

FADE IN:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

People are sat at desks typing at computers and speaking on telephones. IT is a typical office with a quite background murmur or voices and keyboards.

STEVE is sat at his desk typing up a report. The desk is neat and tidy with a small pot plant on it. His GEOFF comes over to his desk as he types.

GEOFF

Steve. How are you?

STEVE

I'm OK thanks Geoff.

GEOFF

Great. Have you finished off the Finnigan Report?

STEVE

I'm just about to finish it now. (Steve hits the return key and turns his attention to GEOFF)

GEOFF

Great. Walk with me.

GEOFF sets off without waiting for a response from STEVE. STEVE looks confused and is not sure whether to leave his desk but he gets up and follows GEOFF trying to keep up with him.

GEOFF

You're a good worker Steve and I like you a lot. You're the kind of guy that gets the job done when he's asked to do. The Finnigan Report for example. I ask you whether it's done and by god it is.

GEOFF is striding confidently round the office, around desks and past people as if they weren't there. STEVE has a hard time trying to keep up, knocking into people and objects.

GEOFF

You're dependable and reliable, your work is consistently at a level that makes you the kind of employee a Manager such as myself dreams of. Good enough to take the credit for if it's good but not at the kind of standard where you'll get noticed by the brass and take my job. I like that. If I had a choice all of our employees would be like you.

GEOFF strides into an elevator and STEVE shambles in behind him, narrowly getting through the doors before they shut.

GEOFF

But it's not. We've hit a rough patch here recently, fewer clients and less money coming in. Apparently it's all to do with this recession. I can't say I know what it's all about as for the first 6 months I thought it was a running joke about the MD's hair line. However, I do know that it is bad for business and our profit margins are lower than an Essex girls knickers.

The elevator door opens with a 'ping' and GEOFF strides out with STEVE looking bemused in tow. They are walking through the building's atrium.

GEOFF

So I've been assigned the task of cutting away a few loose elements that the big man upstairs has deemed surplus to requirements. Now I can tell you that the man upstairs has noticed you and that he likes the cut of your jib, that he's noticed like me that you're a grafter and a man with a hard work ethic. He'd like you to stay because you are an invaluable member of the company and with a couple more years

GEOFF (CONT'D)

under your belt you could be in the management hierarchy battling it out for a position on the board with me. I can tell you that Steve, but it would be a lie. In fact he hadn't even heard of your name until he randomly picked it out of a hat.

OFFICE WORKER walks up to STEVE and hands him a box. The pot plant that was on his desk is sticking out of the top. GEOFF pushes STEVE through the front door of the building so that they are both standing outside.

GEOFF

It is therefore with great regret that I have to inform you that we are letting you go.

STEVE

What?

GEOFF

Good luck with everything.

GEOFF puts out his hand to shake STEVE'S but he is holding the box so GEOFF just shakes STEVE'S little finger.

STEVE

But i...

GEOFF

That's the spirit. Chin up. And don't try to get back in as we will have locked the door.

GEOFF walks back inside and locks the door behind him. STEVE stands outside the building looking shocked and confused.

EXT. JOB CENTRE - DAY

STEVE is stood outside looking at it. He looks determined. He walks up to the building and through the door.

INT. JOB CENTRE - DAY

STEVE is looking at jobs and speaking to an advisor. There are numerous promotional and inspirational job related posters and leaflets on the walls. STEVE prints off a number of job applications. He enquires about jobs on the telephone.

INT. STEVE'S FLAT - DAY

MONTAGE

He is writing up CVs and application forms and putting them into envelopes. Bills are put through his letter box. He opens the bills and reads them. He goes back to writing applications and posting them. He gets letters through the door asking him to attend interviews as well as more bills. He dresses in a suit. He sits across from a number of interviewers.

INTERVIEWER 1

We'll get back to you tomorrow and let you know how you've done.

INTERVIEWER 2

We've still got a lot of applicants to get through, so hopefully we can give you an answer by the end of the week.

INTERVIEWER 3

Although we think you're the best person we have interviewed we are going to keep looking.

INTERVIEWER 4

I'm very sorry but you're just not what we are looking for right now.

INTERVIEWER 5

Don't call us, we'll call you.

STEVE looks more dejected after each rejection. He prints off more applications from the job centre. He puts more

applications in the post-box. He looks at job finder websites. Slogans flash up on screen "Find your dream job", "Get a job today!", "We will find you the job you deserve". He enters in the details sections on websites that he is looking for any position and salary, it doesn't seem to matter what he does as long as he has a job.

More bill reminders are posted through the letterbox. He doesn't even look at them just throws them on a pile.

INTERVIEWER 6

Better luck next time.

INTERVIEWER 7

Sorry.

INTERVIEWER 8

No.

