

DEATH AND MAX'S

Written by

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INT. ANONYMOUS APARTMENT - NIGHT

A man and his drugs.

Torch to spoon, a grotesque powder melts into yellow goop.

He ties off his arm with a well worn rubber band.

We see the needle pull in liquid.

A flick of the spear marks the official end of preparation.

We don't see the needle puncture skin, but we see his eyes drift from an uncomfortable sober into the hazy delight of synthetic euphoria.

His body sways, eyes roll into his head, and he hits the couch hard.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. ANONYMOUS APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The screen still black. The only sound is a faded KNOCK. The knock intensifies and builds until it's in full form and clarity when suddenly -

The man opens his eyes, facedown on the couch.

The heinous KNOCK now morphed into the everyday experience of a KNOCK on the door.

The man rolls his eyes in frustration but inevitably rises from the couch. We see him in full, unimpressive, form.

A plain white tee drenched in dirt and stains of every nature. Sweats with several holes in them. He hasn't bathed for the day or shaved for the week. This is MAX.

The KNOCK persists. Now obnoxiously incessant.

Fast food wrappers lay around the floor, a couple holes in the wall, overall the house is a mess but still livable. Max heads down a long halfway to his front door.

As the door swings open we see another, much more impressive, individual.

He's dressed with otherworldly class. Sharp black suit, black under shirt, black shoes, black tie and slicked hair. A thin black briefcase hangs from his clutches. He is the epitome of business. This is GRAHAM.

GRAHAM
Mr. Noble?

MAX
Yes?

GRAHAM
It's a pleasure to meet you.

Graham extends his arm. Max returns the gesture with a hesitant and confused handshake.

Graham immediately presses past Max and into his home. Max moves aside to let him in, but his eyes slam open, completely befuddled, as if he was moved by some higher power.

MAX
Who the fu-

Graham looks into Max's eyes and bores through his brain with command.

GRAHAM
Let me in.

Physically entranced, Max moves out of the way for Graham.

Graham takes a seat at the kitchen table and starts to unpack a briefcase. Several sheets of paper, an ornate black pen, and a small box with a bright red button now placed on the table.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)
Now, Mr. Noble, we have some pressing matters to address.

Max tries to blink back in to reality, portraying the look of a clueless maniac.

MAX
Wh-who the hell are you!?

GRAHAM
(sprints through the words.)
That is not yet pertinent.

Graham grabs the pen and cocks his arm into his own procedural writing stance. Graham maintains eye contact with his paperwork while he starts to write.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)
Now, we have a lot to cover,
including a test of sorts for your
morality but first...

He gestures for Max to sit down.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)
Sit down.

Max's eyes slam open once again, mesmerized. Max obliges
Graham's orders without a hint of understanding.

MAX
What...uh, okay sure.

Now opposite of another, Graham raises his eyes to Max with a
devastating gaze.

In complete silence Graham slowly pushes the button towards
Max's side of the table.

Max remains too befuddled to respond.

GRAHAM
Before you is a button. A very
powerful, very truthful button.
Should you decide to press it,
someone on this planet will die.
You won't know how, you won't know
who. However, you will also receive
1 million dollars as compensation.

Max can't help but stare at the menacing red button.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)
Now, what is your-

Max bops the button.

BUTTON
That was easy!

Graham's thrown off by Max's eagerness to end a life.

GRAHAM
You didn't even hesitate.

MAX
Is there like a limit or something?

GRAHAM
What?-

Max immediately starts to slam the button as fast as he can.

BUTTON

That was easy! That was easy! That
was easy! That was easy-!

Graham swipes the button off the table, all forms of
professionalism now out the window.

GRAHAM

What are you doing!?

MAX

If there's no restriction on how
many times I can hit the button
then why wouldn't I cash out?

GRAHAM

You were killing people!

MAX

Not people I know, besides people
suck. And if you ask me we're way
overpopulated.

Graham looks harshly offended.

GRAHAM

Well, congratulations Mr. Noble you
failed.

MAX

Failed?! I didn't know that was the
test.

GRAHAM

Of course that was the test!

MAX

You said but first!

