

THE METHOD MAN

written by

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INT-NEWS ROOM-DAY

Intertainment opening Graphics

News reporter talks over video footage of John King on the red carpet showing off his new method acting device that is attached to his forehead. The footage fades away while a still image of the attachment remains in the corner of the screen.

KRISTINE MURPHY

That was Oscar award winning actor John King showing off his new toy on the red carpet. King has gone under an experimental procedure where he installed a device into his head to make his roles, as Mr King quoted, "more realistic." When turned on, the device convinces King that he truly is the character he is portraying.

The poster for Chase Danger: Man of Action appears on screen.

KRISTINE MURPHY (CONT'D)

John King will be testing out this device on the set of Chase Danger: Man of Action. King has spent so much time in character the question on everyone's mind is what he is really like.

Int-Dressing Room-Day

Romona Page and John King are arguing in Johns's dressing room. John as Chase Danger. His costume consists of camo gear and combat boots.

ROMONA

You're such an asshole

Ramona is holding a contract firmly in her hands. John is pacing back and forth.

JOHN

I'm the asshole? You're the one abandoning me mid-production.

Romona rolls her eyes.

ROMONA

I'm not abandoning you, John. This gig is the only chance I to make it as a screenwriter.

(MORE)

ROMONA (CONT'D)
If I'm not in London by next
Tuesday, then I can kiss my dreams
goodbye and I'd be stuck as your
stupid P.A forever.

John stops in his tracks and blankly stares at Romona. He snatches the contract off her, slams it on the table, and points at the fine print.

JOHN
Well according to this you're
signed on to be my stupid P.A until
the end of production, which
terminates in a month, not next
Tuesday.

The director walks into the dressing room and interrupts the pair.

DIRECTOR
Hey Johnny, the boys are coming to
carry you on set in five so it
might be a good time to switch on
and wake up my star.

The director exits. John avoids eye contact with Romona as he walks across the room. He sits down in his chair, grabs a remote from the side table, and looks up at Romona.

JOHN
As your manager, I can't let you
leave.

Romona looks back at her old friend.

ROMONA
As your friend you should let me
go.

John pulls the remote up to his forehead. He touches off the implant.

JOHN
Friends don't pay each other's
wages.

John presses a button on the remote, his implant lights up and he falls asleep. Romona roles hers eyes back and marches out slamming the door behind her.

CUT TO BLACK

INT-EVIL LAIR-NIGHT

Chase Danger Man of Action wakes up in a dark villainous laboratory. He is tied to a chair. His nemesis Dr Nightshade walks towards him. Dr Nightshade is dressed like an evil scientist.

DR NIGHTSHADE

Wakey Wakey Mr Danger. Did you think that you'd get past my guards unnoticed?

Chase grunts as he struggles in the chair. Dr Nightshade paces the floor.

DR NIGHTSHADE (CONT'D)

I've waited years for this. For my moment to strike revenge on Chase Danger. The man who killed my wife!

Dr Nightshade comes face to face with Chase. Chase breaks free from the restraints.

CHASE

Take this Dr Nightshade!

Dr Nightshade squints and tilts his head.

DR NIGHTSHADE

Huh?

Int-Craft Services-Day

Romona butters a roll at the craft services table. A thud and a shout can be heard from the sound stage. John under the control of the implant runs out the sound stage.

JOHN

You'll never get me Dr Nightshade.

John runs out of the front door. The director and Rupert, the actor playing Dr nightshade exit the sound door stage. Rupert is holding his jaw and moaning in pain. They walk over to Romona

DIRECTOR

I need you and Rupert to chase after John. We're already four days behind schedule and I can't have our star going missing. Especially when we have the canal blocked off for the stunt this afternoon.

Romona puts her plate down on the table.

ROMONA

How are we supposed to find him? He could've gone anywhere.

The director hands Romona a tracking device. That shows John's location on a map with a little red dot.

THE DIRECTOR

You thought the studio would finance John's little experiment without installing a tracker?

Romona takes the device.

THE DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Now go and save this movie!!!

The tracker's red dot is flashing and moving. John is on the move.

EXT-FORREST-DAY

John slows down and stops running. He takes in his surroundings. He looks up at the sky and surveys the land around him. He takes out his handheld recorder.

JOHN

Chase Danger Mission log A-15-13-C.
I have escaped Dr Nightshade's laboratory and am making my way towards the escape point.

