

FEBRUARY 4, 1977

SO I'M DEAD.

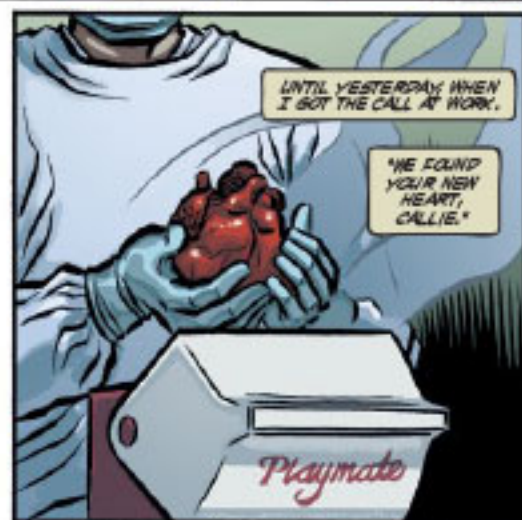
AND THAT'S A BUMMER.

BUT I'VE BEEN DYING ALL MY LIFE.



UNTIL YESTERDAY, WHEN I GOT THE CALL AT WORK.

"WE FOUND YOUR NEW HEART, CALLIE."



AND NOW I'M DEAD.

BUT IF I'M LUCKY, I WON'T BE FOR LONG.



HA. WHY WOULD I START BEING LUCKY NOW?





FIVE DAYS LATER.

OW!
OW!

FUNNY THING ABOUT DOCTORS CUTTING YOUR CHEST OPEN, RIPPING YOUR HEART OUT AND SEWING ANOTHER ONE INTO PLACE.

KINDA HURTS.



FOUR WEEKS LATER.

THEN YOU GET OUT OF BED, AND YOU REALIZE THAT WAS JUST, LIKE, A SNEAK PREVIEW.



THREE MONTHS LATER.

THEN YOU START THE REAL RECOVERY PROCESS AND YOU KINDA THINK YOU'RE STILL DEAD, OR WISH YOU WERE.



TWO DAYS UNTIL DISCHARGE.

BUT AFTER MONTHS OF THIS, YOU REALIZE THIS IS EASY PAIN. PHYSICAL STUFF.

THE REAL SHARP STICKS COME AFTER YOU CAN WALK, DRESS YOURSELF, FEED YOURSELF.

WHEN IT'S JUST YOU AND THAT LITTLE VOICE IN YOUR HEAD.



ONE HOUR TO GO.

OR YOU AND YOUR FUTURE.

GETTING BACK TO BUNNERS.

MISS BOLDREAR, YOU KNOW I CAN'T REVEAL THE DONOR'S IDENTITY, NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YOU ASK.

NOW LET'S TALK ABOUT WHAT COMES NEXT.

UGH.
FINE.



YOUR HEART IS ALMOST PERFECTLY IN SYNC WITH YOUR BODY. IT'S FAR BETTER THAN MOST TRANSPLANTS EXPERIENCE.

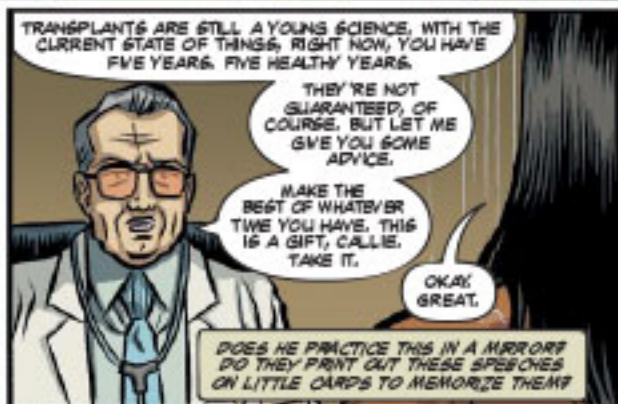
YOU SHOULD BE VERY PLEASED.

BUT...



THIS ISN'T A NEW LEASE ON LIFE. IT'S MORE OF A... WELL, A RENTAL.

YOU CAN SAY IT, DR. SHUNWAY, I ALREADY KNOW. I REMEMBER YOU TELLING ME BEFORE THE SURGERY.



TRANSPLANTS ARE STILL A YOUNG SCIENCE, WITH THE CURRENT STATE OF THINGS, RIGHT NOW, YOU HAVE FIVE YEARS. FIVE HEALTHY YEARS.

THEY'RE NOT GUARANTEED, OF COURSE. BUT LET ME GIVE YOU SOME ADVICE.

MAKE THE BEST OF WHATEVER TIME YOU HAVE. THIS IS A GIFT, CALLIE. TAKE IT.

