

MUMMERS

Written by

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EXT. FOREST - DAY

A thick mist swirls through a snowy forest.

The SOUND OF ROCK SPLITTING shatters the stillness.

Out of the mist stride DERWARD and JACKO, both 40s, hauling DOROTHY, 30, her hands bound. CORMAC, 35, tries to keep up.

DOROTHY

Let me go!

JACKO

Quit fighting, witch!
(to Derward)
The road's up a ways.

DOROTHY

Get your hands off me--

CORMAC

You don't have to be so rough--

JACKO

I'll drag her by her bloody hair if
need be.

DERWARD

This is your doing, b'y!

EXT. FOREST ROAD - DAY

They reach a road. Jacko checks both ways. Empty. He pushes Dorothy onto the road.

JACKO

Start walking.

DOROTHY

You can't leave me here!

JACKO

You're lucky I'm letting you live. I
see you again, you won't be so lucky.

Derward and Jacko head back into the forest. Cormac lingers.

CORMAC

I'm sorry. I can't risk my family--

DOROTHY

You said we were family!

CORMAC

I thought I knew you, but... I can't give you what you want.

DOROTHY

There must be a way--

CORMAC

You're not blood. You've shown that. I made a mistake.

DOROTHY

You promised--

CORMAC

No. Forget you ever met me.

Down the road, headlights approach. Cormac disappears into the mist.

DOROTHY

Don't you leave me here! Damn it, give me what I want! You promised!

(sweetly)

Cormac, my love? Please?

(angry)

You're wicked! I'm going to tell everyone about this place! Cormac!

Dorothy slips her hands under her legs to the front and chews at the rope.

The car pulls up beside her. The window opens.

DRIVER

Christ risen lass, you must be freezing! You need a ride?

Dorothy manages to free her hands. She glares at the driver.

DOROTHY

What are you staring at?

She heads back into the forest.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Dorothy follows voices echoing through the mist.

CORMAC (O.S.)

We shouldn't have left her like that.

JACKO (O.S.)
No one threatens the clan.

CORMAC (O.S.)
I never should have brought her--

DERWARD (O.S.)
No, you bloody shouldn't!

EXT. FOREST PATH - DAY

Dorothy reaches two rough lines of trees suggesting a path.
She follows it into a narrow ravine.

JACKO (O.S.)
You've no business bringing outsiders
in. So help me, if we have to move
again--

DERWARD (O.S.)
All right Jacko, it's dealt with!
Let's just get back--

The SOUND OF ROCK SPLITTING cuts them off.

Dorothy listens for a moment, then walks on through the
mist-- into a huge boulder blocking the ravine.

She inspects it. No way around. Dead end.

DOROTHY
Where the hell did they go?

A SNORT startles her. She turns to see BRYMER, a huge moose,
glaring down from the ravine wall.

Brymer BELLOWS and drops into the ravine.

DOROTHY (cont'd)
Oh shit... easy...

He gouges the snow with his antlers-- THEN CHARGES. Dorothy
scrambles aside as he slams into the boulder.

She runs.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Dorothy crashes through undergrowth. MOOSE BELLOWS echo
close behind. Branches SHATTER. Hooves THUNDER.

She bursts through thick scrub onto the forest road.

EXT. FOREST ROAD - DAY

A CAR HORN BLARES-- headlights flash-- Dorothy turns to see a car rushing towards her through the mist--

BLACKOUT.

INT. DOROTHY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A dark, dusty room filled with piled junk and stacked boxes.

BASEMENT

A squalid bachelor's bunker. Laundry, pizza boxes, soda cans on the floor. The video game RESIDENT EVIL paused on a TV.

MAX, 32, lies in bed, mouth agape, eyes slitted. A HALF-EATEN PIZZA SLICE on his chest. He might be dead.

His eyes snap open. He CHOKES UP AN OLIVE, gasps for air-- then picks up his controller and resumes gaming.

PLINK. He scans the room-- a leak through the floor above. He slides an empty can under it with his foot.

PLONK. He flips the TV to cable and waddles to the bathroom.

FEMALE TV ANCHOR (V.O.)

Good morning Toronto, and a Merry Christmas to you Peter!

MALE TV ANCHOR (V.O.)

You too Susan! Minus ten, eh? Shorts weather! Bee-utiful day in the Six!

BATHROOM

Max stops brushing his teeth. Flushes the toilet. Brushes.

FEMALE TV ANCHOR (V.O.)

Sure is! You know, Peter, it got me thinking this morning--

MALE TV ANCHOR (V.O.)

Oh oh! Don't want to do that!

FEMALE TV ANCHOR

Christmas is about family, and real family is not the one you're born with, it's the one you find--

MALE TV ANCHOR
So, so true Susan, and you know--

FEMALE TV ANCHOR
--so I want to say, from the bottom
of my heart, that I'm glad I found
you, Peter.

Max checks the time on his phone. Heaves a sigh.

MALE TV ANCHOR (V.O.)
Well okay then Susan! Hey now, you
hear about this? A beaver was seen
running wild downtown yesterday--

LIVING ROOM

Max digs through junk and finds a box of greeting cards.

EXT. TORONTO STREET - DAY

Snow covered brownstones. Christmas lights on every house
except Dorothy's.

Max exits with a pizza delivery bag, tossing boxes into the
trash until he sniffs out a good one.

