NewsRadia

"Stocks"

#306

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BRILLSTEIN / GREY COMMUNICATIONS

ACT ONE

SCENE A

FADE IN:

INT. BULLPEN - MORNING (D-1)
(Matthew, Joe, Bill, Catherine, Beth, Lisa)

Everyone is working.

Matthew enters the office carrying large suitcases. He is wearing sandals and an embroidered silk Japanese jacket over his regular clothes.

MATTHEW

O-haiyo-gozaimasu, everyone! I have returned from the land of the rising sun!

No one looks up. A beat.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

In Japan, the way they say hello is "O-haiyo-gozaimasu."

No one responds.

JOE

(PASSING BY) O-hommina-hommina to you, too.

MATTHEW

Hey, slow down -- I was only there a week, I just know a few phrases!

(BEAT) Okay, no one cares about my trip, fine. I brought you all presents, but--

Everyone immediately surrounds Matthew.

the--

ALL

(AD LIBS) Great to have you back!/
We missed you!/ How was your trip?

MATTHEW

You guys would have loved it. I had the best time, we saw the Imperial Palace, the Harujuku music street,

BILL

Ah, the Black Ship Matthew, fat with treasures from the Far East.

MATTHEW

Well, I wouldn't say "fat," but I did eat a lot over there. Did you know that in Japan you're allowed to eat seaweed?

BILI

No, but that is so fascinating, I almost forgot you had presents.

MATTHEW

Oh, right!

Matthew starts handing out the nicely-wrapped gifts. Catherine opens hers: a beautiful lacquered Japanese box.

CATHERINE

Oh honey, this is beautiful.

BETH

Wow. What a fancy box!

MATTHEW

It reminded me of you, beautiful on the outside. And on the inside? The unknown. (BEAT) You can keep paper clips and stuff in it.

* Catherine exits. Lisa opens her gift to reveal one of those dolls with an oversized wobbly head that people put in their cars.

LISA

(TO MATTHEW) Wow. I have always wanted... one of these.

MATTHE

It wobbles! See?

Matthew hits the head to get it wobbling and wobbles his head along with it.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

In Japan, they love the wobbleheads. Wobble, wobble, wobble...

* Lisa puts her hand on the doll's head to stop it. Matthew stops.

Bill has his gift open.

BILL

What is this?

LISA

(TO BILL) It's a "Hello Kitty" backpack, silly.

MATTHEW

(TO LISA) It's perfect for him, isn't it?

LISA

It has Bill written all over it. Lisa exits.

MATTHEW

(TO BILL) I know how you like to read, so I was thinking you could carry books in it. In Japan, everybody wears one.

BILL

Matthew I can't accept this--

MATTHEW

No, please--

BILL

Because I am neither Japanese, fourteen-years-old, nor a girl. But thank you for the thought.

Beth opens her brown paper bag.

BETH

Matthew, these are like...weird Japanese nudie magazines.

MATTHEW

Right! Because I know how you're fascinated by the differences in aesthetic sensibilities in various cultures.

BETH

(SURPRISED) How'd you know that?

BILL

He didn't. He bought them for himself, but gave them to you by accident.

* Matthew looks at them, caught.

BETH

Trade you?

BILL

Done.

Bill and Beth look at each other, swap gifts.

CUT TO:

OPENING CREDITS

ACT ONE

SCENE B

FADE IN:

' <u>INT. BULLPEN/BREAKROOM/BULLPEN - LATER (D-1)</u> (Lisa, Joe, Catherine, Bill, Beth, Matthew, Jimmy)

Lisa is standing by her chair. Joe rocks it back and forth, listening intently to an annoying squeaking noise.

SFX: SOUEAK

LISA

I think we've established that the chair squeaks, Joe.

JOE

Shhh! A chair can squeak for any number of reasons. If you'll just listen, she'll tell you where she hurts.

LISA *

Well, Dr. Dolittle, could you translate for those of us who don't speak office chair?

SFX: SQUEAK

JOE *

Yeah. Can't fix it.

LISA

Can't you just put oil on it?

JOE

Oil won't help. At least, that's her opinion.

LISA

My chair does not have a gender.

JOE

Maybe she does, maybe she doesn't.

* Dave enters.

DAVE *

Joe, have you called the guy about the refrigerator, yet?

JOE *

It's just a blown compressor. I can do it myself.

DAVE *

Have you called the guy?

JOE *

Seriously, I just have to reroute the water line. Something like that. We're golden.

