

OF MOUSE AND MAN
by
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FADE IN:

INT. ONE ROOM DIRTY APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Dimly lit. Down and out filthy. A cloud of light shines through a dingy window illuminating a

BED

In the corner where lies sleeping.

The foot of an old MAN protrudes from under the covers of stained sheets and old Afghans.

The sleeping old man lets out a LOUD SNORE. He moves about under the sheets for a second then becomes still again.

Off in the distance sounds a WHIMPERING VOICE.

WHIMPERING VOICE

Help me. Please. Please help.

THE BED covers rustle about and reveal Man's face. Eyes open in an attempt to understand what the sound is. With some clarity he can now tell it's a mysterious high-pitched VOICE. Is it in his head?

He grabs his robe from the foot of the bed and wanders off to the direction of the plea.

WHIMPERING VOICE (CONT'D)

Help me. Oh the pain. Please help me.

The apartment is not quite at the hoarder stage but there's enough garbage and junk piled up to trip over.

It becomes LOUDER towards the

KITCHENETTE

The voice leads Man to a mouse trap on top of the refrigerator which has its own clutter of old knickknacks, paper plates and expired vitamins.

In the trap: a badly injured MOUSE.

Its rear leg is caught.

Mouse turns its sad head towards Man.

MOUSE/WHIMPERING VOICE

Can you help me kind sir.

Man jumps back in in a mixture of fear and curiosity.

MOUSE/WHIMPERING VOICE (CONT'D)

I don't want to die.

MAN

Was that... is that you speaking?

MOUSE

I'm in pain.

MAN

Sorry about the pain but dead is what you should be. I don't entertain rodents in my home.

MOUSE

This dump is someone's home?

MAN

Smart ass.

MOUSE

Hell. My home is nicer than this.

MAN

Insults get you nowhere.

MOUSE

Some good mice can really liven up this place.

MAN

All the tiny shits you leave around is enough livening up for me.

Man pushes down on the trap, administrating more excruciating pain to Mouse.

MOUSE

Ahhh. Stop. Please stop.

MAN

I need my solid eight or I become angry and mean. You don't want to see that side. Oh no.

MOUSE

Okay. Ouch ouch ouch. I get it. Let me go and I promise to leave you alone.

MAN

Promises from a little squeaker like you. Ptooie.

Man can see a tiny tear fall from Mouse's eye.

MOUSE

I'm begging. At least a drink. I need a drink.

MAN

Ahhh.

Man lifts the trap off the Mouse's leg. Mouse inches its way away from the trap as best it can.

MOUSE

Oh thank you thank you thank you.
Can you tell if it's broken?

Man presses down on Mouse's leg who in turn SHRIEKS in pain.

MAN

Lucky you're alive. Buck up.

Mouse massages its own leg with a few tongue licks for comfort.

MOUSE

Buck you old man. Can I have my
drink now? Ow.

MAN

Ask me nice.

MOUSE

Bourbon. Please.

Man goes to the sink and lets a few drops of water from the faucet drip into a teaspoon and holds it up to the Mouse's mouth. Mouse sips.

MAN

It's a rare blend.

He carefully picks Mouse up by the tail and places it on the kitchen table.

One of the nicest items in the apartment is an elegant cloth napkin that drapes over an object on the kitchen table. Mouse is curious.

MAN (CONT'D)

One good reason I should keep you
alive.

MOUSE

What's under this?

MAN

Nothing for you.

Mouse bites on the napkin and pulls as hard as he can, revealing a small chess set held together by cobwebs.

MOUSE

Chess.

(MORE)

MOUSE (CONT'D)

I'm actually pretty good at this game. Get'em when they least expect it.

MAN

Well I suck at it.

Mouse drags his small frame to hide behind a cork from a wine bottle.

MAN (CONT'D)

And you got no right peekin' at my personal belongings.

Man gently replaces the cloth napkin over the chess pieces. Making sure it's perfect by eyeing all sides.

MAN (CONT'D)

You need some manners learned young squeak.

Man searches under the kitchen sink mumbling some indistinct words. Things are CLANKING and BANGING until he stands as violently as his frail body allows, clutching onto a hammer.

