

COMMUTERS

by

Brian Schwab

55 Riverwalk Pl. Apt 414
West New York, NJ 07093
Bsschwabb@aol.com
(484) 241-7045

FADE IN:

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - MARY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Large. Meticulously clean and organized. Morning breaks, illuminating walls lined with dance memorabilia and old competition trophies. A worn, dirty pair of ballet shoes hangs above the bed.

On the dresser, sit several framed pictures of DAVID, late-twenties, clichéd businessman.

MARY FOREMAN, early twenties, fit and pretty, is fast asleep. Though she lies beneath the covers, the sheets remain oddly well made.

The alarm clock BUZZES. Mary wakes and shuts it off. Takes a deep breath, feeling well rested and ready for the day.

This moment of peace is quick interrupted by loud BANGING on the door.

MR. FOREMAN (O.S.)
Get up! You're going to be late.

Mary rolls her eyes and tosses off the covers.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. STEPHEN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

With blackout curtains drawn, the sun scarcely illuminates the messy space. The floor can barely be seen beneath the piles of dirty laundry and notebooks, each of which is filled with notes and hand-edited stories.

The walls are lined with classic movie posters.

STEPHEN CLYMER, early twenties, handsome but unkempt, is asleep in bed.

After a moment, his cellphone RINGS. Stephen groans, rolls over and searches through one bloodshot eye.

CELLPHONE

An alarm on the front screen - "7:15 AM: Are You Trying To Shower Today?"

STEPHEN silences the phone and rolls back over.

In Mary's BATHROOM, toiletries carefully line the sink in order of when each will be used. Upbeat music PLAYS from the speakers of an iPhone as the shower runs.

After a moment, the shower turns off and Mary steps out, dancing to the beat as she dries her hair.

Stephen has not moved. His cellphone RINGS. He rolls out of the covers and searches for it.

CELLPHONE

An alarm on the front screen - "7:45 AM: Are You Trying to Look Presentable Today?"

STEPHEN silences the phone and rolls back over.

Mary dances to the music as she brushes her teeth. Her moves are very premeditated and choreographed.

Stephen is still asleep. His cellphone RINGS. He rolls out of the covers and grabs it.

CELLPHONE

An alarm on the front screen - "8:00 AM: How Many Sick Days Do You Have Left?"

STEPHEN stares at his phone, contemplating. Drops his head and meanders out of bed.

In her BEDROOM, Mary stands in the corner where, on the laundry rack, five neatly pressed pants suits hang. Grabs two hangers, compares and picks one.

END INTERCUT.

INT. STEPHEN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Messy. Filled with cheap hand-me-down furniture. On the mis-colored couch, sit Stephen's four HOUSEMATES, late 20s, grungier than they should be for their age. They laugh obnoxiously as they play video games and smoke.

Stephen enters from his bedroom, wearing jeans, a polo and backwards ballcap.

STEPHEN

What are you guys doing up already?

HOUSEMATE 1

Try up still.

HOUSEMATE 2

Dude, you missed a hell of a night.

STEPHEN

Yeah, I heard.

HOUSEMATE 3

From who?

STEPHEN

No, I literally heard. You know...
 (points to his bedroom)
 ...from right there.

HOUSEMATE 4

Really?

STEPHEN

Yeah. I know my thin, cracked,
 bedroom door looks soundproof and
 all, but if I listen real hard, I
 can still make out every single
 goddamn noise in the entire house.

HOUSEMATE 1

Ah, yeah. It was epic!

Stephen grabs his messenger bag and walks out.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY

MR. FOREMAN, professional, powerful, intimidating and imposing, sits at the table reading news stories on his iPad as MRS. FOREMAN, somewhat submissive housewife, serves him his breakfast.

Mary enters and joins her father at the table. He immediately checks his watch.

MR. FOREMAN

Is your work having a half day
 today?

MARY

Dad, stop. You know when I wake up.

MR. FOREMAN

Hmmm... that must be nice.

MARY

My train doesn't leave for twenty more minutes and that gets me there at ten-of-nine.

MR. FOREMAN

Ten of nine? Good. I would think you'd want to get in early given what's going on this week, but that's just me. Speaking of which, have you heard anything.

MARY

For the millionth time, no. I said I'd let you know. I'm probably not going to find out until Friday.

MR. FOREMAN

Just so you're taking this opportunity as seriously as I am.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - PLATFORM - DAY

Crowded with professionally dressed men and women who patiently await the train. Stephen stands in front, barely able to stay awake.

Mary approaches, coffee cup in each hand. The two stand next to each other, facing front.

SUPER: "MONDAY."

Mary hands Stephen a cup.

MARY

Here's your chocolate milk. The cashier asked me if my son wanted it in a big boy cup or an Iron Man, collectable, kiddie cup.

Stephen casually glances down.

MARY

No, I did not get you the superhero cup.

Stephen hides his disappointment.

STEPHEN

I like your outfit. Are you like a professional lesbian now?

MARY

I like your outfit too. Tell me, are you coming from or going to your adult, slow-pitch softball league.

STEPHEN

With a pants suit like that, I think we both know who the softball player would be in this situation.

A train BLOWS its horn as it pulls in front of the two. Stephen lets out a disappointed sigh.

STEPHEN

Shit.

INT. TRAIN CAR - DAY

Crowded, yet almost uncomfortably quiet. Filled with typical businessmen, all appearing to be devoid of personality.

Stephen and Mary enter and move towards an open row up front. Sit and situate their belongings as Mary receives a text.

Stephen spots a man standing in back, wearing a shirt and tie with an obnoxious leather jacket over top. Stephen cringes and shakes his head in disgust.

Mary sighs in frustration. Stephen turns back and sees her on her phone.

STEPHEN

Already?

An annoyed Mary shakes her head.

STEPHEN

What, he didn't get it all out of his system during breakfast?

Mary is visible on edge as she responds to the text.

STEPHEN

Seriously, I don't understand how you stay in that house.

MARY

Because I apparently live in a world where a college graduate, working full time still has to choose between a shoebox or a house full of strangers. Whatever, renting an apartment is a waste of money.

STEPHEN

Living at home is a waste of your twenties.

MARY

If you're not paying off a mortgage then you're just throwing money away every month.

As he gazes back towards the leather jacket wearing man:

STEPHEN

At least you'll have your freedom.

MARY

I figure if I keep building equity, I can be out within the year.

STEPHEN

Sorry, I'd love to debate some more, but I'm really going to need to channel my energy towards hating this asshole's outfit.

LATER

Stephen dozes in his seat, baseball cap pulled over his eyes. His nap is interrupted by the CLICKING of an iPhone.

Stephen does his best to ignore the annoyance, but to no avail. The CLICKING continues.

He finally turns to Mary, who texts on her cellphone.

STEPHEN

Excuse me. Some of us aren't awake yet. Can you wait until you get to work to start being a dork please?

MARY

Sorry. I'm just texting.

STEPHEN

What the hell could you be texting about this early in the morning?

MARY

It's David. Well, I'm texting David. He's at work so he's probably busy.

Stephen hides his disapproval.

STEPHEN

That's still going on?

MARY

For your information, I was just texting to wish him a happy two-week anniversary.

STEPHEN

Do these two weeks count as dating if you've never seen the guy in real life?

MARY

He's busy. Unlike you, David is very ambitious.

STEPHEN

Unlike me, David is some fat, black chick.

MARY

What?

STEPHEN

All I'm saying is I watch a lot of shit on TV and there's, like, a seventy percent chance David is some black lady from the Midwest. Mexican at the very least.

MARY

I can assure you that David is, in fact, a man.

STEPHEN

Where did you meet this guy again?

MARY

Online.

Stephen is disgusted.

STEPHEN

Your internet dating profile? Yuck.
I knew I hated him for a reason.
What's the name of that site you're
on?

MARY

BusinessMeeting.com

Stephen pretends to gag.

MARY

What's wrong with internet dating?

STEPHEN

Nothing's wrong with internet
dating. What's wrong is your
profile.

MARY

What's wrong with my profile?

STEPHEN

I looked it up. Under your career
section, you say that you're a
business analyst for an insurance
company. Your "about me" says
you're an analyst for an insurance
company. Under your "likes and
interest," you put insurance
analytics.

MARY

So?

STEPHEN

Do you know the only thing more
boring and pathetic than that
profile?

MARY

What?

Pointing to Mary's cellphone:

STEPHEN

A guy who would take non-ironic
interest in that profile.

MARY

Oh, James-freakin'-Dean over here.
Big shot from the mailroom. How
would you spice it up?

Stephen stops and thinks.

STEPHEN

You're right. There's no saving that shit.

MARY

What? My job is interesting.

STEPHEN

Please! A business analyst for an insurance company? The only thing interesting about your job is that you have the word "anal" in your title. And even that stopped being funny after like, the first week.

Mary shakes her head and returns to her text.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - STREET - DAY

Stephen and Mary approach a large office complex. In big letters across the building - "AmerInsured."

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - ELEVATOR BANKS - MOMENTS LATER

Stephen and Mary approach and press the call button. The doors open - PETEY, older, overly-friendly stands inside. His eyes light up when he spots Stephen.

PETEY

Stevie Wonder!

Stephen turns to leave, but Mary grabs him by the collar and spins him around. The two step into the--

ELEVATOR

Stephen avoids eye contact with Petey, who continues to stare, like an excited puppy.

STEPHEN

Hey, Petey. How are you?

PETEY

As good as I can be on a Monday morning. Am I right?

Stephen turns to Mary, unable to hide his disgust.

MARY
Don't be a dick.

As the doors close, an OVERWEIGHT WOMAN waddles towards.

OVERWEIGHT WOMAN
Hold that elevator!

Stephen smiles.

STEPHEN
I got you.

He frantically presses the "doors close" button. Mary smacks his hand away and holds the doors open.

MARY
Don't be a dick.

The woman continues to waddle towards the elevator at a frustratingly slow pace.

STEPHEN
Take your time.

Mary elbows him in the rib.

STEPHEN
Ow. What? I said "take your time."
I was being polite.

The woman gets in and presses the "Floor 2" button. Stephen turns to her. As the doors close:

STEPHEN
Really?

PETEY
Looks like this train is making
local stops today. Am I right?

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - CUBICLES - MOMENTS LATER

The room is buzzing. A number of PROFESSIONALS rush around with armfuls of folders and stacks of papers. Stephen and Mary enter.

MARY
All I'm saying is that maybe
there's a reason she couldn't take
the stairs.

As he touches all of the items hanging from the wall:

STEPHEN

Yeah, I'm familiar with the concept
of gravity.

As they approach Mary's desk, they see PAUL, middle-aged,
uncomfortable, always with an unwarranted smirk on his face.

MARY

Morning, Paul.

Still with a smirk, Paul pretends to be cranky.

PAUL

Ugh. Do not try to talk to me
before I've had my coffee.

He laughs.

PAUL

I'm just kidding. How are you?

MARY

Good.

STEPHEN

What's up, Paul? How was your
weekend?

PAUL

Friday I had the mother-in-law
over, so, you know...

He pretends to shoot himself.

PAUL

I'm just kidding. She's actually a
wonderful woman.

STEPHEN

You're just kidding? Oh, thank God!
For a minute there, I actually
thought you committed suicide by
firearm over the weekend. Phew!
Thanks for clearing that up for me.

PAUL

Yeah. Yeah.

He nods, lingering for a few seconds too long before sitting
back at his desk.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

Foreman!

RICHARD FRANKLIN, overweight, mustache, a poor comb-over, approaches. He wears a full suit, complete with pink pocket square and matching tie.

MARY

(to herself)

Come on. I haven't even sat down yet.

FRANKLIN

Nice of you to finally join us. It's okay though. The American people just called. They said they were going to be extra careful this morning. They won't be needing any insurance until Mary decided to finally make her way in.

Mary turns to the clock on the wall - "9:12."

MARY

Sorry, Sir. The trains are running on a temporary delay today.

FRANKLIN

Temporary delay, huh? I just hope this isn't going to be a regular thing.

MARY

I don't think the temporary delay is going to be a regular thing because, you know, temporary.

FRANKLIN

Are you giving me attitude?

MARY

No, Sir. Sorry, Sir. It won't happen again.

FRANKLIN

Let me remind you that performance reviews are this Friday and if you're interested in that senior analyst position, I'm going to need to know you're committed.

MARY

I'm very committed, Sir. I'll take those twelve missing minutes out of my lunch today.

FRANKLIN
That's more like it.

Stephen has a giant grin across his face.

STEPHEN
What's up, Dick?

Franklin rolls his eyes.

FRANKLIN
Clymer.

He looks Stephen up and down.

FRANKLIN
Nice hat. Don't you have some mail
to attend to?

STEPHEN
Nice pocket square. Don't you have
some males to attend to?

Franklin couldn't be less amused. Mary tries her best to hide her embarrassment.

FRANKLIN
How clever.

He drops a stack of papers onto Mary's desk.

FRANKLIN
Today.

MARY
Yes, Sir.

Franklin looks at Stephen, shakes his head and walks off.

PAUL (O.S.)
Man. If that got any more heated, I
thought a gunfight might just break
out.

Stephen and Mary turn to Paul, who was watching from his desk the whole time.

PAUL
I'm just kidding. I know neither of
you would ever resort to violence.

Stephen and Mary stare blankly at Paul who nods, chuckles and turns back to his desk.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - MAILROOM - DAY

A far more relaxed scene. MAILROOM EMPLOYEES are all dressed in polo shirts and khaki pants.

