

MAN OR MOUSE

by

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REVISION

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INT. PUB - NIGHT

The aftermath of a brutal bar fight.

DOGFACE, 30, an English bulldog, thick set and tattooed
and

TRIPPY, 28, a violent Irish clown, try unsuccessfully to fix a
broken table.

DEBS the landlady, 50, is mopping up broken glass, blood and
lager.

The big screen TV flickers silent news of the Iraq War.

LEE 17, enters.

Jim marches over, eyes blazing, licking his bleeding hand.

JIM
Alright, son?

LEE
Alright Jim. What happened here?

JIM
Never fuckin' mind what happened here.
I'm a man down for tonight. Are you
in?

LEE
Who me?

JIM
No, Bill 'n' Ben the fuckin' flowerpot
men, of course fuckin' you.

Jim leans his face into Brizzer's ear.

JIM (CONT'D)
Gotta serve someone up.

Jim offers his bloody hand.

They shake.

JIM (CONT'D)
Eleven tonight. Outside.

Lee smiles, beaming.

LEE
Wicked.

JIM
Fuck me about, I'll fuckin' kill you.

Jim flashes a dazzling smile, swirls his long black coat and leaves.

Lee sees Jim's blood on his hand.

DEBS
Made a pact with the devil, have you?

He wipes it in his jeans, looking up at the TV on the wall: an image of Saddam Hussein.

The subtitle reads:

'Execution of a Lawless Tyrant.'

BACK OF PUB

Dogface breaks the table leg.

DOGFACE
Oh...fuck this!

DEBS
Oi!

TRIPPY
Sorry about the furniture, like.

DEBS
Go on you two, fuck off. Filth'll be here in a minute.

TRIPPY

Oi, Lee, fancy a burger?

LEE

Um, I--

Trippy puts his arm around him, forces him to leave --

TRIPPY

Come on.

Trippy winks at Dogface.

Dogface hides a broken table leg inside his jacket.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

As they skulk along, Dogface keeps his hands in his jacket pockets, and his weapon concealed.

TRIPPY

Did you see the state of the cunt,
like?

DOGFACE

Prick deserved it.

Suddenly Dogface whips out the table leg, grabs Lee under the chin and thrusts him against a wall, about to smash him in the face.

DOGFACE

What'd Jim say to you?

LEE

What?

DOGFACE

You deaf, I said what'd Jim fuckin'
say to you you little cunt.

LEE

He asked me if I wanted to work.

DOGFACE

When?

LEE

Tonight.

DOGFACE

And you said?

LEE

Yeah.

Dogface shakes his head, chucks his weapon, snorts phlegm and phlobs it on the ground.

DOGFACE

Fuck this. I'm goin' round my birds
for a bit.

He goes.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Trippy and Lee finish their burgers, and then...

LEE

Jim said we've got to serve someone
up. What's he mean?

TRIPPY

Good question. Hmm, let's see. Serve
someone up...deliver him...to God, I
suppose, on a platter, like John the
Baptist's head.

Lee stops.

TRIPPY (CONT'D)

Well what do you think he meant? We're
all popping round to serve him dinner?
Do I look like Jamie fucking Oliver?

Suddenly, Trippy grabs Lee and pulls him into an alley.

LEE

Oi!

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

A few paces in, Trippy stops, releases his grip.

LEE

What the...Trippy, what the fuck!?

Trippy bites his nails nervously.

TRIPPY

Look, don't fucking come tonight.

LEE

Why?

TRIPPY

Because violence is like drugs and sex. It's not for kids.

LEE

I'm not a kid.

TRIPPY

How old are you?

LEE

18 !

TRIPPY

Bollocks you are! Look. It's dangerous. You could get banged up for life...we all could...and for what? We're family. A clan. We've been together for years. I've known Jim since I was fucking your age. Dogface is like his surrogate son... adopted him in prison...were both doing a ten stretch for armed fucking robbery.

Lee looks lost.

TRIPPY

Look, I know you wanna prove yourself to the big boss...You think you're the first lost sheep that's wandered off the streets looking for a shepherd? London's fucking crawling with you.

LEE

What?

TRIPPY

I've seen the way you creep up to him, looking for a fucking father figure. We all have. That's why Dogface hates you...sibling fucking rivalry.

LEE

I-

TRIPPY

Fact is, the boss has taken a shining to you, like you're the prodigal fucking son or something, but, if you ask me, he's making a big mistake...to tell you the truth, I've got a bad fucking feeling about tonight. I don't know why, but...

A loud meow!

Both turn to see a black cat sneaking along the fence, back high, eyes glaring.

It flicks its tail and disappears.

TRIPPY (CONT'D)

You see, a fucking omen!

His voice intensifies, heavier, more dangerous.

TRIPPY (CONT'D)

Listen, take my advice, fuck off now and don't come back. I'll have a word with the boss, tell him you had to go home, see your folks, like...

LEE

No!

TRIPPY

What d'you mean, no?

LEE

No. I shook on it. I'm in.

Trippy shakes his head in disbelief.

TRIPPY

Suit yourself. Don't say I didn't
fucking warn you.

Trippy walks away.

TRIPPY (CONT'D)

(under his breath)

Cunt.

EXT. PUB - NIGHT

Jim leans out of the driver's window.

JIM

Alright son. Get in.

The door slides open.

Trippy's and Dogface's unwelcoming faces peer out.

Lee climbs in.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

They pull away. It's dark. A flash of streetlight illuminates
the snake tattooed on Dogface's neck.

Its red eyes stare.

DOGFACE

I can't believe we're bringing this
cunt.

JIM

Who? Trippy? I know, he's a fuckin' liability.

DOGFACE

No, not Trip, *this* cunt.

JIM

Who? Lee? He's my boy.

