SAMPLE

Building Tomorrow's Public Speakers

The Room's Keeper in the Machine Era

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INTRODUCTION

Few crafts are caricatured as badly as speaking. One cartoon has the speech as a show -- the performer on a stage, graded by applause meter, the podium a spotlight's pedestal for charisma's lucky winners. The other cartoon has the speech as a trial -- the podium a place of judgment, the audience a panel of examiners, the whole skill a gift of birth that the unlucky were never issued, and prudence the better part of valor. The first cartoon is broadcast from the highlight reels and repeated by people who have never been handed a room with a decision in it. The second is lived out in offices everywhere, by capable professionals who forward the deck instead of presenting it, schedule the demo instead of giving it, and let a career's worth of Tuesdays pass without once standing up. The cartoons disagree about everything except their shared, wrong center: both believe the spectacle is the job. The spectacle is the job's smallest part.

This book treats the speaker as something the cartoons miss entirely: the room's keeper -- the working professional whose real product is not the performance but the change it leaves behind. A room loans its attention; the speaker converts that loan into understanding the audience actually carries out the door; and what the audience does with it next -- the decision made, the objection dropped, the sentence repeated at the coffee machine on Monday -- is the asset the whole hour was built to move. Applause cools before the parking lot empties. The changed mind is the deliverable, and a speech that fails to ship it is a well-reviewed failure.

The chapters build the craft in working order, and each keeps to the series' habits: the role defined without flattery, the instruments described so a practitioner can actually install them, the failure modes named and counted, and the practice scheduled so it survives contact with a real calendar. The route: the honest definition -- the two folklores, the speech understood as a transfer rather than a recital, and the machines' arrival at the podium; the room's evidence -- the audience researched before the first word, the stakes mapped, the one sentence chosen; the message's architecture -- the structure built to be followed once, live, with no rewind; the story's instrument -- narrative as evidence rather than decoration; the delivery's physics -- voice, body, and silence as tunable settings rather than birthrights; the fear's honest physics -- the nerves explained, metabolized, and governed rather than denied; the difficult room -- the ambush, the skeptic, the hostile faction, the crashing projector, and the calm that is learned; the virtual stage -- the camera's separate physics, the webinar's scattered attention, the hybrid room's two audiences; the machine's speaker -- the drafting models, the synthetic presenters, the analytics, and the boundary that keeps the presence human; and the operating program -- the weekly and quarterly cadence that converts an event survived into a competence compounded.

Every discipline in this series gets the same two-word test -- read honestly, run by design -- and speaking perhaps earns it most personally of all, because the instrument is the speaker's own voice and body and the arena is a room of live human attention. This volume is for the professional ready to quit both cartoons at once -- the performance and the hiding -- and take up the quieter, larger job underneath: keeping the room.

CHAPTER 1: THE HONEST DEFINITION

1.1 The job, said in one sentence

A public speaker is a person who gathers a room's attention, converts it into understanding, and answers for what that understanding does afterward. That sentence fences off territory the folklore keeps wandering out of. Attention is gathered, not seized, because a room that feels captured spends its energy looking for the exits. The understanding is the conversion, not the performance, because a room that remembers the speaker's charisma and cannot repeat the speaker's argument has been entertained, not addressed. And the answering-for is where the folklore goes blind: a speech ends in an hour, and its consequences are billed across the whole quarter that follows -- the decision made, the budget released, the fear named, the direction changed, or nothing at all, which is also a consequence. In this series' grammar, that makes the speaker a keeper: the room's understanding is the asset, the held things are the attention the room fronted and the trust it paid in advance, and every sentence, slide, and silence either strengthens the loan or squanders it.

1.2 The showman and the terrified: two pictures the craft must escape

Name the profession to almost anyone and the same pair of pictures returns: both bright, both expensive, and both mistaken in ways worth studying. The first is the showman: the stage as a spotlight, the audience as a crowd to be swept, the speech scored by the applause's volume -- the performer whose masterpiece is a room that wept, rose, and remembered nothing on Tuesday. The showman's picture is wrong about the asset (applause is the room's receipt for entertainment, not evidence of understanding) and wrong about the craft (the performance is the packaging; the transfer is the product). The second is the terrified: the speech as an ordeal survived, the podium a predator, the invitation forwarded to someone else -- the professional who loses the argument in the silence where their own voice belonged, because standing up felt like volunteering for judgment. The terrified's picture is the showman's from underneath: the same stage, feared instead of desired. The two pictures are one picture flipped: both crown the performance as the job, when the performance is the job's thin outer shell -- the room's understanding is the work, and spectacle or dread is the scab that forms over precisely the spot where the craft was never built.

