

MISTAKES HAPPEN

Written by

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EXT PARK - DUSK

JEREMY, 12, in hoodie, plods to a swing-set in the middle of the park and sinks onto a swing.

He pulls an automatic pistol from his pocket and studies it, as if unfamiliar with it. In the half light, everything is indistinct.

A police cruiser, lights FLASHING, pulls to the curb not far away. Jeremy looks up to see two POLICEMEN pour out of the car.

EXT PARK - EARLIER

CLIFF, 40, in ratty, dirty clothes, a junkie who has failed at everything, stands with Jeremy in his hoodie. With a pat on the back, Cliff pushes Jeremy toward the swing-set.

EXT. PARK - DUSK

As the Policemen approach Jeremy, they notice his pistol and draw their weapons.

INT. CLIFF'S APARTMENT - EARLIER

The place of a loser-addict. Smoke, dirt, TV tuned to a mindless soap.

Jeremy, hood up, faces Cliff. Cliff hands the automatic pistol to Jeremy who tucks it into his pocket. Cliff grins and opens the door.

EXT. PARK - DUSK

The Policemen separate, each drawing a bead on Jeremy.

POLICEMAN 1  
DROP YOUR WEAPON!

INT. CLIFF'S APARTMENT - EARLIER

At the kitchen table, Cliff shoves a magazine into the butt of the automatic pistol. He jacks the slide and aims at

BRIANNA, 35, smoking, skinny, tattooed, the product of drugs and hard living.

BRIANNA  
What you doing?

CLIFF  
Scared?

BRIANNA  
Of what?

CLIFF  
I think you're scared.

BRIANNA  
You shouldn't do this.

CLIFF  
To score big, you got to think big.

He laughs and lowers the pistol.

EXT. PARK - DUSK

The Policemen stop, pistols aimed. Jeremy shifts the gun from hand to hand, not paying attention.

POLICEMAN 1  
DROP YOUR WEAPON NOW!

INT. CLIFF'S APARTMENT - EARLIER

At the kitchen table, Cliff carefully applies black electrical tape to the orange tip of the automatic pistol. Smoking and sipping beer, Brianna shakes as she watches.

BRIANNA  
It's all your fault anyway.

CLIFF  
My fault? I ain't the one who did heroin and vodka when the little fuck was cooking in the oven.

BRIANNA  
That ain't it, and you know it. Remember what you did? Remember why he popped out five weeks early?

CLIFF  
You sayin' you didn't deserve what you got?

BRIANNA  
I'm just sayin' it wasn't all my  
fault.

CLIFF  
You're as worthless as the dummy.  
Only, with luck, the dummy might  
make good.

He finishes taping the pistol and admires his handiwork.

EXT. PARK - DUSK

Jeremy looks up at the Policemen, his eyes vacant.

POLICEMAN 2  
SON, DON'T MAKE THIS WORSE THAN IT  
IS.

INT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - EARLIER

CLIFF, 40, stands at the gun counter as a CLERK hands over a  
BB pistol that looks like a real automatic.

CLERK  
The black Ops full metal, 1911  
Scorpion is one of the finest BB  
pistols in the world.

Cliff handles the pistol, feeling it, working the slide.

CLERK (CONT'D)  
Looks and feels like the real  
thing. There's blowback, a metal  
magazine, thumb and grip safeties,  
and that classic design. It's  
accurate too.

CLIFF  
Ammo?

CLERK  
Six millimeter BBs in a sixteen  
round magazine. And notice the  
orange tip of the barrel. There's  
no mistaking this pistol for the  
real thing.

EXT PARK - DUSK

The standoff continues. Jeremy's gun faces down. The Policemen paint his chest with red lasers.

POLICEMAN 2  
YOU DON'T WANT THIS TO END BADLY.

INT. CLIFF'S APARTMENT - EARLIER

Jeremy, without hoodie, pours milk onto his cereal as he watches cartoons on TV. Not paying attention, he overfills the bowl, and the milk spills onto the table.

CLIFF (O.S.)  
What the fuck are you doing?!

Jeremy looks up at Cliff and notices the spill. Fear fills his face as he puts down the milk and tries to corral the spill with his arms.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
Stupid fuck.

Cliff cuffs Jeremy across his head.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
You can't even pour milk.

Jeremy doesn't answer. He knows better. Cliff grabs Jeremy's hair and pushes his face into the milk.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
You think milk is cheap? Hell no,  
you can't think. Fucking idiot.

He lets up. Jeremy raises his milk-coated face. Cliff grabs a dish towel and throws it at Jeremy.

CLIFF (CONT'D)  
Clean up your fucking mess.

As Jeremy sops up the milk, Cliff changes the TV a news program where a NEWS BABE smiles.

NEWS BABE  
(on TV)  
The Mayor's Spokesperson verified that the city settled the Koogan's wrongful death suit for half a million dollars. This ends an ugly episode of police abuse.  
(MORE)

NEWS BABE (CONT'D)

The police officer who fired the  
fatal shot retired last year.

Cliff looks from News Babe to Jeremy.

EXT PARK - DUSK

Safe to one side, Cliff records the Police and Jeremy on his  
cell phone.

CLIFF

Come on, come on. Do it.

He sees the Policemen soften their stance, careful.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

No, fuck no.

Cliff, cell phone in hand, jogs toward the swing-set.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

A GUN! GUN!

Policeman 1 turns to Cliff.

POLICEMAN 1

STOP! STOP RIGHT THERE!

CLIFF

SHOOT! SHOOT! GUN!

POLICEMAN 1

DROP YOUR WEAPON!

Policeman 2 turns his head to the commotion.

CLIFF

SHOOT!

The WHOOSH of Jeremy's BB gun. Cliff stops and grabs his  
chest where the BB hit him.

CLIFF (CONT'D)

YOU LITTLE FUCK!

He points his phone at Jeremy.

BLAM

Cliff looks down as blood seeps between his fingers. He  
sinks to his knees.

POLICEMAN 1  
ON YOUR FACE NOW!

Policeman 1 moves toward Cliff who falls on his face. He lies still in death as Policeman 1 circles and kicks away Cliff's phone.

POLICEMAN 1 (CONT'D)  
What the fuck...shit.

On the swing, Jeremy tosses away the gun and smiles.

FADE OUT