

THE WAREHOUSE

Written by

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BLUE 04/10/2021

PINK 05/01/2021

1 **OVER BLACK**

Vintage 1990's VIDEO GAME SOUND EFFECTS/CHEESY MUSIC fill the sound scape. GROWNS and GUTTERAL UTTERANCES interject with the eventual EXPLOSION and trumpet fail WHA WHA WHAAA.

FADE IN:

2 **A VIDEO GAME ON A TUBE TELEVISION**

A muscled caricature stands over a smoldering hole at the center of the screen. GAME OVER flashes across the scene.

VIDEO GAME (V.O.)

Come. Conquer. Be a hero!

3 **INT. WATSON HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT**

Lit by the light of the TV, ARTIE, 25, with controller, sits with a smirk on his face. A nerd, Artie plays video games more than he sleeps or eats, though he manages to sleep, and eat junk food to excess as well.

DOUG

How did you do that!

At the other end of a couch, that's seen better days, DOUG, 25, the employed and semi-responsible best friend, sits, mouth agape.

ARTIE

Do what?

DOUG

That! I've never seen that before!
You roasted me!

ARTIE

Well, I may or may not have gained
a strategy guide for this game.

DOUG

(incredulous)

A "strategy guide"? But that's,
that's... cheating!

Artie chuckles at Doug and tosses him the guide.

ARTIE

Read it and weep. There's all kinds
of hidden stuff in this game.

Doug flips through the guide and checks his watch.

DOUG

Four AM? Man I gotta get some shut eye! I have to be at work by ten!

ARTIE

One more game man.

DOUG

No way. Gotta scoot.

ARTIE

Enjoy rewinding those VHS tapes.

DOUG

Yeah... hey, are we still on for tomorrow's costume party?

ARTIE

Heck yeah. Got my costume...

Artie points at a homemade blue Star Trek officer's shirt as Doug wades through pizza boxes, soda cups and junk food bags.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

My pointy ears are around here somewhere. You still gonna be the guy in Sense and Sensibility?

DOUG

(bad British accent)
Most certainly, my dear Chap.

ARTIE

Cool. The accent needs some work.

DOUG

I'll give ya a call.

ARTIE

Not before four.

DOUG

Wouldn't want to wake Sleeping Beauty.

Doug heads up the stairs and kicks some junk over.

ARTIE

Man! You wake my dad up and he'll have us both doing push ups and running laps around the house!

DOUG
No he won't.

Artie gives him a knowing look and nod and hits a button on his controller and the CHEESY MUSIC plays.

4 **INT. WATSON HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

FRANK Watson, 60, fit as a fiddle gung-ho ex-Marine drill sergeant, sits at the lunch table and stews as Artie's SNORING is heard throughout the house.

JENNY Watson, 55, the All-American doting wife and mother, works at the counter, prepares lunch.

FRANK
Where's Artie?

Jenny just looks at Frank with a you-have-to-ask look.

FRANK (CONT'D)
It's 12:30 in the ever lovin'
afternoon!

Frank stomps over to and down the basement stairs.

5 **INT. WATSON HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY**

Frank stops short and stares.

Artie, hair disheveled, snores and snorts, sprawled on the couch. Several quilts cover his awkward position in front of the tube TV. His face sweats.

Frustrated, and at his wits' end, Frank stomps back upstairs.

6 **INT. WATSON HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

Frank blusters into the room.

FRANK
Where's the paper?

Jenny motions to the kitchen counter.

Frank snatches the paper, flips through it and stops.

FRANK (CONT'D)
He's going on a job interview today
if it's the last thing he does!

Jenny eye-balls Frank as he flips through the paper.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I told him if he didn't have a steady job by New Years he was out on his... ear!

JENNY

Honey, he's our son.

Frank glances at Jenny, driven with purpose as he flips through the paper.

FRANK

(to Jenny)

I'm doing him a favor.

(back to the paper)

No... No... here's a new one...

"Warehouse nightshift worker needed. Interview today, be working tonight." How hard was that?

JENNY

So you're going to set up a job interview for our son.

FRANK

Well, somebody has to! You're the whole reason he's still sleepin' on that old couch and doing diddly squat. You coddle him too much!

Jenny, with the calmness, confidence--and sarcasm--of a mother bear, continues the eternal argument with Frank.

JENNY

Yep. It's my fault. I also caused the local economy to tank and I ran off all the businesses. I'm quite the powerful woman.

Frank grouses over, picks up the phone, and dials...

FRANK

When I was in the Marines, we...

JENNY

I know, I know. You stormed the beaches of Normandy, built some demilitarized zone. It was all Semper Mai Tai. Hoorah!

Frank stops his phone dial, pauses.

FRANK

Normandy was WWII. The Demilitarized Zone was the Korean Conflict. I was only in Vietnam and you know that. And it's Semper Fi and "Oorah!" not "Hoorah"! Hoorah is the army.

JENNY

Oh, oorah, hoorah, que sara sara,.. whatever. Just go easy on him, will ya?

FRANK

Humph!

(into the phone)

Hello! Yes, I'm calling about your warehouse ad in the paper...

7 **INT. WATSON HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY**

Artie remains unmoved. Beads of sweat pool on his forehead. His face twitches.

8 **INT. BLACK ROOM - NIGHT (NIGHTMARE SEQUENCE)**

Artie stands by himself, perspiration soaks his shirt. Heat waves rise. A brief LAUGH causes him to look to the side.

Artie catches a glimpse of a WOMAN saunter away.

ARTIE

Hey! Come back! Why is it so hot?

Artie chases after the vanished image of the Woman and stops.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Wait!

WOMAN (V.O.)

Don't let the heat get to you.

ARTIE

What?

A blast of fire surges straight at Artie. He turns and runs.

He sees the back of the Woman ahead of him move away as she LAUGHS.

As Artie runs the blast overtakes him and side blasts cover him. Artie disappears in the flames.

9 **INT. WATSON HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY**

Artie remains unmoved. His sweat-soaked twitches intensify.

An air horn appears before Artie and BLOWS. Raised from the "dead" and his nightmare, Artie pops up, instant-awake, struggles to piece the world together, breathes heavy.

FREEZE FRAME ON Artie's shocked face.

ARTIE (V.O.)

Yep, that's me--sweaty-jalapeno-pizza-induced nightmare and all-- Arthur Rudolph Watson. I know, it sounds like a lovable drunk reindeer crime-solving sidekick. I go by Artie. Unemployed, looking at some very serious job leads... Who was I kidding? I was a film school grad, camera op slash director of photography, sort of looking for work in an area where the film business vacated a year ago. I was really quite busy before all the film stuff left.

(depressed sigh)

I had only ever really been a PA...

10 **EXT. ISOLATED FARM ROAD - DAY (FLASHBACK)**

Artie stands alone near a field of cows.

A.D (O.C.)

(over the walkie)
And we're rolling!

ARTIE

Rolling!

A cow MOOS.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Shhh!

Artie gives the evil eye to the cow.

... making radio calls for the First AD a half a mile from the actual set. It's a very "glamorous" line of employment. The work will come back, I think, hopefully, I guess.

(MORE)

ARTIE (CONT'D)

And soon I'll be back making radio calls on "yet to be famous" low-budget movies for "yet to be famous" actors.

A.D (O.C.)

Cut!

Artie just looks around.

ARTIE

Cut!

(Big sigh)

11 **INT. WATSON HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY**

Artie remains in FREEZE FRAME.

ARTIE (V.O.)

But I digress.

UNFREEZE and continue the horn.

Frank stops the horn and lowers it.

ARTIE

What in the world!...

FRANK

You know what I was doing when I was your age, son?

Artie struggles to look alive.

ARTIE

You were... probably... not sleeping.

FRANK

You are absolutely right! I had left the safety and comfort of my mama's bosom...

ARTIE

Dad!

FRANK

... for the privilege of serving my country and halting the murderous progress of a communist regime.

FREEZE FRAME ON Frank.

ARTIE (V.O.)

You guessed it. This is my Dad...
Benjamin Franklin Watson. He can
get a little high strung.

12 VIETNAM BATTLE - DAY (ARCHIVE FOOTAGE)

ARTIE (V.O.)

He's a three-time decorated Marine--
once saved an entire platoon single-
handed. My dad means well, but I
think I've always been a bit of a
disappointment to him.

BASEMENT - RETURN TO FREEZE FRAME ON Frank.

ARTIE (V.O.)

He wanted me to be a Marine. I
doubt I would have survived the bus
ride to Basic Training, much less
followed in his footsteps. I want
to be like him, I really do. It's
just not in me though. He's a hero.
I'm not. Semper Fi.

UNFREEZE FRAME ON Frank.

Frank continues the "talking-to".

FRANK

And we would have won if the
bureaucrats would have stayed out!

Artie braces himself for a Marine lecture.

FRANK (CONT'D)

My point is son, I was not up all
night playing video games and
sleeping all day on my mama and
daddy's couch. I was making a life
for myself!

ARTIE

Dad, I know the story...

FRANK

No, sir! And I hadn't gone to some
"liberal" arts college and gotten a
flimsy degree in film studies--

ARTIE

Film Production. Big difference.

FRANK

Don't interrupt... By the time I left Vietnam, I'd been shot four times and escaped a POW camp twice.

Artie sits back and attempts to endure the speech.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Did I set out to be some hero? No! But I was going places. I may not of known where, but I wasn't stationary nor sedentary. And in the middle of that, somebody needed me--several somebodies.

ARTIE

Dad, about work... film work will come back and I'll be good to go.

FRANK

Have you ever thought about going to where the film work is? Have ya?

ARTIE

No no. Some sort of work will come back here, soon... in another six or eight months.

FRANK

Six or eight months?

Frank stands back up.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Do you remember our little chat about finding a job by year's end?

Artie opens his mouth to acknowledge. Frank plows ahead.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Well, to keep you off the streets, I have done you a great favor.

ARTIE

(under his breath)

Oh, no.

FRANK

I have gotten you a job interview for today at 5:30 PM sharp.

ARTIE

What?

FRANK

You will go to that interview, be interviewed, probably be offered a job, and you will take that job.

ARTIE

But Dad--

FRANK

No buts. It's either that or you're sleeping in your car. But since you don't own a car then you'll be sleeping on the driveway.

ARTIE

What kind of job is it? Please tell me it's not flipping burgers down at the Burger Barn. I can't stand that place.

Frank is astonished.

FRANK

What difference does it make? It's a job at a warehouse moving pallets from point A to point B all night and they pay you! Here's the number and address.

Frank hands Artie an immaculate, folded paper. Artie is stunned, but gets it.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Get off the couch and go be somebody's hero, even if it's just for yourself!

With his agenda met, Frank marches back to the stairs and stops.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Oh, and your mother made you lunch and she says it's getting cold.

Frank exits.

Artie lays back on the couch and stares at the ceiling.

13

INT. WATSON HOUSE - BASEMENT - BATHROOM - DAY

Artie enters the bathroom, splashes water on his face and stares at himself in the mirror. A METAL CROSS hangs from his neck. He fiddles with it and walks out.

14 **INT. WATSON HOUSE - KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - DAY (LATER)**

Artie emerges from the basement, dressed, pulls out the warehouse phone number, and picks up the phone. POP JAZZ MUSIC plays LOUD in another room. Artie pulls away from the phone to see Jenny and Frank dance. Jenny winks at Artie.

FREEZE FRAME ON Jenny.

ARTIE (V.O.)

My mom. The definition of an angel, saint. She'd have to be, married to my dad for thirty-plus years. She's really the boss, my dad just didn't know it or didn't mind. He wore the pants in the family. But mom told him which ones to put on.

