

UNO

Written by

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INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

The paediatric ward is empty except for two teenagers. Ewan (14, gaunt and skinny) lies in bed, playing cards with Jimmy (15, clearly healthier) who sits in a chair by Ewan's bed.

Jimmy takes a sip from a cup of water, pausing for effect.

Ewan hangs on his every word.

JIMMY

Spank it everywhere, mate. It'll hit a ton in third. Every lunch we used to go round and get orders from all the year elevens, then me and Angela- you know Angela...

Jimmy indicates large breasts. Ewan grins.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

We'd spank it up to McDonald's in ten minutes flat. Pick everything up, spank it back. Made stacks, bro. But this one time I was coming down the A28, right, and the L.A.P.D. started flashing the blues and twos behind me.

EWAN

Did you spank it?

JIMMY

Not a fuckin' amateur, mate. I pull over, right, and just as he comes to my door I get all panicked, like 'Ahh, you gotta help me, my girlfriend's havin' a baby! I gotta get to the hospital!'

Ewan looks awestruck.

Another sip. Another pause.

EWAN

And?!

JIMMY

He shits himself. Gave me a personal escort right up to door. Just sat in the hospital and waited for him to do one.

EWAN

They never found out?

JIMMY

Nah! Police ain't too smart, Ewan.

Jimmy places his cards down on top of Ewan's and knocks over his cup of water as Steve (16) enters.

Steve carries a backpack and looks sullen.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Oi oi! What you doin' here?

Steve ignores him.

He crosses the room and dumps his bag on an empty bed. He starts unpacking.

EWAN

Hi, Steve.

STEVE

Alright?

EWAN

Yeah.

JIMMY

They kick you out when they found out your balls haven't dropped yet? Or did you start pissing the bed again?

STEVE

Fuck off.

JIMMY

Only bants. Only Banter Clause. Only the Archbishop of Banterbury-

STEVE

Fuck off!

JIMMY

Here, Steve, sort this out. You know, like, when you die, your face freezes?

STEVE

What?

JIMMY

Like, when you die the face you pull is frozen on and that's your face forever.

STEVE

No.

JIMMY

We've been practising. Tell us
whose is better.

Jimmy motions at Ewan.

Ewan folds his arms across his chest and smiles, peacefully.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Nah, you want more like...

Jimmy clamps his arms to his side and gurns like a moron.

STEVE

Such a pleb.

JIMMY

How very dare you?

STEVE

Sorry. You're a Plebasaurus-Rex.
Bants.

JIMMY

Fine. If that's the way you wanna
play it, you won't be getting your
present.

EWAN

Aww, come on, Jim!

STEVE

What present?

EWAN

Let him see, go on!

Jimmy pretends to consider the request.

He moves to his bedside drawer, rummages around in the bottom
and pulls out a soggy, flaccid cannabis joint. It's a pretty
sorry sight.

STEVE

What the fuck is that?

EWAN

He knicked it!

STEVE

From who?

JIMMY

Can't tell you, mate. A dealer never reveals his secrets.

EWAN

No, you never reveal your secrets.

JIMMY

Good lad.

STEVE

This is a joke, right? You're not putting that inside you?

JIMMY

I never joke. Even about what's been inside you. And calm down, it's just gear.

EWAN

Just gear, man.

STEVE

It's illegal.

JIMMY

What's the worst that could happen?

STEVE

You could die.

Beat.

JIMMY

Good thing I'm in a hospital then.

STEVE

Fuck this, do what you want.

Steve gets into bed, connects his IV drip and turns away from them.

Jimmy lights the joint and takes an elaborate drag. He tries and fails to blow smoke rings, then hands the joint to Ewan.

Ewan takes a drag and coughs. Jimmy smiles knowingly and takes the joint back.

A few tokes later...

JIMMY

Would you rather have, like, an arm coming out of your forehead, or a leg for a tail?

EWAN

How big is my tail leg? Can I call it my teg?

