

Afternoon Calamity

Language inspired by *Touch of Evil*

INT. DETECTIVE'S OFFICE (BLACK AND WHITE)

Jane, 11F, lead detective, sits back in her Laz-E-Boy recliner, fiddling with her Fedora and chewing on a toothpick.

Jane raises an eyebrow and looks out the window. Mabel, 11F, junior detective approaches excitedly.

Jane smiles and shakes her head – Mabel has no idea what's about to hit her.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

Jane grabs her toothpick and flicks it away. She approaches the door suavely.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

Jane opens the door.

MABEL

Jane, it's good t'see ya! I've been thinkin we-

JANE

(cool-ly)

Calm down detective, we have a hot trail to follow, not a train to catch.

MABEL

Right, sorry.

JANE

None o' that sorry business. We've got a case!

Jane steps aside, beckoning Mabel in.

Mabel drops her bag by the door and continues into the room.

JANE

Not that far darlin'. Oh, Mabel... Just wait 'till I tell you.

MABEL

What's going on-

Jane jumps on a couch under the window. She crouches on her knees, so just her eyes peer above the sill.

JANE

You know Mr. Becker, from across the street?

Jane looks back at Mabel.

JANE
Well, don't be a drip! Get over
here!

Mabel quickly manuevers herself next to Jane.

JANE
That chrome dome's got a secret.
And we're gonna find it out!

MABEL
Really wha-

JANE
Don't cut me off.

Jane gets up and walks towards the Kitchen. Mabel follows her.

JANE
Every day at exactly..

Jane glances down at her watch.

JANE
4:15 PM, a car, that DOESN'T belong
to Mrs. Becker, pulls into the
driveway.

MABEL
Go-lly.

JANE
Golly, indeed.

MABEL
But, how do you know it's not Mrs.
Becker?

Jane smiles and shakes her head.

JANE
Just. Watch.

The two girls shoot their gazes out the window.

Low and behold, a black car with shaded windows pulls into the driveway across the street. A light haired woman in shades, a tight dress, and heels steps out of the car. She carefully walks up to the Becker's front door. After a few seconds, she enters.

Mabel and Jane's heads turn toward each other. Mabel's mouth drops.

MABEL
Oh. My. God.

JANE
 (sighing)
 I'm gonna need a drink. Fetch me a
 cocoa. EXTRA dry.

Mabel races to a kitchen cabinet and pulls out a hot cocoa packet. She grabs a mug off the counter, pours the cocoa powder in, and slides it to Jane.

Jane picks up the mug. She smiles and takes a sip.

JANE
 (With cocoa powder puffing
 out of her mouth)
 Mmmmm. That hits the spot.

MABEL
 So, where is Mrs. Becker anyways-

JANE
 (talking over mabel)
 Today? Colonoscopy.

MABEL
 How do you know-

JANE
 (talking over mabel)
 I've been reading their mail.

Jane gestures to a large pile of mail on the counter, the top letter from Cologuard.

MABEL
 Riiight. And Mr. Becker? You think
 he's... Cheating?

JANE
 Tsk tsk, detective, that's morbid..

Jane scans the otherwise empty room like an undercover spy.

JANE
 And it's exactly right! Keep your
 hat on tight, Mabel, this is one
 case we can't afford to go belly up
 on.

Jane smiles at her, chunks of cocoa powder stuck between her teeth.

CUT TO:

INT. DETECTIVE'S OFFICE (BLACK AND WHITE)

Jane and Mabel sit behind a coffee table. Polaroid pictures of the Beckers' house are strewn out over it.

MABEL

So, how long has this been going on again?

JANE

I first noticed the car pulling in two weeks ago, after we cracked the stray dog in the culs-de-sac case.

A polaroid catches Jane's eye, she grabs it, then frantically searches through the pile for another.

JANE

Holy Mackerel!

MABEL

What'd you find?

Jane holds up 2 almost identical pictures of the Beckers' driveway.

JANE

The key to this whole case is the tire tracks! Look! In this picture they're not there, but in the second one they are!

MABEL

(speaking over Jane)

What does that have to do-

JANE

Can't you see?! Mr. Becker thought he could hide everything, but the truth is in the pudding...

