

A MEANS TO GET BY

"Drudge"

Written by

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TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. PIZZA STORE WASHROOM - AFTERNOON

DORIAN JOHNSON (African American, 23, sheepish pizza delivery driver), sweats profusely while sitting on the toilet of the filthy Fatso's Pizza restroom.

The doe-eyed, mild-mannered, lanky youngster appears as the kind of guy that you would trust to hold your drink at a party after one too many Jägerbombs.

Dorian, hyper-focused on playing air guitar, simultaneously watches a video of himself playing electric on his phone. Every so often he pauses the video to take notes of certain cords he messes up on in his notebook.

DORIAN
(whispers)
E major barre chord.

A fan on the ledge of a tiny rectangular window covered in eight year old insect smudges, located high on the wall blows loudly, mirrored by the FLAPPLING of the ribbons attached to it.

KAT (34), Dorian's notoriously moody and condescending manager, knocks aggressively on the bathroom door. Dorian, spooked, pauses the video inquisitively.

KAT (O.S.)
(from behind the door)
Alright Dorian that's fifteen
minutes, you think it's time to get
back to work now?!

Dorian sighs heavily, wearily standing up and exiting the restroom.

ROLL TITLE.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. IMANI'S HOUSE - MORNING

IMANI HASSAN, a jaded, brooding 22-year-old newly grad, walks down the stairs of her small childhood home.

As she walks further down the steps the sound of her Egyptian immigrant FATHER shouting and battering the worn out and heavily taped up TV remote from the couch escalates.

IMANI'S FATHER

(Egyptian accent)

Why does it not work?! I paid thirty dollars for this thing, I don't understand why it does not work?

IMANI

Babba, you paid 30 dollars for that remote fifteen years ago. It's clearly broken, and hanging on by a thread.

Imani's father chuckles.

IMANI'S FATHER

Ah *Habeebti*, what is this? We send you to university to learn about the science of computers and your telling me that my expensive remote control is broken?

Imani sighs loudly. She walks toward the kitchen where her MOTHER is making breakfast.

IMANI'S FATHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Walahi, you go to school for no reason! Every year something else becomes digital, the banks, the shopping markets, the music in the headphones, all online! You should be an expert --

IMANI'S MOTHER

(Egyptian accent)

Okay, okay *Habibi*, leave her! She cannot help you, she is going to be late for work!

Imani's mom whispers to her, as Imani eats food out of the pot. Her mom slaps her hand.

IMANI

Ow!--

IMANI'S MOTHER

Imani! What is this face you have?
It is your first day, why are you
not excited?

IMANI

Excited? To play Bob The Builder to
a bunch of middle aged appliance
salesmen?

Imani's father yells from the leaving room.

IMANI'S FATHER (O.S.)

Imani, It is already 7:30 and you
are just waking up! Now you have
the nerve to complain, you are so
blessed you only have to wait three
months after finishing school and
you already have a full-time job.

Imani rolls her eyes.

IMANI

(under her breathe)
Here we go--

Imani's mother puts her arm around her and comfortingly rubs
her back.

IMANI'S MOTHER

Your father is right *Habeebti*. It
is your first day you have to be
early and make good impression--

IMANI

Mommy I don't start until 8:30, I
think I'll be fine.

Imani notices a packed lunch-bag and gestures at it annoyed.

IMANI (CONT'D)

What is this--

IMANI'S FATHER (O.S.)

Everyday when I could work my boss
would say to me "Omar you are a
very smart man, you know why?
Everyday you come to work early and
beat the traffic, you even beat me
here."

Imani's father laughs at his own story.

IMANI'S FATHER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

He said "We need smart men like you
at this company!"

(beat)

You see what happens when you are
early, People will notice. Ah, my
boss was a very good man, I
appreciated him very much.

Both Imani and her mother ignore her father's story.

IMANI'S MOTHER

Just a little something to eat for
your lunch because you have no time
now to eat.

IMANI

But mom I do have time ---

Imani's mother pushes her out of the kitchen and hands her
the lunch-bag.

IMANI'S MOTHER

No. Go, go, Yalla!

IMANI'S FATHER

Wait, wait! You must help me change
to the news please, I cannot watch
this crap all day, help your
father! I don't know what is wrong
with this stupid thing?!

Imani walks over to her father on the couch and grabs the
remote from him. She presses a few buttons and the TV
switches to the news channel.

WEATHER WOMAN (ON TV)

Let's talk about our weather here
in the Valley. Today we are under
an excessive heat warning with a
high of one hundred and seventeen
degrees, the hottest temperature we
have felt so far this year--

IMANI

(whispers sarcastically)
Great.

IMANI'S FATHER

See I told you, this is an
important thing--

Imani's father wheezes in pain and holds his chest.

IMANI
Babba, did you take your medication
 today?

IMANI'S FATHER
 (impatiently)
 Yes of course--

IMANI
 All of it? Because I can pick up
 some--

IMANI'S FATHER
 Please Imani, do not be ridiculous,
 just go enjoy your first day.

Imani looks concerned. Her mother sits down next to her father on the couch, rubbing his chest.

IMANI'S FATHER (CONT'D)
 Please go *Habeebti, yalla*.

Imani stares at her parents hesitantly before leaving the house with her bags.

INT. JORGE'S HOUSE: BEDROOM - MORNING

A cellphone ALERT awakens a young 19-year-old JORGE MORENO from his slumber. He finds himself alone in the room that he shares with his 10-year-old little brother.

His side of the room however, is separated by brand-name shoe boxes hung on the wall for decoration. Jorge wipes his eyes and reaches over to his bedside table to grab his phone from the charger.

When he looks, he sees that the notification is from his HYPE-BEAST app, reading that the \$300 GEL-MIQRUM 54 sneakers will be released sometime in the upcoming days. Jorge GASPS and stares at his cellphone in awe.

JORGE'S MOTHER (O.S.)
 (yelling)
JORGE get your ass up, you are not
 gonna be late for work today!

Jorge buries his face back into his pillow, grunting into it.

INT. JORGE'S HOUSE: BATHROOM - LATER

Jorge drags himself down the narrow hallway of his family's small bungalow to their tiny washroom but finds that the door is locked. He sighs and knocks on the door only to be interrupted by his mother fiercely swinging it open.

His youthful mother has on her Valley Metro Rail work uniform and rushes to pin up her hair in the mirror with a bobby pin between her teeth.

JORGE'S MOTHER
Hey did you check the mail?

Jorge rubs his eyes exhaustedly.

JORGE
I literally just woke up--

JORGE'S MOTHER
Good. Those bills can stay in the mail for a couple more days until I figure out how we're gonna pay them.

She glances over to him briefly and then turns back to the mirror.

JORGE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
Are you really wearing those pants?

JORGE
Yea, what's wrong with them?

Jorge's mom rolls her eyes

JORGE'S MOTHER
Nothing they just look a little heavy thats all...
(under her breathe)
With all those straps hanging off them.

Jorge's mom cracks up laughing.

JORGE
These are Raf Simons archive bondage pants, you can't just by these anymore!

His mom ignores him and goes back to fixing her hair in the mirror. Jorge yawns and stretches his arms above his head, arching his back and scratching his curly hair.

JORGE (CONT'D)
 They said dress to impress. Or...
 (thinking)
 Was it dress for success? Whatever
 that fuck--

She turns around swiftly and hostile.

JORGE'S MOTHER
 Hey!

Jorge's little sister and brother chase each other out of one room to a parallel room while laughing and yelling in their pajamas.

JORGE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
 Ay *mijos!*
 (In Spanish)
 <The two of you better calm down before I come out there! Matías! Continue running around like that and see what happens, next thing you know you're going to be crying for your puffer cause you can't breathe!>
 (in English)
 And put your damn clothes on!

Jorge sighs loudly and rests his head against the door frame, whining.

JORGE
 Are you really gonna make me go?

She stops what she's doing abruptly and looks at him frustrated.

JORGE'S MOTHER
 Yea I'm really gonna make you go. Do I have to remind you that you quit your warehouse job, your roofing job, and you quit Fedex after like a day!

She turns away from him and continues getting ready in the mirror.

JORGE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
 Javi wanted to get you that landscaping job with him but noo. You wanted something challenging right? Well here ya go.

JORGE

Mom it's literally twelve hours of just walking around. Like is that even legal?

(grumbling)

... And I'll have to work on my birthday--

JORGE'S MOTHER

-- *JORGÉ* you're not getting anything for your birthday if you don't stick with this! I'm not asking you for rent but you need to start helping out around here!

Jorge looks disheartened by this. His mom looks back at him with protective sympathy.

JORGE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

For once in your life *mijo*? This isn't a punishment.

Jorge's mom loses the sympathetic look and starts doing her makeup in the mirror.

JORGE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Besides we can't afford to keep buying you all this designer shit dude.

Jorge walks away from the bathroom sulking with his head down.

JORGE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

(yelling)

And you better not have that van waiting outside for you all day!

INT. IMANI'S CAR - DAY

Imani drives her mint green Ford Focus hatchback into the parking lot of Agri-Fab Ltd and parks. The corporate office belongs to a dinky outdoor equipment manufacturer.

She turns off the car and stares into her overhead mirror for a beat before welling up with tears. She immediately wipes the tears away, sniffing...

IMANI

(to herself in the mirror)

Gross.

(beat)

(MORE)

IMANI (CONT'D)

It's only eight hours.... It's only eight hours. It's only eight hours.

She takes a couple deep breathes, closes her overhead mirror and gets out of the car.

INT. AGRI-FAB OFFICE - DAY

Imani walks into the office building, through one set of glass doors and tries to open the second set only to find that they're locked.

A male colleague in a suit notices her walk in without a keycard and holds the second set of glass doors open for her, to which she thanks him with an awkward smile.

Imani walks across the burgundy carpet towards the reception desk where she sees the "receptionist" and another woman standing in the corner behind the desk looking displaced. Imani approaches the desk.

IMANI

Hi my name is Imani Hassan I'm here for my orientation with...

Imani pulls out a small piece of paper from her pocket and reads it.

IMANI (CONT'D)

... Kelly?

KELLY

Sure let me just ring her for you.

KELLY FITZGERALD (HR manager, 40, nosey, does not easily pick up on social cues) picks up the phone and presses a random amount of digits with a mischievous look on her face. Imani looks confused.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Ring, ring, ring. Hello, I'm looking for Kelly Fitzgerald, Human Resource manager. Oh what's that you're already looking at her.

Kelly laughs and hangs up the phone but Imani still looks unsure.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Hi nice to meet you I'm Kelly, HR manager here at Agri-Fab... I know right, plot twist!

Kelly laughs and looks over at the real receptionist standing in the corner who fake laughs, Imani plays along and does the same.

KELLY (CONT'D)

That means I will be conducting your training today although i'm sure you should be the one training me...

Kelly puts her hand to the side her mouth to whisper to Imani.

KELLY (CONT'D)

I still have trouble resetting my desktop password.
(chuckles)
Alright enough of the first day antics, let me show you around...

