



"But Ernie, you're over-
 reacting! You're letting
 your imagination run
 wild. All they want Obie
 for is some testing."
 We know what they want.
 More prodding and probing,
 more cloning. They want
 him back. Well too bad.
 Obie's mine. You take blood
 \$ for your dream, not mine.
 You know what Obie means
 to me. Not a pet. A friend.
 We won't allow for more
 exploitation. In this I know
 for certain - Obie agrees.

X Ernie



ANIMAL HEARTS

"All animals are equal."

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26 Jan. 2040

They're Back

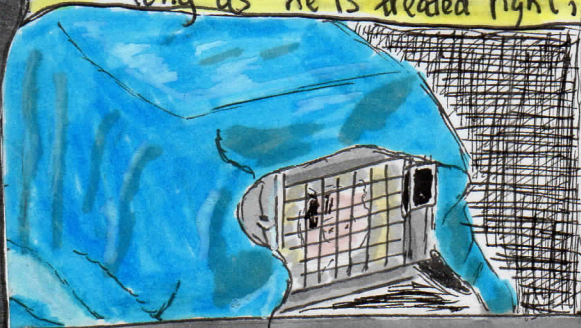


Ernie

The company wants Obie back. They speak with corporate jargon: "peculiar developments" that "warrant further investigation." They say other patients are showing signs of heart failure, and that if we return and submit to their tests, then perhaps they can figure out the secret to our success and save lives. Well I don't buy it. They want to exploit Obie again. In exchange, they offered M money and She agreed, which makes her the enemy. Those of you who have been following my posts—you know where I stand. I won't let them take him to further their vicious cause of breeding animals for their organs. I've come this far... I must remain strong.



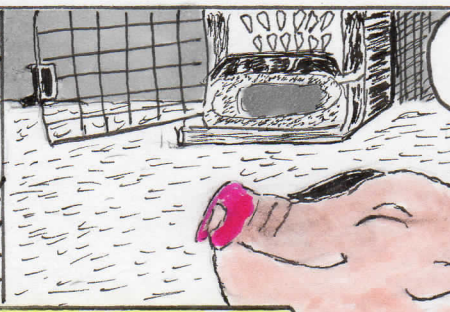
We took the train from Austin. I asked for a private room. The crew assumed he was a common pet like a puppy or cat. They didn't ask to see inside the carrier. He stayed quiet. As long as he is treated right, Obie's just fine. One of a kind.



I remember the night he came into my life. It had just been a week since my surgery and I was still recovering when M came home holding a crate draped with a towel.

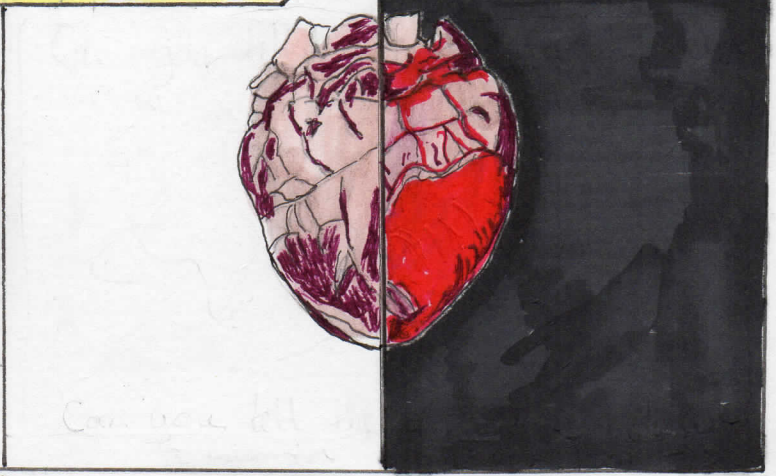


What's in there? A kitty cat?? A pup?



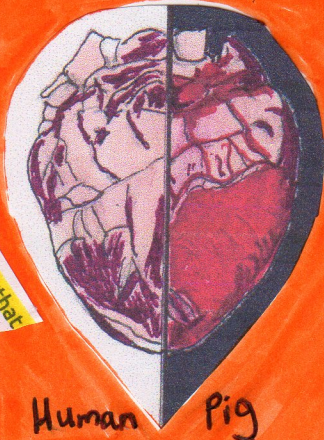
NO, DON'T BE SILLY! GUESS AGAIN.

This was no ordinary pig. Special. An original. My original. I took one look and knew that the heart in my chest belonged to him.



