

The Day Mac Quit

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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.