Mabel still doesn't get it.

JANE

The tire tracks prove that broad's been slinkin around the Beckers' house for MONTHS-

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY (IN COLOR)

MABEL

Do we- do we have to keep talking like that?

INT. DETECTIVE'S OFFICE (BLACK AND WHITE)

JANE

We're finally makin progress! Don't go cockeyed on me now detective.

Mabel drops her head, nods.

JANE
Good good... Well! Onward.

FADE TO:

INT. DETECTIVE'S OFFICE (BLACK AND WHITE)

Jane and Mabel kneel on the couch, peering through the window out at the Beckers' house.

Mabel sits back onto the couch and groans.

MABEL
How long are we going to sit heree-

JANE
(talking over mabel)
THERE!

Mabel bounces up.

MABEL
What?! What happened?!

JANE
Mr. Becker opened the blinds!

In the now open window to the Beckers' house, Mr. Becker kisses the blond woman.

JANE & MABEL
(together)
Woahhhhhhhh.

CUT TO:

INT. DETECTIVE'S KITCHEN (BLACK AND WHITE)

Mabel and Jane take sips of their 'extra dry cocoas' Mabel coughs, hot cocoa power puffs out of her mouth.

Jane puts her mug down.

JANE
I knew that son-of-a-gun was guilty.

MABEL
(mouth full of cocoa powder, struggling to speak)
He's a crummy bummy!

JANE
Yes, detective, that's the spirit!

Jane disdainfully shakes her head.

JANE
It's almost sad, isn't it - this whole situation?

She smoulders.

JANE
Mr. Becker didn't just ruin his marriage... He annihilated it! And when this gets out... His whole reputation'll be toast!

MABEL
What do you mean when this gets out?

JANE
I mean, we have to tell Mrs. Becker! Assuming the colonoscopy goes well. Or- OOOOO- we'll make it so she catches them in action!-

MABEL
(talking over jane)
Woah, woah, woah. Don't you think that's...

INT. KITCHEN (COLOR)

MABEL (CONT'D)
Going too far?

INT. DETECTIVE'S KITCHEN (BLACK AND WHITE)

JANE
What do you mean? He's a cheater! We have to catch him!

INT. KITCHEN (COLOR)

MABEL
Yeah, but like is that even allowed?

MABEL (CONT'D)
(whispering)
What if we get in trouble?

Jane furrows her brow.

INT. DETECTIVE'S KITCHEN (BLACK AND WHITE)

JANE

No. No way! We're not letting that adulterer off the hook!

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. DOOR TO JANE'S HOUSE/FRONT YARD - DAY (BLACK AND WHITE)

Jane cracks her front door open and sticks her head out of the gap, surveying her surroundings. Mabel peers out the door from below her.

JANE

All clear.

Jane cautiously slips through the door into her front yard. She crouches, as to not be seen.

Mabel hesitates.

MABEL

A-are you sure?

JANE

Detective, 10 hours ago Mr. Becker was an honest to god family man, now... he's able grable. So, yes! I'm sure!

Mabel nods then slowly moves behind Jane. Jane takes a step out further into the yard.

WEEEEOOOO WEEEEOOOO SIREN SIREN!

JANE

(whisper screaming)
DOWN! DOWN!

Jane and Mabel crouch down. After a second Jane looks around then gives Mabel a thumbs up.

The two girls army crawl to the end of Jane's front yard. Mabel looks back at the house neighboring Jane's.

MABEL

(whispering)
You don't think my parents can see us right?

JANE

What? No, of course not, we're army crawling.

Jane reaches the edge of her yard. She thinks for a moment.

JANE

Ok... Now we run.

Jane bounds up and runs across the street, ducking behind the mistress' car.

Mabel follows.

EXT. BECKERS' DRIVEWAY - DAY (BLACK AND WHITE)

Mabel and Jane kneel behind the mistress' car, catching their breaths.

JANE

Can't you feel the adrenaline pumping? This is why we do this Mabel! I've got a nose for guilt and I won't stop until justice is brought to the Becker family!

MABEL

Right... Yeah... So are we gonna go knock on the door? Or should we just stay under the window and listen, you know, get the dope?

