

ACT 1

SCENE 1

(A blank conference room, the first meeting of the day. Hoburn and Oakes, two mid-level executives, chuckle to each other behind a table, across from an empty chair. There is a knock on the door.)

HOBURN

Come in! Come in!

STUBBS

Are you ready for me?

HOBURN

Come on in.

OAKES

We're ready.

HOBURN

Have a seat.

OAKES

You're in the right place.

(Stubbs sits. They stare at him expectantly.)

(After a long pause:)

HOBURN

So how do *you* think things are going?

STUBBS

Great. It's been a great year. I've learned a lot.

OAKES

Really!

STUBBS

...Oh?

OAKES

No, I'm just surprised to hear you say that. Go on...

STUBBS

...Well. I know I had trouble with my sales, but I've really turned that around - thank you both for your input on that - and now my numbers are where I want them. I like it here.

(Pause.)

HOBURN

Go on.

STUBBS

I finally feel like I like people, and people like me
- .

HOBURN

- Well that's great - !

OAKES

- But this isn't summer camp, you know? It's not about that - .

HOBURN

But it's still a good thing!

OAKES

Of course.

(Pause.)

HOBURN

So, is that all you have to say?

STUBBS

...Well, I'd love to hear *your* feedback.

(They both throw their hands up.)

OAKES

Right there, that's the problem.

HOBURN

(To Oakes)

It's just like you said.

OAKES

You're not being honest with us.

STUBBS

Right.

HOBURN

Not to say that you're *lying*.

OAKES

Of course not!

HOBURN

But this isn't a place where we hide from each other.

OAKES

You're just... closed off. You know?

HOBURN

There's a TED Talk about this.

OAKES

But we want you to feel safe with us.

HOBURN

You can tell us anything. This is a nonjudgmental space.

(Pause.)

STUBBS

I really have been doing better.

HOBURN

No one's saying you haven't.

(They share a look.)

OAKES

But we think...

HOBURN

And we may be wrong...

OAKES

But we think you still harbor some of those reservations? You shared with me?

STUBBS

(violated)
That - was in private.

OAKES

I know.

STUBBS

And you asked me to confide - .

HOBURN

- And it's nothing to be ashamed of.

STUBBS

I know.

HOBURN

Lot's of people have depression, I assume.

OAKES

It's nothing to be ashamed of.

STUBBS

I know.

OAKES

But we think - .

HOBURN

- And, again, we could be wrong...

OAKES

...Well - isn't there anything you want to tell us?

(Beat.)

STUBBS

No.

OAKES

(gotcha)
Closed off.

HOBURN

It's right there on your face.

STUBBS

(holding it together)

I know I had trouble early on, with the workload - and you both have been more than accommodating - but that's - over! I consider that resolved.

OAKES

Do you?

HOBURN

Go on...

STUBBS

I have been trying - really hard -

HOBURN

And nobody's saying you haven't, but... look at you, you're not comfortable here.

STUBBS

Yes, I am.

HOBURN

No, you're not.

STUBBS

Well maybe right now I'm not - .

OAKES

(To Hoburn)

You see?

(to Stubbs)

This is what we're talking about.

HOBURN

You can be honest with us. You are a valued member of our team. We can't function without your feedback. What can we do to be helping *you*?

(Pause.)

STUBBS

Well, I think we can simplify the sales script - .

HOBURN

Okay...

OAKES

That's - a start...

HOBURN

But we were thinking maybe...

OAKES

Do you have reservations? About us? About what we do here?

STUBBS

Well I didn't imagine myself selling mortgages - .

OAKES

Then why are you here?

STUBBS

But!... I've really come to excel at the work.

OAKES

Just not enjoy it.

STUBBS

What?

OAKES

Just not enjoy it. Do you like working here?

STUBBS

Yes.

OAKES

What do you like most?

STUBBS

Helping people.

OAKES

Who have you helped?

STUBBS

Clients. Tons of them.

OAKES

Anybody in particular?

(Beat.)

STUBBS

Yes.

OAKES

Who?

(Beat.)

STUBBS

I've really bonded with Joe.

OAKES

What *client* have you helped?

STUBBS

There was a lady - .

OAKES

What was her name?

(Pause.)