Stephen enters and immediately runs into ARNOLD DUGAN, meek, dorky, socially awkward but means well.

ARNOLD

A very good morning to you,
Stephen.

As he walks right past:

STEPHEN

Hey, Arnold.

Arnold rushes to catch up.

STEPHEN

How was your weekend?

ARNOLD

My weekend? Talk about a wild time!
After I got home on Friday, I tried
to get a group of guys to go out
for dinner. That's the one I
invited you to. So, I called up...

As Arnold rambles on, Stephen spots several COWORKERS mocking him for putting up with Arnold. The group laughs as they reenact Stephen and Arnold's "adorable" relationship, swooning and blowing kisses to one another.

Stephen, having a reputation to uphold, chuckles and plays along, shaking his head and mocking Arnold behind his back as he talks.

The two continue towards Stephen's desk, where on the wall Stephen spots a--

COLORFUL FLYER

In bright, fun text: "Employee Evaluations: Friday 3 PM."

STEPHEN points to the flyer. Cutting Arnold off:

STEPHEN

What is this?

ARNOLD

Performance reviews. We had a meeting about it last week.

STEPHEN

Where was I?

ARNOLD

You were there, but if I remember correctly, you were really preoccupied with Dustin's new pants.

STEPHEN

Oh yeah. He wore those designer skinny jeans.

ARNOLD

You told him his outfit made you want to "ralph Lauren" then you spent the rest of the meeting coming up with new nicknames: Blobby Hilfiger, Calvin Recliner, Michael Four-Course, Hot Cocoa Chanel. It really went on and on.

STEPHEN

Yeah. I didn't get much accomplished after that. So they're doing those cuts down here too?

ARNOLD

Unfortunately. But I heard a rumor that the ops team might be expanding and looking to promote from within. So...

He crosses his fingers for luck. Stephen stares at the flyer.

STEPHEN

(under his breath)

Shit.

CARROLL, peppy and energetic approaches the two. With her is ANTONIA, sexy, exotic, piercing blue eyes.

ARNOLD

Uh-oh! Better quiet down, buddy. Can't have the boss lady listening in on our boy talk.

CARROLL

A couple of wild guys like you, I don't even want to know.

Stephen rolls his eyes.

STEPHEN
Morning, Carroll.

Antonia smirks, casually checking him out. As they continue, Arnold is full of a sudden nervous energy, actively avoiding eye contact with the girls.

CARROLL
Stephen, Arnold, I'd like you two to meet the newest member of the AmerInsured family - Antonia DiVeroti.

Antonia shakes their hands.

ARNOLD
DiVeroti? Like chief of operations, DiVeroti?

ANTONIA
My uncle, yeah. I was supposed to intern for him, but cubicles aren't really my scene so I asked to come down here instead.

STEPHEN
Well, welcome to the mailroom... uh... family. If you decide to skip the reunion, I won't hold it against you.

She smiles.

ARNOLD
Uh-oh! Watch out for this guy. He's a real card. Be careful or he'll put you in one of his comedy books.

Stephen cringes, apparently not wanting that information to be made public.

ANTONIA
You write?

STEPHEN
Whenever I can pry my thoughts away from the captivating world that is supplemental accident insurance.

ANTONIA
That's so cool.

ARNOLD

And trust me, with the characters we have working around here, he's got plenty of material.

Antonia looks around - normal people going about their nominal work.

STEPHEN

Yeah... real wild times.

CARROLL

All right. We should keep this locomotive moving. So, uh... choo choo.

She laughs and walks off. Antonia lingers for a moment.

ANTONIA

It was nice meeting you.

She smiles at Stephen, then follows Carroll off. As she walks, her short cut shirt rides up a bit, exposing a tattoo on her lower back.

Arnold composes himself.

ARNOLD

Man. Is she a fox or what?

Stephen is less impressed.

STEPHEN

She's cute, I guess.

ARNOLD

You got that right. The intern seemed nice too.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - BREAK ROOM - DAY

Mary warms up her oatmeal in the microwave.

Standing around the water cooler are MEREDITH, matronly, huge glasses, tight perm, and JEREMY, loose tie, thinks he's younger and hipper than he really is.

Mary is already fed up, trying to ignore their conversation.

JEREMY

...so I look at all the papers he puts on my desk and I say "Jeez, if you're going to screw me like this, at least buy me dinner first."

Meredith cackles. She cannot believe what she's heard.

MEREDITH

You did not!

JEREMY

I sure did. Franklin almost exploded!

MEREDITH

Oh, Jeremy!

JEREMY

It was ridiculous. I mean, I thought we got rid of slavery in this country.

MEREDITH

Jeremy! You can't say that!

Mary turns to the two in disgust.

MEREDITH

I'm sorry. I try to keep him under control. I'm obviously not doing a very good job.

Meredith cackles again. Mary rolls her eyes, pulls her food out of the microwave early and leaves.

MEREDITH

See, Jeremy? Now she probably thinks we're crazy.

JEREMY

She wouldn't be wrong!

MEREDITH

Jeremy!

She cackles louder.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - MAILROOM - DAY

Antonia stands in the middle of a large circle of her coworkers. She slouches, unenthused and uncomfortable.

ANTONIA

A - my name is Antonia. I like to eat apples. My favorite hobby is archery. And I want to visit... I don't know. Alaska. Did I miss anything?

CARROLL

Favorite animal?

ANTONIA

Aardvark. Anteater. Whatever.

The group applauds and Antonia takes her seat.

CARROLL

That's so interesting. How long have you been doing archery?

ANTONIA

I don't do archery. That was just the first stupid answer I could think of.

Stephen smirks.

CARROLL

Okay. Thank you for sharing. Now that you've all met the new intern, it's time she got to know us a little better. Believe me, we got a couple of real cut-ups working in this office.

As he grabs Stephen by the shoulder:

ARNOLD

Oh boy, she's got that right!

Stephen casually moves his shoulder away from Arnold's grasp.

CARROLL

This is what we're going to do...

She pulls out a ten-gallon hat filled to the brim with folded pieces of paper.

STEPHEN

Oh no. Not the "Howdy Doody" hat.

ARNOLD

Oh yeah! The "Howdy Doody" hat!

CARROLL

We're going to pass around the "Howdy Doody" hat.

(MORE)

CARROLL (CONT'D)

Everyone's going to pick a card and either answer the question or do the dare that is written on it. Remember last time, Martin had to pretend to be a robot all day?

She stands and pretends to be a robot.

CARROLL

My name is Martin. Can you forward me that memo?

Arnold laughs as he joins in.

ARNOLD

The vending machine gave me kale chips again.

The two laugh hysterically.

STEPHEN

Apparently Arnold remembers.

CARROLL

Good times. All right. I'll go first.

As she rummages through the cards:

CARROLL

Come on. Big money. Big money. No whammies. No whammies.

She looks up, anticipating a big reaction, which she gets from Arnold who grabs Stephen's shoulder as he laughs hysterically. Stephen casually moves his shoulder away from Arnold's grasp.

She giggles and pulls out a card.

CARROLL

Here's a good one.

(reading)

"What is your favorite holiday tradition?" Well, my parents did a good job naming me, because I love to Christmas carol.

Arnold grabs Stephen's shoulder as he laughs.

ARNOLD

Oh, isn't that clever?

Stephen casually moves his shoulder away from Arnold's grasp. Carroll sits down and the group applauds.

CARROLL

Stephen, why don't you go next?

Stephen reluctantly stands and picks a card from the hat.

STEPHEN

(reading)

"Do your funniest dance to Taylor Swift's 'Shake it off.'" I'm not going to do that, so I'll just pick again.

ARNOLD

Aw, shoot. That would have been fun.

He picks another card from the hat.

STEPHEN

(reading)

"What is the best job you've ever had?"

CARROLL

I know for me, it was definitely that summer I spent scooping ice cream down at the shore. Death by chocolate, if you know what I mean.

ARNOLD

I sure do!

He laughs, reaching out to grab Stephen's shoulder. With his back turned, Stephen casually brushes Arnold's hand away.

CARROLL

How about you, Stephen?

STEPHEN

This is literally the only job I've ever had. So...

He looks over the sea of dim-witted faces.

STEPHEN

I guess I don't have a favorite.

Antonia chuckles. Carroll doesn't know how to react. The few people uncomfortably clap.

CARROLL
Okay... Arnold?

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - CUBICLES - DAY

Mary sits at her desk, bored. On her computer screen, she scrolls through a YouTube search of ballet videos.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)
Foreman!

Mary quickly minimizes the site.

MARY
Yes, Sir?

Franklin approaches, holding a large stack of files. Looks over to the empty desk next to Mary.

FRANKLIN
Have you seen Liz yet?

Mary shakes her head.

LIZ (O.S.)
Did I hear my name?

ELIZABETH RODRIGUEZ, middle-aged, Hispanic, excessive makeup, short dress, lots of cleavage, approaches holding her bags.

Franklin smiles and quickly fixes his lack of hair.

FRANKLIN
Are you just getting in now?

LIZ
Ugh, yes. I forgot to set my alarm before bed.

FRANKLIN
Long night?

Liz shoots Franklin a seductive stare.

LIZ
You have no idea.

Mary is uncomfortable.

FRANKLIN
You're something else. You know that, Elizabeth?
(MORE)

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

You'd forget your head if it wasn't
screwed onto your shoulders.

Liz laughs, playfully placing her hand on Franklin's chest.

LIZ

Oh, stop it.

Franklin holds out the stack of folders.

FRANKLIN

Hey, can you run these numbers for
me before lunch... or, you know,
whenever you get a chance?

LIZ

Oh, Richard. I really have a lot I
need to get done today. Is there
any way you can get somebody else
to handle all this silly paperwork?

As she puts her bags down, she leans over, giving Franklin a
view down her dress. He is mesmerized.

FRANKLIN

S-s-sure thing. No problem.

He tosses the files over his shoulder, onto Mary's desk.

FRANKLIN

Mary, I need you to run these
numbers.

MARY

But Sir--

FRANKLIN

Before lunch.

He walks off, catching his breath. Liz sits down, pulls out a
nail file and begins manicuring her nails.

Paul leans over the cubicle.

PAUL

Jeez, get a room. I'm just kidding,
I'm sure their relationship is
strictly professional.

Mary stares at the daunting piles of work now on her desk as
Paul lingers over her cubicle for a moment too long.

PAUL

Okay.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - MAILROOM - DAY

Stephen sits in the far corner, huddled over his notebook. As he writes, he does what he can to keep the notebook out of plain view.

ARNOLD (O.S.)
Has anybody seen Stephen?

Stephen's eyes pop off the page. Sees Arnold searching. Looks to the clock - "11:57." Panics and dives under the desk.

Antonia approaches and chuckles.

ANTONIA
What are you doing down there?

Stephen shushes her and pulls her under the desk. The two are practically cheek-to-cheek in the cramped space.

ANTONIA
What are we doing?

STEPHEN
Shhh! Every day, right before lunch, Arnold tracks me down and invites me to go out with him.

ANTONIA
And?

STEPHEN
And I'm out of excuses, so keep it down.

Stephen looks around for his notebook before realizing it has been left on top of the desk. He carefully reaches up and grabs it. The motion catches Arnold's attention.

Arnold approaches. Stephen cringes and holds his breath.

Arnold looks around for a moment and then wanders off. Stephen pokes his head out and breathes a sigh of relief.

STEPHEN
That was close. You almost blew my cover. It would have been another hour of figuring out which Disney character everybody in the office would be.

ANTONIA
Why not just tell him you don't want to hang out with him?

Stephen watches Arnold walk off with his typical happy-go-lucky attitude.

STEPHEN

Nah.

He turns to Antonia, quick to mask his empathy.

STEPHEN

I mean, where's the fun in that?

ANTONIA

Now that you're free, why don't we grab something to eat? Maybe you can show me around.

She bites her lip seductively.

STEPHEN

Sorry, I already have plans.

INT. DUANE READE - DAY

Stephen and Mary walk up and down the aisles, snacking on candy bars.

MARY

...and, of course, now I'm stuck doing her work again!

STEPHEN

So what, you don't have any skimpy dresses you can put on? I'm sure even you could out-sexy Paul.

(imitating Paul)

I'm just kidding. I'm sure he has a wonderful personality.

MARY

Stop it. Paul's always nice to you.

She groans.

MARY

I swear to God, if he gives her that promotion over me...

As they continue down, they run into Arnold.

ARNOLD

Well, hello. Fancy running into you here.

STEPHEN

Hi, Arnold. I was going to ask if you wanted to grab lunch but I couldn't find you after the meeting.

ARNOLD

You were?! Oh, shoot. Man, I would have loved that. Where were you looking for me?

STEPHEN

I tried the vending machines.

ARNOLD

Ah, I was at my desk.

STEPHEN

Your desk! I should have thought of that.

ARNOLD

Darn it. Darn it! Maybe next time.

STEPHEN

Yeah. Or not. Whatever.

Arnold chuckles.

ARNOLD

This guy.

They walk off in opposite directions.

STEPHEN

What were you saying?

MARY

Liz getting ahead.

STEPHEN

I think you mean Liz giving a-head.

MARY

I'm being serious.

STEPHEN

I'm sorry, but you have to admire that kind of ambition. Seeing Dick Franklin naked just to move up a job grade? So little reward yet so much ass.

As they turn to the next aisle, they run into Arnold again.