JANE

I'm liking your thinking detective, but you're not hitting it on the nose quite yet.

MABEL

What else can we do?

Jane smiles, she reaches into her pant pocket, fiddling for a few seconds.

AHAH! She whips out a swiss army knife from her pocket.

JANE

We'll make it so the mistress can't leave!

MABEL

What?!

JANE

We'll slash her tires! Then Mrs. Becker will come home and find her and ask Mr. Becker why she's here and we'll-

MABEL

No!

JANE

What?!

EXT. BECKERS' DRIVEWAY - DAY (IN COLOR)

MABEL

No Jane.

EXT. BECKERS' DRIVEWAY - DAY (BLACK AND WHITE)

Jane rolls her eyes.

She clicks open the swiss army knife and starts to crawl towards a car wheel.

EXT. BECKERS' DRIVEWAY - DAY (IN COLOR)

MABEL

NO! This isn't fun anymore!

JANE

What do you mean?

MABEL

The game! It's going too far Jane-

EXT. BECKERS' DRIVEWAY - DAY (BLACK AND WHITE)

JANE

(speaking over mabel)

This isn't a game! It's real-

EXT. BECKERS' DRIVEWAY - DAY (IN COLOR)

MABEL

(speaking over Jane)

It's not real! We're not
detectives! And we can't slash
someone's tires!

Jane looks around as if she's discovering the world for the first time.

MABEL

Sitting in your house talking weird
all day and spying on the neighbors
is one thing, but this?

Mabel gestures to the knife.

MABEL

This is crazy! Jane, I wanna go
home.

JANE

But you saw them! Mr. Becker is real-life cheating on his wife, shouldn't she know?

MABEL

Maybe, yeah, I don't know, but it's not our business! Oh my god and if my parents found out about this? I'd be grounded for months!

JANE

(defeated, cutting Mabel off)

Yeah whatever I get it.

Mabel takes a deep breath and stands up.

MABEL

(shaky voice)

Look, I get it, but I can't do this. You can come with me, or slash the tires, or whatever. Just... if you stay, leave me out of it.

Mabel turns around, tears welling up in her eyes, and walks back across the street.

Jane looks longingly out at her, then at the knife in her hand.

She squeezes her eyes shut tight and groans.

JANE

Wait!

Jane drops the knife and runs across the street to Mabel.

They stand face to face. Jane drops her head.

JANE

You're right. I went too far. I shouldn't've tried to slash her tires. I'm sorry-

MABEL

And it's not just that! I've been trying to get us to play something else all day and you didn't listen to me!

JANE

(talking over mabel)

Well you didn't say that!

MABEL

I tried!

JANE

Well! I!

Jane stops, she breaths out in resignation.

JANE

I'm Sorry. For that too. I just want to be friends!

MABEL

I want to be friends too!

Jane sticks out her hand. Mabel eyes it confusedly.

JANE

So?

MABEL

So what?

JANE

Friends?

Jane offers Mabel a smile, she returns it.

MABEL

Friends.

The girls shake hands. Mabel shoots forwards and hugs Jane.

CUT TO:

INT. JANE'S DINING TABLE - NIGHT (IN COLOR)

Jane, Mabel, and Jane's dad sit around the table with microwave meals in front of them.

Behind Jane and Mabel, we can see through the window into the Beckers' house.

JANE'S DAD

And thennn I guessed Red Hot Chili Peppers...

Mrs. Becker pulls into her driveway. She gets out of her car, stopping for a moment behind the mistress's.

Something shiny catches her eye. Mrs. Becker bends down and picks up Jane's dropped knife. She holds it up and walks to the front door.

JANE'S DAD (CONT'D)

And that was right!

Mrs. Becker enters. Mr. Becker and the mistress appear through the window.

JANE'S DAD
Anywho, what did you girls get up
to after school?

Mrs. Becker approaches Mr. Becker and the mistress, holding
the knife out at them.

Mrs. Becker and the mistress step close to each other.

MABEL
Uhhhhh...

Mrs. Becker throws the knife to the side, grabs the mistress,
and starts passionately making out with her.

JANE
Nothing muchhhh...

Jane and Mabel giggle.

THE END