

'Work Quote'
By:
Simon K. Parker

Simonkyleparker@hotmail.co.uk

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EXT. WORK ROOM - DAY

A small windowless room. There's several desks all crammed in. Each with a computer.

Shaven headed thin and sickly looking MEN and WOMEN sit at these computers and type furiously.

They all work at their top speed. There's great fear in all of their eyes.

Each of them has a metal wrist strap on one of their arms. Everyone is identical.

Just a single light hangs down from the ceiling. But it shines bright.

As they work a MANAGER dressed in a bright orange coat walks along the worn down carpet.

He keeps a close eye on all of them. Unlike the others he doesn't have a wrist strap on.

The sound of fingers slamming against the keys of the keyboards fills the air and echoes all around. A great swirl of repetitive noise.

There's a WOMAN, pale faced, drenched in sweat. She's off the rapid pace of everyone else.

She struggles.

She looks really ill. Suddenly she breaks out into a coughing fit.

She stop typing only for a couple of seconds. Her wrist strap begins to beep.

She instantly knows what it means.

Before she can do anything about it. BOOM!

It explodes. Rips off her entire arm.

She collapses to the floor in a heap. A pool of blood quickly forms underneath her.

The others keep their focus on their work, even speed up.

A few lets out horrified gasps. They can't help it.

A couple of the women break down in tears.

The manger moves over to her quickly. Grabs a hold and drags her screaming out of the room.

A trail of her blood left behind her.

INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY

Another windowless room. A coffee making station.

The floor and walls are filthy.

A sort of office break room.

Clearly shaken by what's just happens. Everyone drinks down a thick mud like looking horrible coffee. Nearly all of them smoke vape pens.

JACK, 22, tall and handsome. Rests up against a corner with DAN, 24, much shorter with a long pointy nose.

JACK

That's the seventh explosion this week.

DAN

No surprise, I've heard they've put up the expected work we're supposed to do.

Jack shakes his head, defeated.

JACK

I need to become a manager somehow.

Dan forces out a laugh. He slaps a playful hand against Jack's chest.

DAN

Impossible.

Jack frowns.

JACK

But why does it have to be?

DAN

Being a manager, it's not something you just get. You're born into it.

INT. JACK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Just enough space for a bunk bed. In this world natural light just doesn't exist. There are no windows.

Jack lays down on the top bunk.

Dan lay beneath him on the bottom.

Both ready for bed. In only their underwear their wrists straps remain on. They can't come off.

Jack looks up at a map stuck to the ceiling.

It's a map of a great city that's surrounded by a Great Wall.

Outside of this wall it's black and marked 'no life zone'.

Jack stares hard, studies it.

JACK

I need to get out of here.

Dan turns onto his side and closes his eyes.

DAN

There's worse bedrooms than this.

Jack reaches up and taps a finger against the so called no life zone.

JACK

I mean I've got to get out of this city. What's really out there?

DAN

That's not the question.

JACK

No?

DAN

How. How can you get out of this place?

Jack rolls over onto his side and closes his eyes.

JACK

I'm sick of hearing you say it's impossible. There must be a way.

Dan lets out a long deep breath, slips into a deep sleep.

INT. LAUREN'S BEDROOM - DAY

A single bed pushed up in the corner. The walls and floor are all bare. A bucket filled with steaming hot water sits on the floor.

LAUREN, 24, a soft pretty face, her hair tied back into a ponytail. With a wrist strap on she's down on her knees.

Dunks in a soft hand towel. Wets it with the warm water.

OLIVIA, 30, cracked lips and sunken eyes sits in front of her on the edge of the bed. Her right arm is missing. Dressed only in her underwear.

Lauren starts to wash Olivia. Takes great care over it.

Olivia shivers, looks like she's not eaten or drunk anything for a few days now.

OLIVIA

Its not right you doing all this
for me.

LAUREN

I want to.

Olivia looks downcast.

OLIVIA

I'm sorry I let this happen to
me. I just couldn't work fast
enough.

Lauren throws the towel down into the bucket. Wraps both arms around her, hugs her tight.

LAUREN

It's this place. It's evil. You
didn't do anything wrong.

