

Night: The Shift Nobody Sees

My order: first the person — “Welcome — you’re in good hands now: give me a few minutes and I’ll have everything sorted out for you”; a seat, water, calm. Calm conveyed truthfully: what you promise is your attention, not a control you don’t have yet. A 2:40 a.m. guest doesn’t need efficiency: they need the certainty that they have reached a safe harbor.

Then the solution with what you have: a paper form with the essentials (name, ID, contact details, license plate if they came by car), kept in your custody and never left in view; payment taken or a guarantee noted down, to be settled in the morning — and as soon as the system is back, everything goes into it and the paper is securely destroyed: paper is a bridge, not a file; and a room that I have checked MYSELF as ready — night is no time for cleaning surprises. I walk them there or explain the way in detail: a hotel in the small hours is disorienting.

And third, the handover: their case in writing, complete, first on the handover list — registration pending, payment pending and one human line: “arrived exhausted, handle gently.” If the 2:40 a.m. guest has breakfast at 9 a.m. and the morning shift greets them by name, that night was worth a review. And probably, in time, a promotion for you.