

BREAKING AND EXITING

By Jeff Dunne

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CHARACTERS

- PANDA 1 A panda bear. Black, white, the usual thing.
- PANDA 2 Another panda bear, but this time with the number “2”
as part of its name.

SETTING

A cage.

SCENE

(A panda bear is sitting in a cage, lonely and unhappy. A second panda enters. He looks back, snarls half-heartedly, then plops down next to the first one.)

PANDA 1

Whoa, buddy. What do you think you're doing?

PANDA 2

What?

PANDA 1

Don't you know what personal space is?

PANDA 2

We're pandas. We don't have boundaries.

PANDA 1

Well at least lean away a bit.

PANDA 2

Wwwwwhy?

PANDA 1

Your head's too close.

PANDA 2

What?

PANDA 1

Haven't you heard? We're all supposed to be doing facial distancing.

PANDA 2

Facial...

PANDA 1

Facial distancing. The humans are all making a big deal about it.

PANDA 2

Social distancing.

PANDA 1

Is *that* what they're saying? I thought... well, I guess that makes more sense.

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It does? PANDA 2

Not really. PANDA 1

I mean, we're not even social. PANDA 2

We're not? PANDA 1

Pandas are solitary animals. PANDA 2

Oh. Good. That's good news. I guess you can put your face wherever you want, then. PANDA 1

Thanks. PANDA 2

So... what are you in for? PANDA 1

It's a long story. PANDA 2

Did you steal a ton of money from lots of people? PANDA 1

What?! No. I'm a panda, for crying out loud, not a politician. PANDA 2

Kill someone? PANDA 1

What would make you say that? PANDA 2

I heard about this one panda a while back. He had really bad grammar, so after he walks into a thicket, he... PANDA 1

...eats, shoots, and leaves.

TOGETHER

Yeah, good times.

PANDA 2

So was that it?

PANDA 1

No.

PANDA 2

What then?

PANDA 1

If you must know, I'm here on charges of breaking and exiting.

PANDA 2

Wow. Did you do it?

PANDA 1

What are you, my lawyer?

PANDA 2

So you didn't do it?

PANDA 1

I'm not saying.

PANDA 2

I'd do it. I'd totally do it.

PANDA 1

That so?

PANDA 2

Oh yeah. I'm a hell-raiser. When I was a cub I used to get into all kinds of trouble.

PANDA 1

That so. Like what?

PANDA 2

Oh, like grabbing my back paws with my front paws, and then rolling over my head and onto my back.

And you made it out alive? PANDA 2

What can I say? I was a rebel. PANDA 1

And now? PANDA 2

Now? Now, I'm older. Wiser. Calmer. PANDA 1

So basically just a fluffy, monochromatic bamboo processing unit. PANDA 2

Something like that. PANDA 1

Are you thinking what I'm thinking? PANDA 2

Does it involve marshmallows? PANDA 1

No. Marshmall— What? No. PANDA 2

Then probably not. PANDA 1

I think we should break out of here. PANDA 2

Yeah! PANDA 1

Yeah! PANDA 2

Definitely! PANDA 1

Absolutely. PANDA 2

Why, exactly? PANDA 1

Because we're bears! Wild animals... we were born to live free! PANDA 2

I was born in the National Zoo. PANDA 1

To be free! PANDA 2

Actually, they never said anything about that. PANDA 1

Well, trust me. PANDA 2

It was so nice there. Fresh leaves any time you wanted... Little puzzle boxes with pineapple on the inside... PANDA 1

Pineapple? What are you, a parrot? PANDA 2

And little kids would come around and make giggly noises... PANDA 1

Did you bite their faces off? PANDA 2

No! Of course not! PANDA 1

But you wanted to, right? PANDA 2

No. PANDA 1

Not even a little? PANDA 2

PANDA 1

Well, there was this one little boy...

PANDA 2

That's the spirit! What happened?

PANDA 1

He kept saying, "Look mama! A penguin!"

PANDA 2

That little bastard.

PANDA 1

"No, Timothy, that's a panda bear," she told him. Then not two seconds later, "Look, mama! A penguin!"

PANDA 2

So what'd you do? Did you growl at him? Did you take a swipe?

PANDA 1

Nahh. Too much effort.

PANDA 2

Don't tell me you let him get away with that...

PANDA 1

Well, I did fart right about then. I think it might have been kind of in his direction.

PANDA 2

Wow. Just wow.

PANDA 1

I know. Vicious, right?

(Panda 2 just stares at Panda 1.)

You must think I'm pretty embarrassing.

(Panda 2 shrugs.)

I mean, I didn't even know they were saying "social distancing".

PANDA 2

It's alright. First time I heard them talk about it, I thought they were saying postal disdaining. I mean, what's so contemptable about mailing a letter, right?

PANDA 1

I think I could do it.

PANDA 2

Mail a letter?

PANDA 1

No, no, no. Break out of here.

PANDA 2

Right.

PANDA 1

No, really. I think I could. Are you with me?

PANDA 2

If you know how, then yeah. I'm definitely with you.

PANDA 1

See that part of the cage right there? That part swings open sometimes. I think we can get out through there.

PANDA 2

Really??

PANDA 1

Yeah. I've seen it.

PANDA 2

Then let's do this!

(They walk over to the cage door. Panda 1 pushes on it, but nothing happens.)

PANDA 1

Huh. I wasn't expecting that.

PANDA 2

Very disappointing.

PANDA 1

Hold on, hold on. Let me think. Wait, now I remember. See that little part right there? That's the lock. I forgot to open the lock.

(Panda 1 puts his paw to the lock. They stare at the door.)

Nope.

PANDA 2

Nothing.

(They stare at the door again. Finally, Panda 1 taps Panda 2.)

PANDA 1

I just remembered something.

PANDA 2

What's that?

PANDA 1

Why we can't get that open...

PANDA 2

Yeah? Why's that?

PANDA 1

We're pandas.

PANDA 2

Damn.

(They walk back to where they were, and take a seat. After a beat, Panda 1 picks up and offers a twig.)

PANDA 1

Want some bamboo?

PANDA 2

Yeah, okay.

(Lights out)