

*SCENE 6*

(Diane, head of HR, is seated in Joe's office. Joe is standing with putter. He is trying to putt. Every time we hear applause from the trading floor she looks out the window of the office and is uncomfortable.)

DIANE

(Laughing) Oh my God.

JOE

Sure. Sure.

DIANE

I had to take a break. (She laughs uncontrollably)

JOE

Sure.

DIANE

(Through laughter) No one's been by here?

(Joe's phone rings.)

JOE

(Answering phone) Yeah. Yeah. Keep trying. (Hangs up. To Diane) Where were we?

DIANE

Has anyone been by here?

JOE

Not a one. You're doing a great job. I'll be able to go home, play with my dog, think of England. (He putts and reacts according to result.)

(We hear applause from the trading floor.)

DIANE

Part of it is the time factor. We're not giving them much time.

JOE

I hear that. Want to give this a go?

(DIANE shakes her head no.)

DIANE

One of our escorts (she starts to laugh) these security guys, where do they come from? He said, he said he wasn't comfortable going through personal belongings – what is your job? I wanted to scream. (Laughing harder) What two-bit school of security did you go to? Can I go to that one? I'd love, oh my god, I'd love not to have to go through people's . . . oh my god the things you see. (Laughing harder.) You know we've got a guy here . . .

JOE

What?

DIANE

I can't. I can't. Confidentiality. (Trying to calm self down.) I hate fucking confidentiality. (Continuing to try to calm self) OK. OK. I'm calm. I am. I'm calm. (Business like) Now I'm going to need someone with me when I talk to Eric. I am going to need a witness.

JOE

(Setting up another putt.) Sure.

DIANE

I mean, I really need this. His reactions (she laughs) have never been predictable.

JOE

Yeah, as I remember that's why we hired him.

DIANE

Oh yeah.

(They laugh. We hear applause and whistles from the trading floor. He doesn't look up.)

JOE

Who's that?

DIANE

Probably Steven Winslow. (She looks out.) Yeah it's Steven Winslow. He's not turning back. (Laughing) He'll turn into a pillar of salt. He was really pissed.

JOE

Come on. Putt!

DIANE

No, I'm terrible.

JOE  
Just for a goof?

DIANE  
No.

JOE  
You need a goof.

DIANE  
(She shakes her head no.) I am a goof.

(Joe's phone rings.)

JOE  
Yeah. Yeah. Get it done. I don't care. Get it done. (Hangs up.)

(Uncomfortable pause. It's deadly quiet outside the office.)

JOE  
Sorry about that. When's Eric coming in?

(More applause.)

DIANE  
We're calling him in at 3:00 but I am not doing it unless you are available.

JOE  
Do we need a lawyer?

DIANE  
No, a witness and uhhh . . . maybe some protection? As long as you are there it will be fine.

JOE  
How many so far?

DIANE  
I'm averaging 6 an hour. I give my speech that's 4 minutes, leave 4 minutes for questions, two minutes at the end to breathe before I start again.

JOE  
Many questions?

DIANE  
(She starts laughing hard) I made a mistake.

JOE

What?

DIANE

OK. Ummmm, I'm feeling the flow and starting to feel pretty good – my delivery, powers of persuasion, I'm in a groove – I am able to convince them and myself - this is a positive step. Things are moving. I think – this day is going to fly, I'll be home this evening, feet up, glass of Champagne, it will be over. I, for a moment or two, just a moment or two, believed, truly believed - I am doing good. I am offering new opportunities/growth potential – the adventure of life!

(We hear more applause from trading floor.)

DIANE

A fellow comes in and he doesn't look familiar. I launch into my speech. We appreciate your dedication. We are giving you a glowing recommendation. Here is the confidentiality agreement. If signed your more than generous severance . . .

(Whistles from trading floor.)

