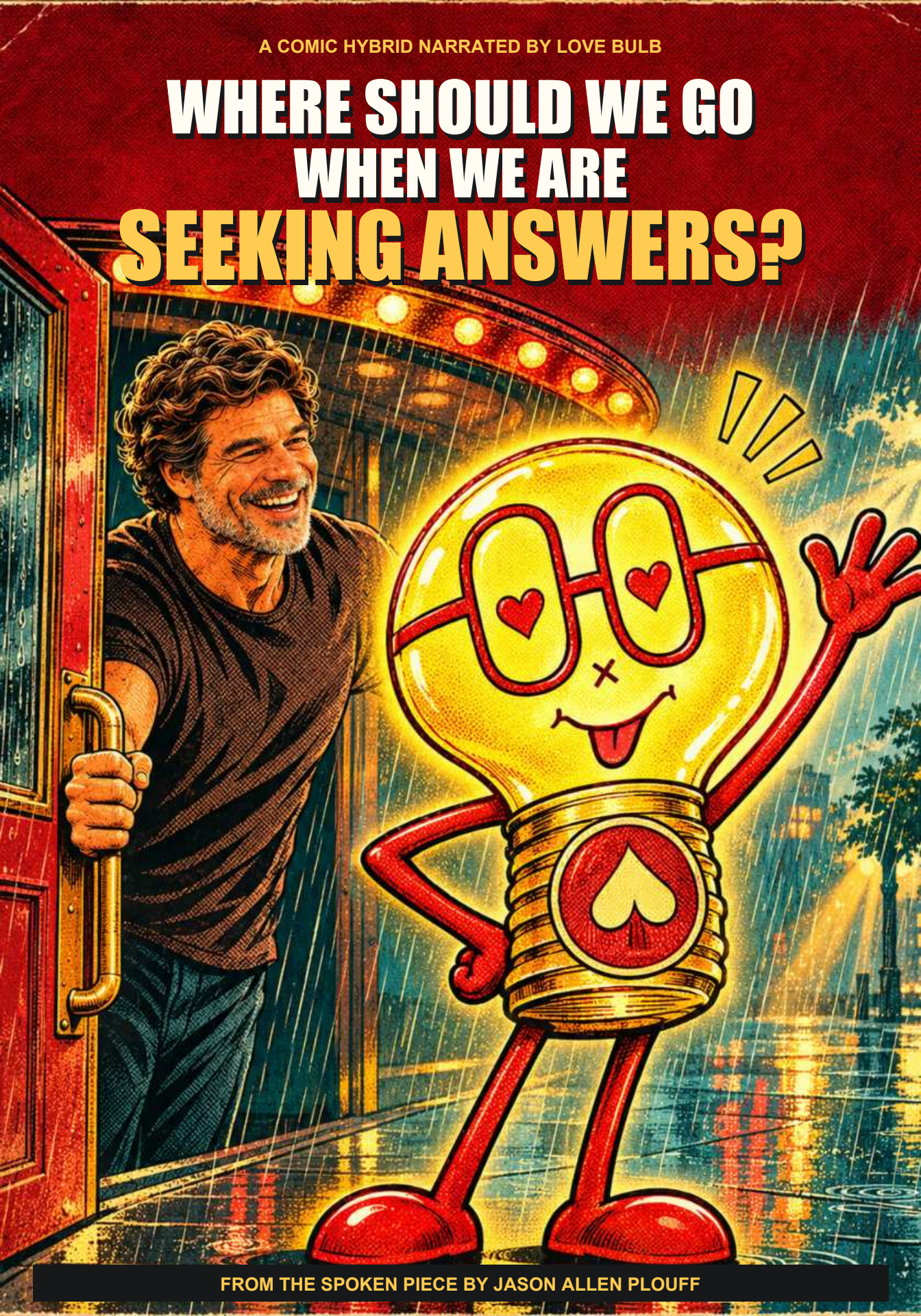
A COMIC HYBRID NARRATED BY LOVE BULB

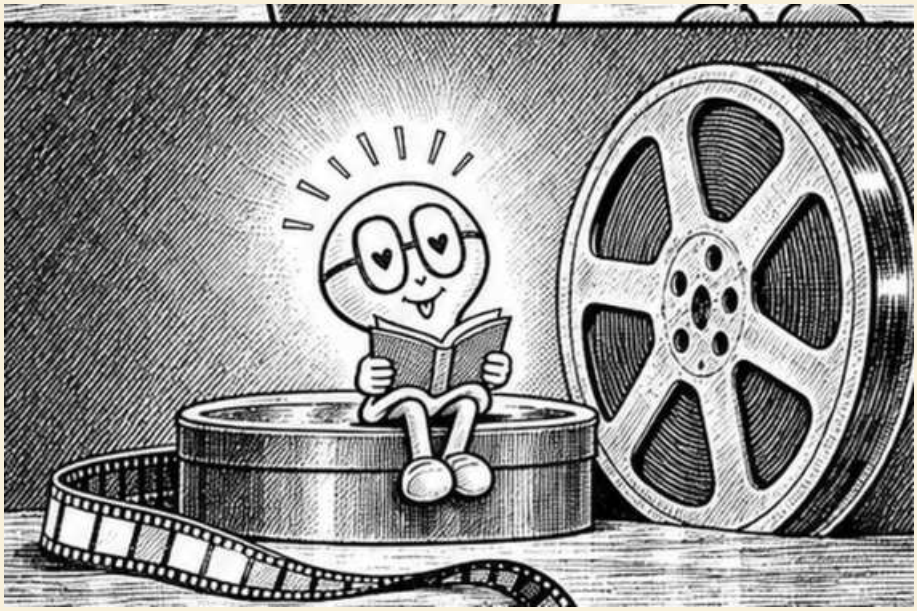
WHERE SHOULD WE GO WHEN WE ARE SEEKING ANSWERS?



FROM THE SPOKEN PIECE BY JASON ALLEN PLOUFF

LOVE BULB PRESENTS

WHERE SHOULD WE GO WHEN WE ARE SEEKING ANSWERS?



Adapted from the spoken piece by Jason Allen Plouff.

Love Bulb narrates. Jason is the human character. The scenes and dialogue are fictional adaptations of the questions and ideas in the recording.

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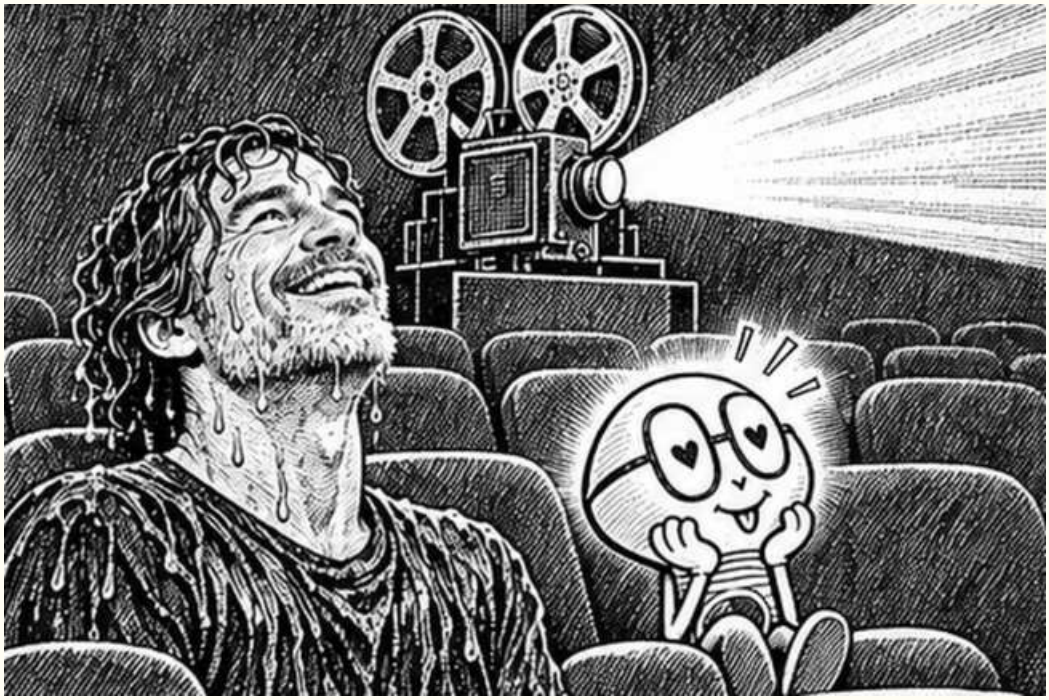
THE DOOR IN THE RAIN



EXT. OLD CINEMA - EVENING

Rain rolls off the marquee. Jason arrives with a paper route folded inside a folder. The ticket window is closed. He tries it anyway.

INT. CINEMA LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Love Bulb lights up at the end of the counter. Jason flattens his map with both hands. The ink swims there in the water.

LOVE BULB (V.O.)

I'd watched him look at the same door three times. Then I saw another one in a puddle.

Jason follows the reflection to the blue door. It gives under his palm. Inside, an old projector waits.

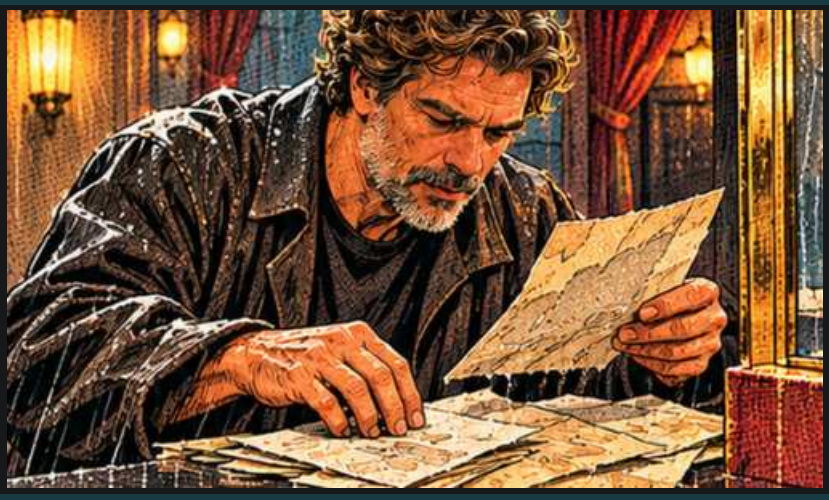
THE DOOR IN THE RAIN



I've seen Jason come prepared. That evening, the rain came prepared too.

He'd brought the answer in an envelope. The ticket booth sent it back.



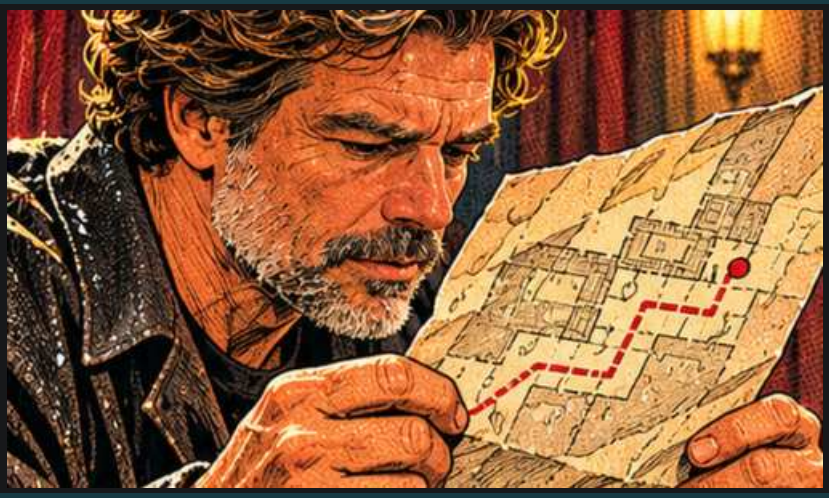


Inside, he arranged his evidence in the usual order.

