

THE COMEUPPANCE

Written by

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INT. HOME OFFICE - DAY

BIG JIM WALLENBECH is sitting on a comfortable chair talking on the phone. He's sitting up and forward. In front of him is a table with a closed laptop on it.

BIG JIM
Don't you worry a second. You know me, Eric, Big Jim always delivers.

ERIC (V.O.)
Well, the deliveries have been a little damaged in shipping as of late.

Big Jim doesn't take kindly to be spoken to what way. He glares for a moment and takes a deep breath before delivering.

BIG JIM
I guess if you were doing some better agenting and getting me bigger projects. . .

ERIC (V.O.)
. . .like what I just got you.

Big Jim pauses, annoyed. He finally relaxes, sits back and puts his feet on the table shoving the laptop to the floor.

BIG JIM
I'd fire up my expansive imagination and give this town a run for it's money.

ERIC (V.O.)
Expansive imagination? Is that responsible for coming up words like agenting? You do know agenting isn't a word?

Big Jim pulls his feet off the table and sit straight up.

BIG JIM
Listen you lit. . .

Big Jim stops. He thinks for a second.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
Listen, Eric, I appreciate all the hard word you put into getting me this job.

ERIC (V.O.)
I just emailed you the outline and contract. you have ten minutes to look it over and get back to me. If you miss the deadline they're going with someone else.

BIG JIM
They're bluffing. You know they want. . .

ERIC
. . .not this time. Ten minutes. Can you handle it?

Big Jim snaps into the phone.

BIG JIM
Yeah.

Big Jim disconnects the phone call and tosses the phone on the table.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
Jerk.

Big Jim picks up the phone and dials. It rings.

OLIVIA (V.O.)
The law firm of T. D. Luca. How may I direct your. . .

BIG JIM
. . .it's Big Jim I need you to tell T.D. to step up on the divorce. I'll be getting a big check and I don't want to be giving her a dime of it.

OLIVIA (V.O.)
Let me transfer you over to. . .

BIG JIM
. . .just give her that message. I don't want her getting much more of my money either.

Big Jim disconnects the phone call. He sits back self-satisfied.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
Time to rake it in.

After gloating to himself for a while Big Jim reaches down and picks up his laptop. He tosses it on the table and swings it open. He pushes the on button but we hear nothing. The screen is black.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)

What the?

Big Jim picks up the laptop and starts shaking it. He presses the on button again and again before dropping it on the table. He picks up the phone and dials.

TONY (V.O.)

Tech 4 Life, how may I. . .

BIG JIM

. . .what the hell are you running here?

TONY (V.O.)

Excuse me?

BIG JIM

You sold me a laptop that just died. What are you going to do about it?

TONY

Mr. Wallenbech?

BIG JIM

Who else?

TONY (V.O.)

What happened this time? Throw it against the wall or leave it on the roof of your car again?

BIG JIM

Don't get smart with me. I need it fixed.

TONY (V.O.)

Not today. Closing in five. Call back tomorrow.

BIG JIM

Why you little. . .

But Big Jim is talking to himself because Tony has hung up the phone. Big Jim picks up the laptop and holds it.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)

Now what am I going to do?

Big Jim looks across the room and we see an older desktop.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
I can't use that old piece of crap.

Big Jim throws the laptop across the room.

We follow it spinning across the room until it crashes into the desktop. The laptop flings open and cracks in two. The desktop whirs to life as the laptop falls to the floor shattered.

The desktop begins booting up but it's not your average boot up. It metallically grinds and shrieks and shudders. The screen goes from black to bright white in a flash then back to a eerie vibrating glow.

Big Jim doesn't seem to notice any of this. He's up off the couch walking across the room.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
I haven't used that thing in three years. I don't even know why I kept it.

Big Jim reaches the still booting computer.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
Oh, that's right. She made me keep it because I wrote the first script I sold on it. Good it does me now.

