

One Screwy Day 16

by

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A shivering Epic Dave is sitting down, legs stretched out, with his back against a dirty, orange-brown brick block of flats. It's crumbling and most of its windows are smashed. By his left is a cardboard sign saying 'Will levitate for money/food' written in pen. On his right is a muddy path, disappearing behind the building and a rundown shop is on the right of that. A customer in tatty jeans skips out of it carrying a shiny new pistol. He shoots it in the air. In front of Dave is a road full of potholes and light traffic of mostly screeching and rusty cars. In front of them are more similar 'affordable' abodes. The weather is grey. Occasional gunshots are heard in the distance. Epic Dave talks to himself 'What's a superhero got to do to get money round here? I've shot bullets out of the sky with my eye lasers when people shot at me for 'looking like a ponce' and have stopped countless... well that's it. Just bullets. Maybe I should have done something about the various muggings, carjackings, bombings and all that stuff, but what appreciation would I get, really?

A policeman in riot gear appears from the path. He stands over ED and growls 'What was that about not stopping crime??' ED replies, quick as a flash, with his eyes dashing from left to right 'I'm just saying I wish I could stop it. Just like you try to catch people like m... I mean people like Mike. Evil Mike, I mean. Well you DO stop it, but y'know. I like you, you're a good man.' 'It sounded to me like you let crime happen'. 'No. I was in character, there. Just for fun. I was also thinking to myself 'how could I attract the attention of a policeman without causing a scene', and I guess it worked.' 'You wanted to speak to me?' 'Right!' 'About what?' 'Er... Are you having a nice day?' 'Aw. Shucks. That's really sweet of you. You risked me tasering your eyes just to ask how I am?' 'Yeah!' 'Well, I have to be on my way...' The policeman makes a few bouncing steps away from the madman then stops. He turns to face him again and comments, darkly.

'Say... What does 'ED' stand for?' Epic Dave furrows his brows 'Errr... Ummm...' The cop continues '... on your chest, there.. ' Dave looks up in thought 'Ummm... Sorry, I'm a bit drunk.. Ummm... Empty-handed David, that's it.' The cop nods. 'Ok, that makes sense. But where did you get your clothes?' ED bites his thumb 'Just do-gooders. Do-gooders made them.' The cop scratches his ear 'Do the colours symbolise anything?' 'I don't think so...' 'Are you sure green doesn't symbolise peace and red doesn't symbolise passion?' 'No, no, no. They're just random. Maybe subconsciously green symbolises money? But I wouldn't know. If that's the case, it's not giving me any luck.' ED smiles nervously. The cop rolls his eyes 'Ok then. I'll get out of your way.' The lawman turns and walks past ED's sign. ED tries to be jolly with a wide though crazy grin 'Byeee!'

The cop freezes then twists to ED with caution 'You... can levitate?' ED laughs it off 'Just a joke...' 'You're really reminding me of someone my British friends have been talking about...' 'David Beckham??' 'How about...

' The cop stamps his foot and continues 'EPIC DAVE?' ED's whole body jolts. He then composes himself and feigns a sense of calm 'Why not focus on crime, huh? Instead of harassing the disadvantaged?' The cop laughs with wild eyes 'You? Disadvantaged? A man who can fly and shoot lasers? It all makes sense now. I thought I was mad when I heard you talking about stopping bullets!' ED shakes his head with feigned empathy and tuts 'I feel sorry for you. You have a long recovery ahead of you'. Out of nowhere and as fast as a bullet, ED points behind the policeman 'Some guy's getting mugged!' In a daze, the cop turns to face the other buildings.

ED raises his fist to the sky then becomes nothing but a multi-coloured blur, shooting upwards. He's gone. The cop turns back with his hands on his hips 'You lying...' He looks up and screams 'EPIC DAAAVE!!!!' He pulls his mobile from his pocket and makes a call 'Hello, backup please. A suspected felon has flown away like Superman. Now I KNOW that sounds crazy, but you HAVE to trust me.' The cop pulls on his hair with one hand and continues 'Look, he's a British superhero gone bad and he's extremely dangerous. The only reason you haven't heard of him is because those over the pond don't want to give him any more of the attention he craves! Also they told the locals to keep quiet about him so the tourist industry isn't negatively affected! There have been reports of people moving to Antarctic research centres just to get away from him. They needed to spend years at university, first! Seriously, call the Brits and get back to me!' The cop pockets his phone.

In a rage, the cop kicks ED's sign then stamps on it. He picks it up, tears it to pieces and throws the fragments in the air. Then he mumbles to himself 'Whoops. Just destroyed some evidence.' He gets a call, which he answers 'Oh you've had confirmation from the UK! Thank God!... You can dispatch a Harrier jet fighter that's already on manoeuvres round the local air base, in just a few seconds? Oh thank you!... Of course Epic Dave won't show up on its radar, he's not made of metal. I think... You want my advice on where he could be? I suggest checking out the area I'm in. Dave's the exact kind of person who would return to the scene of a crime over and over. I'm sure all the graffiti I've just seen, saying 'Supa man is ballz', 'Dave rulez these parts' and 'Crime 4 eva' were him. The arrogant jerk. I suggest you phone the British Chief again, if you're looking for some more advice... Ok, bye...'

Inside the cockpit of the jet fighter, the g-suite and headset wearing pilot scans his radar on the button, switch and light-filled dashboard 'No superheroes are showing... Worth a try, I guess... No multicoloured bellends are showing, either.' He looks out of his front windscreen to see row after row of those crummy flats, etc. and those barely usable roads in front of him. Some buildings are on fire. On the bright side, they go by quickly, so it's not appropriate to think about them for too long. With any luck, Dave will be chilling out in a lovely green park, instead.

