

Stranger Than Fiction #2

ANA

(pause)
Hi.

HAROLD

(pause)
Hi.

ANA

(pause)
Everyone's gone.

HAROLD

(pause)
I know.

ANA

(pause)
I made too much batter so I'm baking
off some cookies.

HAROLD

(pause. looks around.)
Where did all the other food go?

ANA

Well, we try to only make what we
think we'll sell. The small amount
left over we give to the shelter up
the street.

HAROLD

Ah... well... goodnight.

He goes to leave. She looks after him.

ANA

Want a cookie?

Harold stops, and thinks, but he's given up.

HAROLD

Uh... No.

ANA

Come on. They're warm and gooey,
fresh out of the oven...

HAROLD

No. I don't like cookies.

ANA

You don't like cookies?

HAROLD

No.

ANA

(pause)
What the fuck is wrong with you?

(CONTINUED)

HAROLD

I... I don't...

ANA

Everybody likes cookies.

HAROLD

I just--

ANA

After a really awful, no good day, didn't your mother ever give you milk and cookies?

HAROLD

No. My mother couldn't bake. All the cookies I ever had were store bought.

ANA

What about birthday cakes?

HAROLD

Store bought.

ANA

Breakfast muffins?

HAROLD

Store bought. Frozen. Thawed in the oven.

ANA

Bake sale brownies?

HAROLD

Private school. No bake sales.

ANA

(pause. sincerely)
That's probably what turned you into an evil government drone.

HAROLD

No. Actually, I was kidnapped by gypsy accountants as a teenager.

She laughs.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Really. A nomadic tribe of abacus builders.

It's that same laugh. The wonderful, human, loving one from the bus.

Suddenly she stops and looks at him. They stare at each other for a moment.

Her lips part.

His fingers twitch.

(CONTINUED)

Harold's watch looks on (anxiously).

The pad of paper reveals their lopsided fate: comedy 7, tragedy 114.

Harold's watch waits. Then...

ANA
(ordering)
Okay. Sit down.

HAROLD
Listen, I should be...

ANA
No. Sit down.

He sits on a stool across the butcher block from her. She goes to a cupboard and pulls out a glass and a plate. She goes to the refrigerator and pulls out a bottle of milk, then pours some into the glass. She brings the glass and plate over to the block, places a single cookie on the plate and places the plate in front of Harold.

HAROLD
Thank you. I...

ANA
Eat the cookie.

HAROLD
I really--

ANA
Eat the cookie.

HAROLD
Ms. Pascal--

ANA
(sweetly)
It was a really awful, no good day. I know. I made sure of it. So pick up the cookie, dip it in the goddamn milk and eat the fucking thing.

She slides the plate closer to him.

He cautiously takes a cookie, dunks it and bites into it. His eyes light up, his shoulders relax, he breathes.

HAROLD
Wow... that's... that's a... really good cookie.

Once again she suddenly stops and looks at him. They stare at each other for a moment.

Her lips part.

His fingers twitch.

(CONTINUED)