INTERVIEWER 9

No.

INTERVIEWER 10

No.

EXT. THE JOB CENTRE – DAY

It is a busy day outside, cars drive past.

INT. JOB CENTRE – DAY

DAWN is sat on a swivel chair in a small office, barely big enough to fit a single person in. It has a desk and a computer on the back wall that she faces. There is a small window in the sidewall and an empty chair in the middle of the room. There is a knock at the door. DAWN does not turn around before answering.

DAWN

Enter.

STEVE walks through the door and shuts it. He stands next to it. DAWN still does not turn around.

DAWN

Take a seat. Be with you in a minute.

STEVE sits down in the chair. He is very close to the back of DAWN'S Chair. DAWN swivels round to face STEVE, their knees almost touching.

DAWN

Right then, it's 11.15 so you must be Mr Steven Redding.

STEVE

It's actually just Steve not Steven.

DAWN

Steve? S-T-E-V-E? No N.

STEVE

Yes that's right.

DAWN

My computer told me to expect a Mr Steven Redding, not a Steve Redding. Are you sure that you're supposed to be here?

STEVE

Yes. I think that it's just an error on your part. I've informed people before that it's Steve and not Steven but no one seems to have changed it.

DAWN

Is that so?

STEVE

Yes

DAWN

I don't know if you have noticed Mr Redding but this is the Job Centre. A government funded organisation. We have data on just about every individual in the country. Are you quite sure that this error was on 'my' part and not that of yourself.

STEVE

Well I...

DAWN

Are you quite sure that you did not mindlessly miss spell you own name when you came in here to claim benefits from hard working individuals with jobs. Maybe you miss spelled your name on purpose in some kind of benefits scam.

STEVE

No, not at all.

DAWN stares at STEVE in silence.

DAWN

Well 'm sure you now why you are here Mr Redding. You have been claiming benefits for the last 6 months without successfully finding a job. You are being paid a generous allowance by the government in order for you sit around watching Deal or No Deal in your dressing gown while drinking cups of tea are you not?

STEVE

No I don't think that's right...

DAWN

No it isn't right. You are claiming job seekers allowance. The final outcome being that you get a job. And

DAWN (CONT'D)

I have to say that it does not take many people longer than 6 months to find themselves gainful employment. Do you know what happens when it takes someone more than 6 months to find themselves employment and we do not think that they have been looking?

STEVE

No I don't.

DAWN

We stop their benefits. No more money for your teabags and Sky TV package.

STEVE

I don't have Sky TV.

DAWN

And you won't do either Mr Redding. Unless you get a job within the next week you can say goodbye to jobseekers allowance.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

STEVE is in his dressing gown making a cup of tea. On the kettle is a post-it note "Interview at 2". He puts the kettle on and goes to the fridge to take out the milk. On the fridge door another post-it note reads, "You can do it!" As he picks up his cup of tea he can hear the telephone begin to ring. He runs towards the telephone still holding onto his cup, he spills some of the tea on the floor.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The television is on and Deal or No Deal is going to adverts in the background. As STEVE gets closer to the telephone it is picked up by the answering machine.

PHONE VOICE

Hello Mr Redding this is Jackie calling from Sainsbury's. I'm very sorry to inform you that following your interview we have decided that you are not suitable for the position of trolley collector. We hope this will not put you off shopping with us. Thank you.

As the message ends STEVE sits down and begins to cry. As he cries a voice from one of the adverts speaks out to him.

GUY SLICK

Are you out of a job? Can't find one anywhere, no matter how hard you try? Do you feel like a big fat, disgustingly ugly failure because you have been rejected more times than a tramp begging for change?

STEVE looks up at the television to watch the advert. GUY SLICK is stood in front of a plain background staring into the camera.

GUY SLICK

Bills piling up on your doormat? Sat on your sofa watching daytime television in your dressing gown because you have nothing else to do with your worthless time? One more rejection away from ending it all under a train or at the end of a noose? Are you so desperate for work that you are willing to do anything to get a job? Anything?

If this is you, then we might be able to help. So call 34255 345346 now. If you're not prepared to give it this last roll of the dice however, then maybe you should just gas yourself you incredible piece of excrement.

The advert ends with a close up of a gas cooker and the telephone number comes up on the screen. STEVE quickly dials the number from the television screen into the telephone. He dries his eyes while it rings.

OPERATOR

Hello. Please can I take your name.

STEVE

Steve Redding.

OPERATOR

OK Mr Redding. Are you really willing to do anything for a job? Anything?

STEVE

Yes. I'm desperate

OPERATOR

Excellent. Be at 130 Westchester Avenue tomorrow at 10.00 sharp for a short interview. If you are late you will not be allowed entry.

STEVE

What is it that you do?