OKAY. GREAT.

DOES HE PRACTICE THIS IN A MIRROR? DO THEY PRINT OUT THESE SPEECHES ON LITTLE CARDS TO MEMORIZE THEM?



I'M THE ONE WHO'S BEEN SICK ALL HER LIFE. I'M THE ONE WHO'S DIED EXACTLY TWICE IN THE LAST TWENTY EIGHT YEARS.

I'M THE ONE WALKING AROUND WITH SOME STRANGER'S HEART IN MY CHEST. BECAUSE YOU WON'T TELL ME WHO HE IS, YOU... YOU...

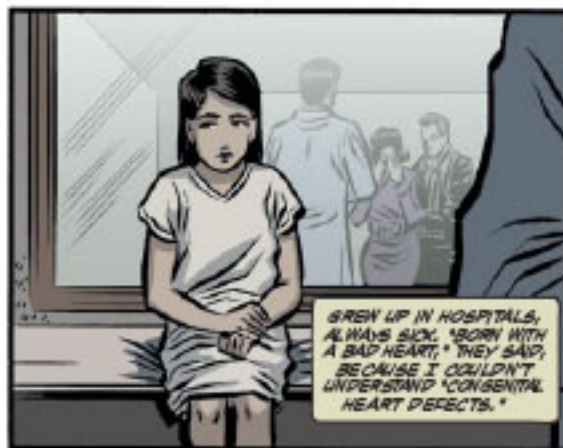


I GET THAT IT'S A GIFT, [REDACTED]

YOU NEED A RIDE, LADY?



WHAT I NEED IS SOMEONE TO TELL ME WHAT THE [REDACTED] I DO WITH IT.



GREW UP IN HOSPITALS, ALWAYS SICK. "BORN WITH A BAD HEART," THEY SAID. BECAUSE I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND "CONGENITAL HEART DEFECTS."



"YOU HAVE TO BE MORE CAREFUL THAN THE OTHER KIDS," THEY SAID BETWEEN SURGERIES AND PROCEDURES.



EVERYONE TREATING ME LIKE SOME DELICATE FLOWER.



AND THE ONES I ACTUALLY WANTED TO TAKE CARE OF ME, THEY WERE TOO FREAKED OUT. EVEN BACK THEN THEY'D SAY WORDS LIKE "COMMITMENT" AS IF THEY WERE SWEARING.



I SHOULD'VE BEEN OLD ENOUGH TO STOP BELIEVING IN FAIRY TALES, BUT I KEPT BELIEVING ONE DAY I'D BE CURED.

SLEEPING BEAUTY IN HER GLASS CASE, JUST WAITING FOR SOME PRINCE TO COME KISS IT AWAY.



UNTIL ONE DAY THE REAL WORLD CAUGHT UP WITH MY FANTASIES. SCIENCE FICTION WAS REGULAR SCIENCE NOW.



SO I WENT TO GO INTRODUCE MYSELF TO THE FUTURE. BE MY OWN PRINCE.



"LONG WAITING LIST," THEY SAID.

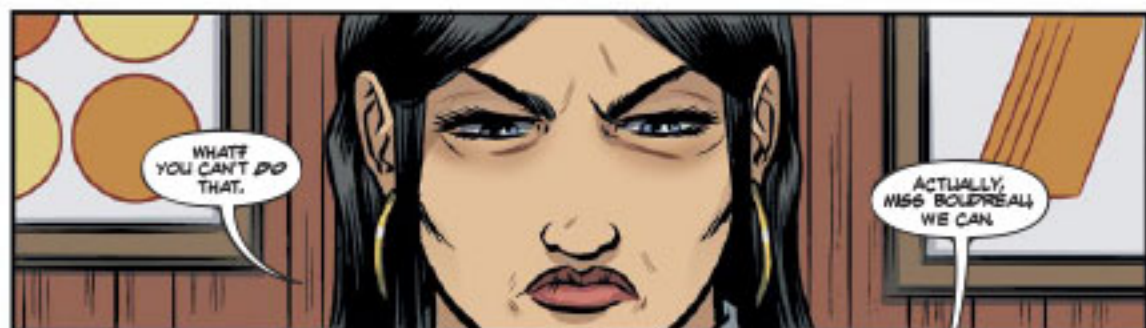
"PROHIBITIVELY EXPENSIVE," THEY SAID.

"SCREW IT," I SAID.

WELCOME TO STANFORD CALIFORNIA







WHAT? YOU CAN'T DO THAT.

ACTUALLY, MISS BOLDREAR, WE CAN.



