

The Day Mac Quit

A monologue

By Darren Canady

CHARACTERS

MAC, m, 35+. Black.

SETTING

An office.

MAC. A tweedy, bow-tied, Striver's
Row-Bronzeville-Buckhead-used-to-
support-Bill-Cosby type of Negro.

MAC

I do not...care for her. If one is telling the truth.

I do not find her music...palatable.

Yes, fine, if one must listen to the music of...*The
Now...she is fine enough, I suppose. If you have to - turn
on one of these streaming services and - and - and suffer
THE ASSAULT of your ears of these...meaningless beats that
seem to just bop and bounce and bedoodle with no
discernible trend towards innovation or experimentation -
then fine, yes, I suppose you can give her a moment of your
time.*

And let us - while we are discussing this - acknowledge the
rabidness of her fans. These - these - these CREATURES who
take any mere critique or criticism or note as if it were a
cardinal sin. THE WOMAN IS AN ACTUAL HUMAN - I am unaware
of any canonization efforts, yet they seem so hellbent on
acting as if every single note she releases from her throat
will put her at the right hand of the Holy Father and that -
I assure you IS NOT THE CASE!

As long as we're telling the truth: I long ago gave up my
membership in The Acceptable Negroes of America
Association. When I didn't love her little group or her
mother's - frankly - tacky little fashions or her - hmph -
"acting" career, it was made clear to me that I was persona
non grata at any social function my friends had planned.
Fine, welcome to the hill that I will die upon!

Ach. This is starting to sound personal. Which it is not.
Again: I do not...care for her.
No more.
No less.

And so it's - it's completely --
it's inexplicable
I cannot explain it
It is a madness
It has no reason - except
...except...

I'm trying to pinpoint the moment...

Maybe it was the zoom call with my sales team bosses
 Maybe it was the starting five minutes late
 Maybe it was the fifteen minutes of talk about pensions and
 cruises and Mediterranean summers and Alaskan adventures
 Maybe it was realizing I am not making enough to do a
 special date night at Red Lobster

Or no

no

No

Maybe it was in the store
 Maybe it was my mask tight around my face
 Maybe it was the people eyeing me like a mahogany alien
 Maybe it was them
 the people
 the public
 the customers
 sweating and breathing and aspirating and releasing moist
 hot particulates in to the air while I tried to close a
 sale behind my safety scrap of fabric.

Or no

no

No

NO

it was the email
 it was the Happy Juneteenth email
 it was the Happy Juneteenth email from the Equity and
 Belonging Coordinating Team
 with the special Down Home Deal Discounts to participating
 fine dining establishments like Applebee's and Red Robin
 and Olive Garden

That's what did it

We start to hear the opening loop
 of Beyonce's "Break My Soul"

Then I heard it.

Down the hall.

Marlena.

Marlena the paralegal.

Marlena the paralegal from the Third Ward
 Marlena the paralegal from the Third Ward who told me she
 knows Megan, A Stallion. Or someone like that.
 Marlena is playing it

"I just quit my job"
 "I just quit my job"
 "I just quit my job"

I never talk to Marlena.
 She comes in at 8
 leaves at 4:30
 She minds her business
 They do not see her
 So I pretend not to see her
 But I see everything she does
 And I know she sees me
 And we do the dance of knowing I think I'm too good for her
 and she hates my bourgie Black gay shit
 and it has been like this for three years
 and I was thinking it would stay this way

and I hear Marlena say:
 "And fuck these Happy Juneteenth Down Home Deals!"
 And I holler back
 "Hell yes!"

And she steps out her door
 And I step out my door
 And the thump thump thump from her office stereo
 is bump bump bumping in to the hallway
 And I catch her eye
 And the beat catches me
 and the voices boom
 And the zoom has exhausted me
 And I have to head back to the sales floor
 And fuck those Down Home Deals
 And the music from Marlena's office is soothing my soul
 soothing my soul
 soothing my soul

Fuck these Happy Juneteenth Down Home Deals, I say
 Fuck the Equity and Belonging Coordinating Committee, she
 says
 Fuck this place, I say
 Fuck. This.

Place, Poindexter!, she says

And Big Freedia on the track saying

Release ya anger

Release ya mind

Release ya job

Release ya time

Release

Release

Release!

Release!!

RELEASE!!!!

A long beat of throbbing music.

Then--

Sudden silence

Hold

MAC

And that's how Beyoncé made me quit my job.