

RAGEQUIT

Written by

Sam Norman



FROM THE BLACK WE HEAR--

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

Uh-huh.

Uh-huh.

Uh-huh.

The thing is - uh, Jack? - we would normally expect a college degree for this internship.

JACK (V.O.)

Yes, absolutely, I appreciate that, but if I could just point out that when I was at Penn I had a 3.94 GPA and was President of the Coding Club--

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

But you didn't finish a college degree.

JACK (V.O.)

No, but I was getting the same grades as the eventual valedictorian, and she majored in, no offense, communications--

INTERVIEWER (V.O.)

Because we would normally expect a college degree.

FADE IN:

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - DAY.

A young man, 25, is sitting at a desk in a cheap-looking shirt, tie, jacket and underwear (but no pants). Neurotic, skinny, arrogant, ambitious - and in the middle of an online job interview. From the corner of the Zoom window, we see his name: JACK FISCHER. In the top corner of his computer screen, a live game of 2-hour online chess unfolds. His bedroom is naturally messy, despite a hasty attempt to scrub up the background visible to his webcam.

Also on the Zoom is the INTERVIEWER, a humorless, by-the-book woman in her 60s who doesn't realize his lack of pants.

JACK

A college degree.

Right.

INTERVIEWER

And absent a job the last four years...

JACK

Hang on, no, I've had a job, I have a job, I'm a full-time retail investor, okay? It's on my résumé.

INTERVIEWER

And what does being a "full-time retail investor" entail?

JACK

It's, well, it's - like I make micro-investments in stocks and shares, but on, like, an app. It's flexible. Freelance.

INTERVIEWER

Could we maybe get a reference from your boss?

JACK

Um, I am my own boss, that's kind of the point?

INTERVIEWER

Because our internship policy is to require a Bachelor's degree and a minimum of two references...

JACK

Yes, I get that that's the policy, but...
Let's be honest. It's a marketing internship, right?

INTERVIEWER

Meaning?

JACK

Meaning, come on, a child could do it.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Meaning the only reason you require a degree is to weed out the utter morons and a degree is a proxy for not being a moron, but what I'm saying is there are also *other* proxies for not being a moron, like having a 3.94 GPA from Penn, or frankly even getting into Penn, so maybe a degree is what you might call a sufficient but not a necessary condition?

And frankly, when you look at half the cretins who graduated in my class I'm not sure it's even *that*.

INTERVIEWER

Well, then, I guess what I'm having trouble with is why you dropped out.

JACK

(Beat)

Um.
Burnout.

INTERVIEWER

Ah.

JACK

But...
Look, I hope it's okay if I'm just honest with you. I went through a rough time my junior summer, so, yes, I dropped out, but you know what? That doesn't mean I'm not smart, or driven, or that I won't be a real asset to your company if you just take a chance on me...

Through the door, not realizing he's mid-job interview, his sister FRANKIE yells--

FRANKIE

(O.S.)

ALL RIGHT WHO WAS THE NASTY FUCKER WHO HAD A SHIT AND THEN DIDN'T FLUSH THE TOILET?

JACK

I - I'm sorry--

FRANKIE

(O.S.)

'CUZ I'M BETTING IT WASN'T MOM!

JACK
Because I do also have experience
working in high--

FRANKIE
(O.S.)
YOU'RE AN ANIMAL, JACK, I MEAN IT!

JACK
In high-pressure environments--

FRANKIE
(O.S.)
ANSWER ME, YOU COWARD!

JACK
For example, I spent a summer
interning at a Silicon Valley start-
up now worth--

FRANKIE
(O.S.)
MY GOD, YOU EAT A LOT OF CORN!

JACK
One moment, I'm just going to mute
myself.

POV: JACK'S WEBCAM - CONTINUOUS.

As if we're the INTERVIEWER on Zoom, we see JACK mute himself, leap to the door, clearly shout "SHUT THE FUCK UP!" and turn back - only to remember too late that he's in his underwear, panic, grab a towel, and finally decide to cut his losses and slam the computer lid shut, instantly ending the interview.

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS.

Breathing heavily, JACK loosens his tie. As he walks out to the kitchen, he pauses and blows a kiss to a black-and-white photo of his DAD. It's on the front of a cheaply-framed funeral service booklet, along with the words: OLIVER FISCHER, 1965-2003.

TITLE: RAGEQUIT

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY.

Some self-care is called for. Montage:

JACK opens an enormous bag of popcorn.

JACK gets out his Nintendo controller.

JACK sets up a game of Super Mario. (The box still has a RageQuit sticker attached.)

JACK lights a spliff.

