

Chocolate Covered Strawberries

by M. Winston Sullivan.

Alex was known for many things, intelligent, hardworking, crafty and extremely opinionated. Last week on Talk like a Pirate day he led the engineering department of Rewind Inc. in a full scale NERF battle against the accounting department, soon everyone began calling him Captain Alex. Not only did they win but he then combined forces and led everyone downstairs to invade Future Enterprises, both wholly owned subsidiaries of Quantum Enterprises. By the end he was being hailed as the “Terror of the Seventh Floor” and forced Caitlin, the lead engineer of Future Enterprises, to walk the plank. Which was just a contiguous line of pizza boxes leading to their conference room. “My revenge will be sweet and you will rue the day” she promises him.

Alex only had one weakness, chocolate. There is a small artisan chocolate manufacturer in Berkeley called Scharffenberger that has the best chocolates in Silicon Valley. You can go on a tour there and see the entire manufacturing process. The best part is the tasting, first they bring out the cacao beans. These are bitter. Then the chocolate: milk chocolate, semi-sweet, bitter-sweet, extra dark chocolate and more. Each bite is savored for its perfection. However it is only a taste, leaving a deep craving for more.

Sunday 2:00pm

Alex sat down with a large box of Scharffenberger Chocolate. After the tour he just couldn't help himself, they all tasted so good. Inside the box was an assortment of milk chocolate, semi-sweet and bitter-sweet truffles. There was a dark chocolate truffle or three that had somehow snuck into the box as well. Alex didn't like dark chocolate but the designs on them were pretty. The crowning jewels were the chocolate covered strawberries. He took out one of these.

“Just one, I mustn't let them start to spoil.”

Heaven, the rich chocolate flavor hit the front of his tongue as he closed his eyes. Alex tried to savor each bite, making the moment last, but it was over too soon. Three strawberries down and only three left.

“Well, the strawberries don't last long, so it's probably for the best.”

Putting the chocolates away he sat down on the couch and turned on the TV. He had a couple of episodes of Smallville recorded on his DVR and there was plenty of time to finish the Hamilton report for Monday. Half way through the first episode he got hungry.

“OK, no strawberries but maybe one of the milk chocolate truffles.”

Happy with his restraint he gobbles down two truffles and finishes the episode.

“Great, now I'm thirsty.”

Sunday 3:00pm

Alex got up and looks in the refrigerator for something to drink. Pouring himself a glass of milk he heads back. Somehow another two semi-sweet truffles made their way back with him to the couch. *A glass of milk just needs a little extra something, you know?* As he begins the next episode there is a scene with a desert banquet at the Luther estate, all sorts of fancy deserts were served but the chocolate fountain is the centerpiece. Strawberries, covered in 5 kinds of chocolate which spilled from the fountain. The fountain was somehow powered by kryptonite, giving the people who ate from it superpowers. Alex had promised he wouldn't eat all the chocolates before Friday. He was determined to save some and make sure they lasted the entire week, two if he could stretch it. Mustering a supreme force of will he resisted the urge to have another strawberry.

For ten minutes.

Although he lived with his girlfriend, and even though she was out with friends, he felt it necessary to sneak to the refrigerator. On the TV a super powered Louis Lane throws Clarke into a punchbowl for looking at Lana. As Alex reaches for the refrigerator door the power flickers on and off.

Alex, with his hand is on the door, hears a sound coming from his bedroom. It is a kind of whoosh and pop. "That's odd." He remarks. "Maybe I left a window open." Putting the sound out of his mind he greedily opens the refrigerator. A NERF cutlass flies at him from the hallway.

"Stop!" cries a familiar voice. Guiltily holding two of the strawberries he looks up. Standing in the hallway is Alex, dressed in work clothes and slightly frizzled hair from electromagnetic discharge. "If you eat all those we won't have strawberries for lunch tomorrow. You know how jealous Caitlin will be seeing us with them?!" scolds Alex from Monday.

"Did you just time travel back to stop me from eating all the strawberries?"

"Maybe I wanted strawberries for lunch and you ate them all."

"You mean we ate them all."

"Whatever."

"Want a strawberry now?"

"Yes."

Sunday 3:14pm

Both Alex's sat down on the couch, eating strawberries and a couple more truffles.

"Oh, I love this part!" says Monday Alex

"Spoilers!"

Sunday 6:00pm

Two glasses of milk and the remaining milk chocolate truffles later Both Alex's were almost content.

"Well I probably should be getting back; we didn't finish the Hamilton proposal last night so I have a lot of work to do."

"Hey, don't blame me; you wanted to watch the rest of season 9!"

"Yeah. Oh, didn't we just finish downloading episode 12 of Almost Human?"

Sunday 6:05PM

Back at the refrigerator Alex and Monday Alex pick up the box of remaining chocolates. Lights flicker again as they open the refrigerator. There was a whirring sound and both Alex's hit the kitchen floor as a hail of NREF bullets tare across the kitchen filling the space between them and the open refrigerator door.

"What's wrong with you two!" someone yells from the bedroom.

Thursday Alex steps out of the room. "This is why I never get any chocolate, the two of you are always eating it!"

"We saved you a strawberry." Says Present Alex.

Sunday 7:30PM

The three of them sat happily on the couch eating the remaining chocolates, even the dark chocolate as the credits for the final episode of Almost Human started rolling.

"You know, this time travel stuff is the best thing ever." Says Thursday Alex.

"Meh." Says Present Alex,

What's wrong with it?" asks Monday Alex.

"Well, I am always having to share with you and there is never enough chocolate." They all look at the now empty box of chocolate and nod. Each would have rather not shared. Just then the front door opens.

Caitlin enters the front door in full steam punk regalia and sets down a big box of Chocolate covered strawberries gallon of milk. "I figured you would eat all the chocolate, seriously you can be such a pig." As they are distracted the power flickers in the apartment again. Caitlin opens up with a Vulcan laughing maniacally as two other Caitlin's charge in from the bedroom, one in a pirate costume.

"Revenge." They yell. Alex didn't stand a chance.

The next day at the cafeteria Alex watches as Caitlin shares Chocolate Strawberries with everyone but him.