ARNOLD

Boy, oh boy. We really have to stop meeting up like this.

Stephen stares blankly at Arnold.

ARNOLD

This guy.

Arnold chuckles as they walk off in opposite directions. Mary steps towards the next aisle. Stephen stops her.

STEPHEN

He's not going to stop. Just give him a minute.

From the other end of the aisle, Arnold pokes his head around the corner, hoping to run into Stephen again.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - LOBBY - DAY

Stephen and Mary sit against the glass wall, eating sandwiches and watching the people as they walk by.

STEPHEN

I honestly don't know how you do it. The mailroom is like ten percent office and I still want to blow my brains out.

MARY

I don't know why you hate working here so much. Most of the people on our team are fine.

STEPHEN

I hate everyone we work with, but no more than I hate everyone we don't work with. I guess my problem with working in an office is being told how I have to feel. Being told how I have to act.

MARY

What do you mean?

STEPHEN

When you work in an office, you don't get to be a person who works in an office. You have to be an "office person." You know? You have to like your coworkers and care about their commutes.

(MORE)

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

You have to hate Mondays and need more coffee. You have to think management is a bunch of dummies because they just don't know how things really work.

MARY

You have to make jokes about Happy Hour at lunch.

STEPHEN

You have to use cool, sports phrases like, "Put your game face on," and "Let's ballpark this." Yuck. It's just so phony.

MARY

Yeah, but if you just--

Stephen spots a LATE BUSINESSMAN sprinting across the lobby.

STEPHEN

Hold on.

Mary watches as the man sprints towards security.

MARY

No way.

The man stops at security, scans his card, moves carefully through the turnstiles and runs off.

STEPHEN

Damn.

MARY

So what, you don't like small talk?

STEPHEN

I just don't understand why we as a society can't be honest and say, "Hey, I don't have anything meaningful to say to you. You don't have anything meaningful to say to me. So let's just not talk for a while."

MARY

Because that's weird.

STEPHEN

It's not weird. We're friends. We hang out all the time.

(MORE)

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

And every once in a while, a conversation ends and we don't have anything to say, so we just sit and appreciate the silence. We don't go, "Uh, uh, uh, it rained today." That's not how people act.

Mary nudges Stephen and points out another LATE BUSINESSMAN sprinting across the lobby, staring at his watch.

LATE BUSINESSMAN 1

Shit! Shit! Shit!

STEPHEN

You think?

LATE BUSINESSMAN 1

Hold that elevator!

The man sprints full speed towards security and runs crotch-first into the locked turnstile.

Stephen throws his hands up in excitement.

STEPHEN

Yes!

The man's groans echo through the room. The young, black, female SECURITY GUARD barely notices.

SECURITY GUARD

You needs to scan yo' card first.

From across the room, Antonia enters, carrying her recently purchased lunch. Immediately spots Stephen and Mary sitting together, high-fiving over what they just saw.

She is not pleased.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - ELEVATOR BANK - DAY

Mary and Stephen push the call button and wait.

STEPHEN

What are you going to do if you end up working for Liz Rodriguez?

MARY

I don't know. I'll ask her how Mr. Franklin's dick tasted.

The doors open - Petey stands inside. His eyes light up as soon as he sees Stephen.

PETEY
Stevie Spielberg!

STEPHEN
Goddammit.

The two step into the elevator. Stephen attempts to keep as much space between him and Petey as possible.

PETEY
I hear it's nice outside.

Stephen nods.

PETEY
I just hope it's not too nice. I might not come back. Am I right?

Stephen drops his head back.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - MAILROOM - DAY

Stephen enters and runs immediately into Arnold, who holds up a pen and paper.

STEPHEN
What's up, Arnold?

ARNOLD
Hey, buddy. I'm putting together a company wiffleball league. We're going to get together every Saturday and wanted to see if you'd be interested.

STEPHEN
Wiffleball league? That is tempting. You know how I love to pepper mild work colleagues into my weekends.

ARNOLD
We're just one guy short of a team.

Arnold hands Stephen the pen and paper.

ARNOLD
We even picked out a name - "Runs in the Family." I came up with it because we're like a family. And runs because--

STEPHEN

Yeah, baseball. I get it. You got these guys to sign up?

ARNOLD

Yes, sir. They told me they couldn't wait. I figure if a few of us show up early, we could set up...

As Arnold babbles on, Stephen spots several coworkers standing directly behind Arnold, mocking him and encouraging Stephen to sign the paper.

A strong feeling of guilt and empathy falls over Stephen as he realizes their plan.

STEPHEN

Hold on. Where are these games being played?

ARNOLD

Central Park.

STEPHEN

Central Park?! Oh no! Haven't you heard? All these Central Park leagues were cancelled.

ARNOLD

Really? Why?

STEPHEN

Uh... terrorists.

ARNOLD

Wow. Aw, that's too bad. Man, the guys are going to be so disappointed.

STEPHEN

Something tells me they'll get over it.

Stephen tosses Arnold his pen and walks off, patting him on the shoulder as he passes.

As he turns to his coworkers:

ARNOLD

Guys, I have some bad news.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Stephen and Mary stand next to a dirty food truck awaiting their meals. Stephen leans against the truck as Mary stands tall and proper, as if being interviewed.

MARY

I believe my time at Amer-Insured industries has really helped me hone my skill set. I took a position at a job and pay grade well below my capabilities as an opportunity to join such a prestigious organization, but given my completion of this advanced project, I feel I have proven myself as an invaluable asset, capable of taking on new and exciting responsibilities.

She catches her breath.

MARY

How was that?

STEPHEN

That was the most boring and pointless drivel I have ever heard... so I guess you're right on.

Mary pulls out a stack of note cards and reviews her answer.

STEPHEN

What are those?

MARY

I wrote down every question Mr. Franklin might ask me during my review with the best possible answers on the back.

STEPHEN

You're studying note cards for a performance review in hopes of becoming head analyst. You're such a nerd it's actually kind of hard to make fun of.

MARY

You try one.

STEPHEN

No, come on.

MARY

You have a review this week too.
You need to practice.

STEPHEN

Fine.

Mary pulls a random card from the stack.

MARY

Okay, Mr. Clymer. I see that you
have been working in the mailroom
for about two years now. Tell me,
where do you see yourself
eventually moving within this
company?

STEPHEN

Hard to say. I like what I do. I'm
good at what I do. I guess I'd have
to see what opportunities present
themselves.

Mary waits for more.

MARY

Is that it?

STEPHEN

Uh... thank you.

MARY

You're answering a question, not
making opening remarks. Is that all
you're going to say? That was so
blah.

STEPHEN

Exactly.

MARY

Huh?

STEPHEN

My goal this week is to stay under
the radar.

MARY

Why? I heard we might be bringing
some guys from downstairs up to our
ops team.

STEPHEN

My point exactly.

He scans Mary with his hand.

STEPHEN

I've seen what office life does to people. I'm not interested.

An old, greasy COOK sticks his head out of the food truck.

COOK

A Darrell and a veggie gyro.

Stephen and Mary grab their food.

STEPHEN

Thanks.

The two walk to a nearby picnic table and sit down.

STEPHEN

My goal on Friday is to just not get fired. No more. No less.

The two pull out their sandwiches. Stephen has ordered a large hoagie overflowing with fried food while Mary eats from a small pita.

STEPHEN

There's something wrong with you coming to the grease trucks and asking them to specially make you a vegetarian gyro.

MARY

Sorry, but I couldn't bring myself to order a "Fat Bitch."

Stephen chuckles as Mary's cellphone BUZZES. She pulls it out of her purse.

STEPHEN

Dilbert?

As she reads her text:

MARY

Of course.

STEPHEN

What's up?

MARY

David. I got tickets to see a magician in the city next weekend, but now he's saying he can't come.

STEPHEN
Why's he bailing?

MARY
He's going to some conference and
wants to go over his notes or
something.

STEPHEN
You guys are really committed to
keeping this relationship long
distance, aren't you?

MARY
I spent like eighty bucks on those.
Do you want to go?

STEPHEN
Ew.

MARY
Come on. This guy is supposed to be
funny. He does impressions and
stuff.

STEPHEN
Does he do an impression of
somebody more entertaining?

MARY
I thought you liked magicians.

STEPHEN
Nobody likes magicians. Ready? Here
is my impression of every magic
show ever...

He puts down his sandwich and sits up in his chair.

STEPHEN
All right. He's getting into a cage
of some sorts. And... he's gone.

He claps unenthusiastically.

STEPHEN
Okay, now he's getting into a box.
And... he's gone.

He claps unenthusiastically.

STEPHEN

Okay, now he's getting into a barrel. I wonder what's going to-- goddammit, he's gone.

He claps unenthusiastically.

MARY

That's not what happens.

STEPHEN

They should work on making their virginity disappear. Now that would be a showstopper.

MARY

Did you ever actually see a magic show?

STEPHEN

Yeah, when I was like twelve.

MARY

And?

STEPHEN

He took forty bucks and two hours of my life and transformed them into disappointment.

Mary chuckles.

STEPHEN

Why would you even get those? You don't like magic either.

MARY

No, but he does. I wanted to see the Russian Premier.

STEPHEN

What's that?

MARY

It's like the top dance company in the world. They're touring the city right now, doing Swan Lake.

STEPHEN

So why wouldn't you buy tickets to that?

MARY

David said he wouldn't be caught dead at a ballet.

STEPHEN

It's probably hard to find a guy who'd be into Swan Lake and you at the same time.

MARY

I know, but ever since I was a little girl, I always dreamed of joining the Russian Premier. They only come around every couple of years and I was looking forward to finally seeing them.

She shakes her head.

MARY

Whatever. I'm just pissed that I wasted so much money on these tickets.

STEPHEN

It's probably for the best. You can't have your first date be a magician.

MARY

Why not?

STEPHEN

Because your first date sets up your entire relationship. It says everything about who you are as a couple.

MARY

And what would going to magic show say?

STEPHEN

That you're both so boring, you're actually willing to pay some stranger to be interesting for you.

MARY

What about a movie?

STEPHEN

You have so little to say to each other that you're going to sit in a dark room where you don't have to talk all night.

MARY

What about an amusement park?

STEPHEN

You're seven.

MARY

All right, smart-ass, what would be your idea of an acceptable first date?

Stephen looks around the dirty, empty lot.

STEPHEN

This, right here.

MARY

We're sitting in a dirty parking lot eating shitty sandwiches.

STEPHEN

It's perfect. It's a guy and a girl and that's it. There are no distractions. There are no big spectacles. Just two people hanging out, talking, enjoying nothing more than each other's company. If you can do this, you know you're right for each other.

MARY

Well then...
(holds up her bottle of water)
To our first date.

Stephen holds up his can of soda.

STEPHEN

Our first date.

Stephen and Mary smile at one another. Just before they cheers, Mary's cellphone RINGS.

She stops to pull it out of her bag.

MARY

It's David.

She is conflicted. Contemplates for a moment before reluctantly giving in.

MARY

Do you mind if I grab this?

STEPHEN

Uh. Yeah, sure.

He quickly masks his disappointment with a chuckle.

STEPHEN

Try to talk him into going to that magician. That way I'm not stuck seeing David Lame.

Mary chuckles as she answers the phone. After she walks off, Stephen is left alone and a bit deflated.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Mr. and Mrs. Foreman quietly eat their breakfast as Mary enters. As Mr. Foreman checks his watch:

MARY

I know. I know.

She sits down and begins eating the breakfast already laid out for her.

MR. FOREMAN

You weren't here for dinner last night. You decide to work late?

MARY

No. Stephen and I grabbed a grease truck and hung out for a bit.

Mrs. Foreman quietly smiles, but her husband is not pleased.

MARY

Why do you get like that every time I bring Stephen's name up? He's never been anything but nice to you.

MR. FOREMAN

I don't know. I just wish you'd smarten up and stop wasting your time with that loser.

MARY

He's not a loser.

MR. FOREMAN

He's a mailroom loser and to make matters worse, he distracts you from your work. He's going nowhere and he's bringing you with him.

MARY

He does not distract me. And by the way, that loser just got invited to a leadership seminar a few months ago.

MR. FOREMAN

And I'm sure he lasted all of ten minutes.

MARY

He actually couldn't go. He had a family emergency.

MR. FOREMAN

Sounds about right.

MARY

You'd be surprised how ambitious he actually is.

As he clears his plate:

MR. FOREMAN

Tell him to talk to me when he gets a real job.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - PLATFORM - DAY

Mary stands in front of a large group awaiting the train.

SUPER: "TUESDAY."

Stephen approaches holding one plain, white coffee cup and one colorful, plastic, kiddie cup.

He hands the plain cup to Mary.

MARY

Really sticking with the whole backwards baseball hat and ungroomed facial hair thing, aren't you? Are you trying to convey that you're a fan of baseball or high school girls?

STEPHEN

Another pants suit, huh? Tell me, when does your "Every Man is a Rapist" book finally come out?

Mary holds up her coffee cup.

MARY

Thanks for the coffee. Did you go to Dunkin' Donuts because you know it's my favorite or because I told you about the Iron Man cups yesterday?

Stephen nonchalantly hides his cup behind his back.

MARY

That's what I thought.

The train BLOWS its horn as it pulls up. Stephen sighs.

STEPHEN

Shit.

INT. TRAIN CAR - DAY

Quiet. Mary is turned towards the window, sleeping with her earphones in. A bump in the track wakes her. Sits up and sees Stephen writing in his notebook.