JACK checks Santaclaus on his phone.

JACK is happily gaming and smoking when FRANKIE, his 28-year-old sister, comes in. She's naturally cooler than JACK -- dyed hair, nose ring, tough exterior -- but sweaty and pink-cheeked after a long DoorDash shift in the cold. Peeling off her regulation bib and eyeing JACK's spliff, she wrinkles her nose in disgust. (As they talk, she washes her hands in the kitchen sink and returns to a half-painted canvas and easel, set up incongruously by the window.)

FRANKIE

Really bro?

JACK

It's five o'clock somewhere.

FRANKIE

Inside? With Mom like two feet away?

JACK

That's an awfully righteous tone from someone who just torpedoed her brother's job interview.

FRANKIE

And *apologized!*

JACK

Apology accepted. It was a shit job anyway. Retail investing for the WIN.

FRANKIE

You can't find anything more useful to do with your free time?

JACK

Like painting, you mean? How's that going for you? Making any money?

FRANKIE

And how's the filthy teat of capitalism going for you? Finding any value?

JACK

Quite a lot of value, thanks. Been diversifying the portfolio, bit of this, bit of that, currently up about a G.

This takes a second to sink in. FRANKIE looks up from her canvas.

FRANKIE

A G as in... a grand? As in a thousand dollars?

JACK

I think currently like one point two.

FRANKIE strides up and switches off the TV, terminating the race. JACK is outraged.

JACK (CONT'D)

Hey! You can't quit the game just when I'm winning!

FRANKIE

I just spent four hours cycling round Manhattan bringing sushi to rich assholes. One of them asked me to marry him, and I actually considered it. How the hell did you make a thousand dollars?

JACK

Okay, one, *rude*. Two, I didn't say I'd *made* it, I said I was *up* it. And three, I'm afraid it involves the filthy teat of capitalism so you won't be interested.

Frankie makes a fist as though to hit him.

JACK (CONT'D)

OKAY OKAY, I'll show you. So violent, jeez.

He unlocks his phone and shows her the screen.

JACK (CONT'D)

See this?

FRANKIE

It's an app.

JACK

Yeah. And a pillar of our democracy.

FRANKIE

"Santaclaus"... Freebies for poor people?

JACK

No, what? No, come on, I'm a libertarian, don't insult me.

FRANKIE

So what's the point?

JACK

The point is, it gives everyone a shot. The point is, it's about liberty. Democracy.

FRANKIE

Amen to that.

JACK

Free markets.

FRANKIE

Oh, I take it back.

JACK

Because you can't be free if you don't control your economic destiny. This app lets you invest in stocks and shares directly, no commission. That's where the one point two Gs come from. Biddits.

FRANKIE

Biddits?

JACK

Biddits, right. I bought shares right when the pandemic hit.

FRANKIE

What's a biddit?

JACK

You know, biddits. Those kind of European bowl-things you sit in after taking a dump so you can wash your--

FRANKIE

Oh, *bidets*.

JACK

Yeah, whatever, biddits, bidets, who cares about the exact pronunciation? All I knew was that people were gonna be hoarding toilet paper, ergo there was gonna be a shortage, ergo everyone was gonna start buying these bad boys and the share price would shoot up like a toupee in a hurricane.

FRANKIE

Dude. That's really smart.

JACK

Yeah, well, that's the other side to this whole thing. Pull up a chair.

Intrigued, FRANKIE sits down and cranes her neck over JACK's phone.

CUT TO:

INT. LAYLA AND MATEO'S KITCHEN - DAY.

A beautiful open-plan apartment in the most expensive part of Hell's Kitchen.

LAYLA CHAU, a pretty 25-year-old analyst at Goldman Sachs, is sitting at a desk in the corner. She has a double-monitor set-up, displaying a shockingly complex array of numbers and symbols. But she's distracted. She has a small notepad to hand, and she's brainstorming. In the middle of the page she's written "NOVEL?!?!?", around which are a series of related words ("CHARACTERS", "STAKES", "PLOT" etc.), each with bullet points containing further ideas.

She hears the front door close and quickly hides her notebook.

MATEO
 (O.S.)
 Food!

LAYLA
 Coming.

MATEO BIANCHI - her 25-year-old boyfriend with whom she shares the apartment - comes in carrying a large DoorDash bag. He's a handsome hedge fund trader with a ruthless streak a mile wide; they make an attractive couple.

LAYLA sits at the table as he takes out two huge trays of sushi.

LAYLA (CONT'D)
 This is exactly what I need. Enough mercury to fill a thermometer.

MATEO
 Busy day?