Olivia begins to cry. She can't help it.

OLIVIA

The same thing will happen to
you. Don't do it.

Lauren pulls back away from her.

LAUREN

We need money. You looked after
me now it's my turn.

OLIVIA

Don't.

Lauren ignores her. Again takes the towel in her hand and continues to wash Olivia.

INT. WORK ROOM - DAY

The sound of fingers slamming against keyboards again fills the air.

Lauren is at a desk beside Jack. Everyone is back to work. They type at an insane pace.

Jack glances across at her. He watches as she's able to type just as fast as everyone else.

JACK

You're new, but you're fast.

She doesn't even bother to look over at him.

LAUREN

Because I know what happens if I fail.

He nods. Comes back to concentrating on his own work.

INT. BREAK ROOM - DAY

Jack and Lauren are together in a corner of the room. Each with a cup of that disgusting looking coffee.

She looks over at him sheepish.

LAUREN

So you really have done this job for a long time then?

He nods, looks down into his coffee.

JACK

And for the longest time ever all I've ever wanted was to become a manager. I would have done anything for it.

She's annoyed.

LAUREN

Why?

JACK

If you're a manager there's no more work. You just walk around with all the power. So now I just want to get out of here. Escape the city. Leave it all behind.

She leans back against the wall behind her. Forces him to take her coffee from her. Crosses her arms in front of her chest.

LAUREN

Escape can't be done. But these managers, they're nothing special. Trust me. I've seen it.

She walks away.

He follows her, suddenly very excited.

JACK

Show me.

She glances over her shoulder. She finds him very curious.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Jack uses a thin piece of wire to break open the lock of a plain looking front door inside an apartment block.

Lauren stands behind him, keeps a look out. Very nervous about the whole thing.

LAUREN

This is insane what you're doing.

JACK

You're my look out remember.

The lock clicks open and Jack pushes the door ajar.

He grabs a hold of her and they both disappear inside.

INT. MANAGER'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

A modestly furnished room. Nice wallpaper and a thick carpet.

Jack and Lauren sneak around inside. They can hear someone nearby in a shower.

He glances back at her, keeps his voice low.

JACK

Are you sure?

She nods, no doubt about it.

LAUREN

But we shouldn't be here. This is so stupid.

Jack comes over to the double bed. See a managers orange coat folded in half.

Lauren points to closed door, the shower room must be in there.

Without hesitation he puts on the orange coat.

She looks at him wide eyed with horror.

He puts his hands in the coat pockets and pulls out a set of weird looking keys.

One of the keys looks familiar.

He tests it on his wrist strap. The key fits inside the lock that's on it.

He turns the key and his wrist strap falls off.

She comes hurriedly over to him.

LAUREN (CONT'D)
What have you done?

JACK
I'm a manager now.

He takes a hold of her arm. Puts the key into the lock on her wrist strap. She resists but he doesn't let go.

LAUREN
Don't.

JACK
Trust me.

He turns the key and her wrist strap falls to the floor too.

She gasps, can't believe it.

Jack now grabs a hold of a chair and props it up against the closed door to the bathroom. Trapping whoever's inside.

He takes Lauren by the hand and they flee.

Now she has a huge smile.

INT. WORK ROOM - DAY

It's silent inside. All the workers stare hard at Jack in his orange managers coat.

None of them can quite believe it.

Jack goes to them one after another and with his managers keys he unlocks each and everyone of their wrist straps.

Sets them free.

Confusion hangs heavy in the air.

Dan smiles happy.

DAN
Thank you.

INT. LAUREN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Lauren sits on the bed with Olivia. Jack stands in front of them.

LAUREN

So what now?

JACK

I've got what I wanted but it's
different now.

LAUREN

Yeah?

He takes out the keys. Keeps a tight hold of them.

JACK

I have to help other people too.
And want you both to come with
me.

Lauren and Olivia exchange a look.

Olivia shrugs.

OLIVIA

I've got nothing to live for
here.

Lauren reaches out for Jack and he takes her hand, helps
her up.

LAUREN

Alright.

JACK

You opened my eyes.

They share a tender moment then kiss.

Olivia blushes, happy for them.

THE END