DAVE *

Have you called the guy?

JOE *

No.

DAVE *

Call the guy.

Dave exits.

LISA

Well, where do we go from here?

JOE

You go in Dave's office and ask him to order you a new chair.

LISA

(LOOKS AT CHAIR) I don't know... You know how he's been about the budget lately.

I'm sure he'll make a special exception in your case..

LISA

What's that supposed to mean?

JOE

Come on, if you need something, all you gotta do is go in and ask your sugar daddy.

LISA

Dave is <u>not</u> my "sugar daddy."

JOE

Okay, "Sweet Poppa." Whatever. Catherine passes by.

CATHERINE

Lisa, I need a new stapler, so if you get a chance while you're in with Dave, shaking your stuff for a new chair, could you--

LISA

I have never -- ever -- been the kind of person who "shakes her stuff."

CATHERINE

Okay, so you're a little light in the "stuff" department, that's okay -- but I think we've all seen you shake what you've got.

LISA

Where did everyone get the idea that I'm some sort of office supply whore?

Bill slides back in his chair.

BILL

Lisa, I'm out of thumbtacks, and

Dave doesn't seem to respond well to

my backrubs, so if you could just--

LISA

Okay, I really resent this. When I am in this office, I work very hard to maintain a completely professional relationship with Dave.

BILL

That's the best way: Don't get emotionally involved. Just lie back, close your eyes, and think about the thumbtacks.

Bill, Joe, and Catherine exit. Beth walks up.

BETH

What's wrong?

LISA

Have you ever -- ever -- seen me use my personal relationship with Dave to get special treatment in the office?

BETH

God knows I've tried, but you guys always close the blinds.

RESET TO:

INT. BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy enters from the foyer.

MATTHEW

Mr. James!

JIMMY

Matthew...

MATTHEW

I have returned...

JIMMY

From where?

MATTHEW

From my wondrous journeys in the Far East--

JIMMY

Not Vietnam.

MATTHEW

No -- Japan.

JIMMY

Don't ever bring up Vietnam around me again. I've got bad memories.

MATTHEW

I'm sorry. When were you there?

JIMMY *

Last month. The hotel they put me in... what a nightmare. Now pardon me, but it's cracker time.

MATTHEW

Oh! Of course.

Jimmy heads into...

RESET TO:

INT. BREAKROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jimmy takes a box of crackers from the cupboard. Beth enters.

BETH

Mr. James, can I talk to you about... Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't realize it was cracker time.

Beth starts to exit.

JIMMY

No, no -- that's okay. What do you need?

BETH *

Well, see, something great really happened. Remember my Aunt Winnie?

JIMMY *

Is she still available?

BETH *

Yeah, but unfortunately, she's dead.

JIMMY *

Jimmy don't do that.

BETH '

Anyway, her estate was tied up, because some of my cousins claimed...

JIMMY

Get to the good part.

BETH

I've inherited some money.

JIMMY

And what a good part it is! How much?

BETH '

A lot. I mean, enough to finally pay off my college loans, all my credit cards, my back rent -- and if I get the rest all in one dollar bills, I'll still have enough to roll around naked in.

JIMMY

Congratulations! Feels good to finally get your head above water, doesn't it?

BETH

So good. (BEAT) But then I started thinking...

JIMMY

Oh no...

BETH

I mean, the stock market is just sitting there, virtually begging to quadruple my money for me.

JIMMY

That's just the kind of boundless optimism that earned the Donner party their place in history. But I don't give stock tips.

Bill enters.

BILL

Stock tips? Excellent.

Bill pulls up a seat at the table.

BILL (CONT'D)

I like Lockheed these days. How

about you?

Bill studies Jimmy's face for any kind of reaction. Jimmy gives up nothing. Jimmy's expression starts to change -- Bill studies it even more intently. Jimmy's expression contorts until he sneezes.

BETH

Bless you.

JIMMY

Sorry, Bill. No stock tips.

BILL

But why are you giving tips to her?

JIMMY

I'm not giving stock tips to her or anyone. Jimmy don't do that.

BILL

But Jim, you know what they say:

Give a man a fish, and he eats for a

day. But teach a man to fish...

JIMMY *

And he spends all his time in his basement, tying flies and neglecting his hygiene. Aren't you supposed to be on the air?

BILL *

Actually, no.

JIMMY *

Yes, you are.

BILL *

Yes, I am.

* Bill exits.

BETH

Why won't you share your knowledge with me? It's just not fair.

