

Insanity

Chapter 1:

Down the Yellow Brick Road

"This is ridiculous! Stranded here alone while my little sheep is lost in that other world; poor little lamb, she probably won't survive a day out there without me! Me! Her beloved intellectual companion!" he let out a heavy sigh, but no breath came out. The air around him began to get chilly and if he could, he'd shiver but instead the chunks of chocolate stiffened in the cold just as gray clouds rolled in from the skies above. "Oh, perfect..."

And rain came down, hard, splattering onto the yellow brick road in front of him, hitting his body with their little spits of revenge as they tried to fly off the ground. Thunder rumbled, shaking the sky but he was unperturbed by that. His concern was to get out of here and find the portal. But how? He couldn't walk, he couldn't move! All he had was a voice and nothing else. His only option was to call for help; hopefully some moron would be kind enough to help him.

Just then he heard something: *squirt...splat, squirt, splat!* Someone was coming this way! Indeed someone did, in fact, a dodo came, waddling in the puddles of rain, flapping its pathetic tiny wings. Poor damned bird, doomed to walk the lands as his cousins flew above, mocking him for his clumsy size and plumped bottom. The dodo looked like an idiot as do they all, he made quick movements with his head but was looking for nothing. His eyes were bleary like he was drunk and he swayed side-to-side on the yellow brick road. The rain had drenched his plumage of cream and blue while it made his rather large beak shine.

"Oh, good, sir, please help me!"

The dodo looked about but found no one in sight. "Who is calling for help?" asked the dodo. "I hear someone but see no one. Where are you?" The dodo continued to walk the wet road, looking everywhere but behind him.

"Turn around!" and the dodo did. His eyes widened as he stared at the brown quick bread sitting on the rock. The dodo looked more focused now but there was something in his eyes, something scary...it was the look of utter hunger! The dodo stuck out his tongue like a dog, slobbering over his already wet feathers.

"Oh! Look! A muffin!" the dodo said, laughing against the thunder. "Mmm, and it's chocolate too!" the dodo opened his beak and leaned over the rather large muffin. His breath stunk of wine and the disgusting walls of his beak were covered in slime of greenish color.

"Don't eat me!" the muffin screamed and the dodo stumbled on his own feet, landing with a loud *plop* onto his fat bottom. He looked around as if he didn't know where the voice had come from. Who was stupid enough to eat a muffin sitting outside in the rain? Clearly, only a birdbrain would!

"W—who said that?!"

"Me, you idiot, me!"

The dodo looked at the muffin once more as he hopped to his feet and waddled over to the muffin. "You?"

"Yes, me, now you fool, help me or I sha—" he didn't get to finish because the dodo ran off screaming into the rain about a devil muffin. If he had teeth, he'd have gritted them against each other but he just let out a sigh. He'd have to wait for the next idiot to come down the road, hopefully not a hungry one.

The sky roared with one last thunder, flashing white before the clouds dispersed just as quickly as they had come. The yellow rays of sunshine ate away at the puddles of water, winking

down at the muffin as if they were doing him a favor. Sun was as bad as rain because now the muffin had to endure the heat while his chunks of sugary goodness oozed down his little body, licking his sides with the sweet taste of chocolate on chocolate.

“Thank you, sun, thank you, you may bring life to all with your mistress water but they forgot to tell children that you are a murderer too just like her!” he could scream and shout all he wanted but the sun wouldn’t listen to a single word he said. The sun was arrogant, he did what he wanted when he wanted even when people grumbled and cried for him to go away. In fact, the sun liked people complaining, they were like music to him! Sweet, melodic cries of the poor unfortunate souls living beneath his rays. The muffin shouldn’t complain. He was only making music for the sun.

“Dum-dee-dum-dum!” someone sang faraway. Oh! Another one was coming down the road! Who was it this time? The muffin prayed it not to be another birdbrain and to his relief, it was none other than good Mayor Walrus, the kindest of souls in this wretched wonderland. Mayor Walrus was a very large odobenus, light brown in color with two large, yellowed tusks hanging down from his mouth. He had black beady eyes and wore nothing but a tuxedo top that was too small for his grand size, the buttons on his suit top looked like they were going to pop any moment while some of his blubber protruded out of the gaps. When he waddled about, his fat skin jiggled with joy just like his personality did.

