

HOME COOKED

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

The newsroom is alive with activity. JAMES BROWNING (30's) is sitting at his desk, feet up and eating an over the top decorated cream bun.

Everyone else around him is working, whilst it appears he's on some kind of never ending break.

ABBY (50's) comes marching over to him, obviously disgusted with how he's presenting himself.

She slaps his feet off the desk, he almost drops his half eaten cream bun onto the floor.

JAMES
(annoyed)
Excuse me?

ABBY
(sharp)
I've got a writing assessment for you. Get off your arse and hop to it.

JAMES
I only review Michelin stars. And I've reviewed every one in the country. I've collected enough stars to be a certified astronaut.

ABBY
Save your wisecracks for your review.

JAMES
What review?

ABBY
There's this cute little town about three hours from here. It's called Rosehaven.

JAMES
Hate it.

She frowns, pushing on regardless.

ABBY
And in this town is a bakery.

JAMES

Every town has one.

ABBY

Where a ninety year old woman works.

JAMES

You know, there's a retirement age for a reason. Once people hit seventy they become practically useless. It's a fact.

ABBY

And she's just won a highly prestigious award.

JAMES

And what's her prize? A full week of sitting on the comfiest chair in the retirement home?

ABBY

A hundred thousand pounds actually.

JAMES

(surprised)
Really?

ABBY

Best pie in the country.

JAMES

Pie?

ABBY

(nodding)
Cherry pie.

JAMES

A hundred thousand pounds for a cherry pie? I smell horseshit.

ABBY

No, you're going to be smelling cherry pies. Because you're going to be interviewing her.

JAMES

Pass. And not just a regular pass. A hard pass.

ABBY

You WILL do this interview. And you do it well. Or you're fired.

He leaps out of his chair.

JAMES

You can't be serious.

ABBY

Oh, I am. And don't forget. She's ninety years old, so I would leave it too long to get it done.

Abby then turns and leaves. James is left in a state of stunned silence.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING ELEVATOR - DAY

James leans against the wall of the elevator as it goes from the top floor all the way down to ground level.

BILLY, (20's) in a smart suit holds both hands to his mouth, trying to suppress his laughter.

JAMES

(shoots him a glare)
This isn't funny.

Billy lowers his hands as he busts out laughing.

BILLY

A pie eating contest?

JAMES

It's not a pie eating contest.

BILLY

Then what is it?

JAMES

She won a pie contest of some kind.

BILLY

Well, you're going to have to try it.

JAMES

No.

BILLY

Then how are you going to write a review?

JAMES

I'll lie.

BILLY

That's dishonest.

JAMES

All the best journalists are dishonest.

BILLY

I'm not.

JAMES

And that's why you'll never be one of the best.

BILLY

You've got to try the pie. You're a food critic for god's sake.

The elevator doors open with a loud PING! They step out together.

JAMES

All home-cooked food is trash.

BILLY

Wow.

JAMES

And don't even think about trying to prove me wrong, because I'm right.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

A modest house on a quiet suburban street.

James waits at the front door, notebook and pen at the ready. The door finally opens and he's met by NATALIE, (20's) with a flour stained apron on.

NATALIE

(smiling)

Hi, you're the reporter?

He nods.

JAMES

Yeah, but you're not ninety years old.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

But if you are, you've got to tell me your skincare routine. Because it's fantastic.

NATALIE

(chuckles)

I'm her granddaughter. Come in.

INT. COZY LIVING ROOM - DAY

James sits in the middle of a stiff floral couch. He looks uncomfortable. Gripping a tight hold of his notebook and pen.

Natalie enters, carrying a small plastic tray with a slice of fresh cherry pie. It looks delicious.

NATALIE

Here you go.

She tries to place the tray on his lap but he refuses it.

JAMES

No.

She's taken aback

NATALIE

It's for you.

He stands up.

JAMES

I just need to get this interview over with, then I can go back home.

NATALIE

(a deep frown)

Try the pie.

JAMES

Your grandmother...

NATALIE

She's resting.

JAMES

It's not even noon.

NATALIE

She's ninety.

JAMES

Is she even still alive?

NATALIE

Choose your next words very carefully.

JAMES

If I don't get this interview I'm fired. And I like my job. I get paid to eat amazing food and write about it.

NATALIE

Then eat the pie.

JAMES

I don't want to.

NATALIE

Why?

JAMES

I already know you're going to take this the wrong way, so I'm not even going to bother asking you not to.

NATALIE

What?

JAMES

It's home cooked food.

NATALIE

What about it?

JAMES

It's trash.

NATALIE

I think you should leave.

JAMES

You see, I knew you were going to take it the wrong way.

NATALIE

I want you out of this house.

JAMES

Not before my interview.

He shoves past her, exits out of the front room.

INT. STAIRCASE - DAY

James marches up the staircase, Natalie chases after him.

NATALIE

I want you out of the house.

JAMES

Not before my interview.

NATALIE

You want me to call the police?

JAMES

As long as I get my interview first, you can call whoever the hell you like.

NATALIE

You're insane.

JAMES

I just want to get paid to eat in fancy restaurants. What's crazy about that?

INT. GRANDMA'S BEDROOM - DAY

GRANDMA, (90) dressed in her nightgown is sitting on the edge of her bed, waiting.

Suddenly her bedroom door is flung open and both James and Natalie burst inside.

GRANDMA

You know, I could hear you all the way downstairs. I'm in here trying to take a nap.

NATALIE

I tried to stop him.

JAMES

(to grandma)

All I want is a couple pictures, and to ask you a couple dumb questions and I'll be gone.

Grandma nods.

GRANDMA

I know.
(to Natalie)
Go get a slice.

Natalie, without hesitation turns on her heels and heads back downstairs.

JAMES

I'm sorry, but I don't want any pie.

GRANDMA

What are your questions?

JAMES

(shrugs)
What's it feel like winning first place?

GRANDMA

What's another question?

James opens up his notebook, flipping through the pages to his notes.

JAMES

How long have you baked?

GRANDMA

Another one.

JAMES

What advice would you give to someone just starting out?

GRANDMA

Give me another.

James snaps the notebook closed.

JAMES

(to grandma)
You get the gist. You want to answer them? Because then I get to leave.

Natalie returns with the tray, the slice of cherry pie still there.

GRANDMA

Try the pie.

JAMES

Really?

GRANDMA

My one and only condition.

James takes the plate. Natalie gives him a fork. James takes a bite. The moment the pie hits his tongue, his emotions overwhelm him. His face crumples and before he knows what's happening to him, tears are streaming down his face.

JAMES

(shocked)

I'm so sorry.

GRANDMA

It's OK.

JAMES

I don't know what I'm crying about.

NATALIE

Everyone does. It's alright.

JAMES

But why? What is this? How have you made this?

GRANDMA

Are you ready for a real interview?

He takes another bite, then another. And before he knows it the whole slice is gone.

JAMES

I don't understand.

GRANDMA

Well, I think I'm ready to give away some secrets. Get your pen ready.

James holds his pen and notebook ready. Excited to write down whatever she's about to tell him.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END