1.3 The asset: the understanding the room carries out

The understanding the speaker keeps has the structure of a planted decision. It is specific: one sentence the room can repeat on Monday without the speaker present, the way a good contract can be adjudicated by a stranger. It is durable: built to survive the commute, the inbox, and the week's noise -- not the seven-second memory the folklore attributes to audiences, but the honest forgetting curve that claims anything not structured to survive it. And it is consequential: loaded so that the room does something with it, because a speech that changes no decision, no belief, and no behavior was a performance wearing a briefing's costume. Each keeper in this series is known by the thing it guards: the manager by the

promise, the communicator by the meaning, the negotiator by the agreement, the influencer by the trust. The speaker holds the room's live attention and what it becomes -- the scarcest resource in any organization, loaned in person, in real time, and converted on the spot or lost. The asset's shape dictates the discipline's first rule: no sentence is spoken that the speaker has not verified the room can carry, because a beautiful line that leaves no residue is attention spent on the speaker instead of invested in the listener.

1.4 The machines at the podium: what moves, what stays

The machines have walked into this trade exactly as they walked into the others: through the prep, the drafting, and the delivery's scaffolding, and stalling at the presence, the judgment, and the live human bond with the room. The tools can now draft the speech in minutes, prompt it onto a confidence screen, translate it into the room's languages in real time, analyze the audience's expressions as the words land, and synthesize a flawless video of the speaker saying it all. The era has pushed the cost of production toward zero -- a competent draft, a clean slide deck, a rehearsed delivery are available to anyone -- and the speaker who arrives with merely competent material now arrives indistinguishable from everyone else. The single fuel the craft burns is ungeneratable: a room's willingness to be moved by a person who is verifiably present, verifiably sincere, and verifiably on the hook for what was said. Live presence is the one asset no model can mint, because only a body in the room can soak up its mood, answer its silences, and put its credibility on the line for a sentence as it lands -- the recorded voice can be replayed, but only a present one can be held to account. The machine-era speaker thus holds the middle and rents the rim: the tools carry the draft and the deck, while the presence remains the person's alone -- and a room will sit still for a synthetic voice only as long as it believes a live human vouches for it.

1.5 Where the craft goes wrong, named

The failure modes run from the overbuilt to the avoided, and the audit is honest about both ends. The performer treats the room as a mirror and the speech as a monologue, and the audience applauds and retains nothing. The reciter transfers the deck's bullets to the air and calls it a briefing, mistaking coverage for understanding. The dumper includes everything and therefore plants nothing, the sixty-slide proof of diligence that ends before the room's patience does. The hedger qualifies every claim until the speech has no claim left, and the room leaves unable to repeat what was argued because nothing was. The jargonist speaks the profession's dialect to a room that does not, and mistakes fluency for clarity while the translation happens never. The time-thief runs twenty minutes over, teaching the room that its time was the entry fee. And the avoider -- the most common failure and the least photographed -- never stands up at all, and the room's questions get answered by whoever did. Each failure is instructive because each is a real discipline abandoned: the performer abandoned the transfer, the reciter the architecture, the dumper the selection, the hedger the commitment, the jargonist the translation, the time-thief the room's respect, the avoider the craft itself.

1.6 What the speaker actually holds

The honest inventory is smaller than the folklore claims and larger than the terrified fear. The

speaker holds the room's loaned attention -- thirty seconds of it at the start, earned or forfeited, and every minute after that re-loaned conditionally. The speaker holds the argument's clarity -- the burden of being the only person in the room who has understood the whole case, which is why the room assembled one voice to hear it. The speaker holds the moment's framing -- the power to name what the meeting is about, which is the power to decide what it is about, held honestly or abused, but never neutral. And the speaker holds the credibility staked on the stage: the professional capital that rises when the speech plants its sentence and falls when the speech wastes the hour. None of these require a baritone, an extrovert's temperament, or a thespian's training; each requires a discipline that can be learned, scheduled, and audited -- which is the whole premise of this book.

