

**TUNNEL COLLAPSE**

NARRATOR: Sometimes, in the hustle and bustle and flying viscera it is easy to lose sight of the little policies. The humble everyman who goes on about the business of HartLife in the face of whatever malevolent and extraordinary personalities happen to be threatening the city today. What becomes of such a policy when disaster strikes?

**MAN SCREAMS. BLOOD AND GUTS.**

Well, naturally they fall prey to Elizabeth Rourke's unnatural hunger. As for the even more humble molepeople...

SANDY: (OFF) Go away.

CLAY: (OFF) Please, just stop for a moment...

NARRATOR: ...they wisely disappear from sight, trapped beneath the rock and soil of an unforeseen tunnel collapse.

**EXPLOSIONS. SANDY AND CLAY SCREAMING.  
FALLING ROCKS AND SOIL.**

SANDY: Ow.

CLAY: Are you alright?

SANDY]: I just bumped my head. Um Clay?

CLAY: Yeah?

SANDY: You're on top of me.

CLAY: Yeah.

SANDY: Can you not be?

CLAY: Uh...I sort of...can't move.

SANDY: You're kidding?

CLAY: No.

SANDY: Just stand up.

CLAY: I don't...

SANDY: Move your legs up to here...

CLAY: It's just that...

SANDY: And then shift your weight and...

DIRT SHIFTING AND FALLING.

Oh.

CLAY: Yeah.

SANDY: So, you're...?

CLAY: Holding up the ceiling...kind of. Can you do any digging?

SANDY: You've got my arms pinned.

CLAY: Maybe if I...

MORE DIRT AND ROCKS FALLING.

SANDY: Maybe we should just wait.

CLAY: Yeah. Wait.

SANDY: In silence, cuz I'm still not talking to you.

CLAY: Right. Okay. That's okay. Silence is good. It preserves oxygen. Tunnel Safety Rule 34: All necessary oxygen should be preserved in the event of a prolonged tunnel collapse. (TAKES A BIG BREATH AND HOLDS IT.)

SANDY: What are you doing?

CLAY: (LETS OUT BREATH) The longest recorded tunnel collapse rescue was two years and five days. (TAKES A BIG BREATH AND HOLDS IT.)

SANDY: That doesn't explain why you're holding your breath.

CLAY: (LET'S OUT BREATH) If I breathe less we'll have more oxygen.

SANDY: Is...is this...?

CLAY: Is this what?

SANDY: This is your first tunnel collapse, isn't it?

CLAY: What? No. (SIGNIFICANT PAUSE) No.

SANDY: This is your first tunnel collapse.

CLAY: Okay, so maybe this is my first time on this side of the dirt, but I have seen tunnel collapses. Loads of them.

SHIFT OF ROCK.

SANDY: Loads of them?

CLAY: Tons of them.

SANDY: Tons of them?

CLAY: Stop that.

SANDY: I'm not doing anything.

CLAY: Okay, okay. So...I like to be safe. Excuse me for not buying into the whole "you're not a real mole unless you've been in a tunnel collapse."

SANDY: But you took tunnel safety class right? You must have done tunnel collapse day.

CLAY: I was sick.

SANDY: We don't get sick days.

CLAY: I threw up before the supports could be removed.

SANDY: Lots of people are rubbish their first time. It's nothing to be ashamed of. I remember getting into a tunnel collapse back when I was with Rocksy. We were both so nervous our claws were shaking.

CLAY: Yeah...but I sort of...I kept throwing up. Over everyone. Shale. Ms. Garnet. The Overseer.

SANDY: (LAUGHS)

CLAY: Stop it. It isn't funny.

SANDY: (STILL LAUGHING)

CLAY: (STARTING TO LAUGH) It's not. I had stomach cramps for weeks. Seriously, stop laughing. You're using all our oxygen.

SANDY: I miss laughing at you, Clay.

CLAY: I...miss it too.

SANDY: Why do you have to be such a jerk sometimes?

CLAY: I don't know.

ROCKS FALLING AND SHIFTING.

CLAY: (STARTS HYPERVENTILATING.) What's that?

SANDY: It's okay.

CLAY: We need to get out of here. It's all going to fall. I'm not strong enough and...

SANDY: Clay, look at me. It's probably just the rocks settling. Take deep breaths.

CLAY: I can't. I'll use oxygen.

SANDY: First rule of tunnel safety.

CLAY: First...stay calm.

SANDY: Exactly. Deep breaths.

CLAY: (TAKING DEEP BREATHS)

SANDY: It's okay. It's going to be okay.

CLAY: (DEEP BREATHS) Sandy...you're bleeding.

SANDY: I am?

CLAY: Your head.

SANDY: That...that is going to be okay too. Just.

MORE FALLING ROCKS.

CLAY: Sandy...I'm sorry.

SANDY: I know.

CLAY: I'm sorry I called you a...I called you that. I'm sorry I got mad and I'm sorry that I'm stupid sometimes.

SANDY: These are true things.

CLAY: And I'm sorry we're stuck here because of me.

SANDY: It's okay.

CLAY: If Peat were here...he'd just lift the whole ceiling up himself.

SANDY: Probably...but he's not here. And I'm glad, Clay. I'm glad. There's no one I'd rather be in a tunnel collapse with. I trust you.

CLAY: Sandy?

SANDY: Yes?

CLAY: If I...do you think...

SANDY: Yes?

ROCKS SHIFT.

LOAMY: (MUFFLED) Do you need rescuing?

SANDY: What?

CLAY: I didn't say that.

LOAMY: Over here.

SANDY: Loamy? What...what are you doing here?

LOAMY: Just doing my part as a member of the Mole Underground Retrieval and Deadly Encounter Rescue Service. You two alright or do you still need a minute or two?

CLAY: No. No. We're good. We can get out now.

LOAMY: Alright. Up you come Clay.

SHIFTING ROCKS.

And now, Sandy.

MORE SHIFTING ROCKS.

Oh Sandy. You look a bit dizzy. And no wonder. Look at your head. Bloody head wound that is. A concussion risk too. You should go see Peat over at the medical station.

CLAY: What's Peat doing there?

LOAMY: Oh, he's a vet now. First mole to pass his exams. It's a proud day.

SANDY: So I'll just...

CLAY: You go and...

SANDY: We can...later?

CLAY: Yeah later...

SANDY: Okay well...

CLAY: Well...

FOOTSTEPS.

LOAMY: You know, you really weren't that far down.

CLAY: You don't say.

LOAMY: Surprised you didn't just lift yourself out.

CLAY: (Truthfully.) It was heavy.

LOAMY: "Heavy." Right. (LAUGHS. PAUSE.) Oh. You're serious.

CLAY: Yeah.

LOAMY: Sorry. But hey, bright side. Perfect opportunity to tell Sandy how you feel. I mean, if not in a private potentially life threatening situation, when, right? A mole who couldn't even admit their feelings in the direst of circumstances, I'd have to wonder if they really felt that much at all. Maybe it was just a passing fancy or maybe they just weren't the one. Time to move on. Find someone more in tune with their emotions. Not afraid to take a risk, to put themselves out there and squeal.

CLAY: I gotta go.

FOOTSTEPS RUNNING.

LOAMY: (CALLING AFTER HIM) You're welcome. All in a days work for the Mole Underground Retrieval and Dire Event Rescue Service.

END.