

MAYA'S ORDER

Written by

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EXT. STREET - NIGHT

A grimy-looking street. Lined with various shops: Afro-Caribbean takeouts, betting venues, derelict social clubs. A CLUB PROMOTER stands in the middle of the street handing out leaflets to PASSERSBY.

CLUB PROMOTER

Traffic light party at the Honey Club tonight! Wear red if you're taken, yellow if you're undecided and green if you're single! I guarantee you will find true love tonight!

INT. CHICKEN AND CHIPS SHOP - NIGHT

The shop buzzes with CUSTOMERS, both young and old.

The EMPLOYEES, dressed in a hideous mustard-coloured uniform, work tirelessly to serve the hungry customers who bombard the counter. A LARGE WOMAN with a strong Latino accent does her best to explain exactly what she wants over the noise.

AARON, 17, hands an ELDERLY WOMAN her tray of food. He's cute, in a geeky sort of way.

The Elderly Woman moves away from the till making way for the next customer: AMELIA, 16. Plain and simple. She grins at Aaron, revealing her train-track braces. Amelia slides her braids over her shoulder in a poor attempt to look attractive.

AMELIA

Hi, Aaron! I didn't know you were working tonight! Sucks on a Friday night, what with school and that.

Aaron forces a smile. He looks up at the clock anxiously.

AARON

Uh, what can I-

AMELIA

All that homework too. How'd you manage? What Ms. Heath gave us for English today seems like it'll be tough-

AARON

Amelia. Eating in or taking out?

AMELIA

Eating in. Definitely.

AARON

What can I get you?

Amelia squints at the colourful menu of burgers, chips and kebabs. Standing behind her is a BURLY MAN with a retreating hairline. He folds his arms. Huffs impatiently.

AMELIA
I dunno. They all look the same
without my glasses.

Amelia points to her face.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Did you notice?

Aaron glances up at the clock. He's becoming more irritated by the second.

AARON
Sorry, Amelia, but I really need
you to order.

AMELIA
You suggest something.

AARON
The beef burger meal with small
chips and a drink of your choice is
the cheapest. If that helps.

Amelia smiles.

AMELIA
I'll go for that then. You're so
sma-

AARON
That's £2.50, Amelia.

Amelia looks hurt. She delves into her purse and brings out a handful of coins. Aaron looks miserably at her as she takes out one coin at a time, counting as she goes.

Aaron stares up at the slowly ticking clock.

Amelia holds out the coins to Aaron, who wastes no time to collect it. Their hands touch and Amelia holds on longer than normal.

Aaron pulls away.

AMELIA
Hope that's the right amount-

AARON
It's fine.

Aaron slides open the till. Dumps the coins in. Slams it shut and disappears into the kitchen.

Amelia sighs after him. Goopy-eyed. She reaches into her bag and pulls out a light pink card which reads: "AARON".

Aaron returns to the counter with Amelia's order in hand. Amelia makes a move to give him the card.

AMELIA

Aaron, I didn't get a chance to-

Aaron holds her tray out to her.

AARON

Enjoy. Next!

Amelia drops the card into her bag sadly. Reluctant to take her tray. She looks back at Aaron, who is now attending to the Burly Man.

Amelia sits at a table, closest to Aaron's till. She watches him as he mechanically carries out his order.

The shop doors open wide. In walks MAYA, 17, attractive, looks more like 21, with her friends, OLIVIA, 16, and SIENNA, 17. Heads turn their way as they glide past. Amelia throws them a dirty look.

Aaron's face immediately lights up as he spots Maya.

EMPLOYEE #1

Next please!

Maya is about to go over to the employee, when Aaron puts his hand up.

AARON

I've got this one!

He smiles proudly at Maya.

AARON (CONT'D)

Evening.

MAYA

Hey. You alright?

AARON

As alright as I can be on a Friday night in this place.

