

EMPLOYMENT

by

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INT. SHARE HOUSE - EVENING 1

STEVE and ROY sit on the couch watching TV.

Keys are heard rattling outside, dropped, inserted in the lock, dropped again, then successfully used to open the door. Mike enters.

STEVE

Yo.

MIKE

Hey what's up?

Mike puts his bag down and joins them on the second couch.

ROY

Steve got a job.

Steve looks at Roy.

STEVE

Just an interview.

Roy rolls onto his side, facing away from them, grunting weirdly. Mike looks at him a moment.

MIKE

What are you doing?

ROY

Trying to fart, it would have been perfect timing.

STEVE

You sound like you hurt yourself.

ROY

I might have shit my pants. (yawns)
Will see how it turns out when I...
(quiet) wake up.

Roy dozes a bit.

MIKE

What's the interview for?

STEVE

That job right near your office.

MIKE

Yeah?

STEVE

This will be a sweet setup. We can carpool.

MIKE

Oh yeah right well here's the thing dude, I don't work at Decker Simons anymore.

STEVE

Lol.

MIKE

No I'm serious. I was... like very fired.

STEVE

When?

MIKE

Just now.

ROY

What did you do?

MIKE

Swore at a customer. I said "have you really been standing here a full minute and not pushed the lift button"? No, "*cunting*" lift button. Turns out it was like our biggest customer. She didn't see the funny side, so... yeah. Here we are.

STEVE

Well fuck, so much for working near my best friend.

MIKE

I thought Roy was your best friend.

STEVE

Roy shits his pants trying to fart on me then sleeps in it. You just graduated.

MIKE

Look it's fine, I'm sure I'll find something new in town.

STEVE

You're on my CV as a referee. Your work number.

MIKE

Wait! What? ...is a referee? I thought that was a cricketing term?

ROY

(eyes closed)

Umpire is for cricket, referee for basketball.

Roy twists his head back toward them a bit, curious.

ROY

What do they have for that equestrian shit though?

MIKE

This seems like a good time to start writing the novel I've been thinking about.

STEVE

The dog who knows binary code.

MIKE

He doesn't just *know* binary code, he thinks in it. The whole thing is written from the dog's perspective.

Steve frowns.

INT. STEVE'S CAR - MORNING 2

Steve drives a Toyota Camry to his job interview, distracting himself by dicking around with the radio, following signs to the highway onramp.

EXT. HIGHWAY ONRAMP - MORNING 2

As Steve reaches the front of the merging lane, the car in front of him barely squeezes into the long line of cars that are literally bumper to bumper, almost touching, jamming both highway lanes.

Wide from high and far back, we watch the Camry begin to angle in, then veer away, multiple times, as every slowly passing car goes out of its way to lock him out of the merge.

The Camry slows to a halt, the cars behind it slowing then stopping also. One driver leans on his horn.

INT. STEVE'S CAR - MORNING

Steve looks in his rearview, throwing up his hands. He tries to pull into traffic again but is once again locked out.

STEVE

What... come on. Hey. Hey man.
Shit.

EXT. HIGHWAY ONRAMP - MORNING

The Camry moves forward into the emergency stopping lane, the traffic behind him all merging seamlessly while he continues forward at a jogger's pace, indicator on, completely cockblocked out of the lane by every other driver.

We hold on this for a long time, a deep field shot from the rear vantage point, the Camry slowly fading into the distance, its blinking indicator the only thing visible.

EXT. HIGHWAY OFFRAMP - MORNING 2

Steve's Camry continues at the same pace, kilometers up the road, still trying to angle into traffic before reaching the beginning of the off ramp, its indicator switching from right to left.

As the Camry pulls out onto the off ramp, speeding up, it's cut off by a honking truck.

INT. STEVE'S CAR - MORNING 2

Steve slams on the brakes.

STEVE

(screams)
Fuck!

INT. RECEPTION DESK - MORNING 2

Steve stands at an unmanned reception desk, nervously watching the wall clock, looking only mildly disheveled.

