

ELEVATORS

By James Manning

People never talk to each other on elevators. However, he thought, I'll change that today. Every morning he left his apartment at 7:26 AM, walked to the dull metallic doors at the end of the hall, and hit the down button. The doors slowly clanged open to reveal her, a slender Colleen with auburn hair and icy blue eyes. Too shy to speak to her, he quietly boarded the contraption as she gently smiled at him. He enjoyed her silent companionship for about the 10 seconds before the cabin reached the first floor. The doors opened, the two parted without saying a word.

This had gone on for weeks. But today would be different. Today he would boldly stride onto the elevator, return the girl's smile, and say "Hello". After a shower and a shave, he burst from his room and made for the elevator. He reached for the down button, but his hand hesitated. His heart began to pound as his breathing became heavier and more strained. His fingers made contact with the button; it lit up. His stomach rebelled. His head spun about the room. He had the overwhelming urge to flee, but his shoes seemed glued to the floor.

DING! As the doors opened the man took a deep breath and acted. He began his new habit of taking the stairs.

THE END