

Team Meeting

A Play

by

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

- JULIE: (38/f) Chief Operating Officer. Organized, determined, astute.
- CASSIE: (27/f) Personal Assistant. Neurotic, eager, innocent.
- SERGIO: (32/m) IT Specialist. Arrogant, confrontational, lazy.
- GAV: (73/m) Sales Rep. Perky, chatty, co-dependent.
- MALLORY: (41/f) Head of Marketing. Abrasive, direct, sarcastic.
- AARON: (37/m) Lead Designer. African American. Needy, whiny, fearful.
- LANA: (28/f) Accountant. Distant, brilliant, quirky (she has Asperger's)
- BEN: (48/m) Chief Executive Officer. Forceful, manipulative, charming.

THE SET

An office conference room with whiteboard walls. The room gets used a lot, and shows signs of a busy, chaotic, start up tech company.

TIME

The present.

SCENE 1

AT RISE: A conference room with a large table, 8 chairs, and whiteboard walls. JULIE enters, talking on her phone.

JULIE

(into phone)

And we have everyone's backing? The whole board? Okay. No, I have a plan. Yes, today. Look I'm about to go into a meeting, I'll call as soon once it's done. Okay...

(hangs up and pumps her fists)

Come on! Let's go! Let's fucking GO! Right... right--

She sits at the far end of the table, pulls out her laptop and dives into her work.

CASSIE enters carrying several bottles of water and an armful of stationary - notepads, pens, pencils.

CASSIE

Oh, you're sitting there Julie?

JULIE

Uh-huh...

CASSIE

Oh dear. So where should I put Ben? I know he usually goes by the door, but he read that LinkedIn article about the "The Power Corner" and now he wants to maintain 'visual dominance' over the room, so...

JULIE

(distracted)

What?

I think you're in Ben's seat.

JULIE

(distracted)

Is the WiFi down?

CASSIE

I can text him and ask if you want?

JULIE

I'm busy, Cassie.

CASSIE

I'll text him. Wait, he might be driving. I probably shouldn't. Or maybe I should. Ugh, I don't know what to do. Okay, make a decision, Cassie...

(picking a chair for Ben)

I'll put him here. Okay. Protein, water... hmm... is this water cold enough for him?

(MORE)

CASSIE (cont'd)
 (presenting a bottle for Julie to
 check)

Julie? Can you check? Julie?

JULIE
 (exasperated)

What?

CASSIE
 Ben likes his water fridge cold. Not ice cold.

JULIE
 I'm trying to focus.

CASSIE
 Can you just please check? Julie?

JULIE
 (absently touching the bottle)
 Christ, it's fine. It's not like he'll die if he drinks warm water...

CASSIE
 Oh my god it's warm?

JULIE
 That's not what I said--

CASSIE
 He hates warm water!

Cassie rushes off as SERGIO as he pops his head in.

SERGIO
 Yo Jay, you need video today?

JULIE
 Don't know, not my meeting.

SERGIO
 'Cos it takes a while to set up--

JULIE
 I don't know what the meeting's about.

SERGIO
 So... I'm hearing don't bother then?

JULIE
 Why don't you set it up, just in case.

SERGIO
 You said you don't know.

JULIE

It's Ben's meeting. He might be presenting something.

SERGIO

Right - only it takes a minute. To set everything up, you know? 'Cos of our connection. 'Cos of the network. 'Cos you bought that Ethernet hub.

JULIE

I'm aware of your feelings about the equipment we purchased, Sergio.

SERGIO

It's chill either way, but like, if you'd just let me cook we wouldn't be here--

Sergio grabs Ben's protein bar and starts eating.

SERGIO

Fuck yeah, protein.

(...)

For real it'll take 20 minutes just to get the cameras to even see the network, 'cos of that janky hub. Then they're gonna need a whole ass firmware update. Then I'll have to set up a network bridge and manually white-list everything. Again. 'Cos the network always forgets. 'Cos it's mid. I mean that's like, the whole morning right there.

JULIE

Don't you have other stuff you should be doing right now?

SERGIO

Yeah, I got you fam. Holla if you change your mind and I'll set that shit up.

Sergio exits.

JULIE

Sergio, I said to do it! Sergio? Ugh...

Cassie enters with a bottle of water.

CASSIE

Disaster averted. I found a cold one at the back of the fridge.

Cassie eyes Julie's chair, frustrated.

JULIE

Are you going to move, Julie?

JULIE

Hmm?

CASSIE

I really think Ben is going to want that seat.

JULIE

I'm fine where I am. I don't need to move.

CASSIE
Even though that's his Power Corner?

JULIE
Even though it's his Power Corner.

CASSIE
Oh dear...

JULIE
You're attaching far too much importance to this.

CASSIE
I don't think I am.

(...)
Fine. I'll just put him here, where he won't want to sit.

Cassie arranges the water and stationary ready for Ben.

GAV enters.

GAV
Hey ho!

CASSIE
Morning, Gav.

GAV
What's up, buttercup!

CASSIE
(guarding Ben's seat)
Ben's sitting here!

GAV
Okie dokes. I'll go deep. Far from the boss as poss, right? I'm just kidding. My god, the 405, am I right? They keep adding lanes, we keep filling 'em up. Monday Madness, that's what we call it in our house. You know Lucy tells me to take Coldwater and cut across but I never listen and it gets me every damn time. Any coffee, Cassiopeia?

CASSIE
In the kitchen. But don't use Ben's mug! Someone's been using it.

GAV
Oh no! I plead the fifth!

Cassie glares at Gav seriously.

CASSIE
Gavin, if you know who's been using Ben's mug you need to tell me.