TRIPPY

To be honest, Jim, I have to say, like, on this occasion, for a change, I do agree with Dog, like...we should've had a vote.

The van screeches to a stop.

The three bash into each other, spitting swear words.

JIM

Right. Now listen. I'm the chairman of this fuckin' committee. And what I say, goes. If anyone's got a problem with that, you can fuck off now.

No one moves, or breathes.

JIM (CONT'D)

Right. That's fuckin' that, then. Now let's go to fuckin' work.

Jim drives on.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

The van stops. Engine off.

JIM

Here we are, boys. The land of Oz. Now let's go and see the fuckin' wizard.

LEE

What'd he do, Jim?

JIM

Never fuckin mind what he did. What matters is what you fuckin' do, and what you do is what you're fuckin' told. Understand?

Lee nods, terrified.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

Dogface clunks the toolbox down, opens it, and takes out a chisel.

JIM

I'll have that.

Trippy grabs a mallet.

TRIPPY

I'll take that.

Dogface takes a monkey wrench.

DOGFACE

And I'll have this.

Jim grabs a hammer and gives it to Lee.

LEE

What's this?

JIM

What's it fuckin' look like?

LEE

No but I mean, why have I got it?

JIM

Well, while we're there I thought you could put a fuckin' shelf up.

Dogface and Trippy snigger.

TRIPPY

Don't worry it's just your average,
household, DIY murder weapon.

JIM

You're the virgin, son. Gotta break
you in. There will be blood, but
hopefully it won't be yours.

Dogface smirks.

JIM (CONT'D)

Now listen, boy...

Jim takes the hammer off him, holds it high above his head.

JIM

Grab him!

Dogface and Trippy grab Lee's arms, and hold him.

JIM (CONT'D)

...when you do him, hit him hard.....
crack...right on the crown!

Lee's trembling with terror as Jim brings the hammer down,
fast, towards his head, stopping just in time.

Jim, Dogface and Trippy laugh.

Jim gives Lee the hammer.

Lee's relieved.

Suddenly there's a piercing screech as something dives low
over their heads.

DOGFACE

What the fuck!

TRIPPY

A bat. You see, you cunt, another
fucking omen!

JIM
Trippy, shut the fuck up! Right,
follow me.

RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT

Jim marches across the road, followed by the others.
Lee's lagging behind.

JIM
Come on!

Lee quickens.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Jim rings the bell.

A light goes on inside.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Who is it?

JIM
Jim. Gary in?

WOMAN'S VOICE
Nah, Jim, he went away for a few days.
See his Mum.

Jim thrusts his chisel in the door and rips it open.

The WOMAN screams as Jim barges in.

Next door, a curtain twitches.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Lee follows.

JIM
Come on! Upstairs!

Lee looks back and sees Dogface headbutt the Woman.

She falls.

Jim runs upstairs.

Lee follows.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jim hits the lights.

A double room, luxurious.

A man, GARY, 40, in boxers, cowers in the corner.

GARY

I told you Jim, I'll have the dough,
next week.

Jim grabs him.

JIM

Too late for that, ol' son.

JIM

Please, please Jim...

Jim locks his arms behind his back.

Gary thrashes out, kicking, wailing.

JIM

(to Lee)

Now! Do the cunt!

Fear in his eyes, Lee lifts the hammer behind his head.

JIM (CONT'D)

Now! Do him, son! Just like I taught
you.

Lee hesitates.

JIM

What are you waiting for? Do him now!

GARY

Jim, don't, please, I told you...

JIM

(to Lee)

Do him! Now! Do him you little fuckin'
cunt!

INT. HOUSE - DAY (MEMORY HIT)

Lee, cowered in the corner, his drunken DAD kicks him.

DAD

Little cunt.

He Kicks him again. Puts his boot on Lee's face. Presses his
face into the ground, under his foot, crushing him.

DAD

Come on you little fucking faggot.
Stand up for yourself, you fucking
poof.

Lee sobs, cries under his dad's crushing boot.

DAD

You're no son of mine. You pathetic
little prick. You cunt. Come on, stand
up and fight! What are you, a fuckin'
man or a mouse?!!

BACK TO SCENE.

Jim pulls a gun, points it at Lee, clicks the safety.

JIM

Do him you little fuckin' prick! You
cunt! Do him now before I fuckin' do
you! What are you fuckin' man or
mouse?!

The past blurs with the present as the two voices ECHO in
Lee's mind in harmony - angry faces blurring into one -

DAD / JIM
Man or Mouse / Man or Mouse / Man or
Mouse -

Lee swings the hammer forward with FULL FORCE.

CRACK!!!

Blood SPLATS his face.

A massive THUMP as a body hits the floor.

Lee stares, wide-eyed at what he's done.

He drops the hammer and runs, down the -

STAIRS

- three at a time, to the --

HALLWAY

-- where Dogface guards the woman, who lies on the ground,
groaning, mobile in hand.

In the distance a siren sounds, getting louder, getting
closer.

Dogface stares at Lee, spattered red, the bloody hammer in his
hand.

DOGFACE
Where's Jim?

LEE
(calm, cold)
Upstairs. Jim's still...upstairs.

Sirens get louder.

DOGFACE
(calling up)
Jim? Old bill! It's on top. Let's go!

Trippy comes in.

TRIPPY

The fuckin' filth! Come on! Let's go!

Lee runs past them, sprints out the door.

DOGFACE / TRIPPY

(calling upstairs)

Jim!

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Lee runs out of the house.

Blue lights flash. Sirens scream.

Lee stands still in the moonlight, frozen, staring at the blood on his hands.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dogface and Trippy charge in.

And stop. Wide eyed. Shocked. Looking at -

-- JIM --

Dead.

Blood oozing from his smashed head.

BLACKOUT.