Autobiography of My Hungers

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I lived on the third floor of the dorms, and though there was an elevator, it was always quicker to sprint up the flights of stairs. The only time the elevator was useful was when I hauled my laundry to the basement. Every other week that was my routine, the trip so familiar I counted my breaths to it. That was how I knew I had descended too far, that the elevator had plummeted past the basement, which I never knew was possible. The small light went out and I was stuck there, in the near-dark, dirty clothes in my arms, a handful of quarters heavy in my pocket.

I pressed the emergency button and nothing happened. I pressed every other button repeatedly, refusing to let this small space get smaller still by having panic set in. I even giggled at my bad luck, imagining the story I’d tell later at the cafeteria while my dorm mates aligned the orange trays of food on the tables. It would finally be my chance to say something interesting since all this time I had nothing much to contribute to the daily dose of jokes, anecdotes, complaints, and witty observations flung from one side to the other. All this time I had been the listener, adding the sound of my laugh to the all-consuming din. I had yet to command attention, yet to be visible.
Then the terrible thought: What if no one noticed I was missing? It would be business as usual in the cafeteria, with silverware clanging and drinks spilling without me because I was the most insignificant of witnesses. And all the while me inside that coffin, buried in an unmarked grave, weeping at the memory of them.