



PROMPT #3: Your main character has been stranded on a desert island for months. Alone... or so they thought. One morning, they wake up to a message written in the sand.

Enough

by Alexis Kessens

Mason cracks an egg on the hot skillet and watches the clear runny mess instantly harden into white. Some of the cooking oil escapes and clings noncommittally to the outer edge, the rest remaining trapped underneath. Mason has always been a morning person. He always thought that no matter what job he had, no matter the coworkers or the boss or the issues in his personal life, he would always have his mornings, his eggs and his Great Value brand coffee and creamer, maybe bacon on his birthday. He prides himself on his ability to appreciate the simple things. He watches as the steam rises off the egg, wondering what he'd do if they went away.

Another thing about Mason is that he's a good guy. An honest guy. The kind of guy who holds the door open for women, not because they're women, but because it's a nice thing to do. He holds the door for men, too, when the opportunity presents itself. He can't remember the last time he did that.

Mason puts his shades on and goes outside with his slightly stale coffee. There's a dolphin on the mug. He thinks it's cute. He looks out at the horizon over the still ocean, not letting himself put his toes in the sand. There's a message etched onto its surface. It's low tide.

Nice junk!

-hungrydiva425
via Twitter

Mason erases the message with his foot and goes back inside.

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Mason cracks his morning egg and lets it sit on the skillet. Mason doesn't concern himself with things he can't control. Part of being an adult is knowing what's what. The egg whitens, slowly this time because he forgot to turn on the insta-stove beforehand. The white bubbles within the murky clear. Then, eventually, the egg looks just the same as it should have, but less crispy. Still good, Mason thinks. Tastes the damn same. Maybe not everyone would agree.

Mason puts his suit on and opens the back door of his beach house, walking down the long metal hallway, flicking back loose strands of hair. The gates open and he walks out on stage, the bright lights blinding him as he makes his way to his chair. He's a little late, but they like that, he hopes.

The annoying New California girl had been voted off, Mason discovers. He didn't care for her much at all, but they liked that she said whatever came to mind, and all of the elderly liked her long pink nails.

The question for today is about the war. Mason doesn't think much of it, especially since the country didn't have much to do with starting it anyway. He squints through the light to find the announcer, but he can't make him out.

"We're now looking for a response from Grant. Grant, if you were in charge, would you continue this war?"

Mason perks up a little, turning his head slightly toward his left. "Well, sir, to tell you the truth, I believe that we should focus on our problems here at home."

"Alright, now for a response from Mason."

A spike of fear shoots through Mason; he expected a follow-up question for Grant, but he realizes that he should have known better than that. He thinks of the reports of the Lithuanians bombing along the coastline, but he decides against bringing that up. He imagines the soundbite circulating on Sinclair Reels.

"Mason, the people at home love you."

"Is that so?"

"Of course. They like all of you, now, but they especially like you, boy. You were nominated because people like you. They trust you, and they think you're an honest person."

The modern electorate wants to know what they're getting, and with you, we know we're getting an average joe, and we could all need that. No surprises. And we here at the studio would like to say... damn, Mason, you sure do like eggs, boy! I saw a clip of citizens wearing egg hats and calling themselves eggheads."

Mason makes an effort to process the label of "egg boy." At least he starts off the morning right, every morning, which is something that not everyone can say.

Mason isn't sure who would think of him as honest, either. He's nice, sure, maybe even to the level of being a bit of a pushover, but textbook *honesty* is a little more dubious. Mason would lie to Jesus himself to get out of a fart accusation, for instance.

"We're now going to ask a question about the economy. Alice, you're going to go first on this one. What should the country do, moving forward, to ensure economic prosperity?"

Alice adjusts her pantsuit. "I believe that the citizens of this country need to take a long look at themselves. This is not something that one person alone can solve. We need to take down the rich, and that will only happen if we become more involved in our local communities."

"Good, Alice. Good. Mason Johnston, the same question for you. How should we handle money in this country?"

Mason forces his sweat back into his pores. Honest people don't sweat. *An easy one*, he thinks. "I believe in fiscal responsibility." He pauses. "But, I also believe that we should take care of people." Then he adds, "...who deserve it." That sounds right.

He imagines the applause of millions, remembering when he was in debate club and his classmates' parents would pity clap. He leaves the stage and blinks the sun spots away.

The announcer takes his phone out of his pocket and checks the Twitter poll.

"The results are in. The winner of Election Island is... Alice... not you. There's just something that we don't like about you, but we can't quite put our fingers on it. Mason, you're the winner." The announcer removes his headset. "Hey, can someone on set make sure that we got a good take of that? Her expression is damn priceless. I want that online."

The live studio audience stands and applauds with a soundboard app on their phones. Mason joins in on the clapping. He keeps clapping because he won and he can finally get some sleep and have some eggs in the morning.