Webbington can get a word in, he closes the door and hurries off. She takes a long sigh to calm down, then returns to her phone, bed, and gift basket. Another knock.*

MS. WEBBINGTON

What!?

*She flings the door open.*

PORT

Ms. Denise Elizabeth Webbington, I--

MS. WEBBINGTON

Do you see this sign?

(re: Do Not Disturb sign)

This! What does this say?

PORTER

(beat)

Do not disturb.

MS. WEBBINGTON

Good! Now I don't know what that means here in Painters-fuck Virginia, but where I come from, when I put the "Do Not Disturb" sign on the hotel door, it means I do. not. want. to. be. disturbed!!!

PORTER

That is this hotel's policy as well, Denise.

MS. WEBBINGTON

Then *why* do you keep disturbing me? And who told you to call me by my first name?

PORTER

Denise, Denise, please, allow me to explain. It is hotel policy to obey the "Do Not Disturb" sign in the *physical* sense, but not necessarily in... how do I put this... in the *electronic* sense.

MS. WEBBINGTON

What? What the hell are you talking about, "electronic sense"?

PORTER

It's all in our terms, Denise Webbington, the terms you agreed to before accessing our network.

*It's all slowly starting to make sense to her.*

PORTER

Now, the reason I have *electronically* disturbed you is to ask what payment method you'd like to use for the additional two weeks of your stay.

MS. WEBBINGTON

My what!? I don't want to stay an extra two weeks! I don't even want to stay these three nights!

PORTER

(re: gift basket)

By accepting the *amenities* of Paintersville, you are expressing that you *like it* here in Paintersville, and thus permit arrangements for you to *remain* in Paintersville. Again, it's all in our terms.

MS. WEBBINGTON

This is... this is illegal! You've hacked into my browser history, extracted highly personal information...

PORTER

Oh please, a little behavioral targeting is a small price to pay for the luxury of high-speed Internet.

MS. WEBBINGTON

I won't allow it. I refuse to pay.

PORTER

That's no problem, Denise. I'll charge it to one of the four credit cards I have on file... thank god for auto fill, am I right?

MS. WEBBINGTON

Is this because I didn't tip you?  
(pulling out wallet)

Here, look, I have money, I can tip you.

PORTER

You're very kind, but there's no need. I've already transferred standard porter gratuity from your bank account.

MS. WEBBINGTON

But... that's... there has to be a way around this... I have other commitments!

PORTER

I see. Well as I said we do satisfy the needs of every guest here in Paintersville... so I suppose we *could* arrange for you to revoke your contractual obligation.

MS. WEBBINGTON

Yes! Please, what you said... where do I sign?

PORTER

No signatures necessary. If you'll just open up the "settings" app on your phone...

MS. WEBBINGTON

Mh hm.

PORTER

Under WiFi, select "Paintersville Inn"...

MS. WEBBINGTON

Got it.

PORTER

And then simply click "Forget this network."

MS. WEBBINGTON

(beat)  
Forget it?

PORTER

Why, yes. By failing to comply with the terms of agreement you'll of course have to give up WiFi access.

MS. WEBBINGTON

Oh... well a few days worth of data won't kill me--

PORTER

The cell service in Paintersville is practically nonexistent within a 50-mile radius. But oh there's so much more to do... explore the local eateries, interact with the humble townspeople... believe me, Ms. Webbington, you won't find a dull moment here.

MS. WEBBINGTON

(long beat)  
Charge the Visa.

PORTER

Very good, Ms. Webbington. I'll get that done right away. Is there anything else I can do for you?

MS. WEBBINGTON

Just... just please don't come in anymore... I need my *physical* privacy, at least.

PORTER

Understood, ma'am.  
(beat)

PORTER

Ah, isn't it great, the proud town of Paintersville?  
You see so many people *do* love it here. Maybe one  
day... you could even be one of them.

*He closes the door and exits, leaving Ms.  
Webbington dumbfounded in her room.*

END OF PLAY