

Life is Good

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. SMALL BUSINESS STOREFRONT - NIGHT

It's raining. A neon sign reads: LIFE IS GOOD

INT. LIFE IS GOOD - NIGHT

Three of four cubicles are empty. CHARLIE, 34, jacked into the phone system via a headset, sits behind a computer terminal -- eyes bloodshot, sneezes into a wad of tissues.

CHARLIE

Oh god!

Charlie is sick, but nothing compared to his boss, TOMMY, 40, who barely has the strength to stay standing.

TOMMY

Muscles ache. Got the chills. How do I look?

Charlie thinks for a moment...

CHARLIE

Like Merle from the Walking Dead -- after he changed.

TOMMY

That bad? He was god ugly before hand.

CHARLIE

Go home, rest on up.

TOMMY

Louis is on vacation and Claire is already home with the flu, I can't leave you here by yourself.

CHARLIE

Phones are dead. Go home before you are too.

Tommy thinks about it...

Tacked to the wall of every cubical: RULE #1: NEVER USE THE WORDS "DEAD" or "DIE."

Charlie then shakes his head at his blunder.

TOMMY

Alright, call if you need me to
come back.

CHARLIE

Reckon I won't. Feel better, Merle.

Exit Tommy. Charlie sighs while further refreshing his
knowledge of the rules...

RULE #2. NEVER USE THE WORD "SUICIDE"

He hacks mucus into a wad of tissues. Reaches for the box on
his desk -- it's empty!

CHARLIE

Crap.

Telephone call-indicator chirps. Charlie into the phone...

CHARLIE

Life is good, Charlie speaking. Ask
me how to make tomorrow twice as
good as today.

RASPY VOICE OLD LADY (PHONE)

Fuck tomorrow. I'm fix'n 'ta kill
my self now!

Charlie stiffens up in his chair, begins protocols...

CHARLIE

Oh, Mrs...?

Another CHIRP and blinking light on the call indicator...

RASPY VOICE OLD LADY (PHONE)

Alice, if you must know.

CHARLIE

Well, um Alice, we can...
(cough, hack, sneeze)
... I think...

Blasts another sneeze -- this time fit-enough for a hippo.

RASPY VOICE OLD LADY (PHONE)

You okay?

Charlie blows nose sludge into a paper document.

CHARLIE

One sec.

RASPY VOICE OLD LADY (PHONE)

One sec? You're not putting me on
hold are you?

He switches calls...

CHARLIE

Life is good, Charlie speaking. Let
me show you how bright and
beautiful tomorrow can be.

CALLER #2, sounds like... who cares, actually.

CALLER #2 (PHONE)

I'm looking at the weather right
now, heavy rain through Friday.

CHARLIE

Um, it's uh... how can I help you?

CALLER #2 (PHONE)

I need to speak with Claire.

Charlie has another sneezing fit...

CHARLIE

She's home sick.

CALLER #2 (PHONE)

I took half the bottle.

CHARLIE

Bottle of what?

CALLER #2 (PHONE)

I can't deal with my mom anymore,
so I'm fix'n 'ta take the rest of
her pills.

CHARLIE

Wait. Just tell me where you are at
and I'll get you help.

RASPY VOICE OLD LADY (PHONE)

Charlie? Are you there?

He switches back to the original caller, also opens up an
additional line to 911.

CHARLIE
I'm still here, I'm having a...

RASPY VOICE OLD LADY (PHONE)
It's a long... long... way down.

CHARLIE
Down? What do you mean? Where are you?

FEMALE 911 OPERATOR...

FEMALE 911 OPERATOR (PHONE)
Nine-one-one, state your emergency?

CHARLIE
Um, just a...
(coughs like a 4-pack-a-day
smoker for 25 yrs. average
even after he learns about his
tumorous lung polyps.)
Hold on.

FEMALE 911 OPERATOR (PHONE)
Sir, are you alright.? Do you have
an emergency at your location?

Back to original caller...

