

AT LEAST HE'S HONEST

Written by

Jason Zaccaro

INT. WHITE ROOM - AFTERNOON

TOM LOWRY, 22, lies face planted in an all white bed, with all white sheets and pillow cases.

The room is completely empty, save for a TV directly across from Tom, which is currently turned off, and a single door.

Tom groggily starts to wake up, turning onto his back and wiping his hands with his eyes. He then starts to sit up, slowly looking around at his surroundings as he does.

Tom is obviously very confused, but ultimately puts his hands behind his head and lies back down.

Suddenly the TV turns on, startling Tom, who turns to watch it. Initially it is just static, but soon a Man in a suit sitting in a classroom comes on. The TV is in black and white, reminiscent of a 1950's PSA.

TV ANNOUNCER

If you're seeing this it can only mean one thing, you're dead! Congratulations! Before you head off on your own, you'll want to speak to your personal death consultant about how to make your afterlife a productive one! Head through the door when you're ready to get started on a great eternity!

The TV shuts off and Tom sits there staring at the blank screen for an extra few seconds. He then shakes his head and makes his way toward the door.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Tom walks out into the hallway and sees rows and rows of doors identical to the one he just came out off.

Out of one of these rooms comes JEFF TYE, 22, with disheveled hair and a glazed over look in his eyes.

TOM

Yooooooooooooo!

JEFF

Yooooooooooooo!

Jeff and Tom excitedly walk over to each other and fist bump

TOM

How is it going man! Longtime no see.

JEFF

You know I literally saw you at the party yesterday, right?

Tom looks at Jeff, confused, and is obviously straining hard to remember the previous night.

TOM

Oh ya, now I remember. So, any chance you know where we are? Seems like your memory is a little more intact than mine.

JEFF

No idea pal. The last thing I remember I was doing my eighth... or maybe it was my ninth line of coke, and I must have passed out or something. Then I woke up in a creepy ass white room.

TOM

Was there nothing in that room but a TV?

JEFF

Ya, and it played some dumb video saying ---

TOM

Saying that you were dead?

JEFF

Ya, how did you know?

TOM

Same exact shit happened to me man.

JEFF

Well at least we know someone around here has a sense of humor right?

TOM

Ya I guess so. Looks like there's an elevator at the end of the hall over here.

Jeff and Tom walk over to the elevator, and get in.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

JEFF

Any idea where we're actually going?

TOM

Nah, I figured we would just head to the ground floor and walk straight out if no one stops us, you know?

Tom hits the button for the first floor.

JEFF

I just thought of something man, if we're really dead, than we must be like ghosts or something right?

TOM

Makes sense to me.

JEFF

So than we should be able to like phase through walls and stuff right?

TOM

I don't see why not.

Jeff tries to walk through the wall of the elevator, but is obviously unable to.

JEFF

Tom.

TOM

Ya bud?

JEFF

I don't think we're ghosts.

TOM

Ya I think we can safely rule that out as well.

The elevator stops on the ground floor and Tom and Jeff walk out of it and into the lobby of the building.

INT. BUILDING LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Jeff and Tom walk out into a mostly empty building lobby, with a few offices off to the side and a desk near the front door.

Jeff and Tom start walking for the exit door to go outside, but notice GEOFFREY MOULDER, 22, in a suit sitting at the desk, behind a computer.

Geoffrey, waves at Jeff and Tom to come towards him, with a slightly off putting but eager smile.

Jeff and Tom look at each other, shrug, and walk over to Geoffrey, who sticks out his hand for both of them to shake.

GEOFFREY

How's it going guys! My name's Geoffrey and I'll be your death consultant today. If you have any questions about the afterlife be sure to ask away, and I'll answer to the best of my ability!

TOM

I'm sorry you're our what now?

GEOFFREY

I'm you're personal death consultant!

TOM

Hey man, I can appreciate a weird trip as much as the next guy, but this whole "you're dead" joke has been old for a while now.

Geoffrey takes a quick peak at his computer.

GEOFFREY

Tom Lowry and Jeff Tye right?

Jeff and Tom look at each other, obviously concerned.

TOM

Ya that's us.

GEOFFREY

According to my records here, you both died roughly 20 minutes ago.

TOM

There must be some kind of mistake!

GEOFFREY

Says here that you died of alcohol poisoning Tom, and Jeff, you died of a cocaine overdose.

JEFF

That... that sounds about right actually, now that I think about it.

TOM

Alright well if we are really dead, where are we?

GEOFFREY

You're in purgatory.

TOM

Purgatory?

GEOFFREY

Ya it's kinda like heaven and hell's waiting room.

TOM

I thought that was Florida.

GEOFFREY

Not quite. You're both here because neither of you are good people, so we can't send you straight to heaven, but you aren't like, Hitler bad so you didn't get sent to hell.

JEFF

So are we stuck here forever?

GEOFFREY

Nope. We'll assign you a job, and as long as you do it you'll earn the right to get to heaven, in just a few short centuries! Might take you guys a little extra since you're suicide cases though.

