12.11.05

THE STRIP



Building Stories By Chris Ware

PART 13: 9 a.m.









SO 1'D WAITED UNTIL NINE WHEN I FIGURED IT WAS POLITE TO CALL THE LANDLADY ABOUT MY TOLLET, BUT RATHER THAN DISCUSS IT ON THE PHONE, SHE WISISTED I COME DOWNSTAIRS AND SEE HER IN PERSON...THUS, HALF AN HOUR LATER, I WAS HER "GUEST"...
"GUEST"...
I GUESS I SHOULD HAVE PREDICTED SOMETHING LIKE THAT... OLD PEOPLE FREQUENTLY SEIZE ON ANY CRUMB OF PRETENSE TOWARD SOCIAL INTERACTION.. I JUST HADN'T COUNTED ON DISCUSSION OUR RESPECTIVE UNCONSCIOUS FANTASY LIVES, THAT'S ALL!









I MEAN, THERE WAS THE USUAL EXPECTED EXCHANGE OF MUSTY NICETIES, THE SMELL OF OUD CARPET, THE SAD BALD SPOT ON THE BACK OF HER HEAD THAT I STARED AT AS I FOLLOWED HER INTO THE LIVING ROOM CARRYING HER TEA TRAY, BUT WITHIN ONLY FUR MINUTES SHE'D ALSO TOLD ME ABOUT HER MOTHER'S PROTRACTED ILLNESS AND DEATH...





REALLY





AS IT TURNED OUT, SHE'D ACTUALLY TAKEN A CLASS OR TWO AT "THE ACADEMY" IN THE 1920'S OR 1930'S. SHE DESCRIBED IT AS A "SUNDAY WATER COLORIST SORT OF AFFAIR," WHERE A GROUP WOULD TRAVEL TO INDIANA FOR THE DAY AND SET UP THEIR EASELS...

I WONDERED WHAT KIND OF ART PROFESSOR WOULD BE ADVISING A BUNCH OF GIRLS ABOUT THEIR DREAMS, THOUGH...







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I'D JUST HOPED WE'D GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER **SOONER**, THAT'S ALL...





EVERYONE **ALWAYS** TALKS ABOUT THEMSELVES WHEN THEY'RE TRYING TO RENT AN APARTMENT



AND INDEED, THE MEMORY OF HAVING MADE SOME SORT OF CORDIAL LIE ABOUT VISITING HER CREPT FORWARD AND ENVELOPED ME, FLUSHING MY MAS I REALLY THAT SELF-ISH? THOUGHTLESS? SHE WAS CLEARLY OESPERATELY LONELY.
BEEN FOR ME, ANYWAY?



I FELT BAD... I HADN'T MEANT TO HURT HER FEELINGS... I'D JUST FIGURED SHE DIDN'T WANT TO BOTHER WITH HER TENANTS, THAT'S ALL.

I WONDERED IF WE MIGHT EVEN BECOME
GOOD FRIENDS...SHE SEEMED SMART,
SHE'D STUDIED ART... A DISCONNECTED
MONTAGE OF SENTIMENTAL INAGES
RAN THROUGH MY MIND: HER SHOWING
ME SOME OF HER PAINTINGS, US
SITTING ON A PARK
BENCH AMONG
FALLING YELLOW
LEAVES, A TEARFUL
HUG ON THE PORCH
OF AN OLD WHITE
HOUSE...

HOUSE ..









