

More Screwy Days (One Screwy Day Part 9)

by

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Mental and Morgan are sitting next to each other in a library. Pens, papers and an envelope are on their table. Many other tables are seen, but few are occupied. Rows of books are all around and a clock in front of the two says it's either 3 AM or PM. (Guess which). All that can be heard is the occasional person tiptoeing, the odd turn of a page and the odd thoughtful sigh. It smells of books here, in a good way - very sophisticated. Mental comments to Morgan with a twinkle in his eye: 'I can't believe we're doing this...' His friend responds: 'Yep. This will be the best practical joke of all time!' Mental laughs: 'No one will dare call us muppets again!' Morgan wipes a tear and slaps his leg: 'I know! We're innovators, you and me. Only the funniest people in the world would even THINK of making a convincing law about giving the death penalty to people who insult us!' 'Do you think we've done enough work on it?' 'Looks pretty professional to me. Let's post it to the Chief...'

Morgan puts the papers in the envelope with focused eyes, takes it and rises from his squeaking chair with Mental. The two are far less concerned about being quiet and swagger out of the building whilst giggling. Outside of it is a busy, sunlit Charltonham street. Three storey shops extend far on both sides of the straight road and in both directions. Traffic is heavy, and pedestrians are numerous. Carefree pigeons roam and peck. More importantly, a postbox is just a few meters away. This time the policemen have to raise their voices to be heard. Again, Mental takes the initiative but scratches his head, this time: 'Do you think the Chief will find this funny?' Morgan responds as he looks to the floor: 'Errrr... I'm not... Hmm...' A 30 year old manchild walks past the duo and speaks pretty much as casually as possible, without making eye contact: 'Good afternoon. Muppets'. He strolls away, with a spring in his step. Mental goes red: 'Post the damn letter'. Morgan nods and does so.

Mental responds to himself: 'You know what, Morgan? On second, I mean third thoughts, I'm not sure if that WAS funny...' His coworker sighs: 'Oh no.' He then goes red, but for a different reason this time: 'What if the Chief agrees with it?' Mental jolts: 'Oh God! That little punk who just walked by could be living on numbered days...' 'That's messed up. We have to wait for the postman to fish our letter out.' 'But what if the postman doesn't trust us? I mean we're not exactly acting like policemen are we? I'm not even dressed as one...' 'Hmmm... Having thought about it, we'll just have to put our faith in the Chief as we planned on doing in the first place. Only a complete madman would agree with our law, if you can even call it a law. He isn't a madman... right?' 'Of course not. Just an asshole.' 'Let's just forget about the whole incident and go back to fighting crime'. 'Agreed'.

The Chief of Police is sitting in his office which has since been upgraded. The wallpaper is gold, as is the carpet and ceiling. An absolutely amazing chandelier hangs on it and that's gold as well.

A gold clock says the time is 9 AM or 9 PM. Actually it's the former - you know how you can just tell if it's day or night? Same thing's happening, here. The boss is on a gold chair, behind a computer (yes, gold), which is on a gold desk. A non-gold envelope is in front of him. After looking at it with disgust, he tears it open and starts to read. It's not long before he nods his head with agreement and makes approving noises. Finally, his eyes widen as he speaks: 'This is great... And I thought Morgan and Mental were a couple of fools... This idea is a bit out-there maybe, but you have my full support. I love the bit were disrespectful people should be killed with a single slap by a karate expert. Dramatic, but not too barbaric.'

The COP rubs his chin: 'Hmmm... But how do I get parliament to agree to it?' He steeples his hands: 'I could ask them 'how would YOU like to be called 'muppets'? No, it's too weak an argument...' The man sighs: 'I could point out how crowded the town's prisons are. Wouldn't it be nice for the prisoners if they kept getting more and more space for themselves? And it's good to keep people in general on their toes, right? So we have muppets, prison and toes... A three pronged attack that can't fail...' The Chief opens a drawer and pulls out a picture of Morgan and Mental shaking hands. He looks at with another respectful nod, then hangs in on a wall: 'You've really earned my respect with that idea, you know? Back on the wall you go... You know what? I'm going to email parliament, right now.' The COP gets typing.