His POV of the clock, one minute after nine.

He paces the small room, looking over at the locked door leading to the company's back office.

When he looks up at the clock again, it's six after nine.

CLAIRE--obviously the receptionist by the way she runs in and slides into the chair behind the desk before looking at the door to the offices, down at her keyboard, and up at Steve as she logs in--offers only raised eyebrows as a form of inquiry.

STEVE

Hi, I'm here for an interview.
Steve Watts?

CLAIRE

(vague, thick accent)
Interview?

She types a moment.

CLAIRE

Oh... no interview, sorry.

STEVE

No I--I'm Steve, did someone... say
to expect me? (glances at clock) At
nine?

She blinks at him.

CLAIRE

Okay, no Steve... sorry.

STEVE

I'm Steve.

Claire just looks at him.

STEVE

I think the guy I'm supposed to see
is called Dave.

CLAIRE

(nodding, more pleasant)
Ohhhh Dave-u. Mmmmm.

They stare at each other for a long moment. Steve points at the computer.

STEVE

Can you... contact him with--you
work here yeah?

She types again, slower than before.

CLAIRE
 (excited)
 Oh! Dave-u. (sad) Ohhhh... no Dave-u.

STEVE
 Maybe David?

She looks at him, thinks, then types with a smile.

CLAIRE
 Ah! David-san.

More typing, then she pulls on a headset and dials.

CLAIRE
 David-san? Ohhhh mmmmm ok!

She takes off the headset.

STEVE
 Did--you tell him Steve is here?

She smiles pleasantly.

CLAIRE
 He--ahhhh--coming--here?

STEVE
 Can you tell him you were late? I don't want him to think I just got here, because my interview was at nine.

CLAIRE
 (standing, nodding)
 Ohhhhhh mmmmmmm.

She goes through the locked door, letting it close behind her.

Steve watches it for a moment before DAVE appears, a balding man of fiftyish with an expensive suit spread thin across his ample girth.

Dave clicks his fingers, pointing at Steve.

DAVE
 Steven.

STEVE
 Hi.

DAVE

Late on your first day. Okay. I guess we'll see how that goes. Come on.

Dave disappears back through the door, letting it close before Steve can lunge for it. He tries the handle, finding it predictably locked.

Steve has a brief panic attack, almost knocking, hesitating, then knocking.

Claire opens the door, smiling at Steve as she passes him with a mug of steaming tea.

Steve catches it before it closes this time, going through.

DAVE (O.C.)

(annoyed)

What are you doing, Steve?

INT. SHARE HOUSE - MORNING 2

In MIKE'S ROOM, Mike slowly awakens to the sound of hard banging on the front door, rolling out of bed, walking into the hall.

At the front door, Roy stands with his blanket draped over his shoulder, watching the front door as it's repeatedly hit from the outside.

MIKE

What's happening?

ROY

Someone at the door I think.

MIKE

Why don't you answer it?

Roy shrugs.

ROY

I don't have a good answer.

Mike opens the door, revealing NUTZ.

NUTZ

Fuckin' oath. What took you so long? My prostate and colon are playing tennis with a spikey popcorn-infused log back here. Can you blokes grab my gear?

Nutz gestures at his suitcase, duffel bag and oversized art folio scattered on the front deck, then shoulders his way inside, walking funny, almost as if on eggshells.

Mike, still half asleep, looks at Roy.

MIKE

Do we... *know* this character?

ROY

(thoughtful)

Do I?

INT. HELPDESK - MORNING 2

Steve sits at a clean desk with his PC at the login prompt. The five other seats around him sit unoccupied, until KIM, an older Korean man, enters the helpdesk room and takes a seat to his right without so much as acknowledging Steve.

Kim logs into his own PC.

After a while longer, they're joined by CLIVE--a huge, loud, child of a man. Sitting down at the desk to Steve's left, Clive offers him a meaty, sweaty-looking hand.

CLIVE

You must be Steven.

STEVE

Hi. Steve.