GRAHAM

Wha...what are-?

MAX

You said you were going to test me,
but first. As in but first lets do
something that's not the test.

GRAHAM

Perhaps there was a
miscommunication -
(To himself, quickly)
Through no fault of my own.

MAX
Gimme a redo.

GRAHAM
You don't get a redo.

MAX
Fine, then give me my money.

Max folds his arms confrontationally.

GRAHAM
It was a test, you were never going to get any money.

MAX
Oh.

Max looks away mildly upset but quickly snaps his head back to Graham.

MAX (CONT'D)
Wait, why the fuck are you in my apartment?

Graham responds with a stern frown.

GRAHAM
We don't appreciate that language here Mr. Noble. Let's just continue with your case.

Graham returns to his paperwork, fully agitated.

MAX
How about you get the fuck out of my house before-.

GRAHAM
It says here you're a heroin addict. Correct?

The question smacks Max into a freeze frame, completely caught off guard. After a second or so of contemplation Max immediately shifts gears.

MAX
Uhhhhh. No, no, that's-that's-no what? Who said that?

Graham raises his gaze once more, thoroughly displeased.

GRAHAM

Really? You've never done heroin before?

MAX

Never. Especially today.

GRAHAM

You're telling me that even though you've never done heroin. Today, you are doing even less heroin than no heroin at all.

MAX

Yyyyyyyessss.

GRAHAM

Okay, so...what's that then?

Graham points towards the couch to reveal Max's body lain down in the exact position he passed out.

Blue foam bubbles out of his mouth, his skin pale. His entire body limp and lifeless, half open eyes glazed over by death.

Max nearly falls out of his chair.

MAX

What the fuck! What-what-whaaaaat the fuck.

GRAHAM

That is your dead body. Now, correct me if I'm wrong, but is that a heroin needle in your lifeless, dead, fingertips?

Frozen in horror, Max frantically looks around.

MAX

(Whisper to himself.)
I don't...feel high.

GRAHAM

Dead bodies can't get high.

Graham reinforces his accusation with the tip of his pen.

Max looks at his body, then at Graham, back at the body, back to Graham.

MAX

Are you...the grim reaper?

GRAHAM
I mean, kind of, yeah.

Max takes one last look at his body.

MAX
That's not me.

Graham rolls his eyes.

GRAHAM
Oh come on.

Max gets out of his chair and slowly starts to creep towards the entrance hallway.

MAX
Look. This is a huge
misunderstanding. Now, if you could
kindly leave my house and be on
your way I would very much like to
not die today -because I shouldn't -
because that's...

We see a close up of the body, it's without a doubt Max.

MAX (CONT'D)
(While chuckling.)
That's obviously not me.

Now in front of the hallway, he finishes his bluff with a stone cold stare at Graham.

GRAHAM
Let me know when you want to take
this seriously.

Graham returns his gaze to the paperwork and starts to complete several forms.

Max sprints down the hall and out the door but comes out of another door in the house, back in front of Graham.

He's confused, but returns through the door he just came out of and reappears at the other end of the hall.

Max sprints towards the other end of the house and we see him step outside onto his porch and sprint out of frame.

Once again he reappears, this time from the bathroom in his house.

Graham's still focused on his paperwork.

Max finally stops, now winded.

MAX

(Heavy breathing.)

It's-it's a goddamn Scooby Doo house.

Max turns to Graham.

MAX (CONT'D)

Hey! Grim Reaper dude.

GRAHAM

My name is Graham.

MAX

Okay, Graham. Am I going to hell?

GRAHAM

Have you murdered, raped, or ruined anyone's life?

Max takes a second to think.

MAX

Does the button count?

GRAHAM

You think we would actually kill people with a test? Don't be ridiculous we haven't done that for well over a century now.

MAX

What about my own life?

GRAHAM

Ruining your own life, while an accurate assessment, is not quite damnation worthy.

MAX

So, I'm not going to hell?

GRAHAM

No Mr. Noble, you are not going to hell.

Graham looks up from his work and looks at Max for the first time in a while.

GRAHAM (CONT'D)
You're going to court.

FADE OUT.