When finished, the Chief's retrieves his mobile from his pocket and makes a call: 'Mental! Am I glad to hear from you! You're a legend!... Did I think it was funny? I thought it was damn hilarious!... What do you mean you don't really think your idea is good? You came up with it, you idiot... You sent it as a joke? Was THAT a joke? I was about to promote you for your creativity... Look, I've written an email concerning your plans, which I've just sent to parliament, and there's nothing you can do. Good day.' The COP gets up again to take the picture down: 'You're not the man I thought you were... Never mind, I'm keeping your idea'.

Mental is sitting alone in a noisy coffee shop. On this occasion, pretty much all tables are at maximum capacity. :O (Two to four people, that is). He has his mobile phone in his left hand and a decaffeinated (that's very important) coffee in his right. ('Decaf' is written on the cardboard cup). He starts to cry. He makes a call as he stutters: 'M-Morgan... I'm fine, I'm... fine... It's just... the Chief is t-trying to pass our... joke law by g-getting government approval... I don't know... what to do... .. No... you're right... There's no way t-the law will be passed. Thanks, friend. I think... I'll g-go home and... take it easy...' A concerned waitress approaches a visibly upset (duh) Mental: 'Are you ok? Is there something wrong with your coffee? I've never seen anyone cry about them before...' Mental laughs the comment off: 'It's not you... It's just...

soon people who call police officer muppets will... face the death penalty...' The other customers spit out their drinks. Mental continues: 'I... have to go. Bye.'

In the mild darkness, Mental wakes up in his clothes, with black circles under his eyes. It's surely the next morning, unless something is afoul with the lawman's body clock. He opens the curtains to let in the sunlight and make the admirable policemen-helmet-wallpaper, the TV and the huge picture of General Mental more visible. He sits on his police car bed and removes his mobile from his pocket. It seems he's been sent a message by the Chief of Police. He reads it aloud in dread: 'Thank you for your great input, Mental. Your new law called 'Mental's Law' has been passed. It is your duty to inform the public about it, ASAP. Cheers, chief.' Mental pinches himself: 'This isn't real. This ISN'T real...' He makes a call after yawning: 'Morgan, everything's gone to hell. The new law has been passed. We have to tell everyone about you know what... Yeah, I know... Meet you outside the library again? Ok, bye...'

It's back in the commercial street. Mental and Morgan are in their same clothes, but are also wearing billboards with 'if you call a policeman a 'muppet' you will DIE' written on them. The two certainly get lots of attention, but it's not clear exactly what people think. The facial expressions seen are kind of unique. A wide-eyed, spaced-out and raised voiced Mental tries to clarify things to the many pedestrians: 'Hi, everybody. Er... A new law has been passed, crazy I know, where if someone calls a policeman a 'muppet' they get sentenced to death. It's kind of a funny story how that law got made...' An outraged old lady shouts at the duo: 'Who's demented idea was that?!' Mental replies, sheepish: 'Er... Mine... Sorry, about that...'

A scruffy boy in his late teens snarls at Mental: 'You ARE a muppet, if you think that's a good idea.' The two cop's jaws drop open. Morgan eventually breaks the silence: 'I'm sorry, but... but... you're going to have to come with us to the station...' The young man replies in disbelief: 'Oh and what are you going to charge me with? It's not exactly a crime to call someone a word that isn't even a swear...' Mental and Morgan go pale and look solemn. Morgan puts his hand on the offender's shoulder: 'I'm so sorry. But look on the plus side, you have AT LEAST ten years of your life ahead of you. I'm sure you'll live them to the fullest along with your cellmates, who you will no doubt get very close to. And think of your final meal! Mmmm!'

The young man laughs: 'You police really have a sense of humour nowadays, don't you!' Mental replies as his body shakes: 'Don't make this any harder than it is. You need to expect the gravity of your crimes. You are literally the UK's worst offender at this time, and you can expect the most severe punishment...

' The young man starts to cry: 'This is insane! I'm not going to the station with you freaks!' Morgan turns to Mental: 'We can't let this happen. We have to do something...' Mental shakes his head: 'Rules are rules.' The criminal gets on his knees and begs: 'You have to stop this! I thought you were joking! I thought you were joking!' Mental pulls his taser from his pocket and continues: 'Don't resist arrest as well'. The criminal puts his hands over his eyes as more tears flow. The two cops then lead him away to the horrified screams of the witnesses.