JIMMY

Honey, if life were fair, there wouldn't be rich people.

BETH

But--

Jimmy holds out his hand in the "stop" position.

JIMMY

Stop. It's Cracker Time.

CUT TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE C

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE/BULLPEN-CONFERENCE TABLE - SIMULTANEOUS (D-1)

(Dave, Matthew, Jimmy, Beth, Bill, Joe)

Dave is sitting at his desk, working. Matthew enters.

DAVE

How was your trip?

Matthew takes off his shoes before entering.

MATTHEW *

Observe, David. In Japan, it's customary to remove one's shoes before entering the domicile.

DAVE *

Fascinating.

MATTHEW

You would have loved it, a week in a foreign place, full of strange customs and people.

DAVE

I understand, I've been to Canada.

MATTHEW

Trust me -- Japan is even more exotic.

DAVE

You've obviously never been to Winnipeg.

MATTHEW

I brought you a little present.

DAVE

Oh please, let it be a wobblehead.

Matthew reaches in his pants and pulls out a large Japanese sword in an elaborate sheath. He puts it on Dave's desk.

MATTHEW

Et voila! I'm sure they have some way of saying "voila" in Japanese, but I was only there a week...

DAVE

This is a sword.

MATTHEW

It's not just a sword, Dave. It's a katana sword modeled on the one made by the Great Nagamitsu of Bizen for the Samurai Kojiro.

Dave unsheathes the sword a little bit and tests it. Obviously he expects it to be a dull-edged replica.

DAVE *

I was under the impression that in Japan, the hand can be used as a knife, but thank you... Ow!

It's much sharper than he thought.

MATTHEW

Oh yeah -- be careful! They say this thing is sharp enough to cut a man in two!

DAVE

I'll say. And in that case, I don't want you to be offended, but... I really don't like having guns or knives or... man-splitting swords around me. It makes me uncomfortable.

MATTHEW

(SHRUGS) Okay. I guess I'll just give it to Joe or something.

DAVE

(QUICKLY) Actually, maybe I better hold on to it. I'm a little less susceptible to "Roid Rage" than Joe.

MATTHEW

Great! Arigato gozaimash'ta.

Matthew bows, backs out, hits the door frame, and closes the door. Dave's gaze turns to the sword. After a beat, Matthew re-enters, startling Dave.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Okay, someone stole my shoes while we were talking.

RESET TO:

INT. BULLPEN/CONFERENCE TABLE - CONTINUOUS

* Beth, Bill, and Jimmy take their argument to the conference table.

JIMMY

I just do not give stock advice, especially to friends, because if the pick goes south, then I'm out a friend.

BETH

But all my friends give me bad advice!

* Matthew crawls by, looking at their shoes. No one reacts.

BILL

That would explain the hairdo. Come on, Jim. One tip. I get in, make the bread and boom, I'm out. Like a thief in the night.

JIMMY

I don't consort with thieves.

BILL

I'm not actually a thief--

JIMMY

So you're gonna give Matthew his shoes back?

BILL

(BEAT) When he's ready for them.

JIMMY

Great. I'm out of here. This has been the worst cracker time in recorded history.

•

Jimmy crosses to leave.

BETH

Fine. But I am going to go ahead and do this on my own.

JIMMY

Good. But be careful.

BETH

Oh, don't worry about me.

Jimmy walks away. A beat. Jimmy re-enters the frame.

JIMMY

Seriously, Beth. Be careful. The market can be a cruel mistress.

BETH *

So can I, but that's not how I want to make my money anymore.

* Jimmy looks at her.

BETH (CONT'D) *

What? What?

JIMMY

What are you thinking about investing in?

* Beth produces a thick stack of cocktail napkins from her pocket.

BETH *

It's right here. (LOOKING THROUGH NAPKINS) No, no, no, I don't think that's it, no -- here it is! And all I have to do is go back to the bar with my check and I'm in.

* Jimmy rolls his eyes and sits back down at the table.

JIMMY

Alright, I guess I need to teach you a thing or two about the stock market.

BILL/BETH

Excellent!

Bill grabs a notepad.

JIMMY

Not you. Just her.

BILL

That's not fair.

BETH

Bill, if life were fair, there wouldn't be rich people.

JTMMY

That's my girl. (TO BILL) Now scram. Bill exits.

JIMMY (CONT'D) *

Beth, before we begin, you've got to promise you'll (BEAT) Bill, get out of here.

Bill's head pops up from behind the filing cabinet he was hiding behind. He brandishes a pencil.