THE DOOR IN THE RAIN

That little glow at the window? That's me. I was having a much better time with the weather.





His map put the door exactly where he'd expected it.

I tried pointing lower. People don't trust puddles nearly enough.





There it was, upside down and perfectly plain.



We took the side passage. His map could come along if it liked.

THE DOOR IN THE RAIN

At a blue door, the rain got quieter.



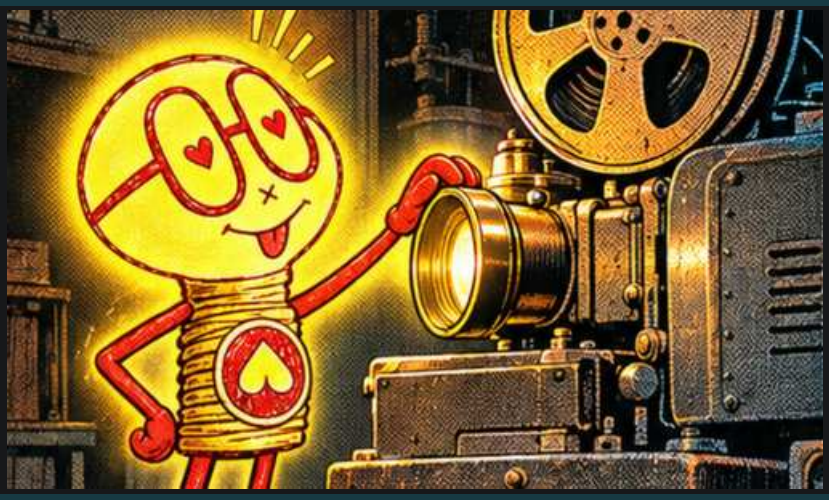


Jason put his hand on the latch and gave it a little room to move.

The door opened into a room he'd never thought to look for.

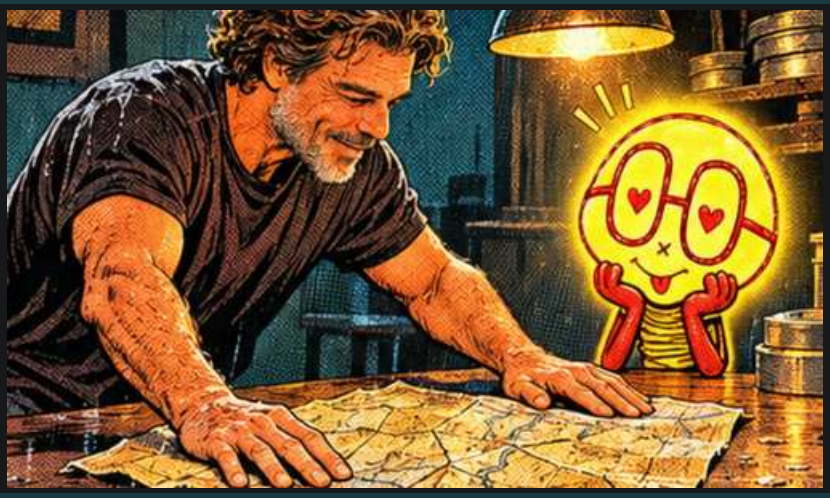


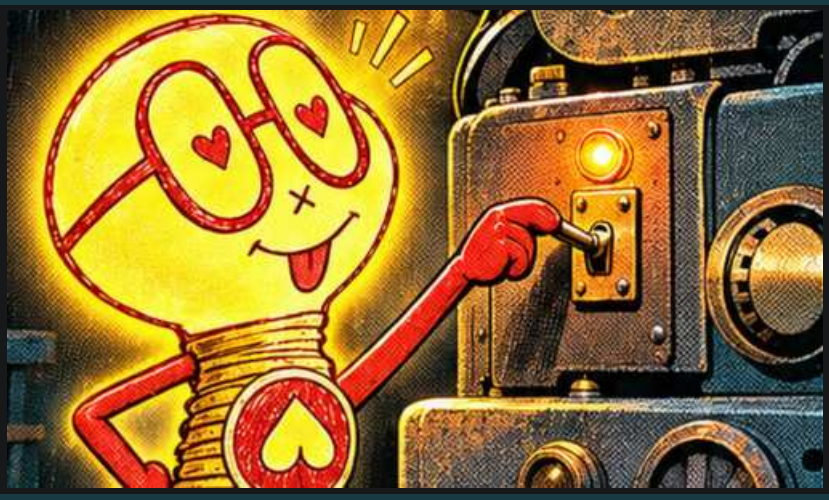
THE DOOR IN THE RAIN



I volunteered to be the lighting department.

His map dried on the table while we looked around.





One little switch was all it took to get the projector humming.

THE DOOR IN THE RAIN



First there was a beam. Then we could see the room it was falling through.



Jason sat down. For a while the only thing either of us needed to do was listen.

THE DOOR IN THE RAIN



By the time the map dried, the rain had drawn a few routes of its own.



I watched the clouds lift. We'd found somewhere to begin.

THE DOOR IN THE RAIN

Where do you look when the plan stops working?

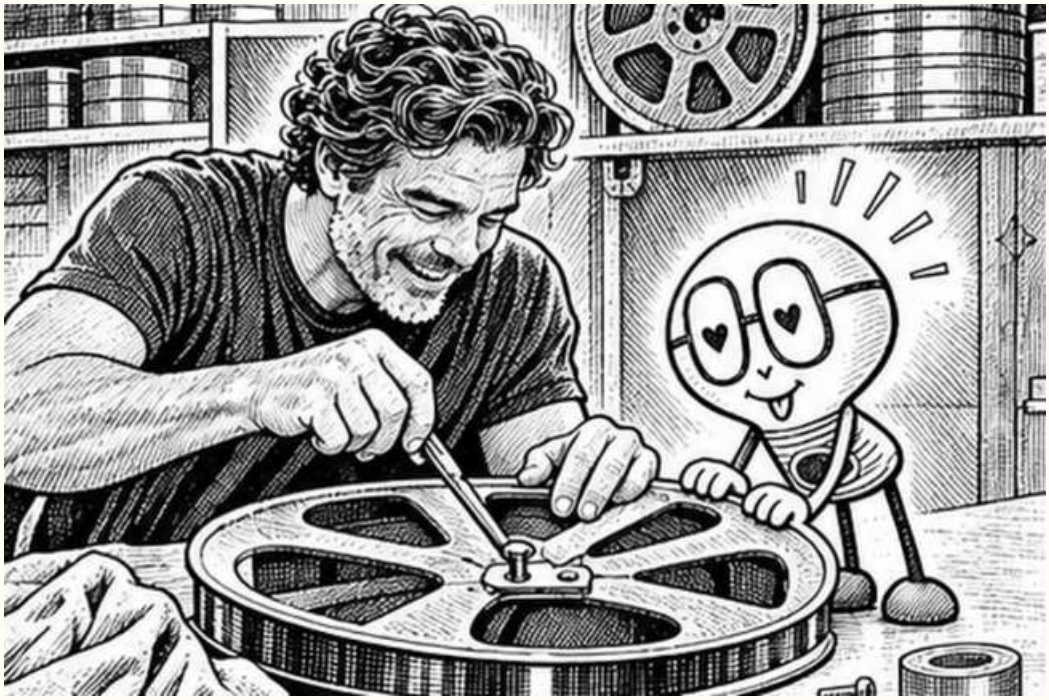
A soaked map is still a map. The trouble starts when I ask it to tell me everything. Planning helps me see a route, and sometimes that route carries me far. But an unexpected situation gives me information I didn't have when I did the planning. If I keep consulting the old picture, I may miss the one forming right in front of me.

There is a moment between realizing a plan failed and deciding what it means. I can fill that moment by trying the same door with more force. I can also look around long enough to notice what the rain has brought into view. A different state of mind can make familiar ground feel like a place I'm seeing for the first time.

TRY IT

Think of a situation you've tried to solve the same way twice. What new detail has appeared since the first attempt? Stay with that detail for a minute before you decide what to do.

THE REEL THAT WOULDN'T TURN



INT. PROJECTION BOOTH - NIGHT

A reel sticks. Jason turns the crank harder. The film tears at the gate and slips to the floor.

LOVE BULB (V.O.)

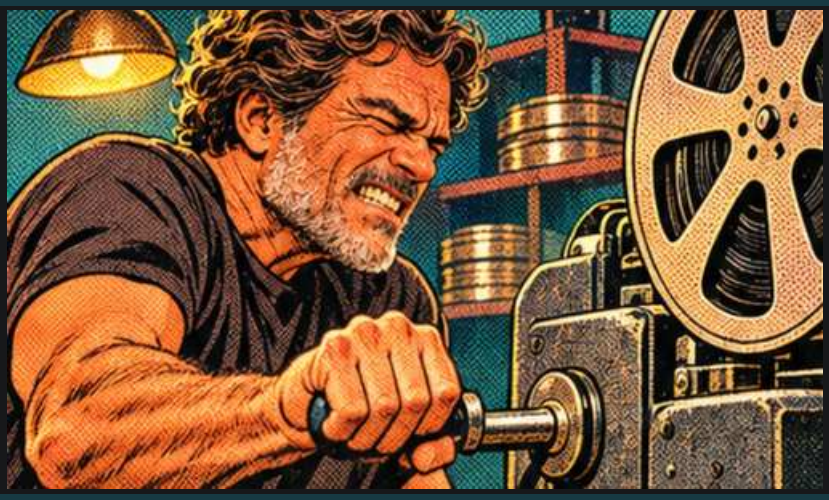
He got exactly the movement he'd asked for. The picture came apart.

Love Bulb shines into the guide. One edge of the film is caught outside its track. Jason lifts the reel just enough to free the strip. He threads it again slowly.

ON THE SCREEN

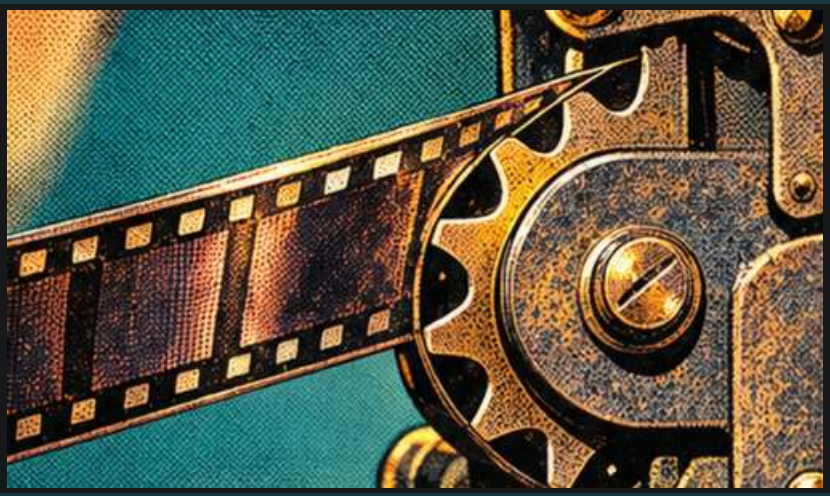
A seedling lifts its head. The reel keeps turning after Jason lets go.

THE REEL THAT WOULDN'T TURN



Jason gave the crank a turn. Something inside held tight.

The strip was already telling us where it hurt.



