

Eastern State's Locksmith and the Cell Door

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A locksmith working on an abandoned cell reportedly encountered an overwhelming presence. Eastern State's own audio tour preserves the account while keeping the prison's documented suffering in view.

STATUS	A recorded story, with its history attached
CLASSIFICATION	STR
MATERIAL	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States
DISPOSITION	PUBLIC / SOURCED STORY
CATEGORY	Strange Files
RECORD TYPE	Ghosts & hauntings
STORY HISTORY	Modern testimony in the historic prison's audio tour

THE ACCOUNT

The job was ordinary: remove an old lock from an abandoned prison cell. The experience described afterward was not. In Eastern State's audio tour, ghost-story author Charles Adams recounts meeting a locksmith who said he had encountered an overwhelming force while working on the door. Adams remembered the man as frightened and unable to explain what had happened. The account is small enough to picture without adding anything: a worker, a mechanism intended to confine people, and a sudden feeling that the empty cell is no longer empty.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

The official tour identifies Adams and lets listeners hear his interpretation in his own words. He is reporting another person's experience, rather than presenting a recording or measurement from the event. The tour also distinguishes the prison's haunting atmosphere from claims about spirits, grounding the setting in more than a century of documented human suffering.

WHY IT STAYS WITH US

The lock gives the story its force. Opening an abandoned cell should be a practical act of restoration. In this account, it briefly feels like releasing something. That is a powerful image without needing to turn every imprisoned person into a ghost.

WHERE THIS TELLING COMES FROM

Audio tour transcript, chapter 26

Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site

https://easternstate.org/uploads/media/ESP_English_Audio_Tour_Transcript.pdf

RETURN TO THE STORY

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Visit the record for its illustrations and further reading.

<https://u225x.com/record/STR-GHOST-031>