

The Chosen One

By

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INT. OFFICE CUBICLE - DAY

DAN, a white collar cubicle drone, is sitting at his cubicle typing away on a tedious task on his computer. Dan's boss, JAMESON, pops up at the cubicle entrance. Dan continues to type.

JAMESON

Dan, hey, how's it going? Did you get my email?

DAN

Um, yes. Yes Mr. Jameson, I got your emails. All three of --

JAMESON

Good. Excellent. So, I'll expect those reports by noon then. That's a good trooper.

Dan spins around in his chair to face Jameson, who's already heading to the next cubicle.

DAN

Well, I'm already covering for Bob and--uh.

Dan leans back deep in his chair, defeated.

DAN (CONT'D)

Dammit.

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY

Dan drags himself down the hall towards the men's restroom. On his way he passes an attractive young intern, KIM. Dan smiles but she doesn't notice. Dan wanders into the men's restroom and parks himself in front of the urinal as two fellow coworkers walk out.

Shortly after Dan starts using the urinal, the lights flicker and buzz. Dan gives the lights a good hard look as he finishes his business. He casually washes his hands and leaves the restroom.

INT. TRASHED OFFICE HALLWAY

Dan exits the restroom and stops. He's in the same hallway he was in only a moment ago, but now it looks like a post-apocalyptic wasteland. Many of the lights are destroyed or without power, trashcans are on fire, loose papers are

blowing everywhere, cubicles are trashed, and there's not a soul in sight. The only signs of life are faint screams in the distance.

DAN  
What the fuck...

Dan slowly walks down the hallway back towards his cubicle.

DAN  
Hello? John? Alice? Mr. Jameson?  
What the fuck's going on? Where the  
hell--

A pack of ravenous coworkers appear at the far end of the hallway. They pause, see Dan, and charge en masse. Dan hesitates, then begins running. He turns a corner and is blocked by debris. A pair of hands grabs him and pulls him to safety into a cubicle. The horde flies by, overshooting their prey.

INT. MAKESHIFT CUBICLE FORTRESS

Dan recoils from his mysterious savior and spins around. A small group of white collar refugees are huddled together in a corner of a makeshift cubicle hut. The blanket ceiling is too low for anyone to stand. A few paces from the group are his saviors, MIKE and ALICE.

DAN  
Alice? Mike? Is that you guys? What  
the shit was that? What the hell--

MIKE  
Shhh.

DAN  
(whispering)  
What the hell was that?

MIKE  
Your, your name is Dan, right?

DAN  
Of course it's Dan. Mike, we  
carpooled this morning. What's  
going on?

MIKE  
This morning. Seems like 3 hours  
ago...so so long ago...

ALICE

The corporate network. It went down!

DAN

So what? It's just an outage. It was fine 60 seconds ago.

MIKE

72 seconds. 72 SECONDS!! No network, no email. No email. No work. No work, no direction. No direction, no law. No law, chaos. Shear, unfettered chaos! People couldn't access their files on the network. They couldn't even check their stock quotes.

ALICE

I couldn't check my facebook. Oh God! My facebook!

Mike shakes Alice to get her to snap out of it.

MIKE

Hold it together Alice!

Mike returns his attention to Dan.

MIKE

Some people couldn't handle it. They've gone rogue.

DAN

No kidding.

Mike points towards the small group of refugees huddled around the glow of a smartphone.

MIKE

We lucked out and found a smartphone that gets one bar if you stand in that corner. But it's only one bar. We have to ration the internet as well as the coffee. Both won't last...and we all know it.

DAN

Um.

ALICE  
The prophecy!

MIKE  
There's been talk Dan. Prophecy of  
'the chosen one'. Someone so  
apathetic to his job that he, and  
only he, can quest to the server  
room.

REFUGEES  
(whispers in unison)  
...the server room...

MIKE  
I believe that man is you Dan. Dan  
the man.

DAN  
Mike, I told you never to call me  
that.

MIKE  
You are the chosen one who will  
bring us back our email! Here, arm  
yourself with this stapler!

Mike shoves the stapler into Dan's hands.

DAN  
Um, OK. I'm going to go, to this  
'server room'

REFUGEES  
(whispers in unison)  
...the server room...