Kelly starts to walk down the hall, Imani still processing what's just happened realizes this last minute and jogs to catch up with her.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Oh right!

Kelly walks back over to the reception desk where the receptionist is still standing.

KELLY (CONT'D)

You can get back to work now Allison! You're such a good sport.

Allison rolls her eyes and sighs, taking her seat back at her desk. Kelly proceeds to walks back over to Imani.

INT. FATSO'S PIZZA: KITCHEN - DAY

Dorian enters the back entrance of Fatso's Pizza, a restaurant chain in Mesa, AZ, more famous for their unusually cheap prices than their cleanliness or their pizza.

He walks into the back room wearing his typical uniform - the Fatso's visor, with his short dreadlocks tied up in a hairband, and blue button-up polo shirt buttoned all the way up and tucked into the belt of his black carpenter jeans.

His two co-workers, KEVIN and CLARK make pizzas and fold boxes in the kitchen while his manager counts the receipts.

DORIAN

Hey Kevin!

Kevin continues to focus on making pizza and does not look up at Dorian.

KEVIN
(jokingly)
Fuck off!

DORIAN
Cool, cool... Hey Clark.

Dorian's odd co-worker CLARK looks up from folding boxes and waves his fingers hesitantly.

CLARK
(very quiet)
Greetings.

Dorian's manager Kat does not stop counting or turn around to greet him. Dorian looks around confused at the empty order shelf.

DORIAN
Hey where are my orders, I left the car running?

KEVIN
That's just cause you're scared you won't get it to turn back on!

DORIAN
Shut up!

Kat finally turns around to face Dorian.

KAT
You're late.

Dorian laughs lightheartedly and looks at his watch.

DORIAN
By like five minutes.

Kat puts the stack of receipts in her hand into a binder clip.

KAT
You're working in-store today, on kitchen duty.

Kat walks away toward her office.

DORIAN
What?

Dorian looks shaken by this.

INT. FATSO'S PIZZA: MANAGER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Dorian follows Kat into her tiny, doorless office, surrounded by windows located in the corner of the backroom. The wooden desk, chair, whiteboard, and small TV mounted in one of the ceiling corners, occupy the entire space.

DORIAN

Wait, I don't understand, it says on my schedule that I'm on the 2nd half of deliveries today!

Kat stops walking and frustratedly turns around to face Dorian.

KAT

Yea well Doug called in sick today and Clark is off in an hour.

Kat proceeds to walk around her desk, reach for her keys from the extremely tight pockets of her khakis and open the desk drawer to put the receipts in.

KAT (CONT'D)

Seriously Dorian, what would you have me do? We are a pizza shop, hence we need people making pizzas. We're understaffed as it is with all those branches closing in the area.

DORIAN

Yea but--

KAT

Not to mention all the times we had to give away free pizzas to customers because you were late on deliveries, don't think I forgot about that.

DORIAN

That only happened because I was having car troubles. And I know it's not the company's responsibility to pay for any damages to my car while on the job but... I drive a 95' Honda Civic that sounds like a giant trash compactor--

KAT

Maybe I should just take you off of deliveries permanently, huh? You think other people here aren't interested in all those extra tips that you rack up on deliveries?

DORIAN

(seriously)

Kat I need those tips to get a new car.

Kat moves back in front her desk towards the door with a clipboard in hand.

KAT

You don't think I want a new car? Everyone wants a new car Dorian.

Dorian opens his mouth to defend himself but can't come up with the words so he sighs and settles for silence.

KAT (CONT'D)

Exactly.

Kat notices Dorian's disappointment and sighs at him empathetically.

KAT (CONT'D)

Hey, You should be thanking me! Haven't you heard, it's like the hottest day of the year.

Kat points up to her TV that shows the weather forecast of one hundred and seventeen degrees and Dorian stares astonished. He is ripped out of his awestruck stare by Kat tapping him on the chest with the clipboard.

KAT (CONT'D)

Hey! And remember you're shift runner until close so you know what to do right? Fake your break. It's Friday there's no time to waste!

Kat walks out of the room, leaving Dorian standing there in disbelief.

DORIAN

You gotta be kidding me.

INT. AGRI-FAB COMPANY VAN - DAY

Jorge sits in the Agri-Fab Ltd retailer company van with a handful of other salespeople around his age and his group's enthusiastic and cheesy 27-year-old coordinator, CJ.

Jorge and the rest of the group are sitting in a semi circle nibbling on lukewarm fast-food breakfast sandwiches, the air conditioning BLOWS loudly from the front of the van but everyone still sweats.

CJ

I want you guys to forget about the word sales and to instead shift all of your focus to the actual 'field' at hand here. Who knows what I mean when I say 'the field'?

No one answers.

CJ (CONT'D)

You should all remember this from training.

CJ looks around the van, still no one answers.

CJ (CONT'D)

I'm talking about M.T.P.P.S!
Everyone! Maximizing your territory
and perfecting your people skills!

Everyone else in the van pretends to know the acronym by mumbling along with CJ.

CJ (CONT'D)

Now I know you've all probably
heard about the extreme weather
warning by now...

Jorge is taken aback by this and looks around the van to see that the majority of the other salespeople are wearing knee-length shorts.

CJ (CONT'D)

Maybe not you over here

CJ nudges Jorge's knee.

CJ (CONT'D)

Huh, fancy pants (laughs)

Jorge does not laugh with CJ but continues to look confused and put-off.

CJ (CONT'D)

That's okay I give you points for originality. But I just want to stress how important it for you all to stay hydrated and stay as cool as you possibly can under the circumstances. Now the best way to do this is to what?

No one answers.

CJ (CONT'D)

Keep in contact with your coordinator! Right? Now I'll be calling you all every hour on the hour to make sure that you're getting along okay and on track to reaching your sales goals. So make sure you are answering your phones. Now I'm just going to take attendance really quick to make sure I have all of your contact info correct, Alrighty?

CJ optimistically looks around the van for reassurance but again no one answers. He looks down at his clipboard.

CJ (CONT'D)

Alright... First up Ashley?

ASHLEY

Here.

CJ

Alright we have an Ashley. Is this phone number correct here Ashley?

CJ passes his clipboard to Ashley (24, dull, conspiracy buff).

ASHLEY

Yup.

CJ

Okay awesome...

CJ checks her name off and scans his clipboard again.

CJ (CONT'D)

And I'm guessing this is my stylish hombre over here to my right, *JORGÉ* huh, did I get you right?

CJ gestures his head at Jorge.

JORGE
(firmly)
It's GEORGE.

CJ
Oh, my bad there GEORGE.

CJ scribbles over his name and Jorge looks down anxiously.

INT. FATSO'S PIZZA - AFTERNOON

Dorian kneads pizza dough across from Kevin who places an assembled pizza into the stone oven using a pizza peel.

KEVIN
Damn, Kat really did you dirty!

DORIAN
Man what else is new.

KEVIN
She punked you out, I could never
let her talk to me like that.

DORIAN
Coming from the guy that washed her
car for her last summer--

KEVIN
--AH! I took her car to the car
wash...

Dorian burst out laughing

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Alright bro I know you're not
talking!

Dorian slowly quiets down.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Every shift, Kat has you doing all
types of unnecessary bullshit! She
doesn't even let you take breaks,
which I'm pretty sure is illegal in
like every fucking state!

DORIAN
K she doesn't let any shift runner
take breaks.

KEVIN

And who does she always pick to be the shift runner... Your ass!

Keven chuckles.

DORIAN

Yea bro well at least I do my job... so I don't have to kiss Kat's ass all the time with those corny ass jokes. You fuck up like every other order.

KEVIN

Yet I'm still here! You should try it bro it's called doing the bare minimum.

DORIAN

Nah I think she just keeps you around because she likes you. I see those eyes she gives you when you're parking her car.

Dorian bursts out laughing.

KEVIN

Bro shut up, it was one time!

Dorian continues to laugh hysterically and Kevin can't help but chuckle too.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

(laughing)

I know you play that guitar hard as hell when you get home just to blow off some steam, like "this is for you Kat"!

Their laughing is interrupted by the chime of the entrance alert for the store's backdoor. Dorians shy and petite co-worker JULIA enters.

JULIA

No way you guys are having this much fun on a Friday night shift.

DORIAN

Hey Julia!

KEVIN

What's up Julz! I'm just clowning this fool over here for having no backbone when it comes to Kat.

(MORE)

KEVIN (CONT'D)

He takes all of her shit just go home and punch holes in the wall and play heavy metal.

JULIA

Hey lay off of Dorian...
(under her breathe)
At least he has some talent.

Dorian gasps mockingly at Kevin.

KEVIN

(sarcastically)
Ha, Ha,Ha. I'll have you both know I'm multifaceted... and you fools haven't even begun to scrape the surface of my abilities.

Dorian and Julia laugh.

DORIAN

(sarcastically)
Okay there buddy.

Julia pulls Dorian to the side.

JULIA

(seriously)
Hey I just wanted to thank you for covering my delivery shifts by the way, you're a God send. I know it's a lot for just you.

DORIAN

You don't need to thank me, I get it. And hey, I need the tips anyway so.

Dorian shrugs.

JULIA

I know, I just couldn't take it anymore, it was creepy before but it just kept getting worse every time. And I feel so guilty letting you do this for me but I didn't know what they were going to do and what could I do at my size--

DORIAN

That's okay you don't have to explain yourself to me. I really do get it.

(MORE)

DORIAN (CONT'D)

It can't be easy doing this job,
there's a lot of sketchy people out
there.

Julia looks at Dorian mesmerized.

JULIA

Definitely.

(beat)

Wait why aren't you out on
deliveries now?

Dorian sighs heavily.

DORIAN

Same reason neither of us have
gotten our gas reimbursement checks
in over a month.

Julia let's out a fed-up sigh.

JULIA

Kat.

DORIAN

The very same.

The two smile at each other in understanding before
dispersing and getting back to work.

INT./EXT. AGRI-FAB COMPANY VAN/ WEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Jorge sits quietly in the semi circle of the Agri-Fab company
van while CJ skims his clipboard. Jorge checks his watch.

JORGE

(under his breathe)

Holy shit we've been driving for
like an hour.

ASHLEY

(whispering to Jorge)

Yea. They always take us out to
some yuppy neighborhood in the
hills. I think they think people
will be more inclined to spend
money out there.

(scoffs)

Like that'll work, they have no
idea how the rich stay rich huh?
Plus they're always sending us to
neighborhoods that we've already
been over like the week before.

Ashley sighs heavily

ASHLEY (CONT'D)
This place is a fucking cult.

JORGE
Why don't you just quit?

ASHLEY
So that CJ and the rest of the office yuppies can spread lies about how inadequate and lazy I was, how I couldn't sell for the life of me so I had no other choice but to quit out of sheer embarrassment. Nah, I'm not going out like that.

Jorge looks at Ashely concerned.