LAYLA
 Pitchbooks, client presentations, valuation analysis. You?

MATEO
 Quant models, investment memos, schmoozing an oil tycoon in an hour or so.

LAYLA
 Do you ever stop and wonder: am I adding value?

MATEO
 We pulled in nine hundred thousand dollars last year before taxes. I think we add value.

LAYLA
 (Beat)
 So how much did you tip?

MATEO
 What?

LAYLA
 How much did you tip the DoorDash rider?

MATEO
 Why do I have to tip the DoorDash rider? They don't work for tips.

LAYLA

Oh my God, Mateo!

MATEO

The reason you tip at restaurants is that they can legally pay their wait staff below minimum wage provided the shortfall is made up--

LAYLA

You are surely not dying on this hill.

MATEO

--whereas the DoorDash riders are legally entitled to minimum wage already, probably more in New York.

LAYLA

That guy has gone out in a pandemic to bring you your sushi and you don't think he'd appreciate a couple extra bucks?

MATEO

First of all, it was a woman, and yes, I'm sure she'd appreciate free money.

LAYLA

Nine hundred thousand dollars, Mateo. I can't believe I ended up with someone who--

MATEO

30%.

LAYLA

(Beat)
Sorry?

MATEO

I tipped her 30%. I just like seeing you up on your high horse.

LAYLA

Oh my God, you're such a prick. Are you serious?

MATEO

Like you said, we're rich. And I know you care about this stuff. Here, check the receipt.

He throws her the receipt.

LAYLA
I don't need to check the receipt.

MATEO
Check the receipt!

LAYLA
I believe you, okay?

MATEO
Go on, just read it.

LAYLA
Okay, fine! Whatever.

She makes a big show of looking at the receipt.

LAYLA (CONT'D)
Yep, 30%, well done.

MATEO
And the special instructions.

She reads them. They say: "WILL YOU MARRY ME?"

LAYLA
(Mystified)
Umm... Why did you ask the Doordash rider to marry you?

But just as she turns around, she twigs. MATEO is on one knee. When he speaks, it's clear he's rehearsed what he has to say.

MATEO
You said you didn't want it to be a big thing.
(Beat)
Layla Chau. We know each other so well. You know I'm a stingy tipper on principle. I know you pick me up on it. I also know that you're the most amazing girl I've ever met in my life.
When I first laid eyes on you five years ago, I knew I wanted to marry you. Of course, there were obstacles. You were dating someone else at the time.

LAYLA laughs, despite herself.

MATEO (CONT'D)

You also told me you'd never go out with a finance bro. And yet here we are. Five years later, we've had some unbelievable highs and some truly awful lows. We've fought and broken up and said we were done. But when I'm with you, I feel like I'm winning. I want to keep on winning forever. I want us to have the most big, beautiful, incredible life together. I want anything anywhere.

Layla Chau, will you marry me?

He gets out a massive diamond ring. \$20k easy. LAYLA is dumbstruck.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

Ten minutes have passed. FRANKIE is listening to JACK, absorbed.

JACK

(Mid-flow)

...Okay, we're not smart, but we're as smart as those guys.

And at least we're not hypocrites.

He's interrupted by a faint, croaky call from the next room. It could almost be a sick animal's death rattle.

MOM

(O.S.)

Sweetie...?

FRANKIE and JACK look at each other, a little anxiously.

FRANKIE

(Whispered)

Still think it's a smart idea to smoke inside?

JACK

(Whispered)

What she doesn't know, she can't get mad about.

FRANKIE

COMING MOM!

(Whispered to Jack)

(MORE)

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

I'm not worried about her getting mad, I'm worried about her *lungs*.

They scramble to their feet. JACK hastily stubs out the last of the spliff, and they rush out of the living room into...

CUT TO:

INT. MOM'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS.

...a horribly dark and depressing room. Jack's MOM lies, propped up on pillows. Her every action seems heavy and painful.

MOM

Hey hon... Ha-...

The word is too much for her, and she falls about in a coughing, hacking fit. FRANKIE stands by, hating her helplessness. JACK goes and tries to pull his MOM upright, but when he touches her...

MOM (CONT'D)

OW!

He jumps back, as if stung. MOM smiles at him weakly.

MOM (CONT'D)

Sorry, sweetie.
Happy birthday.

JACK

Thanks Mom.
Will you sit up for me a bit?
I'm just gonna have a look at your back, okay?

MOM nods. JACK lifts up the back of her pyjama top to reveal a huge, ugly bed sore. It's multicolored and disgusting.

JACK wordlessly opens the bedside drawer. There's a small gun inside.