MARY

What are you doing?

Stephen quickly rips the current sheet out of the notebook and holds it outside of Mary's field of vision.

STEPHEN

Good morning. What, you have a nightmare? You dream you broke a pencil point or something?

MARY

What were you writing?

STEPHEN

Uh. Nothing.

He sits back and chuckles.

STEPHEN

Just putting together a list of excuses.

(MORE)

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

You know, for when people ask me to hang out after work. Always need to have a few on-hand.

MARY

I see. Well, good luck with that.

She rolls back towards the window and closes her eyes.

STEPHEN

Yeah...

As he crumples up the sheet:

STEPHEN

Thanks.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - MAILROOM - DAY

The mailroom crew sit in a circle, eating their breakfast. Shove one another as they make crude comments and gestures. Overall, it is a very obnoxious scene.

After a moment, Arnold approaches, holding a stack of papers. Though his presence is ignored, he laughs along with the group, attempting to make himself a part of the joke.

ARNOLD

Hey, guys.

The group goes quiet as they turn to Arnold.

ARNOLD

I'm helping to put together a little team outing at the end of the month.

As he hands a paper to everyone:

ARNOLD

After work, we're all going to head up to Frames in Port Authority. Bowl a few games, grab a few snack, drink a few cold ones. It should make for a fun night.

The group feigns interest.

MAILROOM EMPLOYEE 1

Cold beer - I like the sound of that!

MAILROOM EMPLOYEE 2
Sounds like fun.

Arnold is filled with a mix of relief and excitement.

ARNOLD
Really?!

MAILROOM EMPLOYEE 3
Definitely. Count us in.

ARNOLD
Great!

Arnold begins to walk off, giant smile across his face. As he get a few steps away, the group bursts out in laughter.

Arnold looks back over his shoulder to see the men crumpling up the papers and throwing them at each other. His mood and excitement plummet.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - BREAK ROOM - DAY

Jeremy and Meredith giggle in the corner.

MEREDITH
You just keep it up mister. See what happens.

Mary enters and fixes herself a cup of coffee. Walks to the refrigerator and sees that the handle has been ripped off of the door. Looks around and sees it lying on the ground.

JEREMY
I guess one of the fatties got too excited for breakfast.

MEREDITH
Jeremy! Don't make fun.

JEREMY
Some of the guys we got working around here, I'm surprised they didn't take the whole door off.

MEREDITH
Jeremy!

Mary turns to the couple, struggling to masking her disgust.

MEREDITH
I'm sorry. Keeping this one in line is like a full time job.

JEREMY

Well I'm going out for drinks with the boys tonight, so get ready to put in some overtime.

MEREDITH

Jeremy!

Mary winces and rushes towards the exit.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - CAFETERIA - DAY

Crowded. Many different stations. Stephen enters, looks around and walks towards the smoothie bar. Looks up and sees the sign - "Smoothie Criminal." Rolls his eyes.

An overly excited BARISTA pops his head up and greets him.

BARISTA

And a berry good morning to you, Sir.

Stephen sighs.

STEPHEN

I would still like to order something from you, despite that greeting.

BARISTA

Certainly, Sir. Today's special is something we like to call "Keepin' the doctor away." It's a mix of four different nutrient packed vegetables blended with the sweet flavors of three different kinds of apples. Because you know what they say, "an apple a day--"

STEPHEN

Yeah, with the apples. I get it.

BARISTA

My personal recommendation is the vitamin rich blend of kale, kiwi, green grapes, avocado and a splash of lime juice. We call it the "Green Goblin."

Stephen bites his tongue.

STEPHEN

Can I just get this one here? The one with all the different fruits in it.

BARISTA

Oh, you mean the "Rooty Tooty Fresh and Fruity."

STEPHEN

The one with the bananas and strawberries and stuff.

BARISTA

Yes, we call that the "Rooty Tooty Fresh and Fruity."

STEPHEN

Yeah... I'm an adult, and we're in an office. So, I'm not going to call it that.

BARISTA

Right away, Sir.

He prepares the drink.

STEPHEN

And can I get a little of that whipped cream thrown on top?

BARISTA

Oh, you mean our "Whacky Wonderful Weekend Whip?"

Stephen looks off in disbelief.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - CUBICLES - DAY

Mary is hard at work, going through countless files and never-ending spreadsheets.

LIZ (O.S.)

Morning everyone!

Liz walks in, holding her bags and a cappuccino. Mary looks to her clock - "10:21."

As Liz walks past Mary's desk, she adjusts the cleavage of her dress and gives her a wink. Continues straight into Franklin's office.

LIZ
Hey, Richard!

FRANKLIN (O.S.)
Miss Rodriguez. Look at that little
number on you.

Liz SLAMS the door behind her.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - ELEVATOR BANK - DAY

Stephen approaches, presses the call button and waits. Takes
a sip of his smoothie.

STEPHEN
Dammit, that goofy bastard makes a
good smoothie.

As the doors open:

PETEY (O.S.)
Stevie Buscemi!

Stephen cringes as he looks up - Petey, as excited as can be.
He reluctantly enters the--

ELEVATOR

Stephen tries to keep his distance.

STEPHEN
How you doin', Petey?

PETEY
I'll be a lot better in about six
hours. Am I right?

As the doors close, Stephen dives for freedom but does not
make it in time. Trapped.

PETEY
Or maybe after a couple beers. Am I
right?

Stephen attempts to pry the doors open with his fingers.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - CUBICLES - DAY

Franklin leans over Mary's desk, mid-story. A group of suck
up employees gather around, captivated.

FRANKLIN

...so I say to her "Your dog
swallowed a sock? Sorry, but I
don't think foreign body ingestion
is covered!"

The group burst out in laughter. Mary looks around, unsure of where the joke was. As Franklin turns to her, she quickly pretends to laugh.

Franklin turns away and she is immediately confused again.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - HALLWAY - DAY

Empty. Stephen and Arnold turn the corner and walk towards one another from opposite ends. Arnold spots Stephen immediately, but is unsure of how to act. Quickly avoids eye contact. Looks down at his shoes. Checks the time. Flips through his papers.

Stephen smirks and stares Arnold down, enjoying the charade. As the two pass, Arnold feigns sudden surprise.

ARNOLD

Oh, hey Stephen.

STEPHEN

Oh, Arnold. I didn't see you there.

ARNOLD

Are you ready for one o'clock?

STEPHEN

Why, what happens at one o'clock?

Arnold is bursting at the seams.

ARNOLD

You'll see. I'll say this - I hope
you have your laughing hat on this
afternoon.

STEPHEN

Oh, boy.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Employees file in. In front, Carroll, Arnold and the rest of the SAFETY TEAM stand side by side in matching outfits, waving to each person as they enter.

Each team member's shirt has one large letter that, when next to each other, spell out "Safety First." A banner above their head - "Safety Training."

Mary and Stephen enter and sit in the back.

STEPHEN
What the hell is this?

Arnold spots Stephen and waves excitedly.

STEPHEN
Oh my God, I'm already
uncomfortable.

Stephen turns to Mary who cannot take her eyes off the group.

STEPHEN
Wow. You're really into this,
aren't you?

MARY
No. I just want to see if they
accidentally spell out a dirty word
as they walk around.

Stephen smirks.

Antonia enters. Looks around, spots Stephen and rushes to sit down next to him.

ANTONIA
Hey, Stephen.

Stephen nods. Mary doesn't approve.

CARROLL
Good afternoon! How's my team
feeling?!

The crowd politely applauds.

CARROLL
I can't hear you! I said "how's my
team feeling?!"

The crowd applauds slightly louder.

CARROLL
Come on, I know you can do better
than that!

STEPHEN
We can't. Move on.

CARROLL

As most of you are probably aware,
June is employee safety month. So,
I pulled together this group of
ragamuffins to form the safety
brigade. Give it up!

The team steps forward and waves. Uncomfortable silence.
Arnold winks and points at Stephen.

CARROLL

Now even though we work in
insurance, we don't like accidents.
At least, not in our office.

The audience laughs. Stephen squirms, uncomfortable in his
own chair.

STEPHEN

Holy shit. I'm not going to make
it.

Mary chuckles.

LATER

Stephen has fallen asleep. In front, two team members take
their bow and walk off. The group applauds, waking Stephen.

STEPHEN

What did I miss?

MARY

They sang a parody of "The Safety
Dance." Needless to say... very
literal.

Carroll applauds.

CARROLL

Okay, now we're going to act out a
little scene up here. I want you in
the audience to watch carefully and
tell us what we did wrong.

Carroll gets herself into character as her team scatters into
their positions.

CARROLL

Oh boy. What a day. I can't believe
Roger spilled his coffee all over
the break room again.

Carroll smiles and winks towards ROGER, a heavy-set man in the front row. He laughs along with the crowd good-naturedly.

Stephen shoots a disgusted look to Mary.

MARY

Shhh! This plot line is very complex. I'm trying not to fall behind.

Stephen chuckles.

CARROLL

I better get to work cutting up these documents. I wonder if anybody knows where the scissors are.

Arnold walks into the scene, holding a pair of scissors. The audience applauds.

ARNOLD

You can borrow my scissors.

CARROLL

Thank you, Careless Carl.

STEPHEN

Uh-oh.

MARY

I don't have a good feeling about this Careless Carl fellow.

Stephen laughs. Antonia notices and is visibly jealous.

CARROLL

Would you mind walking those over here?

ARNOLD

I have a better idea. Why don't I just throw them to you?

STEPHEN

Typical Careless Carl.

MARY

I'm actually rooting for the scissors in this scene.

Stephen laughs out loud, getting several people in the crowd's attention. A humbled Arnold shoos Stephen away, assuming his performance is the cause for laughter.

Antonia leans over, attempting to break up this moment.

ANTONIA
What are we, six?

Stephen politely nods.

STEPHEN
Yeah, really.

ANTONIA
What a bunch of losers. Seriously,
do these people have any friends?

The comment is a bit harsh for Stephen, but he forces an
small chuckle.

Arnold slowly pretends to throw the scissors.

CARROLL
And freeze.

The scene freezes.

CARROLL
Now who can tell me what that
knucklehead, Careless Carl, did
wrong?

Hands shoot up all over the crowd.

MARY
Is it ironic that a safety seminar
is making me want to kill myself?

Stephen bursts out laughing. Antonia cannot hide her disdain
for Mary.

INT. TRAIN CAR - NIGHT

Stephen plays on his phone while Mary dozes. As she drifts
off to sleep, her head lands on Stephen's shoulder.

Stephen smiles.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

Stephen and Mary step off of the train as it pulls off. Mary
stretches as she lets out a loud yawn.

MARY

Do you want to grab something to eat?

Stephen checks his watch.

STEPHEN

No, I can't tonight. I have something I have to do.

MARY

Okay, I'll see you tomorrow.

Stephen watches as she walks off.

STEPHEN

Hey, Mary...

Mary stops and turns around.

STEPHEN

Nah, forget it.

MARY

What?

STEPHEN

Uh. No, I was just going to make fun of your shoes. I'll save it for tomorrow.

Mary shakes her head and then walks off. Stephen is disappointed and frustrated with himself.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - MARY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mary sits on her bed, browsing on her computer. On the--

COMPUTER SCREEN

The New York Dance Academy website.

MARY clicks through when - a KNOCK on the door. Mr. Foreman bursts in. Mary jumps and slams her laptop closed.

MARY

Dad! What the hell?

MR. FOREMAN

Language.

The suspicious behavior is not lost on Mr. Foreman. He stares Mary down in an attempt to get a read.

MR. FOREMAN

What are you doing in here?

MARY

Nothing.

He doesn't buy it.

MARY

I was just doing some work.

He lingers, suspicion and doubts remaining.

MARY

Do you mind?

MR. FOREMAN

Dinner's on the table.

MARY

Okay.

He doesn't flinch.

MARY

Okay! I'll be down in a minute.

He walks off. She reaches for her laptop, but stops herself. Groans in frustration before rushing out the door.

INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT

Filled with ADULT STUDENTS. A TEACHER paces back in forth in front. On the blackboard, written in chalk - "Creative Writing 101."

TEACHER

Good evening, students. Tonight we're going to continue our discussion on character development. Now, remember last time I mentioned...

Stephen strolls in, inadvertently interrupting the class.

TEACHER

Ah, Mr. Clymer. Nice of you to join us this week.

STEPHEN

What can I say? I guess I had a sudden burst of inspiration.

The teacher directs him to the front row. He sits down and immediately turns to the STUDENT sitting next to him.

STEPHEN

You get a load of those protesters outside?

The student ignores the question, remaining ultra-focused on the lecture.

STEPHEN

If anybody is going to bring down the big banks, my money is on the liberal arts freshmen playing on their iPhones.

STUDENT

Dude, shut up. I'm trying to pay attention.

Stephen sits back, embarrassed after being put in his place.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - PLATFORM - DAY

Stephen stands in front of a large crowd, awaiting the train. Checks his watch.

SUPER: "WEDNESDAY."

Mary approaches holding one plain, white coffee cup and one bright green, plastic, kiddie cup.

She hands the green cup to Stephen.

MARY

Good news. They had Incredible Hulk today.

Stephen glances down at the cup, masking his excitement.

STEPHEN

Can I ask you a question?

MARY

So long as it isn't about my outfit.

Stephen says nothing. Mary shakes her head.

MARY

Go ahead.

STEPHEN

Did they let you mail in your
Hilary Clinton vote early, or do
you have to hang on to it?

