

The Bell

FADE IN:

INT. A PLAIN ROOM - TIME UNKNOWN

We see a plain room with minimal furniture, two beds, and two nightstands. There are plain white lights within this room, we see that the floor, walls, and ceiling are tiles with these large white square tiles. There is no door. There is a constant light humming.

NOVICHOK, a young woman is lying asleep in one of the beds. She wakes up, opening her eyes quickly and slowly coming up to sit up. We see a mixture of recognition and confusion on her face.

One of the tiles lights up and an alarm sounds from it, the other young woman, MIKAH, gets up. She walks to the tile and touches it, the alarm stops. She started to move across the room.

MIKAH
(yarning)
Morning.

NOVICHOK stays silent as she watches MIKAH cross the room. MIKAH reaches into one of the tiles, her hand passes through it like it was a projection of a tile. She pulls out two bowls of porridge from behind it, she casually walks over to NOVICHOK and hands her a bowl. They start to eat in silence. There's a pause.

NOVICHOK
How do you know?

MIKAH
Know what?

NOVICHOK
Know it's morning.

MIKAH
(confused)
What do you mean how do I know?

NOVICHOK
We have no sun. We have no way to see the sky. No clock. We just hear an alarm and wake up.

MIKAH
Well... I guess that's our morning.
Morning can be subjective.

NOVICHOK
(trying to understand)
Morning... is subjective?

MIKAH
Yeah, like how every morning
around the world is different. My
mornings are at a certain time
but, you know, it's not a morning
for someone in Africa. So, yeah
it's subjective

NOVICHOK
That makes absolutely no sense.
Our morning depends on the sun so
we are guided by the sun. I'm
asking you how do you know it's a
morning when we can't see the sun.

MIKAH
(irritated)
What do you want me to say? I'm
just trying to make everything
make sense-

NOVICHOK
But why, why are you trying to
make sense of our situation? Why
don't we know if it's morning? How
did we get here? How come all I
know about myself is my name? How
do I even know what the concept of
naming is? How do I even know what
a morning is? How do we even speak
Eng-

MIKAH
Novi, stop.

NOVICHOK
(agitated)
No! I keep asking these questions
and no one replies. How do you
even know what these tiles do?
Where do the letters come from?
Someone is on the other side of
these walls, I know it, why can't
I-

We see her body stop and slowly drop. MIKAH catches her
body, we see a tranquilizer dart sticking out of NOVICHOK's
back. MIKAH takes the dart out and slowly lays NOVICKOV
back down on the bed. MIKAH's face reads that this has
happened before. The lights within the room turn red.

MIKAH

(to the room)

I know, I know. Please just... give
me a chance with her. It's going
to take time. Please just... give it
time.

The lights slowly turn back to white, MIKAH is relieved.
She begins to clean up after breakfast and make her bed.

CUT TO:

START MONTAGE:

The humming of the room throughout these cuts; no music, no
other noise to escape the monotony of this room.

--- MIKAH walking around the room counting steps.

--- NOVICHOK walking MIKAH as she reads her book aloud.

--- MIKAH and NOVICHOK sleeping.

--- MIKAH walking with food towards NOVICHOK.

--- Them eating together.

--- MIKAH and NOVICHOK sleeping.

--- Pills on a platter coming out of one of the tiles.

--- MIKAH and NOVICHOK taking them.

--- MIKAH and NOVICHOK walking around the room counting
steps.

--- Repeated shots of MIKAH and NOVICHOK sleeping.

FADE IN:

INT. A PLAIN ROOM - A FEW DAYS LATER

NOVICHOK is up, sitting on her bed and staring at MIKAH.
MIKAH is on the other bed reading 'Brave New World by
Aldous Huxley'. After a small silence, we see two tiles
move away from each other to make a small gap, then a
letter slides from that gap. The tiles close up again.

MIKAH gets up and grabs the letter. We see a number on the
envelope: 289

MIKAH

(trying to be upbeat)

Hey, look what we got here!

Pause for a response, NOVICHOK doesn't respond.

MIKAH

(opening the letter
and coming to sit down
next to her)
Let's see what they said...