ASHLEY (CONT'D)
Also what else I am gonna do? I quit and then what? All jobs are the same, some just pay better than others.

The van slowly comes to a stop.

CJ
Oh, you know what that means? What time is it?

All the salespeople shout "Showtime" in reluctant unison.

CJ (CONT'D)
Alright Wellington and Mulberry Drive ... GEORGE it looks like you're up first buddy!

Jorge looks worried as one of the other salesman rips open the van door, forcing everyone to squint from the sunlight.

Jorge hops out of the van and CJ passes around the large box containing the lawn aerator to give to Jorge. Jorge grabs the box from him which covers his face.

JORGE
I'm supposed to carry around this huge box all day?

CJ
Um no not necessarily...

CJ looks around the van for something.

CJ (CONT'D)

Ah there it is! Hey Alex pass me that folded up wagon from behind you.

Jorge mouths the word "wagon" to himself in disbelief.

CJ (CONT'D)

I expect that you'll find this guy useful as you transport your aerator from house to house.

The group of salespeople pass around the folded-up wagon until it's handed to Jorge. Jorge struggles to get it open.

CJ (CONT'D)

Yea you just want to unfold the wheels there and then lift up that latch. Oh! Not that one, the latch on your right, yup perfect.

Jorge drops the box on the wagon strenuously, breathing heavily now.

CJ (CONT'D)

Well man, I would wish you good luck but that would be insulting.

(beat)

Salutations my friend, this is your first go at this so it's sure to make or break you!

The van door is then swiftly closed and the van drives away. Jorge stands on a sidewalk looking around the affluent neighborhood visibly intimidated.

ACT TWO

EXT. PORCH - DAY

Jorge drags the aerator up to the front steps of a large house. He absentmindedly tries to drag the wagon carrying the lawn aerator box up the stairs but it doesn't budge.

Jorge struggles to pick up the box and drop it in front of the door. He fixes himself up, clears his throat and RINGS the doorbell. No one answers so he RINGS it again.

He looks puzzled at the lights in the house and the cars in the driveway and goes to ring it a third time but a middle-aged man in a suit irritatedly rips the door open before he can. Jorge flinches.

MR. LUHAN

What?

Jorge, taken aback, pulls a piece of paper out of his pocket with his speech template on it, reading it out unsure.

JORGE

Uh, Hello and how are you today? My name is insert name here...huh? Oh! GEORGE my name is George sorry.

The suited man sighs in frustration and looks at Jorge's name tag unconvinced while rustling with his tie.

JORGE (CONT'D)

I work for one of the top rated outdoor appliance manufacturers in the state. We are currently providing an aeration service in the neighborhood in order promote our latest product which combats lawn thatch build-up and compacted soil, plaguing the lawns of millions--

MR. LUHAN

Whoa, whoa, whoa, are you really trying to sell me a lawn aerator right now?

Jorge looks at the lawn aerator box.

JORGE

Um yea that's what it looks like--

MR. LUHAN

You've gotta be kidding me a machine like that in this area will only kill my already well-kept grass and compact my soil even more, especially in the summer!

JORGE

Um well I--

MR. LUHAN

Listen kid go find a ranch or something to sell that giant piece of junk to. This is a waste of my time, so if you'll excuse me, some of us have actual jobs to get to.

The man grabs his briefcase and rushes out of the door brushing past Jorge to get to his car.

INT. AGRI-FAB OFFICE - DAY

Kelly and Imani exit an elevator.

KELLY

So the fifth floor is where we have
all of our administrative
departments: Invoicing,...

Kelly points to a cluster of desks where 3 people sit divided
by single framed glass partition decorated with family photos
and children's drawings, as they walk past it.

KELLY (CONT'D)

... Certificates,...

Kelly points at an almost identical desk cluster as they walk
by it.

KELLY (CONT'D)

The human resource office,
otherwise known as my second home,
just in that corner there...

Kelly points to a tiny office with frosted windows and her
name on the door in the far back corner of the floor.

KELLY (CONT'D)

And our now IT department.

Kelly stops in front of another 3 desk cluster with one empty
desk. Beside it sits a woman in her late 50's, LINDA (grumpy,
unobliging). Kelly leans against Imani's new desk.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Honestly, you couldn't have come at
a better time, this office has been
through our fair share of technical
emergencies... Let's see there was
the time our wifi completely went
out at month end...

Kelly grits her teeth together.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Could not be worse timing, am I
right? Or that time our fax
machines were all on the fritz at
the same time, that was super
strange, Or how about that time
there was an office-wide Windows
update and no one could find the
internet...

Kelly laughs.

KELLY (CONT'D)
Ah, that was a long week.

Imani's eyes widen in shock.

LINDA
It wasn't anything more than
calling up Microsoft and having
them sort that whole mishap out,
I've done it a thousand times!

KELLY
Right! And Linda over here has been
here with us through it all, she
was our little makeshift office
technician before you arrived.

LINDA
A good airing out over the phone
used to be enough around here...

Linda side-eyes Imani passively aggressively through the gap between her glasses and her grey-ish brown bangs. There is an awkward silence. Imani extends her hand to Linda pleasantly to end the discomfort.

IMANI
Well nice to meet you, my name is
Imani. I didn't realize there was
another IT specialist at this
office. What was your alma mater if
you don't mind me asking--

Linda hesitates to shake Imani's hands and just stares at it for a while before eventually shaking it.

LINDA
Girl, I know who you are. I may not
have some big university education
but I have twenty years of
experience taking care of the
people at this office. And that
counts for something!

IMANI
Oh okay...

Imani looks desperately at Kelly for help. Kelly ignores this look.

KELLY
(insincerely)
Well, I'm sure you two will just
make the best team!

INT. AGRI-FAB OFFICE: IMANI'S DESK - LATER

Kelly and Imani sit side by side at Imani's new desk. Imani sits directly in front of a desktop computer and landline telephone, placed between them.

KELLY
So, after you create a ticket in
our system and the issue is pending
or it has been resolved, you're
just going to mark the ticket as
closed...

Kelly leans over Imani to demonstrate on the computer.

KELLY (CONT'D)
Just like that. Then lastly, you're
just going to print out the daily
report of you ticket summary from
the system and make sure to drop it
off in my office before you leave.
Got it?

IMANI
Yup! Sounds easy enough. I did
something pretty similar for a
period at my old programming
internship at this startup app
company--

KELLY
Oh yes Flick'r! I remember that
from your resume, very impressive!
It's so crazy, when I was in
college girls were more concerned
about finding the right guy and
starting a family after graduation
than networking or internships like
your generation. So good on you!

Imani looks uncomfortable.

KELLY (CONT'D)

And lastly, this job requires a lot as this is our first and only real IT position so it is going to be a lot on your plate at first until we can hire someone else to assist you but we really want to prioritize customer service first as it just makes for a more amiable and easygoing work environment between us and the salesmen.

IMANI

Of course.

The same suited man who blew off Jorge at his house bursts open the door of an office around the corner and darts toward the elevator past Imani and Kelly. Kelly stands up to address him.

KELLY

Oh and I nearly forgot to introduce you to your new project manager this quarter MR. LUHAN, who we are borrowing from our parent company Meridian for the time being.

Imani gets up and extends her arm to shake.

IMANI

Hi nice to meet you, my name is Im--

Mr. Luhan ignores her hand.

MR. LUHAN

I'm sorry I don't have anytime for introductions right now I'm already late for a meeting at Meridian. I'm sure Kelly will have no problem getting you situated.

Mr. Luhan shuffles to the elevator without stopping. Imani and Kelly look at each other puzzled.

KELLY

I'm sure you two will have another opportunity to be acquainted.

Kelly checks her watch.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Well you should start to receive calls any minute now, I emailed the rest of the office this morning about your arrival, telling them not to go easy on you.

Kelly laughs and nudges Imani's shoulder.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Anyway, do you have any questions or concerns before you get started?

IMANI

Nope, I think you covered everything quite thoroughly. I guess, just thank you so much again for all your help so far. I think I can handle it from here.

KELLY

Well that's amazing to hear but I'm actually going to be overseeing your work for the remainder of the day just to make sure you're getting along okay... so we'll be desk buddies!

Imani looks visibly disappointed.

IMANI

... Oh I see.

Imani's landline rings.

KELLY

(whispers)
Oh here ya go!

Imani answers the phone slightly weirded out by Kelly's intrusiveness.

IMANI

Hello thank you for calling Agri-Fab Ltd. Help desk, my name is Imani how can help?

KELLY

(whispers)
How can I help you today.

Imani nods and smiles at Kelly stiffly, with the phone to her ear.

INT. FATSO'S PIZZA - DAY

CLOSE ON: Dorian's finger presses play on a small antenna radio on a shelf above the kitchen counter.

"Fat lip" by Sum 41 plays.

MONTAGE - Dorian and Jorge drudge.

A) INT. FATSO'S PIZZA: KITCHEN - DAY - Dorian kneads and rolls pizza dough in flour until it's round and flat then places it onto a pan, then unto the drying rack.

B) INT. FATSO'S PIZZA: KITCHEN - DAY - Dorian pours tomato sauce, cheese and pepperoni onto the flat round pizza dough.

C) INT. FATSO'S PIZZA: KITCHEN - DAY - Dorian slides the pan with the uncooked assembled pizza over to Kevin at the edge of the counter who slides it on to a pizza peel and sticks it into the oven.

D) INT. FATSO'S PIZZA: FRONT OF STORE - DAY - Dorian walks around the register where Julia stands to hand a pizza to a man holding a receipt with a group of children in baseball uniforms. The man nods at Dorian with gratitude and the kids jump up and down as they walk out of the store.

E) INT. FATSO'S PIZZA: KITCHEN - DAY - Dorian folds and stacks a handful of pizza boxes and places them onto a shelf above him.

F) INT. FATSO'S PIZZA: FRONT OF STORE - DAY - Dorian stands behind the register and inaudibly reads a woman her total. She looks appalled by this and starts to argue with Dorian who looks dismayed.

G) INT. FATSO'S PIZZA: KITCHEN - DAY - Dorian sprinkles sliced green peppers, onions, tomatoes, mushrooms and olives onto pizza dough.

H) EXT. WEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY - Jorge drags the wagon holding the heavy lawn aerator down a long street toward the nearest house while sweating profusely.

I) INT. FATSO'S PIZZA: KITCHEN - DAY - Dorian pours BBQ sauce onto pizza dough with a ladle then sprinkles cheese, chopped chicken breast, pepperoni, ham, and sausage on it.

J) EXT. WEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD: PORCH #1 - DAY - RESIDENT'S POV: DOORBELL rings, the front door is opened to show Jorge smiling on a porch with the lawn aerator box next to him, he holds out a pamphlet and begins to inaudibly introduce himself. The front door is shut in his face by the resident. Jorge looks rejected before the door is closed.

K) INT. FATSO'S PIZZA: KITCHEN - DAY - Dorian sprinkles pineapple slices and ham onto a pizza then winces.