WHEN YOU WERE PROMOTED LAST YEAR, YOU SIGNED NEW CONTRACTS. YOU ALSO SIGNED A CLAUSE FREESING US FROM ANY FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS TOWARDS PREEXISTING CONDITIONS.

NOW CALLIE--

FUNNY HOW NO ONE EVER TOLD ME THAT. IS THAT THE WHOLE REASON I GOT THE STUPID PROMOTION? TO FOOL ME INTO SIGNING AWAY MY LIFE?



BOB, JANIS, I'VE GIVEN FIVE YEARS TO ARCHWAY. YOU KNEW ABOUT MY CONDITION, YOU WERE FINE WITH IT.

I WORKED HARD FOR THIS. SCREWED PEOPLE OUT OF MONEY THEY WERE OWED.



I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU SCREW ME TOO.

WE'RE SORRY YOU FEEL THIS WAY BUT--



LOOK AT IT.

I'M NOT AN EXPENDITURE OR SOME HIGH-RISK CASE. I'M THE WOMAN WHO HAS WORKED WITH YOU FOR YOU.

IF I DON'T GET THIS, I WOULD BE DEAD.



CALLIE, PLEASE. I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH AN ORDEAL, BUT THAT DOESN'T EXCUSE YOU ACTING LIKE THIS. WE'RE TRYING TO WORK WITH YOU HERE.

YES AND WHILE WE CAN'T COVER THE COST OF YOUR SURGERY, WE CAN OFFER YOU THE REST OF THE WEEK OFF TO COMPOSE YOUR--



EAT IT, BOB, AND YOU CAN SHOVE YOUR OFFER, JANIS. I'M GOING BACK TO WORK.

NOW CALLIE, HOLD ON ONE--

SOMEONE HAS TO PAY FOR THIS NEW HEART, AFTER ALL.



WHAT THE HELL'S
GONG ON WITH ME?

I STINK AT
CONCENTRATION.
I'D NORMALLY
RATHER RUN
AND HIDE THAN
EVEN SUSPECT
TO SOMEONE
THEY MIGHT
BE WRONGS.

NEVER HIT SOMEONE
WITH A CONTRACT OR
YELLED AT MY BOSS,
THAT'S FOR SURE.

NEVER PUT AWAY
SEVEN OF THESE
WITHOUT HARDLY
FEELING IT.

BARELY OFF THE WAGON AND MY
TOLERANCE IS STRONGER THAN EVER.
NORMALLY I'D BE ON THE FLOOR.

MINE, ON A GOOD NIGHT BARRY'S
ON A WORSE ONE. SOMETIMES
JERRY, THE BARTENDER, LET ME
SLEEP IT OFF ON THE POOL TABLE.



OUTSIDE OF WORK, THESE ARE
THE ONLY PEOPLE I TALK TO.

MEH.

I SPENT SO MUCH OF MY LIFE IN DOORS,
SIBELINED BY SICKNESS, I KIND OF
STINK AT MAKING FRIENDS BY NOW.

THEY'RE NOT MY FRIENDS.
I DON'T REALLY HAVE ANY
OF THOSE. NOT HERE.

THIS ISN'T MY LIFE,
THIS ISN'T MY TOWN.

THIS IS WHERE I KILL
TIME UNTIL I FIGURE
OUT WHAT THEY ARE.



JERRY! GIVE ME A
CIGARETTE.

MAYBE
THAT'LL...
PAWMIT.

JUST
STEAL
ONE.



OH, HELLO
THERE.

YOU
THE LITTLE
DEVIL ON MY
SHOULDER?

I CAN
BE, IF THAT'S
WHAT YOU
NEED.



IGNORING THAT CLIMBY LITTLE BIT OF FLIRTING, WHAT'S THIS ABOUT STEALING?

DO I LOOK LIKE THAT KIND OF GIRL?

JERRY KEEPS HIS PACK RIGHT UNDER THE BAR, ALONG WITH HIS WALLET.

IF YOU WANT TO MAKE THINGS INTERESTING.



I'VE NEVER BEEN STRONG ENOUGH TO RESIST A PARE.

BUT IF YOU'RE PULLING MY CHAN I'M GONNA-- A-HA!



SMALL MOVEMENTS, EVERYTHING NATURAL. IF YOU DON'T CALL ATTENTION TO IT, NO ONE WILL NOTICE.

IT'S A KIND OF MAGIC. PRETEND YOU'RE DOING A TRICK.



TA DA! THE PERFECT CRIBE.

I'VE BEEN BETTER.

GOT A LIGHT?



OH MY GOD, I LOVE THIS SONG. YOU LIKE FLEETWOOD MAC?