DAN  
And I'll talk to IT or whoever's  
there. And then I'm going to get  
back to work, 'cause I am not  
working another weekend. OK?

REFUGEES  
Bless you! Bless you sir!

ALICE  
Be swift brave knight!

MIKE  
You must traverse the thieves  
hallway, navigate the cubicle  
swamp, ascend the tower stairwell,  
(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)

go past the jammed dragon, and push forward to the server room. But be warned! The Dark Wizard guards the room with a mighty fury.

DAN

Right, so, upstairs across from Jameson's office, just past the copy machine?

Puzzled looks all around.

DAN

Got it.

INT. TRASHED OFFICE HALLWAY

Dan saunters out into the trashed hallway, stapler at the ready.

DAN

I chose the wrong week to stop drinking coffee...

He hears the horde in the distance behind him and scurries up the stairwell just as the horde passes.

Dan ascends the staircase, passing over papers, post it notes, and a variety of other office supplies. The further up the stairwell, the darker it gets. Flickers of light from the busted lights provide moments of clarity

As Dan arrives at the top of the stairwell, he catches a collapsing COWORKER. The coworker is covered in black ink and paper cuts.

COWORKER

...beware...the....dragon.....

The coworker collapses and rolls down the stairwell. Dan returns his attention to the dark second floor. He can see the door to the server room on the opposite end of the floor. The area nearest him is dark. The fluorescent lights flicker, briefly illuminating the hallway. Dan treads slowly into the darkness.

Something large moves behind Dan in a white blur. Dan spins around wildly, stapler ready to strike. Something moves to Dan's left, cutting his cheek. He spins, trying to catch it in motion. There's nothing there. Another blur, this time to his other side, and a cut to his hand.

DAN

Ah! Dammit!

Dan takes a look at the cut on his hand. It's a papercut. He stands motionless, waiting for his hidden assailant to strike again. Sensing a presence behind him, Dan slowly turns around to face his opponent. There, in the middle of the hallway directly in his way, is a bulky white copy machine. The lights flicker, and the copy machine is gone.

The lights flicker again. Dan takes a swing and misses, only to get another papercut on his cheek. The lights flicker again and Dan takes a cut on his arm. Another flicker and Dan spots the power chord plugged into the wall. Dan makes a run for it. Dan is tackled by the copy machine and he struggles to keep the feeder tray away from his face. Dan stretches with one arm to reach the chord, but his fingers are inches short. He stretches to his last, but still can't reach the chord. The printer sprays black ink into his face. Dan turns his face to avoid it. He spots a stack of slightly wrinkled blank paper within arms reach. Dan grabs the papers and crams them into the printer feeder tray. The printer ingests the wrinkled papers and dies. The only sign of life is the user display flashing 'Paper Jam'. Dan rolls the printer off him, gets up, and picks up his stapler. Dan stares at the server room at the end of the hall.

Dan wipes his face and begins slowly walking to the server room. Dan, back against the wall, jiggles the server room door handle. It's locked.

Dan looks at the office across the hall. He see's Jameson's nameplate on the wall next to the door. Inside the office is a pair of keys, floating in the air above the desk and illuminated by a desk lamp.

Dan inches towards Jameson's office and quietly creeps to the desk. He reaches for the keys and discovers they're dangling from the ceiling with a fishing line.

DAN

Ha! I knew it! Dark Wizard my --

JAMESON

Looking for these Dan!

Jameson, dressed in a cloak made of post-it notes and holding a lamp as a scepter, dangles the keys tauntingly. Dan looks back at the keys above the desk and they're gone.

DAN

Whuh? How?

JAMESON  
So YOU are the chosen one!

DAN  
Ah, come on! Just give me the keys  
Jameson.

JAMESON  
Be a good trooper Dan --

Jameson points the scepter at Dan.

JAMESON (CONT'D)  
-- and bow before your Dark Wizard  
or I'll kill the princess!

DAN  
The what?

Jameson points to Kim, the intern from earlier, who is tied to an office chair with computer cables and scotch tape.

Jameson points his scepter at Dan again.

JAMESON  
And I still want those reports by  
noon!

