



Synopsis of

The Room

Awakening to a World without Walls

by Sean D. Krausert

*Written in the first person, *The Room* provides a personal account of a journey into a world contained within a single, massive room – one in which all of the people live in direct contact with each other. At approximately 20,000 words, *The Room* is an easy read designed to be accessible to the general public, regardless of their level of education or experience, in order to bring awareness to a variety of issues affecting our world today. Consider *The Room* a thought-provoking primer to social justice and a better world for all. Readers are introduced to memorable characters from “around the Room” as experiences lead the protagonist to grow as an individual, experience compassion for others, and develop greater understanding of our world.*

Enter The Room . . .

What if we lived in a world without walls?

I awaken to find myself in a huge room filled primarily with tables, chairs, and about 50,000 people. This vast space, without walls separating anyone, turns out to be a scale replica of the Earth – containing the same races of people, religions, wealth distribution, and issues that we have in our world. I keep a diary to chronicle my discovery of this strangely familiar world that parallels our own.

The journey begins on a wonderful note when I stumble across a celebration of life in one of the poorer areas of The Room, which soon spreads everywhere as music and food from all different cultures flow freely. It is during the celebration that I meet a good-natured, wise old man named Kunjufu. The celebration teaches me about the importance of living for today, especially if you are one of the unfortunate many who have very little.

After seven days in The Room, I have had the opportunity to become familiar with all sorts of people from different backgrounds and, in this environment, notice the contrasting ways in which people of different cultures interact . . . in their greetings, in their personal protocols, and especially in how they value relationship. While recognizing that some cultures value “doing” and others value “caring”, Kunjufu helps me see how more “caring” could greatly improve the “doing” in my life.

The disparity between rich and poor is obvious in The Room, but nobody seems to do much about it until the avoidable deaths of a beloved little girl, Mariama, and her tag-a-long little brother, Jaja.

Mariama is simply a cutie who loves to dance and enjoy life. However, her life, and that of her little brother, is cut short because of the measles . . . something that many in the richer areas of The Room have been inoculated against. From this pointless death comes a beautiful transformation as those who 'have' reach out a helping hand to assist those who 'have not'.

During my second month in The Room, I meet Sasmita, a young seamstress who cannot escape the vicious cycle of poverty. Every day she borrows money to purchase material to make clothes, and then sells the clothes back to the lender . . . ending up with enough profit to support her family for that day. Miraculously, Sasmita's entire way of life changes for the better thanks to a new micro-finance program, which loans her enough money to allow her to break free of poverty forever. Fifteen dollars.

Quite related to wealth, or the lack thereof, a clear division exists in The Room based upon literacy – i.e. whether or not a person can read. This lack of education, usually among the poorest, has far-reaching ramifications – whether one can get work, the type of work that one can get, the types of activities in which one partakes, and even the discussions and decisions in which one can participate. As I notice this disparity in The Room, so do others and the results are life changing for many. Basic literacy training spreads like wildfire and The Room is filled with hope.

With four months in The Room under my belt, I need to get away for a bit as I am not used to being around people every moment of every day. A catwalk above The Room provides the perfect place to sit alone and contemplate life. From this vantage point, I am better able to see the many similarities between people. From a distance, even the numerous and varied religions look very much the same. I notice that people of different religions are often in conflict with one another, and recognize that it often boils down to fear.

Not much later, in one of my several embarrassing moments in The Room, I wake to the smell of smoke and jump up screaming, quite believing that everyone is about to be charbroiled. As it turns out, it was just a nearby cooking fire; and even though the smoke was bothersome, it was their only source of heating food. Prompted by a little friend, Juan, I begin a 'heated' discussion about fire in The Room. Of course, nobody likes the smoke, but some have no options and, therefore, no choice. Thanks to Juan's bravery, changes are initiated that will result in a better and more sustainable environment for all.

During my fifth month in The Room, while knowing perfectly well that various conflicts occur from time to time, I discover that even this place is not immune to the most treacherous violence – terrorism. An explosion rocks The Room and kills some innocent children. As the debris settles, the first light of real peace shines through as an impassioned speech by a grieving man touches many and bridges differences. Through pain, everyone learns that violence and conflict must be loved out of existence . . . and several steps are instituted to give effect to the common desire of lasting peace in The Room.

My greatest quandary is why challenges in The Room are handled better and faster in this place as opposed to the world from which I come? I recognize that in both worlds there is tension between selfishness and giving, but giving almost invariably wins out in The Room. My old friend, Kunjufu, reappears to provide an answer to the dilemma in his usual nonchalant manner – “No walls. No place to hide.” Simple, yet genius.

About my six month mark in *The Room*, I take a fall (once again while embarrassing myself) and, when I awaken, find myself back in my own world. Was it a dream? The folded papers of a diary found in my pocket tell me it was not. Regardless, the many things I learned while in *The Room* are very real and will undoubtedly change my life. These lessons include . . . walls are barriers to helping people . . . we all feel the world's pain . . . removing walls benefits the world . . . WE – not *us* and *them* . . . shared pain awareness overcomes differences . . . people are essentially good . . . and we DO live in a world without walls.

**I am. You are as I am.
WE are ONE on this Earth.
The Earth is but a room without walls.
Are WE awakening to this reality?**

**WE are smart enough and rich enough
to address all challenges confronting OUR world.
The question is . . . do WE care enough?**

*The Room contains bibliographical and statistical sources, as well as an Author's Note that describes the inspiration for various fictional characters that appear in *The Room*.*

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