In the time of arriving at this cataclysmic, ruinous cage, you will come across the narrow corridors and low ceilings. There are passages, leading to confined rooms and the centre of the courtyard.

The floors varnished and smeared with the rotten, contaminated food- sometimes, so vile you aren’t able to tell its original form. Kitchen waste: generated by peels, fat and crusts is then used as a supplement, for the depleted prisoners. Dark craters can be seen clearly under the soul-less inmate’s eyes’.

This was an inviolable place of refuge; a hell-hole to those who were required to work for long hours. Masked from wandering fools and careless citizens, you will encounter the shameless owners- who stopped at nothing to catch rife and conflict amongst the prisoners. They never bothered to cleanse the almost decomposing building.

These wearied robots, slouched onto any available surface, are boys who fight for freedom, boys who plead for equality and most importantly, boys without names…

As the light slowly evaporates into darkness, we’re ushered into the barracks, where we were locked up with around thirty other prisoners for the night. It felt like torture having to go back in that horrid room- which was concealed in the throttling smell of cigarettes. This was a room, technically speaking, a concrete box defiled, with one wooden window, covered in wonky slats.

It was very difficult to even take a breath, let alone navigate around the enclosure. Our beds were only three planks for a mattress and a candle, set on a stool, that flickered from time to time.

They treated us like animals feeding us little to practically no food. I didn’t think it was possible to live like this, consumed in the odour of sweat.

Just when the shadows of night make its occurrence, the routine, that was now repetitive – of us being caged in that rodent infested dungeon had begun. It varied from us being locked up for hours to days, which soon turned into weeks. They managed to succeed in the on-going disregard of our basic needs.

I can vividly recall entering this forsaken asylum, that others would call ‘the abyss’. It was a chilly evening, back in September – around my birthday. The sun had already set; boys were just returning from the courtyard, for the daily head-count. By the time I was allowed in, the moon - full on that day, had already started to form. Suddenly, the gates were flung open and a man, bald with an unkempt beard and a crescent scar on his right cheek, grinned mischievously. It was then I regretted every decision that I had ever made...

This somewhat strange warehouse, where I was to spend so many days; experienced so many different levels of torture. Adding to this, no-one was affable, no-one.

No-one at all was ‘normal’.

All corrupted, perpetually troubled by their own internal conscience. Some of which were inured, destined to living the lives of vagrants, petty thieves convicted of burglary. Most were murderers, not buy heart or by choice, only by mischance.

Some had murdered on accident, never by will, but they were brigands, brigand chiefs; kings of theft. And yet, they each had different stories to tell, the majority were opposed to the thought of sharing their past, evidently trying to dispel it from their minds.

I even know boys, who were of such a jovial disposition.

So jovial, that they broke the silence, from time to time. But this was only to relieve the tension that circulated before bed. It was highly common for these degenerates to speak proudly about how they’d helped a boy escape this place without scar face knowing. Most inmates were oblivious to life; due to their weakened social cohesion.

Written by – Gashel

‘Boys without Names’ by Kashmira Sheth – link text ‘The House of the Dead’ by Fyodor Dostoevsky.