

SELLULAR

Pilot

by

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LOGLINE: A destitute 51-year-old entrepreneur secretly makes a failing phone store his redemption project—only to be bulldozed by a world of emotionally addicted customers and commission-hungry reps.

INT. SILICON VALLEY - HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Obscenely large welcome basket on the table next to an impressive flower arrangement. Champagne chilling.

LUCAS AGNELLO, (51), a silver-fox White dude, wears a tux and adjusts his bow tie in front of the mirror.

EMILY AGNELLO, (42), rocking a Pilates-bod with confident coolness, lounges on the bed in a slip, hair in curlers, makeup done. She's engrossed in her phone.

LUCAS

(excited)

This is it, Em. The last big score.

EMILY

(doesn't look up)

Uh-huh.

LUCAS

Just a few more months and we can scoop up that sweet Belize resort. Living and working on the beach. I can't wait.

Emily subtly grimaces. Lucas only notices her commitment to her phone instead of him.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Em? What do you think? When we get back to St. Louis let's plan.

No acknowledgment.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Could you put that thing down for five seconds?

She looks up at him, barely lowering the phone.

EMILY

Honey, as I've told you many times, I'm not ready. Not while my career's finally on track.

LUCAS

We've been talking about this for two years.

EMILY

(resumes scrolling)

You've been talking about it.

LUCAS

Am I crazy? What's happening? You love Belize and agreed that the resort would make a great retirement plan.

EMILY

It will. When I'm ready.

He's shocked into silence.

LUCAS

Wow. It's literally your job to coach executives to communicate better. You missed the mark here.

She glares at him.

EMILY

Y'know what, Lucas? Go to your stupid party. I'm good right here.

Scarily calm, she returns to scrolling. He stares at her in disbelief but waits a beat.

LUCAS

O-K-Fine! Enjoy your phone!

He snatches his wallet off the dresser, straightens a crooked flower in the basket and storms out.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - NIGHT

Fancy-schmancy tech-world celebration. Black-tie-clad GUESTS mingle and schmooze.

Lucas, in his element, stands at the bar with RICK, (50s) - handsome, clean-cut, wired like a gambler who's already counting his winnings - scans the room, overly enthusiastic.

RICK

We did it, partner. The big payoff.

LUCAS

And without compromising our integrity.

Rick gives a half-hearted smile. They raise their glasses.

RICK

To the IPO.

LUCAS
To early retirement.

Lucas sips. Rick gulps, jittery.

RICK
Where's Em?

TECH CEO
There he is!

TECH CEO, (20s), skinny, arrogant and enjoying "his" party, appears with his CFO, (20s), buttoned-up accountant-type with a layer of insecurity brewing beneath the surface.

He comes at Lucas to deliver a hand-clasp-one-handed-hug-tap.

TECH CEO (CONT'D)
How you got us through that final round of funding was beautiful.

RICK
He's the best.

TECH CEO
Now, just watch the *dollahs* roll in.

Lucas notices COUPLES having a good time as the other three huddle like frat-boys, congratulating themselves, the superstars of the evening.

A group of FEDS enter. Lucas sees it in slow motion, stunned, as they handcuff Tech CEO, CFO, and Rick. Lucas is in a dream-like state. The party stops. The room buzzes with whispers. The Feds rattle off the charges. It's all a blur to Lucas until reality comes back into focus.

LUCAS
Embezzling...?

Lucas makes eye contact with Rick, who turns away and hangs his head.

As they're marched out, all eyes turn toward Lucas. Guests slowly back away from him - damaged goods. A SERVER appears.

SERVER
Candied Bacon Cracker?

INT. SILICON VALLEY - HOTEL SUITE - NIGHT

Lucas opens the door, in shock and on the verge of tears.

LUCAS
 My God, Emily. You're not gonna
 believe this--

Lucas spots a note on the nightstand with his name scrawled on the front. Frozen, he looks around with a dejected expression. Emily and her things are nowhere to be found.

EXT. ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI - STRIP MALL PARKING LOT - DAY

Dreary. On the verge of winter. Half-full parking lot.

