

# **The Works**

*Written By*

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*INT. PIPE*

*Black space, a single drop of water peeks in, it hangs there for a second then falls down the frame.*

*We are traveling inside a rusty, moist, dark pipe. Its bottom is covered with dirty water.*

*At the end of one long tunnel, a light is visible. We move closer and closer to it until it fills the screen...*

*EXT. BUILDING- DAY*

*A cab pulls up in front of a tall, aging downtown building. VICTOR, a man of about 30, steps out of the cab in his suit, and fumbles in his pocket for the fare.*

*He hands the money to the cabbie, ROGER.*

*VICTOR*

*Thanks a lot, Roger.*

*ROGER*

*Don't work too hard, Victor.*

*Victor smiles politely. The cab drives off.*

*Victor takes a deep breath. He gravely looks up at the building as it stretches into the sunny skies.*

*INT. CHECK IN ROOM -DAY*

*Victor walks in to a small white room. On the wall hangs a large board with various cards, next to it the punching machine.*

*Victor takes his card; he looks up to the right. On the wall hangs a sign next to a large clock, it reads, "Do not punch in before 7:15".*

*The clock shows it's seven fourteen and fifty seven seconds...fifty-eight...fifty nine seconds... seven fifteen.*

*Victor punches his card in.*

*INT. OFFICE- DAY*

*An ill looking office, bear white walls, and buzzing neon lights.*

*No character, no pictures, no color.*

*Victor is sitting at his desk, staring at his computer screen. He looks at the time, then turns his attention to the window.*

*Outside, sits the building opposite his. It's close enough to see the people inside. Victor focuses on one Woman, wearing overalls; she seems to be fixing something.*

*Victor smiles delightfully; he has watched her before.*

*A voice sounds from the intercom box on his desk.*

**VOICE**

*Victor, are the Williamson reports ready?*

*Victor reluctantly presses a button to answer, still looking at the women.*

**VICTOR**

*Ah... you said 4:30, Gerald.*

**VOICE(GERALD)**

*That will be too late. This is extremely important.*

**VICTOR**

*F-F-Four?*

**GERALD**

*Let's make it 3:30.*

**VICTOR**

*I-I don't think I can. There is quit a lot to do, Gerald.*

*No response from the other side. Victor tries again.*

**VICTOR**

*Gerald?*

*No answer.*

*Suddenly, a drop of water falls right onto the paper he is writing upon.*

*Victor looks up at the large pipe hanging on his office ceiling. He watches as the drop soaks into the page.*

*INT. CAFETERIA- DAY*

*A big clock on the wall says it is now noon.*

*A loudspeaker calls massages in a friendly, exaggerated female's voice.*

*LOUDSPEAKER*

*'M- Core' corporation and management would like to remind all employees, that fruits are good for you. Their Sugar is energy, and vitamins are excellent for your immune system. Please make sure to ask for your fruit salad upon receiving you meal.*

*Victor sits at a long table, crowded in between two people who are talking amongst them selves.*

*WORKER #1*

*--So then she tells me, the reason why the file did not make it on time, is because I didn't fill the D-91 form properly...*

*WORKER #2*

*Where does she get off? You've been filling those babies out since 91.*

*Worker #2 turns to Victor.*

*WORKER #2*

*Could you pass the salt?*

*Victor looks at him, unsure he was referring him, he reaches out for the saltshaker, but before he can grab it, Worker #2 picks it up and passes it to the other man.*

*WORKER #1*

*Thanks, Bud.*

*The conversation continues as if Victor wasn't even there.*

*WORKER #1*

*--That's what I told her. Then Jim comes in and he starts yelling at me...*

*Victor keeps eating his food. He looks around to see all the people in this cafeteria, talking, eating, standing in the line for food.*

*INT. GERALD'S OFFICE – DAY*

*A large report falls on the desk.*

*GERALD, Victor's boss, a cocky, fast talking man, is carefully watering a large tropical plant. He then lifts his eyes up to see Victor.*

*GERALD*

*Easy, Victor.*

*VICTOR*

*You wanted these by 3:30.*

*GERALD*

*Oh, right, you didn't hear. We don't need those today; the client canceled his appointment.*

*He returns his attention to the plant.*

*VICTOR*

*I spent the whole day on--*

*GERALD*

*Good for you, that's less work for tomorrow now, isn't it?*

*Gerald continues what he was doing before he was interrupted by Victor. Victor stands above him, staring in disbelief.*

*After a few seconds, he turns to leave.*

*GERALD*

*Victor?!*

*Victor stops.*

*VICTOR*

*Yes?*

*GERALD*

*The next time you come in, I would appreciate it if you knocked.*

*He looks at Gerald, who is still not looking at Victor.*

*Victor leaves the office and closes the door behind him.*

*EXT. OFFICES- DAY*

*Outside of Gerald's office, Victor stops and looks at all the cubicles spread throughout the floor.*

*He is transfixed; sadness grabs a hold of him.*

*He watches the people working, conversing, walking about, buried in their computers. All is quiet; machine-like.*

*A secretary, MADELINE, carrying a large stack of papers, approaches around the corner. She does not notice Victor and slams right in to him.*

*Papers go flying all around.*

*Victor snaps out of his daydream. He looks at Madeline who is already on the floor picking them up.*

*MADELINE*

*Victor, really... I have to re-alphabetize  
them all over now...*

*INT. OFFICE- EVENING*

*Victor is about to leave the office. He cannot resist, one more look at the Woman at the office across from him... but the office is dark and empty.*

*INT. LOBBY- NIGHT*

*Victor exits the empty building. He watches a JANITOR, sharp faced, walking slow, carrying a bucket and a mop, disappears behind a corner.*

*INT. CAB- NIGHT*

*Victor sits in the back, tired and alone. He turns to the driver.*

*VICTOR*

*How long have you been doing this,  
Roger?*

*ROGER*

*This? What the driving?*

*Victor nods.*

ROGER

*Well, let's see, 5 years with Frank back east, then... about 15 years, I believe.*

*Victor says nothing. He looks at Roger, then to the side, watching the road go by, the parked cars whizzing by his window.*

*EXT. VICTOR'S APARTMENT COMPLEX-NIGHT*

*Victor is walking up the stairs to his apartment. He stops when he gets to his door, and reaches in his pocket for the right keys.*

*The door next to his apartment is open slightly. Music blasts from within. Victor peeks in to see two characters moving around.*

*He opens the door and walks to his apartment.*

*INT. VICTOR'S APARTMENT- NIGHT*

*Victor walks into the kitchen. He puts the kettle on the gas stove.*

*While waiting for the water to boil, Victor looks around the house. He's eyes rest on a typewriter.*

*The water in the kettle begins to bubble.*

*The expression on victor's face changes, an idea is forming.*

*The water is getting hotter.*

*He goes over to the typewriter, feeds a paper to it, and writes the words:  
LETTER OF RESIGNATION.*

*The kettle screams.*

*INT. ELEVATOR- DAY*

*Victor is in the elevator, along with the Janitor who's equipped with a bucket and a mop. The two men make eye contact.*

*The Janitor looks at the elevator's buttons.*

JANITOR

*Top floor?*

VICTOR

*Yeah.*

*The Janitor takes a piece of tape, tapes it on the top floor's button. He pulls a marker out and writes the letter 'M' on it. Victor is puzzled, but says nothing.*

*The elevator rises as the two men stand in silence. After a short while, it comes to a halt and the doors open.*

*JANITOR*

*Well, here's my stop.*

*He exits; Victor reaches over and pushes the button to close the doors. Victor hears the sound of footsteps on water.*

*Just before the doors close on him, he sees the Janitor walking in a large puddle of water, a large puddle of water that is the floor.*

*The elevator continues up in silence, until it hits the last floor.*

*INT. TOP FLOOR OFFICES-DAY*

*The doors swing open. Victor, letter in hand, is about to step off as a large desk rolls in, legs first, pushing him back.*

*He quickly moves to the side, as a man loads the desk into the elevator. Victor hits his shoulder on the desk and accidentally lets go of his hold on the letter. The letter slides down the table heading straight into the elevator shaft.*

*Victor jumps to grab the letter... it's too late.*

*INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT- SAME*

*Featherlike, the letter floats softly down the elevator shaft, spinning in the darkness.*

*It lights on the bottom of the shaft, and soaks up some of the grease and grime from the floor.*

*INT. TOP FLOOR OFFICES- CONTINUE*

*Victor sighs deeply and turns around to face the chaotic office.*

*Desks and office equipment are on their way to the elevator, people running about, all out mayhem.*

*Out of this mess, Madeline appears.*

*MADELINE*

*Welcome to hell, can you believe this? No notice what so ever...*



VICTOR

*What is going on?*

*Rushing from his office is Gerald, with a coffee mug in hand.*

*He catches up with Victor, puts his arm around his shoulder and walks with him.*

GERALD

*I'll take it from here Maddy. How you doing this morning, Victor? Good. You're probably wondering what's going on, I don't blame you. Well, see, our offices as we know them are moving, one floor- down.*

VICTOR

*Down?*

GERALD

*Down. Walk with me.*

*He moves Victor to the window, they look down as a big limo parks in front of the building.*

GERALD

*Mr. M, the old man who owns this building, owns this company, he decided he wanted this floor back. He's going to make it into a huge penthouse apartment. It's going to be his new home.*

*Gerald stands with Victor in silence for a moment, both men staring out the window. Gerald takes a sip of his coffee, then slaps Victor lightly on the shoulder.*

GERALD

*--Let's take a look at your new office.*

**EXT. BUILDING—DAY**

*Out of a dark limo, steps a driver. He circles the car, opens the door and lets a folding ramp descend slowly to the pavement.*

*A man on a wheelchair, MR. M, rolls down slowly. He wears a dark suit. We do not see his face as he rolls into the building accompanied by two large men in suits.*

*INT. OFFICES- DAY*

*Victor and Gerald are coming out of the elevator.*

**VICTOR**

*Gerald, I would like to have a word with you about my future...*

*Gerald ignores Victor and keeps walking and talking.*

**GERALD**

*Here we go, here's our new home.  
Let's take a look at your new office.*

*Two men are moving a large plant to an office. One of the men trips slightly and they almost drop the plant.*

*Gerald snaps at the man.*

**GERALD**

*You drop that plant and you will regret it!!  
Guard it with your life!!!*

*INT. VICTOR'S NEW OFFICE- DAY*

*Gerald opens the door to the company's bathroom. It is a big empty space with urinals in the far corner and a desk in the middle with a little cactus on it.*

*Victor is speechless.*

**VICTOR**

*Is this a... joke?*

**GERALD**

*Joke? What do you mean, Vic?*

*They look at each other.*

**GERALD**

*It's not going to stay like this, Vic. When our people are done here, it will be the biggest, brightest office on this floor. You can quote me on that.*

**VICTOR**

*Office? It's a bathroom, Gerald. It's a bathroom.*

GERALD

*Yes it is, for now. We all have to make a sacrifice Victor, you're no exception.*

VICTOR

*But...*

GERALD

*This move forced us to fire 8 people so far, Victor. All hard workers, with plenty of valuable skills to offer this company. It could be a lot worse.*

*Gerald smiles and leaves the office, closing the door behind him.*

*Victor stands alone in his new office. Dejectedly, he moves to his desk, and sets his briefcase down.*

*From one of the stalls, a toilet flushes.*

*Victor slowly turns in the direction of the sound. From out of the stall comes JONAH, a fellow employee, who overheard this exchange and is a little embarrassed about the whole situation.*

JONAH

*Sorry.*

*He quickly exits the office, leaving Victor staring in disbelief.*

INT. LOBBY-DAY

*The two large men in suits wheel Mr. M into the lobby, and pause at the elevator. One of them pushes the button, as they stand in silence. The doors open.*

*The men are about to push the wheelchair inside, when Mr. M raises his hand to motion the men to stop. The men stop.*

*The elevator doors close on Mr. M's chair, clicking against the side of it. This continues to happen, but the men do not move the chair.*

*Mr. M looks up ahead; this is the first time we really see him, he is staring at a painting of a graceful bird flying in a gray-clouded sky. It rests on the elevator's wall.*

*Mr. M's concerned face calms down with a wonder-like expression.*

*INT. VICTOR'S NEW OFFICE- DAY*

*Victor sits behind his desk in disbelief. He starts organizing his papers.*

*There is a knock on the open door. Victor looks up to see Madeline standing in the doorway.*