John takes out a prop compass that doesn't work and walks in a circle. He stops and reads the compass.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I better head west. Bishop told me to meet him by the bridge that's where I'll make my escape.

John's implant light starts to flicker. He sees flashes of light and distorted imagery, a ball, a man, and a pair of boots. John crouches down and regains his composure. He puts his compose back in his pocket. The light stops blinking and goes back to normal. John looks ahead and lifts the handheld recorder to his mouth.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I better get going, over and out.

John heads toward what he believes is the direction of the west.

EXT-THE FOREST-DAY

Romona and Rupert run through the forest following John on the tracker. Rupert being unfit trails behind Romona breathing heavily. Romona stops and looks at the tracker. Rupert catches up to Romona and collapses on the ground.

RUPERT

You'd think that the studio could afford to get personal trainers for the whole cast.

Romona ignores Rupert's joke and analyses the tracker's screen. Rupert stops panting, picks up a stone, and throws it at a tree.

RUPERT (CONT'D)

John doesn't even need a trainer that guy is built like a horse.

Romona laughs, walks over to Rupert, and offers him her hand. Rupert grabs her hand, and she pulls him up onto his feet.

ROMONA

Unfortunately, this horse has escaped the stables. I think he's gone this way.

Rupert grins and dusts himself off. The pair start walking in John's direction.

RUPERT

Oh wow, nice wordplay. Have you ever considered a career in writing?

Romona glances away and shrugs.

RUPERT (CONT'D)

Oh, so that's what you and John were fighting about earlier?

Romona stalls, turns her head, and raises her eyebrows at Rupert.

ROMONA

Wait, wait, wait how did you know that John and I fought?

Rupert who is now ahead of Romona reaches his arm out, flicks his wrist, and pouts.

RUPERT

As a master of the screen and stage, I can discover your true emotions through a simple glance at your body language.

Romona raises her eyebrows amazed at Rupert's talent. Rupert drops the thespian pose.

RUPERT (CONT'D)

I'm just kidding, my dressing room is beside John's.

Romona rolls her eyes and shakes her head at Rupert. They follow the tracker's directions. Romona stops and sighs.

ROMONA

I'm just sick of being his assistant, his little sidekick. Even when he's in character I'm always second to him. I've been his sous chef, his nurse, and now I'm his private.

Romona starts to tear up.

ROMONA (CONT'D)

To be honest I can't remember the last time we talked as friends. When we were kids, it was so different. I'd write these little plays and John would help me bring them to life. We were a team, we promised each other that we would always be a team. I guess Hollywood had other plans.

Rupert's smile turns to a frown. Romona wipes her eyes and takes a deep breath.

ROMONA (CONT'D)

Dwelling on the past won't find us a movie star. We better keep going.

Romona and Rupert head west, following the tracker.

EXT-FORREST TREES-DAY

John jumps over logs and dodges plants. He is light on his feet and focused on his surroundings. He reaches for his handheld recorder and lifts it to his mouth.

JOHN
Chase Danger Mission log A-15-13-D.
I'm getting closer to the
rendezvous point. I'm yet to face
anymore of Dr Nightshades goons but
I will remain cautious.

Johns implant light starts to flicker.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Nevertheless, I will remain caut...

John is stopped mid-sentence by the flashing lights. The image becomes clearer.

INT-CAR-EVENING

A seventeen-year-old John is in the car with his dad. He is wearing a soccer kit and boots. They sit in silence. Young John stares down at his boots.

YOUNG JOHN
Why didn't I get played Dad?

John's father stares out the front window. He doesn't make eye contact with his son.

JOHN'S DAD
You mustn't be good enough.

The white light fades back in. This statement echoes in John's head.

EXT-FORREST-DAY

John's implant returns to normal. John lies on the ground breathing heavily.

EXT-FORREST DAY

Romona and Rupert follow John's trail. They check their watches. They're running out of time.

RUPERT
I think I get why he got that implant.

ROMONA
You do?

RUPERT

Honestly, yes. The ability to completely embody a character is an actor's dream. I barely know what Dr Nightshade eats for breakfast.

Rupert gestures to his lap coat.

ROMONA

Would you risk your life for it though?

Rupert sighs and shrugs.

RUPERT

I think I would've at the start of my career. I think the reason this profession is so popular is that you get to try on thousands of personalities, vastly different from your own. You spend very little time with the fool behind the mask.

Romona nods. A nearby bush begins rustling. The pair stops walking and looks at each other. They sneak up to the bush. They see John lying on the ground. Rupert yields Romona and whispers.