“Mayor Walrus! Mayor Walrus!”

“Dum-dee-du—ahh, what?” Mayor Walrus said in his gruff voice. He looked around the forest of large vivid flowers. He scanned the area with his beady eyes and then his eyes fell upon the muffin. “Hmm,” he used his flippers and scooted his blubbery body forward to the rock the muffin sat upon. “Ah, yes, I know you. You’re—um, what was your name again?”

“Oh, it doesn’t matter, Mayor Walrus! I am so glad to see you!”

“Ah, yes, I am too!” Mayor Walrus closed his eyes and swayed his plumped neck side-to-side while the whiskers on his face danced in the air. “What is it you need, oh good, cupcake?”

Cupcake?! By all means, he was a muffin! How could anyone mix him up with a cupcake?! Cupcakes were naïve and innocent, giggling about with their sprinkled tops and fluffy swirled cream heads. They laughed when people ate them up; not realizing that in two more bites it would be their end! He was a muffin, a dignified and sophisticated muffin!

“Ahem,” he said, clearing whatever his voice protruded out from in his bread body. “I am a muffin.”

“Ah, yes, muffin, cupcake, cookies, they’re all the same. What was it you needed?”

The muffin seethed, feeling his already melted chunks boiling at the surface of his muffin top. No, they were not the same! A child knew their difference, but he had to remind himself, Mayor Walrus was a good soul and despite his stupidity, he meant well. “I need a way to get to the portal.”

“Ah, yes, a way to get to the por—*blurb, blurrrr!*” Mayor Walrus shook his obese neck and the muffin watched his skin flap about him in every direction. “The portal?! Oh, no, no, no! You can’t go to the portal.”

“I need to. My little lamb was separated from me. I must get to the portal and bring her back.”

“I can’t help you,” Mayor Walrus said panicked. “The portal is dangerous. Imagine what those—those two legged crea—”

“Humans?”

“Yes, them! Imagine what they would do to us! They’ll harvest us for food! They’ll use up all our resources!”

“You don’t understand. Doll is very precious to me. She’s like my daughter! I need to get her back! Without me, she can’t survive!” Mayor Walrus gave the muffin a sympathetic look but he shook his head once more and began to leave. “Please, Mayor Walrus!”

“What is the matter?” a voice called and Mayor Walrus turned his plumped neck only slightly but he shook his head again and left. The muffin placed his sight on a tall human like man who had black messy hair, garbed in a white prince’s outfit like you would see in a Disney movie. But he wasn’t a human, the muffin knew what a human looked like and they definitely didn’t have black pointed ears protruding out the top of their heads while a long fluffy tail swayed at their posteriors. This man...he was a wolf! “Can I help you?”

The muffin would give the wolf the silent treatment and hoped he’d walk away, but to his horror, the wolf knelt down in front of the rock and gave the muffin a charming smile. The muffin made a small gasping noise as the wolf picked him up with his fancy white gloves. “Put me down!”

“I overheard your conversation with Mayor Walrus,” the wolf said. Every crumb within the muffin’s being shook in fear and he felt the dripping syrup at his core wet his bottom. Everyone knew wolves were dangerous. They blew down pigs’ houses and ate little girls in red. This wolf was no different. “You need a way to get to the portal. You are looking for Doll.”

He talked as if he knew Doll. If the muffin had eyes he’d have squinted at the wolf. “Yes, but I need no help from you, wolf!”

“Wolf?”

“Yes, wolf! I can find a way to the portal by myself now put me down this instant!”

The wolf laughed while flashing his super pearly white teeth in the muffin’s sight. Oh, he felt blinded. This wolf was more evil than he thought. “I am no wolf. I am a ram, a sheep just like Doll.”

“Like hell you are!” this wolf was more devil than canis lupus. If he thought he could fool the muffin, he was dead wrong. “I need no help from you.”

“If you say so,” the wolf frowned. In an instant, he removed his hand from under the muffin and the muffin went hurtling down onto the yellow brick road, crumbs of muffin flesh flew off him as he made impact with the ground, smearing it in his sweet cocoa blood. “The way I see it...you need my help. We have the same goal, you and I. We both want to find Doll.”