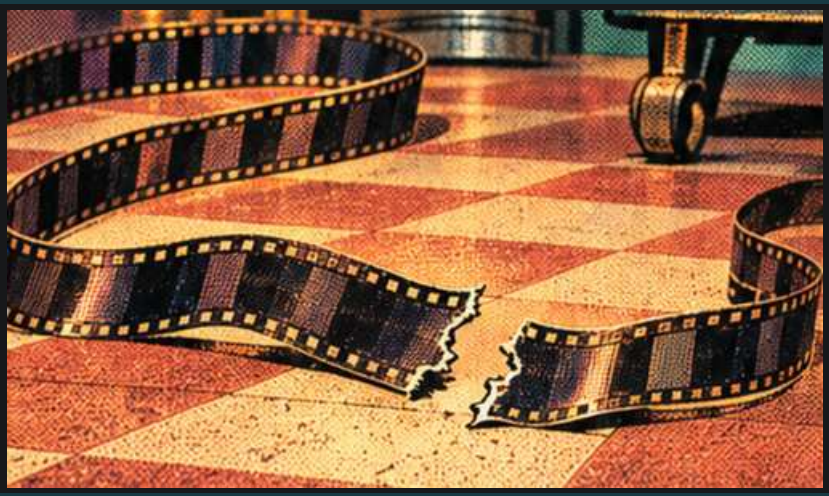


I reached for his wrist. My arm, as you can see, has certain limitations.

THE REEL THAT WOULDN'T TURN

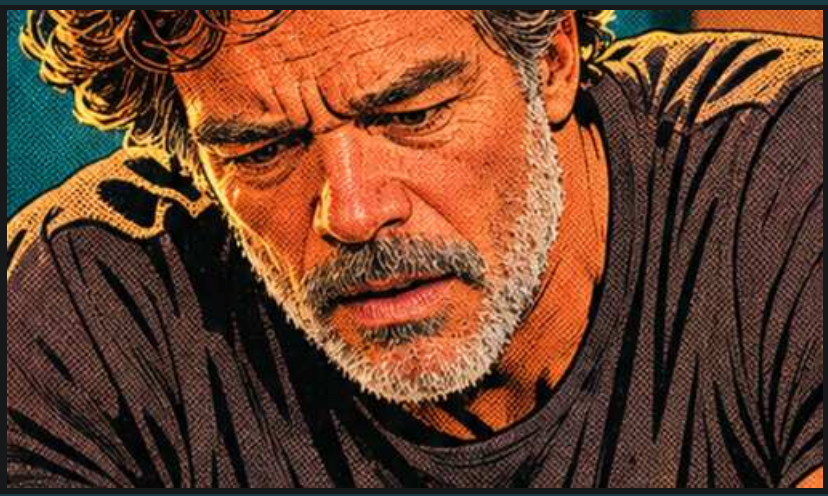
He leaned in. The crank finally moved.



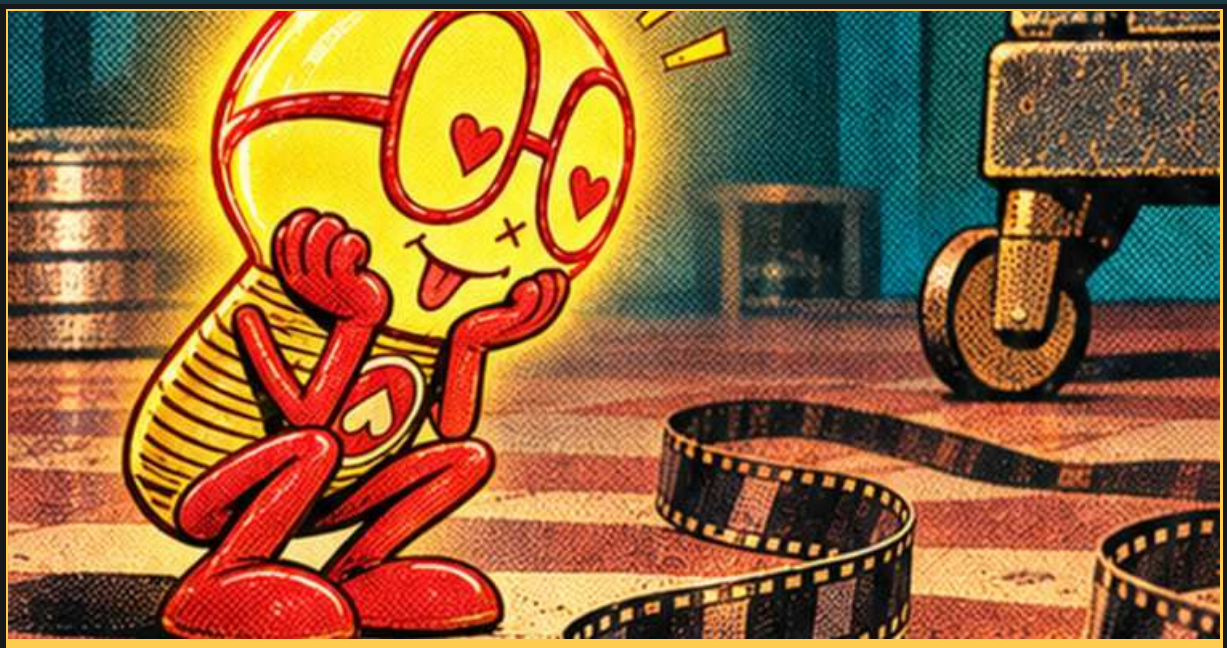


So did all the film that had been keeping the picture together.

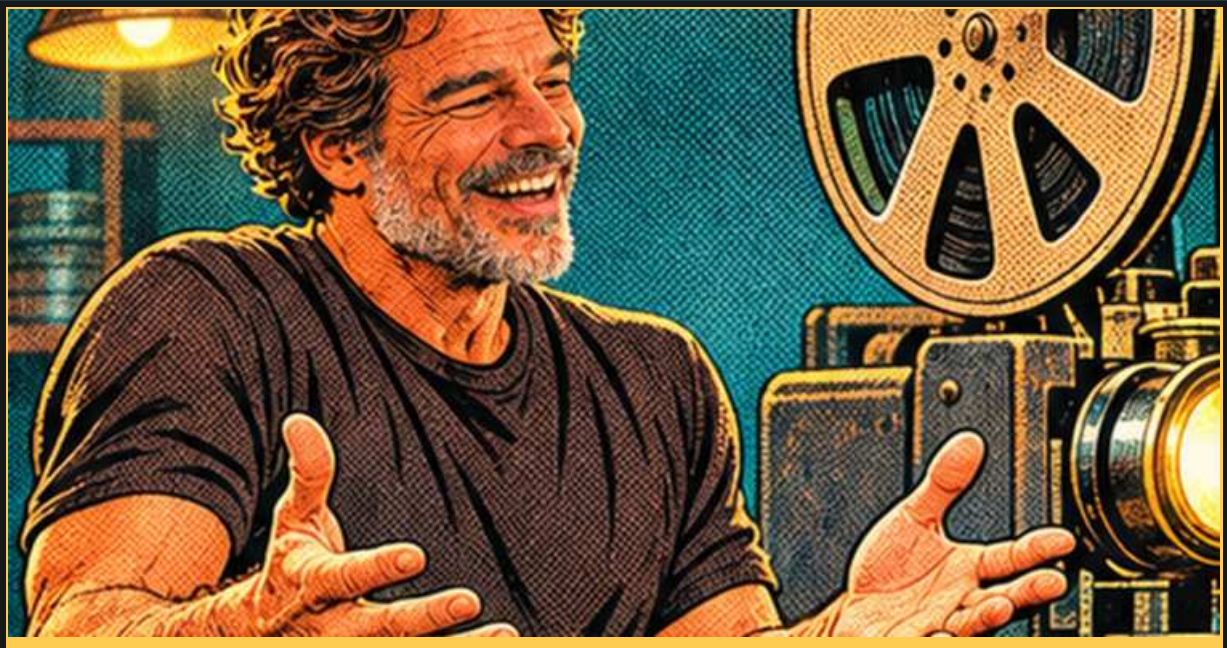
Jason could see the tear from where he stood.



THE REEL THAT WOULDN'T TURN



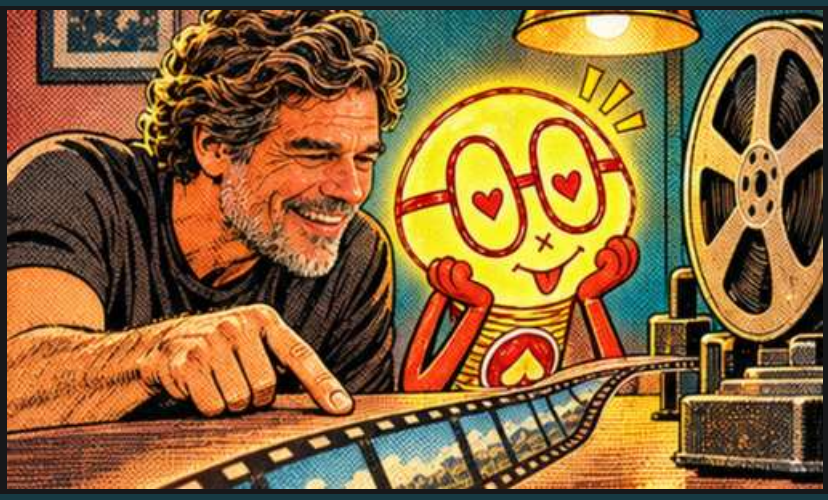
I watched the loose film curl. It looked relieved.



He opened his hands. We had a little time to see what had happened.

THE REEL THAT WOULDN'T TURN

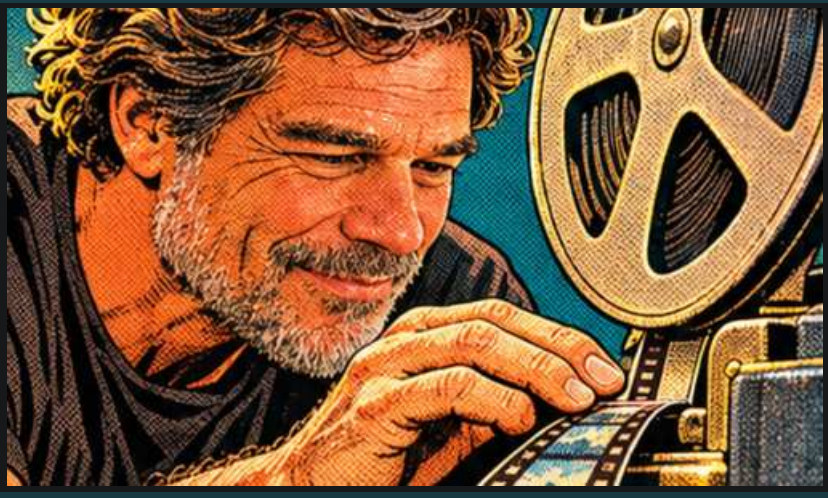
We followed the strip back through the projector.





One edge had slipped right out of its track.

This time he held the reel just steady enough for me to see it.

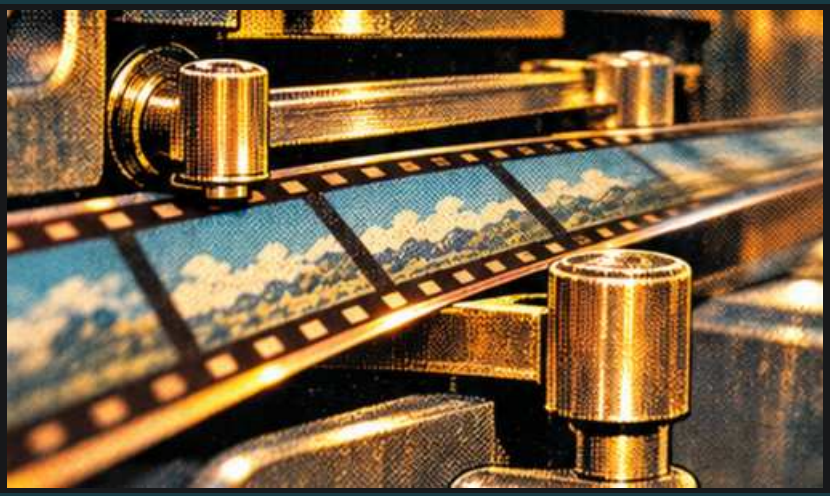


THE REEL THAT WOULDN'T TURN



I lit the guide. It was a small job, but I could reach it.