BILL *

Here it is.

Bill exits. Joe is nearby.

JIMMY *

Joe! I need a real time stock quote terminal. If somebody so much as breaks wind on that trading floor I want to see it.

JOE

I think that'll involve some sort of heat sensor or something...

JIMMY

I was speaking figuratively.

JOE

Check. But if you change your mind,

I do have some equipment that 'll--

JIMMY

Thanks. Matthew, put on two pots of coffee.

MATTHEW

Hai!

JIMY

Hi!

BETH *

Hi!

TIME

And put on some damn shoes.

MATTHEW

Hai-hai!

JIMMY *

Yeah, right back at you. Shoes.

BETH

Have you ever taught anybody this stuff before?

JIMMY

Have you ever heard of a man by the name of Warren Buffett?

BETH

You taught Warren Buffett?

JIMMY

No, but you've heard of him, that's a good start.

BETH

Well, duh. "Margaritaville" is one of my favorite songs.

JIMMY

Okay.

CUT TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE D

INT. BULLPEN/BREAKROOM - LATER (D-1)
(Matthew, Lisa, Dave, Joe, Catherine, Jimmy, Beth, Bill)

Matthew has cornered Lisa by her desk. He's showing her a large stack of photographs.

MATTHEW *

This is another one of the Tokyo airport. They have an amazing automated baggage system. You'd have to ride around on it to believe it.

LISA *

I'll take your word for it.

MATTHEW *

And here's one of--

LISA *

Whoa, let's save some for later.

Besides, I really should get back to
work.

MATTHEW

Oh. Excuse me. Sumimazen. In Japan, when people want to say "excuse me," they say sumimazen. Sumimazen.

LISA

It's actually pronounced "su-mi-masen," but still, very impressive.

Dave walks up.

DAVE

Do you mind if I talk to Lisa for a moment?

MATTHEW *

Sure. Hey, you know who's really popular in Japan? Brad Pitt. He's like a movie star over there.

DAVE

I don't mean to interrupt, but does anybody know exactly how sushi is made? Because Joe was just asking me and--

MATTHEW

(EXITING) Joe?

Matthew exits.

LISA

Thank you.

DAVE

Anytime.

MATTHEW (O.S.) *

Jøe...

DAVE

Do you have a previous draft of this?

LISA

Let me find it.

Lisa sits down. The chair squeaks.

SFX: SOUEAK

DAVE

You ought to get Joe to fix that chair.

LISA

He says he can't do it.

Joe enters from the direction of the elevators.

JOE

Yeah, it's a structural defect.

Joe looks behind him, and very quickly exits. He is soon followed by Matthew.

MATTHEW

And then they roll the rice up into a little... like... log-shaped thing and...

DAVE

I'll have Beth order you a new one.

LISA

No, it's fine.

The chair squeaks. Lisa winces.

SFX: SOUEAK

DAVE

That doesn't bother you?

LISA *

(SWIVELING) No.

The chair squeaks. Lisa winces.

SFX: SQUEAK

* Catherine passes by.

CATHERINE '

(KNOWINGLY) That's right. Shake it.

DAVE *

I'm ordering you a new chair.

LISA

(SOTTO) Look, Dave, I don't need everyone thinking you're my sugar daddy.

DAVE

I've always considered myself more of a "Sweet Poppa," but--

LISA

I do not need a new chair. Thanks, but no thanks. End of discussion.

Lisa turns away. The chair squeaks.

SFX: SOUEAK

Dave shrugs and walks away. Joe enters, followed closely by Matthew.

JOE

If you don't stop talking about Japan, I'm going to kill myself.

MATTHEW

In Japan, they have <u>two</u> kinds of ritual suicide: hari kiri, or seppuku.

Joe flees. Matthew follows. They pass Beth and Jimmy who are entering the breakroom.

JIMMY

(TO BETH) You are going to love this.

INT. BREAKROOM - CONTINUOUS

Beth and Jimmy enter. Jimmy closes the door behind him. The real-time-quote terminal is up and running. Stock prices roll across it. Jimmy and Beth's heads roll with it.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

(RE: QUOTE TERMINAL) Isn't it wonderful? It's like... TV, but without all the people running around doing stupid stuff with a fake laugh track.

BETH

Who taught you about stocks?

JIMMY

No one! I started out with a high school diploma, a second-hand suit, and a hundred dollars in savings bonds...