That would be nicer for everybody. Of course he may have to die, but in nice scenery. He probably won't even mind. No, he'll like it. People are easier to kill when you think that. Not fun, just easier. Imagining the targets doing silly dances also lightens the situation, quite a bit. The pilot's headset rumbles three times. He answers his call by pressing a button on his control panel.

'Hello? You still want me to patrol this local area? You sure he hasn't gone to a national park or something like that? To chill out maybe?... Completely sure? Fine...' The pilot raises his voice 'Excuse me?... You can't be serious?... He's called many police officers 'muppets' and he will most likely do the same to me? It's his catchphrase and he wants stories about him to be memorable and easy to write?... Now hang on, this isn't why I joined the air force... And how could he call me a muppet, anyway?... Through sign language? Look, I don't think I can do this. How am I supposed to keep cool when something like THAT will happen? At least people shooting at me have a kind of mutual respect. As in 'we're both highly dangerous, but you're still faster and better armed. You're the king'. I'm going back to base.' The pilot presses the button again, to hang up. He decides to take the scenic route and consequently the depressing, deprived area is gone in a jiffy. Now ahead of him are mainly fields, hills and scattered trees. A lovely stream is also spotted.

The pilot's head rumbles, again. He presses the button. 'What is it now?... You want me to imagine the taunts are directed at someone else? It's a method the British have developed recently, and they're almost 100% certain it works? You want me to lie to myself, is that what you're saying? I would never do that... You're going to give me a big bonus if I succeed in my mission?... Well... I guess the public need protecting, right?... You muppet... Sorry about that, I was just practicing. I'm turning back, now. Sorry if I seem up and down, my psychiatrist warned me of stressful situations... Right, it's triggering my BIPOLAR tendencies. So much better than saying 'manic', I'm glad the terminology has been sorted out.' The pilot presses the button once more as the urban nightmare faces him, yet again. A red and green blur flashes across him in a millisecond. 'What the HELL was that?? That couldn't have been Epic Dave... You know what? I think it was! And if my ultra sharp fighter-pilot eyes weren't deceiving me, I'd say he was giving me the finger! This is WAR! Yes, apparently kind of predictable, but mostly WAR.'

The pilot presses the button... again... 'Hello?... You would not BELIEVE what I just saw!... Yep, and...' The pilot sees another similar flash of colour... 'He's just passed me again! He's just given me a double-handed middle finger, I swear! I'm going to get him!... I know he wants to provoke a reaction, but things are different this time! I'm in a damn jet! This is a VERY different story than other OSDs!... Sorry, I don't know what that means either. Again, I'm under stress.' The pilot ends his call.

Epic Dave appears by the left window of the pilot, going at exactly the same speed. He is in perfect view. He then knocks on the plane and mouths 'Prick'. He then blinks in morse code. The pilot speaks it as his attention has been dangerously distracted 'You... are... a... nincompoop... a... tool... a... bumhead... a...'. The pilot slams his joystick the direction of the disgraced hero, trying to knock him out of the sky. Instead, Dave zooms upwards in no time at all. The pilot tries to follow him, now seeing only grey skies. He fires his machine gun tracer bullets as a warning and screams 'DAAAAVE!!!'

The pilot flies back down and slows to a hovering halt, mere meters over the tallest constructions. His plane gradually turns 360 degrees as it rocks a little. 'You can't hide from me, DAVE!!!' In another blur, ED appears on a roof, immediately in front of the pilot. He has a pigeon under his arm and shouts. The pilot reads Dave's lips and repeats what he says 'You nearly shot this bird?' Dave lets it go. Dave turns around, bends down for a moment then faces his lawful nemesis, again. The pilot is almost speechless 'Did you just fart in my face?' Knowing what his enemy is thinking, ED nods in triumph. With an overwhelming, uncontrolled reflex, the pilot presses a button on his joystick hard, firing a missile at the antagonist. The latter disappears in a haze as the missile flies into the distance. 'Whoops.' The pilot has an embarrassing call to make 'Errr... Hello? I kind of just fired my missile and I think I must have hit a field or something... Is everything ok?... Blame it on Dave? Can he shoot missiles? Right, right, of COURSE he can. Sorry again, I'll just check the area I shot at, bye!'

The pilot talks to himself 'Needless to say, I'm feeling kinda anxious, right now. Let's put the afterburners on to get to the destruction, quicker...' Everything below the plane turns from a manky orange to a green blur. 'Now to slow down, oh God please be ok...' As the pilot gets a clear, but comfortably distant view, a totally ruined tree on fire is seen, straight ahead. It gets just a little bigger, bit by bit. A number of park visitors stare with blank faces at the wreckage and scratch their heads. The pilot slows to a halt again and comments 'They won't know that was me. Anyway, at least everyone seems to be fine. Thank God there are no tree huggers. They'd be feeling foolish, wouldn't they?' The pilot phones back to base as he continues watching 'Yeah, everything seems fine. I suppose I lost it like everyone before me... No, no, no, I accept full responsibility... Epic Dave has contacted you to say he's faster than any missile? The arrogant jerk... Wait a second, I kinda want to get away from this place, in case people put two and two together...' The pilot turns back towards the town and accelerates.

'What was it you were going to say?... He's come up with a new catchphrase?... I do know 'Hasta la vista' from the Terminator, your point being?... He's got a new version?... 'Jibble my jabble... fool...' What's it mean?...

Nothing? He sounds like a moron... You've told him and he doesn't care?... He wants boys saying it playgrounds when they're playing together? Why?... Because it doesn't make sense? I don't understand!... Those back in the base have already started saying it??... I don't care if they were being ironic! It's the dumbest thing I've heard! Look I'm going to talk this madness out of you the second I meet you, this matters!

TO BE CONTINUED...