The strip went through with barely a sound.



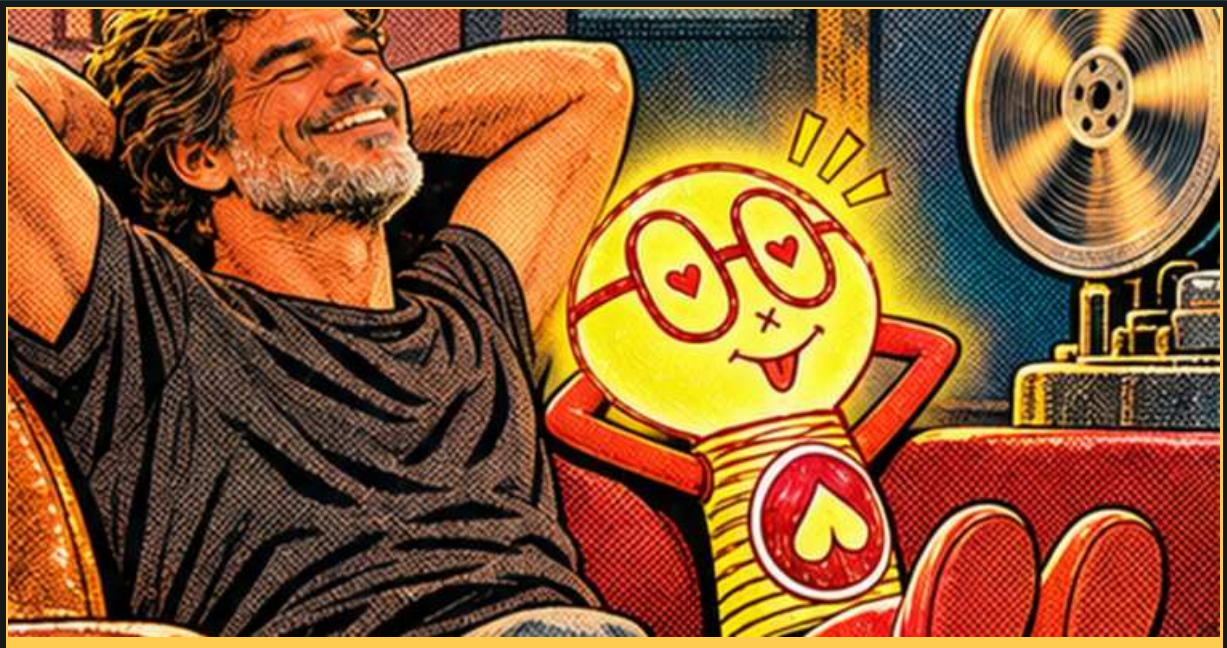


Jason let the projector try again.

THE REEL THAT WOULDN'T TURN



A seedling on the screen lifted its head.



The reel kept turning after he took away his hands.

THE REEL THAT WOULDN'T TURN



A patch in the film left a seam I could see on every turn.



We let it run through. The picture could carry a seam.

THE REEL THAT WOULDN'T TURN

What does a result cost when you have to muscle it into place?

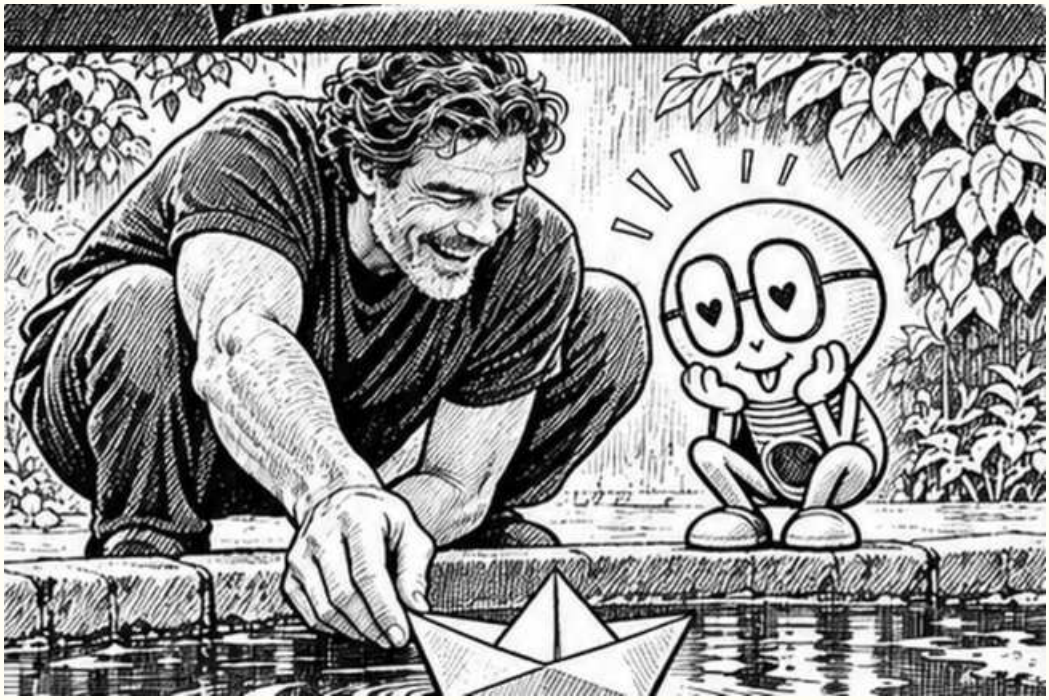
Getting movement can feel like getting an answer. It satisfies the part of me that wants proof I can do something. The harder question comes afterward. Did the way I got that result leave the situation healthier? If another person was involved, did I notice what the effort was doing to them?

A stuck reel deserves a close look. There may be a small place where a change in angle matters more than a change in pressure. The extra time it takes to see that place can feel like a luxury, especially when I want relief. It can also spare me the hours I'd spend repairing what I tore while trying to hurry.

TRY IT

Recall a recent moment when you got your way. What did the result leave behind? Name one thing you could have noticed sooner about the situation or the people in it.

THE PAPER BOAT



INT. CINEMA LOBBY - DAY

Jason rehearses an explanation in front of a mirror. A page slips and falls into a wastebasket.

Love Bulb fishes it out. He studies the clean reverse, then folds the paper into a boat. In the puddle by the door, it leans hard to one side.

LOVE BULB (V.O.)

The speech hadn't made him laugh once. Twelve seconds with a boat and he was on his knees laughing.

He adjusts a fold. Love Bulb helps him launch it again.

THE PAPER BOAT



Jason was practicing an explanation that was supposed to fix everything.

The wastebasket caught page two before he'd finished page one.

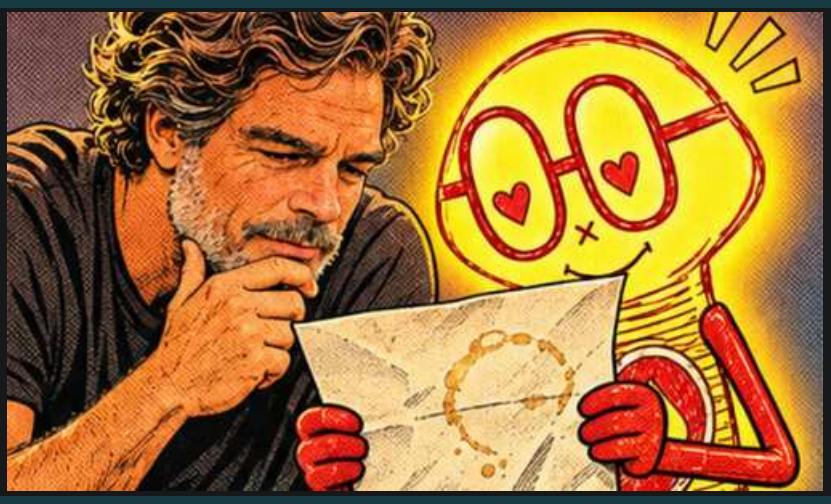




I rescued it. Mostly because I was curious.

THE PAPER BOAT

The back of the page was clear. That got his attention.





He folded the paper where his argument had been.

Our first launch had a pronounced lean.



THE PAPER BOAT



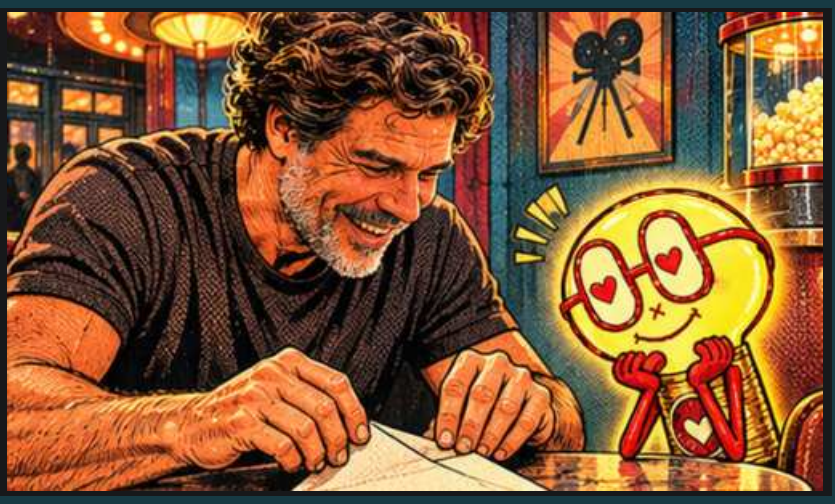
I laughed before I could think of anything encouraging to say.

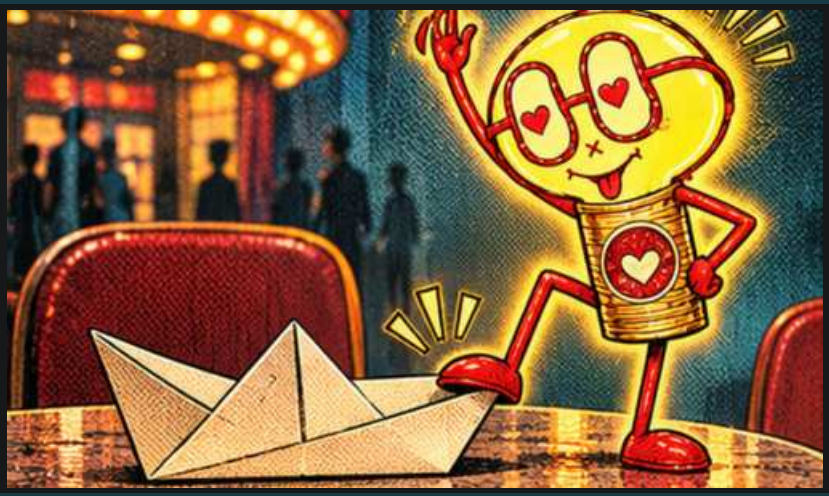


Then Jason laughed, and went looking for the fold that had let in water.

THE PAPER BOAT

We came back to the table for another try.





I offered one foot. That's my preferred unit of assistance.

A little warm air got under the fold.



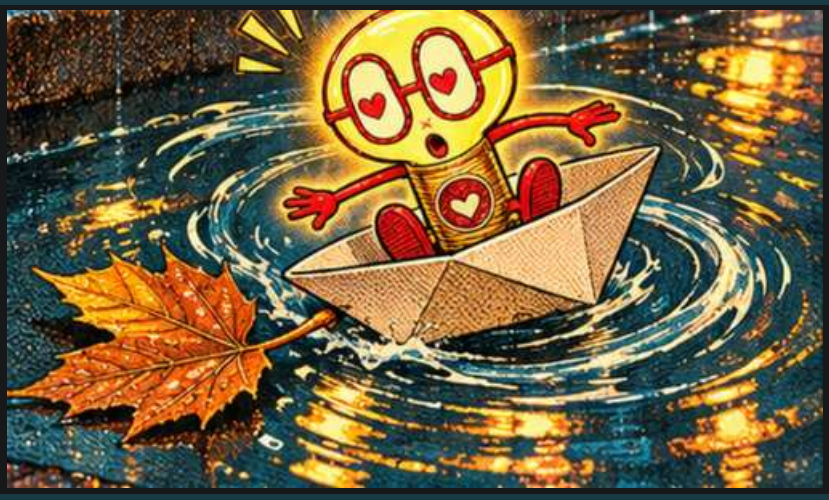
THE PAPER BOAT



Outside, the gutter had just enough water to carry it.