But he ignores it, instead taking out a jar of Terrasil cream, lifting up his MOM's pyjama top and rubbing the cream into her back. It's a deeply intimate process.

MOM is temporarily soothed, before abruptly falling into another coughing fit, huffing and heaving. FRANKIE wipes her eyes. When JACK gets up, she speaks to him in a low fast tone.

FRANKIE
 (Whispered)
 I'm sorry, I can't.

JACK
 (Whispered)
 What?

FRANKIE
 Do you have ears? Do you even *hear*
 her?

JACK
 What do you expect? It's a
 respiratory disease.

FRANKIE
 That's been going on for *six*
months!

JACK
 Bedrest and antihistamines. That's
 what they said.

FRANKIE
 And you think it's working??

JACK
 Are you a doctor?

FRANKIE
 No! That's the fucking point!

JACK
 So literally what do you want us to
 do?

FRANKIE
 Oh, I don't know, *take her back to*
hospital?

The H-word makes MOM sit bolt upright.

MOM
 NO HOSPITALS!

FRANKIE and JACK both jump.

MOM (CONT'D)
 I'm not going back there. Hospital
 is where I got this.

JACK

It's okay, Mom, you don't have to go.

MOM

That's how it all started, you know. A Chinese hospital lab.

FRANKIE

All right, I think someone's had enough internet time for, like, ever.

MOM

I'm just saying. Bill Gates is on the record predicting this in 2015.

FRANKIE

Can we not, Mom? Can we just have a nice time on Jack's birthday?

MOM glares at her but softens her tone.

MOM

Happy birthday, sweetie. I got a little something for you.

She heaves her body to reach under her bed and pulls out one end of a huge envelope, from which she withdraws a \$100 bill. Several more fall out and she hastily puts them back, before sitting upright and holding the \$100 bill out to JACK.

MOM (CONT'D)

Don't spend it all at once.

FRANKIE and JACK exchange a look. JACK doesn't accept the money.

JACK

Mom... What's that?

MOM

It's your birthday present.

JACK

That envelope.

MOM

Nothing.

JACK

Is that...
Where did you get all that money?
(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

Did you win the lottery, or...?
Mom... is that what I think it is?

MOM doesn't speak. FRANKIE breaks the silence.

FRANKIE

In *cash*? Mom, are you fucking nuts?

MOM

Jesus H, if your father were only here--

FRANKIE

When did you do this? What if it gets stolen or, like, eaten by mice?

MOM

--he wouldn't believe you'd speak to your *own mother*--

FRANKIE

WHY, Mom? Why did you withdraw it?

MOM

Because I don't trust banks! Who do you think run the banks?

FRANKIE

Oh my God, you did not just say that.

(Beat)

You need to take that money and go straight to a hospital--

MOM

I'M NOT GOING BACK TO HOSPITAL!

She collapses into another coughing fit. When she recovers, her tone is surprisingly sympathetic -- and sad.

MOM (CONT'D)

Look, I know it's not fair on you. None of it's fair. The financial system, the pharmaceuticals, the government - they've rigged the whole game. The only way to beat it is to burn it down.

Her rant fades into the background. We focus on JACK, who nods almost imperceptibly.

CUT TO:

INT. LAYLA AND MATEO'S BEDROOM - DAY.

MATEO is meeting with a client, a swaggering TEXAN, on Zoom. Improbably, the TEXAN is on horseback on his magnificent ranch. Even more improbably, the internet works fine.

MATEO

RageQuit.
Video game retailer, about three thousand stores domestically, specializing in gaming merchandise, sidelines in figurines, collectibles...

TEXAN

I know RageQuit. S'where my kid gets all his Pokémon cards. He loves it.

MATEO

Yes, sir, and no disrespect to your child, but the fundamentals of that company are horrible. They've been posting quarter-on-quarter declining revenues for years and their pivot into e-commerce has--

EXT. THE TEXAN'S RANCH - CONTINUOUS.

TEXAN

Hold your horses, son. Put it in words small enough for a humble oilman to understand.

INTERCUT MATEO/TEXAN.

MATEO

They've lost seven hundred million dollars in two years.

TEXAN

Now that, I understand.

MATEO

Their share price has halved in that time. They run brick-and-mortar stores, all of which are closed for the pandemic. They're running on nostalgia and a prayer.

TEXAN

So enlighten me as to why we're betting on those guys with my kids' inheritance?

MATEO

Oh no, we're shorting them with every cent.

TEXAN

I thought the idea was buy low, sell high.

MATEO

Ah, no, common misconception, sir. With shorting you sell first.

TEXAN

(Beat)

Thing about oil? You find it, you stick a drill in it, you sell it. It's simple that way. Explain to me, son - with more of those small words, if you'd be so kind - how you can *sell* a stock before *buying* it.

MATEO

Okay - you said your kid collects Pokémon cards? Imagine he's got a Pikachu, and I think the value of Pikachus is going to go down. Imagine we agree that I'll *borrow* his Pikachu card for, say, a year, after which I have to give it back.

TEXAN

So far so good.

MATEO

So he lends it to me and I sell it for five bucks. Then, at the end of the year, the value has gone down, so I buy a new Pikachu for three bucks and give it back to your kid. I even throw in fifty cents to sweeten the deal. I'm still up a buck fifty.

TEXAN

And everybody wins.

MATEO

Yes sir. Everybody except the Pokémon company.

TEXAN

Well that's very neat.

(Beat)

Everything's so clever these days. You get your dinner on DoorDash and your groceries on Amazon. You never even have to leave your room.

MATEO

Yes sir. You can get anything anywhere now.

TEXAN

Thing is? People don't want anything anywhere. Sure that feels good for a bit, but deep down? They want something somewhere. When I take my kid shopping at RageQuit, it's a pain in the ass. Thirty minute drive, check-out girls don't know where anything is, you end up trawling through piles of crap and your kid wants all of it. Whole thing takes two hours. And you know what? Best two hours of my month. An hour in the car talking about school and who's got a crush on who and Miss Blah-di-Blah said WHAT?! An hour at the store watching him scampering around, teaching me how the games work. Now I know you're pretty down on RageQuit with their brick-and-mortar stores and their video games and Pokémon cards, and I'm sure you have a thousand models telling you to bet against them all day long, and you can spin some wisecrack about how they run on nostalgia like that's a weakness. But lemme ask you, son. What happens if the value of Pichachus goes up?

MATEO opens his mouth to answer, then shuts it again.

CUT TO:

INT. MOM'S BEDROOM - DAY.

JACK enters quietly. He comes up to his MOM's bedside. She has printed off news articles and she's been attacking them with a red Sharpie, highlighting the alleged falsehoods. She looks up at him kindly.

JACK

Hey Mom. Can I just say my piece, okay? And then, whatever decision you make - well, I get it. I know that that money is Dad's life insurance. I can understand why you wanted it in cash. Frankie's right. You should spend some of that money on getting better, and first of all you need to put your money in a bank. But she's right for the wrong reasons. She's worried that your money might get stolen if it stays here. The truth is, it's *already* being stolen. Every time the Treasury decides to conjure up new money out of thin air, the value of a cash dollar takes a kick to the balls. And that's the worst kind of stealing. It's slow and insidious, and they call it inflation, and it's done by people in suits. You keep your money here, it's going to get eaten up day by day until it's nothing. Now I hate big banks. I know the game's rigged. But I'm as smart as those guys, Mom. I know what to do with your money. Give me that envelope and I'll turn it into a cash cow. Trust me.

MOM looks at him with a mixture of pride and sadness. A tear rolls down her face. Then she takes the envelope from under her bed, uncaps her red Sharpie, and starts writing.

Three strokes later, she turns the envelope around. On it, she's written "COW".

CUT TO:

INT. THE SUBWAY - DAY.

JACK is on the subway with a small handful of other people. Almost everyone is wearing a mask and looking wary. Someone sanitizes their hands as the train comes bumping to a stop.

JACK is carrying a backpack, holding onto it for dear life. We hear a fragment of his earlier conversation with FRANKIE.

JACK (V.O.)

What you've got to realize is,
Santaclaus is just the arena. How
did I know to invest in biddits?
The same way brokerages like
Goldman and Morgan Stanley knew.
They have teams of Ivy League PhDs
tracking the markets. But we have
the apes and degenerates.

A far-off chorus of monkey-sounds.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK - DAY.

JACK gets to the front of the queue. A masked CASHIER beckons him to the counter.

JACK

Hello. I'd like to open a bank
account.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - DAY.

JACK beckons FRANKIE to look at his phone. A Reddit webpage fills the screen.

JACK

Six million of us. The basement-
dwellers, the bottom-feeders, the
loud-and-proud rejects, logging
onto Reddit every day and swapping
market tips.

CUT TO:

INT. A STRANGER'S BASEMENT - DAY.

A fat, bearded STRANGER is on the same Reddit webpage. As he types, we hear the words.

STRANGER 1 (V.O.)
Tesla up to two twenty-two. Hold
the fucking line, you cowards.
Diamond hands forever!

CUT TO:

INT. BANK - DAY.

The CASHIER is holding the envelope stuffed with money. He looks up at JACK darkly.

CASHIER
I'll need to get my manager.

CUT TO:

INT. ANOTHER STRANGER'S BEDROOM - DAY.

STRANGER 2 is hunched over his computer on the same Reddit webpage, posting a screenshot. Again, we hear him type his caption.

STRANGER 2 (V.O.)
Some Gain Porn for all who partake.
YOLO'd five Gs into Chewy stonks,
just came out at twenty. My my,
them's some tasty tendies.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - DAY.

FRANKIE
What the fuck are they talking
about?

JACK
It's just how we talk. Stonks are
stocks. Tendies are profits - legal
tender, chicken tenders, tendies.
Gain Porn is where you post a
screenshot of your tendies. Gain
Porn, not gay porn.

CUT TO:

INT. A THIRD STRANGER'S OFFICE - DAY.

STRANGER 3, looking professional in a suit and tie, is on the same Reddit webpage, commenting on STRANGER 2's screenshot.

STRANGER 3 (V.O.)
Chickenshit paper hands.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. JACK'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

FRANKIE has sat down, amused and enthralled by JACK's explanation.

JACK
Paper hands are the scaredy-cats
who sell at the first whiff of
danger. Diamond hands are the
legends who never sell for nothing
never.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK - DAY.

A grim-faced MANAGER nods to the CASHIER. The CASHIER reluctantly feeds the cash into a counting machine. JACK smiles pleasantly.

CUT TO:

INT. STRANGER 1'S BASEMENT - DAY.

STRANGER 1 (V.O.)
Late Christmas present for you fine
gentlemen: buy RageQuit. It's not
dead yet!

CUT TO:

INT. STRANGER 2'S BEDROOM - DAY.

STRANGER 2 (V.O.)
I like RageQuit. I also like Nokia,
the humble little king of 5G.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

FRANKIE

And, like, are these people smart?

CUT TO:

INT. STRANGER 4'S BEDROOM - DAY.

STRANGER 4 looks haggard and unwashed. For him, Reddit is an escape hatch.

STRANGER 4 (V.O.)

I eat crayons.
Sunk the family savings into
Sundial in 2019. Thought marijuana
was going straight to the moon.
Just had to close out eighty points
down. Wife raging. Kids in tears.
All vacations canceled. Time to
delete this app, methinks. Adios,
fellow apes! It's been real! Hoo-
hoo-ha-ha!

A chorus of monkey noises.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

JACK

Individually?
No we're not smart.
We're a bunch of degenerates and
morons.
There's freedom in that.
When you spend your life trying to
impress people, it's nice to come
back home. Where you can relax. Be
yourself. Piss away money on a meme
stock.
But here's the thing.
You don't have to be smart if
you're powerful.
Look at Wall Street - you think
those guys are smart? You think
those guys have deep, capacious,
well-thought-out worldviews?

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

You think they've read Tolstoy and Austen and George Eliot and Emily Dickinson, or can appreciate a painting by Rothko or Rembrandt or Andy Warhol?

No, they're good at two things.

They're good at the whole shtick of owning expensive clothes and going to the theatre and impressing each other at dinner parties with their inch-deep understanding of the latest Malcolm Gladwell.

And they're good at being cogs in a corporate machine that rapes ninety-eight percent of the rest of the world.

Okay, we're not smart, but we're as smart as those guys.

And at least we're not hypocrites.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK - DAY.

CASHIER

Fifty-two thousand five hundred and fifty dollars.

JACK

Perfect.

CASHIER

And what's the name on the account?

JACK

Fischer. Jack Fischer.

The CASHIER starts typing.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT.

JACK is alone, getting ready for bed. A clock on the wall shows 11:05 PM. He glances at the photo of his DAD, seeking reassurance for the plan he's set in motion.

Then his phone rings.

JACK picks it up and sees (though we don't see) the Caller ID. It has a remarkable effect on him: he literally clutches his heart and starts hyperventilating.

After several more rings, he's able to compose himself and answer.

JACK

Hey.

LAYLA (V.O.)

Hey - sorry, I know it's late.

JACK

No, I'm awake.

LAYLA (V.O.)

Great. How are you?

CUT TO:

INT. LAYLA AND MATEO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS.

MATEO, wearing only boxer shorts that hug his chiseled body, is bustling around in the ensuite bathroom, headphones in. LAYLA is alone in their plush-looking bedroom, conscious that she shouldn't really be calling her ex.

JACK (V.O.)

Yeah, um, no, yeah, pretty good, you know.

LAYLA

Just wanted to say happy birthday! Did you do anything fun?

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS.