Mouse GULPS. It really has no place to go with its limp leg.

MAN (CONT'D)

My stuff is my stuff and that's all there's to it.

Mouse is frozen in fear as Man raises the hammer high above his head.

MOUSE

NO! No! Stop I beg you. I'm sorry about your private stuff. I didn't mean any harm.

MAN

Nosey little son o' bitch.

The hammer is coming down and it's going to be bye-bye Mouse.

MOUSE

Wait. I can help you.

MAN

Too little too late. You do not promote trust.

Mouse backs itself to the wall.

MAN (CONT'D)

That's for certain.

MOUSE

Money. Haven't you ever wished you were wealthy?

The hammer stops an inch from Mouse's head.

MAN

I can make you wish you were already dead. Talk fast.

MOUSE

I can make you rich if you listen to my plan. It can't fail. That's practically a promise.

Mouse moves its head just enough to direct Man's line of vision around the small apartment to take in the mess along with the grubby 40 year old paint on the walls.

MOUSE (CONT'D)

Two minutes is all I ask.

Man lifts the hammer away from Mouse while taking in his own surroundings. Yeah it sucks. No way to live.

MAN

Fuck it. How do I know I can trust you?

Mouse rolls the cork to the center of the table and painfully positions itself on top.

MOUSE

There is a such thing as live catch traps you know.

MAN

I don't trust so easily these past few decades.

Man peers at the clock on the wall.

CLOCK READS: 11:45

He reaches for the hammer.

MAN (CONT'D)

Two minutes.

MOUSE

Okay. Okay. There's a bank...

MAN

So there's a bank.

MOUSE

Shhh. I'm speaking.
(MORE)

MOUSE (CONT'D)

There's a bank I know of. Yes sir.
It's slow. Business picks up after
the lunch hour, but the morning is
always slow.

MAN

I'm always slow. Nothing good about
it. Besides, I can take care of
myself.

Man now views his home as if seeing it for the first time.

MAN (CONT'D)

Ugh.

MOUSE

May I continue?

MAN

Please.

EXT. TENEMENT BUILDING -- CONTINUOUS

Dreary and misty night. The street has a few stripped cars
parked along its edges. The telephone lines are weighted
down from all the sneakers that hang by their laces.

The exterior of the apartment building was probably nice at
one time. Maybe before World War Two.

MOUSE (V.O.)

Okay then. You'll need a few things.
A duffel bag.

MAN (V.O.)

I got a suitcase. Somewhere.

MOUSE (V.O.)

Perfect. You'll also need a water
pistol.

MAN (V.O.)

Eh?

MOUSE (V.O.)

One of those translucent green ones.
You know like when you were a kid...
if you ever were a kid. And an
overcoat.

INT. ONE ROOM DIRTY APARTMENT - KITCHENETTE -- CONTINUOUS

Man is at the stove boiling water for some tea.

MAN

This sounds like a bank heist. Back
to your trap you go.

MOUSE

So do you have an overcoat? I mean something decent that you could go out in public without looking like... you do.

Man pours the boiling water into a chipped coffee mug.

MAN

Flattery will get you nowhere. And besides, I don't make it outside too often these days. Oh wait.

Man rushes off to a CLOSET just off the kitchenette area with unforeseen energy and excitement.

Mouse watches as Man rummages through the closet MUMBLING indistinctly under his breath.

MAN (CONT'D)

Ha. There you are.

Man emerges holding a yellow raincoat - Morton Salt Girl style. He puts it on, then eyes Mouse for approval.

ON THE TABLE Mouse rolls off his cork-chair and lands flat on his back.

MOUSE

At least you won't stand out.

MAN

Zactly.

Mouse hoists itself back onto the cork while trying to ignore the surreal image of Man wearing the raincoat. Mouse, once again notices the cloth napkin that covers the old chess pieces.

MOUSE

So what's up with the chess set?

MAN

Those were the happier days I'd rather not discuss. 'Specially with you.

MOUSE

You know there's plenty of humans out there who'd like to be rich.

Mouse positions itself in getting ready to jump off the cork.

MAN

I'm all ears.