*MADELINE*

*Looks like somebody lucked out. Look at all this space.*

*VICTOR*

*What about the smell?*

*Madeline comes in, and sits on Victor's desk, facing him.*

*VICTOR*

*--This is incredible. To think I actually had second thoughts...*

*MADELINE*

*Look at this; you have this all for your self?*

*VICTOR*

*Yeah. Just me, and whoever may be answering a call from nature.*

*MADELINE*

*Oh you! Can you believe they stuck me back in a cubicle! A cubicle! Five years for this company, three with my own office, I renewed my contract and now I'm back in the cubicle. Can you believe that?*

*She spins to check the room again.*

*MADELINE*

*Thankful, that's what I'd be, Victor.*

*Victor stares at her. Did she really say that?*

*INT. OFFICE LOBY-DAY*

*Victor walks swiftly towards Gerald, who is speaking to a secretary. Victor stands silently next to him, hoping to draw his attention. Gerald keeps right on talking.*

*Victor rubs his hands and takes a deep breath.*

VICTOR

*Gerald. Ah, excuse me.*

*Gerald turns to Victor.*

GERALD

*Hold on a second, Victor.*

*Victor stands still, as Gerald and the secretary share the token conversation-ending joke, and she walks away.*

GERALD

*Okay Victor, what can I do you for?*

VICTOR

*Well, Gerald. I just came here to tell you that I qui--*

*Suddenly, the rumble of the elevator sounds from down stairs.*

*Gerald raises his hand to silence Victor. His head slowly turns towards the elevator.*

*He stares at the numbers climbing up all the way to the top floor. Through the ceiling we can hear the doors opening and the sound of the wheelchair rolling out.*

*Gerald is still focused on the ceiling.*

GERALD

*Money. It can be an evil thing. Do you know that for one "Mr. .M", there are hundreds, maybe thousands little "Geralds" walking about? Sacrifice is all that separates us, Victor. Separates us, from being one of them.*

*Gerald snaps out of his rant and turns his full attention to Victor.*

GERALD

*Anyway, what did you want to talk about?*

*Victor stares at Gerald, he gathers his courage and...*

VICTOR

*I came to work today to tell you that... I want to resign.*

*The room turns silent.*

GERALD

*What do you mean?*

VICTOR

*M-My job, this job.*

*Gerald steps closer to Victor and puts his hand on his shoulder.*

GERALD

*Good one, Victor. Good one.*

*Gerald turns around and walks away. Victor stands there, unsure what to do.*

*INT. GERALD'S OFFICE- LATER*

*Two knocks on the open door and Victor walks in.*

GERALD

*What now, Victor?*

VICTOR

*I'm giving you the two weeks notice.*

*Gerald looks up; his eyes meet Victor's.*

GERALD

*You're serious?*

*Victor nods and swallows his spit.*

GERALD

*Wow, bad timing Victor, with the move and all we really need you here.*

*Victor remains silent, looking at Gerald.*

*Gerald looks back, upset.*

GERALD

*All right Victor, All right. Hand me a proper letter, we'll take it from there.*

*INT. VICTOR'S NEW OFFICE- DAY*

*Victor begins typing a new letter. He stops to look at his watch, then naturally turns to what used to be a window. Now, a row of urinals stretches out before him. Victor frowns.*

*EXT. ROOF OF OFFICE BUILDING- DAY*

*Victor climbs on the roof. He starts walking towards the ledge. He looks for the building in front, looking for the woman in the office.*

*Suddenly, the door to the roof swings opens.*

*Victor runs to hide behind a small wall. A few men can be heard talking in what sounds like...German.*

*Extremely careful not to make a sound, Victor peeks to look who it is. There, a few feet away are Mr. M and his two henchmen Zeigfreid and Hans, they look to the skies, pointing, nodding, jabbering in German.*

*Victor leans on the wall, waiting.*

*Mr. M answers to the men in German, and all is silent for a few seconds.*

*INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE-DAY*

*Victor sits silently at his desk, he is typing another letter of resignation.*

*He lets out a deep breath, and reaches for his cup of coffee.*

*Before he can pick it up, a drop from the ceiling plops into it.*

*Victor slowly raises his head.*

*Above him, the large pipe sticks out from the ceiling. Slowly and quietly at first, a distant rumble begins to formulate.*

*The rumble rises, and sweeps through the pipes above Victor's head, then disappears leaving everything silent.*

*Another drop plops into Victor's coffee.*

*EXT. VICTOR'S APARTMENT COMPLEX-NIGHT*

*Victor is walking up the stairs to his apartment. He stops when he gets to his door, and reaches in his pocket for the right keys.*

*From the apartment next door, loud music is playing. The door is partially open. Victor leans his head over to try and peer inside.*

*A tall man, DEREK, shirtless and wearing a pair of paint stained white overalls, is splattering paint all over the wall.*

*Suddenly, another young man, ZACK, shorter and equally covered in paint, steps into the doorway, cigarette in mouth.*

*Victor pulls back, as Zack acknowledges him.*

ZACK

*Hey, 'V'. What's up?*

VICTOR

*Hi, Zack.*

*The two stand in silence for a moment. Victor looks down to Zack's hand. He's holding a paintbrush; the red paint is dripping on the ground in front of their apartment.*

VICTOR

*Looks like you guys are busy.*

ZACK

*Just doing a little renovation on the home front. Is it too loud for you?*

VICTOR

*No, it's—*

ZACK

*Yo! Derek!*

*Derek doesn't hear him over the music; he's intensely splattering away.*

*Zack raises his hand and flings the red paintbrush at him. It smacks Derek in the back, leaving a bull's eye on his shoulder. He turns slowly, cigarette in mouth.*

*He nods to Zack, and reaches over to turn the volume down.*

DEREK

*What's happening, Victor?*

VICTOR

*Hey, Derek.*



ZACK

*Just getting off work?*

VICTOR

*You can say that.*

ZACK

*Killer. We'll try to keep it down for you, bud.  
Take 'er easy.*

*Zack retreats inside, closing the door behind him.*

*INT. VICTOR'S APARTMENT-NIGHT*

*Victor steps into his apartment, the music still barely audible from next door. His apartment is well kept, neat and tidy and has a very warm and cozy feel to it.*

*Victor opens his refrigerator, and takes out some milk; he pours some into a glass.*

*He looks around, sips his milk goes to the kitchen window, opens it and climbs out.*

*EXT. FIRE ESCAPE-NIGHT*

*He sits on the fire escape, looks up, staring off into the night, alone.*

*A faint siren is heard roaming through the big city.*

*EXT. OFFICE BUILDING-SAME*

*The siren is slowly dying down. The building is quiet now, no signs of life. There is only one small light, still burning on the top floor.*

*INT. MR. M'S APARTMENT-NIGHT*

*The room is a mess. Furniture still covered with sheets is strewn around; boxes are piled near the walls. A single lamp lights the room.*

*In the center of the room, Mr. M sits in his wheelchair, facing the window. Mr. M is working out his arm muscles with a machine. He is concentrating on the work out, staring out at the city.*

*He lowers his eyes to his legs. Resting in his lap is the painting that hung in the elevator.*

*He looks down at it affectionately; his fingers trace the patterns of the paint.*

*INT. ELEVATOR-DAY*

*The doors open, as Victor steps in. His face says it all, he's ready for whatever awaits him upstairs today.*

*He absent-mindedly reaches to punch the button for the top floor, and then stops. He looks at the newly installed button 'M', and punches the floor below it.*

*Behind him the place where the painting was hanging, is distinctively brighter.*

*After riding the elevator for a while, it stops. Victor is puzzled.*

*The elevator doors open on a large room, filled with pipes running in all directions. Victor looks out onto this room for the first time.*

*Victor takes a quick look around, then press the button to close the elevator doors. Nothing happens. He presses it again. Still nothing.*

*From the shadows of the pipes, a figure is approaching. Victor takes notice, and then freezes when this person comes into full view.*

*The very same woman he was watching from his office, EVE, stands before him, dressed modestly in dirty overalls, mud caked boots and a dusty old baseball cap.*

*She is scanning the room, following a single pipe as it weaves around, intertwined with the others.*

*Victor watches her in silence, captivated as the elevator's doors finally close.*

*INT. VICTOR'S NEW OFFICE- DAY*

*Victor hangs a 14-day calendar on the wall and rips a page off. 13 days remain.*

*INT. VICTOR'S NEW OFFICE- CONTINUE*

*Victor opens his briefcase and removes a bowl. He counts the rhythm of the drops; at the right break he replaces the coffee mug, now full of water, with the bowl.*

*The drip continues.*

*Victor presses 'print' on his computer, out comes a new letter of resignation.*

*He slips it in an envelope and heads out of the office.*

*EXT. GERALD'S OFFICE DOOR- DAY*

*Victor slips the letter under Gerald's door.*

*INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE- CONTINUE*

*Victor re-enters his office with a satisfied expression on his face, he closes the door.*

*As he sits back at his desk a note flies from under his door and stops by his feet. Puzzled, he picks it up and unfolds it.*

*It reads:*

*The Resignation Committee will hold its first meeting tomorrow before launch. Be there.*

*P.S.-*

*Mr. M asks to meet with you. Right away!*

*Victor folds the note.*

*INT. ELEVATOR-DAY*

*Victor's finger presses the button for the top floor. The elevator begins its climb, slowly. This one floor seems to take as long as climbing half the building.*

*It finally screeches to a halt, and the doors open.*

*INT. TOP FLOOR-DAY*

*The elevator doors open revealing Mr. M's new penthouse. Victor hesitantly steps out into the seemingly empty room. The scene is much like it was the night before, the furniture is still covered.*

*In the corner of the room, the two tall men in suits stand. They wear sunglasses and earpieces, looking fairly intimidating. Victor waves shyly and continues to scan the room.*

VICTOR

*Hello.*

*Victor keeps looking around the room; Mr. M is nowhere to be seen.*

*Suddenly, a door of a small dark room opens. Mr. M wheels out.*

*Victor smiles uncomfortably.*

*MR. M*

*Why are you smiling?*

*VICTOR*

*This used to be my office.*

*Mr. M is dead faced.*

*MR. M*

*These are Zeigfreid and Hans, they call me  
Mr. M.*

*Mr. M slowly turns around.*

*VICTOR*

*What's the 'M' stand for?*

*Mr. M darts a look at Victor, surprised by the personal content of the question.  
He starts rapidly wheeling himself toward Victor. He stops right in front of  
him.*

*He extends the painting from the elevator. Victor takes a look.*

*MR. M*

*Beautiful work. Just beautiful.*

*VICTOR*

*Yeah.*

*MR. M*

*What do you do for M-Core, Victor?*

*VICTOR*

*Sir?*

*MR.M*

*Your position.*

*VICTOR*

*I'm the accountant for financing, sector 5-  
R2.*

*MR. M*

*And you're an artist?*

VICTOR

*Artist?*

MR. M

*Well...painter.*

VICTOR

*Oh, no... this. No, I'm an accountant, this is not my work.*

MR. M

*I was told...*

VICTOR

*Oh, I just brought it to work just to... bring some color to the place.*

MR. M

*There was a mistake then, you can return to sector SR—what ever it was...*

*Mr. M turns to wheel away.*

VICTOR

*I-- I know the artists. There are two of them. There're like a team.*

*Mr. M turns to face Victor again.*

MR. M

*Tell me.*

VICTOR

*They live right next door to me.*

MR.M

*I need to contact them, Victor.*

VICTOR

*Okay...*

MR. M

*I need to meet with them.*

*There is a knock on the door and an older gentleman HOOVER, peeks his head in.*

HOOVER

*Sir, are you ready for us?*

MR. M

*Yes, Mr. Hoover, send everybody in.*

*(To Victor)*

*We'll continue this.*

*A group of suited men walk in quietly and find their seats, Gerald is among them. He looks at Victor.*

*Mr. M wheels himself to the corner of the room, all eyes on him.*

MR. M

*Gentlemen, most of you in this room see me now for the first time, and I know you all must wonder why I called you here. It comes down to this; doctors tell me my time is limited.*

*Victor quietly tries to snick out of the room. The two guards stop him at the door.*

VICTOR

*I just need to...*

*The guards don't even look at him. Victor realizes he is not leaving the room and so he turns his attention back to the meeting.*

MR. M

*There for, I have set two weeks to close all legal ends of my businesses, including this firm. I want to see it go on. It will be one of you gentlemen who will have this honor. A tough choice indeed, since you are all qualify and worthy.*