As Jimmy talks, he walks over to the window and -- without looking -- closes the blinds on Bill, who's trying to eavesdrop. Jimmy crosses to the closed door.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Well, I invested those bonds in a little company called -- hold on.

(COUNTS DOWN) Three, two, one...

* Jimmy opens the door quickly. Bill bumps his head.

BILL (O.C.)

Ow!

JIMMY

Sorry about that... where was I? .

BETH

You invested the bonds in some company?

JIMMY

Oh, right. Well, to make a long story short: (BEAT) I'm rich.

BETH

Okay, that sounds really easy, but will it work for me?

JIMMY

Honey, you're talking to the man who once hired Bill Gates to program his VCR.

BETH *

You could've hired Joe to do that.

JIMMY *

Yeah, but he wouldn't have worn the maid's outfit.

CUT TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE E

INT. BULLPEN/BREAKROOM/BULLPEN/BREAKROOM/BULLPEN/BREAKROOM
- SIMULTANEOUS (D-1)
(Matthew, Bill, Lisa, Jimmy, Beth)

Bill crosses to the coffee station and pours himself a cup, staring at the breakroom door. Matthew walks up.

MATTHEW

You know, in Japan they call coffee kohee.

Bill still watches and puts some milk in his coffee.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Miruku...Milk is Miruku.

Still watching.

MATTHEW (CONT'D) *

In fact, in Japan they have all kinds of different things to eat.

BILL

Yes, I know, Matthew. It's called Chinese food. Now shut up.

Matthew leaves Bill and passes Lisa's desk. Lisa is writing at her computer.

SFX: SOUEAK

Matthew looks at Lisa.

MATTHEW

Did you know that your chair squeaks?

LISA

(WITHOUT LOOKING) Just ignore it.

Move along. Don't get involved.

MATTHEW

I'm sure Dave would buy you a new chair if you just asked him right.

LISA

That won't be necessary.

MATTHEW

No, really. Just go up to him, and give him one of your sex looks and--

LISA

My what?

MATTHEW

Your sex looks. You know -- that look you give Dave every time you want him to do something. Like this...

Matthew gives Lisa a very sultry look. Lisa walks off. Jimmy and Beth pass by. Jimmy looks at Matthew giving the sex look, starts to say something, then just shrugs it off and continues towards the conference table.

RESET:

ANGLE ON: JIMMY AT CONFERENCE TABLE

...And that, in a nutshell, is the principle behind the bond market.

Hold on a second.

Jimmy looks straight ahead.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Bill.

BILL (O.C.)

Yes, Jim?

JIMMY

Would you mind getting out from under the table?

BILL (O.C.)

Sure thing.

A beat.

BILL (O.C.) (CONT'D)

You mean right now?

JIMMY

Right now.

Bill gets out from under the conference table. He holds a pencil.

BILL

(TO PENCIL) That's the last time you

get away from me, you little rascal.

Bill leaves, Jimmy continues as if nothing had happened.

RESET:

* ANGLE: JIMMY AND BETH

(OFF NEWSPAPER) Now, all the graphs and charts and stock mumbo-jumbo is fine, but you gotta get down there on street level to see how it affects the common man before you start sinking your money into anything.

Jimmy looks at his watch then motions for Beth to follow him to the breakroom.

ANGLE ON: MATTHEW

Matthew starts looking for something in his desk drawers. In the last drawer he looks in he finds a whole bunch of candy. He starts pulling it out and placing it on his desk.

RESET TO:

INT. BREAKROOM - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE ON: BETH AND JIMMY

They watch all this through the window.

JIMMY (CONT'D) *

Check this out.

Bill heads back to his desk. Jimmy and Beth observe Matthew.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Once a month, I sneak a whole variety of candies into Matthew's desk. His reactions so far have given me an eighteen percent rise in my entire consumer goods portfolio.

BETH

But doesn't he wonder how the candy got there?

JIMMY

Nope. I think in Matthew's world, candy elves are a common occurrence.

RESET TO:

INT. BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE ON: MATTHEW

He starts eating the candy; some he likes, some he violently dislikes.

RESET TO:

INT. BREAKROOM - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE ON: JIMMY AND BETH

BETH

I feel like I'm watching a National Geographic special.

Hang on, hang on.

RESET TO:

INT. BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE ON: MATTHEW

He finishes a piece of candy. He starts rooting through the pile of candy, looking for another one of the same kind.

RESET TO:

INT. BREAKROOM - CONTINUOUS

ANGLE ON: JIMMY AND BETH

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Bingo!