MOUSE

You shouldn't look a gift horse... uh...

MAN
There's a bank.

EXT. BANK -- MORNING

The unkempt, stand alone building embarrassingly sits in a desolate part of town. Small but somewhat quaint.

MOUSE (V.O.)
Yeah right. On the outskirts of town. I've been crawling around those tunnels for maybe six months now.

INT. BANK -- CONTINUOUS

Two TELLER STATIONS side by side on one wall. Window shades cover both Teller windows.

A MANAGER'S DESK is positioned facing the Stations on the opposite wall.

The VAULT is on the rear wall between the teller's stations and the manager's desk.

MOUSE (V.O.)
A skeleton crew in the A.M.. Dead quiet for the most part.

Just then the sound of KEYS JIGGLING A DOOR LOCK followed by a DOOR SQUEAK. A sharply dressed, redheaded, WOMAN TELLER enters the room.

She goes over to the manager's desk and pulls a sheet of paper from a top drawer. She scribbles something on it then heads over to the teller station. She pulls up the shade on her station window.

A WALL CLOCK READS 8:58

MAN (V.O.)
So why do I need a green water gun?

INT. ONE ROOM DIRTY APARTMENT - KITCHENETTE -- NIGHT

MOUSE
Tomorrow morning set your alarm for 7:00 AM. Clean yourself up and get the 8:15 bus to this address. Forty-four Kensington Street. Got that?

MAN
Forty-four...

MOUSE
The bank opens at nine sharp.
(MORE)

MOUSE (CONT'D)

You should arrive at that stop at
around eight-forty-five. Don't forget
the coat and suitcase.

INT. BUS - LAST SEAT IN THE BACK -- MORNING

Man sits wearing the yellow raincoat, clutching his suitcase.
He makes sure it always stays upright. His eyes are shut
tight as if he doesn't want anyone to notice him.

EXT. STRIP MALL - CONVENIENT STORE -- MORNING

The convenient store is wedged between a deli on one side
and a few other low budget retail stores on the other.

The empty parking lot is three times the size of the mall's
footprint.

MOUSE (V.O.)

There's a convenient store just around
the corner. It should be open for
business then.

Man stands in the parking lot facing the small group of
stores. He has the same demeanor of someone who's just been
released from prison; institutionalized.

INT. CONVENIENT STORE -- CONTINUOUS

Man walks down an aisle moving his head side to side as he
scopes out the wares on the shelves. As he strolls down the
toy section he laughs to himself when spotting an old board
game titled MOUSE TRAP.

There seems to be a new vibe to him. His eyes have a sparkle
of life as he observes the toys that look back at him from
his left and his right.

MOUSE (V.O.)

Look for the green water pistol.
Old school kind. But don't load it.
You won't be needing to use it.

STORE CHECK OUT

Man is paying for a translucent green water pistol with
crumpled bills and a few coins mixed in with a shirt button
or two and lint.

MOUSE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Put it in your coat pocket then enter
the bank at around nine-o'five or
so.

INT. BANK -- CONTINUOUS

CLOCK ON THE WALL READS 9:03

The DOOR SQUEAK followed by Man entering. He takes in the layout of the room. The Manager's Desk is still vacant. Only the redheaded teller is there reapplying her lipstick.

MAN

Damn. Mouse was correct. Quiet.

MOUSE (V.O.)

As you approach the teller, keep your hand on the handle of the gun while still in your pocket. Make it noticeable, subtle but noticeable. Have them sense you have a gun pointing at them from inside your pocket.

Man creeps up to the teller's window, tripping over his own feet. Sweat drips from his forehead.

MOUSE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Place your bag or suitcase on the teller's window.

Man uses muscles long forgotten to lift the suitcase onto the shelf at the window with a few GRUNTS thrown in.

MOUSE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Two words:

MAN

Fill it.

MOUSE (V.O.)

Then finesse it:

MAN

Twenties, fifties and hundreds. Hurry.

The red headed woman drops some bills onto the floor as she hastily fills the suitcase.

WOMAN TELLER

Oh sorry. So clumsy.

MAN

Step on it.