L) EXT. WEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD: PORCH #2 - DAY - RESIDENT'S POV: Jorge is acting out how to use the aerator before the door is once again slammed in his face.

M) INT. FATSO'S PIZZA: FRONT OF STORE - DAY - Dorian is on the store's corded wall phone and we can hear a customer SCREAMING at him in a very high pitched voice but we can't make out what they're saying. Dorian pulls the phone away from ears because it's too loud.

N) EXT. WEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD: PORCH #3 - DAY - RESIDENT'S POV: Jorge is presenting a rudimentary drawing that he has done on his clipboard comparing healthy grass to unhealthy grass, using his pen as a pointer. The door is slammed in his face.

O) INT. FATSO'S PIZZA: KITCHEN - DAY - Dorian walks over to the counter next to the oven and placing down two empty pizza boxes. Him and Kevin look at each other, grin and then bang their head to the music in unison. Kevin takes two specialty pizzas out of the oven using the pizza peel and slides them into the boxes.

P) EXT. WEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD: PORCH #4 - DAY - Jorge stands in front of a home owner in her 30s presenting a wad of yellow grass in his hands to her. He turns around to point out which part of her lawn where he plucked it from, the woman looks there, concerned. Creeped out the woman just shakes her head and politely closes the door on Jorge. Jorge looks down and sighs frustratedly, picking up the aerator box and placing it back on the wagon. He gloomy drags the wagon off of the driveway.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. FATSO'S PIZZA - DAY

MUSIC fades out.

Dorian and Julia are laughing as Dorian sloppily assembles a pizza as fast as he can. Julia watches from behind the register.

MR. LUHAN bolts through the front entrance of the restaurant with a pizza box in his hand. The loud chime of the entrance alert startles the two employees and they both look to see who's entered.

Mr. Luhan throws the pizza box to the ground causing the half eaten pizza to slide out onto the floor past the backroom partition and into the kitchen where Dorian is working.

JULIA

Oh my God!

DORIAN

What the hell!

MR. LUHAN

What is this?

Dorian and Julia exchange wide-eyed looks of disbelief. Dorian walks to the front of the store next to Julia.

DORIAN

(firmly)

I'm sorry sir what seems to be the problem here?

Julia bends down and begins to scrape what's left of the pizza back into the box.

MR. LUHAN

I ordered a Pepperoni Feast pizza over the phone. That's an extra large pizza with extra pepperoni and an extra layer of mozzarella cheese. Does that look extra pepperoni or cheese to you?

Julia places the box with the scraped up pizza on the front counter.

DORIAN

Excuse me sir but it must be. There are already two slices taken out of this pizza.

MR. LUHAN

Excuse me?! This pizza was ordered for my office, Meridian incorporated. What am I supposed to tell my colleagues, huh? I've been ordering from this company for well over ten years now, it's bad enough that all of your closer locations keep closing down. Do you really want to lose our business? Your company is in enough hot water as it is. Now I did not drive thirty minutes for this crap, now make me a new pizza or it'll be your job.

Dorian furiously takes a couple of deep breathes.

DORIAN

I'm sorry you were not satisfied with your order sir but we have to weigh our pizzas. And if we add too many extra topping we risk squandering our supplies--

MR. LUHAN

I've heard enough! You talk a lot for someone who isn't the manager and clearly has no power here. And you've just single-handedly lost a customer.

Mr. Luhan gets his cellphone out of his back pocket, examines Dorian's name tag and starts typing.

MR. LUHAN (CONT'D)

Dorian, is it? Yea, you'll be hearing from corporate.

Mr. Luhan dials a number and puts his phone to his ear. He examines Julia's name tag and gives Dorian a dirty look.

MR. LUHAN (CONT'D)

Have a nice evening Julia.

Mr. Luhan leaves the store. Dorian continues to stare him down through the window as he walks to his car while breathing heavily. Dorian then darts toward the back exit the store.

JULIA

Dorian!

EXT. BACK OF FATSO'S PIZZA - CONTINUOUS

Dorian bursts out of the backdoor of the restaurant to find Kevin leaning against the wall, smoking a cigarette. Dorian looks at Kevin a little embarrassed and then sits behind the railing with his legs hanging over the edge of the staircase.

KEVIN

Hey don't mind me, do whatever you need to do.

DORIAN

You heard that?

KEVIN

Yup, I was just about to go in there and back you up but it sounded like it was already over.

DORIAN

I didn't even say anything.
(beat)
I should have told him to go fuck himself huh... that's what you would've done.

KEVIN

Well you're not me.

Dorian scoffs in shame.

DORIAN

Definitively not...

KEVIN

Right. You're better than me.

DORIAN

What?

KEVIN

You can get out of here Dorian, we both can! But you... I've never heard anyone play like you, fuck it I've never met anyone like you, not around here. With your amount of talent and humility, everyone loves you. You could be a fucking rockstar... or literally anything else you're that special bro. And that means a lot coming from me, cause I don't even like you.

They both laugh. Dorian stops and looks at the ground, focused.

DORIAN

Nah, we both need to get out of here.

KEVIN

Bro, just give me a date and time, I'm ready when you are. We just need to--

Kat shoves the backdoor open with the Fatso's delivery sign for the top of Dorian's car in her hand.

KAT

Dorian!

Dorian and Kevin, startled, go silent.

KAT (CONT'D)

You're prayers have been answered.
Don't say I never did anything for
you.

DORIAN

Wait what?

KAT

Julia can cover your in-store
duties, so you're free. Go, make
some deliveries.

Dorian stares at Kat, shocked. Kevin put's his cigarette out
on the brick wall behind him. Kat snaps her fingers.

KAT (CONT'D)

What's not clicking?... Should I go
ask Julia--

DORIAN

NO, no! It's clicking now, I got
it. Thank you Kat.

KAT

You're welcome, now hurry up these
orders won't deliver themselves,
hup to.

Dorian takes the car sign from Kat and she rolls her eyes and
walks back into the store.

KEVIN

(chuckles)

So never mind then?

Dorian looks at Kevin conflicted.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

It's okay bro. Tiny victories
right?

Kevin pats Dorian's shoulder disappointedly before walking
back into the store. Dorian looks dispirited.

ACT THREE

EXT. WEALTHY NEIGHBORHOOD - AFTERNOON

Jorge sweats profusely while walking through the affluent neighborhood, pulling the lawn aerator. He eventually finds a shady tree on the corner of a street and pulls his wagon up to it.

He sits with his back leaning on the tree trunk, fanning himself with his clipboard.

He unpins his name tag from his shirt and stares at it thoughtfully. He then grabs the sharpie out of his pocket and starts to scribble black lines over his name, writing the name GEORGE above it when his cellphone RINGS. He answers it.

JORGE
(into phone)
Hello.

CJ (V.O.)
(over phone, filtered)
Hey buddy! How goes it? I know you were struggling the last time we spoke but that's okay right? It's about how you recover from your downfalls that matter.

JORGE
Hey CJ. Um yea not much has changed... I don't know maybe because it's a Friday--

CJ (V.O.)
Now whoa there GEORGE! Did you know that ninety-nine percent of failure comes from people who have the habit of making excuses?

Jorge looks confused as though he doesn't know what to say.

JORGE
Um no I didn't, is that a real statistic--

CJ (V.O.)
GEORGE The point is the only thing standing in the way of your goal is the stories you keep telling yourself as to why you can't do it. It only takes one leap of faith to achieve your dreams. You do know that don't you?

JORGE

Yea... I think I'm going to go on
my break now.

Jorge receives another notification ALERT mid phone call. He pulls his phone away to find that his Hype-beast app is announcing that the \$300 GEL-MIQURUM 54 sneakers are dropping TONIGHT AT MIDNIGHT. Jorge's eyes widen and he GASPS quietly.

CJ (V.O.)

Alright buddy, you have an hour.
And not a minute over that okay?

Jorge continues to stare at his phone in awe, disregarding CJ, then snaps out of it and put his phone back to his ear.

JORGE

(excitedly)

Yea, yea, yea, will do! See you
later!

Jorge hangs up the phone and goes into the Hype-beast app to look at a picture of the sneakers, their \$300 price listed under it.

Jorge then grabs his clipboard to look at the empty space where his sale profits should be listed. He stares deeply and anxiously.

EXT. FRONT YARD - LATE AFTERNOON

Dorian arrives at a house for a delivery and parks his car next to the curb. He gets out of the car, his rusty door SQUEACKS as it opens and closes, and walks to the front door with the pizza and debit machine in hand.

He rings the doorbell. After not much time at all the front door lights come on causing Dorian to squint and the door opens.

HAZEL (23, big curly hair, kind eyes, warm smile, beautiful but doesn't know it), a girl that Dorian recognizes as his crush from high school answers the door. He looks at her astonished then quickly looks down and covers his face with the pizza box.

Dorian coughs and lowers his voice to disguise himself.

DORIAN

Hi.

(coughs)

Hi, um I have an order here for
Williams--

Hazel GASPS.

HAZEL
Oh my gosh, Dorian!

She tries to peak over the pizza box on her tippy toes.

HAZEL (CONT'D)
Is that you?

Dorian curses under his breathe and lowers the pizza box.

DORIAN
Oh wow Hazel, I didn't even
recognize you--

HAZEL
Holy shit Dorian, it is you! How
have you been?

DORIAN
Good, um I've been good.

HAZEL
Man, how long has it been?
(thinking)
it must be like four years since I
last saw you--

DORIAN
Five... it's been five years since
high school.

HAZEL
Right... So what've you been up to?
I remember you were in like every
other one of my classes senior
year. You were always so nice to
me, helping me with my trig
homework right before it was due in
Mr. Costa's class. Do you remember
that?

Hazel laughs.

DORIAN
Yea those damn functions...

HAZEL
Yea back then it felt like we were
in the worst time of our lives...

Hazel looks at Dorian empathetically as if she were remembering what Dorian went through in high school. She shakes her head, snapping out of those memories.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Oh my god! Do you still play the guitar?

DORIAN

Yea, I mean sometimes.

HAZEL

Oh my god you have to send me a video sometime of you playing, I used to think you were gonna be famous!

DORIAN

Yea well... I'm not unfortunately.

Hazel GASPS, catching herself as if she just put her foot in her mouth.

HAZEL

I'm so sorry I didn't mean it like that, I mean it's not too late, right?

(beat)

I'm sorry I'm holding you up! How much is it?

Dorian is caught up admiring Hazel.

DORIAN

What?

HAZEL

For the pizza.

DORIAN

Oh yea the pizza... which I am delivering to you. It's um... \$15.97.

Hazel rustles with a small lime green, beaded change purse.

HAZEL

Okay, I think I have cash.

Hazel hands Dorian \$25 in cash.

DORIAN

Thank you.

Dorian hands Hazel the pizza.

DORIAN (CONT'D)

Oh, I think you gave me too much--

HAZEL

That's okay you keep it... it's been so nice seeing you again Dorian. I had no idea you worked at Fatso's, I order from you guys all the time! But send that video though, my number's still the same.