1.7 Monday's proof

The definition earns its keep by being testable, and the test is Monday's. A speech kept its room when, three days later, a listener can state the one sentence, name the decision it asked for, and describe the action they took because of it. The test is deliberately harsher than the applause's, because applause is measured at the exit and understanding is measured in the week that follows. It is also deliberately fairer than the terrified fear it, because the test does not ask whether the speaker was magnetic, memorable, or flawless -- only whether the room carries the sentence and the room's behavior changed. The speaker who internalizes Monday's test stops asking the unanswerable questions (was I good?) and starts asking the buildable ones (what is the sentence? what decision does it ask for? what will they do with it?). The definition's test is the discipline's rudder: every choice in the chapters ahead -- the structure, the story, the pause, the slide -- is judged by whether it helps the room pass Monday, not by whether it flatters the stage.

1.8 Three words that aim the work badly

The craft's vocabulary misleads before its techniques do, and three words need re-aiming before the book proceeds. "Presentation" suggests a thing presented -- an artifact displayed -- when the work is a transfer that happens live or not at all; the deck is not the speech. "Audience" suggests a crowd that has assembled to watch, when a working room has assembled to decide, and a crowd watched is a room unmet. "Performance" suggests an evaluation of the performer, when the only evaluation that matters is the room's -- the performance that flatters the speaker and fails the listener has missed the entire assignment. The series' discipline of honest naming applies: the speaker prepares a transfer for a room, and the performance is only the transfer's delivery vehicle. The vocabulary matters because the words set the aim: a person preparing a "presentation" polishes slides, and a person preparing a transfer polishes the sentence the room must carry out the door.

1.9 The room, kept: its working anatomy

A room that is kept -- gathered, converted, and answered for -- shows a recognizable anatomy across its hours. It opens with attention loaned on trial: the first minute that decides whether the room will lend the next ten. It moves through the argument's spine: the structure a listener can follow once, live, without a rewind, because no audience has ever been given one. It lands on the sentence: the one claim the room is meant to carry, planted at the

moment attention is highest and repeated until it is wearisome to the speaker and vivid to the listener. It closes with the ask: the decision, the action, or the change the speech exists to produce, stated specifically enough to be started on Monday. And it answers afterward: in the questions that come to the speaker in the corridor, the emails that reference the argument, the meeting that uses the frame. The anatomy is the chapter map of this book, because each organ is a chapter: the room's evidence, the message's architecture, the story's instrument, the delivery's physics, and the rest, in the order the anatomy assembles them.

1.10 The speaker's three markets

The speaker's craft is exercised in three markets, and the folklore only photographs the third. The first market is the working room: the update, the proposal, the review, the pitch -- the five to fifty colleagues and clients for whom speaking is not an art but a professional instrument, used weekly, judged in decisions. The second is the civic room: the community meeting, the classroom, the association, the town hall -- the room that assembled because something local and consequential is at stake. The third is the stage: the conference, the keynote, the commencement -- the visible market, the photographed one, and the smallest by population. The series' standard applies to all three: the keeper's disciplines are identical in each, only the room's size and the stakes' visibility change. A book that taught only the stage would teach the ornament of the craft; this book teaches the instrument, because the professional who can keep a working room of twelve skeptical colleagues is already equipped for the stage of a thousand, while the reverse has been disproven in every conference greenroom.

1.11 The unphotographed tradition

The craft is ancient, and its history is a warning against the folklore's newest error. The speakers the centuries kept were not the most theatrical but the most answerable: the orators whose arguments survived transcription, the preachers whose parables outlived their voices, the advocates whose cases are still taught. What the history records is never the delivery -- the gestures and the gowns are gone -- but the sentence: the claim, the structure, the story that carried. The machine era's error is to read that history backward and conclude that the sentence can now be generated, so the delivery is all that remains human. The conclusion is half right: the draft can be generated, the voice can be synthesized, the video can be faked -- and the room, knowing it, has raised the price of the one thing the machines cannot counterfeit. The quiet history teaches the same lesson the loud one does: rooms keep the speakers who kept them, and the keeping was always the argument honestly made by a person who stood behind it.