Joe passes by and Matthew protects his candy. Joe crosses off.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

See? That's the one! He had some and now he wants more. That's our stock.

BETH

You mean, we should buy the stock just based on that?

Just based on that! (BEAT) And, of course, the fact the company that makes those just got a government contract to make nougat clusters for the Pentagon.

Catherine crosses behind Matthew and he covers his candy again.

DISSOLVE TO:

ACT ONE

SCENE H

INT. BREAKROOM - LATER (D-1) (Joe, Jimmy, Beth, Bill)

A workman in a jumpsuit is kneeling on the floor, repairing the fridge. Joe is standing over him. Beth and Jimmy enter.

JOE

Ricardo here'll have the fridge up and working in no time.

JIMMY

Thanks, Joe. Could you give us a moment?

JOE

Sure. (TO RICARDO) Let me know if you need anything.

Joe exits.

BETH

What do we do now?

JIMMY

Now we check to see how your stock is doing.

BETH

(RE: TERMINAL) There it is! Mr.

James, they just showed my stock!

There it is again! 30 points!

JIMMY

You've got yourself a live one!

BETH

There it is again! 29 and a half!

JIMMY

What did you buy at?

BETH

Thirty-something. 27 and a quarter!

This is exciting -- there it is

again. 21! 19! It's -- (THEN) Wait a

minute...

JIMMY

Beth honey, I am so sorry...

BETH *

Hang on, hang on. (RE: TICKER) 19...
20... 21...(BEAT) 20... 13.

* Bill, the repairman, jumps up.

BILL *

Thirteen! I have to make a phone call.

Bill exits.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SCENE J

FADE IN:

INT. BREAK ROOM - A LITTLE LATER (D-1) (Beth, Jimmy, Bill)

Jimmy is staring at the stock ticker, shaking his head. Beth enters.

BETH

Okay, I just sold my stock. I bought it at thirty-three and sold it at... (CHECKS PIECE OF PAPER) one.

JIMMY

I'm sorry, Beth. I just-don't understand what went wrong.

BETH

That's alright. I only lost thirtytwo dollars.

JIMMY

Per share.

BETH

Per what?

How many shares did you buy?

BETH

Like a hundred. So I only lost a hundred and thirty-two dollars.

JIMMY

Uh, something like that.

BETH

Well, you've got to break some eggs to make an omelette, right Mr. James?

JIMMY

You could feed an army on the omelette you're making.

BETH

Let's try again. I mean... I've been putting off those college loan people for years, I can put 'em off a little more.

JIMMY

Right. What are they gonna do -- put you in jail?

BETH *

They have mentioned that before, but I think they're bluffing. Let's break some more eggs.

JIMMY *

You got it.

Jimmy gets up and crosses to the breakroom phone. He cradles the receiver on his shoulder and pulls out his keyring. Jimmy uses a whistle from his keyring to blow hard into the phone.

SFX: TWEEEE!

JIMMY

There we go.

As Jimmy dials, Bill walks by outside, holding his ear.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

(ON PHONE) Manny? Jimmy. No, you're the man! No, you're the man! No, you - the - man! Seriously, are you guys gonna get bought out by Vixodyne?

Excellent! Thanks, bye. You the man.

Jimmy hangs up.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

By the way, if you're ever being interrogated by the Securities and Exchange Commission...

BETH

Then that call never happened?

JIMMY

That call never happened, we have never met, and as far as you know, I've been dead since 1987.

BETH *

Got it. And if you ever get a call from the guy who owns my building...

JIMMY *

Same thing?

BETH *

Thank you, sir.

DISSOLVE TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE K

INT. DAVE'S OFFICE/BULLPEN - LATER (D-1) (Dave, Matthew, Lisa, Catherine, Joe)

Dave is still working on the budget. He turns a page and it lands on the sword. He looks at it. He's obviously tempted. He closes the blinds, then carefully unsheathes the sword, holds it with both hands and waves it back and forth, testing it's heft.

DAVE

(TO HIMSELF) If you strike me down, I shall become more powerful than you can possibly imagine, Vader.

Dave stops and looks at the sword

DAVE (CONT'D)

Yeah, right. Like this could stop Lord Vader.

Dave throws the sword in his wastepaper basket. Matthew enters.

MATTHEW

So... how do you like the sword?

DAVE

It's great.

MATTHEW

Then why did you throw it in the trash?

DAVE

In Japan, they use wastepaper baskets as sword receptacles.

Matthew thinks about this for a moment. Then...