JACK is on the verge of tears. But he forces himself not to let a flicker of anxiety into his voice.

JACK

Oh, no, not really, just small, just family.

LAYLA (V.O.)

Pandemics, man.

JACK

Yeah. Total buzzkill.

LAYLA (V.O.)

It's good to hear your voice. How long's it been?

JACK
Oh, I don't know.

LAYLA (V.O.)
Couple years?

JACK
I guess. How are you?

CUT TO:

INT. LAYLA AND MATEO'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS.

LAYLA takes a deep breath.

LAYLA
Yeah, I'm good. Really good. I mean, work's crazy, what's new.

JACK (V.O.)
Hashtag Goldman.

LAYLA
Yup. But, um, actually, the reason I'm... Okay, sorry, I don't know how to say this, but... I'm engaged.

Beat. We sit in the silence. Eventually...

JACK (V.O.)
Congratulations.

LAYLA
To Mateo, obviously. Thanks. Hey, I'm sorry if this is weird, I... I just wanted you to hear it from me rather than--

JACK (V.O.)
No, I appreciate that.

LAYLA
And, you know, I don't wanna get too deep, but--

JACK (V.O.)
You're good.

LAYLA
But I'm sorry. You'll always be a big part of my life, and I hope we can be friends.

JACK (V.O.)
We are friends.

LAYLA
Okay.
Well, I gotta go, but - thank you.
For everything. And happy birthday.

JACK (V.O.)
Thanks.

LAYLA
Goodnight.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS.

Close-up on JACK'S face. He's crying. He screws his eyes closed and...

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT.

We disappear into a memory of JACK'S from eighteen years ago. YOUNG JACK is tucked up in bed. DAD is sitting on the covers. JACK is here too, watching them, invisible in the world of the memory.

DAD
Goodnight! I mean it this time.

YOUNG JACK
No, Daddy, stop, tell me a story?

DAD
Didn't you tell Mommy you were too tired to eat her potato salad?

YOUNG JACK
Ummm...

DAD
So how come you're awake enough for a story?

YOUNG JACK
Because I don't want today to be over.

DAD finds this unexpectedly touching.

DAD

Okay. But only because it's your birthday.

YOUNG JACK

Jack and the Beanstalk!

DAD

Okay, okay.
Once upon a time, there was a boy called Jack, who was a little like you, and he lived with his mother, who was a little like Mommy, and they shared a tiny countryside cottage in an old part of Europe that was really nothing at all like Brooklyn.

YOUNG JACK squeals with delight. JACK bites his lip; his former happiness makes him unhappy. As DAD talks, we flit between scenes in JACK'S memory and imagination.

CUT TO:

INT. RAGEQUIT - DAY.

It's earlier the same day, eighteen years ago (YOUNG JACK'S 7th birthday). DAD and YOUNG JACK are walking through a RageQuit store, perhaps in memory-evoking slow motion. YOUNG JACK is wide-eyed with joy at this cave of wonders. We see DAD and YOUNG JACK demoing some of the two-player games on the store's console.

DAD (V.O.)

Jack's father's death had left him and his mother very poor. All they had in the world was a scrawny old cow.

CUT TO:

INT. MOM'S BEDROOM - DAY.

Flashback to earlier that day in present-day 2021. MOM, sick and miserable in bed, hands over the envelope labeled "COW" to JACK.

DAD (V.O.)

And one day, Jack's mother reluctantly told him to take the cow to market and sell her for as much money as possible.

CUT TO:

INT. BANK - DAY.

Flashback to earlier that day of JACK signing the forms in his own name to set up a bank account.

DAD (V.O.)

But on his way to market, Jack came across what's known as an investment opportunity.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT.

Sixteen years ago. YOUNG JACK is loving the story. DAD sits on the bed. JACK watches sadly.

DAD

He had the chance to trade the cow, not for money, but for some *magic beans*.

His vocal inflection sends YOUNG JACK into a fit of giggles.

CUT TO:

EXT. PENN UNIVERSITY'S WARDEN GARDEN - DAY.

A beautiful, bright spring afternoon, five years ago. The cherry trees are magnificent. COLLEGE JACK and COLLEGE LAYLA (both 20) are supposedly studying but actually flirting like crazy. They're young and in love and eventually just start making out, careless of other people.

DAD (V.O.)

Now, Jack didn't know what made these beans magic or what they would do, but he brought them home anyway and proudly presented them to his Mom, who took one look at them before grounding him for a month.

CUT TO:

INT. COLLEGE LAYLA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT.

The same night, five years ago. COLLEGE LAYLA and COLLEGE JACK are in her bedroom. COLLEGE JACK, in particular, is very new to this.