RUPERT (CONT'D)

I better stay back here.

Rupert points at his bruised chin

RUPERT (CONT'D)

Just in case.

Romona approaches John. John turns his head sharply and gazes at Romona.

John

Private what are you doing out in the woods?

Romona looks over to Rupert who is hiding behind a tree. He holds his hand up to his face, gesturing to put on a mask. Romona closes her eyes and takes a deep breath.

ROMONA

Sergeant Danger I was sent out to find you. We need to head back to base.

John squints his eyes and shakes his head.

JOHN

Private that's where I'm headed.
I'm meeting Bishop at the vantage
point.

Romona cringes and continues. She points in the direction of the production studio.

ROMONA

No sergeant we need to go back that way.

Rupert who has been listening in, leans closer to the pair. He loses his balance and steps on a twig. This sound catches John attention. John sharply turns around and spots Rupert. He stiffens up and gets into his fighting position. John looks back and forth between Romona and Rupert.

JOHN

Oh, I see what's going on here.

John spots the cannal in the distance.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I don't have time for this.

John runs towards the bridge. Romona and Rupert run after him. John climbs up on the railing, he spots a man fishing down the river. He yells and waves down to him.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Bishop! I'm here what's the escape plan?

The man ignores John. Romona catches up to John and stops at the railings. She grabs his leg.

ROMONA

Please get down!

John looks down at Romona and tries to shake his leg loose.

JOHN

I can't believe you betrayed me
Private.

Romona tightens her grip.

ROMONA

I'm not betraying you, it's just
time I went on my adventure. You're
Chase Danger Man of Action you
don't need a silly little private
following you around all the time.

Johns's implant starts to flash. He looks out onto the river. John knows he shouldn't jump but the implant is telling him to complete the stunt.

JOHN
You're not my silly little private
you're my friend.

John dives off the railings. Romona gasps, climbs the rails, and follows him down.

INT-EMBANKMENT-DAY

Romona pulls John ashore. They are both drenched in water and coughing. Romona lies down beside John. John turns to Romona. The implant light is flashing faintly.

JOHN
Thanks for jumping in after me.

Romona looks back at John.

ROMONA
Anytime Sergeant

The implant light shorts out. Chase Danger is no more. John looks down at his reflection in the water.

JOHN
Romona, I'm sorry.

John looks at Romona.

JOHN (CONT'D)
I haven't just been an awful boss,
worst of all, I've been a terrible
friend.

RAMONA
Yeah, you have.

Ramona takes a breath

RAMONA (CONT'D)
I've been blaming you for my failed
writing career, but the truth is,
I've been scared to go out on my
own.

John puts his hand on her shoulder

JOHN

I can't believe you've stayed by my side all these years. It's my turn to help you now.

Rupert rushes over to the scene.

RUPERT

Are you two all right?

ROMONA

We're all good.

Romona stands up and offers her hand to John.

JOHN

Ah, what this the doctor is going to save us now

John gets up and walks over to Rupert holding up his clenched hand in a fist. Rupert prepares himself to get punched, but John hugs him instead.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Got you.

John and Ramona start's laughing, and Rupert eventually does to. John walks over to the edge of the canal, looking in the distance. He takes off his broken attachment and throws it into the canal.

RAMONA

Come on, let's go dry off.

The three walk off in the distance together.

FADE TO BLACK.

Entertainment news graphic

INT-NEWS ROOM-DAY

KRISTINE MURPHY

Disaster Strikes the production of Chase Danger: Man of Action. Forbidden Pictures studios has decided to cancel the film after John Kings incident on set. We manage to get a quick word with the director of the film, he had some choice words to say about John King.

DIRECTOR

That mother fucking actor. He ruined countless of bloody nights working on this shit screenplay, that glorified him more. How many fucking awards or praises does he bloody need. He couldn't even fucking act, that bastard of a chip. It was a (long bleep with director doing actions. What he jumped up off a bridge? He should have jumped off the Grand Canyon.

The director gets cut off

KRISTINE MURPHY

All right, that was the Director harsh remarks about King. King himself has decided to take a break from acting and work alongside his ex-personal assistant and first-time writer Romona Page on a new project which is rumoured to bring the duos childhood and relationship to the silver screen. John King's journey has been an entertaining one and we at the studio can't wait to see what he and his new partner goes on to do next.

FADE TO BLACK