



T I'M GOING TO LET YOU IN ON THE BIGGEST SECRETS IN THE WORLD.

SECRET NUMBER ONE: PEOPLE THINK EVERY BILLIONAIRE IS FAMOUS.

THEY'RE NOT.

MOST OF THEM YOU'VE NEVER EVEN HEARD OF. THEY'RE QUIET, CAREFUL, AND HIDING IN VERY EXPENSIVE PLAIN SIGHT...

...BECAUSE WHEN YOU HAVE THAT KIND OF MONEY, MONEY STOPS BEING FUN... ESPECIALLY WHEN THERE'S A TON OF LAWYERS ALWAYS LOOKING TO "HELP."



MY GRANDFATHER UNDERSTOOD THAT--AND HE NEVER OWNED MORE THAN TWO SWEATERS AT A TIME.

HE WAS A PUBLIC SCHOOL SCIENCE TEACHER, SEVENTH GRADE. HE BELIEVED IN LAB GOGGLES, PACKED LUNCHES, AND NOT SHOWING OFF.



WHEN MY PARENTS MADE THEIR FIRST MILLION DOLLARS FROM A PERFECTLY ORDINARY LITTLE COMPANY CALLED STICKY BANDAGES CO., MY GRANDPA TOLD THEM:

"YOU HAVE A CHOICE: STAY ORDINARY AND THE WORLD WILL LEAVE YOU ALONE, OR LET IT SEE HOW EXTRAORDINARY YOU ARE AND BE READY TO GIVE YOURSELF TO IT."

ONE MILLION TURNED INTO TEN. TEN TURNED INTO A HUNDRED. A HUNDRED TURNED INTO A BILLION.

GRANDPA DIDN'T LIVE TO SEE THAT PART. AND MY PARENTS CHOSE TO HIDE INSTEAD OF BEING SEEN.



SO, FOR MOST OF MY LIFE, NO ONE KNEW WHO MY FAMILY WAS.

NO INTERVIEWS. NO RED CARPETS. NO FANCY PARTIES TO MAKE CHARITY ABOUT THEMSELVES.

WE WERE THE KIND OF RICH PEOPLE WHO PRETENDED NOT TO BE RICH.

WHICH IS EXHAUSTING, BY THE WAY. YOU EVER TRY HIDING A PRIVATE JET IN YOUR BACKYARD?

THEN... THINGS WENT WRONG.



T STICKY BANDAGES CO. MADE SIMPLE BANDAGES. THE PLAIN KIND IN SCHOOL NURSE DRAWERS AND OLD METAL FIRST-AID TINS.

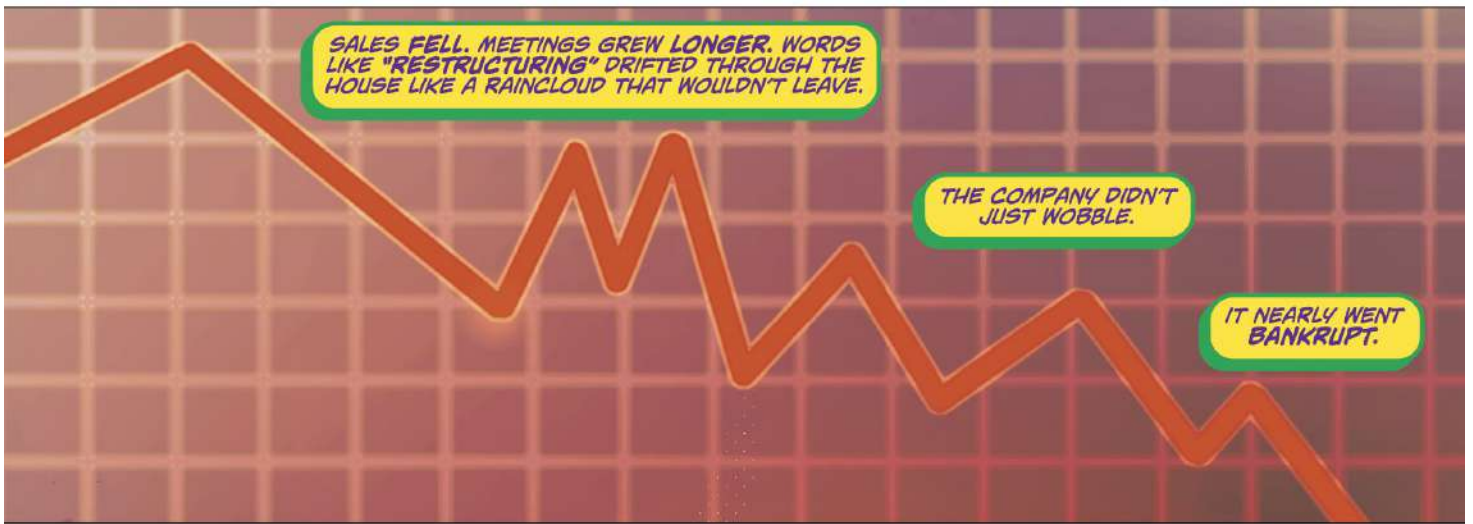
THERE WE GO. GOOD AS NEW.