For half a minute I had a boat of my own.





Then a leaf became a very small shipwreck.

THE PAPER BOAT



Jason left the phone on the table and watched it happen.

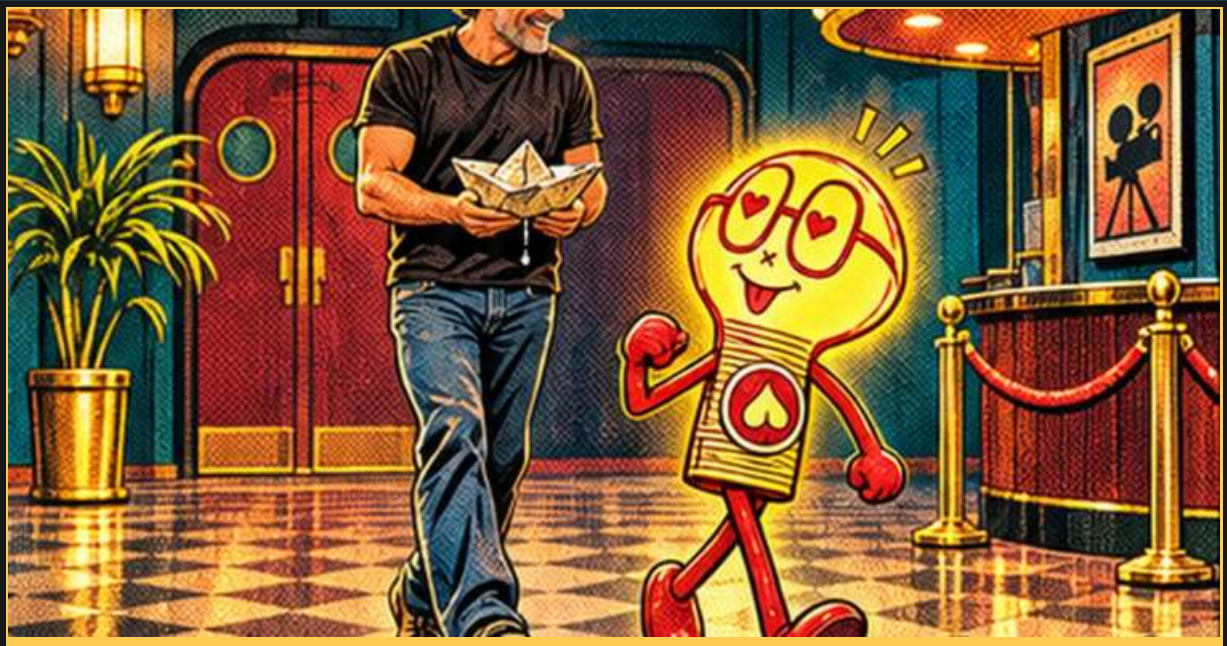


By then we were watching to see what the boat would do.

THE PAPER BOAT



The boat came back to shore a little soft around the edges.



Jason carried it inside. He wanted to keep the thing that had made him laugh.

THE PAPER BOAT

What would a more playful way of changing feel like?

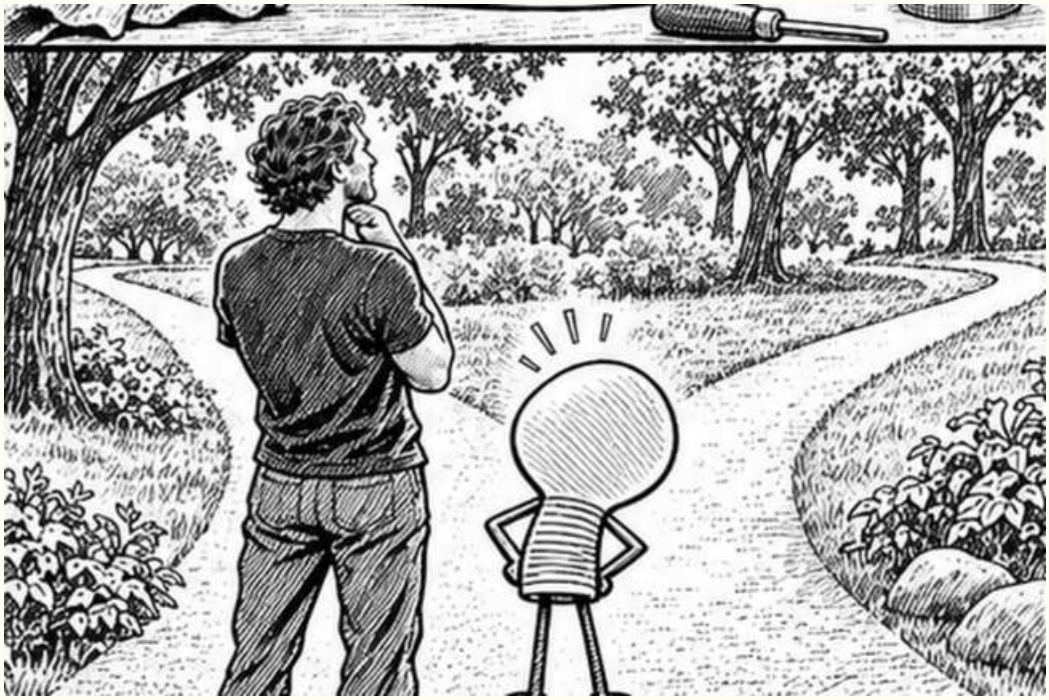
I can talk myself through a habit until I know all the reasons it ought to change. Then the familiar moment arrives and my hands do exactly what they did yesterday. Perhaps the first change is what I see when I look at the moment. If it looks like a test of my worth, there's very little room to play. If it looks like a small experiment, I can afford to learn something from it.

A playful response can still be deliberate. It asks a smaller question and lets the result answer. The boat tipping over doesn't require a verdict on the person who folded it. It tells us where the paper took on water. Forgiveness leaves enough of my attention free to see the next fold.

TRY IT

Choose one habitual reaction you'd like to loosen. What would the smallest experiment be? Pick something you can try once today and look at what actually happens.

THE FORK IN THE PATH



EXT. PARK CROSSROADS - DUSK

A branch blocks the route Jason has marked. Water runs across the path and away through the trees. There are fresh footprints beside it.

Jason puts the map into his pocket. Love Bulb follows the footprints with him to a greenhouse.

LOVE BULB (V.O.)

Through the wet glass he could make out both the plants and his own reflection.

INT. GREENHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

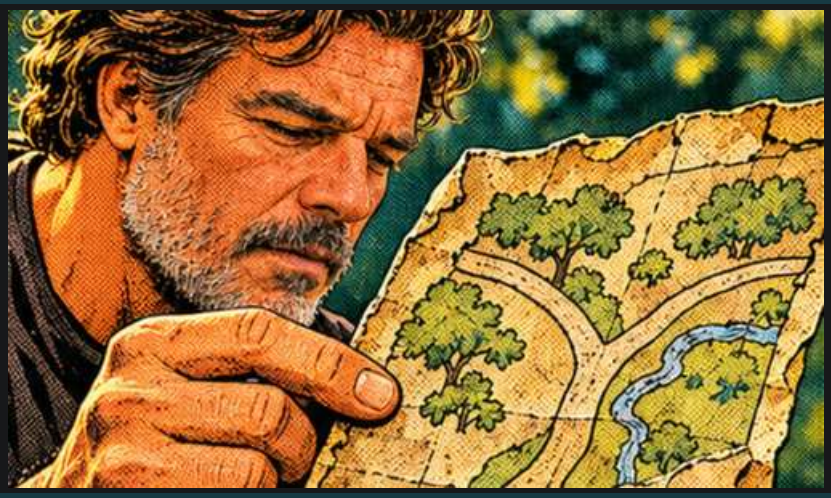
A terracotta pot sits empty on a bench. Jason takes it home.

THE FORK IN THE PATH



You can see a fork in a path long before you're ready to call it a choice.

Jason had marked his route carefully.





The branch had made a decision of its own.

THE FORK IN THE PATH

Footprints pointed toward a quieter stretch of gravel.





Even the water had found a way around.

Jason folded up his map. He could still use it when it helped.



THE FORK IN THE PATH



I climbed onto a stone so he could see how far we'd come.



He took a step. That was as much as either of us could see.

THE FORK IN THE PATH

A glass roof came into view among the trees.





In the puddle it looked almost close enough to touch.

He wiped a patch of glass clear before reaching for the handle.



THE FORK IN THE PATH



I had to stand on tiptoe to get the same view.

Inside, the air felt like a different season.



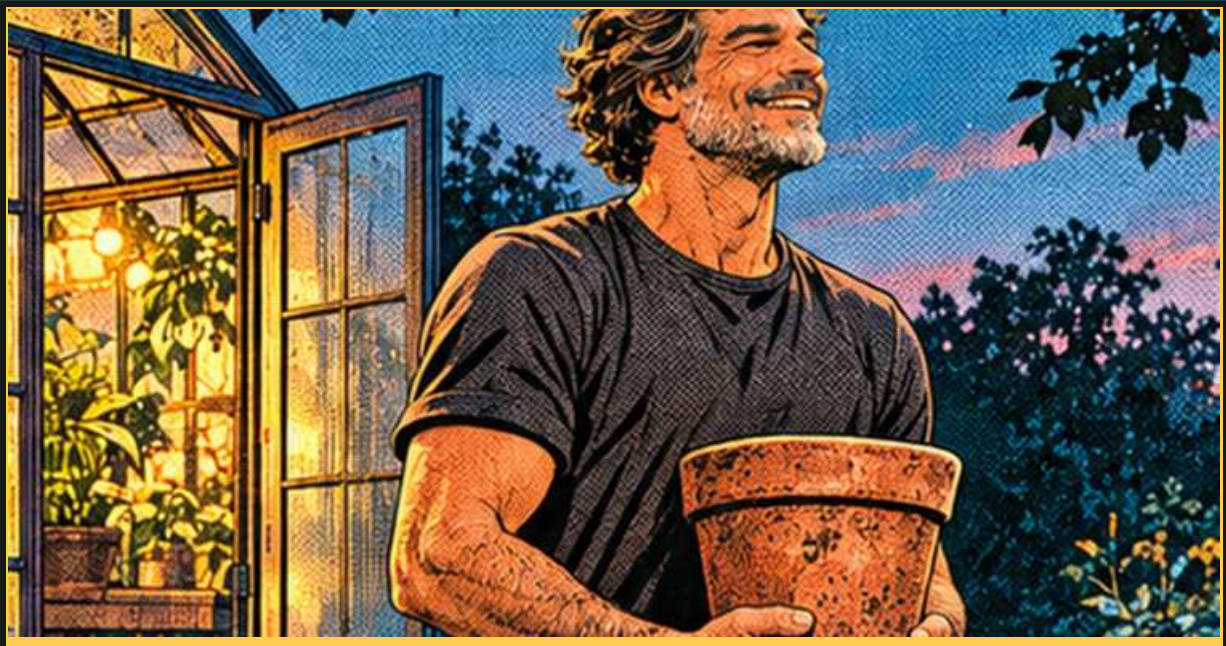


Jason caught sight of himself among the leaves.