The muffin moaned and wailed, “Ahhhhh!” the sun beat into him, laughing at his misery as his liquid chunks flooded out of him ever so slowly. If this was his end, it was a pathetic way to go. At the very least, he wanted to know if Doll was alright in the human world. “I, Archimedes, swear upon my delicious body that I will find Doll even if my soul is to leave this baked batter. I will not give up! I will find you, Doll, wait for me!”

“Cut the theatrics,” the wolf said as he took off his white gloves that was stained with syrupy urine. He threw them aside and reached into his pocket, pulling out another pair. “Let me help you.”

“Why, you cruel bastard? I know what wolves do. I’ve read about you!” the wolf gave out a sigh and rolled his eyes. “You eat people, attack them! Humans have rounded your disgusting species and hunted them down; locking them away in National Parks so other humans could laugh at your misery while you howl like a baby for food. When Red went to her grandmother’s house, you ate them both! And the boy who cried wolf, you made him look like a liar and ate his sheep! I can’t have you eat Doll! She’s precious to me!”

“She is precious to me too,” the wolf said quietly. His ears drooped down and water lined the bottom of his eyes. A tear stroked down his cheek and he laughed softly. “You don’t know how much I love her. She’s precious to me too.” Was this an act? No, those tears looked real, but who was this wolf? How did he know Doll? “You don’t remember me again, Archimedes. She doesn’t remember me either. But it’s me, it’s me! Herman! Her little soldier, that’s what she said. You named her and she named me. We were all together once, but they took you and her away. They took her from me.”

This wolf wasn’t making any sense. But he knew Doll and he knew that Archimedes had given her the name. Yes, Doll was a perfect name for a sheep, named after the first cloned mammal, Dolly, that’s what Archimedes had read in a book once. How did this wolf know this? Could they have really known each other?

“Please, remember me,” Herman the wolf cried. “You used to wear glasses and sit in front of a book all day. You had her turn pages for you and I’d collect rocks for her just like she liked. Shiny ones, rough ones, colorful ones, she liked them all! And she loved when you read to her. Please, please remember me...”

“S—stop crying!” the muffin said but the wolf merely whimpered, his ears drooping even lower. “Pick me up.” And the wolf did. “Stop crying, you idiot.”

The wolf was probably going to be his end, but deep inside his cocoa core he felt something for this wolf... pity? Sympathy? He wasn’t quite sure, but there was also a feeling stirring within him, a distant memory clouded by some sort of spell. It was hard to recall, it was hazy, and a blur but it was there. Yes, there had been another person with him and Doll, a ram, a black ram that Doll had been fond of... but whom? Was this wolf really that ram? He had to be or he was a really good liar, but not many inhabitants of this world knew about Doll. They didn’t like her because she was an anomaly. She was a sheep turned to a girl.

“I have to give you credit. You seem to know her and me.”

“Of course I do!”

“Shut up,” Archimedes said. “I cannot fully clarify you in my memories, but I will trust you... for now.”

“I’ll prove to you who I am. I’ll get your memories back!”

“No. We find Doll first,” the wolf nodded eagerly and without any warning began to walk the yellow road. “Wait! If I am to travel with you I have but one condition!” The wolf knitted his brows together and a corner of his mouth tugged downwards. “Do not eat me.”

Suddenly the wolf laughed, “Eat you? Who would be stupid enough to eat a muffin that has been out in rain and sun?” Indeed, who would be? “I will not eat you, Archimedes. You are my friend.” He certainly hadn’t treated him like one some moments ago.

“Let us be on our way,” said Archimedes.

And together, the wolf and the muffin went down the yellow brick road, looking for the portal that would lead them to their dear friend, Doll. What dangers awaited them down this road? Who could say? Archimedes would face anything to find his beloved Doll even if it meant being torn to little bits of crumbs. He was not going to give up until she was safe.

This is how the journey of Archimedes the chocolate muffin began...

Dear Archimedes,

How are you? Is everything in Wonderland as mad as it was when I came? I’m scared and lost... but I will be brave like you said I should be. I miss you so much. You

told me to always follow the Trail and I have, but today... today I couldn't find it. The Trail is gone, along with it the portals. I'm afraid I will never see you or Wonderland again. What if I turn back into a sheep? I will forget everything. I will be sold to slaughter like my family. Archimedes, please, I don't know what to do. I followed the Trail but now there is none, what do I do?

Doll