

STUCK

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INT-OFFICE BUILDING-DAY

A man and a woman wait for an elevator in the lobby of an office building. It is raining outside, and they are both carrying umbrellas. The man's name is JOHN, and the woman's name is CHRISTINE.

The elevator arrives. John and Christine board. John presses a number on the number pad.

JOHN:  
Where you headed?

CHRISTINE:  
Sixteen

John presses a second button the pad. The elevator doors shut.

INT-ELEVATOR-CONTINUOUS

The two characters stand in silence as they ride to their floors. Suddenly, the elevator shutters, the lights flicker and go out. A moment later the emergency lights come on.

CHRISTINE:  
(to herself)  
You have got to be kidding me.

JOHN:  
Let's hope that someone answers  
the intercom.

John presses the intercom button. A moment passes, and they a voice is heard.

VOICE:  
You alright in there?

JOHN:  
Yeah, we're alright, just  
wondering what happened. If you  
don't mind me asking; who is this?

VOICE:  
I'm Larry, building security. Who  
is this, and how many are there in  
the car?

JOHN:  
I'm John, there are two of us,  
can't you see us on camera?

LARRY:

That would be a negative, power to the entire building has gone out.

Christine motions to John to let her speak.

CHRISTINE:

How is it that the phones and the lights are working, but not the cameras?

LARRY:

Who's this?

Christine rolls her eyes.

CHRISTINE:

I'm Christine, the other passenger.

LARRY:

Well Christine, I'm a security guard, not an electrician, so I couldn't really explain why the elevators are wired the way they are. Apparently in these situations, the phones and lights work, but I'm completely blind down here. Cameras are dead.

JOHN:

Look, can you just give us an estimate of how much time it will take to get us moving?

LARRY:

I really wish I could buddy, but I'm at the mercy of the electric company. Just sit tight. I'll call you if I get anymore information.

The phone mic clicks, disconnecting Larry from John and Christine.

JOHN:

(sarcastically)

Awesome.

The two characters sit down on the floor of the car.

JOHN:

Where were you headed? I hope it wasn't anywhere important.

CHRISTINE:  
A presentation on how to make  
yourself more efficient in the  
workplace.

JOHN:  
Maybe it's not so bad that you're  
stuck here after all.

Christine smiles.

CHRISTINE:  
What about you?

JOHN:  
Just a meeting on the eighth  
floor. Probably be canceled now.

The two sit in silence for a few moments.

JOHN:  
Well this is certainly an  
interesting place to meet a  
person.

CHRISTINE:  
I'll say. Elevators aren't very  
conducive to having long  
conversations.

JOHN:  
This is true.

Pause.

JOHN:  
So tell me Christine, what do you  
think you'd do if you won the  
lottery?

CHRISTINE:  
What?

JOHN:  
If you ever won the lottery, what  
would you do with all that money?

CHRISTINE:  
I understood the question, I just  
don't understand why you want to  
know.

JOHN:

Well, we have time on our hands,  
and like you said, it's not every  
day you get to have more than a  
two minute conversation in the  
elevator.

Christine looks at John as if to say "are you seriously  
asking me this?"

JOHN:

(without  
looking at her)

I'm just trying to be good  
company.

Pause.

CHRISTINE:

Well, I suppose I'd give a lot of  
it to charity.

John chuckles.

CHRISTINE:

What? Do you have a better idea of  
a way to spend the money?--

JOHN:

Oh no, I think charity is a very  
noble thing to do, I just think  
it's bullshit that people give  
that as an answer.

Pause.

CHRISTINE:

If you're trying to be good  
company to me, you're not doing a  
very good job.

John smiles.

JOHN:

Oh I didn't mean anything by it.  
In fact, to some extent I agree  
with you. I'd give whatever I had  
left to charity.

CHRISTINE:

And what would you do with the  
money first?

Pause.

JOHN:  
You'll probably think it's stupid.

CHRISTINE:  
Well, try me.

JOHN:  
I'd invent something.

CHRISTINE:  
What would you invent?

JOHN:  
I don't know, a machine that would make it possible to do things over again.

CHRISTINE:  
So a time machine?

JOHN:  
Well, possibly. I don't know. Something that would make it possible to live life without regrets.

CHRISTINE:  
It's impossible to live life without regrets.

