

THE APARTMENT

by

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INT. UBER CAR - DAY

A DRIVER jams through traffic as PAUL and SHIRLEY WATANABE, early 30's, tourists, type on their phones in the back seat.

SHIRLEY

Are you sure we're going the right way?

DRIVER

Yes, yes... it's on my phone.

SHIRLEY

(whispers to Paul)
But, the app says--

PAUL

Not now, Shirley, I'm posting.

SHIRLEY

Don't forget to tag me.

The car stops at a traffic light. A MAN rips open the door. Jumps in. Puts a gun in the driver's face.

MAN

Drive!

DRIVER

(puts his hands up)
Please, I got nothing. Everyone pays through an app.

Paul and Shirley remain engrossed in their phones, oblivious. The man turns to them.

MAN

What about you two?

SHIRLEY

(ignoring the man)
We're here!

PAUL

Are you sure?

SHIRLEY

Yep. The little car on the app is on top of the building.

They get out of the car much to the surprise of the man.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Paul and Shirley grab their luggage, still distracted by their phones, as the man roughs up the driver.

DRIVER
(out the window)
Please rate me five stars!

The car takes off.

PAUL
So where did she say we would find
the keys?

SHIRLEY
(reading off her phone)
"Under the Red Rock".

PAUL
"Under the red rock"? What does
that mean?

SHIRLEY
That's what it says.

A BUM stands with a sign that reads "Seeking Human Kindness".

BUM
Change?

PAUL
Our first encounter with a real
local!

The bum looks hopeful as they excitedly rush over to him. Shirley extends her selfie stick, posing beside him.

SHIRLEY
Selfie!

She snaps a picture. They examine it.

PAUL
That's a good one!

SHIRLEY
Ugh, look at my chin, it's all
bunched under. Let's take another
one.

PAUL
Just Photoshop it.

BUM
I accept donations...

PAUL
Sorry, bud. No cash.
(to Shirley)
Why don't you just text her?

SHIRLEY
No phone number.

PAUL
How are we supposed to get a hold
of her?

SHIRLEY
Messaging her on Facebook.
(types on her phone)
And... send.

Paul tries the front door.

PAUL
It's locked. Great.

BUM
You want to get in that building?
I can get you in that building...

The bum pushes all the buttons almost in melody. It buzzes.
He opens the door for them. Holds his hand out.

BUM (CONT'D)
Anything, no matter how small,
would help.

PAUL
Fine, give me your Paypal account.

BUM
Paypal account?

PAUL
Yeah, what's your e-mail address?

BUM
I don't have any accounts.

PAUL
You don't have a Paypal account?

SHIRLEY
I just posted the pic. I've
already gotten three "likes"!

Paul types on his phone.

PAUL

Four!

Paul and Shirley move inside as the bum watches them go.

INT. BUILDING - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

They look around the lobby; ancient Hollywood preserved.

SHIRLEY

I feel like we've stepped back in time.

PAUL

Smells like moth balls. Let's just find this "red rock", so I can plug in.

SHIRLEY

Maybe it's code for something. Googling.

She types on her phone.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)

The page won't load.

PAUL

Look, there it is!

Paul bends down at a potted plant. Picks up a red rock. A key drops from underneath it.

Shirley grabs it. Puts it in a nearby door. Turns the lock.

SHIRLEY

It fits!

INT. APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Paul and Shirley look around the strangely put together studio equipped with a small kitchenette.

Dull, brown wall paper is in stark contrast against the colorful decor of the furniture and accessories.

PAUL

There aren't any windows.

SHIRLEY

You're right, how strange.

PAUL
And it's freezing in here.

SHIRLEY
Let me turn the heat on.

She turns to find a whiteboard with "Tonya Spurious 323 - 543 - 0000. Call me if you need anything", written across it.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
There's her phone number. Why
couldn't she just e-mail it to me?

She finds the thermostat. Switches the dial. The whole thing falls off.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
It's not even attached!

PAUL
(distracted)
Got any food?

SHIRLEY
Yeah...
(stares at the thermostat
in her hands)
I brought some noodles, I'll heat
them up.

PAUL
I'll see what's on TV. She better
have Netflix or Hulu.

Paul plops down in a chair in front of the TV as Shirley faces the kitchenette.

Condiments sit on the counter, label out. Every one is emblazed with the word "Hooked" across the front.

SHIRLEY
"Hooked".

PAUL
What?

SHIRLY
I guess it's a company or
something. They all have the same
logo.

He grabs the remote. Clicks it. Tries another button. Nothing.

PAUL
Why won't this thing turn on?

Shirley opens a cabinet. Cleaning products line the shelf with the same "Hooked" label.

SHIRLEY
There aren't any pots or pans.

PAUL
You're kidding.

SHIRLEY
No, there's nothing to cook in.

PAUL
But, it's a kitchenette.