DORIAN

Yea for sure.

The two look at each smiling awkwardly.

HAZEL

See you later.

DORIAN

Uh, yea bye!

Dorian walks down the driveway toward his car.

DORIAN (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Please don't look at my car. Please don't look at my car. Please don't look at my car...

Dorian arrives at his car and looks behind it to see Hazel still standing at the door, waving at him cheerfully.

DORIAN (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Shit.

Dorian forces a smile and waves back at her.

INT. AGRI-FAB OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Imani and Kelly sit side by side at Imani's desk while she takes a call. Kelly leans in to listen.

IMANI

(into phone)

And you're sure the monitor is plugged in to the power strip?

We hear a hostile screechy voice reply sharply on the other end of the call but can't hear what is being said.

IMANI (CONT'D)
 (into phone)
 No--
 (sighs)
 Ma'am, I don't think you're stupid.
 It's just that since nothing is
 powering on--

The screechy voice yells back at Imani, interrupting her.

IMANI (CONT'D)
 Yup
 (beat)
 Alright ma'am, I understand. I'm
 transferring you over to Linda now.
 (beat)
 Okay bye--

We hear the loud dial tone and Imani presses transfer on the landline before hanging up the phone. Linda sits next to her grinning slyly at Imani as her phone starts to ring. She answers it.

KELLY
 Yea that's Teressa, she's a tough
 one.

JARED, (24) A young hesitant office temp with long stringy hair and a wrinkly dress shirt tucked into his ill-fitting trousers, walks up to Imani desk.

JARED
 Um, sorry to interrupt but Kelly,
 you're needed on the second floor.
 Janet is talking about her cysts
 again.

KELLY
 Oh no.

JARED
 Yea she's just going into to grave
 detail about the puss and the
 different areas on her body that
 ooze from time to time--

KELLY
 Yup, that's fine I get it!

JARED
 Everyone's just pretty freaked out.

KELLY

Got it!

(to Imani)

Welp, duty calls. You're okay to take it from here right? It shouldn't be that busy, you can go for lunch in about...

Kelly checks her watch.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Let's say... about ten minutes time.

IMANI

Sounds good.

Kelly stands up next to Jared.

KELLY

Alrighty! I'll see you later this afternoon.

IMANI

See ya then.

Jared stands there stiffly, staring into to space in Imani's direction. Kelly looks at him irritatedly.

KELLY

Walk Jared.

JARED

Oh yea sorry!

Kelly walks behind Jared towards the elevator. Imani sighs in relief while typing.

IMANI

(whispers)

Thank God for that.

The phone at Imani's desk RINGS causing her to flinch in dismay.

IMANI (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Oh, kill me.

She picks up the phone while typing.

IMANI (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Hello thank you for calling Agri-Fab Ltd. help desk, my name is Imani how can I help you today?

VP (V.O.)

(over phone, filtered)

My printer's not working, and I need to print this report right now!

IMANI

No problem sir, can I just get your first and last name please.

VP (V.O.)

Is that really necessary I'm gonna be late for my meeting!

IMANI

Sir your contact info is just incase we get disconnected so that I can accurately report your ticket.

VP (V.O.)

Miss I do not need a ticket I need you to fix my printer. I was told that that was within your capabilities, am I mistaken?

IMANI

No sir you are not. Is your machine a network or personal printer?

VP (V.O.)

Ma'am with all due respect, I am the VP of sales at this office, I think it's pretty safe to assume I would not be using a shared printer.

IMANI

Alright so a personal printer. Is it a bluetooth printer or is it connected to your computer with a usb cable?

VP (V.O.)

I'm sorry but what is this incompetence?

IMANI

Ah- I'm sorry?

VP (V.O.)

Seriously it's your first day on the job and your already half-assing it. What exactly are you being paid for if I'm over here doing all the work myself like a jackass. Is the printer bluetooth or usb, I don't fucking know! I'm not the engineer...

The male colleague continues to yell at Imani over the phone but we cannot hear what he is saying. She turns to see Linda listening to her call intently. Imani puts her palm over the phone and looks desperately at Linda for help.

IMANI

(whispers to Linda)

What should I do?

Linda realizes that she has been caught eavesdropping and pretends to be focused on her computer screen which currently displays that she is in the midst of a game of Solitaire. She ignores the question.

Imani looks visibly upset by this but puts the phone back to her ear anyway.

IMANI (CONT'D)

(into phone)

Yes

(beat)

Of course sir I understand that--

Linda interjects coldly without looking away from her screen.

LINDA

I would go over there if I were you.

Imani nods uneasily in understanding of both the demands coming from over the phone as well as what Linda has just suggested.

INT. AGRI-FAB OFFICE: VP'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Imani scrolls through the Vice President of sales' computer, knelt in front of his pristine mahogany desk comprising of a metal newton cradle and a single dismal family portrait.

The VP sits with his feet kicked up on the desk next to Imani's face, while talking obnoxiously on his cellphone.

IMANI

So you're just going to go into Devices and Printers, then select Bluetooth Devices, turn bluetooth on, find your printer name and click select and then you can just press Print on your report from there.

The printer loudly turns on as it prints out the document.

IMANI (CONT'D)

It's as easy as that sir--

VP

(into phone)

Yea so he just slams the thing on the floor and he tells the guy does that look like a pepperoni feast to you?!

(laughs)

I know, can you believe that guy?

The VP notices the document in the printer. He pulls his phone from his ear.

VP (CONT'D)

(whispers to Imani)

Is this it?

IMANI

Yup.

The VP grabs the sheet of paper and picks up his briefcase, placing it gently inside.

VP

(to Imani)

See? That wasn't so hard was it?

Imani looks the Vice President straight in the eyes.

IMANI

You were yelling sir.

The VP stares at Imani for a moment fascinated and then puts the phone back to his ear as he exits the office.

VP

(into phone)

Yea, so then he's like we've been
ordering here for over ten years
and you've single handedly just
lost our business!

(beat)

Right, what a character!

Imani struggles to stand up using the mahogany desk for support. Her knees crack loudly and she bends over to wearily rub them.

IMANI

(grunts)

Oh boy.

EXT. FATSO'S PIZZA PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

Jorge exits Dorian's store chewing on pizza crust, before throwing away the paper plate it came on. He chugs the remaining contents of a water bottle to which he pours the last drips over his face and hair.

A new Audi TT Convertible full of trust fund babies and their girlfriends, pull into the parking lot and park in front of the store, next to Jorge. The driver's side window rolls down to reveal CALEB (21) a euro-centrally attractive frat boy, tallish, a bit soft.

CALEB

Hey dude, nice pants...

The other people in the car lean forward to observe Jorge, he looks at them cautiously, slowing his pace.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Those are the Raf Simons archive
parachute bondage pants right?

Jorge surprised, relaxes slightly, stopping beside the car.

JORGE

Yea...

CALEB

Sick bro, my cousin copped one of
the original pairs of those years
ago at a vintage shop. I don't
think I could pull them off
though...

Caleb laughs with the rest of the car, Jorge joins in nervously.

CALEB (CONT'D)

So I'm guessing you probably heard about the GEL-MIQRUM 54s dropping tonight!

JORGE

(excited)

Bro I've been waiting for this drop since last year, they just kept teasing them. I'm definitely copping a pair tonight, I'd do anything for those kicks!

CALEB

Oh yea? You reselling them?

JORGE

Hell no! Bro I'm literally wearing these kicks to my grave!

Jorge and Caleb chuckle.

JORGE (CONT'D)

I resell my Jordan's on the side though. You can make bank on the Retros if you're doing it right.

CALEB

Yea I have a couple pairs of the MIQRUM 53s but I've never worn them out the box before. They're just too priceless you know.

Jorge looks insecure now.

JORGE

True.

CALEB

But yea I just got off the phone with my bot guy. He's gonna do his thing, use his little software to automatically checkout multiple pairs of the 54's for me tonight, and I'm just gonna resell them for like 4 times the retail price later.

Caleb gets out of the car.

CALEB (CONT'D)

(thinking)

...Damn, they'll probably sell out
in like under five minutes at that
rate.

Jorge looks worried and Caleb glances at the wagon and the
clipboard in Jorge's hand.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Bro what the fuck are you doing...
holy shit are you a fucking door-to-
door salesman?

Caleb bursts out laughing and the rest of the people in his
car lean over the doors to see, also laughing.

CALEB (CONT'D)

(laughing)

What is that a fucking lawn mower?
(beat)
You know that shit's a scam right?

JORGE

Yea I know bro, no one actually
needs a lawn aerator.

Caleb laughs harder.

CALEB

Bro no! You're being scammed!
(beat)
They promise you some fast-track
management progression system,
like, let me guess they told you,
you could make like a ninety
thousand dollar salary in twelve
months right?

Jorge looks down kicking garbage at his feet in humiliation.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Bro! Only one percent of employees
ever make it that far because of
their sketchy and desperate sales
strategies. Dude I'm sorry to drop
all of this shit on you but I've
been driving for like an hour so my
brain's just super simulated right
now.

(MORE)

CALEB (CONT'D)

Oh my god, not to mention their pattern of preying on young gullible dropouts, I know because my uncle owns one of these shitty companies... Damn, Im sorry bro, that's super fucked up.

Caleb leans in toward Jorge as if he were telling him a million dollar secret. The rest of his companions exit the car talking amongst themselves.

CALEB (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Hey If I were you I would just quit. You're better off selling sneakers for a living.

Caleb chuckles before joining his group to walk into the pizza store, he locks his car with his keys making the HORN sound.

Jorge stands in the parking lot alone with the wagon handle in one hand and the clipboard in the other, he stares at the convertible piteously for a moment. His head then shoots up with excitement as if a light bulb just went off in his mind.

INT. FATSO'S PIZZA: KITCHEN - LATE AFTERNOON

Dorian enters through the backdoor of Fatso's into the kitchen. He picks up the next pizza delivery, confused, with no address or receipt attach to it. Kat quickly shuffles in from the front of the store with the receipt, handing it to Dorian.

KAT

This is yours.

DORIAN

Thank you...

Dorian looks at the address concerned.

DORIAN (CONT'D)

Wait a second... Paradise Valley? That's like forty minutes out of zone.

Kat sighs heavily.

KAT

Oh come on Dorian. The order's already been made. This isn't anything new.

DORIAN

But it's not too far? You know how my car acts--

KAT

If we didn't make any out of zone deliveries we'd already be out of business, is that what you want?

Dorian looks uncertain.

KAT (CONT'D)

Just do this for me, this one time Dow, can't you?... Or just let me know now if this is going to be problem because we can find somebody else--

DORIAN

No! No, it's no problem. I'll do it.

Kat smiles at Dorian warmly like a proud mom after their child washes the dishes without being asked.

KAT

Thank you. You know I remember things like this, you're always so reliable.

Dorian walks out of the back entrance with the pizza, reluctantly as if he's disappointed himself once again.