JOHN:  
Well, then maybe I would invent a potion that made people's brains focus on happy memories instead of hateful or sad ones.

CHRISTINE:  
You sound like a pessimist.

JOHN:  
That's what my therapist always says.

CHRISTINE:  
Sometimes I think I need a therapist. Do they actually make you feel better?

JOHN:  
My therapist would say that you only feel better if you make the decision to feel better. The only problem is that I make that decision everyday. And everyday I find out that feeling better is an  
(MORE)

JOHN: (CONT'D)  
ability that I haven't learned how  
to do yet.

John and Christine sit in silence for a few moments.

JOHN:  
Does it scare you?

CHRISTINE:  
What?

JOHN:  
Being stuck here with me?

CHRISTINE:  
Why would it scare me?

JOHN:  
Well, I've just admitted to you  
that I have a therapist. The  
thought of being stuck in such a  
tight space with someone who might  
be deemed "unstable" might scare  
some people.

CHRISTINE:  
You don't seem unstable, you seem  
wounded.

Pause.

JOHN:  
Yeah, my therapist says that too.

CHRISTINE:  
I didn't mean to offend you. If I  
did, I'm sorry--

JOHN:  
No, no you didn't. I just wish it  
wasn't so apparent all the time.  
I'm smart enough to know that  
depression hurts those around you.  
The thought of hurting anyone I  
come in to contact with  
is...frustrating. Not to mention  
it perpetuates the cycle.

CHRISTINE:  
The cycle of depression?

JOHN:

Yeah. I can hide it pretty well,  
around acquaintances. Around my  
family it gets harder.

CHRISTINE:

Do they pry for information on  
your feelings?

JOHN:

Mmmhmm, all the time. If I had a  
nickel for the number of times my  
family asked me why I was wearing  
a long sleeve shirt at the fourth  
of July, I wouldn't need to win  
the lottery.

CHRISTINE:

So you've done it before?

JOHN:

Done what--

CHRISTINE:

(with  
compassion)

John, please don't insult my  
intelligence. I can put two and  
two together. You wear long  
sleeves to cover the slits in you  
wrists from your suicide attempts.

JOHN:

Yes.

They sit in silence for a few moments.

CHRISTINE:

What does it feel like for you?

JOHN:

What does what feel like?

CHRISTINE:

Wanting to die.

JOHN:

Oh, it's much the way Hollywood  
would dramatize it. I feel like  
walls are closing in and that life  
is just too much to handle. That  
my regrets are just too great to  
overcome.

CHRISTINE:

Well, no I mean--. I meant, what does it feel like physically?

John looks at Christine quizzically.

JOHN:

You know, I've never had to describe the physical feeling before.

Pause.

JOHN:

It's two things really. It's a cross between weigh--

Just then, LARRY is heard over the intercom.

LARRY:

Hey, sorry about the wait guys. We're going to get you moving in a few minutes.

JOHN:

Larry, good to hear from you, I was beginning to think you'd forgotten about us.

LARRY:

Not a chance.

Just then, the elevator lights come back on, and the elevator begins moving again.

CHRISTINE:

John, about the physical feeling when you want to commit suicide.

The elevator reaches the eighth floor. John goes to get out. Christine pushes the "door open" button.

JOHN:

Yeah?

CHRISTINE:

You were going to say weightlessness, weren't you? Like a cross between weightlessness and wanting to vomit.

John looks at her, surprised that she was able to know what he was thinking.

JOHN:  
Yeah. That's exactly it.

Christine rolls up her sleeve, revealing scars along her wrist's veins.

CHRISTINE:  
You lied about the floor you were going to, didn't you?

JOHN:  
And you lied about the meeting you were going to.

CHRISTINE:  
I didn't want you to think that you were trapped in an elevator with an "unstable" person.

JOHN:  
Eh, not unstable. Just wounded.

John touches Christine's hand, which is still pressing the "door open" button. Their eyes meet.

JOHN:  
Can I try something?

CHRISTINE:  
If it's what I think you're going to try, then I've wanted you to, ever since you told me you had a therapist.

JOHN:  
Do you think it might help?

CHRISTINE:  
It might help both of us.

John gently takes Christine's hand off the button. As the elevator doors close, they kiss.

FADE TO BLACK.

ROLL CREDITS.

THE END.