CLIVE

I'm Clive, mate. Clive and Steve, what a pair we are. We should have a moustache growing contest. I'll post for donations on the company intranet, and we can use the cash to buy World of Warcraft skins.

Steve looks at him for a long time--the big, enthusiastic grin.

STEVE

I don't know which bit to respond to.

CLIVE

Did Dave give you a login yet?

STEVE

No, not yet.

CLIVE

I'll ask him about it when he's back from the exec meeting.

STEVE

Okay. Anything I should do until then? Do we have some doco I can read? To be honest I thought I was here for an interview, he just told me to sit down and then left. Do I... *work* here now?

CLIVE

Docos? Mate, if you like that sort of stuff I've got *terrabytes* of it on my portable drive. Have you seen this BBC thing about magnets?

STEVE

No, like, documentation. Helpdesk processes.

Now it's Clive who stares.

STEVE

Do you guys use ITIL?

CLIVE

What do you mean?

STEVE

The IT industry framework.

CLIVE

I don't know but let me ask you this...

STEVE

Go on.

CLIVE

Who do you think is the best UFC fighter?

STEVE

(pause)

I don't know, to be honest. They all seem pretty good at fighting.

CLIVE

What kind of car do you drive?

STEVE

Toyota Camry.

CLIVE

No offense but that's a piece of
shit car.

STEVE

None taken.

CLIVE

I drive a Nissan Skyline GTR,
nineteen ninety six. Vintage, mate.

Steve returns his attention to the login prompt, then Kim,
and finally back to Clive, leaning slightly toward him.

STEVE

(quietly)

What's his name?

Clive leans in too, making it uncomfortable with his ever
present huge, stupid grin, matching Steve's stage whisper.

CLIVE

Kim. He does the support for our
In'Chon office.

STEVE

English?

CLIVE

Oh sorry. Our Seoul office.

STEVE

No, I mean, does he *speak* English?

CLIVE

Not a word.

Steve leans back a bit, gaining some space.

STEVE

Oh, well that's a relief. He didn't
say anything when he came in. I
thought he was just being a dick.

Steve gives Kim a little smile, met with only a steely
facade.

CLIVE

Oh, he's a dick alright.

STEVE

How do you know?

CLIVE
I can just tell it about them.

STEVE
"Them"?

CLIVE
Starcraft players.

STEVE
Right.

Steve's phone rings in his pocket, relief evident as he steps out of the room to answer it.

INT. SHARE HOUSE - MORNING 2

In the KITCHEN, Mike talks on the house phone.

MIKE
Hey Steve, did you tell a guy from *internet relay chat* that he could come and stay here? (pause) He says his name is Nutz, with a Z at the end. If that rings a bell? (pause, to Roy) Steve doesn't know him either. Maybe Ryan invited him.

ROY
That asshole.

MIKE
(shakes head)
Fucking Ryan.

Mike hangs up the phone.

Off screen, the toilet flushes, then Nutz appears immediately, walking to the kitchen sink, as if about to wash his hands, instead only spitting in it.

NUTZ
That's better. I think I clogged your toilet though. Does the shit, and all the shitty toilet paper, normally float up over the seat, then spill on the floor when you flush it?

MIKE
No. That never happens to *us*, Nutz.

NUTZ

Probably need to call a plumber in.
Do you have a second toilet? I
found half a free Powerade on the
skybus that had something like
bubble tea at the bottom, and it
hasn't sat well... (pats stomach,
looking down) Ah dammit, got toilet
runoff all over my shoes.
(squelching sounds as he steps)
Where's your tea-towel, gents?

Mike and Roy just stare at his shitty shoes.

A KNOCK at the door, Mike goes to answer.

EXT. SHARE HOUSE - MORNING 2

A UNI STUDENT looking kid stands waiting at the share house
front door.

Mike answers, looking him up and down, waiting for him to
speak.

UNI STUDENT

(hesitant)
Is he here?

MIKE

Is who here?

The student frowns, as if weighing up the question as a test.

UNI STUDENT

The oracle.

Mike also frowns.

