

LUNCH BREAK

Written by

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Three men in casual business attire stride out into a hot, fenced-in parking lot. MIKE squints up at the sun and puts on a pair of sunglasses. DONNIE has a jacket draped over his shoulder. THEO loosens his tie and carries a briefcase.

THEO

Christ, that meeting took forever!

MIKE

I'm gonna get "could've been an email" tattooed on my forehead if I have to sit through one more.

THEO

Dude, Henderson joked about pushing lunch back if it went overtime, I almost lost it!

DONNIE

What're we feeling fellas?

MIKE

There's that Italian place that opened uptown I've been meaning to check out.

THEO

Well let's just hurry up, man, I'm starving.

DONNIE

Same, but uptown? Isn't that like a fifteen minute drive? We've only got an hour for lunch.

MIKE

We can just call ahead.

DONNIE

Call ahead?

MIKE

Yeah, put our orders in, then they'll be ready to go when we get there and sit down.

DONNIE

Uhm, I think it'll take more than fifteen minutes for them to make our food, dude. Plus we have to see the menu and figure out what we want. Do they have one online?

THEO
Uhm, guys?

MIKE
I mean, theoretically they've got a menu. But it's an Italian restaurant. They've got Italian food.

THEO
Guys...

DONNIE
Well, I'm not seeing them on Yelp.

MIKE
Dude, it's an Italian restaurant. You wouldn't need a menu to order a pizza, would you?

DONNIE
Hold up, is it an Italian place or a pizza place?

MIKE
I'm sure they serve pizza, but it's an Italian restaurant. Let's get in-

THEO
Guys!

MIKE AND DONNIE
What?

Theo stands next to a Range Rover, and points across the parking lot. The barred entry gate is tilted at an odd angle and two men in mechanic's uniforms work on it.

THEO
I think the gate's busted.

MIKE
What?

DONNIE
No no no no! Come on!

Mike approaches the mechanics.

MIKE
Excuse me, gentlemen, looks like we're having a bit of a problem?

MECHANIC 1

Yeah, the gate was knocked off its track and the chain that pulls it snapped.

MIKE

We can't move it by hand?

MECHANIC 1

Alignment's off. Security said you can leave through the personnel gate, but no ones driving in or out of here.

DONNIE

Damn it, dude!

THEO

That sucks.

MIKE

Yeah, yeah, alright. Should we order delivery or...

THEO

Man that'll take too long, plus with the fees and tipping it'd be like playing for a whole other meal.

DONNIE

You guys didn't bring any food, right?

MIKE

No, man. Wednesdays were for eating out.

DONNIE

Yeah... well, there's the mall a couple blocks over.

MIKE

I guess. Just not any fast food, alright? Stuff's poison.

THEO

Yeah, yeah. Let's go.

They walk out of the side gate and leave.

2

EXT. STREET-DAY

2

Mike, Donnie and Theo walk down the street. The sidewalk is cracked and uneven, the wide street roars with cars moving back and forth, sending hot wind blowing along.

DONNIE

So, what're we thinking?

THEO

I don't know what to think man, I haven't been to the mall in forever.

DONNIE

You never go with Lisa or the kid?

THEO

No, she doesn't like this part of town, thinks it's depressing.

A bus races by, the engine roaring right in their ears and kicking up dust.

MIKE

(coughing)

Can't imagine why!

DONNIE

God, the mall used to be THE place.

MIKE

Yeah, practically lived there in high school. Remember?

DONNIE

Damn, you're right.

THEO

Yeah, and now we work... just a few minutes away.

DONNIE

Yeah...

MIKE

Yeah...

They walk in silence for a few beats. They pass a KFC/Pizza Hut/Taco Bell.

DONNIE

Think the Chili's is still there.

MIKE

Chili's? At 1 in the afternoon?
Place'll be depressing as all hell.

THEO

What? Dude, don't you remember?
Friday nights, we'd invite some
girls, have our fake IDs, they had
the margaritas for a dollar each!

MIKE

Uh, I remember *inviting* girls,
don't remember any showing up.

THEO

Oh, yeah.