1.12 The era's whole stage, surveyed

Stated in full, the machine era changes the speaker's economics on three axes. Production: the draft, the deck, the rehearsal, and the translation are now nearly free, which means competence is the floor and no longer differentiates. Presentation: the synthetic voice, the avatar presenter, and the deepfake video mean the room can no longer trust its ears or eyes alone -- provenance, verification, and live presence carry new weight. Measurement: the

attention's analytics -- the engagement dashboards, the sentiment scores, the expression analysis -- promise the speaker feedback at a scale the craft never had, and tempt the speaker toward optimizing the metrics instead of the Monday. Each axis gets its full treatment in chapter 9; the definition's work here is to place them: the machines take the craft's edges and sharpen them, and the center -- the transfer of understanding from one live person to a live room, and the accountability that transfer carries -- remains exactly where it was.

1.13 What the speaker owes, and to whom

The keeper's ethics, stated in full, run to three parties. To the room: honesty about what is known, unknown, and contested -- a speech's credibility is a loan against the speaker's record, and a hedged claim spoken plainly is worth more than a confident one that outruns the evidence. To the message: fidelity to the argument's actual strength -- the story that proves rather than the story that moves, the number in context rather than the number alone. And to the self: the speaker's own credibility, staked on every stage and compounding in both directions -- the speech that plants its sentence raises the capital the next speech borrows, and the speech that manipulates spends capital the speaker will need at exactly the moment it is gone. The obligations bind in the working room most of all, where the audience is the same people next week and the speaker's record is the only credential that matters.

1.14 Where the definition stops

The definition has borders, and honesty requires drawing them. The speaker is not the entertainer, though entertainment is a legitimate tool deployed in the transfer's service. The speaker is not the celebrity, though fame will fill a room once -- and the second appearance is priced in understanding, not tickets. The speaker is not the trainer, though instruction is one form the transfer takes; the trainer keeps a skill, the speaker keeps a decision. And the speaker is not the leader, though leadership without the speaker's craft is leadership muffled -- the leader sets the direction, the speaker makes the room willing to move in it. The edges matter because each neighbor discipline has its own book, its own metrics, and its own failure modes, and the speaker who forgets which craft they are practicing optimizes for the neighbor's applause and loses their own asset.

1.15 The toolkit, glimpsed ahead

The chapters ahead are the instrument, previewed here in the order the craft assembles them. The room's evidence: the research that answers who is in the room, what they already believe, and what would count as worth their hour. The message's architecture: the structure built for one live pass. The story's instrument: narrative as evidence, with its grammar and its abuse. The delivery's physics: the voice, the body, and the pause as tunable instruments. The fear's honest physics: the nerves metabolized rather than eliminated. The difficult room: the ambush, the resistance, and the failure, answered as techniques. The virtual stage: the camera's physics and the hybrid room's double duty. The machine's speaker: the tools governed and the presence kept. And the operating program: the cadence that makes the whole thing a practice. Each chapter holds the same standard: the instrument buildable, the

failure modes counted, the practice schedulable.

1.16 The keeper's measure, in use

The series' standard -- read honestly, run by design -- is applied to this discipline more personally than most, because the instrument is the speaker's own body and the arena is live attention, which means every flaw is public and every improvement is also. The standard's honest reading: the craft is learnable, the fear is normal, the talent myth is the folklore's most expensive lie, and the machines have made the learnable part easier and the personal part more valuable. The standard's designed running: the speaker who follows the chapters builds a repeatable pipeline -- room researched, sentence chosen, structure built, story selected, delivery rehearsed, fear metabolized, difficult rooms prepared, virtual physics learned, machines governed, program scheduled -- and walks on stage with the only confidence that survives contact, which is preparation's. The chapters that follow build that pipeline piece by piece, and the definition is its foundation: the room's understanding is the asset, the speaker is its keeper, and the applause is not the metric.

1.17 The room's attention, understood as a loan

The definition's economics deserve their own statement, because the craft's every technique follows from one fact: attention is loaned, never owned. The room's attention is assembled before the speaker speaks -- gathered by the invitation, the agenda, and the room's own stakes -- and handed to the first voice on a probation of roughly thirty seconds. What the speaker does with the probation determines the loan's renewal: the sentence planted earns the next minute, the minute earned buys the ten that follow, and each segment of the speech is priced against the balance it inherits. The loan has a ledger the room keeps silently: the ninety-second open that respected the room's time, the signpost that respected its memory, the story that respected its intelligence -- each entry extends the credit; and the throat-clearing, the overtime, the unsignposted maze -- each entry calls the balance due. The speaker who internalizes the loan stops asking why the room "won't pay attention" and starts asking what the last passage did to deserve the next one, which is the only question the craft can actually act on.