"Hello, Novichok.
We hope you're doing well. We miss
you terribly and have been waiting
for you every day. I wait at the
back door of the house and
[redated] waits for you near the
front. The front is more dangerous
so he takes post there. Not much
happens when we wait but I saw a
squirrel the other day. I wonder
if you remember what squirrels are
or what they look like, Heaven
knows I've almost forgotten.
Anyways, that was a nice surprise.
I hope the food there is good, it
much better than what we get. We
get this mixture of wheat bran and
water. It keeps us alive but it
takes like paste. I hope they feed
you well there.
I know you may not be able to,
but--"

MIKAH stops herself, she starts to close the letter and put
it back in the envelope.

NOVICHOK
What does it say?

MIKAH stays quiet.
You can't say?

Small pause.
You can't say.

MIKAH
She ends it but wishing you well.

NOVICHOK
For sure.

One of the tiles opens to reveal a shredder. MIKAH goes
towards the shredder and with hesitation, she feeds the
envelope into the shredder. NOVICHOK stares at the letter
as it sheds.

NOVICHOK
The number on the envelope was
289.

MIKAH
Yeah? What's wrong with that?

NOVICHOK
Nothing wrong with it. It's just
the last letter had a 281 written
on the envelope.

Pause.

MIKAH
(lying)
Oh really? Are you sure? That was
from a while ago... maybe you
remembered the numbers wrong?

Pause. NOVICHOK looks as if they know MIKAH is covering
something up.

Also, we don't know what the
numbers mean. Could be nothing.

Pause.

NOVICHOK
For sure.

They hold each other's gaze for a moment.

CUT TO:

INT. PLAIN ROOM - THAT "NIGHT"

MIKAH is asleep, NOVICHOK is lying down on her bed. She
then sits up, studying the room around her. She turns her
head slowly to look at the tile behind her as if she
remembers the dart that came out of there. She lies her
hand on the tile, feeling it. She lies her hand flat
against the wall, there's a click as she does.

She reacts in surprise but continues pressing into the
wall. As she does the tile is released and falls down,
revealing a huge amount of wires and steel structures
feeding into the surrounding tiles. She has a look into the
vast amount of wires on either side of the tile, as she
looks she hears whispers (as if they are traveling through
the wires).

WHISPERS
(distorted and over one another)
--- Novichok, listen.
--- Don't listen.
--- They hear everything.
--- They know nothing.
--- They know everything.
--- How could they know?
--- You know.
--- Do you know?
--- Don't obey?

--- Obey.
--- Don't obey.
--- Obey.
--- Listen to them.
--- How can you listen to
something that cannot speak?
--- It doesn't need to speak.

CUT TO:

INT. SURVEILLANCE POINT - CONTINUOUS

CAMERA cut to behind the wires, looking at NOVICHOK through a darkened plane of glass.

BACK TO:

INT. PLAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

NOVICHOK slowly turns to look at the darkened glass behind the wires.

CLOSE SHOT of a silhouette behind the glass. It then disappears.

The lights then turn red and a siren rings within the room, waking MIKAH. NOVICHOK starts to run backward, away from the open tile and falls over from her bed. As she moves we see a collection of darts fired at her, narrowly missing her.

CAMERA cut to a close up of her face whilst she is lying on the floor and then cut to a pistol-like contraption aiming at NOVICHOK. With this include cuts to MIKAH, running towards the open tile and pulling out one of the wires. One she does the lights turn off and the humming of the room stops. It's dark except for the dim light coming from behind the darkened glass panel.

MIKAH looks at it, terrified. NOVICHOK stands, grabs MIKAH's hand and begins to head towards the glass. Once there, she props herself up onto her bed and starts kicking the glass, she cries in pain after each kick and as it starts to shatter her foot becomes bloody. It takes a few attempts but finally, the glass shatters and reveals a lot of light behind it. MIKAH stands still, looking at the glass.

NOVICHOK
(in pain)
Could you... go first?

MIKAH looks at her.

I don't think I'll be able to walk
without help.

MIKAH hesitates but then nods quickly. She climbs through the panel and we see her jump out. She is now out of view.

NOVICHOK is left alone. She stares out the window for a moment.

NOVICHOK
(whispering)
Hey... you okay?

A moment of silence. NOVICHOK starts panicking.

Hello?

Another pause.

MIKAH
(whispering)
Hey. I'm okay.

NOVICHOK is relieved.

You can jump down now.

NOVICHOK takes a second to look around the room. The CAMERA PANS to show only the silhouette of NOVICHOK created on the wall from the light within the panel. We see the silhouette start to crawl through the panel and fall out of the other side.

We see TEXT appear onscreen:

"The Bell"

FADE OUT:

THE END.