MAYA

True. God knows I'd hate myself if I had to work here. No offence to you or anything. Just me.

She grins at him.

MAYA (CONT'D)

I'll have a-

AARON
Double cheeseburger, medium fries,
Fanta, no ice.

Olivia and Sienna exchange looks.

MAYA
Right.

Maya is baffled.

AARON
What? You're here every Friday
night, usual time, usual order. You
keep us in business with your
weekly visits.

Olivia coughs, interrupting the pair.

AARON (CONT'D)
Sorry, what will you be having?

Aaron takes Olivia and Sienna's orders and their payment.

AARON (CONT'D)
I'll be right with you.

Maya turns her attention to her friends as Aaron leaves.

OLIVIA
So this is why you're in here every
Friday. Because of Greasy Fingers
back there?

Amelia scowls. How dare they call him that?

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
The boy knows your damn order when
Ricardo didn't even know your
favourite colour.

Sienna laughs.

MAYA
Don't be mean, man. He's cool.

Amelia scowls the more.

MAYA (CONT'D)
And no, I don't come here for him.
I come here because it's a Friday.
Ain't no one wanna be cooking on a
Friday night.

Aaron places drinks onto a tray.

MAYA (CONT'D)
Thanks.

Aaron disappears into the kitchen once more.

OLIVIA

Friday night. Valentine's Day and we're up in here like a sad group of old women when Aisha and them lot are partying. If you wanted cheering up then this ain't the way to go about it. I don't do all that sitting-down-drowning-your-sorrows shit. You get out there and you get yourself a new man. Show that fool of a boy what he's missing.

Maya scoffs.

MAYA

I ain't missing him! He's been on my case ever since begging me to get back with him, like that's ever going to happen.

Aaron returns and puts two bags of chips on the tray.

MAYA (CONT'D)

Boys are idiots.

Maya looks up at Aaron.

AARON

Two small chips for you two-

MAYA

Not you, of course.

AARON

Sorry?

MAYA

You're not an idiot.

Sienna raises her eyebrows at Aaron as he beams at Maya.

AARON

Good to know.

Aaron goes back to complete the order.

SIENNA

Seriously, what's with you two? I'm starting to think there's more to your weekly visits here, May.

OLIVIA

Now I get why you dumped Ricardo. You were doing the dirty on him with Greasy Fingers.

MAYA

Oh shut up.

Aaron carries Maya's order proudly.

AARON

And one medium for you-

He places the box down in front of Maya. Flashes a smile. All teeth on show.

Maya picks at her chips.

AARON (CONT'D)

Hold on a sec. You'll be needing ketchup with that.

Aaron bends down under his till.

OLIVIA

So when are you two gonna admit that you've been seeing each other this whole time?

MAYA

Seriously. Shush. You're both tripping. He ain't even my type. He's far from it.

Amelia smiles to herself. Pops a chip into her mouth. Silently pleased.

Aaron's face pokes up from behind the till. His smile has disappeared. He dumps a handful of ketchup, salt and napkins onto the tray.

AARON

(flatly)

Enjoy.

Maya leads the girls to an empty table next to Amelia.

Aaron turns his attention to his next customer. His face hard, his lips pressed together tightly. It is another OLD PERSON.

AARON (CONT'D)

Can I help?

INT. CHICKEN AND CHIPS SHOP - LATER

The shop is a little quieter now, with the odd customer ordering. Amelia sucks away on an empty drink carton, watching Aaron's every move. She pulls out the card and slips it onto her tray.

Aaron wipes down a few tables keeping a close eye on Maya who is still at the table with her friends. Maya slurps her drink, mocking being drunk.

MAYA

I am done with guys. Honestly.

She sighs.

SIENNA

Ricardo was fine, though. If it wasn't for the whole girl code thing, I'd have tapped that.

MAYA

Sienna!

OLIVIA

She does have a point. Ricardo is fine. Half god, half human.

