

The Diner
(A Mad Mabel Adventure)
by
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Time: *The present*

Place: *A small urban diner toward closing time. An old cash register/box, a few tables and light-weight chairs. Not a dive, but definitely has lots of character. There is only one waitress (MABEL) and one guest. It's been a long day.*

Cast:

Mad Mabel/Mabel Meehan- *Early 30's. Very fit and confident. She has a "worn-all-day" looking apron that covers her traditional MAD MABEL shirt/logo.*

Bristle - *30's. the last guest in the diner. She is not a bum, but she certainly isn't dressed to impress.*

At curtain, MABEL is wiping a few tables and starting to stack chairs upside down on the far empty tables. She stops, looks at BRISTLE, and puts the rag on the counter by the register. Her cell, also by the register rings.

MABEL

Hi, Gladys. Yeah, everything's fine. Been a long day; good steady business. No, no problems at all. Happy I could give you time to tackle your emergency at home but I don't think I could do this full time. And you wouldn't want me to either--I'm not that good at it. No, not yet. One more customer and then I can close. I know. I'll be careful. I'll call when I've deposited the cash at the ATM. *(hangs up)*

BRISTLE

Hey, girl, some more coffee.

MABEL makes no move to get the coffee pot. Instead she gets her order book and walks toward BRISTLE

MABEL

Coffee pot is in the washer. I should have closed 10 minutes ago. And you have long since outlived your 40 minute coffee table time. See that sign *(points to sign "Patrons who order only coffee must vacate table after 40 minutes")* Gotta lock up. Here's your check. Thanks for your business.

BRISTLE

Business you won't get again. Since when can't you sit and have a coffee in peace? Don't count on a tip!

MABEL

I never do. I'm going in the kitchen to shut off the lights. When I get back I want to see you at the register. *(she exits and returns almost immediately)*

Meanwhile BRISTLE has moved to the register and leans on the counter. MABEL returns and reaches for BRISTLE's check.

MABEL (*taking the check and looking at it*)
That'll be \$2.50 plus tax; \$2.70. (*looks BRISTLE in the eye*) And no tip, right?

BRISTLE
(*reaches into her jacket pocket and pulls out a small caliber gun*)
Wrong! That'll be all the cash you've got and I do have a tip for you. (*reaches across and grabs MABEL's wrist*) You are just plain stupid to play smart ass with me and you're going to have to pay for that. After you're cleared the register.

MABEL frees herself from BRISTLE's grip and moves around the counter to face BRISTLE. At the same time she rips the apron off revealing her Mad Mabel shirt and logo.

BRISTLE
What kinda' joke is that? You into comic strips?

MABEL
Nothing comic about our relationship. Give me the gun and I'll try not to hurt you.

BRISTLE
You are a first class nut case! Give me the key to the cash box -- NOW!

MABEL
Don't say I didn't try.

The fight begins with MABEL disarming BRISTLE at the choreographer's discretion. It then continues as unarmed. By the end, BRISTLE is out cold and MABEL has her tied with the apron strings. MABEL picks up the gun and empties the chamber, then gets her cell and starts to dial.

Maybe with a little luck I'll get a police escort to the ATM!