1.18 The audience's three gifts, and their prices

The room gives the speaker three gifts, and the honest definition names their prices. The first gift is presence: the room came, physically or virtually, spending an hour of a finite life -- priced in the obligation to spend it better than the room could have spent it alone, which the hour's contract of chapter 2 makes explicit. The second gift is attention: the room's scarcest resource, loaned in segments -- priced in the transfer the loan exists to fund, because attention collected and converted into nothing is the definition of wasted. The third gift is the benefit of the doubt: the room's initial willingness to believe the speaker knows what they are doing, extended at the first sentence and repriced at every claim -- the most valuable gift and the least understood, because the showman's error (the doubt's extension mistaken for the room's gullibility) spends it fastest. The keeper's discipline is to treat all three gifts as accounts in credit: drawn against deliberately, repaid with interest through the sentence's planting and the hour's delivery, never assumed to renew.

1.19 The speaker's two economies

The speaker lives in two economies, and the definition must name both because the folklore conflates them. The attention economy is the stage's: the hour's scarce currency, spent in real time, priced in engagement and applause -- the economy the showman optimizes, the one the dashboards of chapter 9 measure, and a perfectly legitimate one when it funds the transfer. The trust economy is the corridor's: the speaker's record across rooms and years -- the kept sentences, the verified claims, the hours that delivered, priced in the invitations the speaker receives and the credibility their claims carry. The two economies interact by a law the craft states plainly: the attention economy may be farmed for short-term yield by techniques that bankrupt the trust economy (the overclaim, the borrowed story, the applause bait), and the trust economy may be quietly built while the attention economy looks unremarkable (the honest update, the planted sentence, the corridor's follow-through). The keeper's portfolio runs both deliberately, and the craft's bias is stated now and held to the end: when the two conflict on a stage, the trust wins, because Monday collects.

1.20 The myth of the born speaker, audited

The definition's last enemy is the talent myth itself, and the audit is short because the evidence is overwhelming. The speakers the folklore calls born are, on inspection, almost universally trained: the childhood stammer outgrown through a decade of forced reps, the "natural" whose naturalness was installed by a high school teacher and a hundred small rooms, the charismatic whose charisma is the rehearsed open's confidence showing. The myth survives because the training is invisible and the performance is public -- the room sees the fluent hour, never the recorded rehearsals, the cut drafts, the filler audits, the years of weekly rooms that installed the defaults. The myth's cost is paid twice: the terrified use it as evidence they were excluded by birth, and never start; the talented use it as evidence they need no program, and never compound. The series' verdict applies: speaking is a craft with learnable instruments, the learnable compounds on a schedule, and the born speaker is the practiced speaker with the practice removed from the story -- which is, on inspection, the showman's oldest trick, performed for free.

1.21 The definition, tested at both ends

The chapter closes by holding the definition against its two standing temptations, the way the earlier volumes held theirs at the close of chapter 1. The showman's temptation: to mistake the room's delight for the room's understanding -- the applause is real, the hour was enjoyed, and the corridor test finds nothing planted; the keeper answers with the Monday standard, applied without mercy to the most charming speaker in the building, who is the speaker. The avoider's temptation: to mistake the absence of fear for the presence of craft -- the delegated podium, the emailed argument, the influence exercised only in writing; the keeper answers with the loan's arithmetic, because the room's decision that needed the speaker's voice got the memo instead, and the memo does not answer questions, absorb a mood, or stake its credibility in real time. Between the two temptations the definition stands as written: the room's understanding is the asset, the speaker is its keeper, the performance is packaging, and the fear is weather -- and the chapters that follow are simply the keeper's instruments, built and scheduled.

CHAPTER 2: THE ROOM'S EVIDENCE

2.1 The discipline before the draft

Every kept room is researched before it is addressed, and the research is not a courtesy -- it is the transfer's foundation. The speaker who drafts first and asks questions later has already made the craft's most common error: writing a speech for a room that does not exist. The audience's reality -- their knowledge, their convictions, their worries, and what would count for them as an hour well spent -- is not an obstacle to work around but the material to build with. This chapter treats audience research the way earlier volumes in this series treated the market's evidence and the counterparty's preparation: as the listening that must precede the speaking, done with the humility of a professional who knows the speech is not about them.

