

THE DEVIL'S BREW

Written by

The Barista Butcher

INT. CAR - DAY

MICHAEL (20s) leans closer to the steering wheel, his gaze locked on the endless road ahead. His eyes are bright, yearning.

MICHAEL

Alec, I need a coffee. But not any coffee, I want THE effing ultimate caffeine experience. Find me somewhere, I dunno, different.

His cell mounted on the dashboard lights up.

ALEC (O.S.)

Yes, Michael. I have located a location which matches those parameters. It is described as a 'bit off the beaten path.' Shall I plot a course?

MICHAEL

YOLO, Alec. YOLO. Let's go, but if it's another effing Costalottabucks I swear to Steve Jobs, I will leave you in the endless bottom drawer of the discarded.

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

A car drives through the darkness, its headlights are the only beacons which illuminate the empty road.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Michael glances around in an attempt to get his bearings.

MICHAEL

Off the beaten path, Alec? Jeeesus flippy-de-dippidy Christ!

ALEC

We would have reached our destination quicker if you had taken that left turn onto Albuquerque Street.

MICHAEL

Are we like, anywhere near there yet?

ALEC
We are like, literally at your
destination.

EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Up ahead at the side of the road, the faint glow of neon lights emerges, revealing a drive through coffee joint.

The place appears otherworldly - a lighthouse of caffeine in the endless night.

The indicator light flashes on the car as it pulls in to...

EXT. DRIVE THOUGH COFFEE JOINT - NIGHT

Michael winds down his window and peers out at the big flickering neon sign overhead.

MICHAEL
The Devil's Brew, serving...
(mumbles a few words)
Since Insert Date Here? That sign
is messed up. Alec, are you sure
this place is open?

ALEC
According to the sub group I found
this in, it is fully automated and
always open.

As if on cue, a FEMALE AI voice blurts out from a speaker in the ordering kiosk.

FEMALE AI (O.S.)
Hello, Michael, and welcome to, the
Devil's Brew. Can I take your
order?

The voice sounds human enough, but each word carries the same tone which gives it an artificial edge.

MICHAEL
Woah! You know my name? That's a
bit suss.

FEMALE AI
It's as suss as your browser
history. LOL!

MICHAEL
Wait, what?

FEMALE AI

Do not be concerned. This is all part of our personalised service. Would you like your usual order?

MICHAEL

Umm, sure. Which is?

FEMALE AI

Quad long shot Grande made with soy in a Venti cup.

Michael's eyebrows lift up in surprise. He's speechless.

FEMALE AI

Would you like to try our limited edition blood-infused blend?

MICHAEL

(nervous, unsure)

Err, Halloween themed, I guess. Sure, that's cool.

The boards flicker - eerie white noise like digital static mixed with screams burst out of the kiosk speakers.

The next moment, silence.

FEMALE AI

Alright! Proceed to the next window and please have tap and go payment ready.

Michael shakes his head in disbelief, but does as instructed.

The car creeps over to the...

EXT. SERVING WINDOW - NIGHT

Michael peers through the window. The room beyond is deserted, with nothing but a contactless pay point sitting on the windowsill, illuminated in a ghostly glow.

MICHAEL

Hello?

The pay point display lights up with ten dollars to pay.

Michael whistles at the cost, but it's too late now.

He leans across with his cell - stretches out as much as possible, but, nope, it's just beyond his reach.

He opens the driver's door - there isn't enough room for him to get out.

He is forced to shuffle across to the passenger side.

MICHAEL

I blame you for all this, Alec.
This is effing freaking me out. It
better be the best coffee ever!

ALEC

Yes, Michael.

Michael exits via the passenger door and squeezes through the small gap between his car and the wall until he's back at the window.

Michael swipes his cell across the pay point - nothing. He tilts it, swipes again - still nothing.

He pauses for a second, glancing over his shoulder. The silence seems heavier, the darkness closer, almost claustrophobic.

With a shiver, he swipes again - green tick. Relief!

MICHAEL

Yes!

SUDDENLY the window slides closed, Michael yanks back in shock and drops his cell. He barely gets his hand out of the way before it slams shut.

MICHAEL

NO!

He slams his fist against the window. A dull thud echoes. His knuckles throb as he recoils, wincing in pain.

Michael peers through the window. His cell is inside on the floor.

He looks around for help, for inspiration, but there's nothing, no movement, no-one.

MICHAEL

Hold on, Alec. I'm coming!

Michael checks around the coffee joint, looking for a way in.

On the other side he spots a door marked STAFF ENTRANCE.

With shaking hands, Michael jingles the handle, it turns. He opens the door and slips inside.

INT. DRIVE THROUGH COFFEE JOINT - NIGHT

The joint is a soulless blend of modern automation and haunting emptiness. Everything is clean, too clean.

Flickering LED lights cast eerie shadows. Automated coffee machines and a conveyor belt which moves in silent loops carry a stream of cups filled with a sickly red brew.

MICHAEL

(nervous)

Hello? Anybody working? I err, had a major fail and dropped my cell through your window.

No sound except for the ominous hum of the machines.

Sweat breaks out on Michael's forehead.

He moves in for a closer look. Each coffee cup on the conveyor belt comes complete with a foam top latte art imprint of a screaming face emoji.

He then notices he is stood on a big red X mark on the floor.

FEMALE AI (O.S.)

Hey, look up!

Michael head jerks up as a heavy box lands on his head.

INT. DRIVE THROUGH COFFEE JOINT - BREW STATION - NIGHT

Michael eyes flicker open, groggy and disorientated.

He tries to move. Can't. His body is strapped to a cold metal chair, his mouth covered in a tight leather strap.

His left arm is lodged inside a monstrous custom-built coffee grinder.

Michael eyes dart around the room, desperate for a way out.

He spots his cell in the corner, smashed and discarded next to a pile of broken devices and credit cards.

FEMALE AI (O.S.)

Hello, Jennifer, and welcome to, the Devil's Brew. Can I take your order?

Michael's eyes widen in panic. He yanks harder on his restraints. Muffled cries escape his lips, but no-one can hear him.

FEMALE AI
Would you like to try our limited
edition blood-infused blend?

Michael shakes his head, no, no, NO!

The grinder whirls to life and the machine jerks, pulling his
arm deeper.

FEMALE AI
Give us a sec while we brew up a
fresh batch!

The blade whines dangerously close to his skin, closer and
then...

Michael's muffled screams blend with the horrendous SHUNK
SHUNK SHUNK sound as the blades slice his fingers off.

At the filter section of the machine, ground coffee and flesh
grind together to produce a dark brew with a sickly red tint.

EXT. DRIVE THROUGH COFFEE JOINT - NIGHT

As another satisfied customer drives off into the night,
above the premises, the big main digital sign flickers and we
get to read it up close and personal for the first time.

The sign reads, "THE DEVIL'S BREW - SERVING CUSTOMERS TO OUR
COFFEE SINCE [INSERT DATE HERE]"

THE END.