15 **MONTAGE: JENNY SERVES ARTIE (UNDER V.O.) (BASEMENT)**

--Jenny places a plated sandwich in front of Artie
 --Jenny brings Artie a glass of tea during video games
 --Jenny mends Artie's clothing
 --Jenny cleans Artie's basement mess
 --Jenny sprays powder in Artie's shoes

ARTIE (V.O.)

My mom always treated me great, waiting on me hand and foot. Admittedly, that probably made me a little soft. It would've crushed her if she couldn't love on her only child that way. Ah, where would I have been without my mom?... Probably in the Marines... or Leavenworth.

UNFREEZE FRAME ON Jenny as she spins with Frank.

Artie shouts over the music.

ARTIE

Dad, can I borrow the truck to go get a soda?

Frank reaches in his pocket and tosses Artie the keys.

FRANK

There's change on the counter.

Artie snags the change and scurries out the door.

16 **INT. TRUCK - DAY (MOVING)**

The music continues to play over the radio as Artie drives.

DJ

All right! That was Drew and Crew with Darling Tonight. Speaking of tonight, how do you plan to ring in the New Year? Out with 96 and in with 97! Give us a call at 867-5309...

17 **EXT. CORNER STORE - DAY**

Artie parks the truck and plods to the pay phone.

He drops in a coin, looks at the note and dials the number.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

Warehouse. May I help you?

ARTIE

I think I have an interview this afternoon. Can you tell me where you are and a little about the job?

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

Yes. We're just off Calcine Street. This is your basic warehouse job with great mobility. Most of our employees never leave. A job here will change your entire future!

Artie smirks.

ARTIE

Huh. I'm sure.

FEMALE VOICE (V.O.)

So we'll see you at 5:30 sharp. Don't be late, Artie.

The line CLICKS as Artie hangs up and does a double take.

Artie picks up the phone again, drops in a coin and dials.

DOUG (V.O.)

Be Kind Rewind Video.

ARTIE

Yo dude, what's shakin'?

DOUG (V.O.)

Artie, why you calling me at work?
You're gonna get me in trouble.

ARTIE

Come on, there's nobody there on
New Year's Eve. We gotta talk.

18

EXT. PARK TABLE - DAY

Doug, in a green vest, holds a burger and stares at Artie.

DOUG

Your dad set up a job interview for
you?

ARTIE

Yeah. That's my dad. He's like John
Wayne toilet paper.

DOUG

Huh?

ARTIE

Rough as sandpaper and won't take
nothin' off nobody.

DOUG

Harsh.

FREEZE FRAME ON Doug.

ARTIE (V.O.)

This is my best friend, Doug
Morgan. We grew up across the
street from each other, and, well,
actually we still lived across the
street from each other. Growing up,
we did everything together. Our
parents were great friends, the
whole nine yards. Doug worked at
the local video store but was
saving up to go to law school.
Funny, he hated wearing a coat and
tie. I don't think the green vest
did much for him either.

UNFREEZE FRAME ON Doug.

ARTIE

My dad's too much sometimes. I
can't live up to his expectations.

DOUG
So, what's gonna happen?

ARTIE
I'm probably going to go to this
interview, take the job, and get my
dad off my back for a little while.

Doug nods.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
Hopefully something else will come
up that doesn't involve working all
night or flippin' burgers.

19 **INT. WATSON HOUSE - KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Artie enters to find Frank asleep in the chair. Artie heads
for the

20 **INT. WASTON HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY**

where he finds his mother as she folds his laundry. The couch
and floor area have been cleaned; Artie plops.

JENNY
Hi Hun.

ARTIE
Hey.

JENNY
About that interview--

ARTIE
I know Mom.

JENNY
Look, your father just wants the
best for you.

ARTIE
He just demands so much from me.

JENNY
Well, you have been sleeping on
this couch for about six months...
mostly during the day. A little
work won't kill you, will it?

Artie glances at his mom and sighs.

JENNY (CONT'D)
 Give it a couple of weeks until
 your dad can cool off and see your
 effort. That's all he really wants.

Jenny folds the last shirt and puts it on the pile. She gives Artie a quick peck on the forehead and heads up stairs.

ARTIE
 (to himself)
 A warehouse. It might kill me.

Artie grabs the controller and the cheesy music plays.

21 **INT. WATSON HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

Jenny makes a sack lunch as Frank rouses. Artie emerges from the basement.

JENNY
 You awake, Frank?

Frank stands as Artie holds up the keys to the truck.

ARTIE
 Do you mind if--

FRANK
 Stand up tall, son. Look'em in the
 eyes. Strong handshake--no dead
 fish. Yes sirs and no sirs. And
 yes, take the truck.

Jenny hands Artie the sack...

JENNY
 Just in case.

Jenny gives Artie a hug, a kiss, and he leaves.

22 **EXT. TRUCK - DAY (MOVING)**

Artie drives by with music on the radio.

23 **EXT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT ENTRANCE/EXIT - DAY**

Artie's truck pulls up to the multi-story building, the only vehicle there. Artie exits the truck, looks at the address on the paper and then up at the structure.

FREEZE FRAME ON the WAREHOUSE.

ARTIE (V.O.)

That's the Warehouse. It wasn't much to look at... and it wasn't much to work at either. It had a dark personality all its own. In a bad horror flick, this would be the antagonist itself. For me, it was just a weird building that smelled like moth balls.

UNFREEZE ON the Warehouse.

Artie hesitates, looks about, takes a deep breath.

ARTIE

(to himself)

It's only for a couple of weeks.

Artie trudges up the steps, opens the door, steps in.

24 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - EXIT - DAY** *

Artie steps into the large shipping and receiving area populated with a few crates and loaded pallets. A clock above the door reads 5:35.

24A **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - COUNTER - DAY** *

Artie surveys the area. No one is visible and the area is silent. He RINGS a bell on the counter.

BELL, 30, emerges from an office and plants her dominance across the counter, square in front of Artie. Her resting face could sink a ship and/or ruin your day. Her intimidating countenance stares at Artie.

BELL

You're five minutes late.

FREEZE FRAME ON Bell.

ARTIE (V.O.)

This is Bell, the operational boss of The Warehouse. I never caught her last name. I was too afraid to ask. She hated all men by the way. She wasn't military but something about her screamed "Cross me and you're done." She would take no prisoners and give no quarters.

(MORE)

ARTIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

She's wasn't particularly fond of women or children either, or anyone, for that matter... This was pretty much her eternal expression. Yeah. If looks could kill...

UNFREEZE FRAME ON Bell.

ARTIE

I'm sorry. I just, it's,... never mind.

BELL

You got something to spit out?

ARTIE

No, no, I'm good.

Bell continues her stare.

Artie blinks and avoids eye contact.

25

INT. WAREHOUSE - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

Bell and Artie sit on opposite sides of a table, which has a child's art project and some Crayons at one end.

ARTIE

Oh, colors! This could be a fun inter--

Bell glares at Artie.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Probably not.

BELL

This is an interview for employment at this warehouse. I'm going to ask you a few questions and then you can ask me a few. Understood?

ARTIE

Yes, ma'am.

BELL

Have you ever worked at a warehouse before?

ARTIE

No.

Bell shoots a look at Artie.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

No, ma'am?

BELL

Do you have any physical maladies which would prevent you from working at a warehouse and potentially moving heavy loads?

ARTIE

No... ma'am.

BELL

Do you have any dust allergies?

ARTIE

No, not really, but--

BELL

Can you start this evening at six?

ARTIE

Oh, tonight? Ah...

Artie pauses.

FRANK (V.O.)

You will go to that interview, be interviewed, probably offered a job, and you will take that job.

ARTIE

Tonight's New Year's Eve.

BELL

Yes, and?

ARTIE

Well, hum...

FREEZE FRAME ON Artie.

ARTIE(V.O.)

At this point, I was wondering what happened to the part about me asking questions. Like, how many hours a night do I work? How much per hour do I get paid? Do I really have to start work tonight? You know, the usual fare.

UNFREEZE FRAME ON Artie.

Bell cocks her head and answers on cue.

BELL

You work twelve-hour shifts for
five twenty-five an hour.

Artie looks at Bell and blinks.

BELL (CONT'D)

Do you want your dad off your back
or not?

Artie is a little dumbfounded.

ARTIE

Ah, yeah, I do. I guess I'll take
the job? If you're offering it?

Bell stands and pulls some forms from a file cabinet.

ARTIE (V.O.)

It was the strangest and quickest
interview I'd ever had. Even the
Burger Barn was more stringent than
this place. And I think I had just
met the one person who could be
more intimidating than my dad.

Bell slides the forms and a pen across the table to Artie.

BELL

Fill these out and I'll get your
training video ready.

Bell turns the TV monitor on and readies a VHS tape. She
heads towards the door.

ARTIE

Do you mind if I make a quick phone
call?

Bell motions toward the phone on the table and continues out.

Artie picks up the receiver, dials a number. There's STATIC
on the line as he pulls the phone away from his ear.

DOUG (V.O.)

(voice recording w/static)
Be Kind Rewind Video. Please leave
a message.

ARTIE

Hey, Doug--I got the job. Surprise!
I have to start tonight. So I guess
I won't be going to the costume
party. Represent us well...

(MORE)

ARTIE (CONT'D)
and work on that British accent!
You can tell me all about it
tomorrow afternoon. See ya then.

Bell re-enters, shoves the tape in the player, hits play.

BELL
Pay attention. Don't fall asleep.

ARTIE
No, ma'am. I mean yes ma'am. I--
Artie watches the screen as Bell exits.

TRAINING HOST (V.O.)
Warehouse safety and you.

26 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - COUNTER - NIGHT**

Bell picks up her desk phone and pushes a button. Brief AUDIO FEEDBACK echoes throughout the warehouse.

BELL
Your attention please.

27 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 2ND FLOOR - NIGHT**

Empty aisles reverberate Bell's voice.

BELL (V.O.)
Mallory Wells, please report to the
front counter.

28 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 3RD FLOOR - NIGHT**

More echoes greet Bell's stern voice.

BELL (V.O.)
Mallory Wells to the front counter.

An audible CLICK and ECHO of a phone hang up.

29 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - COUNTER - NIGHT**

Artie exits the conference room/office area. Bell stands at the counter and shuffles papers.

BELL
Over here Artie.

Artie pulls himself over near Bell.

BELL (CONT'D)

Artie, this is Mallory. She's going to give you a quick tour.

MALLORY, early-20s, consumed with self, exhibits an attitude of entitlement, gives a quick nod.

BELL (CONT'D)

(to Mallory)

This is Artie Watson. He'll be starting his first shift tonight.

Mallory hides the disinterest in her eyes with a brief smile.

MALLORY

Hey.

ARTIE

Nice to meet you.

From a distance, as Bell gives brief instructions, a shadow silhouette crosses.

Artie glances past everyone as if he may have seen something.

BELL

Show him how to operate the freight elevator and take him to floors two, three, four, break room, and lockers. Then bring him back here.

MALLORY

(sarcastic)

Gotcha boss.

Bell stares unemotional.

Mallory stares unemotional.

FREEZE FRAME on Mallory

ARTIE

Ah, Mallory--quite the team player... on Team Mallory. A young girl who could subtly but expertly bludgeon you to death with her stealth, and sometimes not so stealth, sarcasm.

(MORE)

ARTIE (CONT'D)

She hated her job, hated being at a warehouse, but was in bad need of spending cash for, let's say, some spending habits. Really she was just scared and hid behind her lethal tongue.

UNFREEZE FREEZE on Mallory.

Mallory flinches first and glances down.

MALLORY

Yes, ma'am.

Mallory suppresses a shiver and leads Artie towards the freight elevator.

