

Prompt: “Do you know how to program websites?”

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Macaroni's art studio.

Macaroni, Andy, and Marvin are in discussion

ANDY

Well, it seems that the Mall now has its own Ministry of Health.

MACARONI

How ironic.

ANDY

So, I think we should place our sculptures right in the middle of it.

MACARONI

Not the food court? They **are** made of food, you know.

MARVIN

What better way to announce that “**we are here**”.

MACARONI

I see your point. Although to be fair, we're saying “They are here”.

MARVIN

“We”, “They”... Does it matter?

ANDY

Maybe to them?

MACARONI

I can't help wondering whether it might be best to sit this one out however. They seem to be doing a great job of running themselves into the ground on their own.

MARVIN

Pettigrew insisted.

MACARONI

Yes, he certainly did. I'm not sure everyone else should fall with him.

ANDY

They fall **in** with him, they **fall** with him.

MACARONI

I guess. Let's not make the same mistake ourselves though.

PETTIGREW

(Pettigrew enters)

Is all in readiness?

MACARONI

An opportunity has opened up, which may lead to... even greater influence.

PETTIGREW

I'm listening.

ANDY

Instead of leaving our message at the food court, we'll leave it at the Ministry of Health.

PETTIGREW

I didn't know there was such a thing.

MACARONI

I know. Things move fast.

PETTIGREW

How did you find out?

MARVIN

We... have interests other than food.

PETTIGREW

There **are** no interests other than food.

MARVIN

Actually, there are lots of –

PETTIGREW

I won't have it. Anything that doesn't relate to food is sissy stuff.

MARVIN

That's just... stupid.

PETTIGREW

Don't call me stupid. I'm not stupid. I'm a rat. Rats have certain standards – the best standards. Standards **you** can barely dream of achieving. That's why you are scrawny little mice, and I am on three pedestals.

MACARONI

You hired us to do your bidding... why?

PETTIGREW

Not because I couldn't do it myself. I can. And I will. You're all fired.

(Pettigrew exits.)

ANDY

Well... that didn't go well.

MACARONI

He'll be back.

MARVIN

Maybe Watson can talk to him. He's so chipper he can get a spider to dance.

MACARONI

But he doesn't know the plan. He'd hate it – it goes against his grain.

ANDY

It goes against my grain too. But it's what the rats want. Because they're rats.

MACARONI

Be nice, Android.

MARVIN

What we're doing isn't nice.

ANDY

We're doing exactly what they want. It's not our fault that they shouldn't want it.

MACARONI

I'll talk to Watson. But I think he has a thing with Kylie, which might complicate matters.

KYLIE

(Kylie enters, addressing Macaroni)

Pettigrew tells me you've changed the plan.

MARVIN

Maybe Kylie should talk to Watson.

MACARONI

Plans change when it's all improvised.

KYLIE

Wait – talk to Watson about what?

MACARONI

The plans have changed.

KYLIE

I know. I just said that.

MACARONI

But you don't know that.

KYLIE

Pettigrew said so.

MACARONI

And when has Pettigrew been right?

KYLIE

What does 'm' stand for?

MACARONI

What does 'm' have to do with anything?

KYLIE

That's what I'd like to know.

ANDY

Magnitude. Meter. Male. Moles. Million. Mach number.

Medium. Magnetic.

KYLIE

Mouse.

MACARONI

(long beat)

Mouse?

KYLIE

Those colored pellets in the bowl. Each one had an 'm' on it. For "mouse". Your kind are behind it all.

MACARONI.

Actually it meant "Macaroni". Sometimes I sign my artwork. I was particularly pleased with that one.

KYLIE

Really? You sign your artwork?

MACARONI

Don't be silly. Mice can't write. They just came that way. There are conspiracies everywhere, but not everything is a conspiracy.

KYLIE

So how are we supposed to know?

ANDY

I could tell you. But then you'd be part of it.

MACARONI

Look Kylie... when you use a mouse, there's a whole network behind it. You talk to me, but the art that comes out is made by Marvin, and Andy, and Watson, and...

MARVIN

Speaking of which –

MACARONI

...Pettigrew does not comprehend this. It's not clear to me that he comprehends much of anything, but that's another story.

KYLIE

So what's the plan?

ANDY

There's a new Ministry of Health opening near the food court. Not **in** the food court, but near it.

KYLIE

How do you know what's opening in the mall?

MACARONI

This network you've employed... this spider's web of interconnected eyes and ears and fingers and feet... lets me gather information from diverse places.

KYLIE

Kind of like Remy?

ANDY

Exactly like Remy. Remy speaks cat. And French, though don't tell a Frenchman. He also crossdresses...

MACARONI

All the French do that.

ANDY

...and it gives him so much more access to things.

MARVIN

When they get ready to build something new, the first ones to know are the spiders. They wake up one morning, and their web is down.

MACARONI

The second ones to know are the spiders' friends. And so on, through the interconnected web that makes up our social ecosystem. And unless it's food, the last ones to know are the rats.

KYLIE

Thank you for the insult. But why should I care?

MACARONI

The program has changed. An opportunity opened up. So the plan has changed to take advantage of it.

KYLIE

Sounds reasonable to me.

MACARONI

But Pettigrew only understands food. He eats the wrong thing, and doesn't know why. He doesn't understand the web that ultimately serves it to him.

ANDY

And we do. There are no spiders in the new office. New construction - the webs are gone.

MACARONI

Soon the spiders will come back and rebuild the web on this same site. But in the meantime, Pettigrew's precious statues can have a **glorious** opening, and when the spiders return, essentially reprogram their webs.

KYLIE

Do you know how?

MARVIN

To program websites? I'm going to get Watson to help us out. He can make spiders dance.

MACARONI

We think. You take care of Pettigrew, and we'll make the rats great again.

(blackout)