DAN  
OK, you know what? Now you've gone  
too far.

Dan throws the stapler at Jameson with all his might.

Jameson catches the stapler with one hand. Jameson looks at the stapler before tossing it aside like a child's toy.

JAMESON  
You'll have to do better than that,  
chosen one.

DAN  
Shit.

Jameson takes a swing at Dan with the scepter. Dan rolls, grabs the stapler, and sprints to a nearby row of cubicles.

JAMESON  
Ha ha ha ha! You're no match for  
me, Dan!

## INT. LABRYINTH

Once inside, it's apparent it's a cubicle labyrinth. A maze of seemingly endless gray fabric walls. Dan spins around wildly trying to get his bearings. Dan rounds a corner, but Jameson is already there. Dan runs away and rounds another corner directly into Jameson. This time receiving a blow from the scepter as payment for a wrong turn. Dan runs frantically through the cubicle labyrinth as Jameson laughs maniacally. Dan turns another corner and another hit from the scepter. Clutching his chest and gasping for air, Dan retreats to a dark side room.

## INT. DRAGON'S LAIR

Hunched over, Dan tries to catch his breath. The lights flicker on. Dan slowly stands up and takes a cautious step back. The room is filled with small copy machines; each one in 'sleep mode'.

Dan backs up against the wall and glances at the door.

## JAMESON

Dan? Oh Dan? You know this will negatively affect your end of year evaluation!

Dan can see Jameson's shadow approaching. Dan looks at the wall next to him and see's a generic corporate America 'Teamwork!' framed poster. The poster has a picture of someone throwing a frisbee. As Jameson enters the room, Dan pulls the poster from the wall and throws it like a frisbee at Jameson. As Jameson dodges the poster Dan rolls, and in one swift move he grabs the keys off Jameson's belt and staples Jameson's cloak to the floor with a series of clicks. The copy machines awaken, each one switching from 'sleep', to 'warming up mode'. Dan sprints out of the room as Jameson struggles to get his cape free.

## INT. TRASHED OFFICE HALLWAY

Dan runs out of the labyrinth as Jameson's screams are drowned out by the sound of copy machines collating.

Dan unties Kim and she throws her arms around him, followed by a passionate kiss.

## KIM

Oh, thank you chosen one!

DAN  
Oh uh...I mean, hell yeah!

Dan watches as Kim unexpectedly turns and skips away.

DAN (CONT'D)  
OK...guess I'll see you later?

Dan strolls to the server room and unlocks the door.

INT. SERVER ROOM

Dan enters the server room and the door closes behind him. He scans the room. It's a dark, clean room filled with rows and rows of humming servers. Dan spots an unplugged Ethernet cable in the corner. Dan wanders over and kneels by it.

DAN  
Well, here goes nothin'.

Dan puts down the stapler and plugs the cable back in. Nothing happens.

DAN (CONT'D)  
Hmm.

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY

Dan walks out of the server room and back out into the hallway, stapler still in hand. He stops and takes in the moment. Everything is back to normal. Employees are walking around tending to their daily business, the hallway is well lit, and there's not a scrap of evidence that any of the previous events occurred. Dan glances over at the copy machine. It looks every bit the everyday ordinary copy machine it is. Dan looks over at the cubicle labyrinth. It too looks like hum drum ordinary cubicles.

Kim walks by with a stack of papers in her arms. Dan stands in her way.

DAN  
Hey! Kim, right?

KIM  
Um, yes. Do I know you?

DAN  
I uh...

Jameson walks up to Kim and smiles at her. She smiles back.

KIM  
Hi Mr. Jameson!

Jameson parks himself right next to Kim, well within her comfort zone. She doesn't recoil.

JAMESON  
Dan! Don't you have some reports to work on?

DAN  
Right...I uh...network was down.

JAMESON  
That it was. But, everything appears to be back to normal now. So, be a good trooper now and get back to it.

Dan takes a good hard look at the stapler still in his hand.

DAN  
Of course...I...just.....forgot something in the server room.

Dan darts back into the server room.

JAMESON  
Hmm. Server room? What could you have possibly --

INT. SERVER ROOM

Dan dives to the cable and unplugs it.