30

INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - NIGHT (WALKING)

Artie looks back over his shoulder where he saw the shadow silhouette and then watches Bell slip into the offices.

ARTIE

She's got a bit of a presence, huh?

MALLORY

Yeah. I generally can stand up to anyone. But her?... I always walk away a little uneasy.

ARTIE

She's probably really nice once ya get to know her.

MALLORY

Unicorns and rainbows.

Artie and Mallory pass by the Entrance/Exit door.

ARTIE

Hey, give me a second, I need to get my keys out of my truck.

31

EXT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - EXIT - NIGHT

Artie reaches the door but is unable to turn the knob or push the door open.

BELL

Going somewhere?

Bell stands behind Artie, arms folded.

ARTIE

Yeah, I just need to get my keys.

BELL

No one leaves the warehouse until their shift is over.

Bell points to the clock above the door which reads 6:15.

ARTIE

But that's not until 6:00 AM.

Bell stares.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Are all the doors locked?

Bell nods.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Isn't that a fire code violation?

BELL

Hmm. That's a good one. Turn me in.

Bell saunters away.

32

INT. WAREHOUSE - 1ST FLOOR - OUTSIDE FREIGHT ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Mallory and Artie land in front of the controls.

MALLORY

As you can see this is the freight elevator. Pretty dog-gone exciting.

ARTIE

How much weight will this hold?

MALLORY

Huh?

ARTIE

How much weight can it handle?

MALLORY

Well, you know. Like, a lot.

Mallory reaches down and pulls the strap to open the horizontal outer doors.

MALLORY (CONT'D)

It's simple, pull this strap. Make sure first the elevator is on your floor. Then you push these doors up and walk in.

Mallory and Artie enter. Mallory continues the mundane.

MALLORY (CONT'D)

Then you do just the opposite and close the doors. Push a button for the floor you want and then wait about ten hours for the elevator to get you there.

ARTIE

Slow huh?

MALLORY

That would be a good descriptor.

Mallory hits a button and the elevator disappears upward behind the wall.

33

INT. WAREHOUSE - 2ND FLOOR - OUTSIDE FREIGHT ELEVATOR - NIGHT

The elevator doors separate and Mallory and Artie step out.

MALLORY

The second floor. Twice as much of everything that the first floor could ever offer... twice the junk, twice the dust, twice the boredom.

ARTIE

You like working here?

MALLORY

(flat)
Crazy about it.

ARTIE

So what's mostly kept--

MALLORY

You don't really want to see more than this do you? It's pretty much the same on all the floors.

ARTIE

Ah, no, I guess not.

34 **INT. WAREHOUSE - INSIDE FREIGHT ELEVATOR - NIGHT**

Mallory pushes the first floor button.

ARTIE

So what's it like working here? Is it hard?

MALLORY

Not unless you make it hard.

ARTIE

How would I make it hard?

MALLORY

By actually working.

Artie gives her a look to give details.

MALLORY (CONT'D)

Look, I avoid all work if possible and try to stay out of trouble.

ARTIE

How do you avoid work?

MALLORY

It's a big place... lots of holes to hide in.

The elevator comes to a halt.

35 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 1ST FLOOR - OUTSIDE FREIGHT ELEVATOR - NIGHT**

Artie opens the freight elevator doors and the pair step out. Mallory continues to walk.

MALLORY (O.C.)

Always close the freight doors when you're done.

Artie shuts the doors and hurries after Mallory.

36 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - NIGHT (WALKING)**

Artie catches up with Mallory.

ARTIE

So, how many people work here?

MALLORY

Oh, a few... I've never really paid that much attention.

Mallory leads Artie past a row of framed photographs of individuals that hang on the wall.

ARTIE

Who are these people?

MALLORY

That's the Wall of Fame.

ARTIE

Really? What'd they do to get up here?

MALLORY

No idea. Don't care.

37

INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - COUNTER - NIGHT

Mallory delivers Artie back to Bell at the counter.

BELL

That was a quick tour.

MALLORY

Quick learner... I'm headed back to my pallet moving on the fourth floor.

Bell eyes Mallory as she hurries away.

BELL

She didn't go past the second floor, did she?

Artie shuffles his feet.

ARTIE

Well, ah--

BELL

I know more about what she does or doesn't do than she thinks.

Artie's eyes widen just a bit.

ARTIE

So, what would you like for me to do?

Bell grabs two clipboards off the counter. Hands one over.

BELL

Go to the third floor and move this pallet of product to the fourth floor.

Bell hands Artie the second clipboard.

BELL (CONT'D)

Then take this pallet from the fourth to the second floor. The location and pallet numbering is easy enough to figure out.

ARTIE

Okay.

Artie examines the clipboards.

BELL

Why are you still standing here?

Artie shuffles off.

ARTIE (V.O.)

Yeah, Bell had this knack of somehow knowing pretty much what you'd been doing or not doing.

38 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 3RD FLOOR - OUTSIDE FREIGHT ELEVATOR - NIGHT** *

Artie exits the freight elevator with a pallet jack. The third floor looks a lot like the second floor.

ARTIE (V.O.)

It could be a little unnerving--okay, a lot unnerving--but she didn't seem to say much to you about it. That, and just her presence sorta made you feel, incompetent.

38A **INT. WAREHOUSE - 3RD FLOOR** *

Artie walks past a few pallets of boxes and notes the info sheet on each one.

He stops and finds the appropriate pallet of boxes, inserts the pallet jack and pumps the load off the floor.

A silhouette figure passes behind him. Artie turns to look a second too late. He looks around.

ARTIE

Hello?

Artie pauses and listens. Nothing.

Artie turns to the load and pulls. He stops in his tracks--at the other end of the warehouse stands what looks like a SMALL GIRL. She holds something in her arms.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Hello?

The Small Girl rushes out of sight.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Hey! Are you okay? Can I help you?

Artie leaves the pallet load and walks down to where the visitor stood.

38B **INT. WAREHOUSE - 3RD FLOOR - RANOME AISLE - NIGHT** *

Artie looks about the other pallets and shelving--no one.

38C **INT. WAREHOUSE - 3RD FLOOR** *

Artie returns to his load, takes a seat, pulls a comic book out of his back pocket, sighs as he flips through the pages.

Artie hears small footsteps behind him and looks.

ARTIE

Hello? Who's there?

Spooked and distracted, Artie pockets his comic and leaves with his load.

39 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 3RD FLOOR - OUTSIDE FREIGHT ELEVATOR - NIGHT**

As Artie closes the doors, he and pallet load inside, the silhouetted Small Girl steps up and watches the elevator travel upward. She hurries away.

40

INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - COUNTER - NIGHT

DAX, 20, built like a five-star athlete, swaggers into the Office Area with all the delusional disorder of Don Quixote, soda drink and towel in hand.

DAX

My favorite drink for my favorite girl!

Dax presents an unopened can of soft drink to Bell.

BELL

What's that?

DAX

It's a cool refresher for the hottest woman in the world.

FREEZE FRAME ON Dax.

ARTIE

Dax. What could be said about Dax that he probably wouldn't say about or show you himself? Dax was into Dax, football, and was a hopeless romantic when it comes to Bell-- totally smitten. The more she resisted, the more he pursued.

UNFREEZE FRAME ON Dax.

BELL

(under her breath)

Please.

Dax pops open the can and pours the drink in a solo cup on Bell's desk like a bartender.

Bell looks at the drink for a moment.

BELL (CONT'D)

What do you want me to do with that?

DAX

Drink it?

BELL

I don't like soft drinks.

DAX

No soft drinks? Oh, wine? You like wine?

BELL

No.

DAX

Well then, what is it? What do you like to drink?

BELL

If I have to, water. Plain. Tap. Water. But I can get it myself.

DAX

I got ya covered.

Dax removes the drink, dumps it in the trash and hops to the water cooler.

BELL

Why do you bother? I have not and will never show any interest in you whatsoever.

DAX

I know your type.

BELL

Excuse me?

DAX

You play hard to get at first. You'll come around.

Dax puts the cup of water on her desk.

DAX (CONT'D)

Bell, I'm so into you... I'll serve you the rest of my life.

Dax walks backwards and out of sight with a CLICK and finger-pistols at Bell. Sappy cliché. Bell only stares.

BELL

(under her breath)
You already are.

41

INT. WAREHOUSE - 4TH FLOOR - OUTSIDE FREIGHT ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Artie exits and pulls the pallet load to a numbered spot.

41A INT. WAREHOUSE - 4TH FLOOR - NIGHT

*

The kick of a piece of lumber stops Artie and causes him to listen and look around for a second.

Artie drops the load, pulls his comic from his back pocket and turns around when he is confronted by the Small Girl/BOO, 10, with a worn dress, sneakers, unkempt hair, and faint circles around her eyes. She's unintimidated by adults but carries a stuffed animal.

Artie startles and steps back.

ARTIE

Whoa!

BOO

Are you okay?

Artie leans on the pallet he just dropped and breathes heavy.

ARTIE

You just took a couple of years off my life!

FREEZE FRAME on Boo.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Meet Boo. Appropriately nicknamed, you could expect her to show up when you didn't expect her. She's a kid at heart, but serious, like an old soul. There was something different about her and I couldn't quite put my finger on it.

UNFREEZE FRAME on Boo.

BOO

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to scare you... too much.

ARTIE

Oh, you did.

BOO

You're new here.

ARTIE

Just started... what's your name?

BOO

Boo.

ARTIE
No kidding.

BOO
My real name is Celeste but
everyone calls me Boo.

ARTIE
I wonder why.

BOO
Do you really?

ARTIE
No.

Boo looks straight at Artie with little emotion.

BOO
I like you. You're funny.

Artie nods.

BOO (CONT'D)
You had an interesting look on your
face when you turned around.

ARTIE
Yeah, one of terror. I didn't
expect to see anyone there.

BOO
I'll try not to do that to you
again.

ARTIE
Thanks. Was that your art project
in the conference room?

BOO
Actually, they're Betsy's.

ARTIE
Betsy?

Boo pulls a string on BETSY, a tired and worn stuffed animal
that has seen better days.

BETSY (V.O.)
Hi. I'm Betsy. I want to take a
nap.

ARTIE
Hi Betsy. Don't we all?

BOO

We're supposed to stay in there but it's so boring and Bell gives me the creeps.

ARTIE

Why are you here? You're all of what, eight, nine years old?

BOO

I'm ten, but I want to know why you're here.

ARTIE

It's just a job my dad got for me. I don't plan on being here long.

BOO

No one does.

A loud CLICK and FEEDBACK echoes through the floors as a PA system crackles into use.

BELL (V.O.)

Artie, please meet Dax on the second floor for proper pallet placement. Artie to Dax on Floor Two.

Audible HANG UP of a phone PA system and CLICK.

ARTIE

I gotta scoot. Will I see you again?

Boo shrugs her shoulders. Artie pulls the jack away.

BOO

I'll find you.

Boo gives him a small wave of her hand.

42

INT. WAREHOUSE - 2ND FLOOR - NIGHT

Dax leans over a pallet of boxes, picks his teeth with a tooth pick. Artie appears at the end of the row and pulls the pallet of boxes behind him.

Dax sees Artie and waves him in, and flicks the tooth pick.

Dax waves Artie to the spot.

DAX
Right over here.

Artie maneuvers the pallet and drops it in the space.

Dax reaches out his hand to shake.

DAX (CONT'D)
Dax, Dax Dickerson.

Artie shakes Dax's hand.

ARTIE
Artie Watson... Dax Dickerson,
didn't you play ball at the
university?

Dax surprised but loves the notoriety.

DAX
Yeah, yeah.

ARTIE
But you got injured.

