

**THE TANK**  
by Jody McColman

A: Male, 20-50, friend to B

B: Male, 20-50, friend to A

Setting: A typical local bar

At Rise: A and B are sitting on adjacent bar stools drinking beer.

A

That's it. I've decided. I'm going in the tank.

B

Huh?

A

I'm going in the tank.

B

Dude, you're only halfway through your first beer.

A

What? Oh, no man, I'm not "tanked," I'm going in the tank.

B

What the hell are you taking about?

A

Ok, you see that neon sign over there, by the men's room?

B

The Bud Light sign with the Red Sox logo? Yeah. I see it, so what.

A

No, the other one. The one next to it.

B

The Molson sign?

A

Yeah, what does it say?

B (incredulously)

It says "Molson," dude.

A

No, man, what does it say underneath that?

B

It says "Ice Cold Canadian."

A

Exactly.

B

Exactly what, exactly?

A

That's gonna be me, man, an ice cold Canadian. I'm going in the tank.

B

What the fuck are you talking about? Did you start drinking before you got here? Are you and the wife having "issues" again? 'Cause, you know I'm there for you dude, but if this is going to be one of "those" nights – and I'll remind you that this's a Wednesday – then I'm ordering a shot so I can prepare.

A

No, man, we're fine, and I'm sober, that's not what this is about. I'm talking about... wait, what do you mean one of "those" nights? What do you mean "prepare"? No, never mind, different discussion for a different night. I'm talking about cryonics, cryo-preservation. Life extension. The post death deep-freeze.

B

What the fu... you mean like Ted Williams and Walt Disney?

A

Yeah. Well, like Ted Williams. The Walt Disney thing is an urban legend. He was actually cremated and interred at Forest Lawn in L.A.

B

Wait, I heard that Walt Disney... Yeah, ok, whatever, Walt Disney is not the point. The point is you're gonna have your head chopped off and dunked in, what, liquid nitrogen or something when you die, and then hope that some future scientific break-through will allow you to be thawed out and brought back to life?

A

Well, it's a bit more sophisticated than that but, basically, yeah. Though you can cryo-preserve your whole body; they don't have to remove your head.

B (deadpan)

Oh, good, now it makes so much more sense.

A

I'm serious, man. I'm doing this. I've done the research and I'm doing it.

B

Oh I'm not doubting it. Which makes this even more fucked up. Where is this place? I mean, where do they keep the tanks?

A

Scottsdale.

B

Arizona?! Yeah, that makes sense, keep the popsicle-people in the hottest city in America. Ok, whatever, never mind. How much does this cost?

A

Well, its two-hundred grand for the whole body, eighty grand for just your head. Plus membership dues while you're alive of six-hundred bucks a year, plus an optional hundred and eighty bucks a year for a medical standby team to fly to your hospital and prep you for preservation right after your heart stops beating.

B

Where in the hell are you getting that kind of money? I know what you do for a living.

A

Ahh, that's the beauty. A life insurance policy with the facility as the beneficiary. Fifty bucks a month. Do all the math, and it's a hundred and twenty-five bucks a month for a chance to live forever.

B (bewildered)

Ok. I just... ok.

A

"Ok." That's it? That's what you have to say? "Ok"?

B

Well, yeah. No. I, mean... I just... Dude, don't you believe in God?

A

What does God have to do with this?

B

God. The after-life. Heaven. Hell. You know... God. You'll be dead, dude. Dead. Your soul will have left. You'll've headed toward the light. You're the fucking parrot in the Monty Python sketch: you'll've shuffled off your mortal coil; you'll be an ex-dude, dude.

A

Not dead, man, just in a reaaaaallly long coma with an uncertain prognosis.

B

A really long... this isn't funny, dude, this is your immortal soul we're talking about here. Your soul will have left and headed out to... to... to, well, wherever the fuck your soul is going, heaven maybe – though for you maybe not so much – but somewhere. And then, SNAP, 300 years later your soul is flung back into some recently defrosted body? I mean, shit, have you thought through the metaphysical and spiritual ramifications of that?

A

Awww, the inconvenience of my immortal soul. That's sweet of you to worry. But, seriously, what's the worst thing that happens? I'm stay dead, that's the worst thing. I can deal with "soul re-entry" and any psychic adjustments if and when they thaw me out. Totally worth it.

B

Uhhh, well.... What if the people who thaw you out are some highly advanced sadists? Hmm? Ever think of that? Or perverts? What if you get thawed out only to be – wait, are you doing whole body or just your head?

A

Just my head, I think. If I can ever afford whole body then maybe, but all I can swing right now is one-twenty-five a month, so for now just the head.

B

So what good is it if they just thaw out your head? (beat) Oh, right, the future, I get it. Ok, so, like I was saying, you get thawed out by genius perverted sadists of the future only to have your defrosted head attached to some robot body and they force you into some kind of twenty-seventh century sex slavery. Or they thaw out your head and just keep you in a display case for third-millennium fourth-graders to visit on some field trip: "Look children, this is a live human head from 2064." (beat) I can keep going.

A

I take your point, but I think it's worth the risk. Just think of the possible upside! Getting to see what happens one-hundred, two-hundred, one-thousand years from now! Living in a world where death doesn't exist! Where we've colonized other worlds, expanded throughout the galaxy! Answered the fundamental questions of the universe! I mean, come on man, aren't you curious? Aren't you curious about how this all turns out?

B

No, dude, I'm not. I'm fine with my "if-I'm-lucky-I-get-to-one-hundred" existence. I'm fine, perfectly fine, with old age, death, St. Peter, heaven, happy eternity. I think most people are. But hey, I wish you luck, dude. (beat) You tell the wife about this?

A

Yeah.

B

And?

A (laughing)

She thinks I'm nuts.

B (laughing)

I've always liked her. (beat) Ok, enough with this heavy existential shit, dude. Can we talk about football or something?

(out to audience)

Hey, barkeep, another round? Make it two Molsons, in honor of my soon-to-be ice cold Canadian friend here.

CURTAIN