INT. SHARE HOUSE - MORNING 2

Mike and the uni student return to the kitchen, where Nutz is
using the dish brush and a chux to scrub the shitty toilet
paper off his shoes, while Roy types an email on his phone.

MIKE

(to student)
This guy?

UNI STUDENT

Oracle!

Nutz looks over his shoulder at the kid.

NUTZ
(nonchalant)
Yo. What have you got for me?

The kid unpockets a baggie full of home made capsules and smaller zip-lock bags with powder.

NUTZ
Alright, let's go out back.

Mike and Roy watch through the kitchen window while Nutz and the student go to the back yard, sitting at the coffee-stained and cigarette-burned plastic table and chairs.

The kid empties his pockets of more drugs.

ROY
Dude what is happening?

MIKE
I don't know.

A sleepy RYAN enters, walking to the fridge.

RYAN
Hey guys. You know I'm working late shift tonight, right? Can you keep it down?

Ryan sips orange juice directly from the bottle, putting the lid back on without twisting it, then placing it back in the fridge door.

RYAN
I need like another three hours sleep. Sorry.

MIKE
Hey Ryan did you tell that fat piece of shit sitting on our outdoor setting he could sleep here?

Ryan peers through the rear window, shrugging.

RYAN
No, but I'm paying less rent if he sleeps on our couch.

Ryan leaves, slamming his bedroom door.

ROY
Fucking Ryan.

MIKE

Fuck him.

EXT. SHARE HOUSE BACK YARD - MORNING 2

Mike and Roy join Nutz and the student in the back yard, watching Nutz swallow huge handfuls of capsules.

MIKE

Hey Nutz, what are you doing man?

Nutz goes to speak but puts up a finger, taking big gulps of water to swallow the pills the rest of the way.

UNI STUDENT

You feed him psychedelic drugs and he tells your future.

ROY

What drugs?

UNI STUDENT

Any you have on you, pretty much?

He looks to Nutz for confirmation, who nods through uncomfortable looking hard swallows, thumping his own chest to get it all down.

NUTZ

(breathless)

Yep. I can prognosticate on pretty much any combination of hallucinogens or dissociatives. Not Iboga, though. I won't make that mistake twice.

MIKE

Isn't that the African herb that knocks you out for forty-eight hours while you piss, *shit* and vomit the bed?

NUTZ

Yes, except I did not know that at the time. So for one thing, I never prepared a bed. I took it at the office of a gentleman who also was *not* prepared for the overall effects--before, *and* after--both logistical, *and* careerwise--that the ensuing two day period had on both of us.

ROY

Wait, you're like, well known for this or something? It's a business you do?

NUTZ

Sure, I have bookings through the next few months.

MIKE

So you can afford to pay us *rent*?

NUTZ

Of course. I wouldn't crash on your couch without paying my fair share.

Mike and Roy exchange a glance.

MIKE

Okay, fuck it. I guess you can stay. A couple of people in this house should probably have employment.

NUTZ

The LSD is kicking in already. (to student) Your name is Will, right?

UNI STUDENT

No, Yorgen.

NUTZ

Yorgen? Seriously?

Yorgen nods.

NUTZ

Wow. Ok.

Nutz closes his eyes.

NUTZ

You're going to fail your economics degree and fuck up your relationship with... Cathy?

Mike and Roy's gaze swings to Yorgen.

UNI STUDENT

Holy shit. That's amazing!

The student stands, nodding to Mike and Roy with a smile before leaving.

ROY

So this guy is psychic now, or he's like one of those detective shows with the expert who perceives tiny details?

Roy watches Nutz meditate there, his confusion growing.

Mike walks after Yorgen.

MIKE

One sec.

EXT. SHARE HOUSE FRONT YARD - MORNING 2

Yorgen leaves via the front door with a pleasant, contented smile.

Mike jogs after him.

MIKE

(yells)

Hey wait up!

Yorgen turns back to Mike, waiting while he catches up.

MIKE

What he said back there, was any of it accurate?

UNI STUDENT

Yeah man, of course! It's the motherfricking Oracle.

