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## 1 The Beginning

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In the beginning, there was a door. It was neither a large door, nor a small one, but rather an instrument of special mediocrity, sometimes referred to as a Stock Special. As far as the door could tell<sup>1</sup>, life was a good and beautiful thing. Its masters were kindly — fond by any means for a comfortable end — and so the door enjoyed what love and peace a door can know.

Were this door one of the anthropomorphic variety, it would perhaps have been surprised that Sebastian Bolivier did not much care for entryways and porticos. Naturally, such a of degree of uninterest may be not at all unusual in the Common Man<sup>2</sup>, but on the subject of doors, Sebastian had established a deep and full-bodied philosophy. While many people might exclaim that “life is an open door,” usually they would be speaking in a decidedly figurative sense. Sebastian held no such misconceptions. People in his line of work often fell into a rather introspective frame of mind, and so this was not altogether surprising. Sebastian truly believed in the doors of life; he simply tended to close them.

Of course, other individuals have similar tendencies, and Sebastian was by no means an absolute exception. Doors, after all, are very easily closed, and if only by rule of entropy, a great many people close them. Nonetheless,

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<sup>1</sup>Not very far.

<sup>2</sup>A common misconception — the common man makes the doors.

there existed at least two differences between Sebastian and a graduate student studying the South African fig. Sebastian tended to close other people's doors, and mostly, he closed them permanently.