**INT. OFFICE- LATER**

*Victor and Gerald step out of the elevator. They make their way to their offices.*

*Closing the doors behind them.*

**INT. ZACK'S & DEREK APARTMENT- SAME**

*The phone rings. For a few rings no one answers, then from the background, Zack's head slowly rises up. His hair is messy, having just woken up from a deep sleep.*

*Zack slowly picks up the phone and answers it with a shattered voice.*

ZACK

*H...Hello?*

VICTOR

*Hello, Zack?*

ZACK

*Victor? Why would you call here at this hour?*

*Victor, on the other end of the line is silent.*

VICTOR

*It's twelve thirty.*

ZACK

*Yeah?!*

*Derek's head appears as well, leaning out from his bed.*

VICTOR

*I need to talk to you about something. I have some good news.*

ZACK

*Can you call back in about three hours, man? That would be great.*

*Zack hangs up the phone. The two sit there, disoriented.*

DEREK

*Who was that?*

ZACK

*Victor.*

DEREK

*What did he want?*

ZACK

*I don't know.*

*They stay up for a few seconds, and then fall back to their sleeping positions.*

*INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE- DAY*

*Victor hangs up the phone slowly.*

*The door to Victor's office opens and Gerald steps in.*

*Gerald stops when he sees Victor at his desk. He walks slowly toward it.*

**GERALD**

*Victor...*

*He reaches the desk and stops, picks up a pencil and begins to play with it.*

**GERALD**

*--I don't know what you think you're up to here. This whole resignation business, the meeting with Mr. M. It all seems a little fishy. I smell a rat.*

*Victor doesn't respond, he has no idea what Gerald is talking about.*

*Gerald places the pencil back on the desk, and slowly moves behind Victor to one of the urinals. Victor doesn't look at him.*

**GERALD**

*This is how I see it, Victor, this is a good job. Decent hours, great pay. Why would you quit, Victor? I'll tell you why.*

*Gerald can now be heard urinating. Victor's face rises in shock. Gerald continues his spiel.*

**GERALD**

*You're up to something. Cooking something up with the old man. Well, I can tell you right now, it's not going to fly. I've worked too hard, Victor. Too long and too hard.*

*Gerald flushes the toilet and rinses his hands. He moves past Victor's desk, then turns to face him as he reaches the door.*

**GERALD**



*You're not going to get away with it. I'm watching you.*

*Gerald exits, leaving Victor sitting at his desk in disbelief.*

*INT. ELEVATOR- DAY*

*Zack and Derek are riding in the elevator.*

*ZACK*

*Just be cool. We'll just knock on the door, go in, put our business faces on.*

*The elevator doors open on Mr. M's floor. Zack and Derek look into it, unsure of how to react. Where's the door?*

*They look at each other, as the elevator doors close on them.*

*Silence. The doors open again. This time they slowly get off, and stand in the room, looking out the large picture window.*

*DEREK*

*Whoa. One can see the whole town from up here, Zack.*

*ZACK*

*Business face, Derek. Business face.*

*From a back room, Mr. M rolls in on his wheel chair.*

*MR. M*

*Gentlemen.*

*Zack and Derek jump to attention.*

*TOGETHER*

*Afternoon, sir.*

*ZACK*

*The doors just opened...*

*MR. M*

*Do you know why you are here?*

*ZACK*

*You like our work.*

*MR. M*

*The painting that was hanging in the elevator--*

ZACK

*Right, no problem. It is an original, though.*

DEREK

*We price it at 250... usually.*

MR. M

*I am interested in the painting, on this wall.*

*Mr. M points a big empty wall to their right.*

ZACK

*Where? In the middle?*

DEREK

*I don't want to sound rude, sir. See... we are artists.*

ZACK

*We're painters not handy men.*

*Awkward Silence falls on the room. Mr. M realizes the misunderstanding and a small smile sneaks to his face.*

MR. M

*I didn't mean for you to... I want it as a mural, on this wall.*

*Zack and Derek look at each other, then back at Mr. M.*

ZACK

*Oh, yeah...*

DEREK

*The whole wall?*

MR. M

*Correct.*

DEREK

*That's a big wall.*

*Zack elbows Derek.*

MR. M

*I need it in a week.*

ZACK

*What my partner means to say is that this is a big, time-consuming gig. There is the paint--*

*Mr. M leans back in his chair, letting Zack have the floor.*

ZACK

*--the ladders and the brushes, and quite frankly we try to avoid painting the same painting twice. It's an artistic choice. It's like a freedom thing... it creates--*

MR. M

*Will 35,000 dollars plus expenses do it?*

*Zack and Derek swallow their spit. They look at each other.*

ZACK

*Okay, we'll go get the stuff then.*

*Zack runs out. Derek turns to Mr. M with a big smile on his face.*

*INT. NEW OFFICE – DAY*

*Calendar reads 12 days remaining.*

*Victor sits at his desk and unwraps his sandwich. He leans out a little, and sees Eve talking with Gerald in his office.*

*He takes a bite of his sandwich.*

*Gerald smiles, and then points in his direction. Eve makes eye contact with him.*

*Victor straightens up. He clears his throat just as Gerald leads her into his office.*

GERALD

*This is Eve. She's here to take a look at the problem.*

*Gerald exits.*

*Eve takes a look at the pipe. The drip is still filling the bowl on Victor's desk.*

*Suddenly Eve steps up onto the desk. She stares carefully at the pipe, examining it, as Victor looks up at her.*

*To break the silence, he tries to squeeze some words in.*

VICTOR

*...It's been like this since I moved in, about two days ago.*

EVE

*You've got a pretty bad suture here.*

VICTOR

*Excuse me?*

EVE

*In the plumbing.*

*She hops off the desk and moves to the pipes that rise on the wall behind his desk. She puts her hand on them, gently.*

*Eve then heads for the door, then stops. She turns around and walks up to Victor's desk.*

*She reclaims the table, takes her chewing gum out of her mouth and sticks it right into the suture above Victor's desk. Without saying a word she hops down from the table and exits the room.*

*Victor watches her leave, mesmerized, and accidentally sets his sandwich down in the bowl of dirty pipe water.*

INT. MR. M'S APARTMENT- SUNDOWN

*Zack and Derek are drawing, their cigarettes hanging down from their mouths. Zack stands on a small ladder sanding the wall. Derek is standing to his right, also prepping the wall for coloring.*

*In the back of the room Mr. M can be seen wheeling up and down the floor, flapping his hands. Zack and Derek look back at him, then at each other. They return to the wall.*

INT. ELEVATOR- NIGHT

*Victor and the Janitor are riding the elevator in silence.*

JANITOR

*Good day was it?*

VICTOR

*All right. Yours?*

JANITOR

*Can't complain, and even if I did, who would listen.*

*Victor does not know how to respond to that, so he smiles politely.*

*The elevator stops. The Janitor exits and disappears into the dark pipe room.*

EXT. LOBBY- LATER

*As Victor steps out of the elevator he sees Eve walking by, on her way out. Victor brightens up.*

VICTOR

*Hi.*

*She wipes away some dirt that has gathered around her eyes.*

VICTOR

*Long day, huh? Going home?*

*Eve smiles and nods. Victor shows her his office card.*

VICTOR

*Punch in, punch out.*

*Again she smiles but says nothing.*

VICTOR

*You don't talk much, do you?*

EVE

*No.*

*Victor laughs. Victor and Eve walk towards the building's exit.*

VICTOR

*I'm in the process of quitting my job.*

*Victor is about to say something, but then refrains.*

VICTOR

*...I need to... Can you wait a second?*

*He runs to a side room quickly. The sound of the clock punch echoes through the empty lobby. He runs back.*

VICTOR

*...punch out.*

*Eve smiles.*

VICTOR

*Are you working tomorrow?*

EVE

*Yeah.*

VICTOR

*Great, good. I guess I'll see you then.*

*She steps toward the exit. Victor watches her leave.*

*EXT. VICTOR'S APT. COMPLEX- NIGHT*

*Victor, Zack and Derek arrive to their apartments at the same time. All look beat; this has been a long, eventful day.*

*They all put the keys to their door.*

VICTOR

*Hey, fellas.*

ZACK & DEREK

*Victor.*

VICTOR

*How's it going with Mr. M.?*

*The two take time to think.*

ZACK

*He's weird, man.*

DEREK

*It's like walking on eggshells with him.*

VICTOR

*And the painting?*

DEREK

*No, no, we're using brushes on this one.*

*A moment of silence falls on the three.*

VICTOR

*I meant the painting process, how is that going?*

ZACK

*It's going, going well. Listen Victor, thanks a million for this job, you really did come through for us.*

VICTOR

*All I did was hang that painting in the elevator.*

DEREK

*Thanks anyway, buddy.*

ZACK

*If there's ever anything we could help you with, just let us know, man.*

VICTOR

*Don't worry about it. Good night guys.*

ZACK & DEREK

*Night.*

*They all go step in to their apartments. Right before Victor closes the door, Zack hurries out of his apartment.*

ZACK

*Victor?!*

VICTOR

*Yeah?*

ZACK

*We were thinking, we work in the same building, right?*

*Victor nods.*

ZACK

*What do you say you ride with us, save some fare money? It's a little crowded, but hey, it's good company.*

*Victor is quite flattered by the offer.*

VICTOR

*I would like that Zack, that would be—that would be nice.*

INT. ZACK & DEREK'S CAR- DAY

*Loud Metal music plays in this big, old, messy van, filled to capacity with ladders, paint and brushes, overalls and nylon.*

*Victor sits in the front seat, squeezed between Zack who's driving, and Derek. Both are smoking.*

*Zack rides fast, and with every turn all three shift along to the side.*

INT. COMMITTEE ROOM- DAY

*In the large room, at a long and wide table, sit three men; GORDON in the middle, DALE to Gordon's right and CLIFORD to his left.*

*At the top of the table sits LINDA, a stenographer, armed and ready at her typing machine. All sit in painful silence. They stare at some paper work in front of them.*

*On the other side of the table sit Gerald and Victor, looking at the men, waiting. Gerald throws the occasional look at Victor.*

*Gordon establishes eye contact with the stenographer, nodding her to start typing.*

GORDON

*This is the first meeting of this resignation committee, on today- Tuesday, the third of June 2002, regarding the resignation request of worker No. Z55530-8, Victor Arnet. We are on the record.*

*Victor sits comfortably.*

GORDON

*Are you married Victor?*



VICTOR

No.

GORDON

*You have a girlfriend?*

VICTOR

No.

DALE

*Do you get the recommended eight hours of sleep a night?*

VICTOR

*Ah... Yes, usually.*

GORDON

*Have you ever had a drug problem?*

*Victor squirms in his chair a little.*

VICTOR

No.

CLIFFORD

*Do you ever hit the bottle Victor?*

GORDON

*Yeah Victor, do you have a tendency to drink alcohol beverages to excess?*

*Victor can't believe this.*

VICTOR

*No, what does this—*

GORDON

*Just answer the question.*

VICTOR

No.

CLIFFORD

*Have you ever been to a head shrinker?*

GORDON

*Ever seen a psychologist Victor?*

VICTOR

No.

GORDON

*Well, that's what's on my list. Dale, anything else on yours?*

*Dale shakes his head no.*

GORDON

*Clifford?*

*Clifford shakes his head as well.*

GORDON

*Okay. So, you wish to resign, Victor, is that correct?*

VICTOR

Yes.

GORDON

*Are we not treating you right, Victor?*

*Gerald eyes Victor.*

VICTOR

*No. It's fine.*

GORDON

*Pay well?*

VICTOR

Yes.

