

"Come on, Frankie, you can do this," Goo murmured to herself, her eyes glued to the complex spreadsheet on her laptop screen. The soft murmur of the café behind her was the only company she had, aside from the aroma of freshly brewed coffee that filled the air. She took a sip from her now lukewarm mug, trying to ignore the persistent buzz of notifications. The deadline for the broker project loomed closer, and she was determined to crunch the numbers until they made sense.

A shadow fell over her work, and she looked up to see a figure blocking the warm light from the window. Goo's heart skipped a beat. It was Mac, looking more real than he had in her memories. His baseball cap was pulled low over his eyes, and his sweatshirt looked too big for his lanky frame, but it was unmistakably him.

She hadn't seen him since the day he'd left Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends.

Flashback

"Wont it be scary? Out there all alone? In the cold? By yourself?" Goo asked.

Mac hesitated before giving a weak yet blunt answer.

"From what I've seen I 've always been alone" he said, running off until nobody could catch up.

Flashback end.

Goo's eyes widened in shock as she took in the sight of Mac. He looked older, with lines etched into his face that spoke of hardship and weariness, but the same

spark of mischief danced in his eyes. She blinked, unsure if it was a figment of her imagination or if the stress of the project was finally getting to her.

"Mac?" she whispered, her voice shaking.

Mac looked up, puzzled despite not recognizing her at first glance.

"Yes? Do we know each other, Ma'am?"  
Mac asked kindly.

Goo's eyes searched his, looking for the glimmer of recognition she so desperately hoped to find. "It's Goo," she said softly.  
"From Foster's."

Suddenly Mac's eyes widen, and he presses a palm on his head, trying not to get some sort of dizzy.

"Goo? Short for Goo Goo ga ga?" He asked. "I... I forgot about all of that.. Foster's home... Really? That Goo?"

Mac still couldn't believe it: she certainly didn't speak ten words a second nor have a late 60s fashion sense anymore.

"I guess we've both changed," Goo said with a sad smile, looking at Mac's worn out shoes.

Mac smirked.

"Good to see you again too, Lolipop Star" he said, somewhat carefree "so how's everything been since my... absence?"

Goo felt a pang of bitterness at his casual tone but pushed it aside. "It's been..."

interesting," she replied, "Eduardo took over the house, and it's still a madhouse. But everyone's doing okay, I guess."

"Huh" he said "good to see Fosters is still standing, though I am sorry about Madam F's passing not too long ago. Would've gone, but... you know how it is"

Goo nodded solemnly, the memory of the funeral still fresh in her mind. She had been the one to break the news to the rest of the friends and had felt a profound sense of loss herself. Madam Foster had been like a mother to them all.

"Welp... Gotta be somewhere in an hour" Mac said as he slowly walked backwards and started turning around "Glad to see you've taken care of yourself, Goo, keep up the good work"

Goo's eyes widened in disbelief. "Wait!" she called out, setting aside her laptop and standing up from the chair. "You can't just leave like that! We have so much to talk about!"

Mac walks back, sighing yet somewhat patient.

"Heh, guess we've only changed a bit after all" he began "So, what's on your mind?"

Goo took a deep breath, trying to organize the jumble of thoughts racing through her head. "Why did you leave, Mac?" she asked, her voice tinged with a hint of accusation.

Mac rolled his eyes a bit.

"Goo, you knew my childhood was in deep shit as it was" said Mac, surprisingly firm yet somehow nonchalant "My brother, My Mom..."

Mac hesitated before working the courage to bring his name up.

"Him...Bloo...Constantly throwing me those "surprise parties" as though I didn't have enough on my plate then. I guess I got tired of being treated like a dormat forever, even if it meant looking for my father who had long remarried. You can't pretend they were perfect times either, Goo"

Goo felt a sharp sting, his words cutting through her like a knife. It was true, Foster's had been a refuge for all of them, but she had never really thought about how much harder it might have been for

Mac with his home life.

Mac once again sighed, realizing how different things were yet at the same time weren't.

"I did everything I could, Goo, but I'm just not that same thrill seeking kid with glucose related problems anymore" He added.

Goo's eyes searched his, looking for any sign of regret or sadness, but all she found was a strange sort of peace. It was clear that Mac had made his choice and had come to terms with it.