

BOONDOGGLE

[EXCERPT]

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EXT. LOWER EAST SIDE - DAY

A UPS DRIVER is handing a package to a DOORMAN, when his (the Driver's) pager rings. He looks at the message, and abruptly returns to his truck, package and all, and screeches off.

INT. 8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A huge APPLAUSE. Around a giant veneer table sits a mix of clean cut young corporate frat types, and the balding, overweight, middle-aged men they will one day become.

Alec stands at the front of the room, tucking a single computer disk into the giant portfolio. Todd glares at him.

EXT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE 8TH FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Alec exits the conference room with his co-workers, including Todd, who clumsily carries a bunch of mounted posters.

TODD

Son of a bitch, you were carrying that case just to psyche me out.

ALEC

(innocently)

Maybe I needed a portfolio this size to contain my ideas.

TODD

I had my whole fucking presentation blown up because of you.

ALEC

Did it help?

TODD

Suck my dick. A clever acronym and a multimedia projector don't make your ideas any better.

ALEC

No, but originality does.

TODD

Fuck you. You'll be lucky to spend your life trapped as an Associate VP, like Markowitz.

MARKOWITZ (V.O.)

Actually, I'm quite secure in my position.

Just then, Markowitz steps in. He is middle-aged and balding, and clinging to a dream of upper management.

TODD
Mr. Markowitz. Have you lost weight?

Markowitz stares down Todd, then goes to his office and slams the door.

ALEC
Smooth move. He wears a man-girdle.

Todd thinks he's joking.

ALEC
Squash league.

TODD
There's a squash league?

ALEC
Invite only.

Alec makes a racquet swinging motion as he walks off.

EXT. CHRYSLER BUILDING - DAY

A UPS truck pulls up to the building.

INT. UPS TRUCK - DAY

The UPS Driver climbs in back and starts opening several small, seemingly random parcels.

INT. ALEC WELLINGTON'S OFFICE - DAY

On a floor full of cubicles, Alec sits in a small windowless office. Clearly he is on the rise. He is at his computer printing out all his e-mails without even reading them, when one in particular catches his eye.

ALEC
Confidential? They only send those to Senior Executives and higher.

Then it dawns on him.

ALEC
Oh my God, they're testing me.

He hits "PRINT" and jumps out of his seat.

INT. UPS TRUCK - DAY

Taking pieces from the various boxes, the UPS Driver assembles a gun. He opens one more and removes a silencer.

EXT. PRINTER AREA - DAY

Todd tries to act intra-office cool and mentorly in front of a young co-worker, DEAN SIMONS, while waiting and waiting for several documents to print.

TODD

Dude. Does he have to print every single e-mail?

DEAN

No doubt, brah. Look at this one. It's call "The Sludge Report."

Todd takes the sheet and reads it in a voice.

TODD

Dear Mr. Wellington, We anxiously await your appraisal regarding manufacturing. Research indicates that a mere twenty percent increase in the output of industrial by-product will lead to a two percent increase in profitability for our environmental clean-up properties. Signed, The Board.

(laughing)

Jesus Christ, he's writing fake confidential e-mails to himself.

(reading)

See attachments?

DEAN

(in awe)

There's like fifty pages here.

Alec arrives and rips the papers away from Todd and Dean.

ALEC

That's private.

TODD

Anything sitting on the printer is fair game.

DEAN

Why do you print them all anyway?

Alec touches Dean on the shoulder, in a perfectly executed intra-office mentor move.

ALEC

Getting ahead is all about a personal touch. A phone call. An office visit. Sending a fruit basket.

(holding up the printouts)

I like to have something tangible to make me feel connected to the people I do business with.

Todd cannot believe Dean is eating-up this shit.

ALEC

Besides, if I leave my e-mails on the server, Markowitz reads them.

TODD

Fucking finally! Tree killer!

Todd rips his printout off the printer and leaves. Dean meanwhile jots down, "fruit basket."

INT. MARKOWITZ'S OFFICE - DAY

A window office with a COLUMN blocking half of the crappy eighth floor view. A PLANT from home. An old WEDDING PHOTO with the bride cut-out. Welcome to Middle Management hell.

ALEC

Markowitz, you have a minute?

MARKOWITZ

What do you want, Wellington?

Markowitz tilts his monitor so that the porn can only be seen reflected in the window behind him.

ALEC

I'd like to request a trip to manufacturing.

MARKOWITZ

Fuck you, you don't get to request trips. You get sent on them.

ALEC

This is important. Could you just put in a request for me?

MARKOWITZ

What's that in your hand?

Markowitz notices the printouts.

ALEC

Nothing.

MARKOWITZ

Bullshit.

ALEC

It's confidential.

MARKOWITZ

No way. Let me see it.

ALEC

I can't.

Markowitz gets up and puts his hand on Alec's shoulder.

MARKOWITZ

Look, Wellington. I'm trying to be your friend. They see you requesting a trip that's above your level, it reflects badly on you.

ALEC

I guess I'm willing to take that risk.

Markowitz grabs for the papers. Alec counter maneuvers to the doorway.

MARKOWITZ

Fine then. It's your career.

INT. CHRYSLER BUILDING/LOBBY - DAY

The UPS DRIVER makes his way down the hallway, carrying a package the exact size of a powerful handgun with silencer attachment, the brownness of his shirt and his electronic clipboard symbols of unfettered corporate access.

BUSINESS GUY

Freight elevator is that way.

UPS DRIVER
Lick my balls.

The UPS Driver is in perfect character.

INT. NEAR THE COFFEE MACHINE - DAY

The coffee machine sits next to a window in a back corner of the office, where no one sits. Todd enters with a stack of printouts, takes one look at the black, sludgy coffee, and pulls out a new filter. Then Alec comes in. He too notices the sludginess, but pours himself a cup anyway.

TODD
Are you following me?

ALEC
(ignoring)
Mmm, murky goodness.

TODD
That stuff's a day old.

ALEC
Synthetic sweeteners make
everything taste good.

Alec adds milk from the fridge. The color of the coffee barely changes.

TODD
You don't know how to brew another
pot, do you?

ALEC
Who has the time? Besides, we have
people who do that.

TODD
Yeah, it's usually me.

Alec notices that Todd is holding a filter. He throws away his cup and waits for Todd to start brewing a new pot. Todd, however, intends to torture him.

TODD (CONT'D)
See, I know how to make the office
coffee taste good. I use a pack and
a third to give it that nice
caffeine edge, yet without
overpowering the flavor.
(MORE)

TODD (CONT'D)

Any more than that and it's too acidic, and any less and you fuckwads might as well be drinking decaf.

Alec nods in agreement, hoping to speed up the process.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

The UPS DRIVER and his brown uniform make their way down the hallway without question.

EXT. ALEC'S OFFICE - DAY

The nameplate reads, "Alec Wellington." The door is shut. The UPS Driver silently twists the doorknob and slips in.

INT. ALEC'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

We are looking at Alec's computer screen. Alec's e-mail program is open. The hand on his mouse is searching.

VOICE (O.S.)

They're all deleted? What about the trash folder, it's got to be in the trash folder. What? Zero e-mails? Who the hell empties their trash?

SINISTER VOICE (O.S.)

Alec Wellington?

VOICE (O.S.)

What? Yes! I mean no! I mean--

The figure at the computer turns around, startled. It's Markowitz. The sinister voice belongs to the UPS Driver, who is behind him.

MARKOWITZ

Oh, it's just you. He's getting coffee.

UPS DRIVER

You're not Alec Wellington?

MARKOWITZ

No.

UPS DRIVER

Why are you reading his e-mail?

MARKOWITZ

I wish I was. The fucker prints them out and deletes them.

UPS DRIVER

He prints them out?

MARKOWITZ

Little bastard. Coffee machine's over there.

Markowitz points down the hall. The UPS Driver looks him over one more time, then leaves.

MARKOWITZ

You're not going to say anything, are you?

INT. NEAR THE COFFEE MACHINE - CONTINUOUS

Todd is on a roll.

TODD

...But then half the time when I step away, and come back, the new pot is already empty, because all the assholes like you come out of the woodwork, and drink it all. So I usually I gotta sit here and watch the shit brew just so I can get a cup of my own goddamn java.

ALEC

Wow, if only you were as proficient in your presentations as you are at making coffee.

Silence. Alec stares at the new filter in Todd's hand. Todd is unwilling to make a move.

TODD

Say the magic word, bitch.

ALEC

(looking at the sugar)
Shucks! Looks like we're out of Splenda. Guess I'll have to go to Starbucks.

Alec throws away his cup and leaves.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Alec passes the UPS Driver on his way to the elevators.

ALEC
Mailroom is that way.

UPS DRIVER
Gnaw on my hairy ass.

Delivery guys.

INT. NEAR THE COFFEE MACHINE - DAY

Todd leans on his printouts, gloating while watching his new pot of coffee brew.

TODD
Fucking Starbucks coffee sucks.

The UPS Driver rounds the corner.

UPS DRIVER
Alec Wellington?

Todd turns around to block access to his precious brew. Then he notices who it is.

TODD
Oooh, is that important? I'd better sign.

The UPS Driver hands Todd the clipboard. After signing, Todd looks up to find an empty box and a powerful handgun pointed at him. The UPS Driver fires silently. Todd winces in pain, only to realize he hasn't been hit.

Instead, the hollow-point bullet has blown out the glass window directly behind him. The UPS Driver is walking away.

TODD
What'd you do that for? Hey asshole!

The UPS Driver stops about twenty feet down the hall. Then he turns around and charges linebacker-style straight for Todd.

TODD
Oh shit!!!

INT. LOBBY - DAY

Alec exits the elevator and leaves the building through the doors on one side. A moment later, a falling body goes SPLAT just beyond the doors on the other side. Alec doesn't notice.

EXT. CHRYSLER BUILDING - DAY

A crowd has gathered around the splat dressed in Todd's suit.

BYSTANDER

First I heard the window break, and then I saw him jump.

BYSTANDER 2

He killed himself.

Bystander 2 points to a broken window on the eighth floor. Everybody is so taken, that nobody notices anything strange as the UPS Driver dumps the incriminating evidence in his truck, then crosses the street to an awaiting limo.

INT. LIMO - CONTINUOUS

STROM is there, looking out on the crowd and the splat through tinted glass. The UPS Driver gets in.

STROM LOOKING GUY

I trust there were no complications.

UPS DRIVER

Nope. Just another overly eager yuppie overcome by the stresses of working his way up the corporate ladder.

Both laugh.

UPS DRIVER

Oh, there was one other thing. He prints out all his e-mails.

Strom looks horrified.