DONNIE

Why do you think that was?

MIKE

Probably because- why would they
want to go to Chili's on a Friday
night with three guys they'd never
met?

DONNIE

Hey, they knew us.

MIKE

Because you wouldn't stop inviting
the same girls, man.

THEO

(yawning)

Sara Martinez, right? Her and her
friends, I forget their names.

DONNIE

That's right, Sara Martinez! I was
so into her junior year. Her
boyfriend, not so much.

THEO

Yeah. How'd you get away with
asking out the school quarterback's
girlfriend so often, dude? If I
tried that I'd be a goner.

MIKE

Probably cuz he was selling weed to
half the football team.

*

DONNIE

That's right. I was untouchable!

MIKE

Mmm, not to the cops, if I recall.

THEO

Yeah, 'least your folks bailed you out.

MIKE

Right before they kicked him out.
He spent a week on my couch.

DONNIE

It was *not* a week, dude.

MIKE

Oh, that's right. It was *two*.

DONNIE

Who can say for sure.

MIKE

The couch. My mom let me take it
when I moved out. Could never get
the bongwater smell out.

DONNIE

Well, your welcome for the free
couch.

They continue walking. They turn left at an intersection and
pass between two gas stations.

THEO

Oh, can we stop here, I wanna grab
a puff bar.

DONNIE

Dude, you gotta knock off that
vaping crap.

THEO

It helps me stay awake! You'll want
a hit when we're back in the office
for another meeting!

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Theo jogs up and enters the closest gas station. Mike and
Donnie wait on the sidewalk. Mike wipes his shades on the end
of his tie.

DONNIE

What about that Thai place?

MIKE

That could work. Can grab one of those salads with the little fried peanuts.

DONNIE

A salad.

MIKE

I'm watching my figure.

Donnie tilts his head back and sighs.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I'm sticking to my resolution, man. Gonna get fit, but not too bulky.

*

DONNIE

Uh-huh.

MIKE

Yeah, been mostly focusing on core. Avoiding the glamour muscles. My trainers got me doing like sixty crunches a day man, killing me.

DONNIE

Must be tough.

3

INT. GAS STATION-DAY.

3

Theo looks around before grabbing a Rockstar energy drink in a tallboy can and approaching the counter. The GAS STATION ATTENDANT blankly stares past him.

THEO

This and a puff bar, man. The mango one.

GAS STATION ATTENDANT

Drivers License, please.

THEO

You serious? Come on, look at me.

GAS STATION ATTENDANT

ID or no nicotine.

They stare down each other for a moment before Theo looks away and takes out his wallet. He passes his driver's license over.

THEO
Unreal, man. Here.

The attendant takes the card and without looking, passes it behind the counter for a moment before giving it back. He turns and grabs the puff bar in its package and hands it over.

GAS STATION ATTENDANT
Ten ninety-five.

Theo hands him the cash, his eyes rolling as he takes a breath.

THEO
Great, thank you.

He takes his goods and walks out.

4 EXT. STREET-DAY.

4

Donnie looks off into space, standing slack as Mike goes on.

MIKE
-And I've been having him train me to exercise the side abs too, getting that tightened up. I'll be looking like Jesus on the cross by April.

DONNIE
Why do they make him so ripped when he's up there?

MIKE
Probably 'cause he was. All that carpentry, manual labor, walking everywhere; not like now, we're all staring at computers at our cubicles. It's bullshit.

DONNIE
Yeah, driving our gas guzzlers, poisoning the air.

MIKE
Well, not me. Not in the Rover.

Donnie checks his watch.

DONNIE
What's taking him?

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Theo walks out of the gas station. He's got the Rockstar tucked under one arm and his briefcase under the other while he struggles to open the packaging of his vape.

THEO

Alright, alright. We decide where to eat?

DONNIE

Hey, we were thinking Thai. How's that sound?

THEO

Sounds good, man.

They start walking as Theo hits his vape.

5

EXT. STREET-DAY

5

They cross the street and continue onward.

DONNIE

Where do you guys think Sara Martinez's at now?