JIMMY

Call it what you want, mate, but it's fucking massive. You have to get special trousers made, but on the plus side, you can sleep standing up. I suppose the arm would be good for if you got in a fight. Ahhh, this one time, right, me and Mars Bar- you know Mars Bar, the guy who ate three hundred Mars Bars in an hour and then had to have his stomach pumped and now he can only eat lettuce- we were down the White Lion and this big bloke come up to us and-

EWAN

How big?

JIMMY

What?

EWAN

How big was he?

JIMMY

You know Andre the Giant?

EWAN

Mmm.

JIMMY

Bigger.

EWAN

Woah.

JIMMY

Yep. Anyway, so I was... wait, what was I...

EWAN

D'you think there's a Ewan the Giant?

JIMMY

Nah, before that, what was it?

EWAN

Something about lemons?

JIMMY

Oh yeah. So me and my mate Stig-
you know Stig, the one who used to
race Formula 1 cars but gave it up
to go into his Dad's used lighter
sales business- me and Stig ate
fifty lemons and then the next day
all of our hair went yellow.

EWAN

Serious?

JIMMY

No lie.

Steve turns to face them.

Enough is enough.

STEVE

Bull shit.

JIMMY

I'm tellin' ya.

STEVE

So you ate fifty lemons and your
hair instantly went yellow.

JIMMY

Nah, it took a few hours.

STEVE

Course.

EWAN

Does anyone wanna play cards?

STEVE

You're so full of shit!

JIMMY

Don't hate, man.

STEVE

And stop fucking talking like that!
You're not some L.A. gangster.

JIMMY

Word.

EWAN

Or we could play Uno?

STEVE

I'm trying to fucking sleep!

Steve turns away from them and pulls his blanket over his head.

Jimmy catches Ewan's eye and sneaks over to Steve's bed. He tips some of the weed from the joint into Steve's IV bag.

Ewan giggles.

Jimmy throws him a warning look, but it's too late- Steve has noticed.

Jimmy throws himself against the wall.

STEVE (CONT'D)

What you doing?

JIMMY

Stretching.

Jimmy raises a solitary arm into the air.

STEVE

D'you know how much shit you'll get in when they find out about this?

JIMMY

They won't find out.

EWAN

Yeah, they won't find out.

STEVE

It's bad enough you doing it, but forcing him...

Steve's speech starts to slur.

STEVE (CONT'D)

I thought you had some fucking sense.

A grin creeps over Steve's face before he catches himself.

STEVE (CONT'D)

What the fuck have you done?

JIMMY

Nothing.

EWAN

Ain't done nothing!

Steve rips his IV from his arm and walks towards Ewan's bed.

He notices the crumbled cannabis in his IV.

STEVE

This is bullshit! Why'd you do that? You fucking asshole, you fucking twat!

JIMMY

Why are you speaking in rhymes? You're not an L.A. rapper, bro.

EWAN

Not a rapper, bro.

STEVE

I'm not rhyming, I don't know how. I'll stop rhyming, I'll stop it now.

Steve looks horrified. He has no control over this. It's Christmas come early for Ewan and Jimmy.

JIMMY

Steve, what's the food like in the adult ward?

STEVE

(Raps)

It's amazing, tantalising, ridiculous, incredible. Everything you see and hear and smell is surely edible. The shit they throw together here is so bland, but upstairs every single meal is pre-planned. You eat five times a day to keep up your weight. And they serve it to you on a proper china plate. None of those stupid paper cups, they're a calamity. I think they use them here to preserve familiarity. They treat the kids like dogs, it's a travesty, when we're all just the same in this vicinity-

EWAN

That doesn't rhyme.

Steve breaks out of the trance.

STEVE

Oh yeah. What is that stuff?

JIMMY

Never reveal your sources.

EWAN

Never reveal your sources.

JIMMY

Good lad. Right, would you rather talk like Terminator or Barry Scott for the rest of your life?

STEVE

Who?