GORDON

*Why do you want to leave then, Victor?*

*Victor thinks.*

VICTOR

*Well, sir... sirs... I just ...*

*The committee members lean back in their chairs. They look at each other. Gordon looks to the stenographer, nods again.*

GORDON

*Let's get off the Record, Linda.*

*She stops typing, gets up and leaves the room. Gordon leans forward, towards Victor, speaking in a more friendly tone, almost too friendly.*

**GORDON**

*Victor, you're a bright young man, you know the rules. This company made sure to give you the best, the least you could do is answer our questions.*

**CLIFFORD**

*You can be honest with us, Victor. You want something? You want to negotiate?*

*Victor is confused.*

**VICTOR**

*No. I just want to leave.*

*Gordon looks at Dale and Clifford.*

**GORDON**

*All right then. We'll meet again in two days. Can we get back on record?*

*Gordon turns to the stenographer that is not there.*

**GORDON**

*Well, until we meet again, I want you to think really hard on what you are doing.*

*He leans forward, pulling his glasses back to his eyes.*

**GORDON**

*Breaking a contract is a serious matter, Victor.*

**DALE**

*Very serious.*

**INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE- DAY**

*Day 11 rests on the wall.*

*Victor places another bowl, this time on the floor at the back of the room. As he does this, Eve's voice surprises him.*

EVE

*Getting worse?*

VICTOR

*It seems so.*

EVE

*Well, with any luck I'll be able to locate the problem today.*

*Eve climbs up on the desk. Victor steps in; he is not really interested but wants to keep the conversation going.*

VICTOR

*I thought this was just a...suture.*

*As Victor says this, the big and loud rush of water storms through the pipe just above them.*

*Eve looks fascinated, she stares at the pipe with wide eyes, hitting it gently with a wrench in different parts, examines the sounds.*

EVE

*Well, yes. The result maybe a little leak, but that usually indicates a bigger much more intricate problem.*

*Eve tries to reach above the pipe to block the suture. She cannot reach.*

EVE

*Can you...*

VICTOR

*Yeah, sure.*

*Victor hurries up to climb the desk. He watches Eve work.*

VICTOR

*...You really love this, huh?*

*Eve says nothing; she is concentrating on the pipes. They are very close to each other.*

VICTOR

*I worked here for 6 years.*

EVE

*Determination.*

VICTOR

*I'm on my way out. What about you?*

*Eve stops working. She looks at Victor seriously, almost offended.*

EVE

*I love my job.*

*Victor nods slightly and keeps quite.*

INT. MR. M'S APARTMENT- DAY

*Zack and Derek are slaving away, applying the first coat of paint. They work in perfect sync; one completes the movement of the other. Some noises can be heard from a room in the back of the apartment.*

*Zack signals Derek to look at what is going on.*

*Zack climbs down the ladder and walks slowly towards the noisy room. The sound grows louder.*

*He reaches for the door slowly. His hand almost touching the door handle.*

*Suddenly, the door opens slightly, very fast. The room is dark, lit by a soft red light; Mr. M's face is pressed into the open crack.*

MR. M

*What do you want?!!*

DEREK

*We heard noises, we didn't know you were here...*

MR. M

*I'm here. I'm busy, what do you want?*

DEREK

*Nothing. Nothing.*

MR. M

*Well?*

*Derek slowly steps back; don't know what to make of this. Zack, who has been watching, is shocked as well.*

INT. PIPE ROOM- LATER

*Victor walks into the pipe room, he is wearing a yellow jumpsuit. He looks around, amazed by the complexity of the room.*

*Eve is moving through the pipes, examining them.*

VICTOR

*This is incredible...*

EVE

*This is the heart.*

*Eve keeps working.*

VICTOR

*Can I ask you something?  
Please don't take this the wrong way, but,  
why do you do this?*

EVE

*Do what?*

VICTOR

*Plumbing.*

EVE

*Why not?*

VICTOR

*Well, you're a pretty girl, you seem  
intelligent...*

EVE

*Is this degrading to you?*

VICTOR

*No, no. Not at all... well, a little, it's just –  
dirty.*

*Eve turns to face Victor.*

VICTOR

*I didn't mean...*

*The two fall silent for a minute, collecting their thoughts.*

EVE

*While other kid's parents took them to picnics, my dad took me pipe fixing. You can say I grew into it.*

*Victor takes a back. A smile spreads on his face.*

VICTOR

*I guess it's strange to meet someone who enjoys what they do for a living.*

EVE

*It's the problem solving that I love. Locating, then solving it.*

*Victor looks at her.*

*Suddenly a rumble of water rushes across a big pipe right above Eve, rattling a little.*

*Eve is amazed, almost excited, by this phenomena.*

VICTOR

*Is that... normal?*

EVE

*Not really.*

*The stream shoots up the pipes.*

*INT. GERALD'S OFFICE- DAY*

*Gerald, wearing magnifying glasses, is carefully yanking the dead leaves of his plant, watering it with spray water.*

*The rumble makes its way through his office, as he looks up; he sees a damp spot on his office ceiling.*

*INT. MR. M'S APARTMENT – DAY*

*The Mural is in progress.*

*Mr. M who is working out again.*

*In the middle of the room, Zack and Derek are taking a break, smoking, drinking coffee.*

*Suddenly, from a far, the same rumble approaches and the same pipe sound sweeps through Mr. M's apartment.*

*Zack and Derek look at each other then up to the ceiling.*

**ZACK**

*What the hell was that?*

**DEREK**

*Sounded like a massive flush.*

*Mr. M looks at the ceiling, amazed.*

*Zack and Derek look at him.*

**INT. MR. M'S BEDROOM- NIGHT**

*The room is lit by the moonlight. Mr. M is tossing and turning in his bed, murmuring unintelligible words and then abruptly, Mr. M wakes up.*

*He sits up in bed, frightened.*

**MR. M**

*Diane?!*

*Mr. M breathes heavily. He looks around the room disoriented. In the dark, he sees his wheelchair and remembers where and who he is. He puts his head in his hands, and gathers himself.*

*From outside a flock of birds' flap their wings, Mr. M looks out the window to see them fly, he then picks up the phone and dials a number.*

**INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE- SAME**

*The phone rings on Victor's desk. Madeline, who is still there, picks it up.*

**MADELINE**

*Victor's office.*

*The other line is quiet, and then the line hangs out.*

**MADELINE**

*Hello?*

*She hangs up, puzzled.*

**EXT. BUILDING - NIGHT**



*Eve and Victor are in front of the building by Eve's car, a big white van.*

VICTOR

*So...*

*They stay in silence.*

VICTOR

*I'll let you go, you have a good night, Eve.*

EVE

*Where's your car?*

VICTOR

*I don't have one.*

EVE

*How are you getting home?*

VICTOR

*I get a ride with my neighbors; they will be here any minute.*

EVE

*Good night, Victor.*

VICTOR

*Good night.*

*She goes to leave and then—*

EVE

*Victor!?*

VICTOR

*Yes?*

EVE

*Look, you're a guy and I'm a girl, and it seems like we both like each other. At one point we will probably kiss and go to your place or mine and all that... and, I just wanted to tell you right now that - I'm a mess.*

VICTOR

*That's all right. I'm a mess.*

*EVE*

*And neurotic, obsessive compulsive, and  
I'm not that emotionally available at times.*

*They turn quiet, victor smiles gently.*

*VICTOR*

*I respect that, Eve. I do.*

*They stand in pleasant silence.*

*EVE*

*Well, good night then.*

*Victor watches her leave. He waits there in the street, excited by the emotional exchange that had just transpired.*

*He then looks around, Zack and Derek are nowhere in sight.*

*INT. MR. M'S APARTMENT- NIGHT*

*The elevator door opens, Victor peeks in. The place looks empty.*

*VICTOR*

*Hello? Zack? Derek?*

*Victor looks around. He hears a faint sound from the near by room. He walks through the house, the sound gets louder. There, in the corner of the main room, he sees Mr. M on the floor face down, his wheelchair next to him.*

*Victor rushes to him.*

*VICTOR*

*Are you all right, sir?*

*MR. M*

*I'm lying face down on the floor would  
you consider that all right?*

*VICTOR*

*Let me help...*

*Victor goes to help him up but Mr. M pushes him away.*

*VICTOR*

*I'm just going to help you to the couch,  
don't fight me.*

*Mr. M is quiet.*

VICTOR

*Don't fight me.*

*Delicately, Victor lifts Mr. M up and starts struggling to get him to the couch. It is not an easy task. After a minute they finally manage to get him seated, both men breathe heavily.*

MR. M

*What are you doing in my apartment?*

VICTOR

*You're welcome.*

MR. M

*Yeah. It's not the first time it happened, I  
can take care of myself.*

VICTOR

*I'm sure you can.*

MR. M

*That's right.*

*They sit there, in silence. This event left Mr. M extremely tired he is nodding off in front of victor.*

MR. M

*(under his lip)*

*Thank you.*

VICTOR

*You are very welcome. You need  
anything?*

MR. M

*I'm fine. Just need to rest.*

VICTOR

*I know what you mean.*

*For the first time we see a tired smile on Mr. M's face.*

VICTOR

*You don't like people much, do you?*

*MR. M*  
*I liked the idea of people once.*

*Victor smiles, the two sit in silence for a while.*

*MR. M*  
*How long have you worked here?*

*VICTOR*  
*A little over five years.*

*MR. M*  
*Enjoying it are you?*

*VICTOR*  
*I'm actually on my way out.*

*MR.M*  
*Oh?*

*VICTOR*  
*Yes.*

*MR. M*  
*Where you let go? I can make a call and...*

*VICTOR*  
*No, no. It was my choice. I need to leave.*

*MR. M*  
*May I be so bold as to ask why?*

*VICTOR*  
*I just want to be happy again.*

*Mr. M's head sinks back into the couch. His eyes are heavy.*

*MR. M*  
*That sounds like a pretty big plan to me.*

*VICTOR*  
*I know.*

*MR. M*  
*Well, you know what you want, that's the first step. Now you have to make it happen.*

*Mr. M and Victor sit in pleasant silence for a while.*

VICTOR

*So, all this is yours,  
'M- Core'... you never told me what does the  
'M' stand for?*

*Mr. M is quite; when Victor looks at him he is already asleep.*

*Victor smiles gently. He grabs a cover from the couch and pulls it over the old man.*

*Victor turns to leave when he notices his old office, the secret room. He looks at the now sleeping Mr. M, back to the room.*

*Victor starts walking towards the room.*

*He moves slowly down the hall. The door to his old office is open a crack, and he can't resist. He wants to see what is on the other side.*

*He reaches the doorway, and places his hand on the door. Just as he is about to open it, he hears Mr. M clear his throat.*

*He spins to find Mr. M sitting right behind him in the wheelchair. Mr. M has a firm look on his face.*

*Victor opens his mouth, trying to explain what he was doing, but no words come out.*

*Mr. M's cold stare does not waver. Victor knows that he has overstepped his bounds, and sheepishly moves passed the old man to the elevator.*

*Mr. M does not watch him leave, and stays sitting there silently in the hall.*

INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE- DAY

*Victor is walking to his office. He rips another number off the calendar – 10 days remaining...*

*Two men are at the urinals taking care of "business"; they look back at Victor, nodding their heads.*

*Victor stops dead in his tracks.*

MAN

*Hey buddy; you know where the towels are?*

VICTOR

*Get out!*

*The men are puzzled.*

VICTOR

*(scream)*

*Finish what you started, and get the hell out of my office!!*

*The two men run out of the office. As they leave we can see Gerald standing in the doorway.*

INT. MEETING ROOM. DAY

*Gordon, Dale, Clifford, and Linda sit in the same places they were in the first meeting.*

*Victor is sitting across from them in the chair, against the wall across from him, sits Gerald, staring daggers at Victor.*

GORDON

*Well, Victor. You'll be pleased to know that Clifford here has looked over your letter of resignation. Cliff?*

*Clifford clears his throat.*

CLIFFORD

*Well, Victor. Your purpose was stated clearly, ah... sentences were short and to the point, punctuation accurate, headings and closings were in the right format, and signature very impressive. All in all, a good letter.*

*The room stays silent.*

GORDON

*Thank you, Cliff. We can't let you go, Victor.*

*Victor sits up.*

GORDON

*The fact of the matter is, you signed a five year contract with us when you first started, and at the beginning of this fiscal*

*year, you did not exercise your right to renegotiate that contract.*

VICTOR

*Right to renegotiate?*

GORDON

*Right. So, as a result, the same boundaries of the first contract were reapplied, thus making you a commodity to this corporation for a further five years.*

*Victor leans forward to speak, but Gordon beats him to it.*

GORDON

*But here's what we're going to do. You never claimed any of your sick days. They've been piling up. Cliff?*

DALE

*46 days.*

GORDON

*Now, we have a solution for you, Vic.*

VICTOR

*Sir—*

GORDON

*Now let me finish, son. All this work you've been doing, well, it wears a man down, Vic. You need a change. Some kind of stimulation. A jump-start. A new position.*

CLIFFORD

*What we're offering you, Vic, is a 46-day paid vacation.*

GORDON

*46 days of vacation, Vic. And then when you come back, a new job will be waiting for you.*