INT. LUCAS' CAR - DAY

Lucas - with the same dejected look - stares out the window at the blinking neon CELLULAR MOBILE sign above the stand-alone store, flickering like a broken heart rate.

His phone is on speaker as he listens to MARGIE, his headhunter.

MARGIE (O.S.)
 This store is ranked in the bottom
 ten in St. Louis.

LUCAS
 Of all things, Margie. Phones?

MARGIE (O.S.)
 You asked for a job with uncapped
 commissions at a place that needs
 fixing. I delivered both.

LUCAS
 But selling phones--

MARGIE (O.S.)
 A widget's a widget. That's what
 you said. Besides, we've been over
 this. You lost all your money and
 are up to your ears in lawyer fees.
 You've got no W2 history. Nobody
 wants to hire a disgraced
 consultant, except these phones
 stores hire anyone, including
 criminals.

LUCAS
 I wasn't embezzling! I'm not a
 criminal!

MARGIE (O.S.)

I'm not saying you are. But perception is reality. This place doesn't care. Lay low until the story dies down.

LUCAS

Can't get any lower than retail.

MARGIE (O.S.)

You're lucky they hired you. Just be grateful.

LUCAS

But I'm not a--

She hangs up. Lucas huffs. Pulls a palm-sized notebook from his coat pocket. Flips it open. Written on the first page:

Cellular Mobile

THINGS TO FIX

Needs better name!!

Lucas steps out of the car wearing an expensive black cashmere overcoat. His shiny shoes land in a wad of pink chewing gum. He opens his mouth in a silent scream. He sees a gnarly straw on the ground and uses his pocket square to pluck it up to pry off the gum.

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - DAY

Open floor plan. Huge TV airs sports on mute. Posters of new phone models. Muzak. Marquee-style signage on the back wall in glittery neon letters spells "ACCESSORIES."

Around the store are several sales desks and a prominent U-shaped, podium-style central station known as the "Judge's Bench" with a high front piece.

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - MANAGER'S DESK - CONTINUOUS

DEAN PURDY, (36), a cocky, insecure people-pleaser, wears a CELLULAR MOBILE polo. His name tag includes his title: "Store Manager." He stands behind the desk with his arms held up in a way that looks like he's being robbed, demonstrating to HUSBAND and WIFE, his customers, who are enthralled.

DEAN

It widens the field of vision when you have three cameras.

He picks up his big-ass brick of a phone with three black circles protruding from the back and shows it to them.

DEAN (CONT'D)

Our two eyeballs can only focus in one place, which is why I always get the newest phones with the most cameras.

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - JUDGE'S BENCH - CONTINUOUS

CARMEN SORTO, (27), a fiery Hispanic she-snake, and AMINA MUHAMMADUDDIN, (21), an excitable, punchy Afghani with a potty mouth and traces of a New York accent, wear similar CELLULAR MOBILE-branded polo shirts with name tags. They glare in Dean's direction.

CARMEN

(shakes her head)

They're lenses, idiot. Not cameras.

AMINA

Bro, if I have to listen to his stupid eyeball crap one more time, I'm gonna slit my wrists with a SIM card.

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - MANAGER'S DESK - CONTINUOUS

Wife takes a closer look at Dean's phone.

HUSBAND

I don't trust a phone with only one camera. That's like a guy with one story. He's hiding somethin'.

WIFE

For the price, that camera better see around corners.

DEAN

Every detail is crisp and clear.

WIFE

Okay, good, because blurry photos ruined my Thanksgiving last year.

Dean glances out his window. Sees Lucas using his pocket square to pull the gum off his fingers. He taps on the glass.

DEAN

'Ay!

Lucas turns to see Dean beckoning him with enthusiasm.

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - CONTINUOUS

Lucas drops his shoulders, opens the door to CHIMES, and shuffles inside like an inmate in leg irons.

DEAN
Agnello! C'mere!
(to Husband and Wife)
One sec.