JIMMY

What is actually wrong with you? Are you mental? He's the Cilit Bang guy. Always talks like he's being probed, like-

(Impersonates Barry Scott)

- 'Hi, I'm Barry Scott, buy this cleaning shit 'cause if you don't a big man follows me round with a glove on one hand and a weird look in his eye.'

STEVE

(Sarcastically)

Tough choice.

EWAN

Mmm. You met him, Jim?

JIMMY

Yeah, I was giving some business classes up London with Dingo- you know Dingo, he's the one who lived with wolves until he was fourteen and then got recruited by the army to teach the SAS combat skills- and he come up to us and started begging me to flog his shit. I said, 'Baz, you wanna know the secret to success?'. He says 'yeah', I says 'Don't sell the shit. Let the shit sell you'. Boom.

EWAN

Woah.

STEVE

You don't actually believe any of this do you?

EWAN

Jim's well good with stuff like this.

JIMMY

True dat.

STEVE

Stop fucking doing that! Dat is a bunch of bollocks.

JIMMY

No it ain't!

EWAN

It ain't!

STEVE

I don't know how you do it, you don't even have your MA in Bullshit Studies.

JIMMY

Is that like General Studies?

EWAN

I'm sure Jim could go to uni if he wanted to.

STEVE

Oh my god you've got to stop listening to him!

JIMMY

As if!

STEVE

He's turning into a mini version of you, he can't even think for himself any more!

JIMMY

Bollocks.

EWAN

Yeah, bollocks.

Beat.

JIMMY

All right, Ewan, what do you wanna do?

EWAN

We could have a sword fight?

STEVE

What are we, six?

EWAN

I never had one.

STEVE

Sure you had much better things to do when you were six.

EWAN

I was here.

JIMMY

Okay, here we go...

Jimmy picks up two used rolls of wrapping paper. He tosses one to Ewan who prepares to attack him from his bed.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Wait, what you doing? You can't kill me if your sword doesn't have a name. I'm pretty sure that's illegal, actually.

STEVE

Erm...

JIMMY

Mine's Excalibur. What's yours called?

EWAN

Um, Mildred.

Jimmy shrugs and begins to play-fight with Ewan.

Steve watches as Jimmy dances around Ewan's bed, Ewan's face alive with childlike glee.

Steve's expression softens.

Jimmy lets Ewan stab him and makes a meal of dying on the floor.

Steve takes a pack of Uno cards from his backpack and deals them into three piles on Ewan's bedside table.

Jimmy gets up, turns on the TV (Disney's Frozen is playing) and sits on Ewan's bed to play Uno.

Steve and Jimmy seem to be letting Ewan win.

EWAN (CONT'D)

Uno!

JIMMY

In France, it's actually pronounced you-know.

EWAN

(To Steve)

Really?

STEVE

Er, sometimes, yeah.

EWAN

You-know!

JIMMY

He knows.

Steve gestures to the TV.

STEVE

I can't stand this shite.

JIMMY

Ah, thank you!

EWAN

It's not that bad.

STEVE

(Sings)

Do you wanna build a snowman? No I fucking don't, leave me alone.

Ewan's eyelids start to droop.

JIMMY

This bloke come up to me once and tried to sell me a snowman.

STEVE

Did you batter him?

JIMMY

Yeah, I battered him.

Ewan is all but asleep now.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Good shit, right?

Steve offers half a smile.

EWAN
I like music.

JIMMY
Thanks for contributing, big man.

EWAN
But I don't get it. How can you be
not not knocking on heaven's door?

STEVE
You'll have to ask the other big
man.

EWAN
Won't be long.

JIMMY
What?

EWAN
Six...

STEVE
Years?

Ewan shakes his head, no.

JIMMY
Six months?

Ewan shakes his head again.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
It's not my brain. It's my balls.

STEVE
Must be all the shagging.

Beat.

STEVE (CONT'D)
You know...

JIMMY
You know...

EWAN
Yeah, I know.