THIS ALBUM IS ALL I'VE LISTENED TO SINCE I GOT OUT OF THE H--.



C'MON, COME DANCE WITH M--

Dew Drop





I DON'T DEAL WITH BAD NEWS WELL.

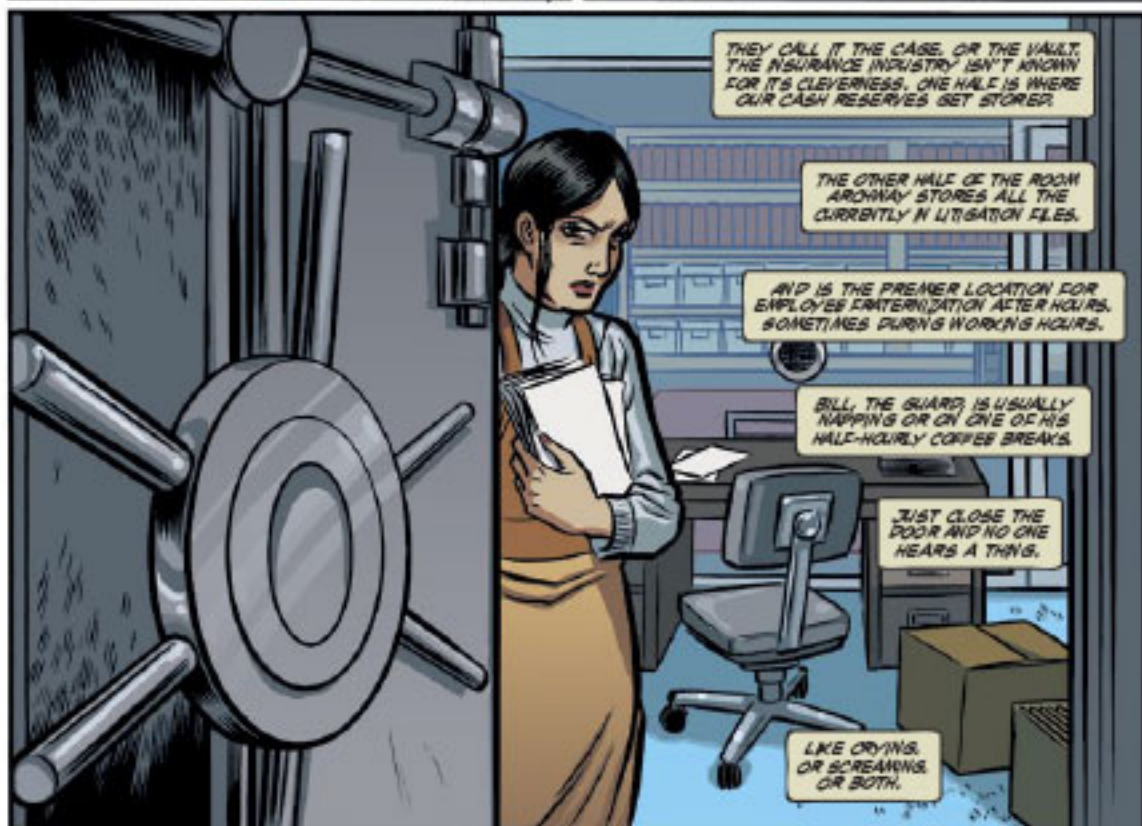
WHICH IS FUNNY, SINCE MY LIFE HAS BEEN A NON-STOP PARADE OF BAD NEWS.



I SHOULD SAY I DON'T DEAL WITH IT WELL IN PUBLIC.

THAT'S USUALLY NOT A PROBLEM, EXCEPT FOR NOW.

LUCKILY I KNOW JUST THE PLACE.



THEY CALL IT THE CASE, OR THE VAULT. THE INSURANCE INDUSTRY ISN'T KNOWN FOR ITS CLEVERNESS. ONE HALF IS WHERE OUR CASH RESERVES GET STORED.

THE OTHER HALF OF THE ROOM ARCHWAY STORES ALL THE CURRENTLY IN LITIGATION FILES.

AND IS THE PREMIER LOCATION FOR EMPLOYEES EMERITIZATION AFTER HOURS. SOMETIMES DURING WORKING HOURS.

BILL, THE GUARD, IS USUALLY NAPPING OR ON ONE OF HIS HALF-HOURLY COFFEE BREAKS.

JUST CLOSE THE DOOR AND NO ONE HEARS A THING.

LIKE CRYING, OR SCREAMING, OR BOTH.



AHH
HHHHHH
SHHHHHH
HHH!



BARRY

ARCHWAY

EVERYTHING.