THE ASSISTANT

Jane & Wilcock (HR rep)
INT. HR OFFICE - DAY

WILCOCK works at his computer. JANE enters, wearing her winter coat and scarf. He keeps working for a beat while she stands there waiting.

    WILCOCK
    Welcome.

    JANE
    Hi.

    WILCOCK
    Have a seat.

She does.

    WILCOCK (CONT’D)
    Did you want to take your coat off?

    JANE
    Uhh... uhh, no. No, it’s okay. Actually maybe just my scarf.

    WILCOCK
    Yeah. Looks more comfortable.

    JANE
    Um... I-- I didn’t know who to come to.

    WILCOCK
    In that case, you came to the right place. So...

    JANE
    I mean, it’s just, uh... it’s just--

    WILCOCK
    --Hey. Whatever’s going on, you can tell me. That’s what I’m here for.

He takes out a notepad.

    JANE
    Um, there’s this girl who arrived today. She... she’s from Boise.

    WILCOCK
    Mmhmm. Okay.

    JANE
    And she’s very pretty. And she’s young.
WILCOCK
Okay.

JANE
She was waitressing in Sun Valley when she met him. And he just liked her, apparently, and just gave her an assistant job.

WILCOCK
And?

JANE
Well, she doesn’t have any experience, or not much experience, and he just flew her over from Boise and is putting her up at a hotel?

Wilcock makes a note and waits for more.

JANE (CONT’D)
She’s very young.

WILCOCK
Is she too young to be an assistant?

JANE
No. No, no. Uh...

WILCOCK
Well, okay. Um... and this girl, has she done something to make you... uh... do you suspect that she’s done something to harm the company?

JANE
No. No, no, no. I mean, I don’t-- I don’t think so. I, I dropped her off at The Mark. The hotel.

WILCOCK
Uh huh.

JANE
We had a reservation for her, and I left her there.

WILCOCK
Yes.
JANE
And when I came back to the office, he was-- he was gone.

Wilcock nods.

JANE (CONT’D)
And he was gone for quite awhile.

WILCOCK
And you were looking for him?

JANE
No. No, he was just-- he was gone, and she was gone, and they were both at The Mark apparently.

WILCOCK
Apparently?

JANE
I mean, that’s what everyone said.

WILCOCK
Who said?

JANE
Um, the production executives. And all the assistants. I mean, they were just, like, laughing about it.

WILCOCK
They were laughing?

JANE
Yeah.

WILCOCK
Okay, maybe let’s back up here a bit. What did she say to you?

JANE
Who?

WILCOCK
The girl.

JANE
The girl? Uh... nothing.

WILCOCK
Nothing? Have you spoken to her?
JANE
No. I mean, just in the cab on our way to The Mark. But I haven’t talked to her since.

WILCOCK
Since when?

JANE
I haven’t seen her since. When I found out I came straight here.

WILCOCK
Sorry, what did you-- (chuckles)-- what did you find out?

JANE
What-- what can we do?

WILCOCK
Do about what?

JANE
About the girl.

WILCOCK
Okay, let’s-- bear with me here. So, a new assistant arrives from out of town, and she’s being put up at The Mark?

JANE
Mmhmm.

WILCOCK
And your boss at some point left the office?

JANE
To meet her at The Mark, yes.

WILCOCK
Yes, according, apparently, to the jokes at the office.

JANE
Yeah, I guess. Yeah.

WILCOCK
Okay. Okay, so that’s-- that’s it? That’s why you came in?
JANE
And-- and I found an earring in the office today.

WILCOCK
An earring?

JANE
By his couch. And a hair tie on the floor last week.

WILCOCK
Ah. Forgive me, but are you often, um, cleaning things off his floor? I mean, we have a janitorial crew, right?

JANE
I’m supposed to tidy up. Um. And-- and a girl came, and, uhh, she picked the earring up. I’ve never seen her before, and it was hers.

WILCOCK
Okay.

