

One Screwy Day 12

by

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Mental and Morgan are smiling excessively at new, twenty year old recruit, Constable Smith. He dresses in the expected clothes and has a couple of centimetres of brown hair showing under his helmet. He has brown stubble and brown eyes - very orderly and police-like. Smith has a burning question which he asks Mental 'Is this a typical police station? It's just not what I was expecting...' Mental replies 'Of course... The arcade machines by the sides, the heavy metal music on the radio, the disco lighting, the snooker table and the surrounding, 4-wall rock climbing course we're leaning on, as if it's nothing. This is just the games room. I brought you here first, to get you excited about working here.' Smith is clearly relieved and wipes his forehead 'Oh. Cool. So we do normal work here?' Morgan joins the conversation 'I'm not sure about normal. We mainly go after people in silly costumes. It's fun, though. But in a serious way, of course.'

Smith asks Mental, respectfully 'You have a very interesting name. Where's it come from? Is it German?' Mental laughs it off 'No, it's a very rare English name. It just means 'crazy' according to the internet, but I'm sure it is meant ironically.' Smith scratches his ear, awkwardly 'Yep... Some surnames are ironic.' 'Exactly'. 'So, what are the other rooms like? 'Nothing special for the most part, they're pretty standard, really. Although the Chief of Police's office is somewhat palace-like. It's even got a throne in it'. Morgan butts in 'Tell him about the canteen food...' Mental's face lights up 'Oh yes. Ever had a Hawaiian pizza?' Smith responds, confused: 'Sure...' 'Well the chef adds chillis to them. He calls his pizzas 'Evil Hawaiians' they're amazing. They're actually completely taking over the local gourmet scene.' 'Wow. It sounds like working here is great...' 'It sure is'. Morgan nods.

The Chief of Police enters the room and fist bumps everyone 'What's that song coming on now? Slayer, huh? Very nice. Anyway, an old lady has been burgled. As it's a relatively minor crime in that no one has been killed in a let's face it, comical way, I think this is a case for Mr. Smith, here? Sound good to you, young man?' The new recruit shakes his fists with excitement 'Sure, I'd love to!' 'Good for you. But remember, you're not a hardened officer, yet. I recommend you get an Evil Hawaiian, ASAP. That will make a man of you.' 'Sorry, I've just eaten.' 'What did you eat?' 'Tomato soup. And candyfloss for desert. Then a Bounty.' 'Was that a joke?' 'I just have a sweet tooth, sir.' 'Ah. Well get one, tomorrow.' The COP looks puzzled and leaves without saying another word.

Morgan turns to Mental 'Do you really think Mr. Smith, here is qualified to deal with a burglary? How about putting on him on the street and giving people simple peace of mind?' Mental responds with confidence 'No. I know what kind of person this gentleman is. He's tough. Analytical. Resourceful.' He turns to Smith and continues 'I see myself in you, young man.'

' Smith responds whilst scratching his chin 'What do you see, exactly?' Morgan butts in again 'A fruitcake.' Mental turns to Morgan 'I'm sorry?' Morgan responds in an instant 'Badcake. I mean badass.' Mental nods and turns back to Smith 'You're a badcake, too.' Smith replies 'I've never heard that word before...' 'Are you sure? I know I've heard it from somewhere...' Morgan reassures Mental 'You did, just now.' Mental replies 'No, before that.' Smith consoles Mental, too 'Ok then. I'm a badcake. Of course I am.' Mental gives a thumbs up 'Good luck on the case.'

Smith is now comforting an old lady in an old lady dress. (Well, some would say comforting, others would say he's patting her on the head). In the living room(?), (it could be pretty much any room, it's hard to say) everything is trashed, even the walls. Drawers have been opened and emptied and no other furniture has been left. The windows have been completely smashed and daylight shines through the gaps. On the plus side, there is a nice garden view. Tutting, the old lady asks a question 'Do you think you'll ever catch the culprit? Will I ever get my stuff back?' Smith is confident 'Of course! People down at the station have stopped all kinds of megalomaniacs. When this case has been solved, you can have a free pizza on the house.' 'An Evil Hawaiian?' 'Exactly'. 'Have you ever had one?' 'No, but...' 'Pussy'. 'Eh?' 'Is it true that criminals often revisit the crime scene?' 'Yep. That sounds about right.' 'You're not sure?' 'Hm... Look, human behaviour is complicated. I once saw some guy have an argument with a coffee machine. He even punched it, perhaps believing it to be human. I didn't know whether he committing vandalism or assault, technically speaking. Some things are best left unexplained or even talked about.'