MIKE

So you're an Economics student?

UNI STUDENT

(enthusiastic)

No I'm in high school! But I'm certainly *considering* Economics. I mean I am *now* anyway.

MIKE

And your girlfriend? Cathy?

Yorgen taps Mike on the arm with the back of his hand.

UNI STUDENT

(more enthusiastic)

Right? Dude! I'm gonna have a *girlfriend!* Cathy.

Yorgen leaves with a nod, leaving Mike alone with his creeping doubt.

EXT. SHARE HOUSE BACK YARD - MORNING 2

Mike returns to where Nutz sits at the table, Roy now sitting opposite where the uni student had his fortune told.

Nutz is swaying in the flimsy plastic chair, eyes rolling back in his head.

ROY
Okay, do me now.

NUTZ
You're going to be a real piece of shit.

ROY
(disappointed)
Aw.

Roy stands again, joining Mike.

MIKE
Hey ah, Nutz, can we get our rent in advance, dude? We want to go out tonight.

Nutz springs to his feet, hand in pocket.

NUTZ
Of course!

Nutz takes Mike's wrist and empties half a handful of the pills the uni student provided, then does the same for Roy.

Nutz sits back down on the plastic chair, then falls face-first through the plastic table, destroying both pieces of furniture on his trip to the dirt, as Mike and Roy take a cautious step backward. Nutz passes out, face down.

Mike looks down at the pills in his hand.

MIKE
Fuck.

ROY
(mouth full)
What?

Pull out to reveal Roy choking down his entire allocation of mystery pills.

INT. HELPDESK - AFTERNOON 2

Steve sits at his desk with the screen still on a login prompt, alternating between reading the paper manual for Microsoft Windows 95, and watching Clive wolf down a meatball sandwich at his desk.

Steve watches disgusted as Clive licks his fingers, throwing the sauce-dripping wrapper in the recycle bin between them.

Steve breathes half a sigh of relief before Clive reaches somewhere off camera to bring back a huge, steaming laksa.

STEVE

Oh for...

Clive looks up.

CLIVE

You want some mate?

STEVE

I'm good.

CLIVE

You need to go get some lunch?

STEVE

(unsure)

I don't know, I still haven't spoken to Dave. I don't have any idea what he wants me to do.

Clive nods, shoveling laksa into his mouth at the same time, slurping in hard, guttural gulps as laksa juice flies off noodles like a sprinkler.

Dave bursts in through the door, face red with angst.

DAVE

What is going on, guys? The whole network is flapping!

Dave stands between them, looking down at them both.

DAVE

Alright, you've got your hands full eating a laksa. Steven, do me a favour and bring up our monitoring suite real quick. This will be a good test of your ability to handle a major outage. I don't know who has dropped the ball in this room today but it's very serious, gents!

Steve pauses as if to say something in his own defense, then just points at the screen.

STEVE

Ah, sorry. I need a login.

Dave leans in past him, lifting the keyboard, tapping a post-it with 'swatts' and 'Welcome1\$' written on it.

DAVE

Mate, are you joshing with me?
Now's not a good time.

Again, Steve hesitates only slightly, logging in.

As the desktop loads, Dave leans in again, squinting at the items there.

DAVE

You haven't installed the network tools yet?

STEVE

I haven't, sorry.

Dave sighs, turning to Clive.

DAVE

Alright Clive-o, you might need to pull Steven's ass out of the fire on this one my friend.

Steve stifles a confused frown while Clive unlocks his machine.

As we slowly withdraw from the scene, out through the door, Dave throws a glance at Steve, shaking his head slightly.

DAVE

Going to need to do a bit better than this, mate. Look at Clive here. Hasn't even finished his laksa. Take a good long look at this bloke. He's your new mentor. And I'm your sensei now. (to Kim) Sorry mate, bad choice of words. (to Steve) Your--ah, *General*.

Dave begins pacing, returning to the open door.

DAVE

Who fucking left this open?

He slams it shut.

TITLE CARD: EMPLOYMENT

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