Mary says nothing.

STEPHEN

What, no snappy comeback?

MARY

I'm not going to make fun of your
outfit.

STEPHEN

Why not?

MARY

Because I already made fun of that
shirt on Monday... the first time you
wore it.

A train BLOWS its horn as it approaches. Stephen sighs.

STEPHEN

Shit.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - LOBBY - DAY

Mary and Stephen enter. As they make their way towards the
elevators, they run into Franklin, who wears a shirt and tie,
but has his tied tie causally thrown over one shoulder.

Pointing to his watch:

FRANKLIN

Cutting it a little close this
morning, Foreman.

Mary puts her head down.

STEPHEN

Hey, Dick.

Franklin stops. Rolls his eyes.

FRANKLIN

Clymer.

STEPHEN

I like what you're doing with your tie there. It's like "Hey, I know I'm in an office, but whatever man. It's just business. Let's hang."

FRANKLIN

At least I have a job that requires me to wear a tie.

STEPHEN

Speaking of "jobs" you're good at--

MARY

All right. I see where this one is heading.

As Mary drags him away:

STEPHEN

I was talking to the guys down in the warehouse...

(to Mary)

Come on, I have a few more lines. Ouch. Okay.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - ELEVATOR BANK - MOMENTS LATER

Stephen and Mary approach, press the call button, and wait.

MARY

I wish you would get off Mr. Franklin's ass.

As Stephen opens his mouth:

MARY

Shut up.

STEPHEN

Franklin's a prick. Why do you care so much?

MARY

One - because he's my boss. Two - you know I'm gunning for that senior analyst position. And three - he knows we're friends. Every time you give him shit, he turns around and makes my life hell.

Stephen chuckles.

MARY

Oh, that's funny? Hey, Arnold.
Yeah, Stephen would love to hang
out this weekend. Oh, you still
don't have his phone number?

STEPHEN

Okay, you win.

MARY

Thank you. And honestly, it would
do you some good to get on people's
nice side with these reviews coming
up. You don't want to be in the
mailroom your whole life, do you?

The doors open - Petey, with a giant smile across his face.

PETEY

Stevie Guttenberg!

Stephen's head falls back in frustration as the two enter the
elevator. As the doors close:

PETEY

Breezy out there. Wednesday? More
like winds-day. Am I right?

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - MAILROOM - DAY

Arnold paces outside of Carroll's office. He is overflowing
with nerves as he sweats profusely.

ARNOLD

(under his breath)
Hey, Carroll. A couple of us guys
are going to grab dinner after
work. We'd love to have you.

He shakes his head.

ARNOLD

(under his breath)
You know, Carroll, Happy Hour just
wouldn't be as happy without you.

He shakes his head. Antonia approaches.

ANTONIA

Hey, Arnold. You okay there?

ARNOLD

Yeah, just getting some people together for drinks later. You know how that can be.

ANTONIA

Yeah. Real stressful stuff. Question for you. If I wanted to get a cup of coffee, do I need to go across the street or is there somewhere--

ARNOLD

My goodness. Has nobody shown the break room yet?

ANTONIA

No. Could you point me in the direction...?

ARNOLD

You must think we're a bunch of animals! Almost a week in and you're probably getting lost around every corner.

ANTONIA

It's no big deal. If you could just tell me where--

ARNOLD

I'll do you one better - I'll show you where it is. Better yet, why don't I give you the grand tour?

ANTONIA

That's really not necessary.

ARNOLD

Of course it is. I am the ambassador to new hires. Self-appointed. Come on. The tour takes about two hours, so we should get going.

Antonia searches for any excuse to get out of this.

ANTONIA

I really should be getting back to--

ARNOLD

Nonsense. It'll be fun and informative.

Arnold guides her off, practically dragging her along.

ARNOLD

We'll start in Candyland. That's what I call the vending machine room.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - LOBBY - DAY

Mary and Stephen sit in the corner, eating sandwiches. Mary scrolls through news articles on her phone. Turns her phone to Stephen.

MARY

Did you see this?

STEPHEN

What?

MARY

That guy on Hamilton Street who was arrested for child pornography.

STEPHEN

What about him?

MARY

It turns out he was a teacher!

Stephen casually turns to Mary who is expecting a much bigger reaction out of him.

MARY

A second grade teacher!

STEPHEN

So?

MARY

So?! Isn't that insane?!

Stephen shrugs.

MARY

What about this story is not reaching you here?

STEPHEN

Obviously the guy who wants to diddle little kids is going to choose a career in which he is surrounded by little kids.

(MORE)

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

That's like saying "Hey, you know that big, fat guy who goes around eating cakes all day? It turns out he's a baker!" It's not insane, it's called strategy.

Across the room, Arnold leads an exhausted Antonia through the front doors.

ARNOLD

...which leads us back to where we begin our adventure each and every morning - the lobby.

ANTONIA

Wow. That was... thorough.

She spots Stephen and Mary.

ANTONIA

Hey, what's the deal with those two?

ARNOLD

That's Mary. Yeah, those two are inseparable.

ANTONIA

Every day this week, I've asked Stephen out to lunch and every day he's blown me off to hang out with her.

ARNOLD

Tell me about it. I've been trying to land a lunch date with Stephen for months. He says he doesn't believe in office relationships of any kind. That's why we can't hang out or speak outside of working hours.

ANTONIA

Yeah?

ARNOLD

He says, even though he totally wants to be best friends with me, he can't have anything threaten his professional life. He takes his work very seriously.

Stephen and Mary's laughter echo off every wall. They look as close as can be.

ANTONIA

He doesn't seem to mind having a relationship with her.

ARNOLD

Technically she doesn't work in our part of the office, so I guess it's okay.

Antonia watches as the two continue to laugh and have a good time together.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Empty. After a moment, the front door opens and Mr. Foreman enters, flipping through the mail.

MR. FOREMAN

I'm home!

He continues up the stairs.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Through her cracked bedroom door, Mary talks on the phone.

MARY (O.S.)

Yeah, Saturday works for me. ... No, I'll just meet you at the train station. ... I'll be sure to do that.

Mr. Foreman makes his way up the stairs and towards his bedroom. Hears Mary's conversation and stops at her door to listen in.

MARY (O.S.)

No, I can't tomorrow. David's coming in for dinner. ... I'm cooking. Yeah, I told you that. ... He's not going to cancel. ... Seriously, he promised he would leave work early so he could make it this time.

Mr. Foreman is pleased. The smitten smile on his face, however, is short-lived, as a laugh catches his attention.

MARY (O.S.)

Hey, if you want to waste your night being my Plan B, feel free.

(MORE)

MARY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 If he doesn't show, not only will I
 come, I'll treat. How does that
 sound? ... Okay, deal.

Another laugh shakes Mr. Foreman already wavering confidence
 in his daughter. He shakes his head and continues off towards
 his bedroom.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - PLATFORM - DAY

Mary stands in front of a group of businessmen and women who
 await the train.

SUPER: "THURSDAY."

Stephen approaches, holding two plain coffee cups. Hands one
 to Mary.

MARY
 Plain cup?

Stephen shrugs off the comment.

MARY
 You are aware that they have
 Captain America cups today, right?

The news gets Stephen's attention.

MARY
 Yeah, some promotional thing for
 the fourth.

A MOTHER and her YOUNG BOY walk past as the boy takes a sip
 from his plastic, Captain America, kiddie cup.

STEPHEN
 Shit.

The train BLOWS its horn as it pulls up.

STEPHEN
 Shit!

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - BREAK ROOM - DAY

Meredith and Jeremy stand at the water cooler. Meredith
 cackles as Jeremy leans against the wall, smug smirk across
 his face.

JEREMY

...so I say "Can you even see me over top of those giant glasses?"

Meredith nearly explodes with laughter.

MEREDITH

Jeremy!

A cute, female INTERN enters and grabs a cup of water. Jeremy casually checks out her butt as she bends over. She smiles and exits.

JEREMY

Who's the new girl?

MEREDITH

I think she's one of the new underwriters.

JEREMY

I'd certainly like to under ride-her.

MEREDITH

Jeremy, you can't say things like that! You're going to get yourself in trouble. And right before your performance review.

He blows off her concern.

JEREMY

Please like I care about the opinion of some old, fat, know-nothing, piece of...

Franklin enters. Jeremy jumps back and stands at attention.

JEREMY

Good morning, Mr. Franklin.

Franklin nods politely.

JEREMY

I love your tie. Is it new?

FRANKLIN

Oh, thank. My wife bought it for me. Apparently this what happens when you leave your credit card at home during a Macy's sale.

Jeremy laughs as hard as humanly possible. Franklin grabs a cup of water and exits.

As soon as Franklin is out of sight, Jeremy slouches back into his cool posture.

JEREMY

Yeah, his wife probably bought it so he could hang himself with it.

MEREDITH

Jeremy!

She cackles uncontrollably.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - RECEPTION - DAY

The reception desk is empty. In the corner, a JANITOR mops the floor. Mary paces around the glass doors, hoping to be let in. Cannot take her eyes off of her watch.

The elevator bell RINGS.

PETEEY (O.S.)

All I'm saying is after the winter we had, the first person to complain about the heat is going to have to answer to me. Am I right?

The elevator doors open and Stephen storms out, shaking his head. Spots Mary.

STEPHEN

Hey, what are you doing out here?

MARY

I left my ID card on my desk again last night. What are you doing?

STEPHEN

I came to visit. I'm doing the snack run, so I don't need to be back for like, another forty-five minutes.

MARY

Why would you volunteer to do the snack run?

STEPHEN

No reason. Just wanted to get out of the office a bit.

He takes a sip from his plastic, Captain America, kiddie cup.

MARY

Ugh. I've been standing here for
like, twenty minutes, hoping
somebody would see me.

Stephen sees the janitor in the corner.

STEPHEN

I got you.
(to the janitor)
Hey, Philippe.

He points to the door. The janitor walks over and unlocks it.
Mary breathes a sigh of relief.

MARY

Thank you so much.

She runs off to her desk.

Stephen spots Franklin leaving his office, locking the door
behind him. He watches as Franklin walks around the corner,
out of sight.

Stephen turns to the Janitor, smiling a devilish smile.

STEPHEN

Philippe, can I get you to do me
one more favor?

He points to Franklin's office and whispers into the
janitor's ear.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - CUBICLES - DAY

Mary flips through the stack of files on her desk. Stephen
approaches from Franklin's office, giggling to himself.

MARY

What are you so giggly about?

Stephen looks back towards Franklin's office. Opens his mouth
but stops himself.

STEPHEN

Nothing.

Mary doesn't buy it.

STEPHEN

It'll be a surprise. You ready for lunch?

MARY

Five minutes. I just have to send out this e-mail.

STEPHEN

All right. I'm going to grab a drink quick.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - BREAK ROOM - DAY

Jeremy slouches against the wall as Meredith cackles at another outrageous joke.

MEREDITH

I don't know what I'm going to do with you.

JEREMY

What can you do with me?

Stephen enters and yawns as he grabs a cup of water.

JEREMY

Long day?

Stephen politely nods.

JEREMY

I know how you feel. It's going to be an even longer night if that receptionist calls me back.

MEREDITH

Jeremy!

Stephen is unable to mask his disgust.

STEPHEN

What?

JEREMY

Sorry. You'll have to get used to me. I'm known around the office for having sort of an edgy sense of humor.

STEPHEN

Oh, you're the edgy guy? I see.
Well then, I have a joke you'll
absolutely love. What do--

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - CUBICLES - MOMENTS LATER

The door to the break room bursts open. Jeremy and Meredith storms out, horrified look on their faces.

Stephen follows the two out, chuckling, quite proud of what just happened.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREETS - DAY

Mary and Stephen walk, eating their lunches.

STEPHEN

Are you nervous about that review
thing tomorrow?

MARY

No, why would I be?

STEPHEN

I don't know. It just seems like
the kind of thing that you'd freak
out over.

MARY

I'm a junior analyst. In less than
a year, I designed an entire
analytics system by myself. Six
months from now, every piece of
business this company sells is
going to go through my program.
There is no way Franklin can screw
me out of that promotion.

STEPHEN

How does it feel?

MARY

How does what feel?

STEPHEN

How does it feel to have created
the thing that'll eventually take
your job?

MARY

You don't know anything.

STEPHEN

You're like a librarian who thinks you'll get a bonus because you invented the internet.

MARY

And who are you, Mr. Job Security?

STEPHEN

Please. It's not like a robot could ever deliver mail.

MARY

They already do, stupid. It's called e-mail.

Stephen stops and thinks.

STEPHEN

Oh yeah.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - EXECUTIVE OFFICE - DAY

Huge. Elegantly decorated. A large glass wall overlooking the East River.

MR. DIVEROTI sits behind his desk, reviewing paperwork.

A KNOCK on the door.

DIVEROTI

Come in!

The door opens and Antonia enters.

DIVEROTI

Hey, Ant! How are you doing? How's the new job treating you?

ANTONIA

It's good. Thanks again. I'm having a lot of fun down in the mailroom.

DIVEROTI

Making friends?

As she closes the door behind her:

ANTONIA

Yeah. That's actually what I came here to talk to you about.

INT. TRAIN CAR - NIGHT

Quiet. Stephen dozes off in his chair until Mary's jostling gets his attention.

MARY (O.S.)
 (on the phone)
 Hey, it's me. ... No, he's not coming tonight. He just texted me. ... I don't know. I guess a meeting ran long or something.