FOR DECADES, THAT WAS ENOUGH.



THEN CAME STRETCHY ONES. WATERPROOF ONES. GLOW-IN-THE-DARK ONES WITH CARTOON PANDAS DOING KARATE.

WHILE STICKY BANDAGES CO. STAYED... SIMPLY STICKY.



SALES FELL. MEETINGS GREW LONGER. WORDS LIKE "RESTRUCTURING" DRIFTED THROUGH THE HOUSE LIKE A RAINCLOUD THAT WOULDN'T LEAVE.

THE COMPANY DIDN'T JUST WOBBLE.

IT NEARLY WENT BANKRUPT.



IT BEGAN WHEN MY PARENTS STARTED TRAVELING ACROSS THE COUNTRY...THOUGH THEY NEVER REALLY TOLD ANYONE WHY.

MY DAD CAME BACK FROM ONE TRIP WITH A BROKEN ARM. ANOTHER TIME, MY MOM SHOWED UP WITH A SPRAINED ANKLE...AND A CONCUSSION.

SOMEHOW, THEY WERE EXCITED ABOUT WHATEVER HAD HAPPENED...BUT ALSO WORRIED. THE KIND OF WORRIED WHERE THEY STOPPED SLEEPING.

THEY SAID THEY WERE DISTRACTED BY SOMETHING... SOMETHING THEY INSISTED WAS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE BUSINESS.

EVEN MORE IMPORTANT THAN MONEY.

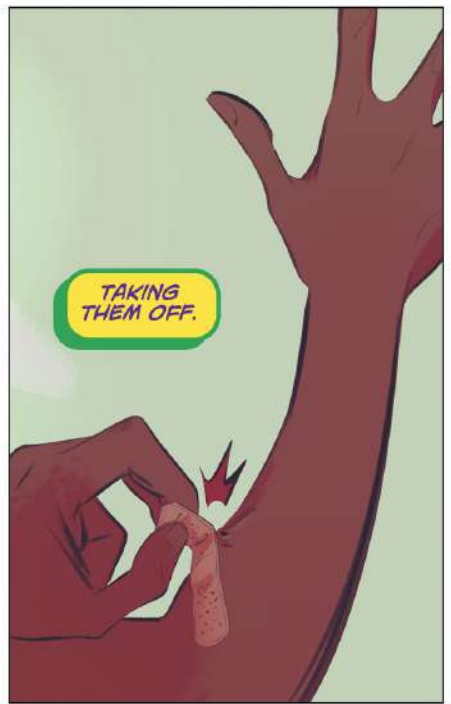


T I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF IT YET...

...I JUST KNEW I COULD HELP.



SO, I FIXED THE ONE THING EVERYONE HATES ABOUT BANDAGES



TAKING THEM OFF.



I INVENTED OUCH-LESS™.

URNS OUT, THE WORLD HAS A LOT OF TINY HURTS.

DOCTORS LOVED THEM. KIDS DEMANDED THEM. ADULTS PRETENDED THEY DIDN'T CARE WHILE BUYING THE FAMILY PACK.

MY NON-STICKY STICKY ENDED UP ON BANDAGES, CASTS, SURGICAL TAPE-- EVEN ASTRONAUT GLOVES.

STICKY BANDAGES CO. DIDN'T JUST RECOVER. IT EXPLODED.

AND BECAUSE OF OUCH-LESS™...



...I BECAME THE WORLD'S FIRST TRILLIONAIRE.

WHICH IS WHEN I DECIDED MAYBE STAYING INVISIBLE WAS A LITTLE OVERRATED AND LET THE WORLD SEE HOW SPECIAL I WAS.

I DID INTERVIEWS. SMILED FOR CAMERAS. PERFECTED MY "HUMBLE, BUT ALSO EXTREMELY IMPRESSIVE" FACE.

...PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW WHO TO SEND THE THANK-YOU NOTES TO.