His cell phone buzzes.

WILCOCK (CONT’D)
Sorry. Just a sec.

He answers.

WILCOCK (CONT’D)
Hey. [Listens.] No. No need. We’re fine really. [Listens.] What? [Laughs.] You think I give a shit about The Rangers? [Laughs.] Yeah. Alright, we’ll pick this up later. Okay.

He hangs up.

WILCOCK (CONT’D)
Sorry about that. Uh... where were we?

JANE
The earring.

WILCOCK
Okay, listen, you’re relatively new to the company.
JANE
I mean, I’ve been working here for nearly two months.

WILCOCK
Five weeks.

JANE
Well, yeah.

WILCOCK
And you’re under a lot of stress. Entry-level jobs in this industry are tough, right? Long hours?

JANE
Yeah--

WILCOCK
--First one in. Last one out.

JANE
Well, yeah.

WILCOCK
I bet you haven’t seen your friends in awhile.

JANE
Um, I-- I missed my dad’s birthday.

WILCOCK
That’s tough.

JANE
Yeah, but that’s--

WILCOCK
--Where’d you go to college?

JANE
Uh, Northwestern.

WILCOCK
That’s a great school. That’s a great school. You’re smart. You have to be smart to get into Northwestern. Plus a 3.8 GPA. And you’re on a fast track in this business, working here. You are. So, what’s your plan?

JANE
Sorry?
WILCOCK
Where do you want to be in five to ten years?

JANE
Oh. Uh, I want to produce. I want to be a producer.

WILCOCK
You do?

JANE
Yeah.

WILCOCK
That’s -- okay, that’s excellent. We could use more women producers, you know. That’s a-- it’s a tough job. But I can see that you’ve got what it takes.

JANE
Thanks.

WILCOCK
So why are you in here trying to throw it all away over this bullshit?

JANE
Sorry?

WILCOCK
This. Whatever it is. Let’s make it official. Call it a complaint. Let’s assume I were to do you the disservice of writing it up for you. So, your complaint is as follows: the company hires a new assistant. She’s young, and, in your opinion, she’s very pretty. And she’s maybe a little inexperienced.

JANE
She was a waitress. She was a waitress.

WILCOCK
Yeah. Exactly. And they possibly offered her a job just like that, and they’re putting her up in a fancy hotel, and you live-- where do you live?
JANE
Astoria.

WILCOCK

JANE
That’s not the point.

WILCOCK
And by the way, how experienced were you when you got hired? A couple of internships? Am I right?

JANE
The last one paid me, so--

WILCOCK
--Do you know how many people work at this company? I have to make sure all of them are taken care of. And do you know how many people want to work here? I’ve got 400 résumés teed up for your position alone. Ivy League grads, 4.0 GPAs. And here you are sitting in my office, stressed out, jealous of some new assistant who’s getting more attention than you.

JANE
I’m not... I’m not jealous. I was just-- I was worried for this girl.

WILCOCK
She’s a woman. She’s a grown woman.

JANE
Sorry, yes.

WILCOCK
You think a grown woman can’t make her own choices?

JANE
I never said that.

WILCOCK
Because she’s a waitress?

JANE
Nope, I didn’t say that.
WILCOCK
What then? What then? Listen, honestly, what do you want from me?

JANE
I just--

WILCOCK
--Tell me what you want me to do here? Do you want to keep working here?

JANE
I do. I...

He pushes forward a box of tissues.

WILCOCK
Look, frankly, it’s your call. I can file a complaint for you, if that’s what you want, but I think you know how it would come off. (Gestures to his notes) Should I file this?

Beat.

JANE
No, don’t. Okay.

WILCOCK
(throwing away the notes)
Okay.

JANE
Okay, thank you.

WILCOCK
Don’t forget your scarf.

JANE
Oh, thank you.

WILCOCK
I don’t think you have anything to worry about.

JANE
Hmm?

WILCOCK
You’re not his type.

She exits.