The old lady turns to the mess of a window and is speechless. Just outside it, a very shifty-looking man dressed all in black, wearing a balaclava and with a full sack, takes pictures of himself on his phone. He poses with a thumbs up. Confused by the woman's state of shock, Smith also looks towards the once-window. He then says 'Ohhhh!... Ok'. With an upbeat tone, he asks the intruder 'Having a nice day? Nice and sunny, huh?' The sure-to-be thief then runs away like the wind. The old lady is now even more stunned 'Wasn't that the burglar?' Smith is dismissive 'Look, I've explained. There are some real weirdos out there. Some people just like to dress in black and pose by broken windows. Others fight with coffee makers believing them to be confrontational or simply annoying.' The lady shakes her head 'I really think...' Smith butts in 'No. Do you know Captain Mental? Charltonham's most legendary policeman? He said he sees himself in me...' The old lady furrows her brow 'Yes, I agree with him...' 'Just leave this case to me, ok? Have a good day.'

Back in the colourful games room and to the tune of Megadeth, ('Take No Prisoners', to be precise) Mental and Morgan are playing snooker.

Smith knocks on the door and the two look towards it. Mental shouts over the noise 'Come in!' Smith enters and sighs 'Would you believe it, no leads. Not even any information from the victim. I guess this case will be tougher than we imagined'. Mental sighs, too 'Dammit. You're in luck, though. Another local has been burgled, and the victim said he saw who the felon was. He looked right in his eyes, and said he'd know them from anywhere. However, he was wearing a balaclava, so he couldn't see the rest of his face and describe it.' Smith responds with a sturdy handshake 'I won't let you down. But why was he wearing a balaclava? It's sunny...' Morgan responds with an analytical face 'It could be because he ran out of suntan lotion. Maybe it's his way of protecting himself from the rays.' Smith looks up casually 'Of course. I guess that's the new trend. Anyway, gotta go...' Mental smiles 'Good luck.'

Here is another messed up room with another totalled window and kinda nice garden view. Glass in on the floor along with a few books. It seems the perpetrator isn't a big reader. (He should check out 'The Danger of Proverbs', just saying). Again, is this a living room or a dining room, etc.? It's hard to say as almost nothing is in it. This time however, the kneeling male victim in his 30s has a gun to his head. The standing aggressor is the man in black with a sack, seen before. Smith breaks the icy silence 'So... What's going on here?...' The mysterious intruder whispers to his prey 'Say this is a game'. The hostage stutters to the constable as he sheds a tear 'T-This... is just a... game...' Smith scrunches up his face 'Are you sure?? You look really worried...' 'Nope, just a game. You can go home, now...' 'But your house... It's ruined...' 'That was er... wolves...' 'Wolves??' 'Yep. I've contacted pest controllers.' 'Huh. Ok.' Smith faces the criminal 'Oh, I got something for you, just in case I saw you again...' Smith reaches into his pocket, grabs some suntan lotion and throws it to the crook. He catches it with his free hand. Smith smiles 'Suntan lotion... You don't need to cover your face, anymore. Anyway, got to make a call...' Smith reaches into his other pocket then mobile-phones Mental as the crook stares at him and the captive looks down 'Sorry Mental, false alarm. Wolves did it.. I know, right? Ok, bye.' The bad man drops his gun and says a naughty expletive. Mental picks it up and hands it to him as the victim freezes 'Ooh, very realistic. Anywho... Bye!'

Mental, Morgan and Smith are in the police station canteen, each with a large Evil Hawaiian. Mental comments to the newcomer over the disco music 'See how many swanky tables and seats are in here, filled with members of the public having a good time? It never used to be like this, but because of the chef's new super food, the station has become partly-restaurant. Consequently, us police have more money to spend on fighting crime.' Smith widens his eyes 'That's different. Is that a whole team of workers the head chef has behind him in his spotless, admirable working area?' 'Yeah, haha. It's normal for chefs to have a kitchen, but not in the theme of a scaled down, medieval village.'

The chef said he commissioned it to stick in people's minds, so he's not mental. This has to be the strangest building in the world. Morgan, tell Smith about the time we had an offer from the zoo to add an aquarium room!' Mental's phone rings. He answers it 'Hello, neighbour!... Come again?' Mental looks grave and continues 'You serious?' Morgan looks to Mental, concerned 'What is it?' 'My house has been burgled...' 'Oh my God. Three houses in a day. It's not even dark, yet.' 'Let's have this pizza then get on the case, ASAP'. Morgan and Smith nod and tuck in.