VICTOR

*I don't need a vacation. I need to quit.*

GORDON

*Well you can't. Linda, will you read what I said earlier about the contracts again.*

VICTOR

*I—I heard what was said. I just don't understand—*

*Gerald stands up and moves toward Victor.*

GERALD

*Let's not get carried away here, Vic. There's nothing you can do. Breaking a contract with a company like M-core is a very complicated undertaking, and unless you know a very good attorney, you'd be an idiot not to take this offer.*

*Victor looks hard at Gerald, boiling up with words, but refrains from snarling any of them.*

GORDON

*Then it's settled. Victor your vacation will start as soon as you find a replacement. We'll be sending in the applicants starting tomorrow.*

*Gordon stamps this request on the paper.*

INT. MR. M'S APT. DAY

*Zack and Derek are facing the mural.*

*A knock on the open door and a DELIVERY BOY walks in with a fruit basket.*

DELIVERY BOY

*Where do you want this?*

ZACK

*Take a wild guess.*

*The Delivery boy looks to the side to see a large table filled to capacity with fruit basket, he sets the one he brought on the floor next to the table.*

DELIVERY BOY

*The man likes fruit.*



ZACK

*What did you say?*

DELIVERY BOY

*I said the man must love fruit.*

*The delivery boy hurries out of the apartment.*

*The mural is coming along. The whole wall is painted with realistic clouds.*

*Zack and Derek take a step back to look at it.*

ZACK

*Well?*

DEREK

*I like it. We should mix the shadows darker.*

ZACK

*You think?*

*As they converse this, they can hear Mr. M talking from a room behind them. Intrigued by the language they slowly walk towards the sound.*

*As they come closer to a small low-lit room, from the crack of the open door they see Zeigfreid and Hans standing above Mr. M. Zeigfreid is talking on the phone in German. He hands the phone to Mr. M who continues the conversation in German.*

*Suddenly, Zeigfreid lifts his eyes to see the two looking at them.*

*Zeigfreid elbows Hans, and Hans turns to make eye contact.*

*Zack and Derek freezes. Hans walks to the door, gives them a last look and closes it.*

INT. CAFETERIA- DAY

*Victor sits at a table alone, in a very large, echoic cafeteria. A long line of workers extends from the window where the food is picked up. Victor watches this with disillusionment.*

*A voice is booming over a loudspeaker, calling out the culinary events.*

LOUDSPEAKER

*Please have your ticket stubs out and ready to be punched. Be sure to tell the*

*server if you want red Jell-O or a cookie for dessert. All vegetarians should pick up a green tray, and move to window H to obtain their specialized entrees.*

*Victor takes a bite of his red Jell-O, and looks around the cafeteria. He sees people laughing, and talking about nonsense, he sees people eating quietly.*

*Zack and Derek sit down across from Victor at the table. Each of them has a handful of fruit. Zack takes a bite of an apple.*

**ZACK**

*You have a second, man?*

**VICTOR**

*Sure.*

**DEREK**

*This is important.*

**ZACK**

*What do you make of this Mr. M guy?*

**VICTOR**

*How do you mean?*

**ZACK**

*The German bodyguards, speaking German on the phone, the hand flapping.*

**VICTOR**

*Hand flapping?*

*Zack demonstrates.*

**VICTOR**

*He's old, probably very alone...*

**ZACK**

*Then there's that room.*

**VICTOR**

*Yeah, he is strange about that room...*

**DEREK**

*Something is going on with that man, either he is completely nuts, or he's planning something...*

VICTOR

*Like what?*

DEREK

*A German takeover!*

VICTOR

*What?*

ZACK

*Look, we don't know. But something is going on.*

*INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE- DAY*

*A young man, CHARLIE, sits across from Victor's desk, looking around the room, waiting. He looks at Victor's Calendar, the number 9 is on it.*

*Across the hall Gerald steps out of his office, and nods to Charlie as he passes by.*

*A few seconds go by, and Gerald reappears in the door.*

GERALD

*Are you here for the job interview?*

CHARLIE

*Yes. Are you Victor?*

*Gerald exhales and nods his head in disapproval.*

*INT. PIPE ROOM-DAY*

*Eve is kneeling, working diligently on the pipes. Victor stands behind her, chasing a mental wild goose.*

VICTOR

*I mean he's an old man, he can hardly walk. Why does he need to work out all the time?*

EVE

*Can you hand me the crescent wrench?*

*Victor reaches down in the tool box and hands Eve the wrench. She begins fiddling with one of the pipes.*

EVE

*You've put a lot of thought into this haven't you?*

VICTOR

*Well, he's a little eccentric. I guess I'm just curious.*

*Eve hands the wrench back to Victor. Victor tosses it back in the tool box.*

*Eve sees him do this and grabs it from where it fell.*

EVE

*No, it goes here.*

*She places it in the exact same place that Victor originally picked it up from.*

VICTOR

*Oh... sorry.*

EVE

*I just have to make sure they get back in the same place, so it's not too disorganized.*

*Another violent rush of water causes Eve to stand up. Her gaze follows the pipe to the ceiling.*

*She places her hand on the large black pipe. It is vibrating quietly.*

EVE

*This is the only pipe that runs through the entire building.*

*Victor and Eve make eye contact.*

VICTOR

*What does that mean?*

*Eve looks at the pipe.*

*INT. GERALD'S OFFICE- DAY*

*Victor and Eve are standing above Gerald's desk.*

*Gerald is attending to his precious plant, grooming it, pulling his dry leaves, half listening to Eve speaking.*

GERALD

*So you're saying that you aren't capable or qualified to do this job, well we'll get someone--*

EVE

*That is not what I'm saying, the water pressure is centered on an extremely old fashioned pipeline. The new system was installed with no respect for the old one. There is a big chance we will be looking at a complete system collapse if we don't do something. You have to shut down the entire building; you have to shut off all the water--*

GERALD

*Whoa whoa whoa whoa whoa, listen ma'm, with all due respect, you have not given me any specification on what is the problem, or how to solve it.*

EVE

*The building in not safe.*

GERALD

*Sure, shut down the building. Just tell 280 people that they do not have a job because the plumbing in the building is lacking.*

EVE

*It's your responsibility.*

GERALD

*Yes it is, thank you very much. Victor, you missed your interview today. You're going to have to call that young man and reschedule.*

EVE

*You haven't given me an answer.*

GERALD

*Yes, I think I have.*

*Gerald goes behind the desk; he picks up his water can and starts to head back to his pet plant.*

*Victor eyes Gerald with anger as Eve and he leave the office. Victor is about to leave as Gerald calls him.*

**GERALD**

*I didn't excuse you Victor.*

*Victor turns around. Gerald gets closer to him.*

**GERALD**

*That's smart Victor. Getting your lady friend to make me shut down the building. Losing money for the old guy. Disqualifying me out of the management race. It's not going to happen Vic. I'm on top of you. You have a week left and I am still your boss.*

**INT. MEETING ROOM-DAY**

*The committee is all decked out again, talking to Victor in his usual chair.*

*Gordon is holding some bland white paper forms.*

**GORDON**

*We've been informed that you've been neglecting your duties. So Clifford has taken the time to work up these forms. Cliff?*

**CLIFFORD**

*We want you to fully screen these applicants Victor. We want you to find the best man for the job.*

**GORDON**

*You will fill them out after each interview, and return them to us so we can make sure you are doing your job. We're becoming quite impatient with your recent apathy, Vic.*

**DALE**

*Very impatient.*

*Victor just stares blankly at the three men as Linda types the last remark.*

**INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE- DAY**

*7 days remaining.*

*A composed, almost dead faced man sits in front of Victor, staring at him.*

*Victor has his head buried in the forms the committee handed to him. he is scribbling away on one of them.*

VICTOR

*So, Danny...*

DANNY

*Sir.*

VICTOR

*What qualities do you feel you have that would benefit us here at M-Core?*

DANNY

*I am the job. I've been around numbers my entire life. It comes natural to me. Don't get me wrong, I can have fun, I know how to be social.*

*(coughs gently)*

*I just don't care for it.*

*Danny smiles robotically.*

*Victor writes down this useful attribute.*

*INT. PIPE ROOM-DAY*

*Eve is bent over attending to the worsening pipes. In voice over, we hear Victor conducting more interviews.*

AMBER (V.O.)

*Work work work, I expect it, I feel left out when I'm not asked to do the best I can. Since graduating I've held a job with Wink & Winterberg. I handle pressure extremely well, and come highly recommended.*

*The pipes stretch on in the darkness beyond Eve, as the rumble starts in again, slowly as if something is quietly boiling over.*

JOHN (V.O.)

*15 years with Turner & Buckley that should say it all. Say, how's the food in that cafeteria?*

*The large pipe is now visible, looming large in the room.*

**RICK (V.O.)**

*I'm dedicated, I work hard, harder than the next guy, and I love, man I really love office environment, there's a sense of brotherhood, like the family I never had.*

*Slowly, a small crack forms at the base of the pipe. A small stream of water begins to trickle out of it.*

**INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE-DAY**

*Hands shake. Firmly, too firmly.*

*Charlie, the man who Victor kept waiting steps into the office, wearing a large smile.*

**CHARLIE**

*So you're the elusive Victor.*

**VICTOR**

*Yeah. Had a misunderstanding. So, ah Charlie, what—*

**CHARLIE**

*Before we start, I'd just like to say that I've met some of your colleagues, and they are fantastic. Madeline, she's so full of life. Beaming! And Gerald, he seems a little strict, but hey! That's why this floor is such a tight ship.*

*Victor starts to speak, but doesn't get the chance.*

**CHARLIE**

*I won't lie to you, Victor. I want this job. I wouldn't have even filled out this application if I thought that I was any less than qualified, determined, willing and eager to tackle all the challenges that this job presents, and—*

**VICTOR**

*Charlie.*



CHARLIE

*Victor.*

VICTOR

*You got the job.*

*This shuts Charlie up. He stares at Victor in silent disbelief.*

*The phone rings on Victor's desk. Victor places his hand on the receiver.*

VICTOR

*Madeline will help you fill out the forms.  
You'll most likely start here with me on  
Monday.*

CHARLIE

*Yes. Yes!!! Thank you so much! I'll work  
for it!!! You made the right choice Victor.*

*Charlie sprints out of the office. Victor picks up the phone.*

VICTOR

*Hello?*

ZEIGFREID (V.O.)

*Victor speaking?*

VICTOR

*What?*

ZEIGFREID

*Victor is speaking?*

VICTOR

*Yes...*

ZEIGFREID (V.O.)

*(heavy German accent)*

*Meet us on the roof.*

**EXT. ROOF- DAY**

*Victor steps out into the sunny, windy plain. At the far end, Mr. M is seated on his wheelchair facing the view. Zeigfreid and Hans stand together to the far right.*

*Victor approaches cautiously.*

VICTOR

Sir?

MR. M

*Breathtaking isn't it? Absolutely breathtaking.*

VICTOR

*You wanted to see me?*

MR. M

*No, Victor. I want you to see.*

VICTOR

See?