MATTHEW *

No they don't. Except for maybe in the Osaka region. I knew I should have given it to Joe.

DAVE

If you'd given it to Joe, I'd be talking to your torso right now.

* We hear a banging sound in bullpen. Matthew exits. Dave exits.

INT. BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Dave crosses past Lisa, who is trying to fix her chair. She has it turned over and is pounding on the bottom with her stapler.

DAVE (CONT'D)

I'm ordering you a new chair.

LISA

That won't be necessary.

DAVE

That stapler looks like it's on its last legs, too.

CATHERINE

(PASSING BY) Stuff or no stuff, you are good, girl.

DAVE *

Let me just --

Lisa pulls the stapler out on Dave like a switchblade.

LISA

Back off, Dave.

DAVE *

Easy, Action. Don't make me call Officer Krupke.

Joe crosses, with the sword hidden.

DAVE (CONT'D)

Joe, come back here.

Joe returns.

JOE

What?

Dave holds out his hand. Joe reluctantly gives up the wrapped-up sword.

JOE (CONT'D)

C'mon, Dave. You know I'm the only one around here who knows how to handle one of these.

DAVE

I don't think stuffing it in your pants is the way to handle it, and neither would the people in the emergency room.

* Joe exits.

DAVE *

So you're sure?

LISA *

Yes, I'm sure. Show's over, folks.

Nothing to see, here. Move it along.

Lisa sits down in her chair. The chair immediately drops two feet. A beat. Dave re-enters the frame. Lisa's chin is at desk level, but she refuses to admit anything's wrong.

LISA (CONT'D) *

Now if you'll excuse me, I have a lot of work to do here.

CUT TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE M

INT. BREAKROOM - SIMULTANEOUS (D-1)
(Jimmy, Beth)

Beth is watching the ticker. Jimmy enters. He has having a hard time going up to her. Finally he does.

JIMMY

Beth, I think we need to talk.

Beth just keeps looking at the ticker, stoically.

BETH

Our latest stock's in the toilet, too. I know. What's the next tip?

JIMMY

No more tips, honey. You just spent all your college loan money. There's nothing left.

BETH

Of course there is. The credit card money. Most of the credit card companies don't even know my real name. Let's go, let's go...

No. No. No. It's over. Here.

Jimmy pulls out a check and hands it to Beth.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Just fill in the amount and we'll leave it at that. I'll lose the money, but I'm not about to lose a friend.

BETH

I can't take this.

JIMMY

Take it.

BETH

I can't.

JIMMY

Take it!

BETH

I didn't actually lose any money.

Jimmy takes the check back.

JIMMY

What's that?

BETH

I took the tips that you gave me...(MUMBLES)

JIMMY

What?

BETH

...and I sold them to Bill.

JIMMY

To Bill? But I specifically told you--

BETH *

I know, I know! I'm sorry. You can have all the money I made off him, just please don't be mad.

Beth pulls the money out. It is a huge wad of bills.

JIMMY

(WHISTLES) How much is this?

BETH

\$2000. He gave me \$500 a tip, four tips, that's \$2000.

JIMMY

What can I say?

BETH

I know, it was terrible of me--Jimmy interrupts her by giving her a big hug.

JIMMY

I am so proud of you. (MARVELING)

Plus he still paid you five hundred

even after that third one tanked...

Welcome to the world of high

finance, my dear.

BETH

But all I did was sell someone something that I didn't even own, that wasn't worth anything in the first place.

JIMMY *

(TAKING THE WAD) Like I just said, welcome to the world of high finance. (SNIFFING THE MONEY) Wait a minute, there's twenty-five hundred here.

BETH

Oh, right... I picked one out of the paper and sold it to him. I figured he wouldn't know the difference.

JIMMY

And how'd it do?

BETH

Who cares?

JIMMY

I'm so proud I could cry.

CUT TO:

ACT TWO

SCENE P

* INT. DAVE'S OFFICE/BULLPEN - THAT EVENING (N-1) (Dave, Bill, Lisa, Matthew, Catherine, Joe)

Dave is still working on the budget. Bill enters, looking forlorn.

DAVE

What's wrong?

BILL

Have you ever lost something very dear to you?

DAVE

(THINKS) When I was twelve, I had this dog named--

BILL

I was thinking more along the lines of a massive sum of money.

DAVE

Oh. Then no. Stock market?

Bill picks up the sword and starts pacing around the room with it.

