

The Deuce

By

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OVER BLACK:

Muffled voices. A distant siren. An engine revs. Tires screech. Van doors slam.

The sound of a body being dragged over concrete.

A heavy door opens, then slams shut.

The sound and moans of someone being dragged over tiles, then a carpet. The dull thud of a punch. The moans stop.

FADE IN:

INT. ELEVATOR FOYER - NIGHT

Dimly lit, but plush, upmarket. The three MEN in it appear out of place.

JOEY pushes the call button several times. He's tall, twenty two, slim and almost always scowling. There's blood on his shirt and knuckles. He swears under his breath.

He turns to CHRISSY. Same age, but a lot heavier, a lot calmer. He's blond, nearly pretty. The type who could chew a toothpick without looking stupid.

Both he and Joey wear dark clothes.

Chrissy stands over an unconscious man in a heap at his feet.

He's forty, podgy, balding and in a dressing gown. Bruises on his face. Plastic cable ties bind his hands and feet. He's DOM. He has a slipper on one foot - the other is bare.

JOEY

Where is this fucking thing?

CHRISSY

Calm down man. It's on its way.

Chrissy is as calm as it gets.

Joey paces up and down. He glances at the elevator doors occasionally. Pushes the call button several more times.

CHRISSY

Make you feel better?

Joey replies with a sneer. He gestures to Dom on the floor.

JOEY

Is he supposed to be like that?

Chrissy frowns a little.

JOEY

Is he supposed to be awake or asleep?

Chrissy shrugs. Joey mimics him with menace.

JOEY

What the fuck's that? You look like a dimwit.

CHRISSY

Steady. Ain't exactly what you'd term asleep.

JOEY

Don't look at me like that. This is important. Listen, and don't do it again. Is he supposed to be awake or asleep?

The elevator arrives. Chrissy drags Dom by his collar into it with ease to dump him against the back wall.

Joey storms in after him.

INT. ELEVATOR

Chrissy inserts a keycard into a slot in the number pad. The doors close. Quiet musak plays. The number display increases.

JOEY

Gonna answer me or what?

A small sigh from Chrissy as he stares up at the ceiling.

CHRISSY

Don't matter. The job was just get him and bring him. No more to it.

JOEY

You sure? I thought he said something else. I mean are you absolutely sure?

Chrissy eyes him, like a parent disappointed with their child. A few moments pass. Chrissy exhales.

JOEY

You gonna answer me, or what?

CHRISSY

So wake him up.

Joey shows worry as he glances down to Dom.

JOEY

Maybe I shouldn't.

Chrissy shakes his head.

 CHRISSY
 You got a girlfriend?

 JOEY
 What's that got to do with
 anything?

Chrissy smirks. Joey fidgets with impatience. He looks at the number display - running through the twenties.

 JOEY
 Lordy. How slow's this thing?

Chrissy shrugs again. Joey tries hard to cover his annoyance.

 CHRISSY
 You wanna take the stairs?

Joey inspects his fingernails.

 JOEY
 What floor we going to?

 CHRISSY
 All the way.

Joey gestures for more.

 CHRISSY
 Eighty eight. Alright?

 JOEY
 Maybe I should wake him up.

 CHRISSY
 You can ravish him for all I care.

Joey looks disgusted.

 JOEY
 There's no need to be so, so base.

He kneels down beside Dom. Taps him on his face. Nothing happens - he taps him harder. He shakes his head. Stands up.

 JOEY
 Maybe I'll leave him.

 CHRISSY
 There's an idea.

A moan from Dom makes them both look at him. Joey goes to kneel down again but Chrissy grabs his arm.

 CHRISSY
 Leave him.

JOEY

Why?

CHRISSY

Just do it, Joey. For once, for me.

With reluctance Joey stands up straight.

The numbers stop on 40. Both Chrissy and Joey's eyes widen.

CHRISSY

It isn't supposed to...

A bell dings as the doors slide open. Chrissy pulls Joey close to him. Joey's eyes widen even more.

JOEY

What the hell are you doing?

CHRISSY

(whispers)

To cover him from...

But there's no one there. They both peek out into the foyer. Deserted, apart from a few chairs and a plant.

JOEY

What do you think?

CHRISSY

Must be a bug.

JOEY

What, like a fly?

CHRISSY

In the system, a software bug. God, you're like my grandma.

He pulls the keycard from his jacket and inserts it into the keypad. The doors slide to a close. The number display increases.

JOEY

There's no computers in elevators.

CHRISSY

Isn't there?

(pause)

They're in everything.

DOM

Where is this?

Dom opens his eyes. Chrissy and Joey both stare forward.

DOM
Why've you bound me? Hey, I'm
talking to you.

His voice is hoarse, pained. He gets no reaction from the two men with their backs to him.