MR. M

*What the birds see.*

*Victor looks around, the city is spread before them, some birds are flying high.*

*Mr. M is quite, contemplating his next line, choosing his words as he looks at the city. He then turns to Victor.*

MR. M

*Points of view, Victor. Everything is relative.*

*Mr. M leans forward to take a look over the edge of the building. He gets lightheaded and topples over a little.*

*Hans and Zeigfreid run to help, but Victor quickly jumps to grab him. He pulls him back to the chair.*

MR. M

*Can I trust you, victor?*

*Mr. M looks deep into Victor's eyes. Victor looks back at him, moved, somewhat scared.*

VICTOR

I--

MR. M

*Can I trust on your help if I need it?*

VICTOR

*I'll do what I can.*

*Mr. M*  
*Thank you, I'll see you soon.*

*And he turns to exit the roof, followed by Hans and Zeigfreid.*

*Victor remains on the roof, trying to make sense of what had just transpired.*

*INT. MR. M'S APARTMENT- DAY*

*The same group of people from the executive meeting is sitting around a large table. Mr. M is at the head of it.*

*MR. M*  
*Before we continue, gentlemen, I would like to say: do not send me any more fruit baskets. My decision will not be based on fruit, but on character.*

*GERALD*  
*Sir, I think I speak for everyone in this room... when and how is this "passing of the torch" going to transpire.*

*MR. M*  
*In three days, there will be a letter, handed to the head secretary. It will be marked with the company's seal. One of your names will be inside. It is my wish, that it will only be open when I'm gone.*

*The men all look to Mr. M intensely.*

*INT. PIPE ROOM-NIGHT*

*Victor moves slowly through the pipe room, and spots Eve off in the distance, kneeling by a large pipe, hard at work.*

*He moves up behind her. She notices his presence, and nods, but says nothing. She continues to work.*

*VICTOR*  
*Hey, I wasn't sure if you were here. You usually come up and say hi, but--*

*Water rumbles through the pipe, shaking the room slightly. Eve stops working and stands up, watching the sound as it moves on up the pipe.*

*EVE*

*I've tried several ways to divert the pressure, but nothing works. Somehow the water keeps coming back to this pipe...*

VICTOR

*Eve?*

EVE

*I must've replaced 30 pipes already, blocked about 10 major sutures. I didn't expect radical change but, it should have...*

*She turns to Victor.*

VICTOR

*Well, what can you do?*

EVE

*I don't know.*

VICTOR

*Maybe you need to...*

EVE

*It's not rocket science. You locate the problem, you solve it. Replace old with the new.*

VICTOR

*Then that's what you need to do.*

EVE

*I have. This problem... there's no logic to it...*

VICTOR

*Why don't you take a break, Eve. Step away from it.*

EVE

*I can't.*

VICTOR

*Just come with me.*

EVE

*No, Victor.*

VICTOR

*It's better sometimes to step back from a problem. You might be looking straight at it but you're so close you can't see it.*

*Eve looks hard at Victor. His quite wisdom calms her down a little.*

INT. EVE'S VAN-NIGHT

*Eve is driving down the dark streets. Victor sits in the passenger seat, looking out. He looks over at Eve.*

*She notices this, and gives him a quick look, then returns to the road. The two share a faint smile.*

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE- LATER

*Victor and Eve sit out on his fire escape.*

EVE

*It's pretty up here.*

VICTOR

*Yeah, everything looks cleaner from above. I think... well, never mind.*

EVE

*What?*

VICTOR

*Nothing.*

EVE

*Tell me.*

VICTOR

*I sit here a lot, by myself. It's just nice to have you here, that's all.*

*Victor looks deep in her eyes. Eve turns away politely, and exhales, relieving some of the intensity of the moment.*

VICTOR

*What about you?*

EVE

*What about me?*

VICTOR

*What makes you get up and go to work every morning?*

EVE

*The fixing. I have a need to fix.*

VICTOR

*Right, the fixing.*

*Eve turns quite, she drifts away to thought.*

EVE

*The thing is, I need things to be perfect all the time that I rather not even touch them until they break.*

*Victor takes this in.*

VICTOR

*I'll let you know when I do.*

*She looks at him.*

VICTOR

*Break.*

*Eve shyly smiles it away. They stay in silence, watching the night style.*

EVE

*You got used to it, didn't you?*

VICTOR

*What?*

EVE

*Your job.*

VICTOR

*I let it become who I was. Ever since I'd decided to quit, I had more contact with people at work than my whole stay there.*

EVE

*So, what are you planning to do with your time?*

**VICTOR**

*I lost touch with so much that I would have to start over. Start everything over.*

**EVE**

*That sounds exciting.*

**VICTOR**

*It scares me. I'm a guy who woke up every day at 5AM, had the same breakfast, took the same taxi, with the same driver, to the same building, then up that elevator. Same office, same people.*

*Eve looks at Victor, and for the first time begins to notice the sadness he tries to cover up.*

**VICTOR**

*Then one day I realized my life was so... lacking. And the only thing that could change my life - was fear. The lack of knowledge of what tomorrow might bring.*

**EVE**

*So, you are getting a new one, a new life.*

**VICTOR**

*Yeah. Pretty much.*

**EVE**

*But you haven't quit yet.*

*Victor looks at her. She sees so much.*

**INT. OFFICES-DAY**

*Victor steps off the elevator. Madeline, in her cubicle seated across from it, is on the phone. Her eyes widen when she sees him step off.*

*She places her hand over the receiver.*

**MADELINE**

*Charlie the new guy is waiting for you, Victor.*

*Victor nods and moves passed her. Madeline turns and calls to him.*

**MADELINE**

*Oh, and Victor! Don't go to your office.*

*Victor looks at her, clueless as to what she meant.*

**EXT. VICTOR'S OFFICE-DAY**

*A line of people stretches out of Victor's office and on down the hall. Victor moves through the crowd, to find Charlie standing near the door. His eyes widen when he sees Victor.*

**CHARLIE**

*Victor! Hey!*

**VICTOR**

*What is going on?*

**CHARLIE**

*These people are using your office as a bathroom!*

*Victor stares at Charlie for a few seconds. Charlie laughs and slaps Victor on the shoulder.*

*Victor is not amused; he turns and marches into Gerald's office.*

**INT. GERALD'S OFFICE-DAY**

*Victor storms into Gerald's office. Gerald is on the phone.*

*He sees Victor, but doesn't acknowledge him.*

**VICTOR**

*Gerald what in the--*

*Gerald frowns and puts his hand up to silence Victor.*

*Victor stops what he is about to say, but his anger still remains. He reduces his voice to an animated whisper.*

**VICTOR**

*There is a line of people outside my office!!!*

*Gerald stares at Victor for a few moments, then speaks into the phone.*



GERALD

*No, no, no. That's not going to work. Red. We need it to be red. No other color will do.*

*Victor begins to slowly pace around in a circle, rubbing his face with his hands, trying to suppress his rage.*

GERALD

*Okay. Thank you. I look forward to it as well. Bye-bye.*

*Gerald hangs up the phone.*

GERALD

*That was a very important client Victor.*

*Victor ignores that last remark.*

VICTOR

*Gerald, there is a line forty people deep--*

GERALD

*There is a line outside your office Victor because your girlfriend has not made any progress on our pipe situation. All the bathrooms in the lower floors have flooded. We've entered into sanitation emergency land here at M-Core, Victor.*

VICTOR

*Well, how am I supposed to work like this?*

GERALD

*I don't know, Victor. I didn't get us into this mess. Remember what I said about sacrifice, Victor?*

*Victor stares in disbelief at Gerald.*

GERALD

*Take the new kid and show him around the building. Get him acquainted.*

**INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE-DAY**

*Victor is trying somehow to move through the crowded doorway to his office.*

*From inside, he sees Charlie's head pop up from the crowd.*

**CHARLIE**

*Victor! Phone call!*

*Victor nudges his way through the crowd, as people murmur in disapproval. He finally squeezes through to his desk; he rips a page off his calendar – 6 days remaining.*

*Charlie waits for Victor to pick up but he doesn't. he appears to freeze, he then turn to the people, ignoring the phone ringing.*

**VICTOR**

*(to himself)*

*That's great, that's just perfect...*

*(to the crowd)*

*Do you people understand that this is my office!! Do I go around reliving myself in yours? Do I? I don't think so, you know why?*

*One Guy reluctantly goes to answer.*

**GUY**

*It would be rude?*

**VICTOR**

*Yeah, that's right, rude.*

**GUY #3**

*But this is a bathroom, guy.  
The only one working.*

**VICTOR**

*So I should accommodate right? I should sacrifice...*

*The phone is still ringing.*

**GUY #2**

*Aren't you going to get that?*

**VICTOR**

*(to himself)*

*I gave five years to this office, and this is what I get?! Stupid... all of this is... us, this place?*

*He then abruptly picks up the phone.*

VICTOR

*Yes, who is it?*

MR. M (V.O.)

*Victor. I need your help. Can you get away?*

VICTOR

*I'm so glad you called.*

INT. MR. M'S APARTMENT- DAY

*Victor steps into the apartment. He stops after he gets inside.*

*Wet towels are resting all over the floor, strung out in a path leading to Mr. M's secret room. Victor slowly follows the trail*

VICTOR

*Mr. M!?*

MR. M

*In here!*

*The door of Mr. M's secret room is open, and Victor can here noise coming from inside.*

*Victor moves down the hall, and comes to the entrance of the door. He freezes.*

*It's breathtaking. The room is filled with models, pictures, blueprints of flying machines, bird diagrams, feathers, pictures of a young Mr. M wearing a large set of wings, and in the middle of the room, rests a large model of a pair of wings, fit for the human body.*

*Victor looks down. Mr. M is in his wheelchair, Victor snaps out of his daze.*

VICTOR

*What is all this?*

*Mr. M takes a look around, then back at Victor.*

MR. M

*My life.*

INT. MR. M'S APARTMENT-NIGHT

*Victor and Mr. M sit in the living room, drinking hot tea.*

*MR. M*

*As far back as I can remember, all I really wanted to do is fly. Clouds all around, sun in my face. Weightless, careless. At some point I wanted to be a pilot, but that wasn't for me. I needed wings. Flying was a child's fantasy and trying to make it real is what got me this wheelchair.*

*Victor leans forward, and listens intently.*

*INT. YOUNG MR. M'S ROOM- DAY (FLASHBACK)*

*We see young Mr. M constructing a set of wings, measuring, cutting, gluing. The room around him looks very similar to the secret room. Mr. M's voice is audible over picture.*

*MR. M(V.O.)*

*(takes a breath)*

*I must have been seventeen; I was working on a set of wings for some time. Studying the birds as they fly, learning their every move. Trying, failing, trying again. That evening would have been my last try. If I were not to succeed I would accept my disability and remain "among" the walking.*

*Young Mr. M is on a top of a cliff now. His wings on him, he stare down, takes the last breath of courage... and – he jumps down.*

*MR. M(V.O.)*

*The wings were perfect! For a moment there, I was flying, really flying.*

*INT. MR. M'S APARTMENT- CONTINUE*

*Tears of joy fill Mr. M's eyes. Then suddenly he turns serious, he looks back at them.*

*MR. M*

*It was a very short moment.*

*EXT. YOUNG MR. M AT CLIFF- EVENING (FLASHBACK)*

*Young Mr. M is lying at the bottom of the cliff, motionless. The wings shattered all around him, a look of defeat plastered on his face.*

*INT. MR. M'S APARTMENT- CONTINUE*

*Victor shrinks in identifying pain.*

*MR. M*

*I'll never regret that evening. I dedicated my entire life, and top dollar, into designing the pair of wings that would do the job, and now, finally it is accomplished. I just got a fax from the team in Germany.*

*VICTOR*

*What are you saying?*

*MR. M*

*I have a dream to fulfill and I'm not getting younger.*

*VICTOR*

*Are those wings tested?*

*MR. M*

*Oh, yes.*

*VICTOR*

*Where exactly are you going to do this?*

*Mr. M points up, to the roof.*

*He follows his pointing finger to the ceiling. Then he looks back to Mr. M.*

*Mr. M smiles like a child who had just revealed a secret.*

*INT. ZACK & DEREK'S VAN- NIGHT*

*Victor is once again sited in between Zack & Derek. This time there is no music in the background.*

*The three are silent.*

*DEREK*

*And then?*

*Victor uses his hands to simulate two wings flapping. The same motion Mr. M has so often used.*

*Zack takes a long drag from his cigarette.*

ZACK

*Wow. That explains a lot.*

EXT. ROOF TOP - DAY

*Mr. M views the landscape of the city. The light winds on his face, he smiles and takes a deep breath of air.*

INT. MR. M'S APARTMENT- DAY

*Zack puts the last touches of paint on the wall. He stops, take his oxygen mask off.*

*He slowly steps to the back on the room, where Derek stands smoking a cigarette.*

*They both look at their finished work in silence.*

DEREK

*It's beautiful.*

*Derek takes a drag from his cigarette, and hands it to Zack who does the same.*

*The intercom buzzes on the side of the wall.*

INTERCOM

*Package for a Mr. M.*

*Derek and Zack look at each other, then to the table full of fruit.*

EXT. VICTOR'S OFFICE- DAY

*Although the line of people thinned out, there are still quit a few waiting to relive themselves. Inside the office Charlie's head is peeking above the line. Victor hurries to turn away to avoid him... it's too late.*

CHARLIE

*Victor? Victor!?*

*Charlie hurries up to chase Victor. He catches up with him. They walk and talk.*

CHARLIE

*Gerald says you will show me around the building.*

VICTOR

*All you need to know is this floor.*

CHARLIE

*Okay... well, how about this floor then?*

*Victor stops by the elevator and calls it. He turns to look at Charlie, then turns to the office, pointing around the room.*

VICTOR

*Cubicles, cubicles, cooler, coffee, cubicles and... Well, you know where the bathrooms are.*