CHARLIE
Ma'am, what do you mean long way
down? Where are you?

RASPY VOICE OLD LADY (PHONE)
This ledge is rather slippery.

CALLER #2 (PHONE)
Charlie, say goodbye to Claire for
me. I'm swallowing the rest.

Charlie THINKS he has switched to Caller #2, but not so. A
4th line now begins to blink.

CHARLIE
Wait! Don't take anymore!

FEMALE 911 OPERATOR (PHONE)
Don't take anymore what?

CHARLIE
Not you. I'll call back!

He hangs up on 911. Switches to Caller #2...

CHARLIE
Sorry, I'm back!

CALLER #2 (PHONE)
You're not very good at this, I
wish Claire didn't get sick.

CHARLIE
You and me both. Be right back.

Switches to line four.

CHARLIE
Life is good, what?

Charlie coughs, sneezes, farts and whatever else you can
think of.

GUY ON LINE #4, middle aged sounding, very deep
BROOKLYN-TYPE voice.

GUY ON LINE #4 (PHONE)
You sound like shit.

CHARLIE
See'ns how I've been way better,
I'm inclined to agree.

GUY ON LINE #4 (PHONE)
The cop is right in front of me,
bro. I'm gonna make him take me
out.

CHARLIE
You're what?

GUY ON LINE #4 (PHONE)
Gonna pretend I got a gun under my
shirt, make a fast move, and then
he's gonna shoot me. There's a name
for that...

CHARLIE
Suicide by cop?

Just as the words leave Charlie's mouth, he catches a
glimpse of RULE #2. Shutters at his mistake...

CHARLIE
I mean, um...

GUY ON LINE #4 (PHONE)
 I'll scare the shit out of him and
 then he'll have no choice but to
 pop me.

Charlie drops his forehead down onto the desk, grabs his
 temples and squeezes them with his palms.

CHARLIE
 That's not gonna work. No cop will
 be surprised by that.

GUY ON LINE #4 (PHONE)
 Ya, why the flip not?

CHARLIE
 Cuz see'n how this is Texas, and
 cops know we all have guns. I got
 mine on me right now.

GUY ON LINE #4 (PHONE)
 Oh, ya. What kinda pis-tole ya got?

CHARLIE
 Cross-draw, three-fifty-seven,
 Desert Eagle, if you must know.

GUY ON LINE #4 (PHONE)
 Dat's a phat piece, bro. Back in
 Brook, I got a one-nine-one-one.

CHARLIE
 You mean nineteen-eleven?

GUY ON LINE #4 (PHONE)
 I gots to rethink my plan. Any
 suggestions?

CHARLIE
 What? I'm won't help you commit
 sui...

...slaps himself on the back of his neck.

GUY ON LINE #4 (PHONE)
 You gotta be the expert on it.

CALLER #2 (PHONE)
 Here I go, Charlie!
 (muffled voice)
 You hear me eating them? Crunch,
 crunch, crunch.

ON THE TELEPHONE CALL INDICATOR --

Two additional lines begin to pulse.

RASPY VOICE OLD LADY (PHONE)
Geronimo, Charlie.

GUY ON LINE #4 (PHONE)
Chucky boy, what kinda bullet
splits brains best?

CLOSER on the call indicator...

BLINKING

BEEPING

AND

BLINKING

AND

BEEPING

AND

-----> POW! -- the loudest gunshot you ever heard.

Charlies LIMP arm now pressing down onto every phone line
button on the console -- INTERCOM now active.

RASPY VOICE OLD LADY (PHONE)
What was that?

GUY ON LINE #4 (PHONE)
That sounded like a gun.

CALLER #2 (PHONE)
Charlie? You still there?

GUY ON LINE #4 (PHONE)
Dang, I think chucky-boy just shot
himself.

RASPY VOICE OLD LADY (PHONE)
No fucking way?!?

CALLER #2 (PHONE)
Who the hell are you guys, anyways?

FADE OUT

THE END