

MacCready's Lucky Cap

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Summary:

My take on how MacCready may have left the Gunners and ended up in Goodneighbor

Characters:

- Robert Joseph MacCready
- Daisy (Fallout 4)
- Gunners - Character

Additional Tags:

- Conversations
- Difficult Decisions
- Shooting Guns
- Blood and Violence
- Mild Language

Words: 1382

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Squinting through the scope of his rifle, MacCready felt the familiar pattern of the bottlecap's fluted edge inside his cheek. A blue Nuka Cola Quantum cap. A lucky cap.

Belly flat atop a high rock, warming his nuts on the hot granite and hoping a radscorpion didn't sting his ass, he waited while Winlock moved the team into position. He'd cover their retreat, if retreat became necessary, but Gunners always picked easy targets. Hell, most targets were easy, when you had more guns, ammo, robots and combat armor than anyone else in the Commonwealth.

He'd tried to convince Winlock to pick off the ferals from a distance, but he got the usual bullshit about following orders, chain of command, if he wanted to eat he'd do as he's told, blah, blah, blah. With the Gunners, everything had to be an "engagement" with "protocol," and something

always had to get blown up. They were almost as bad as the Brotherhood, out to prove they had bigger grenades than everyone else.

Making mental notes of the wind speed and direction, MacCready rolled the cap around his mouth. He swallowed hot spit and imagined sweetness, hoping to find a bit of soda still clinging to the metal. Wishful thinking. His stomach growled.

Drawing a long, slow breath, he scoped a cluster of wrecked railway cars for lurching shapes, thinking maybe he'd thin them out while he waited. But he didn't see anything. He adjusted the brim of his hat, exhaled, and heard the pop of gunshots, joined by the distant but unmistakable hum of their assaultron powering up to fire its deadly laser.

What the hell are they shooting at?

He grabbed his binoculars and spotted a settler returning fire from behind a stack of crates on the station platform. Another crouched behind a tree several yards away, and a third appeared in the upper window of the depot.

Shit, shit, shit, shit, shit. He promised his little boy he wouldn't say bad words, never promised he wouldn't think them. Ferals, he could kill all day long. But these were people, damn O'Brien and his lousy recon.

Grenades sent up clouds of blood, dirt and shrapnel, obscuring his view, and the exchange ended before he could fire a shot. When the dust settled, he saw a couple of settlers drop their weapons and raise their hands in the air.

Barnes and Milo shot them, bursting their heads like festering bloatflies.

MacCready gathered his rifle and pack, shoved the blue bottlecap in his pocket, and climbed down from his perch.

Winlock saw him jogging toward the train station and yelled. "What the hell are you doing? You're s'posed to be on that ridge."

"These aren't ferals! Ferals don't surrender!"

"A ghoul's a ghoul." Winlock planted his boot in the back of a wounded settler who tried to crawl away. Winlock ran him through with a bayonet. Cheap bastard wouldn't use bullets unless he had to.

"This is bullshit. Synths, mutants, ferals, sure, but I didn't sign on to murder people for no reason. What are we, raiders now?"

“They ain’t people, shit stain.” Winlock jabbed a finger in MacCready’s face. “You’re on notice. Keep it up and you’ll be busted down to private, and I’ll bust a few teeth outta your smart-ass mouth.”

A demotion meant a smaller cut, so MacCready clamped his lips shut. Worse than a demotion, he might just up and disappear, like Zachariah. Gomez said he’d bugged off, Barnes called it AWOL, but for all MacCready knew, the guy was dead in a ditch somewhere, a bayonet in the back.

Winlock started delegating. “Jansen, Gomez, perimeter. Milo, Trash, scavenge. O’Brien, corpse duty. Be thorough, but don’t spend too much time with your finger up their asses or I’ll start thinking you’re a sick fuck.”

He paused for scattered laughter. MacCready didn’t laugh because O’Brien *was* a sick fuck.

“MacCready, lookout. Barnes, with me.”

“Yes, sir.” MacCready hated calling anybody “sir” but most of all anybody who didn’t deserve it, like this lunatic.

He walked around the depot until he found a ramshackle catwalk. One thing about being malnourished as a kid, he might not be strong, but his skinny ass could be quiet. Without a sound, he climbed the scaffolding and peered across the flat rooftop.

A ghoul crouched behind a row of metal barrels, with her back to him. She still had a full head of hair, or maybe a wig. Her peeling, blistered hands loaded a 10mm.

He crept close, aimed for her heart, and waited a whole three minutes before she glanced over her shoulder and saw him.

She sighed, shaking her head and lowering her weapon. “Can’t believe I let a smooth-skinned kid get the drop on me. What a way to go.” She had a softer voice than most ghouls but still sounded like she’d smoked two packs of cigarettes a day since the war 200 years ago.

“I don’t want to kill you. Just tell me where to find guns, food, ammo. Something to keep them busy, and I’ll forget we ever met.”

“You’d do that for me? I was gonna shoot your friends.”

MacCready crouched, lowering his rifle. “Yeah, well, they shot your friends, first.”

“Was getting sick of those assholes, anyway. Couldn’t keep their hands to themselves and never paid their bills.” She gestured. “There’s a boxcar with food and ammo, over there, the one that’s on it’s side, near the water. We good?”

“Yeah. And... uh, those Gunners, they're not really my friends, either.”

Unlike most ghouls, she still had lips, which curled up in a smile. “What's your name, kid?”

“MacCready.”

“Well, then, MacCready, you oughta leave that outfit before you get yourself killed. Would be a terrible waste of a good-looking man.”

It had been a while since anyone said he was good-looking. He tried real hard not to think of Lucy. His wife was the only person ever said anything nice who wasn't trying to weasel something out of him.

“You don't need to butter me up, I already said you could go.”

She looked him up and down, thinking. “Why don't you come with me? I wouldn't mind having another gun around, and you're not like the rest of those goons.”

“I need caps, lady. I...” The Gunners had no time for sob stories and it was eating him up inside, so he told her. “I got a sick kid.”

“I'm real sorry to hear that. I am. How about you make sure I arrive in Goodneighbor and I'll make sure you get 200 caps.”

“Offering me a job? Are you for real?”

“And I'll put in a good word for you with the mayor. He's an old friend.”

“You know Hancock?” Everybody'd heard of the notorious leader of the Commonwealth's second largest city. Even the Gunners wouldn't mess with him.

“Is there another mayor? C'mon, sugar, we gotta get while the getting is good. Is it yes or no?”

Maybe she was full of crap, maybe she wasn't. Goodneighbor wasn't exactly safe, but neither was running around with the Gunners. There was no telling when another operation like this one would lead to killing more innocent people, or another reprimand would lead to disciplinary actions. He didn't know how much longer he could control his “smart-ass mouth,” and he certainly didn't trust these clowns not to get him killed on one of their “special ops.” Then there'd be no one to find the cure for his son.

“Alright, I'm in. Who am I working for?”

“You can call me Daisy. You get them busy with that boxcar, I'll take the road east and wait for you under the first bridge. Don't let me down.”

He warned her to avoid Jansen and Gomez, and she left the way he'd come up. He went to the edge of the roof and shouted at Winlock.

"Sergeant! I can see another boxcar, past the tracks, by the river."

Barnes answered. "Thanks, shit stain! I'll grab all the good stuff before you can get there!" He laughed with that stupid, snorting guffaw that grated on MacCready's nerves.

Fishing the blue bottlecap out of his pocket, he popped it in his mouth again and went after Daisy.

Man, the Gunners were gonna be pissed.

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