Stephen smiles to himself, doing his best to keep his eavesdropping inconspicuous.

MARY (O.S.)
 Probably just grab something on Easton Ave. ... Yeah, probably. What difference does... What are you talking about? ... We weren't too busy thirty seconds ago when I was going to be with David.

Stephen turns to see Mary visibly upset. The two make brief eye contact before Mary turns to divert her gaze.

MARY
 (voice low, hidden from Stephen)
 Yeah, but... I don't understand... Fine.

She ends the call and puts her phone away. Keeps her face hidden from Stephen.

STEPHEN
 What was all that about?

Mary, back remaining turned, shakes her head. Sniffles. Stephen feels empathetic but is unsure of what to say.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - MARY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dark. The only light comes from the television. Mary sits on her bed, clutching a pillow. Clearly she has been crying.

Her phone RINGS.

MARY
 Hello? ... Nothing, I'm fine. ... I'm doing work now. Can I call you back?

As she ends the call, the doorbell RINGS.

Mary reluctantly climbs off of the bed to answer it.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Mary skulks down the stairs. Takes a deep, calming breath before opening the door - Stephen, holding two bags of food.

Mary is immediately filled with a mix of excitement and nervousness. Checks to see if the coast is clear.

MARY

What are you doing here?

STEPHEN

I believe we had a deal.

Mary smiles and lets him in.

STEPHEN

I didn't get any of the healthy pita shit either.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - MARY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mary and Stephen sit close on the bed, laughing and having a good time. Wrappers and napkins are everywhere.

MARY

...and why is it so terrible to pay for a personal trainer?

STEPHEN

Because you're like the most out of shape human being on the planet.

MARY

Yeah, hence the trainer.

STEPHEN

All I'm saying is if you have to give a stranger money to come to your house and scream at you until you do a couple pushups, maybe working out just isn't for you.

MARY

It's called motivation. I'm doing it to get healthy.

STEPHEN

Bullshit. You're doing it for this.
So you can talk about it.

MARY

I am not.

STEPHEN

This is what everybody who hires a
personal trainer is hoping for
right here.

He holds up his two hands like phones.

STEPHEN

(into right hand)

Hey girl, we're all going to the
movies tonight. You want to join?

(into left hand)

Ugh, I can't. I have the trainer
coming over soon.

He smirks an overly-confident smirk.

STEPHEN

(into right hand)

Wow a trainer?! You must be some
sort of athlete! What are you
training for, the Olympics?

Mary laughs. Mr. Foreman walks by the bedroom door and spots
Stephen. Pokes his head in.

STEPHEN

Hi, Mr. Foreman.

Mr. Foreman ignores the pleasantries, focussing his attention
on Mary.

MR. FOREMAN

Work, huh?

He shakes his head and walks off. Mary is overwhelmed with a
sudden sense of failure and disappointment.

Stephen stretches out when his arms bump something on the
wall. He looks up and spots Mary's ballet shoes.

STEPHEN

Can I ask you something?

Mind elsewhere:

MARY

Huh? What?

STEPHEN

When are you going to take up dance again?

MARY

What are you talking about?

Stephen reaches up and grabs the shoes.

MARY

I haven't danced since I was in college. Those are just decoration.

STEPHEN

They're old, dirty, and I can smell them from here. You don't keep these nasty things around for decoration.

MARY

Why do you care so much? You hate dance.

STEPHEN

I despise it. But, I don't know. It's what used to make you happy. What does it matter what anybody else thinks?

Stephen's sentiment hits a surprising chord within himself, though he is quick to dismiss it with a chuckle.

STEPHEN

Besides, you're like the clumsiest human being alive. I'd love to see you fall on your ass in front of an audience.

Mary leans closer.

MARY

I'm not that clumsy.

STEPHEN

Please. I once saw you run face-first into a doorframe. Not a door. A doorframe. You know, the thing that hasn't moved in your apartment in like a hundred years.

Mary smiles. Leans a bit closer. The two gaze into each other's eyes. Lean closer and closer.

As this tense moments builds to a head - Mr. Foreman barges back in. The two jump to opposite ends of the bed.

MR. FOREMAN
David's on the phone.

MARY
He called the house?

Mr. Foreman shrugs. Mary stands and walks out.

MR. FOREMAN
You can take it in my room.

Stephen is left alone with Mr. Foreman, who relishes the uncomfortable atmosphere he has created.

MR. FOREMAN
You should probably head out. When those two get on the phone together - it could be all night.

Stephen nods. As he stands, the ballet shoes fall to the floor and roll underneath the bed. He follows Mr. Foreman out the door.

A moment later, Mary strolls back in.

MARY
Hey, sorry about that...

She is confused to find that she is alone.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Mary sits at the table, quietly eating with her mother when Mr. Foreman enters. As he holds up a cellphone:

MR. FOREMAN
What is this?

MARY
What are you doing on my phone?

MR. FOREMAN
There's an e-mail on here about inappropriate workplace relationships.

Mary storms over and grabs the phone.

MARY

I'm sure it was sent to everyone.

MR. FOREMAN

I just hope you're not doing
anything to jeopardize your career.

He gives her a judgemental stare before walking out. Mary sits back down and hesitantly reviews the e-mail. Her mind races as she reads.

INT. TRAIN STATION - PLATFORM - DAY

Mary stands in front of a large group of businessmen and women holding one white, coffee cup and one plastic, yellow, kiddie cup.

SUPER: "FRIDAY."

Stephen approaches. Mary nonchalantly hands him the plastic cup, actively not paying him much attention.

MARY

They had Thor today.

Stephen grabs the cup with a noticeable lack of emotion. The two stand, eyes facing forward, both remaining uncharacteristically disengaged.

INT. TRAIN CAR - DAY

The two sit, actively avoiding one another's company. Stephen's cellphone RINGS. He pulls it out to see an--

E-MAIL

Antonia has forwarded the workplace relationship e-mail with a note attached: "Good thing I'm just and intern."

STEPHEN'S mood sinks even lower. That was the last thing he needed to see.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - ELEVATOR BANK - DAY

Mary approaches, presses the call button and waits. As the doors open - Petey spins around with his arms out.

PETEY

TGIF! Am I...

He notices Mary is alone.

PETEY

Oh. Hi.

Mary steps into the elevator.

MARY

Hey, Petey.

PETEY

Where's...

MARY

He ran ahead of me. Said he needed
to get to work early.

She shrugs.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - BATHROOM - DAY

Stephen enters and notices a MAN next to the sink, brushing
his teeth in the mirror.

STEPHEN

You got a date or something?

The man stops and turns to Stephen, foamy toothpaste spilling
out of his mouth.

MAN

Huh?

STEPHEN

Ew. Forget it.

He walks over to a urinal. Begins to go when, from a few
urinal over - a loud FART.

Stephen turns to see an EMBARRASSED BUSINESS MAN. His face is
ghost-white as he struggles to avoid eye contact.

Stephen stares at the man, lifting a judgmental eyebrow.

The man begins making silly fart noises with his mouth.
Stephen smirks.

STEPHEN

No. We both know that's not what
that was.

The man, acting as though he didn't hear the comment, makes
sillier fart noises with his mouth.

STEPHEN

Nope. That's not what that was either.

The man, desperate to clear his name, makes even sillier fart noises with his mouth before prematurely zipping up and rushing out.

STEPHEN

Forgot to wash his hands.

Arnold enters and is excited to see Stephen. Rushes to use the urinal next to him.

ARNOLD

Hey, Stephen!

Stephen's eyes remain forward.

STEPHEN

Hey.

ARNOLD

So, about this weekend--

STEPHEN

First off, no. We are not having a conversation while our dicks are out. Second off, eyes forward.

Arnold quickly turns and stares at the wall.

STEPHEN

And third, there are like four other urinals.

Arnold zips his pants and moves to the furthest urinal.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - CUBICLES - DAY

Mary pages through a stack of papers when her computer DINGS. She turns and reads an e-mail. It quickly spawns an idea.

She grabs her ID and rushes out.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - MAILROOM - DAY

Mary enters. Searches around until she finds Stephen sitting in the far corner with his notebook, again doing what he can to keep his writing out of plain view.

MARY

Stephen!

He jumps to hide his notebook. Looks up, but is less than excited to see Mary.

STEPHEN

Oh, hey.

MARY

Come with me.

STEPHEN

For what?

MARY

Mr. Franklin is putting together a business lunch and--

STEPHEN

No.

MARY

Please.

STEPHEN

Not gonna happen.

MARY

Please! It's my last chance to make a good impression before my performance review and I really need all the bonus points I can get.

Stephen and Mary stare down one another, attempting to call the other's bluff. Neither one flinches.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREETS - DAY

Stephen and Mary walk down. Mary continues to adjust her outfit, making sure everything is perfect.

STEPHEN

I still don't understand why you need me to come to this.

MARY

Because it's all senior management people and they're all like fifty. They start talking to each other and I'm the odd one left out.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

This way, I have somebody to talk to and I don't look like the loser waiting for someone to acknowledge me.

STEPHEN

No, now I look like the odd man out while the rest of you make shitty insurance jokes to each other.

MARY

Come on, being around some adults will be good for you. These guys are from Boston. Schmooze some of them and, who knows. You might just land a cushy, new job upstairs.

Stephen blows off the comment.

MARY

I'm serious. Remember that leadership thing you got invited to a few months ago? You'll be able to do it next time and these are they guys who set that stuff up.

STEPHEN

What's with the sudden interest in my career? You've been doing this all week.

MARY

No reason. Would it kill you to go one day without shitting on everything?

STEPHEN

What are these people even like?

MARY

You'll like them. Some of the guys are actually pretty funny.

STEPHEN

Bullshit.

MARY

How would you know? You never even met them?

STEPHEN

Nobody who works in an office is funny. You're not allowed to be.

(MORE)

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

People in an office can only joke about three things - their work, the weather or the day of the week. Being the "funniest person" in an office just means the person who gets the most polite chuckles.

MARY

I promise it's not like that.

Stephen nods sarcastically.

MARY

Seriously.

STEPHEN

Three strikes?

MARY

Rom-Com rules.

STEPHEN

You are so on.

MARY

Fine. Three bad jokes in a row and we can leave. But if you laugh or even smirk once, you have to stay and you have to not be a complete dick about it.

The two shake hands and walk off.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - DAY

A group of well-dressed SENIOR MANAGERS sit around a large, circular table along with Franklin and Liz, who sit uncomfortably close. Each man has his tied tie thrown casually over his left shoulder.

Mary and Stephen approach and take the remaining seats.

MARY

Hello, everybody. I brought Stephen along. I hope that's okay.

STEPHEN

Hi.

He notices everybody's ties.

STEPHEN

Casual Friday, I see.

Mary elbows him in the rib.

STEPHEN

What? It's fun.

MARY

Please try. Please. It's important.

STEPHEN

Fine. Sorry.

LIZ

If you'll excuse me, I think I need to freshen up.

As she walks off, she casually brushes her fingertips along Franklin's shoulders. Stephen is disgusted.

MARY

Yeah. Exactly.

Franklin practically dives out of his chair.

FRANKLIN

Uh, I think I'll join her. Not in the lady's room. Just in the bathroom. To the bathroom. I'll walk with her to the bathroom then we will both use our own bathrooms separately.

STEPHEN

You want to try that one again?

Franklin takes a calming breath.

FRANKLIN

If you'll all please excuse me.

STEPHEN

There it is.

Franklin walks off, flustered. Stephen chuckles. Mary finds it less amusing.

MANAGER 1

We were just discussing the turmoil after the whole AmeriNite relationship fell through. I'm sure we'll all be deposed by the end of the month.

MANAGER 2

You know what they say in the insurance industry - "Innocent until proved AIG."

The group erupts in laughter. Stephen pretends to laugh as he turns to Mary.

STEPHEN

Strike one.

He turns back to the group, continuing to laugh.

STEPHEN

AIG, classic.

MANAGER 3

I think AmeriNite's problem was a lack of focus. We asked them to bring us low risk case loads and they bring us an oil rig looking for occupational coverage.

MANAGER 2

Next thing you know, we're selling BTA to the Air Force.

The group erupts in laughter again.

MARY

Strike two?

Stephen looks around, confused.

STEPHEN

Holy shit. Was that a joke?

MANAGER 4

And I mean the products they were trying to write. Did you know they tried to offer a colonoscopy benefit on a group accident policy?

Stephen smirks. Mary lightly kicks him under the table.

MANAGER 1

What kind of accident would require a colonoscopy?

STEPHEN

Actually, I--

Mary gives Stephen a hard kick, shaking the entire table.

MANAGER 2

Be careful over there. I don't think lunches are covered under our worker's comp.

The group erupts in laughter. Stephen laughs out loud as he smugly turns to Mary.

EXT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - LOBBY - DAY

Mary and Stephen sit in the corner, eating fast food burgers. Stephen chuckles.

MARY

You're such an asshole.

From across the room, a loud BANG followed by the loud GROANS of a man.

SECURITY GUARD (O.S.)

You needs to scan yo' card first.

Stephen throws his hands up in excitement and laughs. Mary, on the other hand, is not as amused as she once was.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - CUBICLES - DAY

Mary sits in a chair outside of the conference room. Nervous energy pours from her body. Her foot cannot stop tapping as she fumbles with her note cards.

MARY

(under her breath)

My time at Amer-Insured helped me hone my skills. My skill set. My time with Amer-Sure. Amer-Insured. Ugh. My time with Amer-Insured.