Mental and Morgan are sitting alone in a small, grey police station office. Slogans such as 'YOU'RE the muppet' and 'Police Power!' hang on the walls. A computer is unoccupied in the corner. Mental is red faced. He speaks, almost spitting: 'Telling a young man he was going to die was one of the hardest things I've ever done.' Morgan agrees: 'We could start a petition to save him...' 'I know this may sound silly, but shall we check if that's what prisoner wants? Maybe deep down he thinks the law is a good idea. Like when serial killers say they're glad they've been caught...' 'The youngster may agree why he's been arrested, but sent to death row? No. Too far. Even hardened criminals try their best not to get killed.' 'The maniac Chief will argue the poor guy IS a hardened criminal.' Mental's pocketed mobile rings. He answers it: 'Chief? Thousands of people in the streets have already started protesting?... You want me and Morgan to address them?... If you say so, nutjob, I mean boss...' Mental hangs and looks to Morgan with ever more tired eyes: 'We have to go'.

Morgan and Mental are back in the same street with their billboards. Both are holding loud speakers. The area is so filled with squashed up protesters, travelling by car, bus or even bicycle is impossible. Such transportation is stuck. Roars of 'stop the madness! Stop the madness!' are heard. Many hold up signs saying 'the police ARE all muppets' and 'this ends NOW!' Mental speaks into his vocal aid, which easily cuts through the crowds: 'I know this will be hard to take, but everyone holding up offensive signs will have to die!' The crowds chant 'muppet! Muppet!' Many then start smashing shop windows with their fists and shoes, whilst those too far away to do so, simply raise their middle fingers high up. Morgan projects his voice this time: 'If you stop vandalising things and come with us to the station, it would be very much app...' Morgan gets hit in the face with a flying boot: 'Hey!'

A police siren is heard getting louder. The two cops shut their eyes, tight. In unison they exclaim 'oh, thank God!' However, the siren quickly stops. Mental speaks to the crowd, loud as ever: 'Please let the police car through, wherever the hell it is! If you thought you were in trouble before, you've really done it this time!' A rioter screams: 'How can anything be worse than death? And how can we even move out the way?!' There is a pause.

Morgan continues: 'We could torture you! THAT'S worse!' Mental butts in: 'No! What he means is you'll have less chance of being released if you disobey us!' Another loudspeaker is heard in the distance. Gradually it gets noisier: 'This is the Chief of Police shouting! Please form orderly lines of felons, serious felons and the condemned!' The crowds howl louder than ever.

Thank God the Chief's hat can now be seen by the two nicer and more reasonable officers, making its way passed the protestors. Mental faces it, again with his aid: 'Chief! You have to stop this! You've gone mad!' The lunatic responds: 'We're onto something special here, Mental! You're going to get a huge promotion!' Mental sheds a tear: 'Please!' The COP insists: 'Think about it! No one will ever disrespect us again!' Soon enough, the Chief is fully visible and in handshaking distance. He gives the duo the strongest shakes of their lives. Mental puts his Tannoy by his side and relies on the power of his throat alone: 'Chief! For the last time, you can't kill all the people here. See reason... Remember the time you had someone's pet fish killed? That was murder - yet you didn't get sentenced to death, did you?'

The COP sighs: 'The dead fish again?' Mental replies: 'Don't dismiss it. That thing had great things ahead of it. It was going to be the world's best acrobatic fish'. This time it's the COP who sheds a tear. Mental continues: 'Technically speaking, you could still be in trouble if your little secret got out...' After a few moments of silence, the Chief addresses the crowd as dramatically as ever: 'Er... Hello everyone... I was joking. No one here is going to die. The guy we put on death row recently will be released. Got you!' Mental wipes his eyes and whispers in his boss's ear: 'Just checking, that wasn't really a joke all this time??' The Chief also whispers: 'Nope. I can say it was, though.' The crowds boo and punch the air whilst shouting 'stupid children!' and 'shame on you!' The COP is calm: 'You people need to learn to lighten up'. The three push past everyone and exit.

Morgan, Mental and the Chief are in a grey corridor. They knock on a police cell's metal gate. The felon is still in tears and is crouched on the floor, with a third-rate bed, sink and toilet by his sides. The Chief coughs awkwardly and speaks: 'Sorry about arresting you. That was a joke... Got you!...' The captive replies: 'What... do you... mean?' 'It was fairly straightforward. Never heard of harmless jesting before? My word...' 'I... can go??' 'Of course! And you took the joke very well, I must say...' Mental and Morgan reply and nod their heads: 'Yes, you really did. Good man.' The Chief retrieves a key from his pocket and unlocks the door: 'Get outta here, you little scamp! Have a great day!