DAX
Yeah, blew my knee out.

ARTIE
Why are you in this place?

DAX
Well, when I got hurt, the
scholarship went away, couldn't
afford school. They told me to come
back when I could "walk" again.

Artie looks down at Dax's knee.

DAX (CONT'D)
And so it's been a slow rehab but
I'm almost back to full speed. I
can't wait to get back on the
field. Gonna play for State this
time. They want me.

ARTIE
Good luck.

DAX
You play any ball?

ARTIE
Nah. Only a little in high school.

DAX
Position?

ARTIE
Receiver.

DAX
Really? Come with me. I wanna show
you something.

Dax walks off. Artie looks about, grabs the jack and follows.

43 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 4TH FLOOR - NIGHT**

Mallory nears a far corner and checks for others around. She ducks into some crates and pallets.

44 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 4TH FLOOR - MALLORY HIDEOUT - NIGHT**

Mallory settles into a spot on some pallets, pulls out her novel from her back pocket. She opens the paperback to find a small pouch of white powder. She pulls it out to look at.

45 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 3RD FLOOR - DAX REHAB AREA - NIGHT**

Dax and Artie walk up to a tarp-covered plywood wall.

Dax pulls off the tarp to reveal a small hole in the plywood with a rough spray-painting of a football receiver.

ARTIE
What's this?

DAX
Part of my rehab.

ARTIE
So you work on this after your
shift or what?

DAX
Are you kidding? I work on it
whenever I can get away from the
others.

Dax picks up a football from the floor.

ARTIE
Does Bell know about this?

DAX

No and she's not going to, is she?

Artie shakes his head.

Dax makes a couple of quarterback calls, fakes a snap, drops back, and fires a pass through the hole.

Artie is somewhat impressed.

DAX (CONT'D)

Grab that for me?

Artie picks up the ball and underhand tosses it back.

Dax takes another fake snap, drops back...

DAX (CONT'D)

You're open!

Dax fires a cannon of a pass to Artie.

Artie sidesteps the pass as it bounces down the aisle.

DAX (CONT'D)

Dude.

ARTIE

What?

DAX

A little help?

Artie picks up another ball nearby and tosses it to Dax.

DAX (CONT'D)

Be ready for this one. Hut!

Dax drops back and fires another toward Artie.

Artie raises his hands to catch the ball as it blasts through his hands and fingers. Artie turns and flinches in stinging pain.

DAX (CONT'D)

I thought you were a receiver.

ARTIE

Yeah, on the freshman team.

Artie picks up the ball, walks it towards Dax, and tosses it to him. Artie grabs the pallet jack.

DAX

Where ya going? You don't want to play catch?

ARTIE

No. I shouldn't. If I lost my job, my dad would kill me.

DAX

Lose your job? Nobody loses their job around here.

Artie pauses.

DAX (CONT'D)

This is the perfect place to work... because you hardly ever have to, if you don't want to.

Artie lets that register.

ARTIE

I'll see ya around.

Dax shakes his head and watches him leave. He passes the ball through the hole.

46

INT. WAREHOUSE - BREAKROOM - NIGHT

PAUL, 40+, the opposite of effervescent with an attitude to back it up. He sits at a table by himself, disinterested.

Artie passes by the door, comes back and sticks his head in.

ARTIE

Hey, have you seen Bell?

Paul looks up as if to wonder why this person talks to him.

FREEZE FRAME ON Paul.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Paul, Paul, Paul. You gotta love him. He never met a person he liked, a cup of coffee less bitter than him, and a day that wasn't a complete disaster--in his opinion. Nothing was ever good enough for Paul. But I knew deep down inside of him somewhere, there was something. Something good. Just none of us had seen it yet!

UNFREEZE FRAME ON Paul.

PAUL
You talking to me?

Artie looks around the empty room.

ARTIE
Yeah.

PAUL
How would I know where she is? I
don't look for her, she looks for
me.

Artie walks over to Paul.

ARTIE
Artie Watson. I'm new here.

PAUL
Really?

ARTIE
Yeah, I was just looking for Bell
to see what she has for me to do
next.

PAUL
Yeah, well, about her--

Bell enters with a coffee mug.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Speak of the proverbial devil...

BELL
I see you've met Paul.
(sarcastic)
He's a little shy.

Bell has his attention.

PAUL
I'm not shy and you know it. I'm
just ready for my shift to be over.

ARTIE
But the shift just started.

PAUL
Exactly.

BELL

Don't let Paul fool you. He's just
a big teddy bear.

Paul and Bell stare at each other for a moment.

PAUL

Don't you wish.

They maintain their stare as Bell takes a sip of her coffee.

BELL

Strong coffee can deal with just
about anything.

Bell turns and leaves. Paul's eyes track with her.

ARTIE

I sure want to stay on her good
side.

Paul stares at the door.

PAUL

She doesn't have a good side.

A little awkward, Artie moves toward the door.

ARTIE

All right! I found Bell so I'll see
you around.

Artie leaves. Paul takes a sip of his coffee and also follows
Artie with his eyes.

47

INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - COUNTER - NIGHT

Dax saunters into the office area where Bell works on a
typewriter and Artie does paperwork from his clipboard.

DAX

So Bell, how was that tap water I
brought you earlier.

Bell stares at Dax. She glances down at the untouched solo
cup of water on her desk.

BELL

I'm letting it age.

Dax doesn't give up.

DAX
Can I get you anything else?

BELL
You don't get it do you?

DAX
Get what?

Bell hesitates and then grabs a clipboard.

BELL
Could you be so sweet to inventory
a pallet we missed...

DAX
Sure!

BELL
... on the twelfth floor?

Dax tries to control his instant anxiety.

DAX
Don't think I've been to that floor
yet.

BELL
Just push the button with the
twelve on it and it'll take you
right there.

Dax takes the clipboard, looks at it and backs out of the
area.

ARTIE
This building doesn't have twelve
floors.

Bell shoots a look that could kill to Artie.

Artie feels her wrath.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
I probably just miscounted.

Artie goes back to his paperwork.

48

INT. WAREHOUSE - 4TH FLOOR - MALLORY HIDEOUT

Mallory reads and sips a canned soda. SQUEEKS come from her
movements.

49 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 4TH FLOOR - AISLE - NIGHT**

Paul sets down a pallet and prepares to remove the jack. Paul stops and listens to SQUEEKS come from the corner. He glides toward the sounds.

50 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 4TH FLOOR - MALLORY HIDEOUT**

Mallory moves her foot and spills her soda can.

MALLORY

Ahhh!

Mallory takes her blanket and sops up the drink.

A large boot lands near the spill.

Mallory jumps back and looks up.

Paul stands over her.

MALLORY (CONT'D)

Don't do that! Why are you spying on me?

PAUL

Sweet setup you have here... and I wasn't spying.

MALLORY

Then why are you back here? Are you a perv or something?

PAUL

I could ask you the same thing and no I'm not a pervert.

MALLORY

I'm avoiding work. Are you snooping around to tell Bell?

PAUL

I don't do detective work for Bell. But she did tell me she was looking for you.

MALLORY

Really?

Paul nods.

Mallory gets up to leave.

MALLORY (CONT'D)
You best not snitch on me.

Paul makes the sign of the cross over his heart.

51 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 12TH FLR - OUTSIDE FREIGHT ELEVATOR - NIGHT**

Dax steps out of the elevator to a dark floor.

ARTIE (V.O.)
I have to say, the warehouse was
the oddest building I'd ever been
in. Floors one through six went
up... and I guess floors seven
through thirteen went down.
Bizarre. What I heard was, you
never wanted to be sent "down"
floors.

Old swing music plays on the PA system and echoes throughout
the floor. Dax flips the light switch, nothing happens. Flips
it a few more times and the lights come on.

51A **INT. WAREHOUSE - 12TH FLR - NIGHT**

*

Dax strides to the pallet in the middle of the floor, looks
at the number and compares it to the clipboard. A shadow
figure passes behind him as he counts the boxes.

DISEMBODIED VOICES (V.O.)
(whispers)
Dax. Dax. Dax.

Dax stops his count and looks around.

DAX
Yes? Who's there?

DISEMBODIED VOICES
Dax. Dax!

DAX
What do you want? Who are you?

Strange LAUGHTER fills the room.

Dax continues to count the boxes, but as fast as possible.

A shadow figure passes and touches the back of his arm. He
drops the clipboard.

DAX (CONT'D)
 What was that? Who's there?

The lights flicker and shut off--utter darkness.

Dax lets out a slight whimper.

Dax's flashlight CLICKS on and shines all around and at the clipboard.

As Dax bends down to grab the clipboard, a shadow arm brushes across his neck.

DAX (CONT'D)
 Whoa!

Dax shines the flashlight about.

Dax turns back to the pallet. Another hand brushes his waist.

DAX (CONT'D)
 Stop!

Another hand goes across his throat.

DAX (CONT'D)
 No!

Dax shines his light in the direction of the touch to reveal dozens of arms and hands grabbing for him.

DAX (CONT'D)
 No! Please no! No, no please stop!

52 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 12TH FLR - OUTSIDE FREIGHT ELEVATOR - NIGHT**

The freight elevator stands empty as the cries of Dax go unanswered.

53 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - COUNTER - NIGHT**

Artie hands an inventory clipboard over to Bell.

ARTIE
 Is it all right if I take a five
 minute break for some water?

Bell nods toward the break room.

As Artie exits, he and Mallory nearly bump into each other.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Oh, sorry!

Artie notices a smidge of blood under Mallory's nose and points to his own nose.

MALLORY

Oh.

Mallory touches beneath her nose and draws a drop of blood on her finger.

Mallory takes a tissue from her pocket, dabs the blood away, and continues to the counter.

Mallory stands in front of Bell across from the counter and checks her clipboard.

A drop of blood lands on Mallory's paper with a SPLAT.

Bell stops her work, perturbed, looks at the drop of blood before Mallory can cover it.

BELL

Go to the restroom and take care of your issue.

Mallory puts her hand under her nose and rushes out.

54

INT. WAREHOUSE - BREAKROOM - NIGHT

Paul and Artie sit at a table. Paul takes a big slurping sip of his coffee... and gags.

PAUL

This place sucks.

ARTIE

How's that?

PAUL

Have you tried the coffee?

Artie shakes his head.

PAUL (CONT'D)

It's stale and disgusting... tastes like it was roasted ten years ago, about the same time the coffee maker was last cleaned out. And there's never any snacks in the vending machines. They're basically empty.

(MORE)

PAUL (CONT'D)

The last time I bought a pastry from one of them, it was like buying an overpriced rock. And soft drinks? Forget it--it's like drinking vinegar. A wonder we don't all die here.

ARTIE

Is there anything you like about this place?

PAUL

Well... no.

ARTIE

You get paid don't you?

PAUL

Not yet.

ARTIE

We get paid every two weeks, right? How long you worked here?

Bell walks in to get some coffee as Paul continues.

PAUL

A little while. Maybe about two weeks. I'm not sure. Doesn't matter anyway. I'm quitting at the end of this week. Anything's better than this hole.

BELL

Leaving us so soon, Paul?

PAUL

Oh yeah.

BELL

But we were just starting to... try to like you.

PAUL

This place is a dump and you won't miss me a bit.

BELL

(to herself, her back to Paul and Artie)

True, true.

PAUL

What was that?

BELL

I said we're going to miss you.

PAUL

I don't believe you, but thank you.

ARTIE

I don't know Paul... You go home this weekend, get some rest and relaxation in ya, maybe you'll feel different on Monday.

PAUL

Yeah. You're full of it.

ARTIE

Just trying to help.

