

## A story about you

You have a new job now. Every day except Sunday you drive out into the Sand Wastes, and there you find two trucks. You move wooden crates from one truck to another while a man in a suit silently watches. It is a different man each time. Sometimes the crates *tick*. Mostly, they do not. When you are done, the man in the suit hands you an amount of cash, also different each time, and you go home.

It is the best job you've ever had.



Except, today...it was different.

You moved the crates. The man in the suit, a stranger, watched. But then, *as had never happened before*, the man in the suit received a phone call. He walked off at some distance to take it. "Yes, sir!" he said, and "No, sir!" Also he made hawk shrieking sounds. It wasn't terribly interesting.

You moved crates.

But then, an impulse...an *awful* impulse came over you, and for no other reason than that you are trapped by the freedom to do anything in this life, you took one of the crates, and put it in your trunk.

By the time the man came back from his phone call, you were done with your job. He gave you the money (it was nearly five hundred dollars today, the *second* highest it had ever been), and you drove home with the crate in your trunk.

When you got home, you took the crate into your trailer and left it in the kitchen. The crate *did not make a ticking sound*. It made no sound at all. *Nothing* made a sound except you, breathing in and breathing out.