*Charlie chuckles.*

VICTOR

*Have you seen Eve?*

CHARLIE

*Eve?*

VICTOR

*The plumber girl?*

CHARLIE

*Well, which is she? A plum or a girl?*

*Victor stares at him, stone faced. Charlie is a bit uncomfortable but keeps his smile on. The elevator "pings".*

*Victor hurries up to the elevator. Charlie looks around then follows him in.*

*INT. ELEVATOR- CONTINUE*

*They both stand in silence.*

CHARLIE

*So, where to?*

VICTOR

*I'm looking for someone.*

CHARLIE

*Eve.*

VICTOR

*That's right.*

*They fall silent again.*

INT. PIPE ROOM- CONTINUE

*The two walk into the room. It is slightly different from what we have seen before, louder, some of the pipes rattle and drip.*

CHARLIE

*Oh my. This is... this is something, this is really something. What is it?*

VICTOR

*Eve? Eve?*

CHARLIE

*Are these supposed to gyrate and clank like this?*

*No answer. The pipe room is empty.*

INT. MR. M's APARTMENT-LATER

*Bulky crates fill the apartment's floor. Derek and Zack remove the diagram of the wings from the smallest crate, and look it over. Also inside is a videotape, marked with German writing.*

*Mr. M wheels up to them, and stops. No words are said. Mr. M's eyes drift to the mural. A smile forms on his face.*

MR. M

*Boys, you do gorgeous work.*

*Mr. M looks at the pile of boxes lining the room.*

MR. M

*I was wondering if you can assemble these wings, and once their finished... help me...*

*Zack and Derek look at the diagram, then at Mr. M.*

DEREK

*Fly.*



**MR. M**

*I'll double your fee.*

*Zack and Derek stand for a moment. Zack takes a drag from his cigarette.*

**ZACK**

*An 85 year old man asks us to help him build a pair of wings, put them on him, and push him off a sixteen story building so he can fly; I don't call that a job, I call that a favor.*

*Mr. M looks at them and chuckles.*

**EXT. BUILDING – NIGHT**

*Zack, Derek and Victor exit building after this long day. As they walk to their van, Victor notices Eve's vehicle parked not far away.*

*Eve is rummaging around for something in the back.*

*Victor stops when he sees her. Derek notices.*

**DEREK**

*Vic?*

**VICTOR**

*You guys go ahead, Derek.*

**DEREK**

*You sure?*

*Derek notices Eve's car.*

**DEREK**

*Say no more bud, say no more.*

*He and Zack climb in the van and drive away. Victor begins to walk towards Eve's van. She is unloading equipment from the back.*

**VICTOR**

*Hey.*

*Eve does not answer; she is busy fixing her tools.*

VICTOR

*I was looking for you all day, there is a lot of stuff happening, stuff I'd like to tell you... Eve?*

*Eve aggressively shuts the van's door, closing them in a loud bang.*

VICTOR

*What's wrong?*

EVE

*Nothing's wrong, I just have a lot to do in there, I'm busy.*

*Victor looks at his watch.*

VICTOR

*Now? It's ten thirty.*

*Eve keeps walking into the building. Victor starts walking after her. Eve notices and turns around.*

EVE

*Victor, I have a lot to do in there. I don't want to be rude but in order for me to really do my job I need to be alone. Do you understand?*

VICTOR

*Yeah, it's just, you look--*

EVE

*Alone, Victor!*

*Victor pipes down. He nods and watches her disappear into the dark building.*

*INT. MR. M APARTMENT- NIGHT*

*Mr. M sits alone in front of the wall of crates, the mural behind him. He appears reflective, somewhat uncertain. He turns around and leaves the living room.*

*INT. VICTOR'S APARTMENT- NIGHT*

*Victor lies in bed, staring at the ceiling.*

*INT. OFFICE BATHROOM- SAME*

*Eve is slaving away, working on some leaking pipes.*

**INT. OFFICE-DAY**

*Victor makes his way down the hall to his office. He stops dead in his tracks.*

*Charlie and Gerald are standing just outside of Gerald's office, and both look at Victor.*

*Victor approaches slowly; he knows this can only mean bad news.*

**GERALD**

*Well, good morning, Victor.*

*Charlie waves to Victor.*

**GERALD**

*Charlie here has been filling me in here on your orientation procedures, or should I say lack their of?*

**VICTOR**

*You know I couldn't work yesterday with the constant stream of people in my office--*

**GERALD**

*Well, there won't be any excuses today. Your little friend the plumber seems to have solved some of the problems on the other floors. You're not on vacation yet, Victor.*

*Victor holds up four fingers.*

**VICTOR**

*Four more days.*

*Gerald stares hard at Victor, making sure that he has the one up.*

**GERALD**

*Do your job.*

**INT. VICTOR'S OFFICE-DAY**

*Victor sits at his desk, staring blankly at it.*

*Charlie is standing over the desk, a certain nervous air surrounds him.*

CHARLIE

*I didn't mean to cause--*

VICTOR

*Charlie.*

*Charlie pauses, watching Victor who is still staring at his desk.*

CHARLIE

*Yes?*

VICTOR

*You want to know about the job, Charlie?*

*Victor stands up, and moves around the desk.*

VICTOR

*Have a seat.*

*Charlie nods to Victor, and sits down at Victor's desk.*

VICTOR

*...You're a nice guy, Charlie. People are going to like you. You fit in here. You're ambitious, you've got a good head on your shoulders, and you're a hard worker.*

*Charlie smiles, pleased that he's made such a good impression.*

*Victor begins to pace back and forth in front of him at the desk.*

VICTOR

*--Funny, too. Plum or girl? I got it. That was funny. But those jokes are going to disappear, Charlie. After awhile, that nice guy persona is going to stay just that. A persona. Six months from now you're not going to be a real person when you step off that elevator; you're going to be a machine. A mindless robot that does what it's told to do because it's easier than standing up for yourself. You might one day work up the courage to mention to someone higher up that you're not really happy with your current situation. They'll make some calls, and before you know it you'll have an employee of the month trophy with your name on it. I know mine's in a special place. You may even get a raise. And those paychecks will be rolling in; you'll be doing fine in that category. You'll buy a house, a nice car with that*

*Christmas bonus, a couple new suits, the whole works. Enough material things to cover up that decaying hole that I like to call a conscience.*

*Charlie is speechless. He's sitting in the desk, but his jaw is inches off the floor.*

VICTOR

*That's my job, Charlie. No, wait, that's your job.*

*Charlie swallows his spit.*

INT. MR. M'S APARTMENT- NIGHT

*Victor, Zack and Derek are all busy constructing pieces of wings, metal bars and screws. They are placing them on the living-room floor.*

*Mr. M is watching them from a distance, working out, not active in what is likely to be an eventful day for him.*

VICTOR

*So, this is it? You're going through with it.*

DEREK

*(loud to Mr. M.)*

*So, Mr. M, when is the big day? You have a date plan?*

MR. M

*Date?*

ZACK

*Yeah, the big take off.*

MR. M

*No dates. Soon, real soon.*

*He wheels himself to a different room. Victor sees this. He follows after him.*

INT. ROOM- CONTINUE

*Victor softly knocks on the open door. He walks in slowly to the low-lit room.*

VICTOR

*Are you all right?*

MR. M

*Fine, Victor, fine. Please, I just want to be alone for a while.*

VICTOR

*Should I ask everyone to leave?*

MR. M

*Would you? I'm sorry.*

VICTOR

*It's fine, don't worry about it, get some rest; we'll see you tomorrow.*

*Victor is concerned. He goes to speak but refrains and leaves the room slowly.*

*Mr. M watches him leave. He sits in silence for a moment. He opens a drawer on the desk near his bed. He takes out a letter, printed on a very fine piece of stationery.*

*He carefully folds the letter and places it in an envelope. He reaches in the drawer and pulls out a wax stamp, sealing the letter with an 'M'.*

INT. OFFICE-MORNING

*Charlie is sitting at Victor's desk, working on the computer. Victor is standing behind him, showing him the ropes.*

VICTOR

*Good. You would want to file that under new accounts, though.*

CHARLIE

*Right, sorry.*

VICTOR

*You're getting it.*

*Charlie and Victor look up from what they are doing to see Eve in the doorway.*

VICTOR

*Hi.*

EVE

*Hi. Am I interrupting?*

VICTOR

*No.*

*Eve enters the room, and stands in front of the desk.*

*EVE*

*Is there someplace we could talk for a second?*

*Victor looks at Charlie.*

*VICTOR*

*Will you be okay here for a few minutes?*

*Charlie flashes Victor a big smile.*

*CHARLIE*

*Take all the time you need.*

*EXT. ROOF-DAY*

*Eve and Victor are sitting on the roof, looking out over the city.*

*VICTOR*

*Thank you.*

*EVE*

*For what?*

*VICTOR*

*For removing the endless onslaught of restroom users from my office.*

*Eve and Victor chuckle slightly. A moment passes before either one of them speaks.*

*EVE*

*I have a tendency to be short with people when things aren't going my way.*

*VICTOR*

*Are things going your way now?*

*EVE*

*Things are being held in place now, nothing's solved yet. The calm before the storm.*

VICTOR

*It's not healthy, you know. You could just turn your back on it. This is a big undertaking. It's not your responsibility.*

EVE

*That's not the way I look at things.*

*Victor looks out at the horizon.*

VICTOR

*I'm leaving in two days.*

EVE

*Your paid vacation. And you're coming back?*

VICTOR

*What choice do I have?*

EVE

*Breach of contract?*

VICTOR

*It's not that simple.*

EVE

*It's not, is it?*

*Victor smiles, he doesn't take his eyes off her.*

EVE

*Well, how about this? The day you walk away, is the day that I walk away.*

*Victor and Eve look into each other's eyes, a shared moment.*

*INT. MR. M'S APT.- NIGHT*

*Mr. M is sitting in his chair facing the window. He is not exercising his hands.*

*Derek and Zack move behind him.*

DEREK

*Well, it's done. They're ready.*

*Mr. M says nothing. He does not even turn to face them.*



ZACK

Mr. M?

MR. M

Yes, Zack.

DEREK

You should take a look.

ZACK

They're really something.

MR. M

I bet they are.

*Zack and Derek sense something is wrong.*

DEREK

I bet you're pretty excited?

*Mr. M turns and starts to roll out of the room.*

MR. M

*You boys had a rough night; your kindness will not be overlooked, but, I'm afraid I'm just tired. Will you come back tomorrow?*

ZACK

Sure.

MR. M

Then we'll talk tomorrow.

*Zack and Derek look at each other, concerned for Mr. M.*

**INT. OFFICE LOBBY-DAY**

*Mr. M's sealed letter is being carefully led through the lobby. Into Madeline's hands, and she continues to place the letter in a small safe. The safe is then shut and locked.*

GERALD

*People, please, can I have your attention. This has been, to say the least, an eventful time for this accounting department here in M-Core.*

GERALD

*Tonight, stay in to celebrate the end of one era and the beginning of a new, better tomorrow. Drinks and refreshments will be provided. On behalf of the management and myself we hope to see you there.*

INT. MR. M'S APARTMENT- DAY

*Zack and Derek walk into the apartment, the curtains are drawn. Mr. M is sitting to the light of one desk lamp, the TV in front of him plays the German instructional video, the same lovely girl beaming and explaining all you need to know about building a set of human wings.*

ZACK

*Sir?*

*As Zack and Derek near where Mr. M is resting, they notice he is asleep with the remote control in his hand.*

*On the table, lie books and encyclopedias, open on historic crashes and laws of physics.*

*Mr. M wakes up slowly, he notices their presence.*

*Derek picks up a dictionary off the tables and reads.*

DEREK

*'Gravity-the pull on all bodies in the earth's sphere towards the earth's center.'*

MR. M

*Read the next one.*

*Derek hands the dictionary to Zack.*

ZACK

*'Gravy- the juice giving off by meet in cooking'*

MR. M

*No. The second definition to Gravity.*

MR. M & ZACK

*'Graveness, seriousness'.*

*Mr. M nods.*

*MR. M*

*Funny how now, after all I've done to make this happen, and being so close...*

*ZACK*

*It's all right to be afraid  
Mr. M. I am, and I'm not jumping.*

*While Zack is talking to Mr. M, Derek grabs one of the books from the table and starts reading intently.*