They tentatively kiss, touch each other, still standing up, still fully clothed. Neither one of them has much experience of this.

DAD (V.O.)

So Jack was sent to his bedroom without any supper, but not before he'd had a chance to plant the magic beans.

COLLEGE LAYLA pulls off COLLEGE JACK's shirt. Their eyes light up. They know tonight is the night.

DAD (V.O.)

And so Jack went to bed. But when he looked out his window the next morning, what did he see...?

CUT TO:

INT. LAYLA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT.

Present day. LAYLA and MATEO are having mind-blowingly good sex. There's no hint of inexperience now. JACK, invisible to them, is also in this imagined world, at their bedside, fully clothed again, watching them in pain and disbelief. He screws up his face, holds his head in his hands, and...

CUT BACK TO:

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT.

He's back. The nightmare sequence is over. He's still holding his phone from his conversation with LAYLA, still sweating and quivering with the aftershocks.

He forces himself to calm down. Takes several deep breaths. Gets into bed. Switches off the light.

Hush.

We think he might be asleep.

But then, suddenly, he snaps up in bed and grabs his computer. In an instant, he's on his computer and typing out a long post on Reddit. We hear the words he types.

JACK (V.O.)
 COME UNTO ME, O ye burn-outs, ye
 gifted kids, ye millennial
 underachievers!

CUT TO:

INT. STRANGER 1'S BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS.

The room is dark. We see the scraggly-bearded face of STRANGER 1 illuminated by his computer screen. Another chorus of monkey sounds, closer this time.

JACK (V.O.)
 Come unto me ye creeps, ye incels,
 ye anarcho-capitalists - for our
 church is broad!
 Heed me as I tell you this, for it
 is the word of the Lord.

CUT TO:

INT. STRANGER 2'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS.

In the background, STRANGER 2'S WIFE is berating him. He sneaks a look at his phone.

JACK (V.O.)
 You have seen the Vampire Squid of
 Wall Street jam its suckers into
 the face of your favorite video
 game retailer, and slurp the
 lifeblood out of your childhoods.
 (MORE)

JACK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
You have watched the hedge funds
spit in your faces and sneer at
your protests.

CUT TO:

INT. STRANGER 3'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS.

STRANGER 3 is locking up the dim office. Everything is dark and corporate and miserable. His phone buzzes and he opens up Reddit.

JACK (V.O.)
But now, my dear apes, I tell you
this.
The time has come to attack.
The time has come... to buy stonks.
Sell your houses, your cars, your
espresso machines, and buy RageQuit
stonks. Default on your rent,
ignore your student debt, beg,
borrow and steal what you can...
only join with me in buying stonks
and sending RageQuit to the edge of
the observable fucking universe.
Why?

CUT TO:

INT. STRANGER 4'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS.

STRANGER 4 is quietly and sweatily masturbating under the covers of his marital bed. His wife is nowhere to be seen. His iPad buzzes and he clicks on the notification to open up Reddit.

JACK (V.O.)
Because the knuckle-dragging frat
bros of Wall Street have bet it
will fail, and it must not fail.
Those arrogant mouth-breathing
hedge fund fucks have made RageQuit
the most shorted stonk in America,
and soon we will see the Goliath of
all short squeezes.
Then lo, the Lord shall putteth
down the mighty from their seat and
exalt the humble and meek.

CUT TO:

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS.

Jack, exhausted and quivering with emotion, puts the finishing touches to his post.

JACK (V.O.)
I've just put all the money I have
in the world into RageQuit. 50 Gs,
and the screenshots to prove it.
Join me, my friends. Take control.
Grow rich. Fuck them that have
fucked you.

He posts it. It's an almost anticlimactic moment. Sighing, JACK puts away his phone and computer, rolls over to sleep and covers his face in a pillow.

But what he doesn't see is his phone light up. People are upvoting his post. Just a trickle at first. Then more and more. And all at once, the notifications are coming thick and fast, just as JACK begins to snore.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE: II - HOLD.

CUT TO:

EXT. PHILADELPHIA - NIGHT.

TITLE: May 2016

A warm summer's night. The last week of college. The undergrad body of UPenn is collectively going on a bender.

Tonight is the Walnut Walk -- a citywide bar crawl for seniors (and a handful of juniors with fake IDs and friends in high places).

A couple of students stumble up the street hand in hand. A drunk guy is arguing with a bouncer.

Music throbs in the background.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR - CONTINUOUS.

Brilliant lights, deafening music. Everyone is young, sweaty, high, drunk, and moving like bacchantes.