OAKES

You don't know. That's the problem.

HOBURN

We've come to feel that you don't really want to be here.

(Beat.)

What do you have to say to that?

STUBBS

I would say that you - I would say, I don't know where you got that.

OAKES

Nicely dodged.

HOBURN

You can be honest with us!

OAKES

We are your allies! We are here to help!

(Pause.)

STUBBS

Alright...

OAKES

Here it comes.

(Stubbs hesitates.)

HOBURN

Come on, you look so unhappy. Are you happy?

STUBBS

No.

OAKES

Then what are you doing here?

STUBBS

It's my job!

(Pause.)

HOBURN

(hurt)

Ah. You're "job."

STUBBS

It is!

OAKES

I suppose you wouldn't come in if not for the paycheck.

STUBBS

Of course not! Nobody would.

OAKES

Oh!

HOBURN

I knew it.

STUBBS

Fine!

(Beat.)

Yes this meeting is making me very uncomfortable.

OAKES

It's not our jobs to make you comfortable.

HOBURN

(Sagely)

All of our best work is done *outside* our comfort zone.
You see?

STUBBS

Okay - .

HOBURN

- That's what the Three P's are all *about!*

OAKES

The Three P's!

STUBBS

Is there something specific I'm doing - wrong?

OAKES

Ugh, this constant need for *validation*.

HOBURN

It's generational, I think.

(exaggerated sigh)

Why don't you take the rest of the day off, and decide if you really want to *commit* to this company.

(Beat.)

STUBBS

I need this job.

HOBURN

Sometimes financial reasons are the least right reasons, you know?

STUBBS

(Unyielding)

I'm sorry - .

HOBURN

Don't apologize.

OAKES

We really are trying to help you.

HOBURN

We want what's best for *you*.

STUBBS

Which is?

HOBURN

Which *is...* to open up a position for someone more...

OAKES

A better fit.

HOBURN

A better fit.

(Stubbs crosses his arms.)

HOBURN

Think about it.

(Oakes stands and opens the door.
Stubbs stands up, and walks to it.)

HOBURN

And, Stubbs, as a friend, you gotta deal with that depression, buddy.

(Stubbs stops. He turns.)

STUBBS

What's my middle name?

OAKES

...I don't get it.

STUBBS

Am I married?

HOBURN

Alright, this is very amusing - .

STUBBS

What state am I from? Am I gay?

HOBURN

Whoa!

OAKES

You are being very micro-aggressive right now.

STUBBS

Do you know anything about me? Do you see me? Do you see that I'm a person, not just some hamster in your money machine? A person with feelings.

OAKES

(mocking)

Obviously.

STUBBS

Oh, fuck you.

(Pause.)

We shouldn't be working more than 60 hours a week. We get fuzzy and we make mistakes. And we hate it! And you can't just call me on a Saturday morning and expect me to be come in and work an event all day! What if I had a life? But wait: no one here does.

HOBURN

Some people would kill for that overtime.

OAKES

It's okay. Lay it on us.

STUBBS

You could let us do our jobs instead of reading these inane scripts. If you want us to suck, just hire a robot. We don't "help people" here, we sell mortgages. We are a leech on the ass of the shark lawyer that represents Satan against civil litigation.

(Pause.)

HOBURN

Wow.

OAKES

That was a... litany.

HOBURN

You need help.

STUBBS

I need help? You once told me to lie to a client so we could charge her an extra six dollars. And to suggest that I hate it here because of my *depression* is crazy. This is a depression factory. *You* are crazy.

HOBURN

You got a commission on that sale!

STUBBS

Brent cries in his car every day before work, we all see him. He's so afraid of you that he missed the

birth of his twins.

OAKES

It's called: commitment.

STUBBS

Who would ever commit to you? You are small, mean, petty people, who are so deep in the cult of your own self-help bullshit, that you wouldn't know true happiness if it sucked your dick at Disneyland.

(Silence.)

OAKES

Are you finished?

STUBBS

Yes.

OAKES

I hope you feel better.

STUBBS

Much, much better.

HOBURN

You can get your last paycheck from HR.

(Stubbs grabs a fistful of pens.)

STUBBS

Keep it.

(He leaves. Silence.)

OAKES

What a piece of work.