MIKE

Not here, that's for sure.

DONNIE

Yeah?

MIKE

I heard she went to Princeton. Name one person from here that went there, then came back.

THEO

What's wrong with this place, man? It's got everything we need.

DONNIE

Yeah, man. Have a little town pride. The American small town's dying all over, you know.

MIKE

Town pride? Should people in Mudville have town pride too?

THEO

Where's Mudville?

MIKE

Exactly!

DONNIE

Let's not get into all that before
we eat, man. Can't get depressed on
an empty stomach.

THEO

Who's depressed? I think this place
is great!

DONNIE

Right. Can I get a hit of that?

THEO

Sure.

Theo passes him the vape.

They start crossing a wide parking lot.

6 EXT. MALL-DAY

6

They stand outside a huge building with several sets of
double doors, and people going in and out to shop. They go
inside.

7 INT. THAI RESTAURANT-DAY

7

Mike, Donnie and Theo sit down at the restaurant. A WAITER
gives them menus.

MIKE

Let's order quick. Something simple
like a salad or-

DONNIE

I'm not getting a salad. I'll take
the chicken satay, waters all
around, please.

THEO

I'll have the same, extra spicy,
but no water. I've got a drink.

Theo holds up his can of Rockstar.

DONNIE

Jesus Christ...

WAITER

Sir, we actually can't allow
outside food or beverages.
Restaurant policy.

THEO

How come?

MIKE

Dude, just put it away.

THEO

Well hang on, I'm a paying
customer, I can't sit and drink
what I want to drink with my meal?

WAITER

Not here, I'm afraid. Also you
technically haven't paid yet.

DONNIE

Alright, guy, settle down. Theo,
just wait on the energy drink,
okay? You want that mixing in with
extra spicy Thai? Think of the walk
back.

THEO

Shit, you're right.

MIKE

Thank you.

*
*

He goes to put the can down by his briefcase.

WAITER

Thank you. I'll be back with your
waters in a few minutes.

THEO

Yeah.

DONNIE

Thank you.

The waiter leaves.

THEO

You hear that guy? What's his
problem?

MIKE

Sounded fine to me, dude.

*

THEO

It's like *oh, my Thai restaurant in this mall is too good for energy drinks!*

DONNIE

It's not that deep, man.
Hand me the puff.

*

Theo hands Donnie the vape as the waiter approaches with a tray of water glasses. He sets them down on the next table and turns to Donnie.

WAITER

Sir, I'm so sorry, but we can't allow smoking or vaping on the premises either. It's ours as well as the mall's policy.

Donnie lets out a flustered laugh, a small cloud leaving his mouth.

DONNIE

Well, come on, man. This place is huge, no one else'll notice.

WAITER

It's a disturbance to other diners.

THEO

Other diners? This place is empty.

MIKE

Theo-

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*

DONNIE

-Yeah, and *diners*? Come on, man.
We're in a mall. Chill.

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*

MIKE

Donnie!

*

*

WAITER

Gentlemen, I'm afraid I'll have to ask you to leave if you can't follow our policy here.

DONNIE

Are you joking?

THEO

Can't drink our drinks, can't use our vapes, are we even in America anymore?

DONNIE

You're right, dude. This is
unamerican, and unconstitutional!

MIKE

It's neither-

THEO

It's bullshit! Let's get outta
here, man!

Theo and Donnie stand and collect their things.

MIKE

No no no, guys come on! We don't
have time for this!

THEO

Let's go some place more American,
dude!

DONNIE

Yeah. Let's hit that Taco Bell we
passed by!

MIKE

Son of a bitch! Guys!

Mike gets up to follow. The waiter steps in front of him.

WAITER

Will you be paying for your drinks,
sir?

Mike looks off into the distance, a vein on his forehead
growing pronounced.

8

EXT. MALL-DAY

8

Donnie and Theo are walking out in a huff to the parking lot.
There's a SLAM as Mike bursts through the door. He sprints
past them.

MIKE

TACOBELLSOUNDSGREATLETSGO!

They look behind them to see a security guard and the waiter
pursuing and break into a run.