

DEPARTURE MENTALITY

Written by

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INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - TOY SECTION - DAY

MAJOR, 25, child in an adult body, surfs a skateboard towards the grocery section. His nametag reads: "Bullseye Employee: MAJOR."

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - GROCERY SECTION - DAY

ANDY, 23, a constant companion, stands with his back turned and a open tub of cheese balls in his arm. Andy grabs a cheese ball and throws it behind him. Major runs in and catches it.

Andy throws another. Major leaps in the air and catches it. Andy throws one between his legs. Major baseball slides across the floor to catch it.

Andy throws another cheese ball. Major rolls in on his skateboard and the ball lands in his mouth.

MAJOR

Yes, dude!

ANDY

We did it?

Andy drops the tub of cheese balls and runs to hug Major. Major stumbles off his skateboard laughing.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - ELECTRONIC SECTION - DAY

Major skateboards past a wall of flat-screen TVs with orange powder collected around his lips.

TV ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Tonight only! James Jameson's final performance on his farewell tour!

Major rolls back and stops in front of the screen.

TV ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Catch this monumental performance.

MAJOR

Wait, that's tonight?

TV ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Tonight, at the Higginbottom Stadium. See you there.

The glare from the TV falls off Major's face. He gapes at the blank screen.

MAJOR
How could I forget about James
Jameson? I got to tell Andy!

Major quickly rolls off. He pumps his fist into the air.

MAJOR (CONT'D)
James Jameson!

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - MEN'S CLOTHING SECTION - DAY

CUSTOMERS filter in and out of the fitting room. They dump their items onto the monstrous pile of clothes resting behind the fitting room desk. Andy, bored, sifts through the pile.

Major rolls towards Andy, slamming the skateboard into the desk. His big-toothed grin catches Andy's eyes.

ANDY
You okay?

MAJOR
Yeah...it's just that James Jameson
is playing in town tonight. No
biggie.

Andy drops the hanger in his hand.

ANDY
Seriously? We have to go! Wait,
aren't you working a double
tonight?

MAJOR
Yes... but I'll just talk to Kyle.
Then, we'll be two nose bleed seats
closer to James Jameson.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - OFFICE - DAY

Colorful socks peek from the bottom of a small wooden desk. KYLE, 36, too cool of a cucumber, leans back in his cheap desk chair.

Major sits in a small chair in front of Kyle's desk with his long legs uncomfortably tucked in.

KYLE
No.

Major leans forward in the chair and clasps his hands.

MAJOR

Come on. It's only for tonight.

Kyle springs up from his chair and grabs his shoes.

KYLE

You did ask for extra hours.

MAJOR

Come on, Kyle. I promise I will --

KYLE

Major, I've let a lot slide since you've worked here.

MAJOR

I get it, but this guy is my idol. If there's an opportunity to see him, I have to go.

KYLE

I hear you, but I've got to get going. Husband's got Dollywood tickets.

Kyle scoops up his bag and bounces out the door. Major stumbles after him.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - ENTRANCE - DAY

Kyle power walks towards the exit while Major tries to catch up to him.

MAJOR

Please, just this one shift --

Kyle holds a finger to Major and lifts his walkie-talkie to his face. The walkie BEEPS as he holds down the button.

KYLE

Attention, team. I'm leaving for the day. Cameron will be in charge for the rest of the night. Toodles.

Kyle struts in front of leaving customers and out of the automatic doors. Major holds his face in his hands.

CAMERON, 26, a chronic perfectionist, approaches Major. His power pose commands the room.

CAMERON

Major, I have you down to do your job. A bit challenging, I know.

Major's shoulders tense and his eyes narrow.

MAJOR

Kyle leaves for one second and you
already assume you're the boss.

CAMERON

I'm the co-manager --

Major spins around.

MAJOR

Manager in training.

Cameron closes his eyes and exhales. His eyes open and his
lips press together into a condescending smile.

CAMERON

It's my job to encourage you to
actually do yours.

MAJOR

Okay, well, if I do my job, can I
get out early today?

CAMERON

We'll see.

Cameron walks off. Major's smile curls like the Grinch.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - BREAK ROOM -DAY

Major holds a white plastic bag behind his back. He stops at
a table where an OLDER FEMALE EMPLOYEE sits. Major slides the
bag to her.

She opens the bag and pulls out a book titled "Love, Fangs,
and Chocolate." Sylvia reaches over and strokes Major's arm.
Major lets out a croaked laugh as he backs away.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - TOY SECTION - DAY

Major kicks back in a blue patio chair, scrolling through his
phone. CHILDREN pick up Legos littered across the floor and
toss them into a plastic storage container.

CHILD #1

Can we stop now?