He attempts to kick his feet at Joey - nearly manages it. Both Chrissy and Joey pull out guns with silencers. They let them hang at their sides.

JOEY
I knew we should have gagged him.

CHRISSY
Who's stopping you?

DOM
Oh gawd. I only want to know why
you've done this. Nothing else.

He eyes the floor display. It runs through the sixties.

JOEY
We're taking you to John Feltz.

Chrissy throws Joey a dirty glare. Dom frowns.

DOM
Who?

Chrissy and Joey exchange a puzzled look. They both turn to Dom with disbelief.

JOEY
You're pretending you've never
heard of John Feltz.

DOM
There's no pretending about it.

CHRISSY
He's messing with you.

JOEY
Maybe he's not.

Chrissy shakes his head. He holsters his gun. Joey does too.

JOEY
You're David Barry, right?

DOM
No. I'm Dominic Barry.

CHRISSY
He's lying.

JOEY
What if's he not?

DOM
I'm not.

CHRISSY
Shut it. You're The Deuce.

DOM
I don't even know what that is.

The numbers stop again on 70. The ding as the doors open.

CHRISSY
Not again.

This time Joey moves next to Chrissy without prompting. Nobody there again though. But there is a waste bin a few feet in front on the open doors.

CHRISSY
Weird.

He steps forward to scan around the foyer. A noise a few feet away alarms him - a metal clang.

He pulls his gun out, points it at Dom then looks to Joey.

CHRISSY
Watch him.

Chrissy rushes out.

JOEY
Where you going?

CHRISSY
Heard something. Stay here.

JOEY
Just ignore it.

CHRISSY
Exactly how you get popped. I'll be back in a minute.

Joey watches him disappear from view. He pulls his own gun out then glances at Dom, who tries to look as sympathetic as a puppy with a sore paw.

Another clang rings out, this time louder - closer.

Worry flashes across Joey's face.

JOEY
Oh fuck. Chrissy?

Another noise, but this time a loud thump - Joey jumps with alarm. Dom watches him head out of view.

He attempts to stand, but his bound limbs make it hard.

INT. FOYER

After a few tries Dom manages to stand up and hop towards the door. He pauses for breath once he's out of the elevator.

He hops like a wounded kangaroo toward a door. He crumples when he sees Chrissy come through it.

CHRISSY

Going for a little walk, were we?

He grabs one of Dom's arms and drags him back to the elevator. The doors close just before he gets there.

CHRISSY

Fuck. Did you do you that?

Dom shakes his head. Chrissy glances around. A loud clang sounds nearby.

CHRISSY

What is that? Joey?

DOM

What are you going to do?

CHRISSY

If you don't shut it I'm gonna cut your balls off.

He presses the call button several times.

DOM

Just like your missing friend.

CHRISSY

He ain't my friend. So you saw that, huh? Don't forget what I said about your balls.

Joey appears from a stairwell.

CHRISSY

Where the fuck have you been?

JOEY

I heard somethin'. You freaked me out with getting popped.

CHRISSY

You ever think that's exactly how you can get popped?

JOEY

Don't. Now you're just trying to confuse me. Where's the elevator gone?

Chrissy shrugs.

JOEY

I really wish you wouldn't. Did you find out if he's The Deuce?

DOM

I'm a real estate agent. I've no idea...

Chrissy pushes a finger against Dom's lips, much to his surprise.

CHRISSY

One more word and seriously no more balls for you. Fair warning.

Chrissy whispers in Joey's ear...

CHRISSY

He's The Deuce. We're gonna be in Feltz's office soon, right?

Joey nods. Ding. The elevator doors open.

INT. ELEVATOR

Chrissy pushes Dom in. Joey follows. Keycard in slot. Numbers increase.

Joey whispers to Chrissy...

JOEY

I'm still not sure -

Chrissy roars as he reaches into Joey's jacket, much to Joey's annoyance, and pulls out a crumpled photo to hold it beside Dom's head.

Chrissy pushes Joey with annoyance.

CHRISSY

I knew it. I knew I should have checked.

JOEY

Hey, you set the GPS. And he's the spit of the guy.

DOM

I'm the wrong guy, am I?

CHRISSY

Fuck's sake.

DOM

I am the wrong guy, aren't I?

JOEY

Does look a hell of a lot like him
though, don't he?

Both Chrissy and Joey turn and stare forward. Both adopt a calmness, a stillness. They glance at each other.

Both nod. They put their guns away. Joey slips on a knuckle duster. Both turn. They swing their fists at Dom's face.

FREEZE FRAME

Just before Joey and Chrissy's fists hit Dom's poor face.

CHRISSY (V.O.)

You'll be a Deuce soon.

FADE OUT.