SHIRLEY
There's plates...

Shirley takes a plate off of the shelf; the whole stack comes down with it. She tries to pull them apart.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
They're glued together. Why would anyone do that?

Paul clicks the remote again. Smashes it against the chair. It folds in his hand.

PAUL
What the hell?
(stares at the remote)
It's made out of cardboard!

SHIRLEY
That's it, I'm calling her right now.

She picks up her phone. Dials. Listens.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
No reception.

People's chatters permeate the air. Someone bangs on the wall. Giggles.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
What was that?

PAUL
Probably just some other residents.
Let me try mine.
(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)
(looks at phone)
Nope.

SHIRLEY
I'm going to connect to the Wi-Fi,
maybe she messaged me back.

She goes to her bag. Pulls out an ipad. Turns it on.
Stares for a moment at the screen. "Hooked. Access Denied."

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
"Denied". It won't let me connect.

PAUL
So, now I've got to go all the way
outside to call her? This is
ridiculous. BRB.

He opens the door. Walks out. But his steps only lead him
back into the apartment.

SHIRLEY
What are you doing, I thought you
were going outside?

He stands still, unable to compute.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
Give me that phone... I'll do it.

She grabs the phone. Walks outside. The same thing happens,
back in the apartment as if walking in from the outside.

She tries it a more rapid pace, but only returns inside
faster.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Paul stares blankly at the television set, gripping his
phone, the "Hooked" logo still bouncing across the TV screen,
mocking them.

Shirley peers down at the useless phone in her hands.

SHIRLEY
I don't understand, how could this
be happening?

PAUL
What did you get us into?

SHIRLEY
Me?

PAUL
 (mocking)
 "Let's go to Los Angeles, Paul. It will be an adventure".

SHIRLEY
 It was your idea to sublet!

PAUL
 Well, she had impeccable ratings on Airbnb...

SHIRLEY
 No one knows where we are. We have no way of contacting anyone.

Paul mechanically tries to comfort her.

PAUL
 Hey look, it's going to be okay...
 Emoji grin?

SHIRLEY
 No, it's not. It's not going to be okay, Emoji frown face! Everyone must be so worried, I haven't tweeted in almost an hour.

PAUL
 Well, how do you think I feel? I was supposed to be online ten minutes ago for a rematch with BulletzforBreakfast.

Shirley begins to weep. She looks up, her face covered in tears.

PAUL (CONT'D)
 Your eyes look weird.

SHIRLEY
 (in between sobs)
 What?

PAUL
 They turn green when you cry, I never noticed that.

SHIRLEY
 Yeah, you look different, too.

PAUL
 I do?

She touches the smile lines on the side of his mouth.

SHIRLEY
It's like you're in high
definition, I can see everything.

PAUL
I feel like we're always together,
but I've never really looked at
you.

SHIRLEY
(squirms)
Stop.

PAUL
What?

SHIRLEY
Stop looking at me, it's making me
uncomfortable.

He looks away.

PAUL
I guess we could talk.

SHIRLEY
Talk... About what?

PAUL
What's your favorite color? If you
could be any animal, what would it
be?

SHIRLEY
Red and a kangaroo. Those are all
answered on my profile, you know
that.

Paul's eyes start to twitch. He collapses on the couch. She
shakes him.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
Paul! Hey, you're shutting down.

Lost, she grabs her phone. Takes a selfie of the two of
them, Paul now unconscious.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
Selfie!

She taps on the phone. Twitches as if having a glitch.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
Post! Post! Post, damnit!

Chatter and giggles, again. She goes to the wall. Listens.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
Is anyone over there? I need you
to DM someone for me. Do you hear
me?

No one answers.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
I know you hear me!

She claws at the wall. The wall paper comes off in her
hands, exposing a window.

She eagerly rips off the rest of the wall paper. Searches
for a latch. Nothing.

Her hands above her head, she bangs on the window, her phone
still in her hand.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)
Help! We need help!

THE SCREEN GOES BLACK

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

The sun is shining through the window when Paul awakens. He
looks around. Sees Shirley standing by the window.

PAUL
Shirley, you did it, you found a
way out!

He approaches. Looks closely at her. She does not move.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Hey... quit joking around.

He goes to touch her shoulder, but reaches for the phone in
her hand, instead. He freezes in that position, posed.

ON PHONE: The "Hooked" logo bounces across the screen.

The child's giggles and rapping become overwhelming.

Move backwards through the window out to...

EXT. ELECTRONIC STORE - CONTINUOUS

Paul and Shirley, now posed mannequins, her with a look of surprise, her hands in the air and him trying to grab her phone, hopelessly stagnant.

A CHILD raps on the window. Giggles. Runs into the crowd.

Out to a sign on the building that says "Hooked Electronics".

The bum from before, now well dressed, opens the door. He ushers oblivious people inside, their faces buried in their devices.

THE END