Major keeps his eyes on his phone. He reaches into his pocket
and pulls out folded dollar bills. The children sigh and
continue to clean.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - WOMEN'S CLOTHING SECTION - DAY

A FEMALE EMPLOYEE coaxes clothes onto a nude mannequin. Cameron peers at the employee then back down at his clipboard.

Major slides next to Cameron and stares at him.

CAMERON

What do you want, Major?

MAJOR

Well, I finished my chores and I got someone to cover me. So, I guess I'll be leaving now.

Cameron eyes Major and grits his teeth into a forced smile.

CAMERON

Really? Why don't we take a look at your good work?

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - BABY SECTION - DAY

In the middle of the aisle, packs of diapers stand stacked into a tower. Toy babies sit guard around the tower. Cameron looks at Major who shrugs. Cameron marks his clipboard.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - ENTERTAINMENT SECTION - DAY

DVDs line the shelves with every character's eyes covered with googly eyes. Major stifles his laughter as Cameron passes, marking his clipboard again.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - TRAVEL SECTION - DAY

A row of suitcases sits with small, colorful limbs poking out. Cameron unzips the last suitcase. A pile of stuffed animals fall out onto the floor.

Cameron steps over the stuffed animals to face Major.

CAMERON

Good thing you're not going anywhere tonight. Plenty of time to do your job.

Cameron winks at Major before walking off. Major's body tenses as if holding back from bursting.

MAJOR
Oh, this is not over.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - ENTRANCE - DAY

Customers leave the checkout and push shopping carts out of the automatic doors. Cameron peers around the checkout and down at his clipboard.

Cameron lifts his head to the sight of Major walking alongside a WOMAN with a SMALL CHILD in her cart. Cameron marches over with his hands clenching the clipboard.

CAMERON
Hello, Ma'am. Major, what are you doing?

MAJOR
Oh, Cameron. I'm helping these lovely customers to their car.

CAMERON
The pleasure is mine. Now, would you mind getting back to work?

Major tightens his grasp on the woman's cart. He glares at Cameron, but Cameron just smirks. Major lets go of the cart. He watches as Cameron guides the two out with a frown.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - SEASONAL SECTION - DAY

Major tiptoes towards the emergency exit. He reaches the door and presses on the push bar. An ALARM goes off. Major whistles, inconspicuously, as he steps away from the door.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - BREAKROOM - NIGHT

Cameron sits typing on his laptop at a small table. He takes a sip from his mug when Andy guides Major, who clutches his arm to his chest, into the room. Cameron draws the mug down.

ANDY
Cameron! Cameron! Major jacked up his arm lifting boxes. I think I need to take him to the hospital.

MAJOR
Oh, my arm! Why today? Why?

Cameron jumps up causing his chair to screech back.

CAMERON

Enough, Major! I'm tired of this nonsense. It's like taking care of a child.

Major drops his arm. Cameron closes the gap between them.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

I'll be thrilled to inform Kyle about your actions. Maybe then you will start to care about your job.

Major takes a step forward and looks Cameron in the eyes.

MAJOR

Why don't we settle this? Once and for all? If you win, I'll stay and clean everything. If I win, I get to go to the concert scot-free.

CAMERON

If this will get you to take your job seriously, I'll take it. But, I decide the challenge.

MAJOR

What do you propose?

CAMERON

A cheese ball toss.

MAJOR

Oh, hell yes.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - HOME SECTION - NIGHT

WORKERS clear the aisle while Andy makes two "X" marks on the floor with tape.

Cameron stretches and Major massages his jaw. Andy runs up with a measuring tape.

ANDY

Ready?

Major salutes and Andy salutes back. Cameron rolls his eyes.

CAMERON

Let's just get on with this so everyone can get back to work. Including Major.

MAJOR

You're sounding a bit cocky. Don't worry. It'll all be over soon.

CAMERON

I just hope you can get a refund on those tickets.

Andy stands in front of Major with a jug of cheese balls. He lifts a cheese ball, cocks his hand back, and launches it.

Major catches the ball in his mouth. His coworkers cheer. Major rubs his hands together as he bounces on his toes.

Andy stands before Cameron. Throws. Cameron crooks his neck. Catch. Cameron pompously chews the cheese ball. Major frowns and focuses back on Andy.

Back and forth, Andy throws while Major and Cameron catch. Major, then Cameron. Major, again. Cameron, again. Employees lean on the shelves and look at their phones, bored.

On his turn, Major holds his hand up to Andy and turns to Cameron.

MAJOR

Dude, it's ten to ten. Just let me go.

CAMERON

You sound worried. Getting out of here isn't going to be that easy.

Major turns back to Andy and nods. Andy throws and Major catches. He turns to watch Cameron. Andy tosses. The puff hits Cameron's face.