2.2 The room's four questions

The research answers four questions before a word is drafted, and each has a method. First: who is in the room -- not the org chart's names but the stakes' map, which of the listeners decide, which influence the deciders, and which are there to be informed and nothing more. Second: what do they already believe -- the assumptions they carry in the door, the priors the argument will land on, the parts of the case that will feel like news and the parts that will feel like an insult to their intelligence. Third: what do they fear -- the objection that will surface at the first pause, the risk that makes the room's nodding a mask for its worry, the history that makes this proposal feel like a previous proposal that hurt them. Fourth: what would count as worth their hour -- the decision they are actually in the room to make, the bar the speech must clear to be more than a briefing they could have read. The four questions are the audience's evidence because their answers are the difference between a speech that lands and a speech that merely occurs.

2.3 The interview over the survey

The series' research discipline applies here unchanged: the interview beats the survey. Where the schedule allows, the speaker speaks to two or three room members before speaking to the room -- fifteen minutes each, three questions, and the room's real language in the answers. "What is your biggest concern about this?" from a named skeptic returns more usable evidence than a hundred survey scales, because concerns in the room's own words become the speech's own vocabulary, and a room hears its own worries named in its own phrasing faster than it hears any consultant's framework. The interview also returns the political map no survey captures: who will nod, who will fold their arms, whose support is already bought, whose opposition is about something the speech can address and whose is about something it cannot. Where no interview is possible -- the conference talk, the public event -- the method downshifts rather than stops: the organizer's brief, last year's recordings, the room's own published words, the questions the audience asks in other venues. The discipline is constant; only the instrument's resolution changes.

2.4 The stakes' map: who decides, who influences, who witnesses

A room is not an undifferentiated mass, and the speaker who addresses "everyone" addresses no one. The working room sorts into three constituencies, and the speech serves them differently. The deciders -- usually a minority, sometimes a table of one -- need the argument's spine: the case, the evidence, the ask, stated to the standard of a person whose signature will follow the applause. The influencers -- the experts the deciders consult, the skeptics whose conversion the room watches as a proxy for the argument's honesty -- need the objections answered before they are raised, because the skeptic's question answered in the speech's body costs a sentence and the same question asked live costs the room's momentum. The witnesses -- the room's majority, there to be informed and to ratify -- need the story and the sentence: the version they can carry to the colleague who was not present, which is the speech's second life. The proportions shift by room, and the mapping is done before the drafting, because the decider's evidence and the witness's story are different instruments, and the speech that serves one constituency while ignoring the other two has kept only a fraction of its room.

2.5 The beliefs' audit: the priors the argument lands on

No argument lands on an empty room; every claim falls on priors the room already holds, and the honest speech audits them before it argues against them. The audit's method is three columns. What the room already knows -- and therefore does not need proven, only built on; establishing known facts is the dumper's error and spends the room's patience proving the obvious. What the room believes that is wrong -- the misconception the argument must dislodge first, because a claim stacked on a false prior will be rejected as incoherent rather than merely wrong, and the speaker who does not know which priors are false is arguing blind. And what the room believes that is contested -- the genuinely open questions, where the honest speech does not pretend certainty the speaker does not have, because the room already knows the difference and the hedger's career of pretended confidence ends the first time a listener with expertise is present. The audit's output is the speech's honesty map: built on the known, aimed at the mistaken, humble about the contested.

2.6 The fear's inventory: the objection before the pause

Every room carries objections it has not yet voiced, and the prepared speaker meets them inside the speech rather than after it. The fear's inventory is gathered from the interviews and the priors' audit, and it asks one question until it stops returning answers: what would make this room say no? The answer is usually three to five items -- the cost, the risk, the previous failed attempt, the rival priority, the trust deficit -- and each becomes a scheduled passage in the speech's body, addressed by name before the question period can weaponize it. The craft's rule is counterintuitive and reliable: the objection the speaker raises and answers themselves is credited to the speaker's honesty, and the identical objection raised by the audience is charged to the speaker's evasion. The inventory is also the speech's insurance against the ambush in chapter 7: the difficult room's hardest questions are almost always the inventory's items wearing louder voices.

2.7 The one sentence, chosen before the writing

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