

WE LOVE CASTING SPELLS

Written by

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EXT. REN FAIR PICKLE STAND - DAY

Briny pickles sit eagerly in barrels inside the small tent that acts as a temporary pickle stand. REN FAIR ATTENDANTS are lined up waiting for their turn in line as others pass by to explore other aspects of the fair.

Behind the line, a cluster of picnic tables are set, giving fair-goers an opportunity to relax while enjoying their pickled treat.

MAX (20s) walks from the stand, with TWO PICKLES in hand. He approaches the tables to find a place to sit. He sees TONY (20s) sitting at a table waiting for him.

MAX  
(To the tune of *Sweet  
Caroline*)  
*It's Pickle Time!*  
BAH BAH BAH!  
*And I know it tastes so good!*

He uses the pickle as a microphone.

MAX (CONT'D)  
*So good! So good! So good!*

Max reaches Tony.

MAX (CONT'D)  
One pickle! Fresh from the vine.

TONY  
Did you get me the...

MAX  
Flaming Hot Horror? Of course.

TONY  
Nice!

Tony takes the pickle and bites into it. His face contorts, and he spits it out.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Dude, that's Garlic Galaxy.

MAX  
Sorry. This one's yours.

TONY  
(Laughing)  
Man, your breath is going to stink  
all day.

MAX

So? It's not like I'm gonna meet someone here.

TONY

Yeah, but I don't want to smell it all day. Just take this. A pre-game mint.

He hands Max a WEIRDLY WRAPPED CANDY. Max looks at it, then pops it in his mouth without a second thought. He slowly stops chewing, considers what he's eating for a second, then continues.

MAX

Tony, that wasn't a mint.

TONY

No, yeah, you're right. The mint's right here.

He pulls out a mint, and Max swallows.

TONY (CONT'D)

I think you just took my edible.

MAX

TONY! What the fuck!

TONY

I know, I was saving that for later.

MAX

No, Tony -- what? It's just that I've -- I've -- I've never done drugs before. My squeaky clean record is ruined!

TONY

Relax man. It's gonna be fine.

MAX

I'm a criminal now! I can hear the sirens coming to get me! Tony!

He grabs Tony and stares intensely into his eyes.

MAX (CONT'D)

You've got to hide me, man! I can't go to jail!

TONY

Relax. It was just a little weed,  
right? You'll be fine. Just sit and  
enjoy your pickle.

Max calms down slowly and starts nibbling on his Galaxy  
Garlic pickle.

TONY (CONT'D)

See? Everything's alright, I'm here  
for you, bud! It was just a little  
weed.

Tony pats his pockets.

TONY (CONT'D)

Or, it could have been just a  
little acid.

MAX

Oh no! Oh no!

He starts hyperventilating. His vision starts getting blurry.  
While Tony is talking, he is looking around at all the people  
around him. Shadows become long and sinister. Fare-goers turn  
and stare at him with long-distorted faces.

TONY

Nah, man, it'll be fun! Literally  
half our day is better with acid.  
We've got the clown show, the armor  
demonstration, and the jousting.  
Bro, it's going to be sick!

Tony continues, though Max isn't listening.

Right behind Tony, in a shady area, out of focus, Max sees a  
MAN IN A WIZARD COSTUME (70s) creeping up on YOUNG ADULT. Max  
focuses past Tony and watches as the man gets close enough to  
touch him.

The Wizard waves his hands and a massive bolt of magic shoots  
from them, enveloping the young adult. After the flash ends,  
he is gone.

TONY (CONT'D)

- and then we drop another one  
together during the after party.  
Max? Dude, are you okay?

MAX

Don't turn around, but there's an  
evil wizard behind you.

Tony turns around.

MAX (CONT'D)  
Dude! I said don't.

Behind Tony, the Wizard is just standing there innocently. He notices him staring. The Wizard waves at Tony. Tony waves back.

TONY  
That's an awesome costume, man!

WIZARD  
Why thank you! I made it myself! My nieces and nephews thought...

Tony turns back to Max. The Wizard continues talking.

TONY  
Max, that's just a nice old guy.  
I'm pretty sure he'd die if a breeze hit him the wrong way.

Tony reaches into one of his pockets.

TONY (CONT'D)  
I know it can be tough for your first time, so take this.

Tony hands Max a PLUSHIE RABBIT.

MAX  
What am I five?