TOM

Whoa, hold on just a second, there must be some kind of mistake here.

Geoffrey's smile and welcoming demeanor instantly fade away. Suddenly, he has a serious look on his face and a furrowed brow.

GEOFFREY

I assure you that I do not make mistakes. I understand your disappointment Mr. Lowry but I'm afraid you do belong here.

TOM

Oh really? I find that hard to believe considering you just said my death was a suicide, when it wasn't.

Geoffrey flares his nostrils and grits his teeth, obviously agitated with Tom.

GEOFFREY

I have news for you Mr. Lowry, you are stuck here. I would begin to wrap my head around the concept right now if I were you. The only thing left for me to do is assign you a job.

TOM

Is there someone else I can talk to about this?

GEOFFREY

We use your last submitted resume from when you were alive to determine what job you would be best suited for. According to this, Mr. Lowry your last resume was one you sent to a Taco bell, which list your only skill as "not wanting to starve to death", and includes a short explanation that says "I'm broke and you need workers, what's the fucking problem?" I'm thinking janitor would be the only job you are capable of performing adequately.

Tom stares down Geoffrey with a newfound intensity.

TOM

I need to speak with whoever is in charge, right now.

Geoffrey laughs in Tom's face.

GEOFFREY

I'm afraid you'll find that the only person with authority to overrule me has no time to waste talking to you. If you absolutely insist on pursuing this asinine course of action, stop by my office later today.

TOM

Oh I'll be there. One last question though, where is the nearest bar?

Geoffrey smirks when he hears this.

GEOFFREY

Oh I'm sorry Tom, but there is no alcohol or drug use permitted in purgatory. Have a great rest of the day!

INT. GEOFFREY'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Tom and Jeff are sitting down across from Geoffrey in his sparsely decorated office.

Aside from the desk and chairs at the center, and the filing cabinets along the wall, there are no other decorations.

TOM

What do you mean denied!?

GEOFFREY

I'm sorry Mr. Lowry, but there just isn't any good reason for me to entertain this request. I don't feel as though you've done anything to earn it.

TOM

Well is there a good reason to keep me here? It's pretty obvious you dislike me, why would you want me around?

Geoffrey laughs the same way he did earlier, clearly agitating Tom once again.

TOM

What? What's so funny this time?

GEOFFREY

I won't be around here much longer.
As soon as your stay here becomes
official I'm gone.

TOM

Why are you so eager to leave? Why
do you care so much about keeping
me here?

GEOFFREY

I've been here since the 1300's. I
used to be a Knight! I used to know
nothing but the exhilaration of
battle! For years now I've known
only paper. It is truly a fate worse
than death. Something someone like
you could never understand. By 5
tomorrow I'll be on my way out and
you'll be stuck here.

Tom sits there, seething with rage, but is ultimately
speechless.

Jeff, who has been staring off into the distance for nearly
the entire conversation, finally turns to Geoffrey to say
something.

JEFF

Wait so you were some badass knight
before right? So, where you killed
in like, some epic battle or
something?

GEOFFREY

Why... yes. Yes I was.

Geoffrey looks away from Tom and Jeff, avoiding eye contact
as best he can.

Jeff and Tom look right at Geoffrey, and obviously notice his
lack of eye contact.

TOM

You probably died due to something
stupid, like syphilis. Didn't you?

Jeff chuckles.

JEFF

Or perhaps you got a booboo that
got infected?

Jeff and Tom both burst into laughter, obviously trying to contain themselves but failing miserably.

TOM
But seriously is there someone else
I can talk to?

GEOFFREY
Get out of my office!

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE GEOFFREY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Tom and Jeff stand in the Hallway outside Geoffrey's office, the door slamming behind them.

Geoffrey's office is tucked away in a corner, the only inhabited office around.

At the end of the hall is the exit, and a desk with a young receptionist sitting behind it.

As they head for the exit, Tom stops and goes over to the receptionist.

TOM
Hey, I'm having a problem with Mr.
Moulder, is there anyone I can talk
to about it?

RECEPTIONIST
I'm afraid not, he's the boss
around here for now.

TOM
For now?

RECEPTIONIST
Ya, once you guys get processed he
will have hit his quota and he'll
be able to move on.

Tom struggles to contain his anger when he hears this.

Jeff grabs him and drags him towards the exit, as Tom forces a smile through gritted teeth.

INT. CAFE - EVENING

Jeff and Tom sit at a table in a cafe with all white chairs and tables, in complete silence.

Jeff is eating a muffin, while Tom has a coffee in front him, which he keeps stirring, without ever actually taking a drink from.

TOM

I don't know what to do man. We need to get back somehow.

JEFF

(with his mouth full)

I don't know man. It's really not so bad here. I think you could manage to get used to things around here. Besides, that Geoffrey guy is a total dick. There's no way he'll help us out.

TOM

But if I can prove that he made a mistake, maybe there's a loophole you know?

JEFF

Just let it go man, it's really not a big deal.

Tom is staring at the coffee he is stirring, not really paying attention to what Jeff is saying, while Jeff is staring at a girl sitting at a table in the distance.