Big Jim leans over and opens a drawer.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
Where did I leave my log in information.

As Big Jim leans over the CD drawer slides open hitting him in the head. Big Jim stumbles back and falls.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
What the?

Big Jim lays on the ground next to the laptop. He looks at it angrily before picking it up and throwing it across the room.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
I blame you for all this.

Big Jim struggles to his feet. He jabs at the opened CD drawer and it snaps in half. He picks up the broken piece not noticing the remaining half of the drawer sliding in and out at a rapid pace.

Big Jim leans over to pick up the broken piece as the now sharp end slides out hitting him in the head again.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
What the?

Big Jim stumbles back reaching for his forehead. He pulls his hand away and sees that he's bleeding.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
That's it. After this I'm going to
take you to the roof and throw you
off.

The CD drawer retracts and stops moving. The screen shimmers a dark red.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
What is that?

Big Jim shakes his head.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
Obviously it's about time I put you
down.

Big Jim pulls up his office chair and sits in front of the computer. It lays out like a normal desktop screen but things are slightly off. The icons are all misshapen and expanding and contracting. The calm ocean scene is turning ominous. Dark clouds roll in. The sailboat starts to lose ground and slip backwards. Even the icons begin to look windblown.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
Now where's the log in?

Big Jim leans over but, remembering what just occurred, pulls up slightly as half of the CD drawer juts out. Big Jim stares at it.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
Ha! Missed me this time.

Big Jim opens the drawer and pulls out a sheet of paper.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
Here it is.

Big Jim reads the paper.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
The password is big jim the great.
(pause)
I should have remembered that.

Big Jim moves the mouse and places the cursor over the email icon. The icon shoves the cursor off of it.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)

What the?

Big Jim moves places the cursor over the email icon again and clicks it rapidly. The email program snaps into place. Big Jim looks over his email and sees one from Earl. He clicks to open it but it doesn't open.

Big Jim picks up his wireless mouse and shakes it. He places it back of the desk and clicks again. It still won't open. He picks up the mouse and looks into it. The red glowing sensor becomes like a laser beam directly into Big Jim's eye.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)

Owwwwwww!

Big Jim drops the mouse onto the desk. The email from Eric opens. Big Jim is rubbing his eye while reaching for his mouse. His hand pulls back while he wearily looking at the mouse with his one good eye. Finally, slowly, he reaches to the mouse and takes control of it.

Big Jim moves the cursor over and opens the attachment. A contract opens. He squints at it for a moment. At the top it says, "Contract to write the feature film The Comeuppance."

BIG JIM (CONT'D)

I don't care about any of that
crap. How much are you paying me?

Big Jim scrolls down on the document until he gets to what he's interested in. He leans back in the chair and smiles.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)

That's what I'm looking for.

A big grin comes over Big Jim's face as he leans back further in the chair. Inevitably, he falls over.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)

Whoa, whoa, whoa.

Big Jim slams to the floor.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)

That's it.

Big Jim struggles to get to his feet.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
I'm replacing everything in this
room when I get this job.

The edges of the computer screen vibrate red as Big Jim picks up the chair and tosses it across the room. The chair lands on it's wheels and slides effortlessly back toward Big Jim.

Big Jim turns his attention to his computer. He's looking at the screen before getting a big grin on his face.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
This is just the thing I need. This
will put me back on top. Now all I
have to do is sign it and get it
back to that pinhead agent of mine.

Big Jim grabs the mouse which, at first, he can't seem to move across the desk. He picks it up and it seems to work fine now. He moves the cursor to the corner and closes the contract. He starts to send Eric an email.

Big Jim leans over the desk and starts typing. Except no words appear on the screen. He's typing and typing but nothing happens.

Big Jim looks down at his keyboard. He picks it up and shakes it. Hair and dust and cookies crumbs fly off the keyboard causing Big Jim to sputter and cough.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
Looks as if it could use a good
cleaning.

Big Jim drops the keyboard onto the desk.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
Or a full replacement.

Big Jim leans over again and begins typing but his fingers stick to the keyboard.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
What the?

Big Jim stands there with the keyboard stuck to his hands. He's flailing and shaking but the keyboard won't leave his hands.

Big Jim places the keyboard between his legs putting the keys against the back of his legs. He starts pulling and struggling to remove his fingers from the keyboard. After a mighty struggle Big Jim's fingers come off the keyboard.

Because of all the force he's been using when the hands come off the keyboard it causes him to fall forward smashing his head onto the monitor cracking the screen and burning his forehead.

Big Jim stumbles back groaning in pain. He puts his hands to his burnt head and we see that the keys of the keyboard are stuck to his fingers. When he presses his fingers to his head he screams again as the backs of the keys make indentations into his blistering forehead.

Undeterred, Big Jim attempts to tackle the keyboard again.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)
I'll send out this email if it's
the last thing I ever do.

Big Jim begins flailing at the keyboard but, with keys stuck to his fingers, this is very difficult. He stops for a moment before feverishly trying to yank the keys off his fingers.

Frustrated, Big Jim slams his fists into the keyboard which attaches to his fists. Big Jim slams the keyboard time after time onto the desk in an attempt to remove it from his fists.

Big Jim attempts one last big effort to remove the keyboard from his fists by pulling it away from the computer. When he does he loses his balance backwards falling into the chair that has been slowly rolling towards him.

Big Jim starts rolling backwards in the room while the keyboard is still stuck to his fists. Finally the wire connecting the keyboard to the computer reaches it's full length and starts to pull over the computer desk.

Slowly the monitor and tower and printer begin to topple over with the desk. In one loud and glorious crash it all hits the floor. The tower shivers and whirs until it shuts down. The monitor glows all the final colors it has before fading to black.

Big Jim sits there for a moment still tethered to the keyboard. It's the only thing keeping him from falling because he's leaning so far back in the chair if he wasn't attached to the keyboard he would surely fall.

So, of course, the keyboard tears off his fists flying back to the where the computer is. One by one the keys drop off from his fingers. When the last one drops off Big Jim hangs there for a moment suspended between safety and disaster.

So, of course, we choose disaster.

Big Jim slams to the ground. He lets out a large 'ooof' as he hits the floor. Big Jim is bruised and burned and battered. His skin where the keys and keyboard were attached are all red and painful looking. His forehead is still bubbling. He's a little dazed from the fall.

Big Jim attempts to get up but every time he places his hand on the ground to help him up he winces in pain. Big Jim struggles but with the help of his elbows and forearms he slowly begins to become upright.

Big Jim is on his knees as he surveys the disaster that is his writing room. The monitor and tower are smoking and slowly starting to melt. Keyboard keys are strewn around the room. He's shocked at what he sees.

BIG JIM (CONT'D)

Wow. Well, at least this day can't get any worse.

SND FX: Big Jim's phone ringing.

Big Jim struggles to get up to get to his phone. Along the way he steps on keyboard keys which crunch and snap under his feet. While trying to not step on the keyboard he gets tangled up in some wiring.

Big Jim stumbles and falls once again as his phone keeps ringing until voice mail picks it up. Big Jim gets his hands on the table and uses that to pull himself to his knees to get the phone.

Big Jim looks at the phone and sees that his Eric has left a message. Big Jim pushes a few buttons to play the message.

ERIC (V.O.)

Ten minutes, Jim, all you had to do was sign a contract and get it back to me in ten minutes and you couldn't even do that. Well, you lost the assignment and, I'm pretty glad to be telling you this, we're dropping you as a client.

Eric disconnects the call.

Big Jim leans on the table. His forehead now pulsating red. He attempts to get up but slips and falls. A loud crash is heard as Big Jim falls out of the shot.

BIG JIM (O.S.)

I guess the day can get worse.

FADE TO BLACK.