DORIAN

(somberly)

Yea I know.

INT. AGRI-FAB OFFICE - EARLY EVENING

Imani walks back to her desk and grabs the lunch bag that her mother packed for her out of her drawer.

She walks down the hallway and around the corner to a brightly colored room labeled LUNCHROOM - consisting of a refrigerator, sink, microwave, and a couple of mini circular tables.

She enters it to find a couple of small groups of employees chatting amongst themselves. They all falls silent, with their eyes locked on Imani.

Looking visually uncomfortable and alienated, Imani immediately turns around and leaves the same way she came in.

INT. AGRI-FAB OFFICE: WAHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Imani enters the large modern monochrome tiled washroom, packed with large mirrors and bright white lighting. She enters a tall chrome stall and lowers the toilet seat before sitting down on it.

Imani sighs heavily in repose before taking out her smartphone from her pocket and queuing up a trashy reality TV show about housewives.

After the video begins Imani opens up her lunch bag and uses napkins to take a bite out of her chicken shawarma wrap.

EXT. PORCH - EARLY EVENING

Jorge is at the front door of an receptive YOUNG MOTHER's house.

The house is the same size as the others in the neighborhood except for some dead patches of grass on the lawn, chipped paint on the garage, some shingles are peeling off, and there is some cracks in the wood of the porch.

The young mother bounces her toddler on her hip as Jorge convincingly gives her a completely new sales pitch.

JORGE

The Agri-Fab 48-Inch Tow Plug Aerator 700 was released on the market only three weeks ago in a limited supply. The model is not even in stores yet so right now you have an opportunity that many other households don't, you should consider yourself very lucky.

YOUNG MOTHER

Really? How so?

JORGE

Well for starters compared to the earlier model - the Tow Plug Aerator 600 that was very highly regarded and sold out everywhere in under a year, the 700 offers twice as many spring steel picks allowing you to de-thatch fifteen inches of soil in a single stroke...

Jorge shows the measurement using his fingers.

JORGE (CONT'D)

At half the size and weight of the older model... that's literally unheard off.

YOUNG MOTHER

Wow that's a really excellent deal, I myself have trouble lugging around our lawn mower from the shed out back...

The young mother grins excitedly but with a guilty expression on her face.

YOUNG MOTHER (CONT'D)

I really would but I don't know if I have the time or the energy to be outside pushing this around for an hour. I mean look at the size of my lawn...

The young mother gesture's to her front lawn behind Jorge and he turns around to take it all in.

YOUNG MOTHER (CONT'D)

And who will look after my little ones?

JORGE

Ma'am with all due respect, look around you, look at the houses in this neighborhood. They're spotless! And they'll spend every penny to make sure that it stays that way. If you want to have it all, It's not about what you can't do, It's about keeping up appearances - what you can look like you've done. Now I don't know you personally but for a single mother I would say you've done pretty great job so far, am I right?

YOUNG MOTHER

I mean yea.

JORGE

And at Agri-Fab we don't just want to offer you this top of the lawn equipment, oh no. I also wanna offer you my service this afternoon in a limited time offer.

(MORE)

JORGE (CONT'D)

I will would gladly aerate your lawn for you right now with the purchase of our 48-Inch Tow Plug Aerator 700.

YOUNG MOTHER

Are you serious?

Jorge chuckles warmly.

JORGE

Ma'am I wouldn't be out here if I wasn't. Not to mention the vibrant and modern colour-ways that the machine itself comes in - lightning green and black, our fiery orange and yellow...

Jorge bends down and puts his arm around the lawn aerator box, grinning widely.

JORGE (CONT'D)

And my personal favorite...
Electric red and silver.
(beat)

The young mother looks excitedly at Jorge, convinced.

JORGE (CONT'D)

So what do you say?

YOUNG MOTHER

Alright, where do I sign?

EXT. FRONT YARD - LATER

The large red aerator whirrs loudly as Jorge pushes it steadily across the lawn and sweat stains begin to form all over his dress shirt.

He wipes beads of sweat from his brow before the young mother stops him with a glass of lemonade in her hand. Jorge takes the glass and manages to muster up a smile while breathing heavily.

JORGE

Thank you.

As the woman turns around to walk back to her house Jorge chugs the entire glass leaving one hand on the aerator. He taps her shoulder as she walks away to hand her back the empty glass, she looks surprised.

Jorge continues to push the aerator forward.

EXT. FRONT YARD - LATER

In a WIDE SHOT of the front yard we see Jorge on the driveway bending over to place the lawn aerator back into the box and back onto the wagon, while the young mother stands next to him with a gracious smile on her face.

Her lawn already looks healthier. Jorge stands up to face her and the young mother hands Jorge a check. He extends his clipboard and pen to her and she signs the bottom of the page.

The two exchange short pleasantries and she returns to her house. Jorge stares in awe at the check written out to Agri-Fab Ltd. in the amount of \$113.

JORGE

Tight!

Dorian, in his beat up silver Honda Civic, speeds down the street beside him.

INT. DORIAN'S CAR - EVENING

Dorian is driving down a long dark unoccupied road with rural landscapes on either side of him blaring "Purple Haze" by Jimi Hendrix.

Dorian looks around outside for street names when his car starts to jerk and slow down making a loud sputtering NOISE.

DORIAN

No, no, no, no, no!

His engine lets out one last SNARL before turning off all together. Dorian tries to turn the ignition, revving the engine several times...

DORIAN (CONT'D)

Come on, baby, come on.

But the car does not restart. He slams his hands against the dashboard and rests his head down on the wheel.

DORIAN (CONT'D)

Fuck!

EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Dorian gets out of the car on the desolate road and finds that smoke is coming from underneath the hood of his car.

DORIAN

Shit!

He runs over to the front of the car and rips open the hood which engulfs the area around his face with smoke. Dorian coughs violently.

He slams the hood back down in frustration and sits on top of it, pulling his phone out of his pocket to check the time. Dorian sees that his phone is on two percent battery life and GASPS.

DORIAN (CONT'D)

(whispers to himself)

Oh my god... you know what... fuck it!

Dorian leaps into action opening his truck and pulling out a mountain bike. Dorian grabs the pizza out of his car, placing it on top of the handle bars and riding off. We hear the BEAP of Dorian's car locking by-way-of his car keys.

INT. AGRI-FAB OFFICE: WASHROOM - EVENING

Imani is still watching reality TV on her phone in the bathroom stall when she is interrupted by an ALARM reminding her that her lunch break is over.

INT. AGRI-FAB OFFICE: ELEVATOR - EVENING

Imani walks out of the washroom with her head down and her lunch-bag in hand, past a floor of cubicles to the elevator. A silver haired man in his early 60's sporting a well tailored suit approaches the elevator.

He's the type of man that lets you know he's being profound through extreme eye contact and awkwardly long pauses. The two exchange awkward smiles but the man continues to stare at Imani.

The elevator DINGS alerting them that it has arrived on their floor, and they both get in. The man does not look away from Imani even while they press the buttons of their separate floors.

Just as Imani pulls her headphones out her pocket to escape the discomfort...

SUITED MAN
You look misplaced...

Imani looks at the man defensively with a furrowed brow.

SUITED MAN (CONT'D)
That is, unless your the new IT
girl?

IMANI
I am. Hi, my name's Imani. Nice to
meet you--

Imani extends out her hand and he shakes it, lingering just
long enough for Imani to have to pull her hand way.

SUITED MAN
I-M-A-N-I, wow! Nice to meet you.
And I suppose I should congratulate
you... on the new job. Despite it's
many flaws...

Imani looks visibly uncomfortable and confused.

IMANI
(whispers)
Thank you...

Imani attempts to put her headphones in once again.

SUITED MAN
I was a bit puzzled at first when I
heard that we were hiring someone
for technical support because I
just figured... When I have an
issue with my computer, it just
troubleshoots itself. It didn't
seem like something we needed to
add an intern to payroll for.

IMANI
I'm not an intern--

SUITED MAN
Do you ever worry that that one day
your job will be replaced by some
high-tech Apple software or
something?

The man chuckles.

SUITED MAN (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, I'm just messing with
you, we're excited to have you on.
(MORE)

SUITED MAN (CONT'D)

Work should be much more...
 (thinking)
 Stimulating with you here.

The man winks at Imani as the elevator doors open on his floor.

SUITED MAN (CONT'D)

And your the FIRST IT specialist at that! You should be proud of yourself...
 (sarcastically)
 At least your not an intern.

The man snickers slyly at Imani before exiting the elevator. The doors close behind him. Imani is visibly disturbed by his comments.

EXT. FRONT YARD - EVENING

Jorge stands on the porch of a wealthy middle-aged man who rips a check out of his checkbook and hands it to him. Jorge gives him his clipboard to sign.

JORGE

Thank you so much for your business
 Mr. Kyle--

JIM

Call me Jim.

JORGE

You got it, Jim.

Jorge winks at Jim like a corny used car salesman, as he pulls his clipboard away.

JORGE (CONT'D)

Your aerator should ship in no longer than ten business days.

JIM

I can't wait.

The two shake hands in camaraderie.

JORGE

Enjoy, have a good one!

JIM

You too GEORGE.

Jorge walks off the property staring at his check with a large grin on his face as Jim closes the door behind him.

As Jorge walks down the street to the nearest house, pulling the wagon. We see a CLOSE UP of his clipboard with a new profit of \$1166, his cellphone RINGS. He answers it.

JORGE
(into phone)
Hello.

CJ (V.O.)
(over phone, filtered)
Hey GEORGE, it's CJ what's going on man! Any sales updates?

JORGE
Yea I just sold another aerator at Wellington and Shadow Creek boulevard!

CJ (V.O.)
Wow already?

JORGE
Yea it didn't take that much convincing and the dude said he could do it himself so I was like more power to you!

CJ (V.O.)
See this is what I'm talking about, if you really want to do something you do, there are no excuses! Now look at you, you're a natural! You're blowing through your sales goals, how did you do it?

JORGE
Um, I found my own strategy. Something a little more familiar to me.

Jorge smirks to himself.

CJ (V.O.)
Righteous man! And you doubted yourself... If you manage to make another sale today, I'm sure you'll have broken some kind of record.

JORGE
Are you serious?

CJ (V.O.)
 Sure dude, on your first day?
 You're definitely one of the best
 I've junior salesmen I've come
 across. At this rate your well on
 you way to becoming a top
 associate.

Jorge scoffs in bewildered excitement.

JORGE
 Sick!

CJ (V.O.)
 Yup there's a hefty bonus in it for
 you too so keep it up, alright bud.
 We'll be swing by to pick you up
 shortly.

JORGE
 Yea, alright see ya!

CJ (V.O.)
 Alright, see ya soon.

Jorge hangs up the phone as he arrives at another house. He does a small celebration dance as he walks up the driveway onto the porch and RINGS the doorbell.

A sweet-looking ELDERLY WOMAN in her 80s opens the door.