TONY  
Trust me. If you freak out, just give that thing a squeeze. All your troubles will melt away.

MAX  
Whatever.

Tony takes a bite of his pickle. Max stares back ahead at the old man. He is gone. Tony notices his watch.

TONY  
Oh man! We're gonna be late to the show! Dude, come on.

Tony grabs Max and drags him away while Max continues looking for the wizard.

EXT. CLOWN SHOW AUDIENCE - DAY

Max and Tony are now seated in a small outdoor theater, on small metal bleachers. Around 20-30 others are there as well.

On the stage, a WOMAN IN A CLOWN COSTUME performs cringe-inducing and death-defying tricks like sword swallowing and stuff.

Max is jumpy, leaping, and audibly reacting to each movement of the clown.

TONY

Look, Max. I feel like 90% of this is all in your head.

MAX

That's what the drugs mess with Tony! My head!

TONY

You just need to relax! This isn't just about the drugs, man. You're always so tense all the time.

MAX

Being tense keeps people safe -- And the drugs don't help.

TONY

Were you on drugs last year when you called the firefighters because you saw smoke coming from the BBQ Tent?

MAX

No...

TONY

Or what about when you ran into the jousting arena because you thought they were actually going to execute the guy.

Max sits staring blankly ahead.

TONY (CONT'D)

Or what about when you were banned from the Cheese tent?

MAX

If you saw the Gouda from the same angle I did...

TONY

Max, I'm telling you this because you're my best friend. And because I accidentally drugged you today, but mainly the friend thing. You just need to let go. Enjoy the ride. You're in for a wild one today.

Tony sits back in his seat. Max is still on edge. Things are only getting worse. Suddenly, Tony's seat is a million miles away. Shadows grow all around him.

The Clown starts laughing like a demon, while huge demonic figures grow from her shadow. Fire starts erupting from the sides of the stage.

With everyone else focused on the show, Max's eyes begin to wander. He notices, back stage right, in a small angle only he can see, a Wizard approaches a STAGE HAND. After a flash of light the stage hand is gone.

Max starts breathing heavy. He looks away from the Wizard for a moment. When he looks back, the Wizard is staring at him. He jumps on his chair.

MAX

THERE'S AN EVIL WIZARD TRYING TO  
GET ME!

The clown stops. Everyone looks towards the Wizard in the wings. He waves.

WIZARD

Hello! Have you seen my Grandson?

Angry eyes stare back at Max.

EXT. ARMOR DEMONSTRATION TENT - DAY

Max and Tony stand in a small crowd in front of a tent. A LADY holds up and points to various pieces of armor.

ARMOR LADY

Now it would take a knight an incredible amount of time and effort just to get into...

TONY

I think you're the first person I've seen get a lifetime ban from the clown show.

Max's eyes are darting around.

MAX  
The wizards...

TONY  
Like you should see some of the things people do in those crowds. I guess they draw the line at messing with old people.

MAX  
Do you see them Tony?

TONY  
See what?

MAX  
The wizards!

We see the world from Max's view now. Shadow figures in the shape of wizards are everywhere in Max's eyes. They lurk ominously over Tony's shoulders.

TONY  
(Distorted and Muffled)  
What are you -- Max, let's get you some water.

He leads Max away from the demonstration.

MAX  
Wizards -- clown -- grandson!

As they leave, Max spots a wizard approaching the crowd.

MAX (CONT'D)  
No! Wiz -- Wizard!

The wizard turns to Max and shushes him before turning back to the crowd.

INT. REN FAIR BATHROOM - DAY

TONY  
Look, Max, I'm worried about you.

Tony is sitting in the corner of the empty bathroom while Max is staring into the mirror.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Giving you the drugs was an  
accident, but I thought they could  
be a chance to help you loosen up.

Max continues to absent-mindedly stare in the mirror.

TONY (CONT'D)  
I knew it was going to be hard on  
you -- after what happened with  
Chel, and...

Max briefly snaps out of his stupor.

MAX  
Why'd you have to bring that up?

TONY  
It's obviously still affecting you!  
You're so tense now, man. I know  
you were uptight before, but  
wizards -- taking over the Ren  
Fair?

MAX  
If I'm not keeping everything safe,  
something bad will happen again!

Max stares back at the mirror. His reflection is twisting  
into the shape of a wizard.

TONY  
I just want my buddy back.

He pauses.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Look, you should be coming down any  
minute now. I'm gonna go get you  
something to eat. Stay right here.

Tony leaves.

Max continues looking at the mirror. His image distorts even  
more and starts melting. A skull is left staring back at him.  
It speaks to him.

SKULL MAX  
You are going to die!

Max screams and runs out of the bathroom. The skull looks  
around for a second.

SKULL MAX (CONT'D)  
Was it something I said?

EXT. REN FAIR PICKLE STAND - NIGHT

Max returns to the pickle stand. What was once a bustling fair is now almost completely empty.

Max goes to lean over the pickle stand. Behind it, the Wizard stands. Max falls to the ground.

WIZARD  
Feeling a little tense, Max?

The wizard approaches

WIZARD (CONT'D)  
A little anxious?

Max scrambles backwards.

MAX  
What did you do with everyone?

WIZARD  
I was once like that, too. Always worried. Always anxious. Do you know what helps alleviate that pain? Power.

He reaches out his hands, and energy crackles from his fingertips.

WIZARD (CONT'D)  
With this power, there are no more worries. No more anxiety.

He approaches Max nearly in his face.

WIZARD (CONT'D)  
No more being tense.

He walks away.

MAX  
Why me?

WIZARD  
I suppose you reminded me of myself many years ago. Before the gift was shared to me. Back when I was weak.

MAX

I'm weak.

A beat.

MAX (CONT'D)

Where's Tony?

The wizard chuckles. He pulls back a curtain. Tony is sitting in a chair in a stupor. He is unresponsive.

MAX (CONT'D)

Tony!

Max runs up to him.

WIZARD

Magic demands a sacrifice. To obtain your powers, you must find what is closest to you -- and get rid of it.

MAX

So the others are --

WIZARD

Not yet, but when I need to recharge my abilities...

The wizard makes a killing gesture with his hands.

MAX

Tony! Man! Wake up!

The wizard approaches. A LARGE TWISTED DAGGER clatters to the ground.

WIZARD

Use this. Pierce his heart and shed your worries. Or don't. Then you can die with the others.

Max stares at the dagger. He starts hyperventilating. The wizard starts to tap his foot. The wizard sighs and starts channeling magic, pointing at Max.

WIZARD (CONT'D)

Pity. You would have made a great evil wizard.

Max is fully panicking now. He remembers something and reaches into his bag and produces the plushie. He holds it tight, and his breathing starts to calm.

MAX  
(Under His Breath)  
It really is nice.

The wizard notices the plushie and instantly stops casting his spell. All his bravado is gone.

WIZARD  
Dude, what is that?

MAX  
It's from Tony --

WIZARD  
I don't care where it's from. Get that freakin' thing away from me.

He fires a blast of magic at it. The plushie easily deflects it. He starts scrambling backwards.

MAX  
Why are you scared of a plushie?

WIZARD  
It's not the plushie! Can't you feel it? The love permeating from that thing?

Max moves closer with it.

WIZARD (CONT'D)  
It burns!

Max looks at the plushie and at the wizard. He shrugs and tosses it at the wizard.

WIZARD (CONT'D)  
Shit --

The moment the plushie touches the wizard's skin, he erupts into a ball of light. Max shields his eyes. It's impossible to see anything going on.

After the light fades, everyone who was originally at the Ren Fair has returned to their original places.

TONY  
Max? Is that you?

Tony starts to stand from his chair groggily.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Dude, did I fall asleep?

Max runs over and hugs him.

TONY (CONT'D)  
See? I told you the drugs would  
help you loosen up.

He pauses for a beat.

TONY (CONT'D)  
I -- I messed up big time today. I  
should have been more careful  
and...

MAX  
It's fine Tony. I even think the  
drugs helped me work through some  
issues.

TONY  
So you aren't mad?

MAX  
Nah, I'm still pissed. You owe me  
big time at the next fair.

TONY  
So this won't be the last one?

Max shakes his head.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Nice.

Tony checks his watch.

TONY (CONT'D)  
The after-party is starting soon.  
Want to go?

MAX  
You know, I don't really dance and -  
- yeah, let's go.

The two walk off away from the pickle stand. Tony pats at his  
pockets as they do. His voice trails off as they walk away.

TONY  
Dude, you aren't gonna believe  
this. My acid and weed candies are  
all here. I think you just had a  
piece of saltwater taffy. I don't  
think you --

THE END