Dean trots over to Lucas and points at his phone like it's covered in mold.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Look at you, man, with that
freakin' dinosaur Robot 6! You
gotta upgrade that now that you
work here.

He holds up his phone like a trophy.

DEAN (CONT'D)
This beast sees more than God and I
can watch your pores aging in 4k.

Lucas composes himself. Dean slaps his back.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Anywho, welcome! Meet the gang.

He points at CLANCY KATZ (24), a sweet, grizzly Black guy.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Clancy over there is trying for the
Guinness World Record for longest
phone sale.
(nods toward Carmen and
Amina)
And that's Carmen and Amina at the
Judge's Bench.

He waves Carmen over. She grumbles a choice obscenity under her breath and heads toward him.

DEAN (CONT'D)
So, Luke--

LUCAS
Lucas.

Carmen appears.

DEAN

Right. Carmen Sorto, meet our new sales rep, Lucas Agnello.
(exaggerated Italian)
Sorto! Agnello! I feel like I need an O. Dean-OH!

Only Dean laughs. Carmen sizes up Lucas.

CARMEN

Kinda fancy for this place.

She steers Dean out of earshot, irritated.

CARMEN (CONT'D)

I thought you were going to keep the store diverse.

DEAN

He is diverse. He's old. Don't be such an age-i-tist.

CARMEN

It's *ageist*.

DEAN

(nods toward Husband and Wife)
Just close this deal for me while I show him around.

CARMEN

I'm taking seventy-five percent.

Before he can object, she walks toward his desk.

DEAN

(to Husband and Wife)
Folks, Carmen's gonna take it from here. She's my best rep.

They are noticeably sad to lose him. He beams.

DEAN (CONT'D)

So, you never worked in retail?

Dean wraps a chummy arm around Lucas' shoulder and Carmen clocks this White-dude shit with a scowl.

LUCAS

Never had a job. Always been an entrepreneur.

DEAN
Guess not anymore, huh?

Dean elbows him and laughs. Lucas removes his overcoat, folds it over his arm. He's wearing a dark, tailored suit.

LUCAS
Never had a boss either.

DEAN
No shit? Fresh outta shrink-wrap.
Hot damn. We're gonna have fun!

Lucas fumes and tries to slide out from under his arm but Dean yanks him closer.

DEAN (CONT'D)
Listen. You got life experience. I need your help here. Todd, the Dimrod's store over in Brentwood is always number one. He thinks he's the shit, but the foot traffic there is insane. Just once, I'd like to beat that son-of-a-bitch. Can I count on you to step up to the plate?

LUCAS
It's fixable.

DEAN
(slaps Lucas' back)
That's the spirit. I'll show you the leaderboard later.
(shouts)
Amina! C'mere.

Lucas watches Amina approach, stunned by her beauty.

DEAN (CONT'D)
(struggles)
This is Amina Mohatma-doo-din. She'll get you trained on the basics.

AMINA
(stresses to Dean)
Bro! Muhammad...duh-din, not doo-din, doofus.

Dean laughs nervously. Glances at Lucas.

DEAN
Such a jokester. I'll grab your
polo shirt.

LUCAS
(gestures to his suit)
This is much more professional.

DEAN
Can't have customers thinking
you're a loan shark. Ha!
(to Amina)
Get him started.

Amina gives Dean the stink eye as he walks off.

AMINA
So, look at you. Tall, handsome,
White. Bro, you gonna clean up.

LUCAS
I've built a lot of companies on my
client relationships, but never my
looks.

AMINA
No, stupid.
(points out her body)
This makes sales. Follow me,
newbie.

LUCAS
Did you just call me stupid?

She walks away, ignoring him. Not used to being treated like
hired help, Lucas stands there with his mouth open. Amina
keeps walking.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
Where's your coat closet?

Amina points to a chair. Lucas sneers.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
Uh... this is cashmere.

AMINA
Imma ignore your coat drama. We got
inventory to do.

Lucas spots a cardboard cutout with a grinning teen clutching
the latest mePhone and carefully drapes his precious around
it.