ELDERLY WOMAN
 Oh well hello there handsome. What
 can I do you for?

Jorge is visibly taken aback by this and looks around her front lawn to find that it is in perfect condition. A cat crawls between his legs causing Jorge to jump back anxiously.

ELDERLY WOMAN (CONT'D)
 Oh ignore him, he just loves to be
 the center of attention. Don't ya
 Marley.

The cat purrs as it stares up at Jorge, rubbing his fur on his pant leg.

ELDERLY WOMAN (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry about that he just likes
 you that's all.
 (beat)
 Now that's enough get back in her
 Marley, come inside. Get!

The elderly cat slowly crawls back inside the house through the woman's legs. She looks up to warmly and inquisitively acknowledge Jorge who is at a loss for words.

JORGE

Oh! Um, I'm sorry to bother ma'am but are you the primary owner of this home?

ELDERLY WOMAN

Sure am! Forty years and counting! Why do you ask?

JORGE

Just because I'm here on behalf of Agri-Fab Ltd, one of the leading outdoor equipment manufactures in the state--

ELDERLY WOMAN

Oh my! Hold on a second their son let me go get my check book.

The elderly woman disappears from the door leaving it wide open and unguarded. Jorge closes his eyes in regret.

JORGE

(whispers)
Jesus.

The lady returns already writing in her checkbook.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Please go ahead, go on. Don't let me interrupt you sweetheart.

Jorge looks at the lady sympathetically, unsure of what to do.

EXT. FRAT HOUSE GATE - EVENING

Dorian is nervously riding down the street of a very rich and heavily wooded neighborhood with large houses sparsely placed down gated off roads. He struggles to look at the GPS on his phone through his displaced dreads and beads of sweat.

GPS NAVIGATOR (O.S.)

(through phone)
Your destination is on the right.

Dorian stops in front of one of the mansion's gate intercoms. He presses the buzzer and a feedback NOISE comes on, Dorian looks uncertain. He presses the button again.

DORIAN
 (into intercom)
 Hi, I have your Fatso's Pizza
 delivery for Bishop.
 (beat)

FRAT BOY (O.S.)
 (over intercom, filtered)
 Um... are sure?

DORIAN
 Uh, yea. This is 2853 Paradise
 Valley right?

FRAT BOY (O.S.)
 ... yea. What kind of pizza is it?

Dorian is weirded out by this questioning. He looks at the receipt.

DORIAN
 Didn't you order an extra large
 meat lover's pizza?

There is SOUNDS of movement, murmuring and snickering over the intercom.

FRAT BOY
 (chuckling)
 Yea bro you can come in.

The gates loudly UNLOCKS, causing Dorian to flinch, and mechanically swings open to the mansion.

EXT. FRATERNITY - EVENING

Establishing shot of Dorian riding up to the front of the mansion where we see the greek letters of Alpha Epsilon Pi. He stops and looks up at the letters which he recognizes, as his face fills with dread.

EXT. FRAT HOUSE PORCH - EVENING

Dorian rings the door bell with the pizza and debit machine in hand. The large door opens immediately by a large group of young white men sporting polo shirts and khakis like a uniform.

This includes Caleb, who spoke to Jorge earlier, the right hand man. He also looks like the smartest of the bunch. They all stare at Dorian mockingly.

CALEB
 (sarcastically)
 Nice hair dude.

The other frat boys laugh at his comment and Dorian looks up, blowing one of his disheveled dreadlocks out of his face. The leader, BISHOP (22), steps forward.

BISHOP
 Damn what took you so long bro? We weren't expecting you, you got us all excited for no reason.

The frat boys behind him giggle. Bishop notices Dorian's bike behind him.

BISHOP (CONT'D)
 You didn't ride all the way here did you? Holy shit, I've got to applaud you on your dedication to the pizza industry
 (laughs)
 Maybe one day you'll be promoted to regional Fatso manager...No, bro but seriously what happened to the cute pizza delivery girl that always works Friday nights... We miss her.

Dorian glares at him.

DORIAN
 She quit--

BISHOP
 She quit! What for?

DORIAN
 I don't know. Maybe she just got tired of being harassed by tools.

Angered, the group of frat boys aggressively approach the door muttering threats and insults at Dorian. One of the larger FRAT BOYS that looks like he must have been held back a couple of years grabs Dorian by the collar.

FRAT BOY
 What the fuck did you just say dude?!

They all surround him except Bishop. Dorian rustles with him trying to get free. Bishop steps in, diplomatically separating them, holding eye contact with Dorian the entire time. Bishop smirks.

BISHOP
Relax alphas!

Bishop pushes the large frat boy back with both hands.

BISHOP (CONT'D)
(chuckling)
Calm down brodie! That ain't fair,
look at the size of him, Jesus.
(to Dorian)
Trust me bro we didn't lay on hand
on your little girlfriend, but you
know how it is with females. They
see a house like this, they see the
cars in the driveway, and it's like
they don't know what to do with
themselves.

Bishop laughs and the rest of the frat boys follow suit.

DORIAN
(sarcastically)
Is that so?

Dorian kisses his teeth and snaps his fingers in sarcastic disappointment.

DORIAN (CONT'D)
Man that's tough. Because I'm gonna
be the only one delivering here
from now on...

Dorian looks Bishop up and down callously.

DORIAN (CONT'D)
And I'm not that impressed.

BISHOP
Is that so--

DORIAN
Yea.

Dorian glares at Bishop, maintaining the tense eye contact. Caleb interrupts, taping Bishop on the chest to show him something on his phone.

CALEB
Yo Bishop, look at this! We ordered
our pizza over an hour ago, I swear
that means the pizza's free, no?

Bishop looks back at Dorian grinning delightedly. He quickly grabs the pizza from his hand.

BISHOP

Well in that case we'll be seeing
you next week boy!

Bishop SLAMS the large door in Dorian's face loudly, causing a gust of wind that nearly pushes Dorian over. Dorian looks down dejected along with the idea of riding all the way back to the store at the back of his head.

ACT FOUR

INT. AGRI-FAB: HR OFFICE - EVENING

Imani stands, drained, in front of Kelly with all of her bags in hand, as Kelly scans through her daily report at her desk.

KELLY

I see... Yup, it seems like
everything's in working order here.
You're good to go.

Imani wearily turns around to exit, when Kelly interrupts...

KELLY (CONT'D)

And I don't want you to be too down
on yourself about your numbers
today, it's only your first day!
Everyone starts out slow, I know
you'll get the hang of it.

Imani manages a hollow smile.

IMANI

Thanks Kelly.

Imani turns around again, walking toward the door.

KELLY

Oh, and one more thing before you
leave!

Imani turns around reluctantly.

KELLY (CONT'D)

I saw that you assisted the VP of
sales today, with his printer...

IMANI

Yea?

KELLY

It's just that--

Kelly looks both happy and conflicted, as if for the first time she's not sure whether she should say what she's thinking.

KELLY (CONT'D)

(seriously)

He likes to break in the new team members, especially in the admin departments via intimidation. A lot of people quit because of it. Or if he doesn't like the way they handle it, he'll complain about them everyday until they're fired.

(beat)

He didn't do that with you. I guess you passed the test... good job.

Imani genuinely smiles at Kelly as if she needed to hear that.

IMANI

No worries... Thanks Kelly.

Imani walks to the door with a slight grin on her face, opening it.

KELLY

(enthusiastically)

No problem. Bye Imani... See you on Monday!

Without turning back to Kelly, Imani's smile fades as dread washes over her face, she sighs exhaustedly before walking through the door.

INT. IMANI'S CAR - EVENING

Imani gets into her car and puts her key in the ignition. Before turning it on, she stops to think for a moment, staring into space and exhaling deeply.

She decides instead to take out her cellphone and make a call. The phone doesn't ring for long before someone answers, but we can't hear the person on the other end of the line.

IMANI

(into phone)

Hey are you free right now?

(beat)

Cause I really need see you.

(beat)

Yea? No I can pick you up right now.

(MORE)

IMANI (CONT'D)

(beat)

I can be there in like...

Imani checks the time on her dashboard.

IMANI (CONT'D)

Fifteen minutes?

(beat)

Alright, I'm on my way... bye.

Imani hangs up the phone in gratitude and turns on the ignition.

EXT. FRONT YARD - EVENING

Jorge and the elderly woman exchange some parting words before he leaves her property, pulling the wagon down her driveway. The elderly woman hesitates to close her door with a warm but puzzled look on her face.

As she closes the door behind her, the Agri-Fab company van pulls up in front of her house. The van door swings open and Jorge hopes in...

INT. AGRI-FAB COMPANY VAN - EVENING

Taking his previous seat next to Ashley who has already been picked up along with a couple of other salespeople.

CJ

There you are. You weren't too hard to find.

CJ continues to chat one-sidedly with Jorge and everyone else in the van about their sales accomplishments, as the van takes off, driving to their next destination. Ashley lowers her voice as she leans in to talk to Jorge teasingly.

ASHLEY

How long did it take you to finagle the old lady, like five minutes?

(scoffs)

How much did you get?

Jorge looks forward coldly and dispirited, as if pondering whether he made the right decision or not.

JORGE

She wasn't interested.

Ashley looks at Jorge befuddle by his inability. She laughs at him and tries to pry further into what went wrong but his thoughts drown her out as he continues to look blankly into space.

INT. FATSO'S PIZZA: KITCHEN - LATE EVENING

Dorian is sweating profusely as he enters the empty backroom of Fatso's Pizza. Kat immediately comes darting toward him from her office furiously.

KAT

Where the hell have you been, I've been calling you?!

Kat checks her watch.

KAT (CONT'D)

It's been nearly three hours since you went out for that delivery!

DORIAN

My car broke down on some empty road, and my phone was at like two percent so I had to ride by bike all the way there. I used the rest of my batter life on GPS, then I put it on airplane mode so that it wouldn't die.

KAT

Oh my fucking god!

DORIAN

I know--

KAT

No! You rode your fucking bike to make a delivery?! Do you know how against the rules that is? Do you think we can afford a lawsuit if one of our employees gets hit by a bus while on the job!

DORIAN

I know but I told you my car wouldn't make it that far. And I can barely afford gas for in-zone deliveries as it is.

KAT
 No, no, no, no, no, no, no. I
 really hope you're not trying to
 spin this around on me!

DORIAN
 No it' just--

KAT
 YOU COULD NOT POSSIBLY BE TRYING TO
 BLAME ME FOR DISAPPEARING FOR THREE
 HOURS DURING YOUR SHIFT!

Dorian's eyes widen and start to water slightly.

KAT (CONT'D)
 Could you?!

DORIAN
 (timidly)
 No--

KAT
 Good! Because that is not my
 problem nor is it this company's
 problem that you have a shit car!

DORIAN
 My car is literally still out there
 in the middle of nowhere--

Kat takes several loud deep breaths and puts her fists to her forehead.

KAT
 (soft)
 Dorian. Please tell me that they at
 least paid for the pizza. Please
 tell me that.

