

Alas Poor Yorick

by
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EXT. CITY STREET, NEW ENGLAND - NIGHT

FADE IN: A cold night in late fall. A mostly empty street lit only by the orange glow of street lights.

An elderly homeless man in a tattered coat sits huddled on the sidewalk. People pass by but take no notice of him. He holds a cardboard sign that says "Anything helps, God bless!".

The man looks down at the hat placed in front of him.

INSERT: The hat is empty except for a meager amount of pocket change.

The man picks up his hat, looks both ways and crosses the street.

A car rips around the corner.

Behind the wheel, a suit clad business man shouts into a Bluetooth.

BUSINESS MAN

Figure it out! It's your neck on the line
not mine. If you don't fix this, so help
me-

He looks up from his phone just in time to see...

WHAM! The homeless man flies over the roof of the car and crumples on the pavement behind it.

The car skids to a halt. The business man steps out. He looks at the homeless man, horrified.

The street is empty: no witnesses. He hops back into his car and speeds away.

The homeless man lies motionless on the street. His breathing starts to slow as blood pools around him.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - DAY

A modest but cozy hospital lobby. Patients and doctors mill about.

Through a set of glass doors enters OLLIE HILL. A scrawny woman in her late 20s. She's more sweater than woman. The eyes beneath her round glasses have serious bags on them.

Ollie meekly steps into the lobby and looks around at the hustle and bustle. A middle aged nurse approaches her.

NURSE
Thanks so much for coming, Ms. Hill.

OLLIE
Don't mention it. Where is he?

NURSE
Right this way.

The nurse leads Ollie down a nearby hallway.

INT. MORGUE - CONTINUOUS

A hospital morgue lit by dull and flickering fluorescent lights.

The nurse opens one of the compartments and pulls out the body of the homeless man, his face still covered in wounds.

NURSE
By the time someone found him, he'd been dead for a couple of hours.

OLLIE
Christ.
(beat)
Have you contacted the next of kin?

NURSE
There isn't anyone. That's why I called you. He didn't have any identification. No phone. No nothing. Even local shelters can't tell us anything about him. They're planning on just putting him in an unmarked grave and calling it a day. But I don't know if I feel right about that. Seems kinda like a rough way to go out. Is there anything you can do for him?

Ollie nods wordlessly and steps over to the dead body. She leans down to get a good look.

OLLIE
(Sincerely)
Hey buddy. Bad day, huh.

Sitting on the slab next to his own dead body is a semitranslucent image of the homeless man who nods solemnly. The nurse looks past the image. She can't see him.

INT. HILTPOP CEMETERY, FUNERAL HOME BASEMENT - DAY

The dusty basement of a funeral home. Sickly artificial light illuminates a large sterile platform with the homeless man's body on it. A linoleum staircase leads to the upper floor.

A table to the right of the slab has several trays laid on it. The trays contain everything from a suture needle to a hairbrush. A large white cabinet abuts the wall.

Ollie works through the process of preparing the body for burial. She stuffs cotton into the mouth and nose.

OLLIE

Almost through, buddy. We're working on a budget here, but I never go halfway with a dead body.

She pulls the suture needle and thread from a tray and starts sewing the man's mouth shut. The image of the man grimaces.

OLLIE (CONT'D)

I know it's not pretty. Most folk don't understand the work that goes into making their loved one's look pretty in their casket. Speaking of which...

She opens the cabinet and pulls out a shabby suit.

OLLIE (CONT'D)

Sorry I can't do better. I pick them up from Goodwill when I can.

(beat)

It's too quiet upstairs.

The image of the man cocks his head. Ollie lays the suit down on the table. She returns to her stitching.

OLLIE (CONT'D)

I hate the days when it's silent. I wish someone could've shown up for you. But that's why I'm here, aren't I?

STEPHANIE (O.S.)

Ollie?

A door creaks. Footsteps clatter on the stairs.

Ollie jolts. She wheels around to see, the funeral director, STEPHANIE a blonde woman in her mid thirties with a kind smile and a pantsuit. The image of the homeless man is gone.

Ollie
Oh. Hi, Stephanie.

Stephanie
I was just coming to talk about the clients for the next week.

Ollie
I'll be up in a minute.

Ollie finishes the last stitch and ties and cuts the thread.

Stephanie
Are you, okay, Ollie?

Ollie
I'm fine. Why do you ask?

Stephanie
The first time you did something like this, I thought it was sweet and all, but...

Ollie
But what?

Stephanie
Aren't you worried about your finances? Paying for all this, I mean. It's not like you knew this guy. He could've been a drug addict or a-

Ollie
Does that matter?

Stephanie
I mean-
(beat, giving up)
No. It doesn't.

Stephanie starts back up the stairs. Ollie pulls a comb from the counter and starts brushing the dead man's hair. Stephanie stops halfway up the stairs.

Stephanie (CONT'D)
You know, Angela and some of the others were gonna hit up the karaoke bar on North Street tonight. You're free to come if you want to.

OLLIE
(avoidant)
I would, but I'm uhh... really busy
tonight.

STEPHANIE
Oh, okay.

OLLIE
Yeah, sorry.

STEPHANIE
It's fine. Feel free to stop by if you
change your mind.

Stephanie exits through the door at the top of the
stairs. Ollie watches her go.