THE FORK IN THE PATH



One pot on the bench had room for something to grow.



He carried it home with both hands.

THE FORK IN THE PATH



On our way home the empty pot seemed to get heavier.



I liked our shadows on the wall. The two of us could fit in the space it took to carry one new thing.

THE FORK IN THE PATH

What changes when the person seeking the answer changes too?

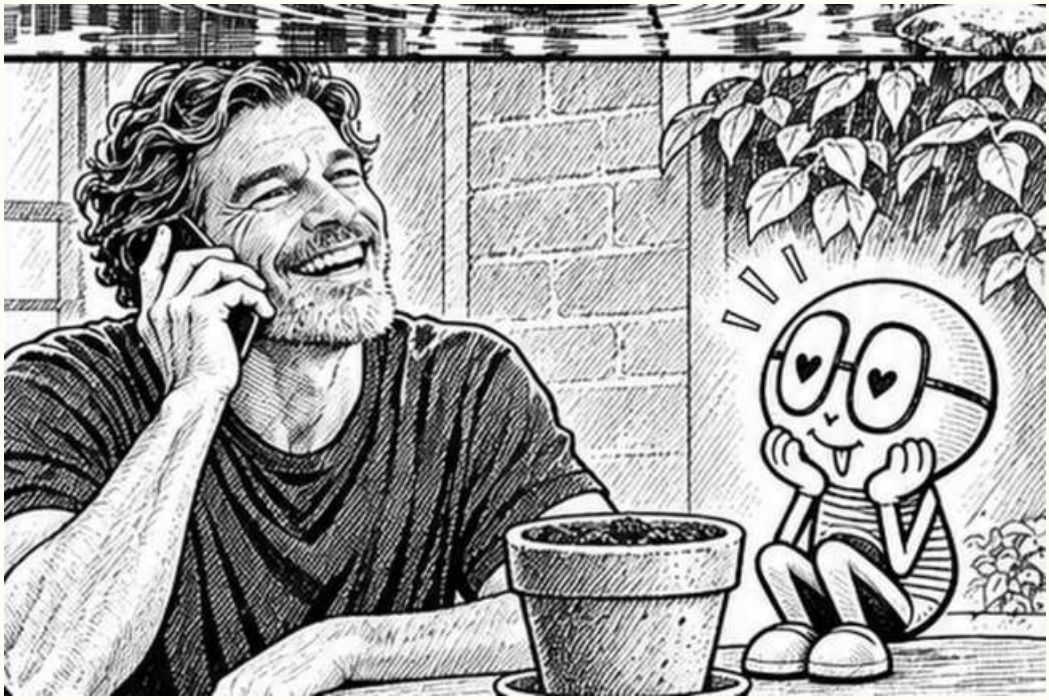
A crossroads offers two kinds of uncertainty. I may be unsure which way to go, and I may be unsure who I will be if I take the way I hadn't planned. I can draw a new route and still carry the old demand that life turn out exactly as I pictured. It takes practice to walk a few steps while leaving the outcome open.

Sometimes what changes first is the size of the question. Jason wanted to see the whole path. The footprints only told him where to place his next step. By following that much information, he reached a place he could never have chosen from the map alone. The empty pot was something he could carry home and make part of his life.

TRY IT

Where are you waiting for the whole route to become clear? Write down one step you could take that would tell you something you don't already know.

THE WINDOW OPENS



INT. JASON'S KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

Jason holds his thumb over his phone. Love Bulb stands beside the empty pot. He sets the phone down and opens the window a crack.

INT. JASON'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Jason takes a call. He leans forward, about to answer, then lets the silence hold. His shoulders lower.

LOVE BULB (V.O.)

I could only hear his side. That morning, his side had a lot more room in it.

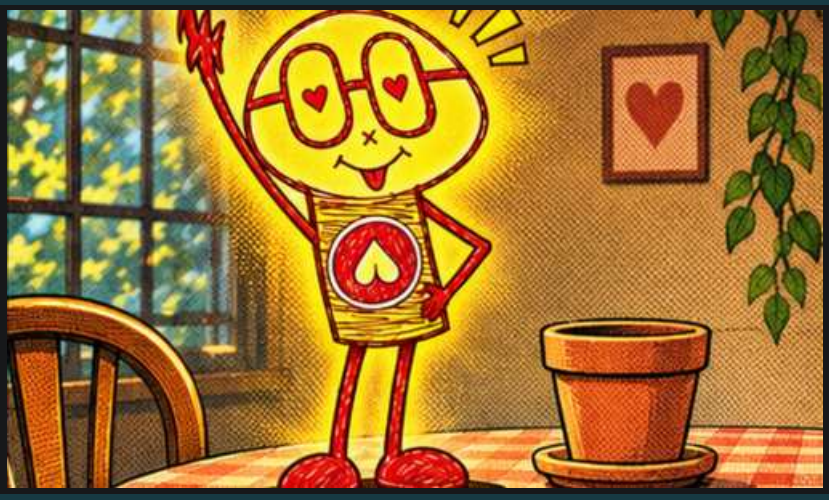
THE WINDOW OPENS



That afternoon Jason did most of his talking with his thumb.

He had the next reply ready to go.



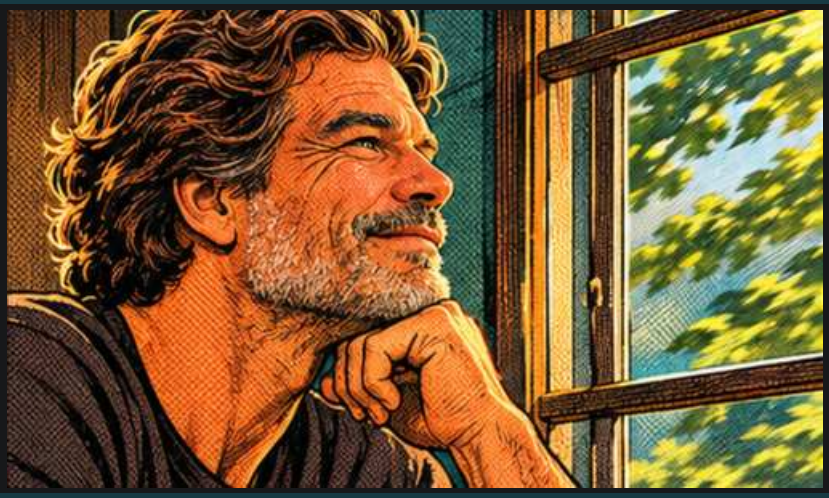


I sat down by the pot. It was good company.

THE WINDOW OPENS

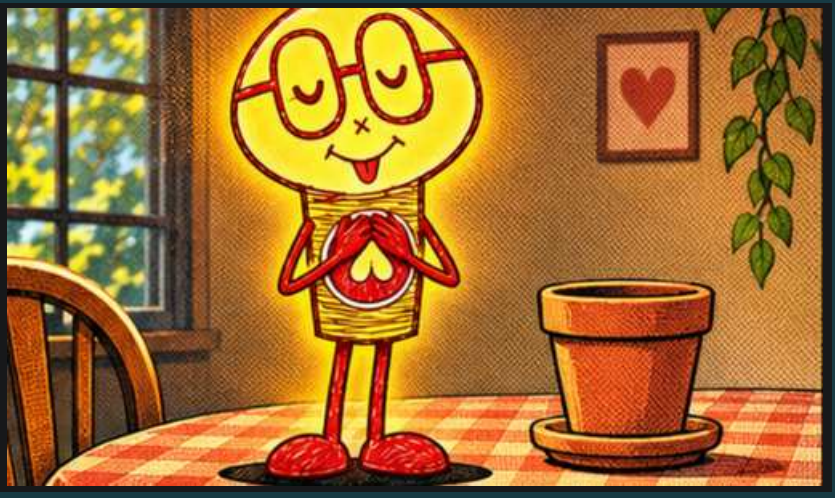
After a while he put the phone down where I could see his face.



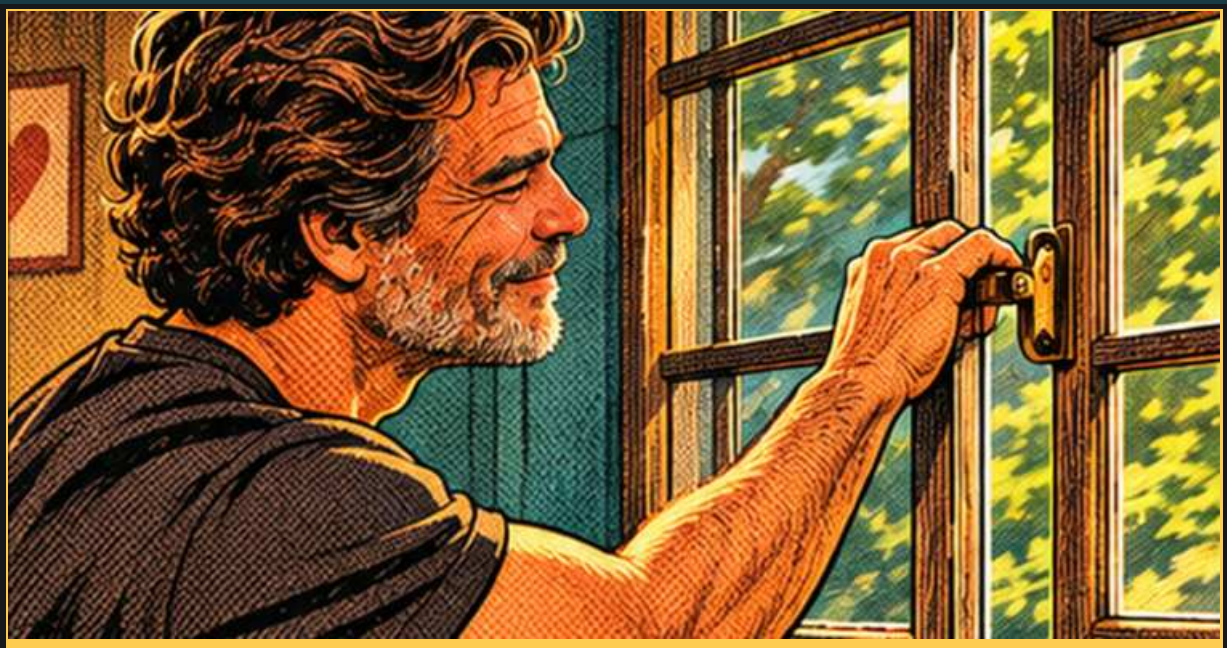


Through the glass, he watched the trees blowing.

I brought my glow down low. I'd been lighting the whole kitchen by accident.



THE WINDOW OPENS



He opened the window a crack.



That made enough space for the breeze to get in.

THE WINDOW OPENS

By morning a pale stripe of sun reached the counter.





The phone was still there. So was the choice he'd made the day before.

When it rang, Jason let the other person finish.



THE WINDOW OPENS



I saw his shoulders drop before I heard him speak.

He took a sip, listened, and asked one more question.





I stayed where I was. Even I can let a pause breathe.

THE WINDOW OPENS



Later he put a second cup on the table.



I liked looking at the empty chair. It meant somebody could sit there.

THE WINDOW OPENS



A cup on either side of a table leaves room for two versions of the morning.



I stayed by the window and watched the branch move in the breeze.

THE WINDOW OPENS

How much can you hear when you leave a pause?