She struggles to regain her composure with deep breaths.

The door opens and Liz steps out, pulling the bottom of her dress down, and walks off.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

Mary.

Mary stands, collects her things and walks into the conference room.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - MAILROOM - DAY

Stephen approaches Carroll's office. Next to the door, he spots Arnold's employee of the month picture, which has been vandalized with sharpie marks, cut out paper penises, speech bubbles and thought clouds.

He turns to see Arnold sitting by himself, depressed about what he's seen.

STEPHEN
(under his breath)
Assholes.

He rips down the notebook papers and steps into--

CARROLL'S OFFICE

Inviting. Brightly colored with pink and yellow walls. Icicle lighting strung about. Filled with small candy dispensers and cliché motivational posters.

On the wall is a colorful, clip-art covered sign -
"~~Performance Review~~ Employee Appreciation Review!"

Stephen rolls his eyes.

Carroll and Mr. Diveroti sit behind a desk in the middle of the room, taking notes. Stephen approaches and sits down.

CARROLL
Stephen Clymer! How's my favorite
guy doing?

STEPHEN
Good. I don't think I've ever
actually seen your office before.
It looks exactly like my middle
school girlfriend's bedroom.

CARROLL
Really?

STEPHEN
Yeah. I feel like a pedophile just
sitting in here.

Carroll and Mr. Diveroti don't know how to respond. Pointing to Mr. Diveroti:

STEPHEN
This guy knows what I'm talking
about.

Mr. Diveroti is stunned.

CARROLL

Okay. On that note, let's begin.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Mary sits across the table from Franklin. Her posture is perfect and hands are delicately folded in front of her.

FRANKLIN

What we are doing here is reviewing the previous year's performances to see who would be right to move up into leadership roles and how we can help to maximize efficiency. Do you understand?

Stephen slouches back in his chair.

STEPHEN

Yeah, you're laying people off or whatever.

CARROLL

I wouldn't use the words "laying off" so much as making our family as strong as possible.

Franklin flips through the pages of a folder.

FRANKLIN

Tell me about the role you currently play in this organization.

MARY

I am a junior business analyst. I was brought in to help develop a program that will better aid our underwriters in assessing risk and strengthening their book of business in hopes of improving the company's ROE and overall profitability.

Stephen shrugs.

STEPHEN

I deliver mail. Sometimes packages.

Franklin marks up the file with notes.

FRANKLIN

What lessons do you think you've learned from your time here?

MARY

I've learned the fine intricacies of risk and how it pertains to the world of insurance. Though other companies may focus on bottom lines and quarterlies, overexposure to factors beyond our control can sink a team such as ours just like that.

Stephen scratches his head.

STEPHEN

I actually didn't know people still mailed letters before I started here. Crazy.

Mary takes a deep breath, still trying to calm her nerves.

FRANKLIN

This project you've been working on, how is it proceeding?

MARY

I am proud to say that by staying late and working some weekends, I have resolved some final bugs and as of noon today, we are ready to go live.

FRANKLIN

Very impressive.

He closes her file.

FRANKLIN

Now, I have to ask, if you were brought on solely to build this system, what purpose do you see yourself playing now that the system is built?

Mary freezes.

MARY

Uh... I...

Carroll reviews Stephen's folder.

CARROLL

All right, well I think I have everything I need. We can probably wrap this up a few minutes early.

Stephen nods. Stands and walks to the door.

CARROLL

One more thing before you go..

Carroll motions for him to sit back down.

END INTERCUT.

INT. TRAIN CAR - NIGHT

Stephen and Mary sit in silence, disheartened, staring off into nothingness.

INT. LOCAL BAR - NIGHT

Stephen slumps over the counter, drinking a beer. Another bottle sits in front of the empty stool next to him.

After a moment, Mary walks up and collapses onto her stool.

MARY

He ended it.

STEPHEN

He ended it?!

Mary nods.

STEPHEN

I didn't even know you two started it.

Mary shrugs.

STEPHEN

Because you got fired?

MARY

He claims he's just not ready for a relationship. He wants to focus on his career. I guess me losing mine helped him realize that.

STEPHEN

Whatever. That guy was an asshole anyway.

Mary shrugs, unable to disagree.

MARY

What are you going to do?

STEPHEN

I don't know. What can I do? I'll just show up, keep my head down and try to keep a low profile.

MARY

What?

STEPHEN

I figure there are enough people around. Maybe I can just slip through the cracks or--

MARY

No, I mean now. What are you going to do for a job?

Stephen says nothing.

MARY

...since you don't work in the mailroom anymore?

Stephen says nothing.

MARY

...since you were fired?

STEPHEN

I wasn't fired from the mailroom. I was promoted.

MARY

You were promoted?!

As he holds up his bottle in a facetious toast to himself:

STEPHEN

Junior Ops.

MARY

How the... Isn't that good news? Why the hell are you so depressed?

STEPHEN

I don't know. I guess I never realized how much I loved the mailroom.

MARY

Yeah, right.

STEPHEN

The job was bullshit, I got paid garbage and, to be honest, I couldn't have been happier.

MARY

Why?

STEPHEN

Because I did what I had to do and left. It was thoughtless and I never brought anything home with me. It gave me time to focus on the things I really cared about.

MARY

Like what?

STEPHEN

I don't even know. I guess it doesn't matter anymore. I have a real career now. Last week, I was a guy who just so happened to work in insurance. Next week, I'll be an insurance guy. And that's what I'm going to be for the rest of my life.

MARY

At least you have a job.

Stephen shrugs.

MARY

Do you know how I got into insurance?

Stephen shakes his head.

MARY

Junior year, I decided to live on campus with some girlfriends and I needed money. I put out resumes to anyone who would take them. Of the hundred or so positions I applied for, I got one interview.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

Intern-to-hire for AmerInsured. I was offered a full-time position before I even started my senior year. A few months ago, I tracked down my old manager and asked why he was so interested in me. Why did he give me an interview. Do you know what he said?

Stephen shrugs.

MARY

He liked the way I formatted my resume.

Stephen chuckles.

MARY

I didn't care about insurance. I didn't know anything about it. And to this day, I don't even remember applying for the position, but there it was. My entire life suddenly decided all because some guy liked the font of my resume.

STEPHEN

Why didn't you ever pursue dance?

MARY

My dad comes from business, so it was really important that I go into business. Get a real job, that sort of thing.

STEPHEN

Sounds familiar.

MARY

When I started college, I double majored. Dance and finance. Everybody was happy. About half way through my sophomore year, the workload just got too much to handle. So...

STEPHEN

You gave it up.

MARY

I made the responsible decision.

STEPHEN

My parents don't even know what my real passions are.

MARY

Did you tell them about your promotion?

STEPHEN

They are ecstatic. What did your dad say?

MARY

I haven't returned his calls yet. I have no idea how I'm going to tell him.

The two sit in a moment of silent self-reflection.

MARY

But hey, look at the bright side - at least you're moving up in the world. You'll be making more money. You'll get to dress like somebody who passed the eighth grade.

Stephen's head hangs low.

MARY

Why don't you come over to my place for dinner next week. I'll invite my parents. You can tell everybody about your new digs. It'll be great.

Stephen's head remains low.

MARY

How can you be that unhappy about this?

STEPHEN

My first day of work, I had to go to this stupid orientation thing. It was up on the twenty-eighth floor, in one of those conference rooms that overlooks the water.

MARY

They make you watch one of those videos that teaches you how to not sexually harass your coworkers?

STEPHEN

I don't know. I wasn't paying attention. I spent the entire hour just staring out the window.

Mary chuckles.

MARY

Of course you did.

STEPHEN

I sat there and I watched all the cars driving up and down the FDR and all the cars driving across the two bridges. I probably saw thousands of cars. There was nothing special going on, nothing significant. Just cars. As we were leaving, I had this weird realization - in every one of those cars I watched go by, there was a person. A person with a family, friends, dreams. There was an entire life and all I saw was another car driving off. It left me with a pit in my stomach like I'd never felt before. I honestly thought I was going to be sick.

MARY

What does that have to do with this?

STEPHEN

This is about six months ago. I had forgotten all about my little traffic episode when suddenly Carroll sits down at my desk. After a few minutes of uncomfortably upbeat chatter, she tells me I've been nominated for some fast-track training seminar in Boston.

MARY

The leadership thing, I remember you tell me about it. That was right around the time your grandfather had that bad fall.

STEPHEN

She explains it to me. Honestly, I don't care, but she insists. Fine, whatever. That night I start having these horrible dreams.

(MORE)

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

I'm back in that conference room, staring down at the line of cars... and I see myself. Each time, I'm doing something different. Flipping somebody off or laughing at a fender-bender.

Mary chuckles.

STEPHEN

This goes on for about a week until one night I'm in the conference room looking down, but this time I can't see myself. And I'm looking because I know I'm down there somewhere, but I never find myself. The next morning I told Carroll I couldn't do it.

MARY

You blew off the training?

Stephen nods.

MARY

You know it would have definitely led to a promotion, right?

Stephen nods again.

MARY

But you...

Mary does her best to hide her disappointment and frustration with Stephen.

MARY

I have to go.

STEPHEN

What?

MARY

I have to go.

STEPHEN

Why?

MARY

Because I can't sit here while you piss and moan about having to grow up. I can't listen to you complain about an opportunity that most people would kill for!

She waits for a response, but Stephen is left in a stunned confusion. Shakes her head.

MARY

I can't hang out tomorrow.

STEPHEN

What? Why not?

MARY

I'm going to drive up to Connecticut to see David. Maybe we can work things out or something. I don't know.

STEPHEN

We made plans. You didn't say anything about--

MARY

I know. I just decided.

STEPHEN

What the hell is your problem?!

MARY

I don't have a problem. Sorry that I don't have time to sit around, eating fast food and listening to you point out everybody else's flaws like you're some kind of big shot!

STEPHEN

Is that all our relationship is to you?

MARY

Oh, shut up.

Stephen is taken aback by the harsh tone.

MARY

Sorry that I'm having a hard time buying into this Mr. Sensitivity act as if now suddenly you've decided to take something in your life seriously.

STEPHEN

I guess I just--

MARY

Do yourself a favor and stick to being the clown who's too cool for everybody and leave the adult stuff to the real grown ups.

The words cut through Stephen, though he tries his best to not show it.

STEPHEN

You sound just like your father.

MARY

Fuck you.

Stephen nods, masking his heartbreak. Reaches into his bag and pulls out an envelope.

STEPHEN

Here. This is why I made such a big deal about tomorrow.

He tosses it to Mary.

STEPHEN

Maybe your asshole boyfriend will take you.

Stephen storms out. Mary opens the letter. A card - "Congratulations on the Promotion!" She opens it and sees--

TICKETS

"Russian Premier Ballet Presents: Swan Lake."

MARY drops her head as the realization of her words sets in.

INT. TRAIN STATION - PLATFORM - DAY

The usual group of businessmen and women patiently stand, awaiting the train. After a moment, Stephen, dressed in an uncomfortable shirt and tie, skulks up.

SUPER: "MONDAY."

The train BLOWS its horn as it pulls up. Stephen doesn't say a word, instead filing in quietly with the countless other corporate drones.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - MARY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Papers and notecards are spread across the bed. Mary sits, pen and paper eagerly in hand, talking on the phone.

MARY

Good morning. My name is Mary Foreman. I saw online that you had posted a market analyst position and I was wondering if you were still interviewing. ... Uh-huh.

As she continues to listen, her excitement level drops.

MARY

I understand. I appreciate your time.

She ends the call. Crumples up the piece of paper in her hand, positive attitude remaining.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - CUBICLES - DAY

Stephen is led in by the RECEPTIONIST.

RECEPTIONIST

...and here's where you'll be seated.

Stephen stops and looks out over the seemingly never-ending sea of cubicles.

STEPHEN

Which one is me?

RECEPTIONIST

Stay against this wall and walk all the way down towards that corner. As you pass the ladies bathroom, turn left and you will be the third desk on your right.

He is overwhelmed.

STEPHEN

Uh... thanks.

Stephen walks off.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - MARY'S BEDROOM - DAY

The sprawl of papers and notecards remains, however many have either been scribbled over or crumpled up. Mary hasn't moved from her place on the bed as she talks on the phone.

MARY

Hi. This is Mary Foreman. I was just following up on an e-mail I had sent to see if you had any openings in your analytics department? ... Are you aware of any positions becoming available in the near future? ... How about in any of your training programs? ... Will you let me know if anything does open up? Thank you very much.

She ends the call, doing her best to remain positive.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - CUBICLES - DAY

Stephen has a pile of folders and papers sprawled across his desk. He stresses to keep up with the work.

Franklin approaches. Watches Stephen sweat. Chuckles to himself as he drops another stack of folders onto the already looming mound.

Paul walks by, holding several files. Franklin grabs them and drops them onto Stephen's desk as well. Stephen stops, barely able to contain his frustration.

Franklin chuckles as he walks off.

PAUL

Wow, I've always wanted an assistant. I'm just kidding. Let me know if you need help with all that.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - MARY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Even more papers have been crumpled up or scribbled out. Mary, clearly losing her enthusiasm, talks on the phone.

MARY

Well, you have my resume. If anything comes up, I'd love to be considered. ... Yeah, thanks.

She ends the call, taking a moment to compose herself.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - CUBICLES - DAY

Stephen continues to sweat as he struggles to keep up with his work.