Dorian looks down like an injured puppy.

DORIAN
 ...It was over an hour. It was
 free.

KAT
 Dorian when you applied to this job
 seven years ago you guaranteed us
 that you had a fully functioning
 car!

DORIAN

Yea but I also only had an eighteen year old car back then, it's been seven years.

KAT

Well you should have gotten a second job, or got your parents to get you a new car seven years ago, like everyone else! Doesn't That make more sense than driving your bootleg car into the fucking ground! Right?!

Dorian wipes his eyes and clenches his jaw as if she just struck a nerve. His voice shakes.

DORIAN

I'm sorry Kat, it won't happen again.

KAT

You bet your ass it won't happen again! This is your last strike Dorian. Now I like you, I know you've been working here for a long time. I still won't hesitate to fire your ass.

Dorian solemnly walks over to the apron rack and goes to grab his.

KAT (CONT'D)

What the fuck are you doing?

DORIAN

I'm closing.

KAT

Dorian. Do you remember that were supposed to be a shift runner? So no one got to go on any of their breaks because of you, including me, and you think you're closing the store tonight?! You're done. Leave early.

Dorian locks eyes with Kat shaking his head helplessly.

DORIAN

(whispers)

I'm sorry.

Dorian exits the backdoor with his head down and a defeated look on his face.

EXT. LOOKOUT POINT - SUNSET

Establishing shot of Imani's car parked at the edge of a wooded cliff looking out over the city.

Imani and SHAY (African American, 21, septum piercing & a shaved head, never seen with a bra on), her childhood best friend, giggle as they climb out of the driver and passenger side windows of the car onto the roof.

EXT. LOOKOUT POINT - NIGHT

Imani and Shay smoke, passing a joint back and forth between them. They lay on their backs on the roof of the SUV looking up at the night sky with their glossy red eyes.

Shay takes a puff of the joint and passes it back to Imani, coughing slightly.

SHAY

So when are you gonna tell me why
you really called?

Imani takes the joint and inhales.

IMANI

I told you. I missed you.

SHAY

Oh, shut the fuck up!

IMANI

What?

SHAY

You've been back in town for like
three months, and you're just now
hitting me up after your first day
of work.

Imani ignores her and takes another hit.

SHAY (CONT'D)

Was it really that bad?

Imani passes Shay the joint.

IMANI

Oh my god! Remember the first day
of middle school, when I had to go
to school missing a front tooth.

Shay finishes puffing the joint and burst out laughing,
sending her into a coughing frenzy.

SHAY

(laughing and coughing)
Holy shit yea. That was after you
rode your skateboard into my
parent's mailbox!

IMANI

I rode it?! You fucking pushed me!

SHAY

Yea well I thought you could skate.
I miss that phase. We really
thought we gonna go pro.

IMANI

Yea, we thought we were Tony Hawk.

The two burst out laughing again.

SHAY

(laughing)
You know we still have that fucking
dent in our mailbox!

IMANI

(laughing)
Holy shit!
(beat)
Yea I guess we're right back where
we started huh Shay?

Shay finishes another puff and passes it back to Imani.

SHAY

What, you miss living away at
(British accent)
Stanford?

Imani laughs, coughing out smoke.

IMANI

Why the British accent?

SHAY

It's posh.

Shay looks up at the sky distracted.

SHAY (CONT'D)
(kisses her teeth)
Where the fuck are all the stars?!

IMANI
I mean yea, I kinda do miss
Stanford in some ways. It just
feels like I'm moving backwards ya
know.

Shay squints as if she's trying to think deeply.

SHAY
... No.

They both laugh.

IMANI
It's like I'm a completely
different person now. But I'm still
sleeping in my single bed from when
I was thirteen.

Shay takes another hit and exhales the smoke, gasping.

SHAY
Do you still have that JC Chasez
poster?!

IMANI
I just took it down.

SHAY
Damn man, fucking underrated.

Imani chuckles at Shay's innocence.

SHAY (CONT'D)
Wait. When's the last time you saw
Khalil?

IMANI
(scoffs)
When I dropped off my keys on
graduation day.

SHAY
Damn. It sounded like you guys were
gonna get married from what you
told me.

IMANI

Yea right, and my parents didn't even know he existed, I don't see that happening.

Shay takes another puff, she chuckles.

SHAY

Bro, It's like your parents don't even know who you really are.

Imani turns to an oblivious Shay as if she just enlightened her of her own unfortunate reality. She sighs deeply. They both get quite for a moment, looking up.

IMANI

Is this it Shay?

Shay takes another puff and passes the joint to Imani who waves it away, Shay shrugs.

SHAY

What do you mean?

IMANI

Are we just expected to work a job we hate that barely pays us a living wage for the rest of our lives? That is, until we get knocked up by a man who will eventually resent us for it, as we struggle to provide a decent life for our kids, then get old and die of a curable disease?

Shay is visibly taken aback by Imani's pessimism. She thinks hard for a moment.

SHAY

Well shit! I just feel like in this life...

(thinking)

And probably the next... you just have to live for yourself and do whatever makes you happy... or else its just a waste, isn't it?

Imani thinks on it for a second then laughs painfully.

IMANI

(whispers)

I don't even know what that means Shay...

(beat)

(MORE)

IMANI (CONT'D)

You know I've never seen the stars
in my entire life.

Shay takes another puff of the joint and hands it back to
Imani who takes it from her this time.

SHAY

Are you fucking serious?

IMANI

Yea... I don't think they're meant
for people like me.

Imani takes what looks like the last hit of the now minuscule
joint, before staring off into the sky aimlessly.

INT. JORGE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jorge slowly opens the sliding patio door leading into his
house from the backyard. He tries to tip toe down the narrow
hallway to his bedroom without making a noise when he is
startled by his mother's boyfriend's voice.

Jorge stops and hides behind a wall as JAVIER (38) and
Jorge's mom talk in hushed troubled voices in the kitchen.

Jorge's mom leans against the counter, still in her uniform
and Javier stands opposite to her, his t-shirt and overalls
are covered in dirt. He holds his baseball cap in his hand.

JORGE'S MOTHER

So that's the fifth person in a row
they've laid off now.

JAVIER

Don't work yourself up about it.

JORGE'S MOTHER

What do you mean don't get worked
up about it, what if--

JAVIER

Don't.

Jorge's mom glares at Javier in fret.

JORGE'S MOTHER

Javier, what if they lay you off
too?

JAVIER

I've been there for almost ten years, the worst that they could do is cut my pay--

JORGE'S MOTHER

Cut your pay! And what do we do if they jack up the rent again?

Javier sighs and looks away from her as if she's being absurd.

JORGE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Seriously Javi, have you thought about what happens then. I'm not looking at a bonus from the train station any time soon.

JAVIER

Hey don't talk like that. I can always get an extra job you know that.

JORGE'S MOTHER

And what about Matías, huh?

JAVIER

What about him?

Jorge's mom throws her arms up in frustration.

JORGE'S MOTHER

He's gonna need a new inhaler Javi!
(concerned)
He's been breathing heavy enough as it is. And he's been having trouble sleeping--

Jorges mom rubs her eyes overwhelmed.

JORGE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

(under breathe)
Oh God...

Javier moves forward to embrace Jorge's mom. They hug and she rests her head on his shoulder as he rubs her back comfortingly.

JAVIER

I know, I know *mami*. You just worry too much.

Jorge looks disconcerted and somberly walks to his room without alerting anyone of his presence.

INT. JORGE'S HOUSE: BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jorge cracks open his room door and quietly inches toward his bed in pitch darkness, letting himself FLOP into it on his stomach.

Falling louder than he expected, he quickly turns to find his brother still asleep and snoring loudly and inconsistently, gasping every so often. He sighs in relief. Jorge reaches under his bed for his laptop and opens it in front of him.

He immediately goes to the GEL-MIQRUM website and looks at the picture of the GEL-MIQRUM 54 sneakers that reads COMING SOON and the \$300 price underneath it.

Jorge pulls his commission check out of his back pocket, written out to him in the amount \$350. He stares at it, kicking his feet in the air and contemplating.

INT. DORIAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dorian wearily enters the front door of his townhouse, turning on the living room light and dropping his keys on the entryway table, making an echo noise through the empty house.

His place is small, poorly kept up, semi-furnished, and dark with next to no decor or personal touches. He grabs a water bottle from his refrigerator, next to his couch and walks toward his bedroom.

On the way there he stops by a turtle tank, pushed up against a wall in the hallway and pours some boxed pet-food into the tank. The frail turtle inside does not move an inch or open his eyes.

Dorian bends down and gently knocks on the tank.

DORIAN
(whispers)
Come on Leopold. Open your eyes
buddy.

The turtle does not respond.

DORIAN (CONT'D)
(whispers)
Come on little guy, you gotta eat
something.

There is still no movement from the turtle so Dorian sighs unsurprised and continues to walk to his room.

INT. JORGE'S HOUSE: BEDROOM - MIDNIGHT

It is pitch dark in Jorge's room besides the light from his laptop screen, his brother is sleeping in the bed next to his. Jorge is laying down looking at his laptop, remaining unmoved from his position from before.

His mouse is hovering over the checkout button. He looks over at his little brother peacefully sleeping then looks at his brother's empty blue inhaler on his bedside table.

Jorge stares at the sneakers in his shopping cart one more time before closing his laptop, sighing heavily in reluctant acceptance before getting up. He exits the room slowly with an envelope in his hand.

INT. JORGE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jorge walks slowly down the hallway to the bedroom that his mother and Javier share.

BEDROOM

He quietly pushes open the door to the bedroom, comprising mostly of the king sized bed that takes up the majority of the room, recent family portraits and framed pictures and sculptures of the Virgin Mary.

While they're sleeping, Javier snores loudly overpowering Jorge's mom's soft melodic snoring, Jorge places the envelope on his mother's bedside table and exits the room contently.

CLOSE ON: The envelope with the word RENT written in bold on the front.

INT. DORIAN'S HOUSE: BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dorian enters his dark room, lit only by the moonlight peaking through his blinds on the opposite side of the room.

He removes his Fatso's pizza visor and t-shirt, throwing them on the floor. He then turns on his fan and the blue string lights that frame the ceiling of his bedroom.

Dorian grabs his vintage fuchsia electric guitar out of the case next to his dresser and plugs it into the red amp on his bedside table.

He sits on his bed while tuning the guitar and then starts to play the song 'Alexa De Paris' by Prince. He messes up a few times, flubbing on the E cord, he winces.

Dorian starts the song over, grinning as he plays every note to perfection, closing his eyes and bobbing his head to the rhythm.

As he finishes nailing the guitar solo both joyfully and passionately he exclaims in pride,

DORIAN

Yes!

His amplifier then immediately blows out, sparking, followed by the sound of STATIC.

DORIAN (CONT'D)

(yells)

Fuck!

CUT TO BLACK:

ROLL CREDITS:

"Godspeed" by Frank Ocean plays out.

END OF PILOT