*MR. M*

*I'm not afraid of dying, I'm afraid of failing. These people further humanity, they made a name for them selves, they're a part of history. When I stood on that hill that day, I spread those poorly constructed wings and the thought crossed my mind: 'today, people are going to know who I am'. Now, I'm just a selfish old man who wants to fly. I don't care who knows it.*

*ZACK*

*What is it really about, for you?*

*MR. M*

*Keeping my word.*

*ZACK*

*Then it's not even about flying really... what did it use to be about.*

*MR. M*

*A need. Unexplainable passion.*

*ZACK*

*That's why we paint. If you told me that in a few years we'd be talking like you are now about our painting... that's sad.*

*MR. M*

*You're right.*

*Mr. M looks to the side where Derek is still reading his book.*

*MR. M*

*Derek, you've been awfully quite through out all this. What's on your mind?*

*Derek lifts his head up from the book.*

*DEREK*

*They keep referring to this gravity thing as a force.*

*MR. M laughs softly. Zack rolls his eyes.*

*MR. M*

*Well, it is.*

*DEREK*

*I don't know, to me it feels more like a limitation than a force.*

*ZACK*

*Derek...*

*MR. M*

*Go on.*

*DEREK*

*I mean, these people knew they would fall, they only hoped they could fly. So don't hope- know.*

*Mr. M's face softens, a breeze of hope brushes through him.*

*Derek looks at Zack, they both look at Mr. M.*

*Mr. M's face now shines with joy.*

*MR. M*

*We find wisdom in the most unlikely of circumstances.*

*INT. OFFICE - NIGHT*

*Victor takes his briefcase, he goes to exit the office.*

*The Janitor sticks his head in the doorway. Victor stops.*

**JANITOR**

*I have something here...I found this; I believe it's yours.*

*The Janitor unfolds a dirty piece of paper from his pocket and hands it to Victor.*

*Victor looks at the paper to realize it is his Resignation letter that fell down the shaft.*

**VICTOR**

*Where did you..?*

**JANITOR**

*I was fixing a squeak in one of the elevator chords, stumbled on this letter.*

*Victor starts stacking all the paper work on his desk, not sure what to say. The Janitor is on his way out as he turns to Victor.*

**JANITOR**

*I took the liberty and gave it a once over. It's a good letter, Victor. It's clear, to the point.*

**VICTOR**

*So I've heard...*

**JANITOR**

*If you don't mind me asking, why are you still here?*

**VICTOR**

*I don't want to leave loose ends behind.*

**JANITOR**

*You know, I've worked in this building for 37 years, fixed many things. I find that sometimes, you have to make a mess of things, before you can build them back up again.*

*Victor takes it in.*

*The Janitor glances over at the urinals.*

JANITOR

*It was beginning to get a little rank in here, so I scattered some air fresheners.*

*The Janitor smiles and walks out of the office.*

INT. LOBBY- NIGHT.

*In the lobby, there is a small gathering of the office workers, welcoming young Charlie to the firm.*

*People are drinking punch, eating cake. A small group has gathered around Charlie. Gerald stands up on a desk. He looks like he may have had a bit too much from the punchbowl.*

GERALD

*Everybody. I want to thank you all for staying late to welcome the newest asset to our company. His name is Charlie, and he's a damn good kid and I know he's going to fit like a glove on this hand we call M-Core.*

*The crowd sighs and a few people applaud.*

*Victor comes out of his office, holding the box of his belongings, and tries to sneak by without being noticed.*

*Just as he is about to break free, Gerald makes eye contact with him.*

GERALD

*Well, well, well. Look who's trying to sneak out without saying goodbye. Victor! Vic! Vicki baby!*

*All eyes turn to Victor. He's just a deer caught in the headlights.*

GERALD

*...Five years he's worked for us. He's going on vacation, and when he comes back, he's going to be working on another floor. But I caught him trying to sneak out the back door! Not going to stay and welcome your replacement? The person you picked to fill your position?*

*Charlie caught up in all the attention being put on him, gives Victor a thumbs up and mouths the words "thank you."*

VICTOR

*I just...*

GERALD

*We know, Victor. You just want to quit. But you can't, now can you? You've got a contract. And M-Core contracts are impossible to break! You know, Charlie, when Victor came to work for us, he was a hardworking devoted employee, much like yourself.*

*Victor slowly moves over to the punch bowl. He turns and looks back at Gerald coldly. He starts to drink cup after cup of punch.*

GERALD

*He just couldn't stomach it anymore. The work just wore him down. It's a shame, really. He must think that he'll be able to land a better job than this one. A job that pays better, a job with people that are better than the family we've got here, on this floor. Accept it, Victor. You're one of us!*

*Victor finishes his last cup of punch. He spins around, looks at the faces in the crowd, then at Gerald.*

*A faint, mischievous smile appears on his face. He turns and heads back down the hall.*

*Gerald and the crowd watch him walk into Gerald's office. The crowd pauses for a second taking this in, then follow Gerald, as he leads them down the hall.*

*As they approach the open office door, a sound of trickling water is audible.*

*Gerald, a look of falsely composed concern on his face, moves in to the office doorway. He stops dead in his tracks. A few women behind him gasp.*

*In the corner of the office, back to the door, Victor stands over Gerald's precious plant, relieving himself.*

*Gerald is speechless. He is unable to mouth a word.*

*Victor zips up and turns to him*

VICTOR

*I quit.*

*For the first time, Victor looks quite content. He exits the office, the crowd parts for him as he walks victorious through them.*

EXT. ROOF – NIGHT

*Mr. M sits on the roof, staring out over the city. He is wearing a jump suit that seems to be equipped with food and various necessities.*

*Zack and Derek are at the last stages of applying the wings on Mr. M's shoulders.*

*Victor runs up to them, he leans over to Mr. M and speaks softly.*

MR. M

*What a beautiful night to fly?*

VICTOR

*I'm trying to do the right thing here.*

MR. M

*The right thing?*

VICTOR

*I'm concerned for you.*

MR. M

*That's nice.*

VICTOR

*How can you be so calm about this, so composed?*

MR. M

*Oh, but I'm not, Victor. I'm scared shitless.*

VICTOR

*You don't have to go through with this; you don't have to prove anything.*



MR. M

*This is not about proof--  
I've only found that talking about it--*

*Mr. M puts a set of old W.W.II goggles on his eyes.*

MR. M

*--Takes out all the fun.*

VICTOR

*So what do we do?*

MR. M

*We let it play.*

*Victor looks hard into Mr. M's face. A smile slowly spreads across it. Mr. M turns away and looks back out at the night skyline.*

*Victor gets up to leave.*

MR. M

*Where are you going?*

VICTOR

*There is someone else that needs to see  
this.*

MR. M

*Oh?*

VICTOR

*Can you wait?*

MR. M

*I've waited 50 years for this. I'll give you  
five minutes.*

*Victor runs to climb down the roof.*

*Right before he disappears down the stairs, he turns back to look at Mr. M.*

*Mr. M, now in full gear, spreads his wings wide and flaps them slowly to the  
amazement of Zack and Derek.*

*Victor is overcome with emotion. The pipes on the roof begin to shake slightly.*

*INT. ELEVATOR- SAME*

*Victor is riding in the elevator as it descends. The elevator begins to shake, first slowly, then more rapidly. The lights begin to flicker, and then they turn off.*

*Victor presses the emergency door open button, and pushes the doors open.*

**INT. FLOOR-NIGHT**

*The elevator has stopped mid floor. Victor lifts himself out of the elevator and onto the carpet floor. The ground is wet. Victor feels a steady stream of water falling from above.*

*He looks up. A pipe above his head is shaking violently. Suddenly it explodes sending water everywhere.*

*Victor stands up and heads for the stairs as more pipes from the ceiling explode and a geyser of raining water fills the room.*

**109.INT. GERALD'S OFFICE-NIGHT**

*Gerald is huddled over his plant; Madeline, Charlie and a few other colleagues are by his side. He has a pair of rubber gloves on, and is removing the dirt from his precious plant.*

**GERALD**

*Water. I need fresh water.*

*The group stares at him. Gerald flies into a rage.*

**GERALD**

*Fresh water!!!! Can somebody get me some fresh god damn—*

*Before he can say the words H2O, the pipe above his head explodes covering the room in water.*

**EXT. ROOF-NIGHT**

*Mr. M looks towards the night skies. He begins to wheel himself closer to the roof's ledge.*

**INT. PIPE ROOM-NIGHT**

*The door to the stairway swings open as Victor rushes in. Pipes are bursting everywhere in this room full of them.*

*Victor rushes in, braving the onslaught of water.*

VICTOR

*Eve! Eve!*

*In the middle of the room, he finds her, standing soaking wet in the middle of the room, staring at the large central pipe, which is on the verge of destruction.*

*She turns to see Victor. Victor stops. The two face each other, soaked to the bone.*

VICTOR

*I did it, Eve. Breached the contract. I quit.*

EVE

*You did?*

VICTOR

*I'm not coming back. I quit my job.*

*Eve stands in the mayhem that was once the pipe room.*

EVE

*I'm thinking strongly about doing that myself...*

*They look into each other's eyes. Both of them rush to each other and engage in a long passionate kiss, just as the central pipe bursts pouring large amounts of water into the room.*

*EXT. ROOF-NIGHT*

*The back wheels of Mr. M's wheelchair fall back on the roof empty.*

*EXT. ROOF- NIGHT*

*Victor and Eve reach the roof. They stop to a halt as they notice the empty wheel chair at the edge of the roof. Zack and Derek just stand there looking to the sky.*

*Victor and Eve slowly approach them.*

VICTOR

*We're too late.*

*There is a moment of silence.*

ZACK

*Not really.*

*Out of the dark of night, just above the group, Mr. M wheezes by swiftly throwing a rush of wind on all. They watch him as he flies by, hollering in joy.*

*EXT. MR. M FLIGHT- SAME*

*We are flying with Mr. M.*

*Just as he dreamed, wind in his face, messing his hair up, a wide grin on his face as he looks at the city below.*

*Mr. M is flapping his wings through the light clouds on this dark night, changing directions, happy beyond description.*

*EXT. ROOF- SAME*

*Victor, Eve, Zack and Derek are looking at Mr. M as he disappears off into the night sky. The four watch and stand in silence for a few moments, not sure what to say or do.*

*Zack takes out a letter from his pocket. He turns to Victor.*

**ZACK**

*Victor, he wanted you to have this.*

**VICTOR**

*What is it?*

**ZACK**

*I don't know, it's for you. We got one too.*

*Victor takes the letter; he looks at it then puts it in his Jacket's pocket.*

**EVE**

*Aren't you going to read it?*

**VICTOR**

*Yeah, I'll find the time.*

*Zack and Derek starch themselves a bit.*

**ZACK**

*Well... this was an eventful evening, and it's way pass our bedtime, so...*

**VICTOR**

*So...*

**DEREK**

*Well, we're still neighbors, don't be strangers.*

*The four looks at each other, embarrassed. They go to shake hands, Victor with Derek, Eve with Zack, the handshakes soon become loving embraces. Then the four slowly walk together to leave the building, silent.*

*EXT. BUILDING- DAY*

*The plumbing van is parked out side the office building. Victor leans on the van, Mr. M's letter in hand. He opens it and starts reading.*

*MR. M (V.O.)*

*Victor, the past few weeks in your company have helped me come to some important realizations, and some inevitable decisions. When the committee opens that in the morning, your name will be on it. The building is yours, Victor. The business is yours. You may do with it as you please. I'll be watching-- Yours, Maynard.*

*Victor smiles warmly. As he finishes reading, Eve joins him from the building.*

*VICTOR*

*Got all you need?*

*EVE*

*Yep. I guess that's it.*

*They stand there, looking at each other.*

*Eve gives him a "Lets go" nod. The two of them climb into the van.*

*VICTOR*

*What if you had more time?*

*EVE*

*Time?*

*VICTOR*

*Yeah. Time.*

*(breath)*

*I was thinking... what if you owned the building, what if it was yours.*

*Victor takes out the paper work in the envelope. Eve's face lights up with a smile. She starts the engine.*

*EVE*

*So what happens now?*

*VICTOR*

*I don't know.*

*He waves the letter.*

*VICTOR*

*We got time.*

*And they drive away, merging with the morning traffic.*

*As they go farther into the horizon we start moving up, to the building tops. There, on one of the building's corners we spot a figure, resting, as we move closer we can tell it is Mr. M.*

*His wings still on him he sits at the building's corner, eating a sandwich, watching the city wake up with a smile of joy and calm on his face.*

*THE END.*