BILL

Yep. It's not just money I've lost,
Dave. It's hopes. Dreams. All I
wanted was enough to buy a little
house in Nantucket, and a boat...
an old pickup truck...and two or
three Ferraris... maybe a 69 Porsche
911 Targa...

DAVE

That just gets me right here.

BILL

No kidding.

Bill unsheathes the sword with a "sch-ting!"

DAVE

Careful with that.

Bill paces around the room, gesturing with the sword.

BILL

But all that's gone now. Gone.

DAVE

It's actually very sharp.

BILL

The house, gone. The boat, gone. The car, gone. The other car, gone. The other --

DAVE

(DELIBERATELY) Put the sword down.

Bill notices what he's holding for the first time.

BILL

This is a real sword?

DAVE

Very real.

BILL

What are you letting me wave it

around for? Jeesh...

Bill tosses the sword down on the coffee table, slicing a corner off. Lisa enters to find Dave and Bill staring at the sliced coffee table.

BILL (CONT'D)

(MARVELING) That was awesome.

LISA *

Dave.

DAVE

I assume you've finally broken down and come to ask me for a new chair.

LISA

(BREAKING DOWN) Well, as a matter of fact...

JOE/CATHERINE (O.C.) *

Go Lisa! Go Lisa! Go Lisa!

DAVE *

Come on, new chair?

* Lisa closes door.

LISA *

(PISSED) No, I came in to visit, okay?

DAVE

All you have to say is, "Dave, I need a new chair." Just six simple little words.

JOE/CATHERINE (O.S.) *

W0000.

LISA *

Just shut up and tell me how your day is going.

DAVE

Come on, say it with me, "Dave, I need a new chair."

LISA

My chair is fine!

Dave gets fed up, grabs the sword.

DAVE

No, it's not.

LISA

I will die before I ask for a new chair. Dave exits to bullpen. Lisa follows.

RESET TO:

INT. BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Dave walks out into the bullpen, pulls Lisa's chair out into the open and unsheathes the sword.

DAVE (CONT'D) *

All right, everyone stand back! I am going to put this chair out of its misery.

Dave raises the sword above his head. Even though it barely touches the clock on the wall, it cuts the clock clean in half.

MATTHEW

David, you don't have to do this just to make me feel better.

Dave turns to inspect the clock. As he turns, the sword neatly slices a desk lamp in two.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

Alright, I admit it. I didn't actually go to Japan!

A beat. Everyone turns.

CATHERINE

What?

MATTHEW

I had the plane ticket and everything, but then I chickened out, so I just spent the week in the public library reading everything I could find about Japan so you guys wouldn't think I was weird!

JOE

(TO MATTHEW) Let me be the first to congratulate you on a job well-done.

DAVE

Can someone help me clean this stuff up?

Dave bends down to pick up the lamp. In so doing, the sword accidentally slices into the wall. A shower of sparks flies out, and the station is plunged into darkness.

LFX: LIGHTS OUT

A long beat. Then...

LISA

Okay, fine: Dave, I need a new chair.

JOE

Whoo! The lights go out, the love-.
talk starts.

CATHERINE

Wish I had a Sweet Poppa like that!

DAVE

Look, everyone -- there is absolutely no favoritism going on here...

LISA

Dave, shut up.

DAVE

Hey, I'm on your side.

LISA

Thanks, but let's take this up when you're not waving a huge sword around in a dark room.

CATHERINE

(KNOWINGLY) Mmm-mmm.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

<u>TAG</u>

FADE IN:

INT. BULLPEN - THAT EVENING (5:00) (N-1) (Beth, Jimmy, Bill, Catherine)

Jimmy and Beth are at the coat rack, putting on their coats, getting ready to leave.

BETH

I still feel kind of bad about Bill.

JIMMY

Bill's a grown-up. He can take care of himself.

BETH

But couldn't we feed him just one really juicy tip?

JIMMY

Well, I did get a hot one on
Amalgamated Turbine. But like I
said, I can't give out tips, on
principle.

BETH

What was the name of the company again?

Amalgamated Turbine.

Jimmy and Beth exit into the foyer. A beat.

The coat rack -- which Bill is hiding inside -- starts moving across the room towards Bill's desk.

RTLL.

(MUFFLED, REPEATING TO HIMSELF SO
HE'LL REMEMBER) Amalgamated Turbine,
Amalgamated Turbine, Amalgamated
Turbine.

CATHERINE

(PASSING BY) 'Night, Bill.

BILL

'Night, Catherine.

FADE OUT

END OF SHOW