

LEONARD (CONT'D)
(getting up)
I'll key in my password.

Leonard starts to key in the password as Twila strains to catch a glimpse of it behind his shoulder.

He presses enter and waits as a progress wheel spins on screen. After spinning for a beat, a box pops up with red text stating: PRINTER UNAVAILABLE.

LEONARD (CONT'D)
Hm?
(typing again)
But that should be correct.

TWILA
It didn't say your password was incorrect, it says the printer is unavailable. So much for Genecosa's deep pockets.

The printer whirrs and flashes again, loudly.

LEONARD
But there should be no reason for it to not be working.

Leonard pushes the "Need Help?" link. It prompts for his username and he enters it. A dialogue box pops up: "NON-BUSINESS MAJOR DETECTED."

LEONARD (CONT'D)
It's talking about you.

TWILA
I know that, but how does *it* know?

Twila starts pawing around the printer which grows louder by the second. The mechanical noises slowly morph into noises that sound like growls and howls.

LEONARD
Is it malfunctioning?

TWILA
Maybe. How about this--

She rears her hand back and slaps the printer three times in quick succession.

It erupts into a siren-like screech. Twila snatches her hand away, covered in black ink dripping on to the floor.

PRINTER

Attack made by non-business major.
Commencing removal.

Leonard and Twila scuttle away as the printer begins to leak ink like an open wound.

Methodically, the printer transforms, pieces of paper stuck to it as it rears up on metal hind legs like an eldritch forest creature. Sparking wires snake out from its body forming multiple arms. The display screen becomes one rectangular eye.

With blazing speed, one of the wires strikes Twila and Leonard, tossing them across the room. They strike the wall next to door HARD.

The printer creature slowly marches across the room as the two of them struggle to get up, ink stains covering their clothes.

TWILA

(gasping)

Why did it turn into an eldritch
horror from a silicon valley
startup?

LEONARD

I do not know, but we can leave
that unanswered.

He grabs her sleeve just as the monster makes another inky swipe with one of its cables, narrowly missing the two.

Leonard scrambles for the door and heaves it open. The pair dart out into the now increasingly dark and morphing business school.

As they escape, the printer creature emerges from the lab. It observes their flight before it takes off after them.

INT. THEATER BACKSTAGE

Fenton digs through a big bin of costumes, his upper half completely buried as he tosses out random clothes and items.

Ryleigh stands behind him, leaning against a makeup table as she is showered in sparkly outfits and funky hats.

FENTON

(muffled)

Aha!

He stops digging and eases himself out of the bin holding a small purple box engraved with golden glyphs. On the lid is written: "Glasses of the Soul." Fenton beckons Ryleigh over.

FENTON (CONT'D)

Okay, stop playing dress up. I've found the box where we keep all the glasses.

Ryleigh shakes off the funky clothes and eyes the box.

RYLEIGH

'Glasses of the Soul'? Over-the-top name for a box that just holds stolen glasses.

FENTON

Not stolen, borrowed. And the theater teacher named it that because if you find the right pair it helps you get into character easier. It's actually kinda wild how some of them feel.

RYLEIGH

And what's with the symbols on the side?

FENTON

Decoration, probably. It may have been a prop for a different production.

He cracks open the box and the symbols pulse a deep, golden glow. The glasses are arrayed in small compartments with little placards underneath (The PROFESSOR, The JANITOR, The CHEF, etc).

Fenton pulls out The THERAPIST'S frames (half-moon, thin, rimless) and slaps them on Ryleigh's face.

FENTON (CONT'D)

Can you see?

RYLEIGH

Depends on your definition of "sight". Mentally, my sight is clouded. Dark. Cluttered. An analysis of my childhood to late teendom would reveal a stark obsession with the meaning of life and existence after my favorite Kpop group broke up.

FENTON
No, I mean out your eyeholes.

RYLEIGH
Ah, physically you mean. No.

Fenton takes the frames off and turns back to the box. Ryleigh shakes her head a bit before Fenton puts another pair on her face, The SURVIVALIST (rigid, rectangle, camo-colored, thick).

FENTON
Eyes enhanced?

RYLEIGH
You can't rely on enhancements when the end comes, Buck. This infrastructure's gonna go to complete shit and you're going to have to decide which of your group to eat first before you can grow crops from the irradiated soil.

FENTON
(nervously)
Haha. What. The fuck.

RYLEIGH
Ah, yes. Fornicating. Very important to repopulate the world as fast as possible--

FENTON
Nope. No more of that.

Fenton rips the glasses off Ryleigh's face and snaps them back into the box. Ryleigh slumps against the table for a moment before coming to.

RYLEIGH
Hey, I actually think I could see through those ones.

FENTON
We're not putting those on your face again.

Ryleigh looks at the rows of glasses.

RYLEIGH
Actually, I think the further we go to the right the better my sight gets. So, let's just jump right to the end of the box.

She grabs a pair of classic mirrored aviators labeled The SECURITY. She puts them on her face and freezes, face tilted upwards.

Fenton scoots away from her just a little bit.

FENTON

Maybe we should leave these alone,
Ryleigh.

Ryleigh's head snaps towards Fenton. He can see his face reflected in the shades, sweating and nervous.

RYLEIGH

The name's Ray, get it right.

END OF ACT ONE