Cameron straightens up and wipes the cheese dust from off his face.

Employees surround Major and pat him on the back. Cameron walks over. He extends his hand.

CAMERON (CONT'D)

Good game. Now everyone, back to work. I'll see you tomorrow, Major.

Major's eyes linger on Cameron. He hesitates. Cameron looks at him with the stoicism of a respectable adversary. Major extends his hand. They shake.

Major keeps his eyes locked on Cameron until Andy starts tugging on his arm.

ANDY

Major, we got to get going.

Andy takes off pulling Major along with him.

EXT. DEPARTMENT STORE - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Major and Andy run to Andy's beat-up Subaru. They slam the door open and hop in. The tail lights glow as Andy pulls out. The tires skid across the lot.

INT. ANDY'S SUBARU - NIGHT

Andy waits at the light with his right turn blinker clicking. Major stares out the window. Sigh. Andy glances at him and frowns.

ANDY

Isn't it ironic that the light is green, but I can't move? Traffic, am I right?

Andy takes another look. Major watches the raindrops sprinkle across the window.

MAJOR

How come the things you want suck when you finally get them?

ANDY

Well, all that time you spent trying to get it you realize what's more important.

Major and Andy turn to each other. Major smirks and looks down. Andy drives forward and scans the road. He turns on his left blinker. Major turns to Andy.

ANDY (CONT'D)

I guess we're doing this.

Andy makes a U-Turn. Major looks back at the window. A smile creeps across his face.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - BREAK ROOM - NIGHT

Cameron sits with his feet resting on another chair. He taps his fingers against the table as he takes sips from his mug.

Major strolls in. He places his coat on the coat rack. Cameron eyes Major with disbelief consuming his face.

MAJOR

Hey, boss. What do you need me to start on?

Cameron's face softens as he tries to hold back his smile. He clears his throat.

CAMERON

Yes... some kid put bread in all the toasters. If you could handle that, please.

MAJOR

Yeah, some kid. On it. Nice cheese ball catching today. Pretty baller.

CAMERON

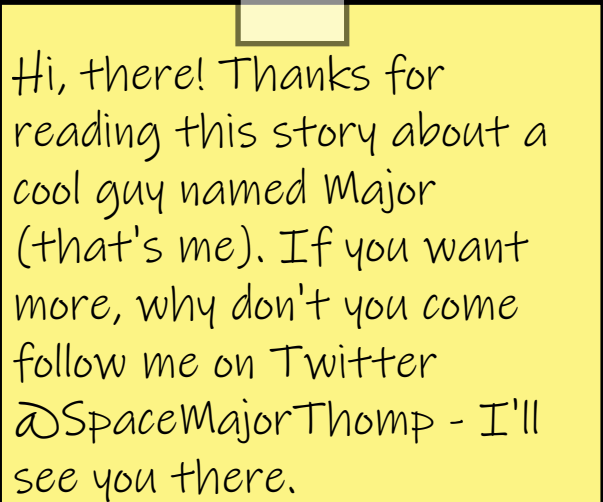
Thanks. Nice to have you back. Now, get to work, I guess.

Major and Cameron share a smirk from the hall.

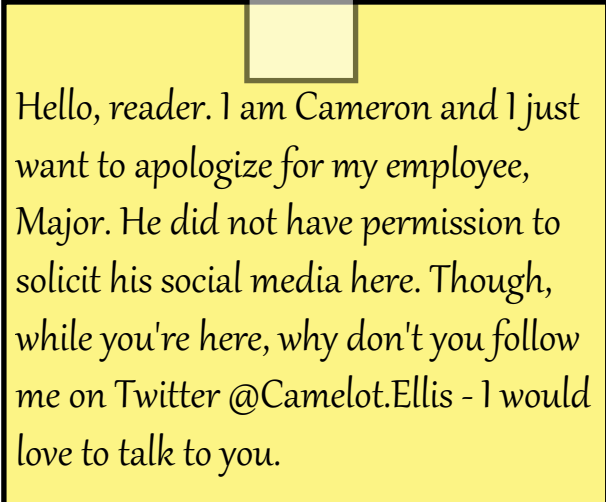
ANDY (O.S.)

Heads up!

Major turns and catches the flying cheese ball in his mouth. He shoots Cameron a thumbs up and runs out the hallway.



Hi, there! Thanks for reading this story about a cool guy named Major (that's me). If you want more, why don't you come follow me on Twitter @SpaceMajorThomp - I'll see you there.



Hello, reader. I am Cameron and I just want to apologize for my employee, Major. He did not have permission to solicit his social media here. Though, while you're here, why don't you follow me on Twitter @Camelot.Ellis - I would love to talk to you.