2.26.06

THE STRIP

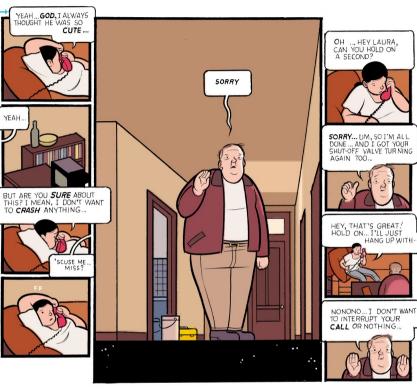


Building Stories By Chris Ware

PART 23: 6 p.m.



I STILL FELT BAD HAVING TO WALK AWAY FROM HIM LIKE THAT... BUT WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO DO? I WAS PROBABLY BOTHERING HIM ANYWAY...
I'M SURE HE JUST WANTED TO GET OUT OF THERE AND GO HOME...
I WAS ON THE PHONE WITH LAURA FOR ALMOST HALF AN HOUR WHILE HE JAMMED THAT FLOPPY RUSTY-WIRE THING FARTHER AND FARTHER DOWN INTO THE PIPES...IT SOUNDED AS IF THE WHOLE BUILDING WAS COMING APART... AT SOME POINT, THOUGH, HE MUST'VE STOPPED, BUT I DIDN'T NOTICE BECAUSE I WAS TOO CAUGHT UP IN REMINISCING WITH LAURA...



SORRY... UM, SO I'M ALL DONE ... AND I GOT YOUR SHUT-OFF VALVE TURNING AGAIN TOO...







I WATCHED HIM LOPE OFF (LITERALLY, INTO THE SUNSET, WHICH WAS NOW FILLING THE APARTMENT WITH A KIND OF PINKISH BLUSH), AND SUDDENLY I REGRETTED NOT TALKING TO HIM MORE...IT OCCURRED TO ME. I WAS PROBABLY JUST ABOUT THE AGE HE'D BEEN WHEN HE WAS LIVING HERE...AND I WONDERED IF THE APARTMENT, WITH ME IN IT, WAS REMINDING HIM TOO MUCH OF HIS WIFE...

I SHOOK THE THOUGHT AWAY ALMOST IN THE SAME MILLISECOND IT'D TUMBLED INTO MY HEAD, NOT ONLY BECAUSE IT WAS TOO PAINFUL, BUT... WELL, I WAS ON THE **PHONE...**



;kof:

SO... LET'S SEE IF I CAN RE-MEMBER HOW IT ALL HAPPENED FROM HERE...

I THINK I MUST'VE TALKED TO LAURA FOR AT LEAST 20 MORE MINUTES, FISURING EVERY-THING OUT ABOUT THE BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR BILL (YET ANOTHER DISTANT SCHOOL ACQUAINTANCE), WHICH I WAS BEING ADDED INTO...

THEN I DID WHAT EVERYONE DOES WHO'S JUST HAD A TOILET FIXED...



PLUS, HEY- I WAS GETTING TO GO **OUT!** THE ODD TENSIONS OF HAVING A STRANGER IN THE HOUSE WERE FINALLY OVER, TOOO... IT WAS THE FIRST TIME ALL DAY I'D ACTUALLY FELT... **HAPPY...**