GAV

I was just playing, Cass. I'm sorry.

CASSIE

That's okay Gav. Just... not today please. There's a lot going on. Ben's water was warm.

GAV

Oh, yeah-- that's uh... yeah, pressure. I get it. Sorry.

CASSIE

Oh no! Where's Ben's protein bar?

GAV

I do not know.

CASSIE

SERGIO!

Cassie runs off.

GAV

So... Julie-fa-tootie, what's the dealio?

JULIE

With what?

GAV

Today. I mean, do you know why we're here--

JULIE

Nope, no idea.

GAV

Huh. The mystery deepens! So you think it's about those sales figures, or...

JULIE

The only thing I know is that Ben called a meeting.

GAV

Gotcha. Right. Yeah, probably not about the sales figures though, right?

JULIE

I have to finish this, Gav.

GAV

Sure, sure. Could be about anything...

MALLORY and AARON enter, mid-argument. Cassie pushes past them quickly with a box of protein bars in hand.

CASSIE

Excuse me, excuse me!

MALLORY

Jesus Christ let it go--

AARON

You know, I say it to you every day. I make a point of it.

GAV

Hey it's the lovebirds!

MALLORY

I am not going to keep saying it. You already know it.

AARON

I say "I love you" and your response is "uh-huh." You don't see how that would make me feel insecure?

MALLORY

Nope.

GAV

Hey, who's in for a cup o' Joe? Anyone? JuJu-bean? No?

AARON

I think you might be a sociopath.

MALLORY

Great! All the sociopaths I know are rich.

GAV

How about you A-A-ron? Coffee?

AARON

What?

GAV

Key and Peele, am I right?

AARON

What?

GAV

A-A-ron?

AARON

Yes?

GAV

Oh, you haven't seen it? I thought you'd get it--

AARON

Why would I "get it?"

Gav pauses, uncomfortable.

Coffee, Mall?

GAV

Mallory gives him the stink eye.

--Ory. Mall-ory. Mallory. Coffee?

GAV

No.

MALLORY

Buttercup?

GAV

No thank you.

CASSIE

Cassie slams the table, grabbing attention.

CASSIE

Everyone! These are Ben's protein bars.

GAV

(...)

Okie-dokes, I'm on the mud if anyone changes their mind!

No response. Gav exits.

AARON

I tell you all the time, Mallory--

MALLORY

Then stop. Unlike you, I don't need to hear it constantly.

AARON

I said it three times today and you didn't say it to me once...

MALLORY

Fuck me, you're counting?

(wrinkling her nose at the room)

This room smells like pesticide. What's this meeting about?

CASSIE

Nobody knows. It's a mystery! Ben called it though so it must be important.

MALLORY

Keep your panties on, Cassie.

AARON

I say it to let you know you're wanted. Don't you feel any responsibility for my feelings?

MALLORY

Aaron, just because you're incapable of managing your own feelings doesn't make it my responsibility.

AARON

Cassie--

CASSIE

(guarding Ben's seat)

Ben's sitting here.

AARON

If your spouse says "I love you", what do you say back?

CASSIE

Oh, I'm not married.

AARON

I know, but if you were?

CASSIE

Who am I married to again?

AARON

No, no one.

CASSIE

Oh. Well then I don't know.

AARON

You don't know?

MALLORY

Oh Christ leave her alone, Aaron.

AARON

I'm saying I think most people would say "I love you" back. That's all I'm saying. That's my truth.

MALLORY

So Ben's sitting there?

CASSIE

(guarding)

Yes. You can't sit here, Mallory.

MALLORY

Relax, Cassie. I'm not after his throne.

AARON

You used to say it.

MALLORY

Did I?

AARON

Yes, like a normal, compassionate person, you did.

MALLORY

How disappointing.

AARON

Seriously?

MALLORY

Okay, Aaron. I love you. Waking up next to you every day I am surrounded by angels gently wafting the sacred wind of true love across my petrified heart. Before I met you, it's like I had never truly breathed in life. Now, my existence feels like a long, drawn-out death rattle.

AARON

I just want you to want to say it back. Why is that so hard to understand?

MALLORY

Fuck me you're insufferable this morning. Cassie. Coffee?

CASSIE

In the kitchen, Mallory - where it always is.

Mallory exits.

AARON

She's just so cold.

Julie? Would you say it? (...)

JULIE

Busy.

AARON

You'd say it though, right Cass?

CASSIE

Hmm?

AARON

That you love me.

CASSIE

(firmly)
Aaron, I don't love you.

AARON

(awkward, hurt)
I know that! What? Why you even-- I wasn't saying that, of course--

CASSIE

Okay, good. I need to know that you heard that.

AARON

I didn't mean me... I meant your husband. Or partner. Primary? I mean whatever. I don't want to assume... you might be... actually, are you? No, I'd know... not "know" know, I mean I think I'd guess if you were... what I'm saying is, you'd tell your spouse... life partner, that you love them every day, right?

CASSIE

Well... in that specific circumstance, then yes. I think I would.

AARON

Right! Thank you! Of course you would. You would.

Sergio enters.

SERGIO

So now you want video Julie?

AARON

This is a video meeting?

SERGIO

Julie? You changed your mind?

JULIE

I didn't change my-- Sergio, please set up the video. I already asked.

SERGIO

That's not how I remember it.

Sergio reaches for a protein bar.

CASSIE

NO!

SERGIO

Whatever. There's a whole box the kitchen!

Sergio exits. Cassie snickers.

CASSIE

(under her breath)

No, there isn't!

JULIE

(struggling with phone)

Is the mail server down again? Sergio! Where does he go?

AARON

What's this meeting about? Julie, is this about beta?