EMPLOYEE 1 (O.S.)
How was your weekend?

EMPLOYEE 2 (O.S.)
It went by too quick. I could have used another day.

EMPLOYEE 1 (O.S.)
Another day? Try another ten!

The two employees laugh hysterically. Stephen cringes and shakes his head as Antonia approaches.

ANTONIA
How are you liking the new digs?

STEPHEN
What can I say? All of my dreams have finally come true.

Antonia leans over and whispers into Stephen's ear:

ANTONIA
Don't mention it.

She winks and struts off.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - MARY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Mary sits on her bed clicking through her laptop. On the--

COMPUTER SCREEN

An employment website's search results, showing page after page of analyst positions.

MARY scrolls through, chin in her hand, less than interested with what she sees.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - RECEPTION - DAY

Stephen waits for an elevator. Cringes as the doors open - empty. Stephen is relieved at first, and then slightly depressed as he enters the empty elevator.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - MARY'S BEDROOM - DAY

All the papers have been thrown in the garbage can. Mary paces back and forth, talking on the phone.

MARY

I just got off the phone with them.
... No, but they said they'd let me
know when they did. ... That was my
last one for today. ... No, but I'll
keep looking tomorrow. ... For the
last time, I don't need you to find
me a job at your company. ... Because
I'm an adult and can find one
myself. ... Yes, I'm actually trying.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - LOBBY - DAY

Stephen enters and makes his way towards the elevator bank.

SUPER: "Tuesday."

Runs into a downtrodden Arnold, who carries a large box filled with his belongings.

ARNOLD

Hey, Stephen.

STEPHEN

You too, huh?

Arnold shrugs.

ARNOLD

But look at the bright side - I
guess that means we can finally
hang out, right? I was thinking of
getting some people together
tomorrow night and renting..

As he continues to babble, Franklin walks by, smug smirk on his face. He is sure to make direct eye-contact with Stephen before condescendingly pointing to his watch.

ARNOLD

So, what do you say?

Stephen's mind remains elsewhere, feeling equal parts rage and humiliation.

STEPHEN

What? Oh, I'm busy tomorrow night.

ARNOLD

Oh. No problem. This weekend, I know I'm going to be--

Trying to step past:

STEPHEN

I'm busy this weekend too.

Scurrying to stay with:

ARNOLD

Oh. Well, how about--

STEPHEN

Enough! Look, I tried to be nice to you, but you need to get one thing straight. We aren't friends. I'm not some office schmuck like you or your nobody friends. I don't hang out with losers like you. I'm not friends with losers like you, okay?

Arnold is crushed but attempts to remain strong. He goes to say something but cannot bring himself to do it. Nods and walks off.

Stephen, emotions still running high, storms to the elevators and pounds on the call button.

INT. SMALL OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Mary sits, biting her nails as a HIRING MANAGER looks over her resume. He does not appear to be impressed.

MARY

I know I'm new to the field, but I'm definitely willing to do whatever it takes to catch up. And as you can see, I have a ton of related skills.

HIRING MANAGER

I'm sorry, but we're just looking for somebody with a bit more experience.

MARY

More experience?

HIRING MANAGER

Yes.

MARY

Isn't this an entry-level position?

HIRING MANAGER

Correct.

Mary tries, but is unable to keep her voice under her breath.

MARY

An entry level position requiring field experience... how stupid can you be?

HIRING MANAGER

Excuse me?

Mary's rage boils over.

MARY

How the hell is anybody supposed to get any experience if assholes like you won't hire them and give them some goddamn experience?!

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - CUBICLES - DAY

Through the glass door, Liz sits in her new office, feet up on the desk, manicuring her nails.

On the wall, hangs a large plaque - "Elizabeth Rodriguez: Senior Analyst."

INT. STEPHEN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Files are sprawled across the bed. Stephen, still in his shirt and tie, tries to work as quickly as possible.

Lost among the folders is Stephen's notebook. As he shuffles paperwork around, he knocks it to the ground.

EXT. NEW BRUNSWICK - STREET - NIGHT

Mary strolls along, feeling down on herself. Passes a brick wall with a community bulletin board. Stops to look. Sees a--

FLYER

"NYC Dancers Group - Teaching Positions Open. Classes and Training Programs Available!"

MARY stares at the flyer, allowing her imagination to run wild until she is dragged back to reality by the sound of approaching FOOTSTEPS.

She takes on last look before reluctantly walking off.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - CUBICLES - DAY

Franklin stands over Stephen's desk. A group of suck up employees surround him.

SUPER: "WEDNESDAY."

All the men, Stephen included, have their ties casually thrown over their shoulders.

FRANKLIN

So, I say "Your enrollment form didn't say anything about that!"

The group bursts out in laughter. Franklin turns to Stephen who quickly fakes a laugh. Franklin looks away, leaving Stephen disgusted with what he has become.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - MARY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Mary sits on her laptop, looking at her online dating profile. On the--

COMPUTER SCREEN

The profile of a man wearing a suit, posing in the cliché businessman's pose. As Mary scrolls, each man is a carbon-copy of the previous.

MARY couldn't be less interested.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Stephen sits across from Antonia.

ANTONIA

Look over there.

Stephen turns to see an OVERWEIGHT, BALDING MAN eating alone.

STEPHEN

What about him?

ANTONIA

You tell me.

She waits with excitement, expecting Stephen to tear into the innocent man.

STEPHEN

I don't know. He seems nice enough.

ANTONIA

Oh, come on. I wonder why he's here by himself. I bet it's because...

As Antonia talks, Stephen could not be more bored or uncomfortable with her company.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - MARY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mary paces back and forth, talking on the phone.

MARY

No, I'm very excited for the opportunity and I'm definitely interested. If you don't mind me asking, how did you come across my resume? ... Uh-huh.

As she continues to listen, her spirits drop.

MARY

Oh.

INT. STEPHEN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Stephen sits on his bed, typing on the laptop. On the

COMPUTER SCREEN

Stephen has created a profile on BusinessMeeting.com. His profile picture shows him in a suit and tie, posed in a clichéd businessman's pose.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Mrs. Foreman walks up the stairs, holding a basket full of folded laundry.

SUPER: "THURSDAY."

MARY (O.S.)

I don't care what you thought!

The commotion gets Mrs. Foreman's attention.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - MARY'S BEDROOM - SAME

Mary paces back and forth, visibly on edge as she talks on the phone.

MARY

I told you I didn't want you
setting up interviews for me! I
told you I wanted to find my own
job! ... No!

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - SAME

Mrs. Foreman stands outside Mary's bedroom door,
eavesdropping on her conversation.

MARY (O.S.)

Because maybe that's not what I
want to do for the rest of my life!

Mrs. Foreman smiles, proud of her daughter's long overdue
rebellious tone.

EXT. WENDY'S - DAY

Stephen sits at a table. As he eats, Arnold enters, very down
on himself. As soon as he spots Stephen, he turns to leave.

Stephen hops out of his chairs and chases after him. Puts his
arm around Arnold and invites him to sit at his table.

Arnold smiles a huge smile as he sits down. The two begin to
talk as old friends.

INT. FOREMAN HOUSE - MARY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Mary sits on her bed, taking diligent notes as she talks on
the phone.

MARY

I got it. Thank you again for this
opportunity Mrs. DiResto. I'll see
you bright and early...

Something under her feet steals her attention. Reaches down and pulls out her ballet shoes. Stares at them as inspiration slowly overwhelms her.

MARY

Actually... I don't think I'm going to be able to make it. ... No, I wouldn't like to reschedule. Thanks anyway.

She ends the call. A smile quickly overtakes her face.

INT. AMERINSURED OFFICE - CARROLL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Carroll sits at her desk, going over paperwork. Mixed in the stack of papers, is an envelope addressed to her.

She opens the envelope and pulls out a--

NOTECARD

"Arnold Dugan - (201) 555-0132"

CARROLL looks around to see who left the letter.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - PLATFORM - DAY

Stephen sits on a bench next to a MIDDLE-AGED BUSINESSMAN.

SUPER: "FRIDAY."

The man grows dizzy. Coughs. Stephen scooches away.

The man coughs harder and harder. Clutches his chest and falls to the ground. Stephen frantically pulls out his cellphone and dials 9-1-1.

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - DAY

Empty. Ready to be sold. The door opens and a REALTOR leads Mary inside.

REALTOR

This is the other unit available in this building. This one has great light and views of the park. It's a bit small, but definitely within your price range.

Mary looks around. She likes what she sees.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

A large crowd has gathered at the scene. Stephen hasn't moved. Paramedics cover the body with a white sheet and begin to wheel it away.

PARAMEDIC 1
Come on people. Let us get through here.

STEPHEN
Who was he?

PARAMEDIC 2
Excuse me?

STEPHEN
What was his name?

The paramedic shrugs as he wheels the man off. Stephen cannot take his eyes off.

The train BLOWS its horn as it pulls up. The onlookers take one last peek before returning to their normal lives.

The train departs, leaving Stephen alone on the platform.

EXT. NEW BRUNSWICK - STREET - DAY

On the brick wall, the dance studio flyer still hangs. Mary walks up and, without thinking, rips off an informational tag and walks off.

INT. STEPHEN'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Stephen enters, still shaken up by what he's seen. Sits on the bed. Loosens his tie and unbuttons his shirt.

Looks down and sees his notebook still lying on the floor. Bends down and picks it up. Stares at it for a moment.

Opens it and begins to write.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

A train pulls up.

SUPER: "THREE WEEKS LATER."

Mary steps off of the train wearing yoga pants and a loose fitting T-shirt. Ballet shoes are strung around her neck.

She walks down with rhythm in her step as she listens to music on her headphones.

From the distance, Stephen approaches wearing jeans and a T-shirt. As he walks, he's talking on the phone, laughing.

STEPHEN

I don't know. Just come over at like three. Yes, she can come too. ... I don't know, man. She probably had your number on file or something. That whole letter thing was probably just an excuse to call you.

The two run into one another.

MARY

Stephen?

STEPHEN

(into phone)
Hey, can I call you back?

He ends the call.

MARY

Sorry, I didn't mean to interrupt. If that was important or whatever...

STEPHEN

No, that was just... a friend.

The two stand in uncomfortable silence.

STEPHEN

So... how've you been?

MARY

I'm good.

She holds up her ballet shoes.

STEPHEN

You're dancing again?

MARY

I got a job in the city teaching beginner's ballet. The pay isn't great but I get to take free classes whenever I want.

STEPHEN
What did your dad say?

MARY
Exactly what you'd expect him to.
But you know, it's okay.

She smiles.

STEPHEN
Good for you.

MARY
How's the new job treating you?

STEPHEN
I wouldn't know. I quit a couple
weeks ago.

MARY
You quit? Why?

STEPHEN
I came across a better opportunity.

MARY
Another company?

STEPHEN
Cluck U.

MARY
That chicken place down by the
bookstore?

Stephen nods.

STEPHEN
The job is shitty, the pay is
garbage, and I couldn't be happier.

MARY
So what are you doing in the city?

STEPHEN
The job gives me a lot of time to
focus on the things I really care
about... like taking some night
courses.

MARY
In what?

STEPHEN

Writing.

Mary is surprised.

MARY

You never told me you wanted to be a writer.

STEPHEN

Honestly, I only recently told myself.

Mary smiles.

STEPHEN

Oh, and I thought you'd like to hear this - Mr. Franklin got fired.

MARY

Mr. Franklin?! Why?

STEPHEN

A few of his e-mails to Liz leaked to the guys in Boston.

MARY

Get the hell out of here! How did that happen?

Stephen shrugs, attempting to hold back a cheeky grin.

MARY

And what about Liz?

STEPHEN

Never been more popular.

Mary laughs.

STEPHEN

I think a few of the execs flew in from Boston just to meet her.

The two laugh uncontrollably.

MARY

I'm really happy for you, Stephen.

STEPHEN

Yeah, you too.

The two linger for a moment.

MARY

I should probably get going.

STEPHEN

Yeah, me too. I gotta go do this thing..

MARY

Keep in touch, though. I'd love to catch up.

STEPHEN

Definitely.

The two smiles and walk off in opposite directions.

MARY (O.S.)

Wait!

Mary sprints to catch up with him.

MARY

What are you doing right now?

STEPHEN

I just was going to--

MARY

I want to hang out.

STEPHEN

Okay. Do you want to go see--

MARY

No. I just want to hang out. I don't want to go to a movie or an amusement park. I don't want to see a ballet or a magic show. Just hang out. Because I know that we can get along without any big spectacles or distractions. I know that all we need to have a good time is a parking lot, some sandwiches and each other. And somebody once told me that if two people can do that, then they must be perfect for each other.

STEPHEN

What about David? Your dad?

MARY

I did the professional thing. It wasn't really for me.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

I was thinking about finding somebody a little more down to Earth. Fast food maybe.

Stephen smiles.

STEPHEN

I'm not paying for any of that healthy pita shit.

Mary smiles. The two begin to walk off together.

STEPHEN

I'm serious about that health food nonsense.

MARY

Please. Your broke, fast food ass couldn't afford it.

STEPHEN

Speaking of which, the other day, this hispter kid comes in dressed like Mr. Goddamn Monopoly. Well, this asshole must have just passed "Go" because he starts ordering everything off of the menu..

As Stephen's voice fades, the only sound that can be heard is Mary's laughter in the distance.

As the two becomes silhouettes in the night, Mary reaches out and grabs Stephen's hand.

FADE OUT.

THE END