TOM

I just... I don't think I was ready to go just yet you know?

JEFF

Ya that's really funny man. I'll be right back.

Tom looks up to realize Jeff isn't paying any attention to him. Jeff walks over to the girl he was staring at.

TOM

(muttering under his breath)

Aaaaaand I'm alone now.

Tom goes back to despondently staring at his coffee as he stirs it.

Tom finally gets up, and sullenly leaves the cafe, with his head down and his hands in his pockets.

BARISTA

Excuse me, sir! Sir you forgot to pay!

EXT. GEOFFREY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Tom is nearly too busy wallowing in self pity to notice that he is walking by Geoffrey's office.

He stops and looks at the window to Geoffrey's office and stares at it for a moment.

INT. GEOFFREY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Geoffrey's office is completely empty and dark. The window in the background opens up, and a clearly struggling and exhausted Tom tumbles in a moment later, headfirst.

He bangs his head on Geoffrey's desk and knocks over a bunch of papers.

Tom lies there on the floor for a moment holding his head, and suppressing the urge to unleash a flurry of curses.

Once he is finally able to stand, Tom walks over to Geoffrey's computer, and opens it up.

He clicks on the password box and stops for a moment. After a few seconds he types in password.

TOM

(muttering to himself)
What an idiot.

Geoffrey's computer opens up, and Tom begins searching through files, before finding his and Jeff's.

Tom is about to make the necessary changes to his and Jeff's files when suddenly the lights in the office flick on, and the door violently flings open.

2 officers burst into the room, guns drawn. Tom immediately shuts the laptop and throws his hands into the air.

OFFICER

Freeze!

Tom is initially at a loss for words, and just stands there with a very surprised look on his face.

He looks as if he is about to explode, but no words come out of his mouth.

Tom manages to regain some composure however, and takes a deep breath.

TOM

2 questions. 1, if you had shot me, what would have even happened? And 2, what happens to me now?

OFFICER

1. You ever been hit with a BB gun? It hurts... like a lot. 2. You'll be thrown into a cell while we show the boss the details of your case, then he'll decide your punishment. If I had to guess, you'll probably be sent to hell.

Tom's eyes widen when he hears this, and he takes a big gulp.

TOM

What exactly is hell like? Out of curiosity.

OFFICER

You'll be buttfucked by Satan perpetually, for all eternity.

TOM

I was afraid of that. I don't suppose there's anyway I can plead my case in person? I believe it was mishandled.

OFFICER

How so?

Tom motions for the officer to look at the information on the computer screen.

EXT. GARDEN - MORNING

GOD

How's it going Tom?

TOM

Uh... honestly I've been better.

GEOFFREY

Why are we entertaining the notion that this man deserves anything other than punishment?

GOD

Patience Geoffrey, you know we have to hear him out. Please Tom, explain yourself.

TOM

Well you see Mr. uh, Mr. God, I-

GOD

Please Tom, no reason to be so formal. Relax a bit, take a hit if it'll help.

God passes Tom a bong and a lighter, which Tom accepts, the look of confusion on his face obvious the other time.

GOD

Are you really surprised that an old guy who wears blouses and has long flowing hair, and a long beard, smokes weed? I mean I invented it after all.

Tom shrugs and takes a hit.

GOD

Let me ask you something Tom, do you think you deserve to be sent back?

Tom pauses and thinks for a moment.

TOM

No.

GOD

No?

TOM

I'm many things, but a liar isn't one of them. I'll be the first to concede that I haven't exactly been a model citizen. But I don't think that means that I have nothing to offer society. Just cause I'm not exactly curing world hunger doesn't mean I'm not doing anything important.

GEOFFREY

That's the dumbest argument I think I've ever heard.

GOD

You know what I appreciate Tom? The honesty. Usually in this situation the person stands there and just spouts some bullshit about how they plan to change, be a better person, etc., etc. It's such a nice change of pace to meet someone who's a straight shooter.

GEOFFREY

You have to be kidding me!

GOD

I'd like to send you back Tom, I really would, but unless you can prove Geoffrey made a mistake somewhere along the line I can't help you.

TOM

Actually, I can do just that! If you look at the report, Geoffrey listed my death as a suicide, when it wasn't!

God looks over at Geoffrey, and sticks his hand out. Geoffrey hands God the report on Tom's death.

God takes out his reading glasses to take a closer look at.

GOD

Looks like he's right Geof.

GEOFFREY

What?!

GOD

You know what Tom? I will send you back. All I want from you, is to make sure you aren't regretting it the next time you come back here?

TOM

How do you know there will be a next time?

God shoots Tom a look.

TOM

Fair enough. What about Jeff though?

GOD

I think he's settling in here just
fine.

Tom pauses again for a second, than nods in agreement.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tom wakes up suddenly to a Paramedic pumping his chest with his hands. He takes a long, surprised breath and sits up slightly.

Looking around the room, he can see it is completely trashed.

He notices Jeff lying in the corner, unresponsive.

Tom takes one more deep breath and lies back down.

FADE TO BLACK.