

Mac & Cheese

Written by

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Draft 9

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FADE IN:

INT. JOURNALISM OFFICE- DAY

A young man, MAX (Male 20), sits at a plain, boring table stacked high with papers and folders.

He is holding a manila folder, a sticky note on the cover reads:

PLEASE REVIEW ALL DOCUMENTS BY 5:00 PM.

A warm orange glow grows on Max's face and we here the crackling as the pages are SET ON FIRE.

Max takes a deep breath in. Coming back to reality, he sets the non-burned manila folder down on the desk.

He slides the folder over, and brings another folder titled: ACTUAL WORK in front of him.

He flips it open and inside is a small stack of super hero character drawings of various colors and styles. The top one is unfinished, and he grabs some loose colored pencils by his side and begins coloring the character in.

As he colors he hears a gruff, angry voice.

VOICE (O.S.)

Hey!

Max slowly looks to where the voice is coming from.

The top flap of the manila folder is moving up and down like a talking mouth.

MANILA FOLDER

Hey!

Max, in frustration, sets the two folders side by side, looking back and forth at them.

MAX (V.O.)

These pricks really hired me to sit here all day checking for commas and spacing errors...

He sighs.

MAX

What a joke.

He closes his drawings and sets them and the colored pencils aside.

He pulls the work folder back in front of him and starts flipping through it.

MAX (cont'd)
What garbage do we have today?

Article after article goes by, some with photos or stickied with notes of possible changes or updates.

He stops on one with a photo of a girl in a Tiara paper-clipped to the corner. The headline reads:

BELOVED TOWN PROM QUEEN MURDERED, KILLER YET TO BE FOUND.

Max tilts his head to match the photo's angle, he recognizes her.

MAX (cont'd)
(To the photo)
Ashley Riles - long time no see, huh?

He scans through the article. His eyes widen.

MAX (V.O.)
What happened to you? Let's see. You were... running away from someone -
Oop - They set a trap for you...
interesting. And SHEEEESH, they
dropped a whole-ass anvil on your
head... That is unlucky.

Max looks at the photo, then to the costume he was coloring.

INT. HOUSE KITCHEN - LATER

In the center of the kitchen is a table scattered with the drawings Max was looking at.

At the stove-top, stirring a pot is CHRIS (Female 22), Max's anxious yet intelligent best friend, who is looking over a copy of the brutal article.

The pot holds boiling water and elbow noodles. The mac & cheese box, butter, and milk sit next to the stove on the counter.

She makes her way over the table and sits down.

Chris confidently pipes up.

CHRIS
Max! I know who did this!

MAX (O.S.)
(Obnoxiously)
What's your guess, huh? Wylie Coyote?

Chris disappointingly shakes her head. Max comes out of his room, holding a mustard colored thick sweater.

CHRIS
(To max)
It was Genevieve Jones.

MAX
Yeah? And how'd you come to that.
She's a total freak, but I don't
think she's got the facilities to
smash lil' old Ashley's head in.

CHRIS
Well this says Ashley died by a
(pointing at the paper) "Rube
Goldberg-esque contraption." (to Max)
Guess what Genevieve's science-fair
project was senior year.

Chris and Max look at each other.

Max rallies her forward.

MAX
(Sarcastic)
Yes, please Chris, keep me waiting in
such suspense.

CHRIS
Alright, well she had this big-ass,
machine-thing with an anvil hanging
down, right? And at the base of it
was a rope with a hole in the center.
Next to *that* was this big watermelon.
So she kicks the watermelon into the
rope and the rope (She pulls the
"rope" with her hands) *ziits* around
the melon - holding it in place. A
little marble rolls and some dominoes
fall, and then... finally... (She
begins whistling like a falling
missile).

CUT TO:

We hear Chris's WHISTLE and see a drawing of ASHLEY RILES face as she lays on the pavement: sweating, panting and TERRIFIED.

A stop-motion anvil crushes her graphite head.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. HOUSE KITCHEN

CHRIS

Splat.

Max stares at Chris with his eyes wide and a disgusted look on his face.

MAX

Yikes.

CHRIS

(To the article)

Yeah, and I got second place to that damn thing.

Max throws the sweater back into his room and walks over to the kitchen.

MAX

Ya think she still lives with her mom in that apartment?

CHRIS

How would I know?

MAX

Well we're gonna have to put on our detective caps since the cops suck at their jobs.

Max opens up the fridge.

Chris stands out of her chair, and starts rubbing her sweaty palms on her pants.

CHRIS

What are you talking about?

Max eyes the shelves up and down.

MAX

(In the fridge)

Do we have any Parm in here?