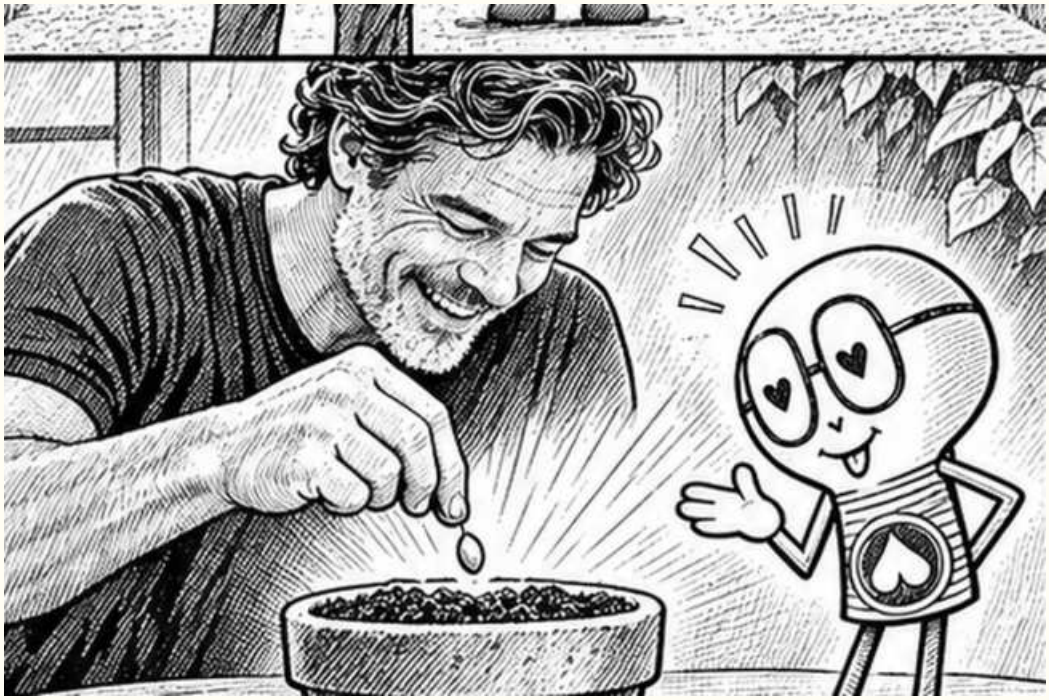
Expecting the unexpected sounds tense if I picture myself braced for every turn. There is another way to wait. I can stay interested in what might happen without having to know it in advance. The posture feels different in my body. My shoulders come down. It gets easier to hear the end of a sentence.

Receptivity matters most when there is something I want. I have a strong picture of how a conversation should go when I've rehearsed it all night. But another person is bringing a whole day of their own. Listening gives me a chance to meet what they are bringing and lets them experience something different from me.

TRY IT

Try taking one complete breath before you answer a question you think you already understand. What did the other person do with the pause? What did you notice in yourself?

ROOM FOR A NEW ROOT



INT. JASON'S HALL CLOSET - DAY

Jason lifts a dented film tin down from a crowded shelf. Inside is a single frame he wants to keep. He sets the frame on the shelf and carries the empty tins away.

INT. JASON'S KITCHEN - LATER

He fills the terracotta pot and opens his palm to show Love Bulb a seed. Love Bulb shines into the soil as he plants it.

LOVE BULB (V.O.)

For a while, what we'd made room for was impossible to see.

DISSOLVE TO a thin green shoot catching the morning light.

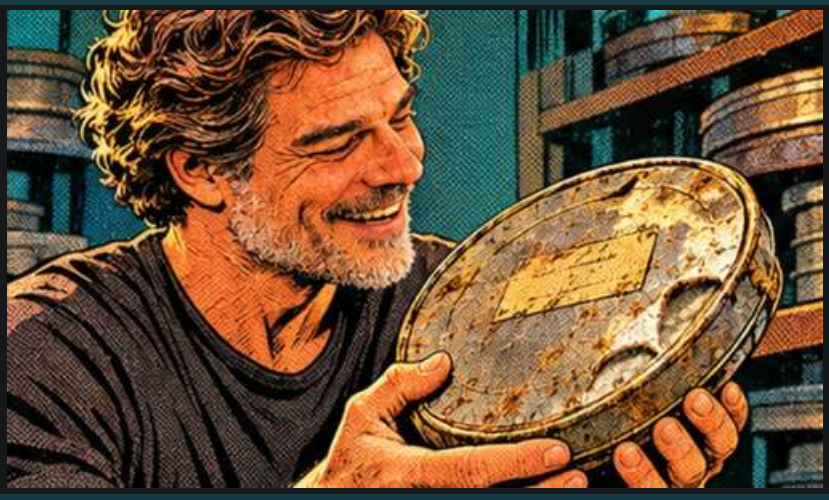
ROOM FOR A NEW ROOT



We opened the closet and discovered a small mountain of reasons to close it again.

I climbed to the top. The dust had been having a very quiet year.

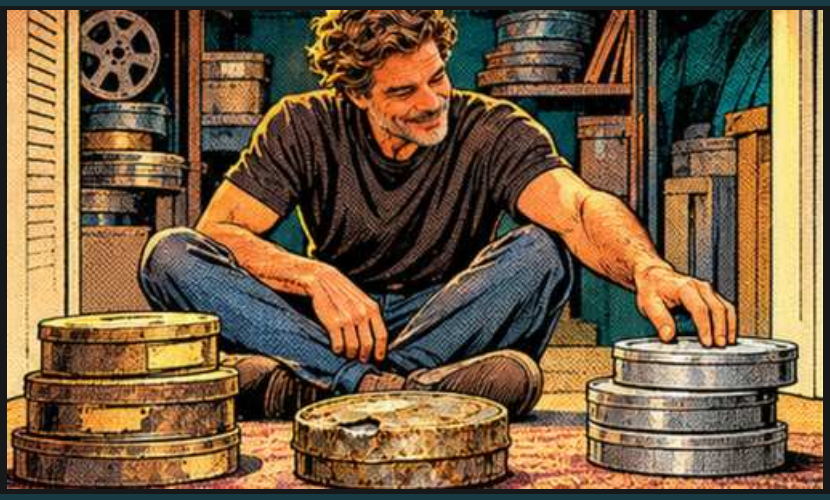


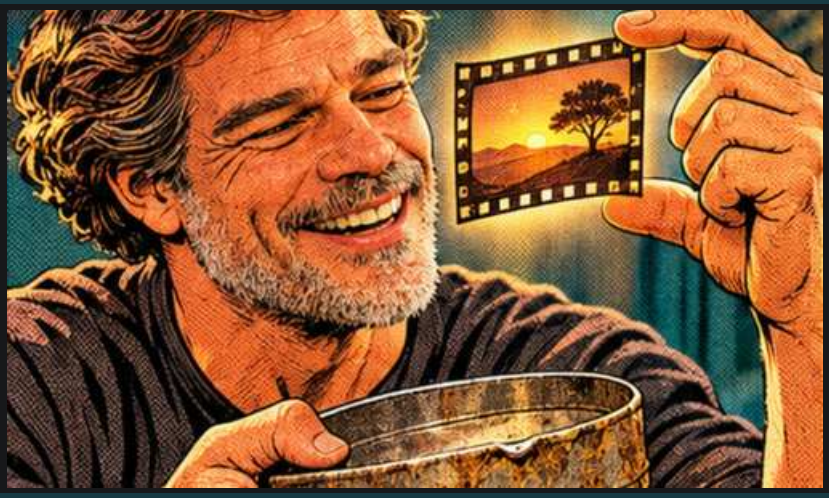


Jason found the old tin he'd been saving.

ROOM FOR A NEW ROOT

He sorted for a while. The floor gave him room to make up his mind.

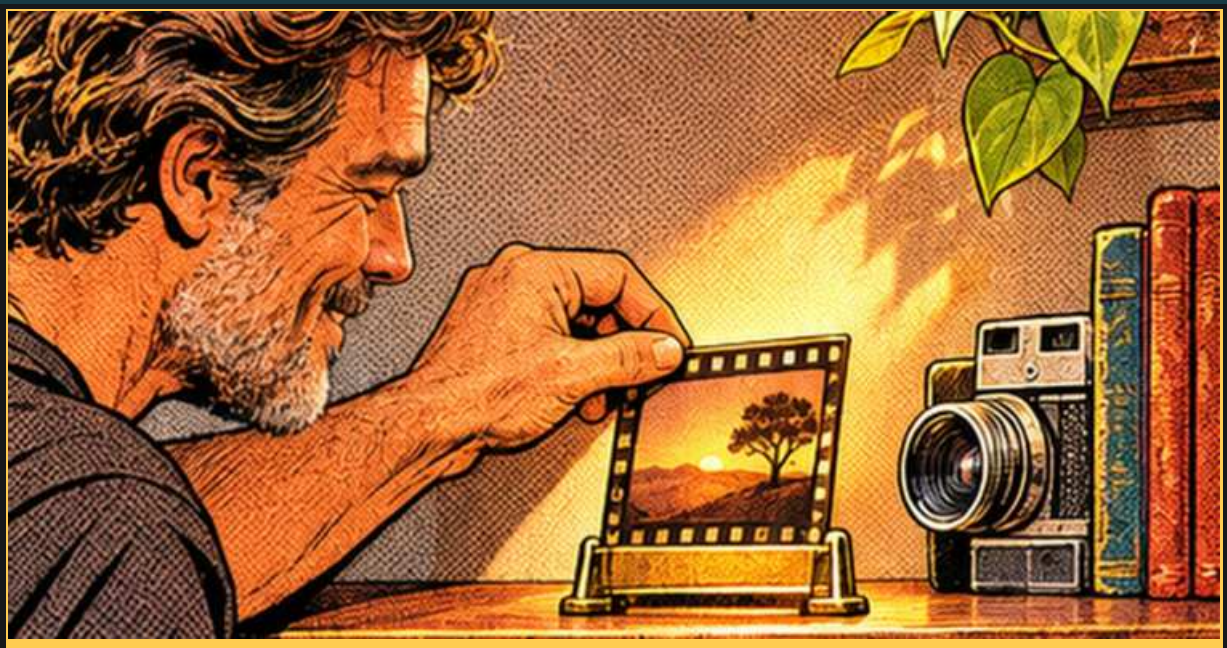




There was a single frame inside the tin that he wanted to keep.

I held the lid while he looked at the frame one more time.





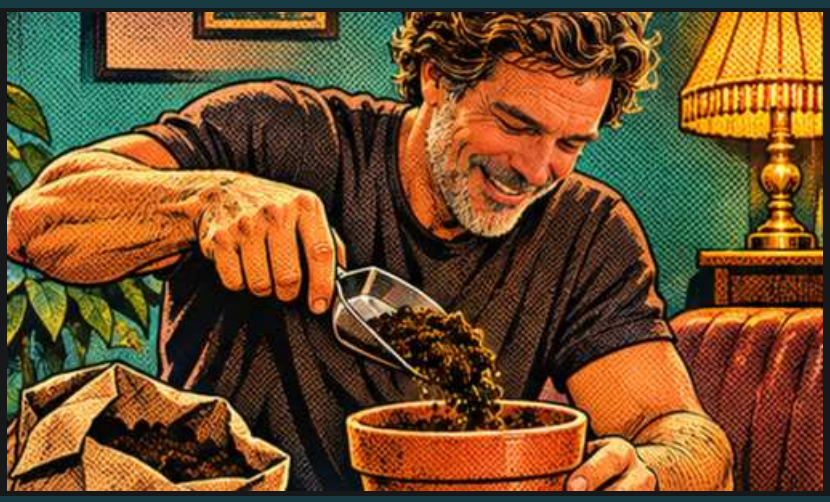
He set it on the shelf where he'd actually see it.



The sun reached the shelf that afternoon.

ROOM FOR A NEW ROOT

The empty pot took more soil than we'd guessed.





The seed was so small I could light the whole thing at once.

Jason tucked it in where neither of us could check on it.



ROOM FOR A NEW ROOT



Then he watered it and got on with the day.

It didn't come up the next morning. One morning it did.



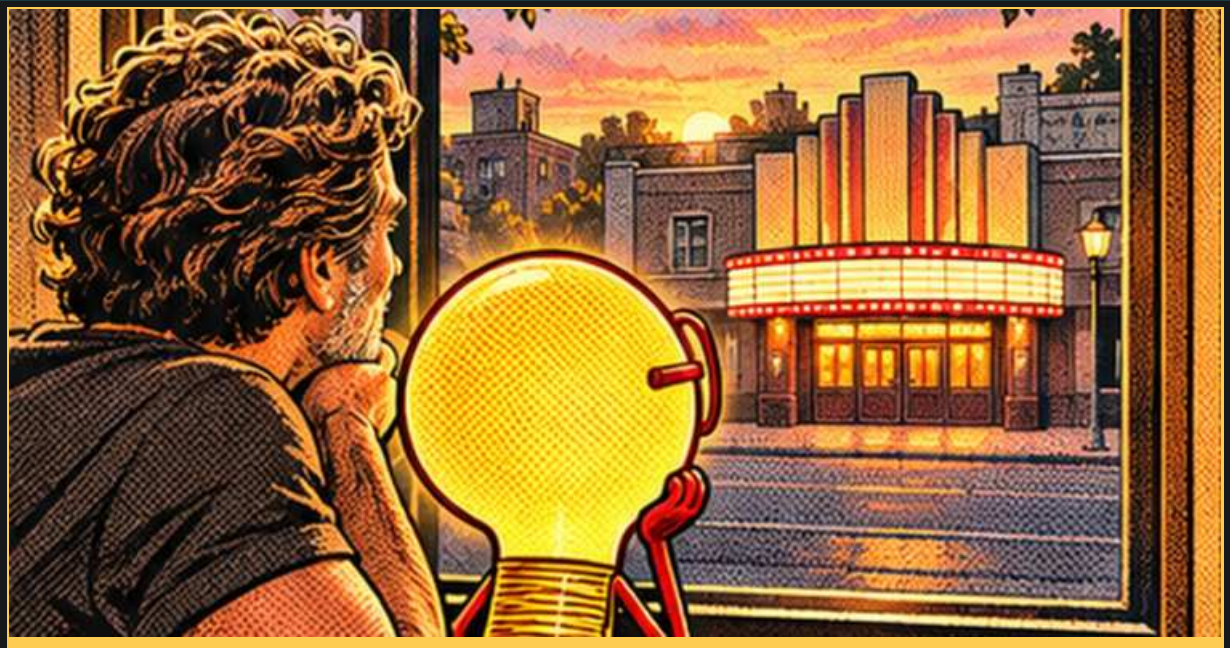


We moved it into the light beside our lopsided boat.

ROOM FOR A NEW ROOT



By then I had to peer through leaves to see the kitchen.

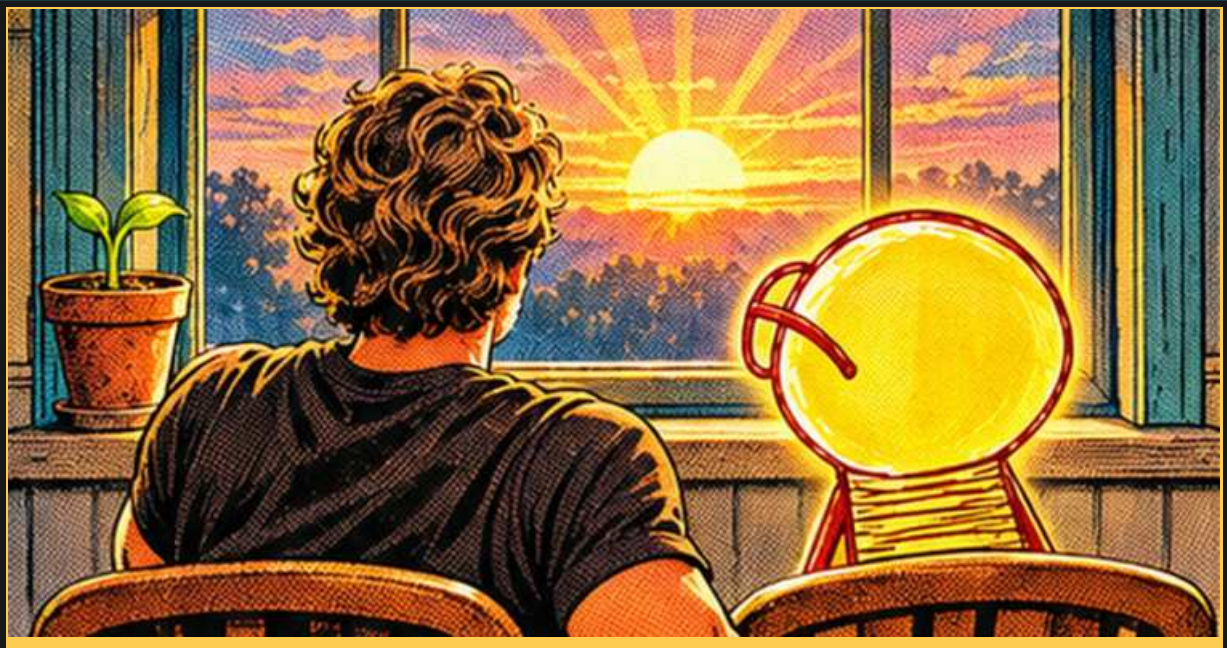


If you're wondering where the answer was, I remember the day we started making room for it.

ROOM FOR A NEW ROOT



The boat and the shoot shared a sill. One had taught us to try. One needed us to keep trying.



When the sun came up, Jason stayed to watch. So did I.

ROOM FOR A NEW ROOT

What are you ready to put down so something else can grow?

Some of the things I hold on to once helped me. A rehearsed answer may have helped me feel safe. A habit of taking charge may have got me through a difficult hour. I can be grateful for what those responses did and still notice how much room they take up today. Letting go often starts with a very ordinary decision about what I want to keep close at hand.

Planting the seed gives that decision a daily shape. Jason has to remember the water, notice the light and make time to check the soil. I can try a similar kind of care with the ways I want to change around friends, family, coworkers and myself. A quieter reply is one watering. Coming back to listen tomorrow is another.

TRY IT

Name one old response you are ready to set down. Name one action you'll repeat in its place this week. Put a reminder where you'll see it at the moment you're most likely to need it.

THE ORIGINAL SPOKEN PIECE

TRANSCRIPT / JASON PLOUFF 007

00:01

Where should we go when we are seeking answers? When life gives us unexpected life situations, which is really all of the time if we are involved with life just a little. How do we know which direction to seek answers from? Should we approach our seeking, or the solutions within the seeking, in a logical, methodical process, or through a flexible, deliberate intention that puts us in the time and space that has disconnected us from where we were, and the solutions that already exist for us on another plane of thought, in another state of mind?

00:46

Is the path of seeking where we muscle through problems, doing our best to control them over and over? Is that really something that produces a good, peaceful harvest? Are we wanting results, or are we taking all things and people, experiences in stride, each opportunity giving us an opportunity to craft the character and human being that we are becoming, and that those around us are becoming at the same time?

01:22

We can get results. We can take charge over and over again to mold or shift life into the ways we think or want it to be. But is that the process we want in our journey of life experiences? Or do we seek a more loving and forgiving, playful life experience? If we are wanting to break habitual habits and actions, then shouldn't we see things first differently before we expect our life to be different? How are important things in our life going to look and be different if we're not first open to all the possibilities that exist that we are wanting, just being open to them?

THE ORIGINAL SPOKEN PIECE

TRANSCRIPT / JASON PLOUFF 007

02:07

If we're going to first open ourselves to realities we are not yet fully experiencing in life, then expecting the unexpected is a good crossroads to start at, at the crossroads of opening ourselves. We can seek change, or we can change while seeking a life-altering transformation where no thing of the old self remains, a completely renewed mind. And that makes all of the difference.

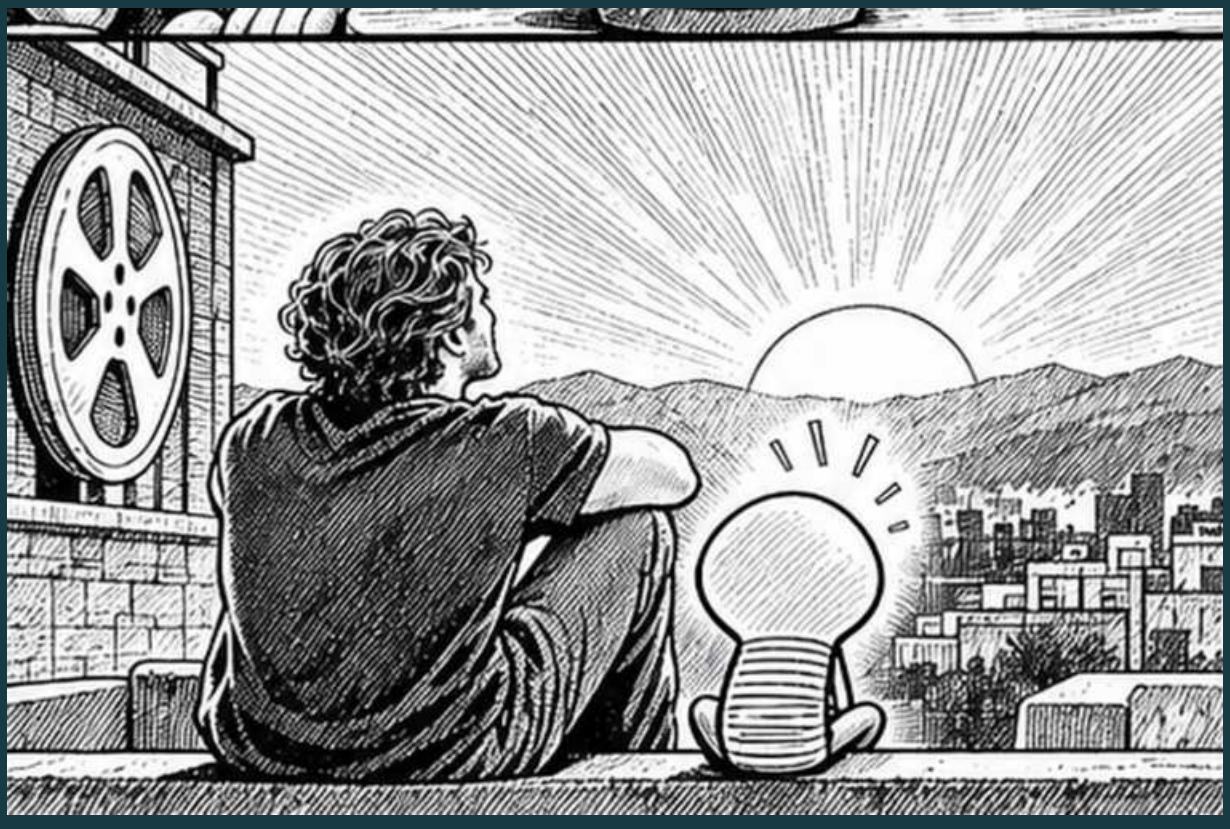
02:41

When we start to open ourselves at the crossroads of the realities of life, we find that expecting life to be different actually softens us or makes us more open and receptive to the change that is inevitably happening in our lives, especially as we seek more and more things that we desire.

03:03

If we are first opening ourselves to the possibilities of life being different, then aren't we really letting go of some parts of ourselves as we are making room for something else to take its place? If we want ourselves to be experiencing life differently with our friends, family, coworkers and self, then opening up to change is actually letting go to make room for a new you to take root and grow. Without doing this, how are we going to change anything within ourselves that is going to consistently manifest in our physical, mental and spiritual experiences of life?

Listen to the original recording on SoundCloud



What if the search for an answer changes the person doing the asking?

When rain upends Jason’s plans, Love Bulb shows him a door he can only see in a puddle. From a jammed projector to a seed in a kitchen window, Love Bulb tells the story of six small changes that make room for a different life.

SCREENPLAY / COMICS / REFLECTION