

Admin of the Malcontent

by Gerson Stearns

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ADJUST TO:

Blackberry device vibrating and ringing on the bedside table. A photo of a loving family rests near by.

In the background, we hear the sound of someone stirring in bed sluggishly attempting to wake up and usher in a new day.

PAUL is waking up. He's late thirties going on 50. Out of shape, not much tone but there's still potential.

PAUL (uttering) instinctively responding by fat-fingering the insultingly small blackberry keypad.

PAUL checks his voice mail.

VOICE MAIL LADY

(vo)

You have 16 new messages. Message one is from "Steve Ericsson".

STEVE ERICSSON

(vo)

Paul, tell those fucking incompetent assholes from Verizon if I wanted to live in a fucking third world country like Bolivia I would move to fucking Bolivia. I don't understand why we work with these incompetent assholes. I feel better... bye.

VOICE MAIL LADY

(vo)

Next new message is from "John Tessle".

JOHN TESSLE

(vo)

Paul, good fucking car service that you guys have. Another piece of shit service. It's really unbelievable how we get this fucking service. When are we going to get a fucking car service that shows up when they're supposed to! It's really a fucking joke... the services you provide.

GRAPHIC of EMAIL TEXT appears on the bottom of screen.

From: Ruth Donner
 To: Paul Stone
 Subject: Pizza

I went to the firm-sponsored health fair only to discover the firm provided us pizza. I find this truly offending considering this was supposed to be about good health. I want to know why you made this decision.

GRAPHIC flickers then deleted.

Another GRAPHIC appears.

From: Bob Buchanan
 To: Paul Stone
 Subject: Receptionist

Please inform our receptionist that eSTAR is our biggest client and not the name of someone. Apparently, she said no one works here by that name. Freakin tools these receptionists!

2 INT. COMMUTER EXPRESS BUS

2

On to the bus steps PAUL - blackberry on ear.

SUZI

(vo)

Paul, when you get in we need to talk. Bye.

VOICE MAIL LADY

(vo)

Message 13 from...

SUZI

(vo)

Me again. Sorry to hound like this but Ruth is causing problems. She is an absolute cancer to the morale of this office. We probably need to meet with her sooner rather than later if you know what I mean.

PAUL with phone still glued to his ear, nestles into a seat next to a lady whose gluteus requires a foldout.

VOICE MAIL LADY

(vo)

Message 14 from...

BOB

Paul, Jeremy Fish from eSTAR will be here today. Let's make sure the office is ready and God I hope your guys switched out the GE bulbs with eSTAR ones. You know how Jeremy likes to give me shit about that. One more thing, can we get some cold air down here? I'm dying.

PAUL the zombie gently hangs up.

MONTAGE of EMAIL TEXT GRAPHICS and VOICE OVER communications thunders in.

Fellow commuters rarely make eye contact with each other. Most are either sleeping or industriously fingering their blackberries.

The just-out-of-college Refoxicans (Fox News Republicans) assert themselves in the commuter business hierarchy by talking really loud on the cell phone in a manner that makes figuring out what to eat for lunch seem like a hostile corporate transaction.

3 INT. LARGE MODERN LAW OFFICE

3

PAUL approaches the white sterilized expanse of the reception lobby with a gate of eternal boredom.

ADJUST TO:

RECEPTIONIST intently viewing her monitor.

GRAPHIC appears on bottom of screen.

ON GRAPHIC: Mouse clicks on a page of victoriasecret.com.

After an instinctual auto-greeting, PAUL mindlessly approaches on vector towards his office.

PAUL

(vo)

Here we go. I am now the proud parent of 120 kids.

(MORE)

PAUL (cont'd)
 Any basic life skills these
 creatures have learned up to this
 point no longer exist.
 I will be shelled with a dizzying
 array of immaturity for the rest of
 the day and be held accountable for
 everyone's actions. This is what I
 do. I am a Director of
 Administration for the law firm of
 Beazle & Bub.

PAUL oozes towards his office.

Secretaries, EILEEN HUNT and DEB WHITE, lock their sour puss
 faces on PAUL as he walks by. Both taking up valuable space
 on the planet. They are the Frick and Frack of the law firm.
 EILEEN and DEB feverishly e-mail each other.

GRAPHIC APPEARS.

To: Eileen Hunt
 From: Deb White
 Subject: Paul

Look who's coming!

GRAPHIC APPEARS.

To: Deb White
 From: Eileen Hunt
 Subject: Paul

I'm going to throw up.

PAUL slumbers towards EILEEN'S workstation.

EILEEN
 Good morning Paul.

PAUL
 Good morning Eileen.

GRAPHIC appears.

From: Eileen Hunt
 To: Deb White
 Subject: Paul

What an ahole.

PAUL approaches DEB.

PAUL
Good morning Deb.

DEB
Hi Paul.

GRAPHIC appears.

From: Deb White
To: Eileen Hunt
Subject: Paul

He is SOOOOOO rude.

PAUL approaches RUTH JONES, a seemingly quiet secretary who rarely socializes and keeps to herself. Her workstation is eerily void of knickknacks and family photos.

PAUL
Hello Ruth.

RUTH
(avoiding eye contact)
Hi.

As RUTH types, the lights and monitors flicker for a second.

4 INT. PAUL'S OFFICE 4
Office is a drab 9 x 13 foot white-washed box. A few proud pictures on the bookshelf along with some vendor swag. No artwork visible, just loads of memos and an in tray full of inter-office envelopes and bills.

PAUL sinks into his chair and thus begins the painful ritual of accessing all the hate-mail starting with his phone.

VOICE MAIL LADY
(vo)
You have 18 new messages. Message one is from "PATTY WEB".

PATTY WEB
(vo)
Paul, this may sound knit picky but I just want to say that the voice mail lady is offensive. She's rude and I feel like every time she says "I don't understand that command, please try again" that I am being raped in a back alley somewhere.
(MORE)

PATTY WEB (cont'd)
We should really try to change her
tone.

PAUL puts his pen down.

VOICE MAIL LADY
(vo)
Message two is from...

SHAWNIE SUKALOVE
(vo - slurring)
Hey Paul, it's Shawnie Sukalove.
Yeah, I haven't seen you in such a
while. I just want to say thanks.
Thanks for firing me. Thought we
were friends and this is what you
do to me. You are such a puss.
Remember when I told you like it's
always quiet before the storm?
Yeah, so I'm looking forward to
running into you... so... yeah, I
seen Bob the other day. He looks
good, but I'm really looking
forward to running into you and
maybe I'll meet you up near the
house where your wife and the kids
are. Or maybe I'll just meet you
outside the building. It's all
calm before the storm so now I want
to meet ya! Ok,... ok... good luck.

PAUL is frozen. He just stares at his screen.

The computer is pinging with incoming emails.

KNOCKING on Paul's door ENTERS SUZI BREWSTER, the Secretary
Supervisor. She's tired, frightened and looks 8 years older
than she is. A beaten down version of a once vibrant
president of student council.

SUZI
You have a minute?

PAUL
Absolutely.

SUZI
We have an issue with Nadine.
Apparently, she feels Lynn is
talking about her.

PAUL
Ok. So?

SUZI

She is requesting that Lynn be moved.

PAUL

Oh is she? Can Nadine provide us with some specifics other than Lynn apparently talking about her? That would be great.

SUZI

Unfortunately Paul, no. She just knows Lynn's talking bad about her. Apparently, Lynn has been giving her dirty looks too.

PAUL

That's it?

SUZI

Yep. The problem is Nadine says it's causing her stress to the point where it's affecting her job.

PAUL

Perfect. I'll see what I can do. But we can't start moving people around because they think someone is talking bad about them.

SUZI

I agree.

PAUL pops an advil.

PAUL

What else?

SUZI

Greg wants a raise. Says he printed some salary info off Monster for you.

PAUL

Great.

SUZI

Don't forget... you have that meeting with the union arbitrator about the cleaning woman thing.

PAUL

Great.

6 INT. OFFICE HALLWAY

6

PAUL and UNION REPRESENTATIVE appear from a meeting.

UNION REP

Ok Paul. We're very sorry about what happened. It's just so rare it does.

PAUL

So what happens now?

UNION REP

She'll have to attend some ethics classes and she'll be placed on 90 day probation.

PAUL

Don't you think that's a bit soft? She was caught S-T-E-A-L-I-N-G.

UNION REP

That's how it's set up. I don't know what else to say.

UNION REP shaking hands with PAUL.

PAUL

Thanks.

UNION REP heads out. PAUL gingerly walks by a series of attorney offices as if navigating through a mine field.

Secretaries NADINE SCOTT and LYNN MASE spot PAUL. LYNN is frazzled and paranoid like a grenade went off in her foxhole. NADINE is a hair trigger universal victim.

LYNN

Paul, I need to speak with you.

NADINE gives LYNN the look of murder.

PAUL

Stop by later. [beat] Hello Nadine.

NADINE

Mmmhmm...

PAUL gets caught by BOB BUCHANAN, the managing partner.

BOB

Paul, I know this floor is above Grand Central but the trains are too loud and my clients, you know... eStar... are joking about it. Is there something you can do about this? Also, there's no sunlight down here.

PAUL

I doubt I can re-route the trains Bob. However, I will ask God to see if he can re-arrange the sun so you can get more sunlight down here.

BOB

That's good Paul.

PAUL

Bob, I really try.

BOB

That's why we love ya!

PAUL

Who's we?

BOB

Ok so not everyone but just the ones that matter.

PAUL

God I hope so.

CUT TO:

INSIDE BOB BUCHANAN'S OFFICE.

You see JEREMY FISH, the young, bratty son that inherited his Dad's business empire, eSTAR looking at the lights in the ceiling. Overhearing their discussion he smirks.

BOB walks back into his office.

JEREMY is looking at some of BOB's photos.

JEREMY

Is this your mom?

BOB

Sure is. She was a pain in the ass that one. Yours?

JEREMY

She left when I was 18. Not sure what happened to her but I suspect my Dad and her had some issues.

BOB

Sorry to hear that Jeremy.

JEREMY

Yeah. Our house sort of went to shit after she left. Oh well. Look at me now right? I guess things worked out ok.

BOB

Yeah.

8 INT. LAW OFFICE LUNCHROOM

8

PAUL is walking up to the vending machine.

NADINE approaches.

NADINE

Paul, seriously, are you trying to kill us with this stuff?

PAUL

Most people seem to like it and we try to add some healthy stuff like that trail mix.

NADINE

What about the Lorna Doones and the snowballs?

At one of the lunch room tables sits ANNALISA JONES the most senior secretary rolling her eyes in dismay at NADINE as she exits.

PAUL

A little sin here and there never hurts. It's all about moderation.

PAUL grabs his Doritos.

ANNALISA approaches.

ANNALISA

These people are unbelievable. I don't know how you do it Paul.

PAUL
I think Doritos just celebrated
their one millionth ingredient.

ANNALISA
I'm a big believer in everyone has
what's comin' to em.

PAUL
Yeah? I'm clearly getting mine.

NADINE walks away laughing.

NADINE
You just keep fighting the good
fight Paul.

9 INT. OFFICE HALLWAY

9

PAUL walking dreadfully towards RUTH who is diligently typing
away.

DIALOGUE BOX APPEARS

From: Ruth Donner
To: Deb, Eileen, Nadine
Subject: Paul

It's time to talk to Mr. Buchanan
about Paul and his lack of
leadership and the fact that he
doesn't seem to care about our
problems. He's depressing too.

The lights flicker.

PAUL
Ruth, I'll have one of the guys fix
the lights for you.

RUTH continues to type.

Dialogue Box

RUTH
Paul, these lights are a serious
health hazard and I demand to know
what you are going to do about it.

10 INT. PAUL'S OFFICE

10

PAUL clicks on his email

PAUL
I just spoke to her about the
lights!

ENTER BARBARA SKEETS, a malcontent angry divorcee who can't
keep it to herself. Busts wobbling about like soiled string
mozzarella.

BARBARA
Do you have a minute?

PAUL
Sure.

BARBARA
Have you walked around here lately?

PAUL
As a matter of fact, yes.

BARBARA
Morale is horrible!

PAUL
I can see that.

BARBARA
Where do you hire these people?
Everyone is stupid!

PAUL
Don't you feel that may be a slight
exaggeration?

BARBARA
I'm a damn good secretary! I do my
job!

PAUL
And that's well documented.

BARBARA
Seriously Paul, this place sucks! I
mean what are you going to do about
this?

PAUL

Can I ask you a question? Why do you work here if it's so bad?

BARBARA

(Labrador Retriever-in-trouble stare)

Because I have a lot of vacation and I don't want to lose it.

PAUL

Ok. Anything else?

BARBARA

What's going on with Nadine and Lynn?

PAUL

I don't know. What?

BARBARA

I heard they're going at it.

PAUL

Who told you that?

BARBARA

Ruth.

PAUL

What a surprise.

BARBARA

Everyone is on eggshells around her.

PAUL

Why is that?

BARBARA

Like you don't know. She's watching everything we say and taking notes. She's trouble. Everything we say and do offends her.

WALKING towards the bookcase BARBARA picks up a picture frame.

BARBARA - CONT

Is this your Guinea wife?

11 INT. RUTH'S WORKSTATION

11

DIALOGUE BOX APPEARS

From: Suzi Brewster
To: Ruth Donner
Subject: Annual Evaluation

(vo)
The 2006 annual evaluation process is currently underway. As part of the evaluation process, we ask that you complete a Self Evaluation for this review period, March 1, 2005 - February 28, 2006. This evaluation is not weighted as part of your final evaluation score, but can serve as a starting point for conversation during the review conference with your manager/supervisor. Your Self Evaluation will remain confidential within Human Resources until all of your evaluations have been completed.

Lights Flicker. RUTH types.

GRAPHIC APPEARS

From: Ruth Donner
To: Suzi Brewster
Subject: RE:Annual Evaluation

(vo)
What if we don't want to? I'm not trying to be a smart ass but I'm not the least bit interested or motivated to do a self-evaluation of my "day job". Feel free to include "bad attitude" in my formal review if necessary but I just logged on to check it out and I am not impressed.

13 INT. RUTH'S WORKSTATION

13

Lights flicker.

EMAIL TEXT GRAPHIC APPEARS:

From: Ruth Donner
 To: Bob Buchanan
 Subject: Paul Stone

(vo)
 Mr. Buchanan, I am forwarding you
 an email I received from Paul that
 I feel is indicative of his lack of
 concern regarding important issues.
 He thinks everything is a joke.

CUT TO:

14 INT. BOB BUCHANAN'S OFFICE

14

BOB squinting at his monitor typing with one finger. Bob is mumbling.

BOB
 What the hell is going on around
 here?

BOB dials the phone - it's on speaker.

PAUL
 (vo)
 Hey Bob.

BOB
 What is going on?

PAUL
 (vo)
 What do you mean?

BOB
 This secretary, Ruth, is pounding
 me with emails about your lack of
 concern around here.

PAUL
 (vo)
 Have you bore witness to her
 issues? They're ridiculous Bob.

BOB
 I agree. But please make it go
 away. That's what you were hired
 for.

PAUL
 (vo)
 Will do.

BOB hangs up.

15 INT. PAUL'S OFFICE 15

PAUL calls RUTH but she lets it go into voice mail. PAUL hangs up.

PAUL
 Unbelievable.

PAUL typing an email.

From: Paul Stone
 To: Ruth Donner
 Subject: Meeting

(vo)
 Ruth, when you have a minute,
 please stop by my office. Thanks.

RUTH ENTERS. Lights and computer monitor flicker.

PAUL
 Ruth, is everything ok with you?

RUTH
 No. Why am I here?

PAUL
 Your emails to Bob.

RUTH
 What about them?

PAUL
 He doesn't really have time to
 address your concerns.

RUTH
 But you don't Paul. You think
 everything is a joke.

PAUL
 With all due respect, Lorna Dunes,
 snowballs and other offensive food
 items such as pizza should not
 warrant Mr. Buchanan's attention.

RUTH
I disagree.

PAUL
I can't see that. Look, all I want is to figure out a way we can work together while we're here. We don't have to like each other but we can work together.

RUTH
Nothing gets done around here. People think you're a joke and quite frankly, I don't know how you got this far in life.

RUTH gets up to leave.

PAUL
I'm not finished.

RUTH turns around.

RUTH
You know... this place is fucked up and it's because of you Paul.

PAUL
Really?

RUTH
Yeah... really. You're smartass and everyone is sick of it.

RUTH casually walks away.

PAUL
You can't hide Ruth.

ANNALISA witnesses the event.

GLARES of hate exchange between ANNALISA and RUTH.

PAUL
Hey Annie, think she likes me?

ANNALISA
Paul, I for one appreciate what you're trying to do around here.

PAUL
Thanks.

ANNALISA
I don't know how people like her
can get away with that.

PAUL
It's truly dizzying Annie.

PAUL dials.

SUZI
(vo)
Hi Paul.

PAUL
Get a termination packet together
for me. I'm terminating Ruth
immediately.

SUZI
I'll be there in a minute.

ENTER DICK SWELLER, Ruth's attorney/boss.

PAUL
Hey Dick.

DICK
Paul, Ruth is very upset.

PAUL
Sorry to hear that.

DICK
She said you antagonized her,
provoked her and didn't take
anything she said seriously.

PAUL
Dick, I made a convulsing effort to
extend an olive branch. Did she
indicate that at all?

DICK
No.

PAUL
Did she tell you she called me a
smartass?

DICK
No.

TENSE PAUSE.

PAUL
What would you do in my situation?

DICK
I wasn't witness to it so I can't
answer that.

PAUL
Hypothetically Dick, what would you
do?

DICK is turning beat red with anger - his right eye looking
as if it's going to burst.

DICK
I think we should have a cooling
off period.

PAUL
I'm cool now Dick.

DICK
What do you propose?

PAUL
Her actions warrant immediate
termination.

ENTER SUZI.

DICK
Paul, I need her. Ruth plays an
important role in my practice.

PAUL
I'll find you someone better.

DICK
I can't allow this to proceed. It's
he said she said. There were no
witnesses.

SUZI looks stunned.

PAUL
You've got to be kidding.

DICK
I'll speak to her Paul. I'll make
sure she understands the
seriousness of this.

DICK exits.

SUZI
What's that all about?

PAUL
Ruth.

SUZI
I know you're busy. By the way, you
need to make a decision on the new
secretary.

PAUL
Which one? Refresh my memory.

SUZI
Harriet Bloom. She's been temping
for the last 2 months.

PAUL
How's she doing?

SUZI
Actually, she's a breath of fresh
air.

PAUL
How so?

SUZI
For starters, she's nice,
professional, diligent, respectful
and focused.

PAUL
She clearly wouldn't fit in around
here!

SUZI
She's a retired senior citizen.

PAUL
Again... she's nice?

SUZI
Yes.

PAUL
She's respectful?

SUZI
Yes.

PAUL
I say make her an offer.

SUZI
Seriously?

PAUL
Yes. I don't care if she doesn't know how to use Outlook or Word. As long as she is grateful to be employed and works hard and doesn't terrorize this office with shit attitude, she's hired.

SUZI clearly shocked.

SUZI
Paul, maybe you should go get some air.

PAUL
Suz, I'm fine. Just hire her.

SUZI
Ookay. [beat] Oh, almost forgot... here are the termination papers for Ruth.

PAUL
Thanks.

SUZI exits.

PAUL'S phone rings.

PAUL
This is Paul.

BOB
(vo)
Paul, Dick says you're antagonizing Ruth. What is this shit?

PAUL
What?

BOB
(vo)
I know he's a pain in the ass but you have understand his portfolio is necessary to this office and if it means you take a little attitude, then so be it.

PAUL
Oh that's neat. You're knocking my
teeth out Bob. This is very hard to
swallow.

BOB
(vo)
Just be patient.

PAUL
When it comes to her I have none.

BOB
(vo)
I know. Just do your best. By the
way, I keep getting complaints
about the vending machine.
Something about snowballs? [beat]
Gotta go... other line is ringing.
eSTAR.

PAUL hangs up.

16 INT. COPY ROOM PANTRY

16

PAUL ENTERS copy pantry. BARBARA SKEETS turns around with
stapler in hand.

BARBARA
How come there are no staples in
this stapler!

PAUL
Probably because it just ran out.

BARBARA
How does that happen!

PAUL
Because people use the stapler and
there are only so many staples you
can use before they run out.

BARBARA
Doesn't anyone ever check these
things?

BARBARA slams the stapler down and storms out without
refilling the stapler.

PAUL methodically begins making copies. The feeder gets jammed. PAUL begins the ritual of tweaking all the sections that may have the jam in order.

He repeats this three times. He loses his cool and bashes the feeder with his fist. He grabs some documents and goes for the stapler. No staples.

Lights flicker.

ENTER RUTH. RUTH is staring at PAUL unphased by his anger.

PAUL makes a hasty exit.

18 INT. PAUL'S OFFICE 18

SUZI is sitting across from PAUL.

SUZI
Paul? What's wrong?

PAUL
This place is finally getting to me.

SUZI
I know how that feels... trust me.

PAUL
Ruth has to go. I can't take it anymore.

SUZI
You sure?

PAUL
Yes I'm sure!

SUZI
You know her attorneys think she's great.

PAUL
No. Only one. The other two are too scared.

SUZI
Dick?

PAUL
Yes and I don't care. She's a cancer to this office.

SUZI

You should really think about what you're doing. He's nasty.

PAUL

All the more reason to do it. I'm sick and tired of this and it's not fair to everyone else.

SUZI

Nadine says the cleaning lady is still using a perfume that makes her breakout. Says she can't work here if she continues to use it.

PAUL

Good. Hopefully she'll back her word.

SUZI

Ruth says the scanner in the copy room is too loud.

PAUL

But she uses the copier in there all day and it's louder!

SUZI

She wants it moved or she may call OSHA.

PAUL

I'll take my chances. The scanner stays. Next.

PAUL sees he has voice mail waiting.

VOICE MAIL LADY

(vo)

You have 2 new messages. Message one delivered at...

PAUL hits the play button.

BOB

(vo)

Are you trying to cook me in here? Roast me to death? It's fucking hot in here. Can you get me some cold air? Bye.

PAUL takes it off speaker.

VOICE MAIL LADY

(vo)
Message two from...

SEAN SUKALOVE

(vo - slurring)
Yeah... Paul... been thinkin'...

PAUL hangs up.

PAUL

Sorry Suzi.

SUZI

No problem. I know how busy you are. You should get out of here for a few days.

PAUL

I can't. Even if I go the damned blackberry finds me. I'm virtually tethered at all times.

SUZI

I'll get the paperwork ready.

SUZI exits.

PAUL hits the speed dial.

WIFE

(vo)
Hello.

PAUL

Sweetie, I need your opinion.

WIFE

(vo)
Is everything ok?

PAUL

Yes. Sort of. Look, I'm about to fire a secretary. Maybe more if necessary.

WIFE

(vo)
Why?

PAUL
Insubordination and for burying
this office with shit attitude. Why
do we have to put up with this?

WIFE
(vo)
Well ok. What do you need from me?

PAUL
This could get ugly.

WIFE
(vo)
What do you mean? Aren't they
always?

PAUL
No. This is Dick's secretary and he
will do whatever it takes to keep
Ruth employed here.

WIFE
(vo)
Are you saying you can lose your
job?

PAUL
Yes.

WIFE
(vo)
Oh God. [beat] Honey, you know I
agree with you that she should be
fired but what happens if you lose
your job over this?

PAUL rolls his eyes - hands on head, elbows on table.

PAUL
I'll get Get a new one.

WIFE
(vo)
We both know how long that can take
and we're already up to our ears in
debt.

PAUL
I can't take this anymore. I spend
90% of my life here and I'm being
held hostage by the daughter of
Satan. I can't do this anymore!

WIFE

(vo)
Calm down. Think about it for a minute... it's just pride. I love you but I don't think you should do this. It doesn't feel right.

PAUL

Well let me know when it FEELS right ok!

WIFE

(vo)
Hey! Don't get pissy with me! All I ask is that you get some support before you think about doing this.

PAUL

Advice taken.

WIFE

(vo)
I love you.

PAUL

Yeah.

PAUL takes a nervous breath and picks up his phone.

PAUL types. GRAPHICS go back and forth.

From: Paul Stone
To: Ruth Donner
Subject: I need to speak with you ASAP

GRAPHIC APPEARS.

From: Ruth Donner
To: Paul Stone
Subject: RE: I need to speak with you ASAP

I see no reason to.

GRAPHIC APPEARS.

From: Paul Stone
To: Ruth Donner
Subject: I need to speak with you ASAP

(MORE)

PAUL (cont'd)

Ruth, just get over here now.

RUTH enters PAUL'S office.

RUTH
What is it.

PAUL
Your employment at Beazle & Bub has
been terminated.

RUTH
Excuse me?

PAUL
As of this moment, you are no
longer employed here.

RUTH
For what?

PAUL
Insubordination.

RUTH
We'll see about that!

RUTH furiously exits slamming the door closed behind her.

INT. BOB BUCHANANS OFFICE

PAUL across from BOB.

BOB
You fired Ruth?

PAUL
Yes.

BOB
I told you to be patient! Dick is
all over me.

PAUL
We have to take a stand Bob. We
can't afford to be limp anymore.

JEREMY FISH enters.

BOB
And is it true that you hired a
blue hair to replace her?

PAUL
A blue hair? What's that.

BOB
Old people... Senior citizens.

BOB addresses JEREMY.

BOB
Jeremy, you've hear of blue hairs
right?

JEREMY
Actually no. What's the problem?

BOB
Nothing Jeremy. Beazle & Bubb are
still 100% committed to eSTAR.

JEREMY
By hiring blue hairs? I though you
were looking towards the future not
the retirement home.

BOB
Call it pro bono.

PAUL is steaming.

BOB
Paul, either you hire Ruth back and
fire the blue hair or you can go
with her.

JEREMY
That's rather harsh don't you think
Bobby?

BOB
Paul knows what's good for him.

HARRIET BLOOM knocks and ENTERS.

BOB
Can I help you?

HARRIET
Mr. Buchanon, there's a gentleman
waiting for you on line 2.

HARRIET and JEREMY make eye contact. JEREMY look as though
he's seen a ghost.

HARRIET EXITS.

BOB
Paul.

PAUL
Yes sir.

BOB
Hire Ruth back.

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE

PAUL is packing up his office. SUZI ENTERS.

SUZI
I am so sorry Paul.

PAUL
So am I. Oh well... life goes on I guess.

SUZI
Is there anything I can do?

PAUL
Save yourself and look for another job.

SUZI
Only if I can work with you.

ANNALISA ENTERS.

PAUL
Gals, this is very uncomfortable.

ANNALISA
You're a good person Paul.

PAUL
Thanks Annie.

ANNALISA
I will make Ruth's life a living hell. I promise.

PAUL
Annie, that's exactly what she wants. She'll get what's coming to her. Trust me, everyone does.

INT. HALLWAY

PAUL walking towards RUTH. RUTH is typing with a slight smirk.

Lights flickering.

PAUL walks towards BOB'S office. BOB is passively arguing.

BOB
I'm sorry Jeremy.

JEREMY
I'll have no problem finding
someone else to represent me.

BOB
Alright.

PAUL EXITS via elevator.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

PAUL sits at the end of the table with JEREMY FISH and BOB BUCHANON.

SUZI ENTERS.

PAUL
Hey Suzi.

SUZI
Paul? What are you doing here? It's
great to see you!

THEY EMBRACE.

BOB
Suzi, please call Ruth in here.

SUZI
(confused)
Ok.

BOB
As fate would have it, Paul is now
VP of Administration Worldwide for
our largest client.

SUZI
That's great Paul!

BOB
Yeah... we're really excited about
it.

JEREMY
Whether Paul knew it or not, he
reunited me with my Mother, Harriet
Bloom.

SUZI
(mouthing)
Harriet Bloom?

PAUL
(mouthing)
Yes.

RUTH ENTERS

BOB
Hi Ruth.

RUTH
Hello.

RUTH makes eye contact with PAUL and grins. Lights flicker.

PAUL
Hi Ruth.

BOB
Ruth.

RUTH
Yes.

BOB
As of now you are terminated.

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT. PAUL'S OLD OFFICE

SHOT PANNING across the bookcase. We see family pictures of SUZI BREWSTER. SUZI is on the phone.

SUZI
No problem Bob. I'll make sure you
get some AC in there.

SUZI'S monitor pops with incoming emails.

ENTER ANNALISA.

SUZI
Hey Annie. What's going on?

ANNALISA
Nadine is upset about the color of
the new carpet. Says it gives her
headaches.

SUZI
Great.

ANNALISA
Lynn says Nadine elbowed her coming
out of the kitchen.

SUZI
What?

ANNALISA
I know... you would think that
after we moved them this would
stop.

SUZI
You know the drill.

INT. HALLWAY

PANNING SHOT of secretary workstations now almost entirely occupied by happy hard-working senior citizens.

Fade out.

Roll credits.