OF COURSE, GRANDPA WAS RIGHT. NOW THE WORLD WANTED EVERYTHING I HAD. BUT IT NEEDS IT. IT'S A DIFFERENT PLACE THAN IT WAS FOR GRANDPA. IT'S HEAVIER.

BECAUSE IF YOU'RE GOING TO UPGRADE REALITY...

IF YOU ASK ME... IT COULD USE A LOT MORE FUN.



T SO, I STARTED AIRDROPPING PIZZA TO THE ENTIRE TOWN EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT.

AND SENT ROOM SERVICE BREAKFAST TO THEM EVERY SUNDAY MORNING, ACCOMPANIED BY A BANANA SPLIT CART FOR DESSERT.



I INSTALLED LEMONADE FOUNTAINS ACROSS TOWN FOR THE SUMMER THAT SWITCH TO HOT CHOCOLATE WHEN THE TEMPERATURES DROP.

I BUILT AN INDOOR SKI SLOPE FOR YEAR-ROUND SNOWFALL AND A HEATED BEACHFRONT ON THE LAKE WITH SIMULATED SUNLIGHT FOR THE WINTER.



I INVENTED A MOSQUITO SPRAY THAT SENT THEM ALL TO OHIO (SORRY, BUCKEYES) AND PARKING METERS THAT TELL JOKES INSTEAD OF GIVING TICKETS.

I FOCUS ON INVENTIONS THAT MAKE THE WORLD FEEL BRIGHTER, SILLIER, AND WORTH WAKING UP FOR.



BUT HERE'S THE PART MOST PEOPLE STILL DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE WORLD YET.

MONEY IS ONLY ONE REASON SOMEONE MIGHT STAY INVISIBLE.

SECRETS NUMBER TWO THROUGH... HONESTLY, I'VE LOST COUNT: THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE WITH UNBELIEVABLE POWER...AND EVEN MORE UNBELIEVABLE BEGINNINGS.

AND THEY'VE GOTTEN EVEN BETTER AT HIDING THAN THE RICH FOLK EVER DID...



T ...LIKE A FORMER WISH-GRANTING GENIE WHO WAS FINALLY GRANTED HER OWN FREEDOM... AND IS TRYING TO FOLLOW THE RULES IN A WORLD THAT MAKES NO SENSE...

I MEAN, I'M NOT COMPLAINING... REALLY, I APPRECIATE YOU AND THE WHOLE G.I.N.E.E. TEAM FINDING ME AN APARTMENT... I JUST THOUGHT MY LAMP WAS KINDA... ROOMIER.



...OR THE VERY GRUMPY GHOST IN BOISE, IDAHO WHO REALLY DOES NOT WANT NEW PEOPLE MOVING IN...

HEY! I JUST WIPED OUT ON THIS STUPID SKATEBOARD.

WHICH ONE OF YOU LEFT IT HERE?

WE HAVEN'T EVEN TAKEN ANYTHING OUT OF THE VAN YET. SOMEONE ELSE MUSTA PUT IT THERE.

...OR THE SECRET CUL-DE-SAC WHERE THE HOLIDAYS LIVE, THEIR TRADITIONS FLICKERING LIKE A PORCH LIGHT THAT MIGHT GO OUT FOR GOOD.



HE HIT JEREMY RIGHT IN THE EYE WITH A SNOWBALL.

THE BRAT ALMOST PUT MY CANDLE OUT!

CASPER CLAUS--

IT WASN'T ME, DAD, IT WAS AN ELF!

DISGUISED AS ME.

MOST PEOPLE WOULD CALL ALL THAT IMPOSSIBLE. MY PARENTS HAD A DIFFERENT WORD.

THEY CALLED THEM...

THE UNBELIEVABLES



I TURNED THIRTEEN TWO MONTHS AGO. MY NAME IS THOMAS NOBLE TOWNSEND THE THIRD.

I LOVE MY FAMILY. MY PARENTS AND MY SISTER, TABITHA.

I'M NAMED AFTER MY DAD, WHO WAS NAMED AFTER MY GRANDPA, THE SCIENCE TEACHER.

YEAH, MAKING THE WORLD A MORE FUN PLACE TO LIVE IS GREAT...

T ...BUT THEY'RE MY WHOLE UNIVERSE...

CHERRY PIT, MICHIGAN.

HOME TO TOMMY TOWNSEND III.
SON. BROTHER. TRILLIONAIRE.

Always remember
Some things money can't buy
Love, Mom & Dad



TO BE CONTINUED IN **THE TRILLION DOLLAR KID** #