Hotel at The end of The Road

By Stephen King

"Faster !" Tommy Riviere said. "Faster !"

"I'm hitting 85 now," Kelso Black said.

"The cops are right behind us,"Riviera said. "Put it up to 90." He leaned out the window. Behind the fleeing car was a police car, with siren wailling and red light flashing.

"I'm hitting the side road ahead," Black grunted. He turned the wheel and the car turned into the winding road-spraying gravel.

The uniformed policeman scratched his head. "Where did they go ?".

His partner frowned. "I don't know. They just - disapeared ."

"Look," Black said. "Lights ahead."

"It's a hotel," Riviera said wonderingly. "Out on this wagon track, a hotel ! If that don't beat all ! The police'll never look for us there."

Black, unheeding of the car's tires, stamped on the brake. Riviera reached into the back seat and got a black bag. They walked in.

The hotel looked just like a scene out of the early 1900s.

Riviera rang the bell impatiently. An old man shuffled out. "We want a room," Black said.

The man stared at them silently.

"A room," Black repeated.

The man turned around to go back into his office.

"Look, old man," Tommy Riviera said. "I don't take that from anybody." He pulled out his thirty-eight. "Now you give us a room."

The man looked ready to keep going, but at last he said : "Room five. End of the hall."

He gave them no register to sign, so they went up. The room was barren except for an iron double bed, a cracked mirror, and soiled wallpaper.

"Aah, what a crummy joint," Black said in disgust. "I'll bet there's enough cockroaches here to fill a five-gallon can."

The next morning when Riviera woke up, he couldn't get out of bed. He couldn't move a muscle. He was paralyzed. Just then the old man came into view. He had a needle wich he put into Black's arms.

"So you're awake," he said. "My, my, you two are the first additions to my museum in twenty-five years. But you'll be well preserved. And you won't die.

"You'll go with the rest of my collection of living museum. Nice specimens."

Tommy Riviera couldn't even express his horror.

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