Can you tell the difference?

yet there is increasing acceptance that of some kind. A growing number of



our closest evolutionary relatives biologists and philosophers agree that,

The extent to which animals can suffer is still argued, have the necessary brainpower to experience suffering at the very least, the majority of mammals can suffer.

Pigs raised for xeno transplantation would probably need to be kept in a sterile environment, so would not be able to forage and play with other pigs © Getty

He squealed and ran through the house. My — our — heart raced. It felt both wrong and right at the same time.

Follow Science Focus

How would you feel about the thought of a pig's heart inside you?

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I MADE A GREAT SACRIFICE, FACING THE SCORN FROM FAMILY AND FRIENDS.



BUT I HAVE FAITH IN SCIENCE, THE BEST OF THE BEST. FOR YOU, ERNIE BABY.



A PIG HEART? WHAT AN ABOMINATION!



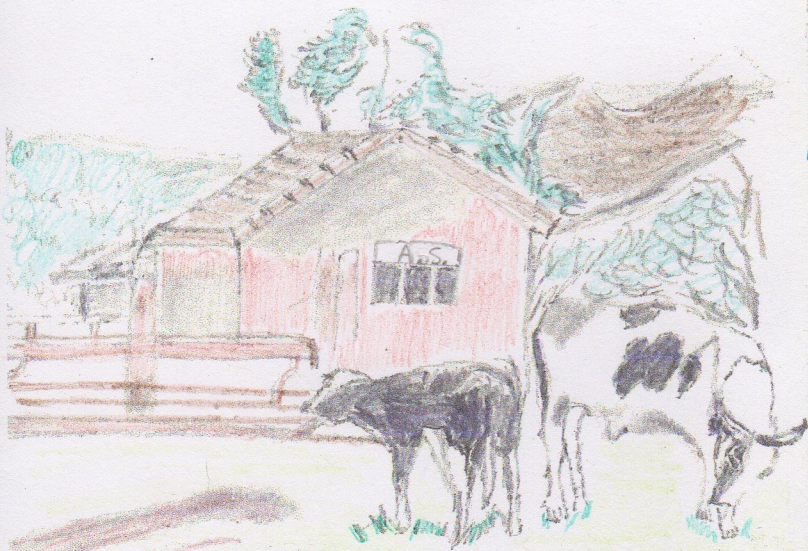
I resented her. What for? First, for not telling the truth beforehand, and then for confessing afterward. Why tell me at all? I could have gone through life no worse off in my ignorance. After all, the surgery was a success. But I can't un-know and I've never been the same ever since.

That night, I couldn't sleep.
So I let him out of the cage.
I had to know for certain.



I held him against my chest,
felt the beating of his
heart against mine.

PERFECT SYNCHRONY



Obie has been with me for every
milestone. At every lonely birthday.
Helps me eat cake, licks the icing off
my face. Every Halloween, I hoard
candy under the bed. We gounge

together in secret, in the dark. I rub
his belly, scratch his ears, and he
can tell when I need a friend.

When I shut the
and lay in bed all
he's by my side.
never lonely.

He has me—human?
Same heart. Now he
Here I am. He came to
number 7, a mere
in a giant
"Obadiah," a
that chose me,
through a
of the heart.



blinds
day.
He's

Hybrid?
needs me.
me as
product
machine.
name
granted
whisper

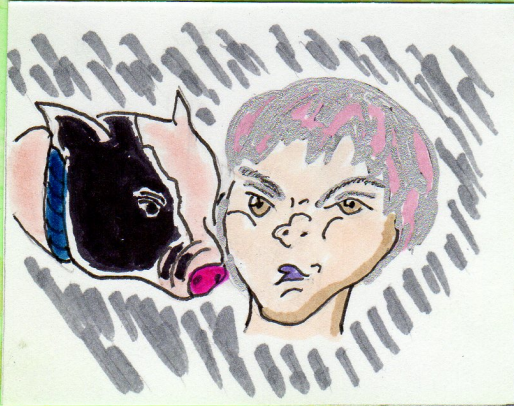
ANIMAL HEARTS

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Leave a
comment

"We have to speak on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves."

-Peter Singer



I dedicate this blog first and foremost to Obie, my best friend, whose clone served as the unwilling donor for my heart transplant. I say unwilling, for unlike his human counterparts who willfully choose, the clone did not volunteer, was not given any say. This is for all animals who are given no voice; I speak on behalf of the unheard. For the past several years, I have come to appreciate the sentience, the intelligence, the marvelousness of this most exploited of species.