OPERATOR

Remember. 130 Westchester Avenue at 10.00. Sharp.

The line goes dead. Steve sits in silence as the television plays in the background.

EXT. 130 WESTCHESTER AVENUE - DAY

The building is run down and derelict looking. A single door is set in a blank wall with no windows.

STEVE'S watch shows the time as being 09.59. He is stood outside the door of the building. He looks around as if he is unsure as to whether he is in the right place. He knocks on the door but there is no answer. He stands and waits. He

checks his watch again. The hands turn to 10.00. The door to the building is opened by a MAN who says nothing; he just waits for STEVE to enter. When STEVE walks through the door the MAN shuts it again.

INT. OFFICE CORRIDOR - DAY

STEVE follows the MAN down a dark corridor. There is no natural light in the corridor. They pass closed windowless doors as they walk. Finally they come to the end of the corridor where they are faced by a door. The MAN motions STEVE to enter, which he does.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Through the door there is a dank looking room lit by a single light bulb which hangs from the ceiling. The light is above a solitary table, in front of which is an empty chair. GUY SLICK is sat in shadow at the other side of the table.

GUY SLICK

Please, take a seat Mr Redding.

STEVE sits down in the chair and pulls it up to the table. It makes a high pitched screeching noise.

GUY SLICK

So you need a job and you have come to me to fix it and make it all better for you?

STEVE

It's quite like...

GUY SLICK

Don't talk. This will be much quicker and I'd rather not have to look at your face for longer than I have to.

STEVE

OK.

GUY stares at STEVE in silence with a disapproving look that makes STEVE look away apologetically until GUY continues.

GUY SLICK

This is an interview of sorts. I want to know if you are the kind of person who is able to undertake the work that I have on offer. Now you look pathetic enough and only a loser would be watching television at the time that my advert aired, let alone be desperate enough to call me after the condescending dialogue I spat out. I mean who would want to work for an obnoxious prick like that eh?

STEVE sits in silence. He does not speak he just looks at GUY with sad eyes. GUY looks back at STEVE and smiles slightly. He wets his finger in his mouth and puts it into STEVE'S ear. STEVE flinches slightly but does not pull away as GUY wiggles his finger around a bit and pulls it out. He cleans it on a handkerchief from his pocket.

GUY SLICK

Excellent. You are just what I'm looking for. A man on the edge and willing to put up with anything. I am going to offer you a job STEVE. It is a run of the mill office job, you will be expected to write meaningless reports, photocopy documents beyond your comprehension and generally be sat at a desk for 8 hours a day doing work for my company. You will be paid minimum wage and thus be able to continue your current existence. Does that sound good Mr Redding?

STEVE still does not speak he just nods, not knowing whether to be grateful or suspicious.

GUY SLICK

Now lets not start slapping each other on the back and shaking hands just yet. You see, you will have to complete a

GUY SLICK (CONT'D)

little task for me first. If you do not want to do it you will not get the job and we will deny you were ever here. Do you understand?

STEVE nods.

GUY SLICK

Good.

GUY SLICK slides a photograph over the table towards STEVE. It is a picture of a man that looks like it was taken at a distance with a telephoto lens.

GUY SLICK

This is a picture of ROBERT DUDDRIDGE. He is a wealthy man and a personal business rival. At the moment his company has taken a number of my clients at great expense to myself. Needless to say this has had a detrimental effect on my accounts and also my reputation. Although his company is doing well and has started to expand, it is all down to Mr Duddridge. He is very intelligent and runs his company almost single handedly, much like myself. What his company does is of no concern to you, as is what my own company does. What I need from you Mr Redding, for this job and to get your life back on track, is to kill Mr Duddridge.

STEVE

What?

GUY SLICK

I have asked you not to speak. Do not make me ask again or this conversation is over and you will be expelled from the premises. No job, no money, no anything.

GUY SLICK (CONT'D)

Now of course you may be a little dubious whether I am serious about my proposal, but I can assure you I am. You kill that man and I will employ you. I don't care how you do it; I just want you to do it. And don't think about walking out of here and going to the police. They would never believe a man whom I will say was rejected from a job interview and obviously wanted some form of revenge by sullyng my reputation with wild accusations. After all I am an upstanding member of the community and you are one step away from being a bum. They would laugh you out of the station and I may even press charges against you for slander and have you locked up. In either case I don't lose. In only one case you will win.

GUY SLICK leans forward.

GUY SLICK

So Mr Redding. What's it going to be?

STEVE is staring straight forward not knowing what to do.

INT. OFFICE COPY ROOM - DAY

STEVE is staring straight forward. A photocopier is heard in the background and STEVE is stood in front of it. The machine finishes copying the documents. STEVE picks them up and leaves the room.

FADE OUT: