Day Zero

After six days of preparatory chemotherapy, I arrive at Day Zero. Today marks the system upgrade to Robo 2.0, download to commence shortly. It’s my New Birthday.

There are five bags of stem cells, harvested week before last from my own recalcitrant and glitchy old OS, now thawing in an Igor-esque laboratory down the hall. Around 3.3M stem cells, give or take, yessir yessir five bags full to be mixolydianed in with my diminished strain.

The Days Minus-6 through Minus-one were largely uneventful, which is really the way you want things in a joint like this one. No drama. Decent sleep. A distinct lull before the storm, as it were. Dorian afoot, and not so minor as its name might suggest.

We are perched seven stories above ground in a building constructed to the strictest brick-shithouse code, a designated shelter for storm pummeled locals. We have an expansive view over Paynes Prairies to the south, where we trust the storm will travel after it blows Mar A Lago straight to where it belongs. A little concerned about the storm hitting our dedicated house/pet sitters, but whaddyagonnado?

Plenty of time to think and ponder, especially after the 4 a.m. vital signs visit from the attending. Time enough to arrive at this: I am in the best part of *It’s a Wonderful Life*.

I’m alive, Bert! I’m ALIVE!
Yeah, it’s one of my favorites. I’m a sap. Deal.

It is too bad it takes a brush with mortality for me to twig to the immensity of my own Wonderful Life. I know I’ve had it good: vis Stanwyck and the amazing kids. That alone is more riches than Ozymandias ever knew.

But also too: There have been notes, emails, missives of all sorts from people reminding me of kindnesses I have done over the years, small things that I might not remember or maybe did not even realize were actually happening at the time.

I cannot express how much this means to me.

We wander through our days, often, in a grey haze, not always careful in how we act towards each other. All too often, that leads to carelessness and, sometimes – like right now when my laptop will not behave properly – nasty bits of temper that lead to simple acts of unkindness or even cruelty.

Funny how those events tend to stick in memory. I’ve often wondered if my life has not been a string of accidental or intentional unkindnesses punctuated by the occasional

accidental kindness.

But lately, the outpourings of thoughts from my many friends lead me to feel a little like George Bailey. A string of random events, perhaps, that actually add up to my having done something good in this world, that I have had a Wonderful Life.

And that maybe, just maybe, I deserve to live it some more, if only to try to make sure the kindnesses outweigh that other crap. What would Anubis say if he were to weigh my heart against his feather?

I'd like to wait a little longer to find out.

A few minutes ago, I received the first of the pre-meds that will support the stem cell transplant. Some of this is a considerable jolt of steroids, something with which I do not well deal. Between that and this damn laptop, I better sign off before I send the blasted device a-sail across the prairie. I'll post again when I can. Meantime, all inquiries, hail thee wells, and get-over-it-bubs are welcome via whatever messenger route you choose.

Sincerely, thanks for all the very real and tangible support. We are grateful for our friends and family, grateful to have been a part of your lives and you part of ours, and full of hope that we will all look back on this over some frosty adult beverages and have a good laugh.

Til then, and as always:

LOVE EACH OTHER, MOTHERFUCKERS.

Time is shorter than you think. Get Cracking.