PAUL

You know how you can help me? Keep all that positive reinforcement junk to yourself. I'm a realist--I call it like I see it. And I see this warehouse as the last place on earth anyone would want to be subject to working. Convince me otherwise.

ARTIE

Maybe tomorrow... you seem pretty convinced today.

Paul nods.

PAUL

Every day.

Artie decides to exit the toxicity.

ARTIE

Back to work.

Artie exits the room, Bell stops short and places a clipboard on the table.

BELL

Paul, I need you to move pallet fourteen forty-five from the 4th floor to the 3rd floor.

PAUL

From the 4th floor to the 3rd floor. Fourteen forty-five.

BELL

Yes.

PAUL

I just moved that pallet from the 3rd floor to the 4th floor, I don't know, maybe a few hours ago?

BELL

Yes. It's needed on the 4th floor now.

PAUL

(sarcastic)

I love my job.

Bell exits. Paul cracks a small smile.

55 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 4TH FLOOR - NIGHT**

Artie pushes and pulls a short pallet of boxes into place and drops it with a THUD and reveals Boo on the other side.

BOO

Hi.

Artie reels with shock.

ARTIE

Ahh! You gotta stop doing that!

BOO

Sorry. Will you play Go Fish with me?

ARTIE

Go Fish, huh? I guess for a couple of minutes. No one else seems to work around here either.

56 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 4TH FLOOR - MAKESHIFT CARD TABLE - NIGHT**

Artie, Boo, and Betsy sit on small crates that surround a larger crate and play.

BOO

Go Fish!

ARTIE

I think you're cheating.

Boo pulls Betsy's string.

BETSY (V.O.)
Got any twos?

ARTIE
Who is she talking to?

BOO
You.

ARTIE
Really?

Artie hands over his card.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
Now I know you're cheating.

Boo pulls Betsy's string.

BETSY
I wanna take a nap.

	ARTIE		BOO
Go fish!		Go fish!	

Boo draws a card for Betsy as Artie rearranges his cards.

Nestled next to Betsy's leg is a small red notebook.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
What's that?

BOO
It's my little red notebook.

ARTIE
Got any kings?... You write in it?

BOO
Go fish... Sometimes.

Artie draws a card.

ARTIE
Like what?

BOO
Rules of the warehouse.

ARTIE
Rules? So how many are there?

BOO

Eight.

ARTIE

What's the first one?

BOO

Time is weird here... Queens?

ARTIE

Go fish... It is late at night for you.

Boo draws a card.

BOO

That's not what it means. Look at your watch, it says three-o-seven.

Artie looks.

ARTIE

So?

BOO

It'll always say three-o-seven here. Everyone's watch says three-o-seven.

ARTIE

You're bluffing.

Boo shakes her head.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Next one.

BOO

Number two: Everyone is being tested and punished here.

ARTIE

Sixes?

BOO

Go fish. Everyone is being tested by being tempted with what always causes them to fall. When they continue to fall, they're punished.

ARTIE

Where do you come up with this stuff?

57 INT. WAREHOUSE - BREAK ROOM - NIGHT

Dax recovers from his twelfth floor encounter. He and Mallory hang out at a table while Paul sits by himself at another table.

MALLORY

You okay? You seem a little off.

DAX

Nah, I'm fine, I'm fine.

MALLORY

Dax, you can see that Bell's about ten years older than you, right?

The mention of Bell's name snaps Dax out of his daze.

DAX

Bell? Really? Cause all I can see is beauty.

MALLORY

You're blind.

DAX

That's what they say, love is blind.

PAUL

So's lust.

DAX

Yeah, well we got something you guys might not have ever experienced--chemistry.

MALLORY

Does she know that?

DAX

If she doesn't, she will soon!

MALLORY

How's that?

DAX

We're going out.

MALLORY

She agreed to go out with you?

DAX

Not yet, but she will.

PAUL

Yeah. When pigs fly.

58 INT. WAREHOUSE - 4TH FLOOR - MAKESHIFT CARD TABLE - NIGHT

Artie shuffles the deck.

Okay, what's Dax's issue?

BOO

Pride, narcissism.

Artie nods his head.

ARTIE

Paul?

BOO

Negativity?

ARTIE

Yeah, Mallory? *

BOO

She's just not a good person--at all. She doesn't care about anyone or who she hurts. *

ARTIE

Hmm. You? *

BOO

I'm not supposed to be here. *

ARTIE

Why's that? *

BOO

Mallory's my babysitter. My parents went on a two-week trip to Europe and hired Mallory to stay with me. She got this job and couldn't find anyone to watch me her first night on the job. So I'm trapped here.

ARTIE

So no testing or punishment for you?

BOO

No, I'm just stuck.

ARTIE
Hmm... third rule?

BOO
People's memories are short here.

Artie motions for her to explain.

BOO (CONT'D)
No one remembers being punished
after a few minutes. No one
remembers when they started working
here, but it only seems like a few
hours or days ago.

ARTIE
Does it seem like that to you?

Boo shakes her head no.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
How long have you been here?

BOO
Not sure... a long time.

ARTIE
So, you're ten, right? That means
you were born in 1987 and--

BOO
No.

ARTIE
Yeah. If you're ten, you were born
in '86 or '87.

BOO
When were you born?

ARTIE
1972, and now it's 1997, so I'm
twenty-five.

Boo lays her cards down. Her eyes well up.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

BOO
I was born in, ... 1976. I'm
supposed to be twenty-one. I've
been here ten years.

ARTIE

Are you sure about that?

Boo stares at the crate.

BOO

My parents... They never knew what happened to me. Are they still looking for me?

Boo buries her head in her hands as Artie moves over to comfort Boo. He is hard-pressed to find words to say.

FREEZE FRAME on Artie as he hugs Boo.

ARTIE (V.O.)

You know, I didn't know what to say. Was this girl serious or was she seriously psychotic? I mean, she was obviously ten, and cute as a button, but not twenty-one. So why would any kid make up such a crazy story and get so upset about it? Something seemed really off about this place.

UNFREEZE FRAME on Artie and Boo. Artie gathers the cards.

ARTIE

I need to get back to work but we can probably talk more tomorrow.

BOO

No! Tomorrow will be too late. We don't have much time.

ARTIE

Okay, okay. Come find me in a little bit and we'll talk more.

Boo puts her little red notebook in Artie's hand.

BOO

Read the other rules. We only have a short time.

Artie nods, hands Boo the deck of cards and puts the book in his pocket. He grabs his pallet jack and heads down the row.

Mallory lands on her crates, opens her paperback, and out flops the baggie of white powder.

Mallory hesitates and then pours the powder on her book.

60 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 5TH FLOOR - NIGHT**

Artie rounds the corner with a pallet of boxes. He drops it next to a pile of assorted items on the floor which includes a mattress.

Artie sits on the mattress and pulls out Boo's little red book. He opens and a small PICTURE of two adults falls out.

Artie picks up the photo, looks at the individuals, and flips it over to read: Mommy and Daddy, 1986.

Artie folds the photo, tucks it back in the notebook and reads.

BOO (V.O.)

Eight Rules of the Warehouse. Rule number four: The Wall of Fame is pictures of people who have been "fired".

Artie looks up for a moment.

ARTIE

(to self)

Note to self: Stay off the Wall.

Artie continues to read.

BOO (V.O.)

Rule number five: You can't escape but for a few seconds after your first shift ends.

Artie looks at his watch: 3:07. He taps on it.

Artie looks again at the little red book.

BOO (V.O.)

Rule number six: Bell has trouble seeing me.

Artie is puzzled but continues.

BOO (V.O.)

Rule number seven: The twelfth floor is for punishment.

Artie turns the page.

BOO (V.O.)
 And rule number eight: The
 thirteenth floor is where you get
 "fired" and you don't come back.

Artie sighs and lays back with the book on his chest.

ARTIE
 (to himself)
 This is crazy. It doesn't really
 make any sense.

61 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 4TH FLOOR - AISLE - NIGHT**

Paul pulls an empty pallet jack down an aisle.

ARTIE (V.O.)
 So, according to Boo, a ten-year-
 old, I should stay off floors
 twelve and thirteen, not get
 "fired", and go home at six. This
 didn't sound too complicated.

Near Mallory's Hideout, Paul stops and listens.

A rhythmic slight KNOCKING comes from the hideout area.

Paul slides near the hideout, careful to not startle Mallory.

Paul disappears into the hideout.

PAUL (O.C.)
 Mallory? Mallory! Wake up, Mallory!

Paul reappears outside the hideout, looks around concerned
 and ducks back into the hideout.

Silence as a glow grows and emanates from the hideout.

62 **INT. WAREHOUSE - NOWHERE FLOOR - NIGHT (DREAM SEQUENCE)**

Artie opens his eyes. He slams himself up off the floor.

He looks around confused in a dark room, strange lighting,
 and an ethereal view, sometimes going in and out of focus.

ARTIE
 Is anybody here? Hello?

Weeping draws Artie towards an area. Strange echoes abound.

63 **INT. WAREHOUSE - NOWHERE FLOOR - WEEPING ROOM - NIGHT**

Artie nears an area to see Mallory from behind stationed on the floor. She weeps, shakes, and rocks.

Artie moves to Mallory's front. Her nose bleeds.

ARTIE

Mallory!

Artie pulls a handkerchief out of his pocket and dabs Mallory's face and blood.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Here, take this.

Mallory doesn't respond.

MALLORY

Someone please help me.

ARTIE

I'm here. I'm here.

Mallory looks beyond Artie. She doesn't see him.

MALLORY

What have I done?

ARTIE

Mallory. Mallory?

Mallory fades away. He takes a step back, shocked.

A raised voice draws Artie to another area.

64 **INT. WAREHOUSE - NOWHERE FLOOR - YELLING ROOM - NIGHT**

As Artie approaches, Dax paces in and out of the light.

DAX

Why don't you love me?

DAX'S FATHER (V.O.)

Son, you'll never amount to anything!

DAX

Mom?

DAX'S MOTHER (V.O.)
 Oh Daxy. Listen to your father.
 This sports thing, it's just a
 waste of time, just a phase.

Artie steps up beside Dax. Dax argues and pleads with no one.

DAX
 I try and try to make you happy.

Dax breaks down to tears as if a little boy.

DAX (CONT'D)
 What do you want from me! Why can't
 I make you happy! Why do you hate
 me.

Artie approaches Dax as he dissolves away.

ARTIE
 Dax!

Artie looks about the now empty room. In another area stands Paul, hands clasped at his chest, eyes closed.

65 **INT. WAREHOUSE - NOWHERE FLOOR - PAUL ROOM - NIGHT**

Artie creeps up to Paul. Paul stands before a lit painting of distinct and separated shades of black, grey, and white.

ARTIE
 Paul?

Paul doesn't react. Artie looks at the picture and Paul.

A loud sound of WHITE NOISE draws Artie out of the room.

Paul opens his eyes and watches Artie leave.

66 **INT. WAREHOUSE - NOWHERE FLOOR - TV ROOM - NIGHT**

Artie enters an area with only a tube TV. The TV only shows STATIC SNOW and blasts WHITE NOISE.

Artie bends down to the TV and the screen cuts to

67 **INT. WATSON HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY (ON TV)**

Jenny holds Frank tight as he sobs.

68 **INT. WAREHOUSE - NOWHERE FLOOR - TV ROOM - NIGHT**

Artie is dumbfounded at the sight.

ARTIE

Mom. Dad. What's wrong? Why are you crying?

Artie looks around for whomever controls this place.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Why is my dad crying?

69 **INT. WATSON HOUSE - BASEMENT - DAY (ON TV)**

Jenny pulls Frank back from her.

JENNY

It's not your fault, Frank. It's not your fault.

FRANK

I made him do it. It is all my fault.

Jenny hugs Frank tight and brushes his head.

JENNY

No no. It's no one's fault.

The image cuts back to STATIC SNOW/WHITE NOISE.

70 **INT. WAREHOUSE - NOWHERE FLOOR - TV ROOM**

Artie anguishes at the sight of his parents' pain. He screams at the TV.

Paul looks on unnoticed, then leaves.

Boo peaks from around a corner too. She scuttles away.

ARTIE

Dad! Mom! Bring them back! Bring them back. What are you doing to me! Why do you torture us! Why do you torture them!

END DREAM SEQUENCE

71 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 5TH FLOOR - NIGHT**

Artie yells as he wakes from his nap in a cold sweat.

ARTIE

Why! Why! Don't do this!

Artie's tear-filled eyes open. He stands, looks at the mattress, and pulls his handkerchief to wipe his face. Blood stains from Mallory are on his handkerchief.

Boo stands nearby.

BOO

Are you okay?

Artie jumps at Boo's voice.

ARTIE

Yeah, I don't know.

BOO

It wasn't a dream.

ARTIE

Huh? What?

BOO

What you just saw, it was real, as real as this place can be.

ARTIE

What is this place?

BOO

You're one step away from a bad forever.

72 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 4TH FLOOR - MALLORYS HIDEOUT - NIGHT**

Mallory takes Paul's offered handkerchief and dabs her nose and mouth.

MALLORY

Thank you.

Paul stands near Mallory who sits on a pallet.

MALLORY (CONT'D)

That thing you just did...

PAUL

I was just trying to wake you from
a bad dream.

MALLORY

No. That was more than a bad dream.
I think I was, dead. You pulled me
completely out of it. How did you--

Paul shrugs his shoulders.

PAUL

I was just helping you.

MALLORY

Why me?

PAUL

You needed help.

MALLORY

But you're never, ah, nice.

PAUL

(defensive)

I have a soft side.

73

INT. WAREHOUSE - 5TH FLOOR - NIGHT

Artie sits on the edge of the mattress. Boo stands.

ARTIE

I see what you're saying. I have to
get out of here.

BOO

But why are you here?

ARTIE

I fell asleep on this mattress--

BOO

No, why have you been sent here?

Artie is troubled by the question.

BOO (CONT'D)

You have to know why you're here or
the door will never open for you.

Artie thinks.

FRANK (V.O.) *
Have you ever thought about going *
to where the film work is? Have ya? *

ARTIE (V.O.)
One more game man.

BOO (V.O.) *
Why are you here? *

FRANK (V.O.) *
Get off the couch! *

Artie snaps out of it.

ARTIE
I'm apathetic. Lazy.

BOO
No you're not. *

ARTIE
But I am. *

BOO
You seem apathetic and lazy, but *
it's for a reason... You're *
avoiding something. *

Artie thinks hard. *

ARTIE (V.O.) *
My dad's too much sometimes. *

JENNY (V.O.) *
Your father just wants the best for *
you. *

ARTIE (V.O.) *
I can't live up to his *
expectations. He just demands so *
much from me. *

Artie comes to a realization. *

ARTIE *
I'm afraid. *

Boo is concerned and fearful. Artie notices. *

ARTIE (CONT'D) *
I mean, I'm afraid of not pleasing *
my dad, so, I don't usually even *
try--what's the point? *

BOO *
So, you're not really lazy, *
apathetic, lackadaisical, *
lethargic, passive, a sloth-- *

ARTIE *
Ah, no!... Not really. I'm always *
afraid of disappointing my dad. *

BOO *
You have to want to change... and *
then we have to get out of here. *

ARTIE *
I do want to change. I don't want *
to be that person anymore. *

BOO
Then please take me with you.

ARTIE
Of course. What time is it?

BOO
It's around 4:50. We have to be at
the door at six when it unlocks.

ARTIE
Shouldn't be that difficult.

BOO
Bell never likes to lose anyone.

Artie thinks for a second.

ARTIE
I've got a plan... and we're going
to need Ms. Betsy's help.

Boo nods.

74 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 3RD FLOOR - DAX REHAB AREA - NIGHT**

Dax throws footballs at his practice target.

The PA system CRACKLES on overhead. Dax stops.

BELL (V.O.)
All personnel to the office area.

75 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 4TH FLOOR - AISLE - NIGHT**

Paul and Mallory walk as Paul pulls a pallet jack.

BELL (V.O.)

All personal to the office area.

76 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - COUNTER - NIGHT**

The workers gather outside Bell's office area.

From Bell's office is a cascade of male shouting in Italian. A shadow paces back and forth in front of the frosted glass as another shadow stands frozen.

The workers listen, glance at each other and murmur.

ARTIE

What's going on?

MALLORY

The big boss is here to yell at Bell.

A slam on a desk ends the "conversation" and Bell emerges from the room escorted to the door by MR. DIAVOLO, 50's, a full-on-godfather type, the Boss, with no patience for finesse who steps out and gives a quick look to the workers.

MR. DIAVOLO

(in Italian)

Inconceivable.

Mr. Diavolo SLAMS the door.

Bell, unembarrassed and in full control, clears her throat.

DAX

What was that all about?

ARTIE

Why was he yelling at you?

BELL

Mr. Diavolo says "Get back to work."

PAUL

All that screaming and drama and he only said three words?

BELL

Get. Back. To. Work... And that's
four words.

All but Dax turn to go, as Paul mumbles under his breath.

PAUL

Three, four... same thing.

Dax sees his chance to endear Bell.

DAX

Wait! He can't talk to you that
way.

Everyone pauses as Dax marches to the door of Mr. Diavolo's
office.

BELL

I wouldn't...

Dax swings the door open with the force it was slammed and
takes a few steps into...

77

INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - OFFICE - NIGHT

... before he realizes Mr. Diavolo is not there. Dax looks
about puzzled. He takes advantage of what the others do not
know and rips into an empty room.

DAX

How dare you talk to our boss like
that? She works her backside off
all night trying to keep those
miscreants in line and you have the
gall to show up here unannounced
and ball her out! Don't ever talk
to her that way again or you'll
have the rest of us to deal with!

Dax slams both his hands on the desk.

The workers watch through the frosted glass in puzzled
amazement as Bell stands, with her back to the spectacle,
unhumored; she shakes her head.

78

INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - COUNTER - NIGHT

Dax exits the office with a slam of the door and nods to the
group as they stare.

As Dax walks past Bell, he gives her a wink. She looks at him, unimpressed.

BELL

That one's gonna cost ya.

As Dax passes Bell, the office door opens and Mr. Diavolo steps out and addresses Bell.

MR. DIAVOLO

(in Italian)

Send him to the thirteenth floor.
He's fired.

Bell nods.

BELL

(to Dax)

He has a job for you.

Dax looks about, nervous.

DAX

I can handle it. I ain't scared of him.

BELL

You should be.

The workers hesitate and head back to work. Dax waits for instructions.

79

INT. WAREHOUSE - INSIDE FREIGHT ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Dax steps in and prepares to close the doors when Paul jumps in.

DAX

Where you going?

PAUL

With you.

DAX

I can fight my own battles.

PAUL

I just want to see the floor, never been there.

80 **INT. 4TH FLOOR - NIGHT**

Artie pulls a small crate on his pallet jack. As Artie pulls, CHEEZY VIDEO GAME MUSIC comes from a corner he just passed.

Artie stops, listens, and wanders toward the MUSIC.

As Artie turns the corner, tucked behind a crate, reveals a tube TV with the landing page of Artie's favorite video game.

VIDEO GAME (V.O.)

Come. Conquer. Be a hero!

ARTIE

No way.

Artie takes a step towards the game but stops himself.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

(to himself)

No. I can't. Boo and I gotta go.

Artie turns and leaves.

81 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 13TH FLOOR - OUTSIDE FREIGHT ELEVATOR - NIGHT**

The doors open to the dark floor.

82 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 13TH FLOOR - INSIDE FREIGHT ELEVATOR - NIGHT**

Dax and Paul can hear the voices from Dax's time on the twelfth floor.

DAX

Oh man. It's those voices again.

Paul sees the fear in Dax's eyes.

PAUL

Hey, I got this. You're only picking up paperwork anyway.

DAX

I can--

PAUL

I gotcha' back. You stay here.

Paul takes a big breath and takes a few steps onto the floor.

The doors to the elevator close on their own. Dax tries to stop them to no avail.

Paul turns and nods.

83 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 13TH FLOOR - OUTSIDE FREIGHT ELEVATOR - NIGHT**

Paul turns to face the darkness.

PAUL

Okay boys. Let's dance.

84 **INT. WAREHOUSE - INSIDE FREIGHT ELEVATOR - NIGHT**

Dax watches through the small elevator door window.

The explosion of a thousand fire blasts light up Dax's face through the glass as he watches and falls back. The elevator jerks and starts upward.

DAX

No! No! Paul! Paul!

85 **INT. WAREHOUSE - 2ND FLOOR - NIGHT**

Artie and Boo scheme behind some crates.

ARTIE

What time is it?

BOO

About 5:30.

ARTIE

Okay, I have to take this one load to the fourth floor. I'll ditch it there and meet you behind the freight elevator on the first floor in ten minutes. Got it?

BOO

Got it. Don't be late.

ARTIE

Wouldn't miss it for the world.

Boo watches as Artie hurries away.

86 **INT. WAREHOUSE 4TH FLOOR - TEMP GAME AREA - NIGHT**

Artie pulls his load down an aisle when he sees Dax play his favorite video game on a tube TV off to the side.

Artie approaches and stares at the game.

ARTIE

Who put this here? Did you?

DAX

No, I came by and it was here. It's a great stress reliever, but I'm not very good.

Artie picks up a controller.

ARTIE

Let me show you real quick.

Artie launches in and is soon ensconced before the video game, lost in play.

87 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - NIGHT**

Boo creeps around the 1st Floor elevator, Betsy in hand, and peaks around crates and pallets as she waits for Artie.

The clock over the door reads 5:41.

Bell passes by, stops, looks about toward the exit, and continues on.

Boo looks at the wall clock--5:42.

She makes a dash for the stairs.

FOOTSTEPS reveal someone approaches and Boo stops behind a crate. Bell rounds the corner and snatches papers off the crate. She pauses and peers at the front exit and then to the crate area. She walks near the crates and stops.

Boo glances at the clock--5:44. She holds onto the cross around her neck and closes her eyes.

Bell pauses near the crates. Boo's image is faint, almost invisible. She doesn't move. Bell looks but continues around a corner into another area of the warehouse.

Boo sighs and scampers away.

88 INT. WAREHOUSE 4TH FLOOR - TEMP GAME AREA - NIGHT

Artie continues with his game. He and Dax are on the edge of their crates.

Mallory stops to watch as well.

MALLORY
What is this?

ARTIE
Lord of the Underworld: The
Final Resolution and Escape,
Part Seven.

DAX
Lord of the Underworld: The
Final Resolution and Escape,
Part Seven.

MALLORY
Oh.

ARTIE
Yeah, please don't break our
concentration, Mallory.

Mallory pulls up a small crate, sits, watches.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
I play this game all the time. I'm
about to bust this thing wide open.

As Artie, Dax, and Mallory continue, Boo appears from behind some crates in the distance. She sees the distraction and dashes to Artie's side.

BOO
Artie!

ARTIE
Not now Boo!

BOO
Artie! Time is almost up!

ARTIE
I've got three more lives... I'm
headed toward my best score--

BOO
No!

A downer sound ripples from the video game set.

ARTIE
Boo! See what ya did! I lost a
life!

Boo stares frightened and disappointed at Artie.

Artie starts the game up again, not giving Boo a glance.

BOO
Stop, Artie! Stop!

Artie continues.

BOO (CONT'D)
You're just like all the rest.

Artie bears down.

BOO (CONT'D)
You're just a game boy, Artie. You
were supposed to be my hero.

Boo turns and runs.

The word "hero" echoes on Artie's face. He freezes as the realization crosses his face.

FRANK (V.O.)
Go be somebody's hero!

As the cheesy music continues, Artie drops his hands and the controls.

ARTIE
Boo!

Artie passes the controller to Dax.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
Dax, you finish the game.

DAX
What? Seriously? But you're almost
home!

ARTIE
Yup.

Artie dashes off in pursuit of Boo.

Artie rounds a corner--no Boo.

ARTIE (V.O.)

You know, there comes a time in a person's life when they have to grow up and put on big boy pants. This was that moment. This was when I became an adult.

Artie stops and listens. A SNIFFLE comes from behind a crate.

Artie approaches the crate.

ARTIE

Boo. I'm sorry. There's still time.

Silence and a SNIFFLE.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

I want to be... No, I need to be your hero. Will you still let me?

Nothing. Artie looks at his watch, that still says 3:07, and trudges away defeated.

As Artie leaves, Boo flies in and latches onto his legs.

BOO

Please get me out of here.

Artie bends to one knee and gives Boo a huge bear hug.

ARTIE

I'm so sorry. Bell's distraction--

BOO

I know. I know. We gotta go!

Boo grabs Artie's hand and drags him forward.

90

INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - NIGHT

Artie and Boo approach the front area. The clock reads 5:56.

BOO

Bell will be watching... she knows you can still escape.

ARTIE

You're right. Okay, if Bell shows up, we split up and go with the plan. She can't stop us both.

BOO

She can't see me... but I'm scared.

ARTIE

How does she not see you?

Boo pulls out a silver cross from around her neck.

BOO

Because of this, and who it represents inside me.

Artie digs in his shirt and pulls out his cross. Boo looks at his cross and then at Artie and smiles.

ARTIE

We're good. Somehow she can see me, but we're going to make it--both of us. You have to believe that.

Boo musters her strength and nods.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

I don't see her or anyone else. Let's make a run for it.

They look at each other and sprint towards the exit.

Bell steps out from behind a stack of pallets.

BELL

Knocking off early?

Artie and Boo freeze.

From Bell's view, Boo's image is faint.

ARTIE

Let me borrow Betsy... and remember the plan--Go fish.

Boo hesitates.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Trust me?

Boo nods, hands over Betsy.

BOO

Go fish.

They take off in opposite directions.

BELL

Where are you going? Like, I don't know every inch of this warehouse! You'll never get out.

Boo dashes behind a row of crates as Artie and Betsy disappear behind a wall of paper rolls.

Bell backs up near the exit, crosses her arms, looks at the clock--5:58 changes to 5:59--and waits.

91 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - CRATE AREA - NIGHT**

Boo peaks out at Bell and the clock. She dips back behind the crates.

Boo spies a shard of lumber, picks it up and tosses it with all her might away from the exit and Bell.

92 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - EXIT - NIGHT**

Bell reacts to the noise of the wood bouncing around.

BELL

You think I'm gonna fall for that?
I've been doing this for quite a
while now.

Boo looks about, unsure of her next step. (NO SC. 93) *

From a side area of the warehouse comes an unexpected voice. *

BETSY (V.O.)

I need a nap. I need a nap.

94 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - EXIT - NIGHT**

Bell straightens up and takes notice.

Bell walks towards the paper roll area.

95 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - PAPER ROLL AREA - NIGHT**

Bell looks around paper rolls and sees nothing until she looks down at her feet. Betsy sits against a roll.

96 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - EXIT - NIGHT**

With an unworldly CLICK, ECHO and continuous BUZZ, the door unlocks as the clock above hits 6:00.

From around the corner Artie sprints to the exit.

ARTIE
Go fish! Go fish!

The quick PATTERN of feet hurry toward the exit.

97 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - PAPER ROLL AREA - NIGHT**

At the sound of the lock and Artie's call, Bell stands from Betsy, turns and rounds the corner of the paper rolls.

98 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - EXIT - NIGHT**

Artie reaches the door as the BUZZ increases.

ARTIE
Boo! Hurry!

Artie pushes the door open to the dawn's light and steps one foot out the door.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
Boo!

99 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - CRATE AREA - NIGHT**

Boo rounds the crates to see Artie wave her on. A distant Bell heads toward Boo's flicker.

BOO
Artie!

Boo runs with everything she has.

99A **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - EXIT - NIGHT** *

The BUZZ volume of the unlocked and open door becomes unbearable as the door pushes against Artie to close.

99B **EXT. WAREHOUSE - EXIT - DAWN** *

Artie steps out and pulls against the door.

ARTIE
Boo! I can't hold it much longer!

100 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - EXIT - NIGHT**

Boo approaches the door and is almost there when she stumbles and falls just short as the door slips out of Artie's restraint and SLAMS...

... against a large piece of lumber lodged between the door and the door frame. The BUZZ continues.

101 **EXT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT ENTRANCE/EXIT - NIGHT**

Artie pulls on the door from outside but can't budge it.

ARTIE

Boo! Push!

102 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - EXIT - NIGHT**

Boo looks up from the floor and follows the piece of lumber up to a hand that holds the lumber up to Paul's concerned face.

PAUL

Are you going or staying?

BOO

Betsy!

Wide-eyed, Boo looks at Paul, pops up and turns to run back for Betsy.

As Boo takes a step, Paul's large arm wraps around her waist, pulls her back, and pushes her out the door he has pried open with the lumber.

103 **INT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT LOADING AREA - PAPER ROLL AREA - NIGHT**

Bell runs toward the front exit and stops and lets loose a HORRIFIC SCREAM.

104 **EXT. WAREHOUSE - FRONT ENTRANCE/EXIT - DAWN (2022)**

*

Boo falls straight into Artie's arms as a door SLAM echos off the empty parking lot. The muffled HORRIFIC SCREAM rattles about.

ARTIE

Are you okay?

BOO
Yes, but Betsy...

The piece of lumber bounces off the ground and startles Artie and Boo. The two turn around.

Positioned by the now shut door is Paul. A third SCREAM shakes the ground as the lights in the windows and street flicker.

PAUL
We need to leave this place.

Amazed that Paul came out of the warehouse, Artie stands and holds Boo's hand.

ARTIE
Yeah! We can take my truck and--

Artie turns to see his truck is gone and the lot empty.

A loud groaning emanates from the building.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
My truck!

BOO
Let's just go!

The threesome hurry away from the building. *

104A **EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAWN** *

The three stop a few yards and stop and look at the building. *

ARTIE
Paul, why did you come with us?

Paul allows a smile to creep from the corner of his mouth.

PAUL
I didn't so much "come with you" as I helped push you out.

ARTIE
Yeah, thanks! I just didn't expect--

PAUL
Look, I have to run.

ARTIE
What? But we just...

Paul reaches into Artie's shirt pocket and pulls out a business card. He hands it to Artie.

It reads "Sgt. Douglas Morgan -- Hawkins Police Department. Detective."

ARTIE (CONT'D)

You know Doug? Where'd you get this? He's no detective. He just works at a video--

PAUL

Keep it. You'll need it.

ARTIE

Yeah, but--

Paul turns to Boo and squats down. She sniffles.

BOO

But Betsy...

PAUL

I have a surprise for you too.

Paul reaches behind his back...

BETSY (O.C.)

I need a nap.

... and pulls out the stuffed animal.

BOO

Betsy!

Boo hugs Betsy and then grabs Paul's neck. After a moment he pulls Boo away.

PAUL

You know, you've both been just as entertaining as you've been unaware.

ARTIE

Unaware?

PAUL

Bell didn't realize who I was either, until it was too late.

Boo smiles up at Paul as he stands. Artie turns and walks.

ARTIE
I don't know what you're talking
about...

As Artie walks, Paul waves at Boo and fades away. Artie turns
to talk to Paul.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
... but we gotta get some help down
here--

Paul is gone.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
Paul?

Boo wipes her tears but beams.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
Where'd he go? He was just right
there!

Boo bends down where Paul stood and picks up a large white
feather, and knows.

BOO
Cool.

With the warehouse in the background, Artie looks around,
confused. He takes Boo's hand and walks.

ARTIE
I must be losing my mind.

As they walk down the street, Boo can't lose the grin off her
face as she glances up at Artie, who's now on a mission.

105 **EXT. CORNER STORE - DAY**

Artie and Boo walk up to the location where the pay phone had
stood.

ARTIE
(to himself)
Where's the pay phone?... It was
just here yesterday!

Artie scoots toward the store. Boo follows.

106 INT. CORNER STORE - DAY

Artie hurries up to the counter as Boo notices all the candy and food at her eye level. A CASHIER plays on his CELL PHONE behind the counter. Artie points outside.

ARTIE

What happened to the pay phone?

The Cashier leans forward and looks outside.

CASHIER

Pay phone?

ARTIE

Yeah, I just used it yesterday.

The Cashier looks puzzled.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

You got a house phone I can use?

CASHIER

No.

ARTIE

This store doesn't have a phone?
This is sort of an emergency.

The cashier shakes his head "no".

CASHIER

An emergency?

ARTIE

I need to call the police. Is there
a phone around here?

The Cashier taps on his cell phone and hands it to Artie.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

What am I supposed to do with this
calculator?

The Cashier now is a bit annoyed. He takes his cell phone back, punches in 911 and hands it back to Artie.

Artie takes the phone, looks at the Cashier clueless.

The Cashier motions for Artie to put the phone up to his ear as 911 answers.

911 OPERATOR

9-1-1 What's your emergency?

ARTIE
Hello? Hello?

911 OPERATOR
Yes. 9-1-1 What's your emergency
please?

Artie fumbles with the cell phone but continues.

ARTIE
Yeah, me and a 10-year-old girl
just escaped from this weird
warehouse on Calcine Street.

911 OPERATOR
What is the address of where you
are calling from?

ARTIE
Ah, the Corner Store at 12th and
College... and so it's me and Boo
and Paul, but Paul sort of vanished
into thin air. This evil woman
named Bell was trying to keep us
there or fire us but--Hello? Hello?

Artie looks at the phone and then at the Cashier who shrugs
his shoulders and takes back the phone.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
Never mind.

Artie heads for the door.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
Thanks for your help... And I gotta
get me one of those, those
calculators.

The Cashier gawks as Artie grabs Boo's hand, they rush out.

107

EXT. CORNER STORE - DAY

Artie and Boo march.

ARTIE
Do you know where your house is
from here?

BOO
I think so, maybe... It's been so
long.

Boo points one way and then the other. They hustle off in the second direction.

108 **EXT. BOO'S HOUSE - TREE - DAY**

Artie and Boo approach the house and stop by a tree. Artie scratches something on a piece of paper.

ARTIE

Look, here's my phone number and address. Call me in a day or so or if you need something, okay?

Boo nods.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

I've got to get over to my house, tell my parents and get back to the warehouse with the cops. I just live a few blocks over. I'll talk to you soon.

Artie rushes to leave.

BOO

Artie?

Artie stops.

BOO (CONT'D)

Your dad will be proud of you.

Artie is unsure how to feel, what to say.

BOO (CONT'D)

You're a hero you know... for me, ... for you.

Artie steps back to Boo, to her level.

ARTIE

Yeah, I guess.

BOO

You are.

ARTIE

Thanks. You helped me too.

BOO

I think we helped each other.

ARTIE
Yeah. See ya around.

BOO
Go fish.

Artie smiles, places the red notebook in Boo's hand, and takes off.

Boo turns and looks at her house.

109 **EXT. WATSON HOUSE - DAY**

Artie hurries toward his parent's house.

Artie bounds onto the front porch and grabs the door knob to open the door. Locked.

ARTIE
(to himself)
Why in the world...

Artie pats down his pockets for his keys. No luck.

Artie feels around on a ledge above. Bingo--key!

Artie tries the key. Doesn't work. He bangs on the door.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
Mom! Dad! Why is the door locked?
Can you let me in?

There's no response. Artie moves to look in a window. The shades are all pulled.

ARTIE (CONT'D)
(to himself)
What is going on?

110 **INT. WATSON HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

An ELDERLY WOMAN looks out the window across the street and sees Artie lurk about the house across the street.

The Elderly Woman pulls a phone up to her ear as she continues to watch the house.

ELDERLY WOMAN
Douglas? Son, there's someone
poking around the old Watson
house...

(MORE)

ELDERLY WOMAN (CONT'D)
Yes, and I think this involves
Artie. You need to get over here!

111 **EXT. WATSON HOUSE - DAY**

Artie pulls on a window to see if it will open. Nothing.

Artie pulls out a credit card, returns to the front door and shimmies the lock and door. CLICK!

ARTIE
Works every time.

112 **INT. WATSON HOUSE - KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Artie barges in and calls out.

ARTIE
Mom! Dad!

Artie stops short. The house is empty. He rushes toward the

113 **BASEMENT**

... and runs down the stairs. Empty.

ARTIE
(to himself)
How could my parents just pack up
and leave in one night? I know dad
wanted me to get a job and all--

Footsteps above stop Artie short as he hurries up the stairs
to the

114 **DINING ROOM**

... where two POLICE OFFICERS draw their weapons and train
them on Artie.

OFFICER 1
Sir, don't move and put your hands
in the air.

ARTIE
Excuse me? Where are my parents?
Why are you in my house? Why are
you pointing guns at me?

115 **EXT. BOO'S HOUSE - TREE - DAY**

Boo stands frozen behind a tree. She looks at the picture of her parents and peers at her old house. She's petrified.

116 **EXT. WATSON HOUSE - DAY**

Artie sits in the grass near a police car, handcuffed, as OFFICER 2 holds an ID and talks on the radio. OFFICER 1 asks questions, takes notes, and listens to Artie.

ARTIE

Officer, if you'll just uncuff me, I can take you to the warehouse where Boo and I escaped and where there are others being held.

OFFICER 1

When was the last time you lived in this house?

ARTIE

Huh? I live here now!

OFFICER 1

And you say you live with your parents... what are their names?

ARTIE

Frank and Jenny Watson.

SEVERAL PEOPLE gather in the street near the squad car as a dark SUV pulls up behind.

A man in a suit and tie exits the car and walks toward the police car. Officer 2 finishes on the radio and talks with OLDER DOUG, 50, professional.

OFFICER 2

Detective Morgan, you know this man?

OLDER DOUG

Maybe. He looks like an old friend.

OFFICER 2

Apparently he knows you. Your card was on him, but his ID is years out of date.

Officer 2 hands the card and ID to Older Doug.

OLDER DOUG
This just isn't possible.

OFFICER 2
What?

OLDER DOUG
Let me talk to the suspect for a second.

Older Doug approaches Artie and gets a good look at him while Officer 2 joins Officer 1 and pulls him back from Artie.

OLDER DOUG (CONT'D)
Artie, do you know who I am?

Artie looks at Older Doug, looks him over, shakes head.

OLDER DOUG (CONT'D)
Artie, you once said your dad was like John Wayne toilet paper--rough as sandpaper and wouldn't take nothin' off nobody.

ARTIE
Yeah. Who told you I said that?

OLDER DOUG
You told me that, at Miller Park, the day you started working at the warehouse.

ARTIE
Doug? Whoa! Did you go to that costume party like that? That's some pretty impressive makeup! But who are you supposed to be, your old man? I thought you were going as that Sense and Sensibility dude. What happened?

OLDER DOUG
I think that's the question for you. This isn't makeup. This is me.

ARTIE
You look ancient! Like you're fifty years old or something.

OLDER DOUG
So you went to work the first night, what happened.

ARTIE

I went to work last night. I had this really mean lady boss who locked me and several others in the warehouse and made us work. But this morning I escaped with a ten-year-old girl named Boo and a guy named Paul, but he sorta disappeared.

The two officers eyes drop and glance at each other.

OLDER DOUG

Mr. Watson, Artie, lower your voice.

ARTIE

Why? I'm not drunk or high on anything.

OLDER DOUG

Not saying you are, just you and me... what's today's date?

ARTIE

It's New Year's Day, 1997.

Older Doug moves closer.

OLDER DOUG

Artie, listen--

ARTIE

(examining the face)

Dude! That is amazing makeup! Did you get that Lori chick to do that for you? Are you punking me? Where's the camera?

OLDER DOUG

Artie, this isn't makeup. Something strange has happened. But there is really no time to figure it out.

Artie looks at Older Doug confused.

OLDER DOUG (CONT'D)

I'm a detective for the HPD--

Artie busts out laughing.

ARTIE

No your not! You don't even like cops.

OLDER DOUG

Trust me and just do as I say or else you may spend a good portion of time in jail or even longer in a padded room.

ARTIE

What are you--

OLDER DOUG

Don't say anything else to the officers about people holding you at a warehouse or a minor girl with you. Just let it go for now.

ARTIE

A padded room? Why?

OLDER DOUG

Please just stop talking.

The officers return to Artie and Older Doug.

OFFICER 1

The Captain is wanting to know what's taking us so long. We're going to need to transport Mr. Watson to the station for further questioning.

ARTIE

I'm going downtown!

Older Doug cuts the evil eye to Artie.

ARTIE (CONT'D)

Sorry.

OLDER DOUG

Officers, do you mind just driving by the warehouse address Mr. Watson says he was at? Just to see what's there?

117

EXT. RAZED INDUSTRIAL AREA - DAY

A police car and Older Doug's car pull up and stop at an empty lot covered only in gravel and small rubble.

Officers 1 & 2 exit the cruiser, shut the doors, walk towards the back door of their car.

OFFICER 2

There's nothing here... hasn't been anything here since I can remember.

OFFICER 1

I know.

The officers remove Artie from the back of the car as Older Doug exits his car.

OFFICER 1 (CONT'D)

Does this look familiar?

ARTIE

Vaguely. I mean, I was just here this morning but there was a building right there. And by the way, someone stole my truck last night.

OLDER DOUG

Artie!

ARTIE

No I'm serious!

OLDER DOUG

Officers, let me have a minute with Mr. Watson.

The officers look at each other and nod.

Older Doug pulls Artie a few feet away.

OLDER DOUG (CONT'D)

Listen, seriously. Totally. Shut. Your. Mouth.

ARTIE

But--

OLDER DOUG

Zip it!

ARTIE

My parents?

OLDER DOUG

Look. I don't know where you've been the past couple of decades,... but your parents are gone.

ARTIE

I know that. Where'd they go?

OLDER DOUG

Artie, it's not 1997. It's 2022.

ARTIE

Dude, you look really old but--
what?

OLDER DOUG

Yeah. You're parents have passed.
I'm really sorry. They were two of
a kind... really good people...
You've been missing for twenty-five
years.

*
*

Things dawn on Artie. Grief crawls across his face.

*

OLDER DOUG (CONT'D)

And now all of the sudden you show
up outta nowhere.

ARTIE

What happened to me?

OLDER DOUG

No one knows. You went to work that
first night and all they found the
next day was the old truck parked
here in this empty lot with the
keys in it. No trace of you. For
all we knew you'd been murdered and
dumped in some shallow grave. It
was awful. The authorities searched
for months. It's still an open
case.

*

ARTIE

Really? Well, here I am.

OLDER DOUG

Yep. Here you are.

The officers approach Artie.

OFFICER 1

The Captain's barking at us to get
him to the station.

Older Doug makes a "keep your mouth shut" hand signal to
Artie. Artie nods as he's placed in the cruiser.

The cruiser drives off followed by Older Doug.

ARTIE (V.O.)

And so, I spent a few days in a holding cell before Detective Doug Morgan, my new old best friend, managed to get me released. They eventually dropped the trespassing charges and didn't really know what to do with me. It was all chalked up to being a big unexplained mystery. Oprah even called once or twice wanting to interview me on TV. I really miss my parents. And so now, I'm just trying to adjust to living twenty-five years in the future. The whole thing was kinda weird. Pretty much like it was for Boo and her parents.

*

118 **EXT. BOO'S HOUSE - TREE - DAY**

Boo still stands behind a tree, frozen and afraid to even look at the house. She places the picture back in the book.

Boo walks away to leave, takes a few slow steps, when a GARAGE DOOR OPENER signals movement at Boo's house.

Boo slides back behind the tree and watches as an OLDER MAN, 60's, walks out of the open garage, raises the hood of a car.

Boo sees the Older Man/DADDY. He takes her breath away as she covers her mouth.

She watches him work for a moment.

Boo, in a trance-like walk, moves toward the car.

119 **EXT. BOO'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY**

BANGING and WRENCH noises come from beneath the hood.

Boo reaches the driver's car door and stops. She hesitates for a moment, fearful.

BOO

Daddy?

All noise from under the hood stops. Nothing happens.

BOO (CONT'D)

Daddy, is that you?

A wrench BANGS through the car engine as it falls to the driveway.

Boo's wide-eyed DADDY emerges and peers around the hood. Fear, shock, and confusion paint his pale face.

An eternal stand-off--neither can believe their eyes.

DADDY

Oh my...

Boo's Daddy drops to his knees, overcome.

DADDY (CONT'D)

Pumpkin?

Boo rushes into her Daddy's arms. Tears flow with the long embrace.

A door CLICKS and swings open somewhere in the garage.

A few FOOTSTEPS precede a woman's voice, 60's.

MOM (V.O.)

Honey, your lunch is--

Boo sees her mom over her Daddy's shoulder.

BOO

Mommy!

120 **EXT. BOO'S STREET - DAY**

A woman's loud scream pierces the noon hour.

ARTIE (V.O.)

And that's how Boo re-introduced herself to her parents--gets me every time. To say they were shocked and confused is an understatement... but at that moment, none of them cared. She had lost her parents for years. They had lost their little girl. And they finally got each other back.

121 **EXT. RAZED INDUSTRIAL AREA - NIGHT**

A razed lot stands alone against a city backdrop.

ARTIE (V.O.)

As for the warehouse... I still drive by there every once in a while, wondering if it will ever show up again. And if it does, maybe I can go inside and get some folks out... Kinda like Boo and I did for each other. Sorta like Paul did for us.

122 **EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT**

The warehouse shimmers into existence and stands against the night sky.

Sin is a funny thing. Not funny like "Ha ha" but funny as in strange. Our flaws blind us. And sometimes we need a real friend, a hero, to show us the way out. Like my dad was a hero, Boo was a hero to me, and I like to think a was something of a hero to her. Semper fi!

123 **INT. WAREHOUSE - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT (CODA)**

Bell pulls open the top drawer of a filing cabinet and rifles through some files.

Behind her two individuals enter the doorway. PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEE #1, proud, touches his hair, knocks on the door frame as PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEE #2 looks on, a bit lost.

PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEE #1
Excuse me? We're both here for an interview?

Without a glance, Bell stops her file search, looks up and into the camera.

BELL
Have a seat. I'll be right with you.

Bell continues to stare into the camera and allows an ever so slight grin. She winks at the camera.

CUT TO BLACK.