INT. SENIORS HOME - DAY

Fake Christmas tree. Cheap decorations. RESIDENTS play cards
and backgammon.

ON A NOTICE BOARD: "Christmas Sing-a-long with Sonny and
Koo-Koo" - CANCELED.

Max enters and presents the pizza to TINA at reception.

MAX
I come bearing Christmas pizza!

TINA
Max! Didn't expect to see you today.

MAX
I came to see you, Tina!

TINA
Me? Really?

MAX

Yeah! And mom too, of course. I brought you pizza! My gift to you. And everyone. But you, really.

TINA

Thank you. That's very kind.
(reads the label)
Erica Rosenblatt.

MAX

Typo. Mind if I...
(eats a slice)
Might want to heat this up.

RAY, 80's, slams his wheelchair repeatedly into Max's foot.

MAX (cont'd)

I recognize those wheels! Hey Ray--

RAY

That damned mother of yours got Sonny and Koo-Koo cancelled!

MAX

Not Sonny and Koo-Koo! I love them!
(to Tina)
That's my Friday night open again...

RAY

You said you'd talk to her! Someone's got to stand up to that bitch!

TINA

Ray! I'm sorry Max--

MAX

Oh I get it. Hey Ray! Let's go good cop, bad cop. Whaddaya say, partner?

RAY

Damn it, I'm serious! Start acting like a man for Christ's sake!

MAX

A man? Wait--
(into phone)
Hey Siri, what is a man?

SIRI (V.O.)

A man is an adult male human being.

MAX

Pretty sure they're extinct, Ray.

RAY
I don't know why I waste my time with
this lousy kid...

Ray wheels away, irritated.

MAX
'Cos you love me Ray! Hey, you want a
slice of cold pizza-- he's gone.
(to Tina)
Hey Tina, would you ever consider...

TINA
Hmm?

MAX
...uh ...saying hi to mom with me?
I'm sure you could put a smile on her
face. God knows I can't!

TINA
You're a good son, Max.

MAX
Yeah. I had a dream where I
decapitated her.

TINA
(smile cracking)
I'm going to put the pizza away.

She leaves - without the pizza.

MAX
Overshared.

CORRIDOR

Max hesitates at his mother's door. He steels himself.

INT. DOROTHY'S ROOM - DAY

Bible on the nightstand. Cross on the wall. Rosary on the
bedpost. DOROTHY, 78, cantankerous, scowls at Christian TV
from her armchair.

Max KNOCKS and enters, bright as a button.

MAX
Hi mom!

DOROTHY
Nobody knocks.

MAX
'Cept me, I knocked!

Max tries to kiss her cheek. She pulls away.

DOROTHY
Ugh, you smell like death. Pull your shirt down. No one wants to see that.

Max tugs his shirt and presents the card.

MAX
Christmas cards! Yay!

DOROTHY
Waste of money...

MAX
That's the spirit! Shall I read it?

DOROTHY
I'm watching Pastor John!

MAX
"Dear Mom. Merry Christmas. Max."
(checks the back)
Could have sworn I wrote more... I'll put it with the other--
(sees only one card)
--One. Oh, well never mind. Who's this from? Oh, it's from Donald!
That's nice.

DOROTHY
Hrumph! Blood sucking lawyer! He only sends one to keep the vein open!

MAX
Oh, now, that's not true mom. I like Donald.

DONALD (O.S.)
I like you too, Max.

MAX
Shitting Christ!

DOROTHY
Language!

MAX

Sorry. Hi Donald. Why are you here?
It is Christmas Day isn't it?

DONALD

Yes, it is. But Dorothy wanted me to
stop by. Today. On Christmas.

DOROTHY

More complaining. I'm paying you,
aren't I?

DONALD

I thought we were going to finally
write your will--

DOROTHY

I don't plan on dying yet.
Parasites...

MAX

Okay, so why is Donald here?

DOROTHY

I'm selling the house. Get out of the
way of the television, boy!

MAX

The house? My house?

Dorothy mutes the television and eyeballs Max.

MAX (cont'd)

I meant... I meant your house.

DOROTHY

Yes. My house.

MAX

Are you just thinking about it or...

DOROTHY

Look at him panic, Donald. Spineless.
It's going on the market right away.

MAX

Right away? Okay. So... where
would... where would I live in that
scenario?

DOROTHY

Where do real men live in their 30's,
Max? Is it in their mother's
basement?

MAX

No, mom.

DOROTHY

No. You'll have to find somewhere else. You have a job don't you, if you could call it that. Delivering pizza to other washouts skulking in basements? Or are you just eating it all yourself? You look like you are.

MAX

No...

DOROTHY

Well then, I'm sure you'll be fine. You've lived there long enough. Now then, Donald is going home to spend time with his family--

DONALD

Am I? Oh how nice.

DOROTHY

--because tomorrow he will be taking photographs of the house.

MAX

Tomorrow? But... it's Christmas, mom. Can't it wait until the new year or--

DOROTHY

No. I'm selling right away. Pastor John said the church needs money.

MAX

But... I need time to--

DOROTHY

Eternal damnation, boy! That's what awaits you if you don't do right in this world. The church needs money.

MAX

We all need money...

DOROTHY

God help me, how did I raise such a selfish child? You don't take after me at all! Now, if you don't mind, it is Christmas, so I'd like to be left alone. Make sure the house is tidy!