MAYA

You're just concentrating on looks. He's a dick deep down. It was only ever about sex with him. Serious. I'll be like, let's watch a movie, he'll be like 'does it have sex in it?'

Amelia winces as the conversation goes on.

MAYA (CONT'D)

I'd want to walk in the park on a nice summer's day and he'd ask, 'why, do you want to do it in the park?' I swear there was never a conversation we had that sex wasn't involved somehow.

OLIVIA

Why are you so surprised? Do you think he wants to sit and talk about his future with you? Boys are physical, Maya. It's all they know.

SIENNA

It's all they want to know.

MAYA

Exactly. One of these days, it'll be nice to have a guy who would love to just talk, rather than grind on me all night at some sleazy club and take me home afterwards. Is that too much to ask?

Olivia and Sienna look at each other. Then back at Maya.

OLIVIA
Course it is. Guys like that don't exist.

SIENNA
Not round here, anyway.

Olivia takes a sip from her drink.

OLIVIA
I still say, we go out tonight. The night is young, and, as much fun as it was talking about all this heartfelt stuff, I would much rather be in a club.

Olivia gets to her feet.

OLIVIA (CONT'D)
You coming or what?

Sienna shrugs her shoulders at Maya apologetically.

MAYA
Fine.

The girls pick up their belongings and head for the door.

Amelia gets up from her seat and goes towards Aaron. This is her moment.

Maya smiles at him as she walks past.

MAYA (CONT'D)
See you around.

Aaron drops the cleaning cloth on the table.

AARON
Wait a minute!

Aaron races to the till, ignoring any sort of health and safety measures. Ignoring Amelia. He reappears a few seconds later, straightening up a rumpled hot red envelope. He holds it out to Maya, who reaches out for it confused as to what it is.

Amelia's face crumples. She stands awkwardly in the background.

AARON (CONT'D)
Sorry about the-

Aaron gestures wildly to the wrinkled card.

Maya tears it open. Olivia and Sienna giggle behind her.

AARON (CONT'D)
I know I'm just 'Greasy Fingers' -

Olivia stops laughing. Looks away, embarrassed.

AARON (CONT'D)
And not your type-I believe 'far
from it' were your exact words...

Maya looks over the card.

AARON (CONT'D)
But for what it's worth, I think
you are amazing. You're pretty,
funny, kind and sweet-

Maya shuts the card slowly and looks up at Aaron. He shifts uncomfortably on the spot.

AARON (CONT'D)
Any guy would be lucky to have you.
I hope that you find one who will
treat you right and give you the
love and care you deserve.

He smiles at her.

AARON (CONT'D)
Happy Valentine's Day.

Maya tiptoes slightly and plants a soft kiss on Aaron's cheek.

MAYA
See you next Friday?

Aaron's mouth drops open. Shocked.

Maya and her friends leave giggling amongst themselves.

Amelia flings her card at a nearby bin. Unknown to her she misses completely.

Aaron stands rooted to the spot. Unable to process what has just happened. Amelia rushes past him.

AARON
Hey, Amelia, have a good night!

EXT. CHICKEN AND CHIPS SHOP - NIGHT

An upset Amelia pauses and stares into the window.

Aaron walks back to the till. He spots the scrunched up envelope on the floor and picks it up. Amelia is confused. Didn't she put it in the bin? She clutches onto her bag as she watches Aaron turn the card over. Hopeful.

Aaron opens the card. He scans through its contents at what seems to be lightning speed. He closes the card. Holds it for a few seconds. Then...

He slots it into the bin and walks off with a spring in his step.

AMELIA

Dick!

Amelia storms off down the road. She waves the annoying Club Promoter out of her face as he offers her a leaflet.

THE END.

Michelle Brown was born in London, England to Nigerian migrants. As a child she filled countless notebooks with stories and later decided to pursue a career in writing. Michelle is particularly interested in writing for young people and Nigerian audiences.