DIANE

is such and such and will last for so many months. Thank you again for your hard work Mr. (searching for a name) Numbnuts and as I am finishing my ode to his glory and brilliant future this fellow gets a big grin on his face and laughs. I stop. I am at a full stop. I don't know what to do. "I'm not Mr. Numbnuts," he says, "I'm Mr. Franklin. My name is Franklin." I say, "oh I am so sorry. I didn't mean to alarm you. I don't know how this happened. Please forgive me. What a terrible thing to put you through." "That is quite all right," he says. We're both nodding like mad. Making nice. "You have a very good day." "Thank you," I say, "You too. Please have a very good day." "And," he says, "by the way you are handling this very well. You should have been in sales instead of HR. I was almost sold." We share a good laugh. He turns to leave and I look at my list and I see, I see I am not handling anything very well and I have to say, "excuse me Mr. Franklin while you are here . . ."

JOE

No.

(She laughs even harder. As if this is a big joke.)

DIANE

His was the next package. He'd come in out of order!

(Applause and whistles from trading floor.)

JOE

Who's that?

DIANE

(She looks out the office door.) Mark Brustein.

JOE

What a pain in the ass. I'm glad to see him go.

(More applause and whistles.)

DIANE

(Still looking out of the office window) They're standing.

JOE

Let 'um.

DIANE

Do you want to know who's standing? I can give you names.

JOE

No.

DIANE

He looked back. He's waving.

(We hear cheers from the trading floor.)

JOE

How many more do you have?

DIANE

Let's see, 18 so far. To go - 20 and Eric. No wait. Three are out sick - 17 and Eric.

JOE

Tomorrow we'll be back to normal.

DIANE

Except for the three.

JOE

(He misses a putt) What the hell? OK. You have to do this.

DIANE

(She laughs.) No. I can't.

JOE

Come on. Do it for me.

DIANE

I have to get back.

JOE

(A friendly command) Do this and at the end of the day I'm buying the Champagne.

(Pause. She laughs.)

JOE

I really want you to do one putt and I'm asking nicely. What? What?

DIANE

(Laughing) Well, I . . .

JOE

This is easy. Putt . . . putt. What? Are you afraid I'm going to evaluate your putting performance? Hold a bad putt against you? Come on. You're thinking too much like an HR person. Come on! (Holds putter out to her.) Oh. Oh. (Looking out office window. Looks back at her.) I see. Yes.

DIANE

It won't look right.

JOE

That's true. It won't look right. It's all about appearance, isn't it?

(More applause outside. For the first time Joe looks at what is happening on the trading floor.)

JOE

Look at that son of a bitch. The day I hired him I thought, he's greedy. He'll make money.

DIANE

He did.

JOE

Not enough. And now they're applauding him like he's some kind of departing hero. (Joe's phone rings. Answering phone) What? What? I don't care. What did I say? I said I don't care. I said do it. (Hangs up. To Diane) Where was I?

DIANE

Our departing hero.

JOE

Oh yeah. It's all about appearance. People don't bother to look at facts, at numbers, at reality. They don't take the fucking time. They're too busy - too scared - worrying about their own appearance to investigate the truth of what's in front of their noses. And you know what? They're right. That's all that matters. That's how we survive. Truth is always relative. Got that? Got that? But appearance . . . take it from me . . . (To Diane – sternly, as if imparting a great truth) the appearance of weakness is a terrible thing.

(He holds the putter out to her once again. He is deadly serious.)

JOE

What do you think I'll remember about this meeting? How you putt? Or if you putt?

(Diane gets up and takes putter. She smiles as she tries to putt. We hear more applause from the trading floor. On televisions, computer screens and we see the Corporate Memo. All lights dim and we hear the voice over of the Memo.)

To: All employees  
From: Jonathan K. Krohl  
Re: Reduction in workforce

Dear Colleagues.

In the coming weeks we will begin restructuring to accommodate changes in the current environment. We appreciate your patience and flexibility. These decisions are not easy. As we move forward please know we appreciate your dedication which is the heart and soul of this firm. As always, our strength lies in our commitment to our clients.

Johnny