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The Life and Times of a Non-playable Character
Jordan Rimpela

I thought I was in luck when my grandmother informed me of her terminal cancer; I gleefully waited for day she died, hoping to inherit her estate. Oh yeah, I’m John by the way, I’m 33 years old, almost broke, and I’m dying of cancer, too - at least I think so. I hope so. Well, not dying; I’d like to recover after all. I was born and still live in Anytown, Ohio where I lived with my grandmother. It seems as though no one has ever heard of Anytown, but I assure you, it is on your map somewhere near that state of ambiguous dreadfulness. You probably have a town just like it near where you live. Hell, maybe you live there. Nothing really ever changes in my world; things are the same day after day, after year.

The sky is always a hazy shade of gray here in Anytown, and the air reeks of broken dreams and hopelessness. It’s truly morbid here. I live a pretty boring life. I have no special qualities about me; I can’t play any musical instruments, I’m bad at sports, I can’t dance, I most definitely cannot sing, and I have no opinion on anything, really. Abortion, I don’t care, it doesn’t affect me. Global warming or gay rights can honestly go fuck themselves as I have no use for them. It could stand to be warmer here in Ohio, and I’m not gay so what do I care what or whom they do? I’m as neutral on politics as beige is dull.

To make matters worse, I wasn’t blessed in the looks department, so I’m not exactly what you’d call a ladies’ man; or a man’s man for that matter. I have never been with a woman, in any way, shape, or form. Pornography has shown me what goes on when guys and girls fornicate, but that’s all I know, and I know it well. It’s kind of a hobby. Masturbation either takes the edge off of my loneliness or exacerbates it. I have never had a female friend, and definitely not one I would call a girlfriend. I honestly do not think that a woman could love me.

My mom and dad died when I was three, and so I spent the rest of my childhood living with my grandmother Agnes who could not care less about raising a child. Thankfully, my parents had left some money behind for me in a trust fund, which I received after graduating high school with a C average. Prior to graduation, I had to get a job to support myself, something my bitch of a grandmother made me do. Teachin’ me to fend for myself or some bullshit like that she always said. So I worked at the local Mega Mart which is literally the only store this town has, after they ran everyone else out of business. I believe they call that progress or so that’s what the store referred to it as. I absolutely hated it there, and made damned sure to be fired for insubordination the day after I graduated; for after all, I did have my trust fund. That was fifteen years ago though, and now I’m a bit worried as to what I’ll do for money. I have no college degree and am definitely lacking in the skills department.

Cue my grandmother dying of terminal cancer. I was foolish to think that the bitch would leave me her estate after she bit the dust. Agnes died alright, but the decrepit old hag left me nothing. She even had the fucking nerve to state specifically in her will that I get nothing. Said I was worthless and that she wished my parents would
have aborted me as originally planned. She was worthless even in death, the bitch. All
was not doom and gloom for me though, as I picked up on something during her
illness: she went from rarely having a visitor (she was a nasty woman, after all), to
requiring a guest book. People she hardly knew gave her cards, (some of which were
ironically of the get well soon variety), flowers, hugs, gifts, and gross amounts of
sympathy. Some even sent her money, even though she was quite rich herself. These
people seemingly came all hours of the day, every day.

Luckily for me -- and quite shockingly to be honest -- after Hagnes died, people
flooded me with the same attention. The only way I can figure it is that no one knew her
disdain for me. I was after all her only remaining relative, and she had no friends.
Anyway, they showered me with cards, food, flowers, and thankfully, money, as now I
had to find a place to live. Soon after, the people stopped calling, and the ones I called
that had extended the offer for anything I needed stopped returning my calls, except for
one: Ariel. Weird name, but she was cute and really nice. I’m not sure what possessed a
smart, hard working girl like Ariel to be there for my grandmother to begin with, but I
did not care. I wanted to be with her every day, but I knew that just wasn’t possible.
Ariel would eventually find me boring or just stop being nice; it was only a matter of
time. I was running out of time and I needed an edge. I got one alright.

You can probably imagine how happy I was the day I was diagnosed with lung
cancer. My body was breaking down, but no pain no gain, right? Besides, I caught it
early. A little radiation and I would be set. I could barely contain my happiness as the
doctor told me the news. She probably thought I was crazy. The timing was perfect; I
had contemplated faking a sickness, but I would not know how to even begin faking.
Now though, I was legit. I could cough up blood to prove it. I knew everyone would
love me now: I’d make friends, marry Ariel, and win the battle with cancer and live
happily ever after with my somewhat above average life, my working wife, and sail this
one through. I was set.