The woman steps on the money that's fallen to the floor.

MAN (CONT'D)

Keep a fillin'. Go on.

MOUSE (V.O.)

Tell them to leave a bit of room in your bag.

(MORE)

MOUSE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

You're going to remove your over -
raincoat and stuff it into the bag.
You'll walk out unnoticed. A
different man than you entered.

Man's mouth waters at the sight of all that cash.

MAN

Mouse. You're okay in my book.
Jeez. Look at all of those lovely
greens.

MOUSE (V.O.)

Once filled, just close the bag and
walk out leaving these last few words:

MAN

Don't sound the alarm for ten minutes.
Can I trust you? You have to give
me your word you will not set the
alarm for another ten minutes.

Woman teller rapidly shakes her head 'yes'.

WOMAN TELLER

You have my word kind sir.

EXT. NAPLES FLORIDA - BEACH -- AFTERNOON

Man envisions himself lying comfortably in a lounge chair,
huge umbrella, holding a colorful drink with its own little
umbrella. The redheaded woman teller is in a very revealing
bikini while feeding him orange slices.

MAN

Feel the soft ocean breeze.

He's also eyeing up the tender young beauties coming out of
the surf readjusting their skimpy bathing suits.

MAN (CONT'D)

What more can I possibly ask for.

WOMAN TELLER

Would you like more Ensure?

Man sips his colorful alcohol beverage.

MAN

Ha. This'll do just fine. Just
fine my dear.

Man puts on a deeply content smile and lays back.

MAN (CONT'D)

This will do just fine.

The sky is blessed with stunning Florida cloud formations he's certainly never witnessed from the window of his dreary apartment.

WOMAN TELLER

Well I advise you to get out of here.

MAN

Huh?

INT. BANK -- MORNING

The suitcase is overflowing with top USD bills in all their glorious denominations.

WOMAN TELLER

You should get out of here. Like now!

MAN

Oh. Right.

He's just about to close the suitcase when he thinks for a minute. He places the opened suitcase on the floor and begins to remove his raincoat.

MAN (CONT'D)

Cant forget to take my disguise off.

He takes a second to turn back to the woman teller.

MAN (CONT'D)

Thank you ma'am.

Just when the raincoat is almost off the ALARM sounds. DING DING DING

MAN (CONT'D)

Shit.

A quick stare to the teller. She shakes her head no as if to say 'I didn't set it off'. Man freezes in his stance.

MAN (CONT'D)

Goddamn it. What happened to my ten minutes?

In the near distance POLICE SIRENS sound. Man is trying to scream but no sound is coming forth.

MAN (CONT'D)

Ten minutes damn it.

FROM UNDERNEATH THE BACK OF THE VACANT MANAGER'S DESK a tiny tail appears wagging back and forth.

UNDERNEATH FROM THE FRONT OF THE DESK

Mouse has just removed its tiny paw from pressing the red alarm button.

MOUSE

Traps. They're a love, hate thing.

Just like that, TWO POLICE OFFICERS storm the bank. So quick there wasn't even time to hear the squeak of the bank's front door.

As one of the Police officers are placing handcuffs on Man, the suitcase of cash sits in the middle of the floor wide open.

Out the corner of his eye, Man witnesses Mouse running out from under the desk. It jumps into the suitcase like one would do on a hot summer's day in a swimming pool.

INSIDE THE SUITCASE

Mouse sinks to the bottom, surrounded by all that green, grinning ear to ear.

MEANWHILE IN THE BANK

The Police begin to usher Man out of the bank. Man halts. Head slightly cocked.

He's waiting for something to happen.

MAN

Give me second boys.

Suddenly the SNAP of a mousetrap is heard.

MOUSE (V.O.)

Goddamn it.

Man makes a quick comment toward the suitcase.

MAN

Ha! Now you'll never hear my story about the chess set.

(to Police)

I get three squares a day, yeah?

One of the Police officers collects the suitcase of money. The other leads Man by the arm to the front door.

POLICE OFFICER

Let's go mac.

MOUSE (V.O.)

Help me. Please, help me. Definitely a love, hate thing. Help me. Please someone help me.

FADE OUT: