

A.C. You know, this really changes the whole corporate infrastructure. (Anne and Barry are both regarding A.C. oddly.) Sorry. Just an observation. (A.C. exits. Anne follows him. Barry, for the first time, notices the coffee mug Anne left behind.) BARRY. Hey. Where'd this coffee come from? Did somebody make coffee? (Seeing he is alone now, Barry shouts down the hallway.) So what's the story? Are we having a meeting or what?

End of Scene One

SCENE TWO

It is the next morning. Someone, A.C. in fact, is lying on the floor underneath the desk. We know this because his feet stick out the way Zukasky's did when Anne knocked him out of his chair.

Anne enters. There are giraffes on her dress today. She has brought a framed abstract picture — circles and triangles, mostly — which she hangs on the wall. She moves without making a sound. She turns to leave and, for the first time, notices the feet sticking out from under the desk. She screams.

ANNE. Aaaaaaaa!

A.C. Aaaaaaaa!

ANNE. Aaaaaaaa!

A.C. (Still from under the desk.) You scared the hell out of me.

ANNE. Me? I did?

A.C. (He comes out from under the desk.) Don't you knock before entering a man's office?

ANNE. This is not your office.

A.C. Well, that's a good point. That's a darn good point. On the other hand, this isn't your office either. Although I notice you're doing a little decorating. Expecting a promotion?

ANNE. I am here for today's meeting, which is due to start

in about fifteen minutes. What are you doing here?

A.C. I knew you'd be here, setting up for today's meeting, which is due to start in about fifteen minutes, and I figured it was time you and I got to know each other better. You know, Annie, I've been here a year and three months, I see you every day and yet we never talk. Does that seem right to you? No, of course not. So tell me, Annie, how the hell are you? What are your career ambitions? Are you married? Do you have kids? Is there something in your past that makes it hard for you to answer questions? Do you have a lot of close friends? Do you think you could learn to like me? (Pause.) Would it make it easier for you if I asked these questions one at a time?

ANNE. I asked you first.

A.C. Another good point! So you did. What was it you asked me?

ANNE. What are you doing here?

A.C. It worries you, doesn't it? You're afraid I just might have a reason. (Pause.) But I don't. You thought maybe they gave me Zukasky's job, didn't you? But they didn't.

ANNE. That doesn't surprise me.

A.C. No, I don't suppose it would. It surprised me a little. But there's no reason it should surprise you. You know what might surprise you? (Whispering loudly.) They didn't give it to you either.

ANNE. You don't know that.

A.C. You're right. I'm just guessing.

ANNE. What are you doing here?

A.C. Whoa! Wait a minute! You're not playing fair. I answered your question; answer mine. Doesn't matter which one, actually. Pick one you like.

ANNE. You have no business being here.

A.C. Where? Here? Sure I do. I work here.

ANNE. You have no business being in Mr. Zukasky's office.

Under Mr. Zukasky's desk.

A.C. Look, yesterday this was Zukasky's desk. Tomorrow it'll be Barry Mills' desk. But today it is Switzerland. I don't figure this is Barry's desk until Barry gets his butt in here and

sticks a picture of his old lady on it. On the desk, that is. Not on his butt.

ANNE. Why do you keep saying Barry? No one has announced a replacement yet.

A.C. Trust me. It's going to be Barry.

ANNE. Oh, be serious. Barry Mills ...

A.C. ... is an idiot with tofu for brains, and the thought that you and I might be working for him is pretty scary, isn't it? But that's what's going to happen. (*With mock solemnity.*) I felt you should know.

ANNE. Any one of the three of us — even you —

A.C. I'm sorry. This was a crummy way for you to find out. You still thought you were in the running, didn't you? Sorry. I'm sorry you didn't get the job and I'm sorry it was me who had to tell you. But it's going to be Barry. Before quitting time today, you and I are going to be working for Barry Mills. Gives you the willies, doesn't it? (*Anne is not sure how to take this.*) Look, I'll let you get back to work ... (*Starting to exit.*)

ANNE. What were you doing under the desk?

A.C. (*He seats himself in Zukasky's old chair and puts his feet up on the desk.*) I planted a bomb. It's set to go off at eleven thirty. If I were you I'd take an early lunch.

ANNE. What were you doing under the desk?

A.C. I was looking for the access number of an illegal foreign account. Sometimes people tape them to the bottom of their drawers.

ANNE. What were you doing under the desk?

A.C. I gave it a lube job and changed all the spark plugs. The drawer was sticking and that makes 'em hard to handle on the turns. (*A.C. leans to one side and makes car noises.*)

ANNE. Get out of this office.

A.C. Look, Annie, you gotta believe me: I am on your side. You thought you were up for a promotion. That's a damn bummer. I feel for you. Really. You had my vote, not that anyone gave me a vote.

ANNE. You're making this up. You don't know any more than I do who is going to replace Zukasky. I don't believe a decision has even been made yet.

A.C. You got me there. You're right. I'm just talking out my boo-hole. Talk to me later; we'll see how lucky I guessed.

ANNE. I just talked to Marfino ten minutes ago. He said no decision had been reached. I have no reason to doubt him.

A.C. Did he mention they were going to make you Barry's private secretary?

ANNE. (*That really is a scary thought.*) You're lying!

A.C. Of course I'm lying. They can't make you a secretary. You're Level Four.

ANNE. Yeah. No kidding.

A.C. So they won't use the word secretary. They'll give you some non-pejorative sounding double speak title. "Assisting Partner." Or, "Co-manager." Or, "Director of Sales, Jr." But it won't make any difference because you will still be a secretary.

ANNE. You're making this up. How could you know this?

A.C. I couldn't. I'm just guessing. Come to me tomorrow and tell me what you're doing that a secretary doesn't do.

ANNE. I am a Level Four manager. Same as you. Same as Barry.

A.C. It'd be easier to believe that if you didn't have giraffes on your dress.

ANNE. The way I dress ...

A.C. ... is way over on the juvenile side. If you want to get promoted, you oughta wear pinstripes instead of endangered species. That's just friendly advice.

ANNE. Are you deliberately trying to make me mad?

A.C. Nol Nol Exactly the opposite. I want you to like me. I want you to trust me. I want you to believe that I am on your side. I am trying to gain your confidence. That is why I am saying all these things that I wouldn't otherwise say. I am talking to you as a friend.

ANNE. I just think you're an asshole.

A.C. Well, building a friendship takes time.

ANNE. Billions of years, sometimes.

A.C. I'm serious about this now. You and I need to be friends. You and I need to have a private, serious, mano-a-womano talk. We need to have the single most important dis-