CHRIS

Max. What are you gonna do?

Max rips open a drawer and takes out a bag of Parmesan.

MAX

(In the fridge)

Found it. Oh - shit, are those bacon bits?

Max grabs the bacon bits from a different drawer.

He makes his way over to the stove, sets his new ingredients on the counter top and turns off the heat.

Chris gets more upset, and begins rapid-fire speaking.

CHRIS

Max don't be a dumb-ass, ok? It's fun to joke around, but we don't actually know anything! Just let the police do their jobs. And anyway, what if she is the killer? She knows who you are.

Max walks over, strains the pasta water, and sets the pot back on the stove. He adds in the powder, butter and milk.

CHRIS (cont'd)

Then what's your plan? You become the Roadrunner dodging anvils? We saw how well that worked out for Ashley.

Max stirs everything together, and then adds Parmesan and bacon to the pot.

CHRIS (cont'd)

Also, what the Hell are you doing to that mac and cheese?

Max stops stirring, turns to Chris and puts his hands on her cheeks, pushing them together, pursing Chris's lips.

MAX

Can we be real for a sec? I work at a dogshit internship, in a dogshit building, doing dogshit paperwork all day. You work at a pet store - in literal dogshit - making \$7.45 an hour and you live with your mother writing graphic novels in your free time.

Chris's face stays smushed.

CHRIS
Yeah, and you draw them.

Max's eyes dart around, looking for a witty response.

MAX
Fair.

He lets go of Chris's face.

MAX (cont'd)
Can I just do something for *me* for once? Genevieve's the killer and the cops haven't done anything! Why can't I have a shot?

CHRIS
Stop being an idiot Max, you don't know if it's her.

Max ignores her and grabs the mac and cheese box from the counter and sticks the ingredients side in Chris's face.

MAX
Look. The recipe and ingredients are already there Chris - and sure - the mac's good. But if you never change anything, how will you ever know how good it *could* taste?

Chris raises an eyebrow at him.

Max sets the box on the counter.

MAX (cont'd)
As for her knowing it's me. First of all, I'm pretty smooth, no way she's even gonna see me... But if she does...

Max walks over to the table and grabs one of the drawings off the table.

MAX (cont'd)
(to the drawing)
Well, I've got a plan for that.

Max stares at the now finished drawing of a superhero dressed in mustard and brown colors with a leather cowl and goggles on.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

A parking lot sits silently, empty except for a handful of cars.

Max is in a home-spun version of his character drawing, with an aviator hat and goggles on, a baseball bat in one hand, and a flip phone in his other, held up to his ear.

MAX

(Whispering in the phone)

What do you mean am I sure its hers? It's broad frickin' daylight Chris - yeah, I'm sure. Same ugly SUV, you'd know it if you saw it.

He is crouched down behind his parked car.

MAX (cont'd)

Wait, she's walking up now.

A figure approaches the car, holding a plastic bin full of rope.

The figure is GENEVIEVE (Female 22). She opens up the trunk of her car, and, with paranoia fully set in, darts her eyes around the parking lot.

The trunk blocks Max's sight.

MAX (cont'd)

She's loading a big bin into her trunk. I just can't see what else is in there. I'll just give you a call if anything interesting happens.

He flips the phone closed, sets the bat on the hood of the car in front of him, and goes to put his phone in his pocket.

As he does that, the bat ROLLS OFF the hood and SMACKS the ground.

Max drops the phone to the ground out of shock.

MAX (cont'd)

Aye!

Genevieve's head whips over to the sound.

Genevieve sees this person standing up from behind a car, looking right at her, strange costume and all.

Genevieve squints her eyes at him.

GENEVIEVE

Hey!

The head dips down behind the car.

Genevieve puts the bin into the car, and frighteningly walks over to Max's car.

She gets closer and closer.

She peers around the car.

Nobody.

She looks down and sees the flip phone on the ground.

GENEVIEVE (cont'd)

Huh?

From the other side of the car comes Max, he is SPRINTING with the bat in his hands.

Max YELLS as he swings the bat and hits Genevieve over the head.

Genevieve SMASHES her head on the car then hits the concrete, setting off a BLARING CAR HORN.

Max stands there, dripping sweating and panting. He rips off the hat and goggles.

In Genevieve's unfurled hand sits an envelope.

Max picks it up and pulls out the letter inside. In grotesque handwriting it reads:

GENEVIEVE - SAME SETUP. OUTSIDE TOWN SQUARE FOR EVERYONE TO SEE OR BYE-BYE MOMMY.

Max, in utter confusion during this chaos, can do nothing but yell.

MAX

WHAT THE FU-

CUT TO BLACK