The COP bursts into the room and shouts unintelligible words at the three. Everyone looks at them whilst munching. After calming a little, the COP shouts more clearly 'What's all this about Smith here believing a man dressed up as an assassin was playing a game with a gun?!' Smith goes red and answers nervously 'Come again??' 'You complete moron! You let a hardened felon go free!' 'But he was so convincing!' 'The ninja man... Was he at the first crime scene you attended?' 'Oh no'. 'Dear God! You're giving this institution an even worse name the Mental, here! At least he's done at least SOME good! And you're all eating whilst I assume you know Mental's house has just been targeted?' Now Mental goes red 'Errr... Would you like a slice?' 'Give me it, here!' The COP gobbles it up in an instant and continues 'This is your last chance, you three. Get me my guy or you're all fired.' Smith pretends to find a new confidence, partly raising his head in superiority and partly shaking 'He's done for.' The three leave their seats and then the building.

It's now outside and sunlit as ever. Things have changed since the last One Screwy Day adventure, though. Now the whole street is pizza themed. Yep, the same kind of fooderies are quite literally everywhere. Even the local postoffice now sells the meals, along with the taxi company, hairdresser, etc. A two-storey high sign says 'Birth of the Evil Hawaiian'. Many passers by on the pavements have the fast food in their hands and many are driving illegally with you know what in one paw. Smith points to the slightly limping, apparently care-free, balaclavad man in black and waves at him, with lit up eyes 'Hey! I know you! What crazy game will you think of next? Would you like me to carry anything for you? Where's your sack?' Mental and Morgan face-palm 'You idiot! It's the burglar!' Smith stamps his foot 'Fooled, again! I'll get him!' Mental shakes his head 'Just stay here and give peace of mind to the witnesses!' Smith nods and the thief legs it surprisingly well. Has he had a surge of adrenaline? Makes sense to me...

As the two remaining friendly officers sprint, pizza houses and walkers become a blur. All that can really be made out is the bad guy they're chasing on the sidewalks and the cars travelling at roughly the same speed.

Mental shouts to Morgan as they pant 'I don't know who's going to give into temptation and get another pizza, us or him!' Morgan slaps his face and continues 'We have to be strong!' 'He's strong too, though! Look at his muscles! He must carry stolen goods with him all day!' 'Just keep focused on the idiot. We can't really even see what we're passing anyway. (Told you) We're too damn fast! Like cheetahs. Or rather 'honestahs'. Sorry for the cheesy comment! Please forgive me!' 'Yes, we are too fast to see, but we KNOW what we're passing!' 'I have an idea!' 'What?' 'We can tell the thief about the new place that's opening! The one that has the extra jalapeno topping! Apparently, it's delicious but highly experimental!' The ninja-lookalike looks left and right, frantic and clearly starving. Mental comments 'It's working!'

The runaway looks up to a sign saying 'Ultra Hawaiian', slows down and swaggers into the neighbouring establishment. Mental shouts as he raises his fist 'Yes!' Now just briskly walking on the pavement, the two can see properly. However, what's in front of them isn't too exciting. It's mostly just more pizza places. (Though as explained, one is slightly though perhaps significantly different - time will tell). Of course the passers by don't really pay attention to the chaos as they are too absorbed with you can guess what. And rightly so. Tasty. The two enter the crowded new place and witness the stealer talking with his hands on his hips, to the staff behind a counter 'One Ultra Hawaiian, please!' Mental pulls a taser from his pocket and shouts to the nasty piece of work 'Put your hands up, now!' The man does so, but Mental fries him anyway. 'That's for robbing my house!'

Mental, Morgan, Smith and the Chief are chilling out in the games room, playing a special kind of four-man pool. All have cues in their hands and all stare at the table in concentration. Henker plays in the background, notable for its totally insane tempos and quadruple pedal drumming. 'But people don't have four feet...' (Yes, but it's two pedals for each foot; raising a foot hits the kick drum as does pressing the foot down). The Chief starts a very necessary conversation with Smith, as he puts his hand on his shoulder 'You're new to the game, son. I understand that. But if the public found out about your mistakes... Well I don't know what would happen. All I know is people would be baffled. Luckily for you, we've made an arrangement with the victims so they don't tell anyone about your inadequacies.' Smith responds 'You gave them our pizzas?' The Chief continues 'You're a wise man. Now I know what Mental sees in you. In a couple of years time, maybe you'll be trusted to hunt down Epic Dave.' 'You really think so??' 'I know so. Now let's play...'