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - REP DESK 1 - DAY

A MIDWESTERN GRANDPA, (70), wearing a well-worn St. Louis Cardinals sweatshirt, sits visibly nervous as Clancy programs the man's new phone.

MIDWESTERN GRANDPA

But, they won't be able to hack it,
will they?

Clancy's patience is thinning. Amina appears, Lucas in tow. She sees his empty scanner charging station.

AMINA

Clancy, where's your wand, bro?

Clancy's spine stiffens. He slowly rotates his head toward her, bugged.

CLANCY

You tell me.

AMINA

C'mon, I need it to train Lucas.

CLANCY

Good luck with that. I return what
I borrow.

Amina grunts and leaves Lucas in search of a scanner. Clancy holds out his hand. Lucas takes it.

CLANCY (CONT'D)

Clancy. Pleased.

He swivels his head back to his customer.

CLANCY (CONT'D)

Ok. Where were we?

MIDWESTERN GRANDPA

Can they hack it?

CLANCY

They who?

Grandpa points at the phone. Clancy speaks in a lyrical style, but with a know-it-all attitude.

CLANCY (CONT'D)

Oh, *them*. I mean, listen, my
justifiably concerned friend.

(MORE)

CLANCY (CONT'D)

They couldn't hack this baby if they had a whole team of *them* hackin' and hackin' like over-caffeinated banshees.

LUCAS

I read that they're actually hacking cars now.

Clancy gives Lucas a do-you-mind look.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

I just think it's fair to tell him the truth.

(to Midwestern Grandpa)

Nothing is unhackable. They can take control of your car from their living room and run it right off the road. Bam. Out from under you.

MIDWESTERN GRANDPA

(leans forward)

Not in my '98 Dodge Ram.

CLANCY

This is the new mePhone. Built like a truck. Just not in Detroit.

Midwestern Grandpa looks to Lucas, who shrugs. Clancy gives him a reassuring look. Amina returns, waving two scanners.

AMINA

Found the magic wands. Let's go, yo.

She hands one to Lucas and they exit.

CLANCY

(to Midwestern Grandpa)

My apologies for him, sir. He's new.

MIDWESTERN GRANDPA

He's a straight shooter. I like that. How much longer this gonna be? I wanna miss traffic on 40.

CLANCY

We're almost finished. Everything is transferring perfectly. Minus the spyware, malware, adware, scareware, underwear, everywhere, all of it. Completely hacker-proof.

MIDWESTERN GRANDPA
You sure about that?

CLANCY
Well, your stuff is all on the
cloud.

MIDWESTERN GRANDPA
Right. But... what do I do if it's
a clear day?

Clancy tosses his pen onto the desk, frustrated.

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - ACCESSORIES WALL - DAY

Lucas stares dumbfounded at an endless wall of nonsense.
Amina squats down to scan accessories on the racks with a
barcode scanner. BLEEP!

LUCAS
Daily inventory's a waste of time.

He jots a note in his notebook.

LUCAS (CONT'D)
Why not just once a week?

Amina points up at the cameras that look like black snow
globes protruding from the ceiling like the Eye of Sauron.

AMINA
Big bro, yo - always watching.

She scans another set of codes. BLEEP! BLEEP!

AMINA (CONT'D)
Get down here. Bottom row's all
you.

Amina continues: BLEEP! BLEEP! BLEEP! Lucas glances down at
his impeccable suit, reluctant to kneel. He bends as low as
his 51-year-old knees will allow, struggling to grab some
products.

LUCAS
Why is the code on the back?

He twists it and the hook dislodges, dropping the whole row
on the floor. Amina laughs.

AMINA
Rookie mistake. Like this. Lasers!

Amina fans a row of products across her hand and scans them. BLEEP! BLEEP! BLEEP! Lucas looks at the mess on the floor.

LUCAS

Putting the stickers on the front would solve lots of problems.

He peels one off and puts it on the front.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

See? Problem solved!

AMINA

Knock yourself out, you'll be re-stickering this shit all day.

LUCAS

All of this is cheaper online anyway.

Amina aims the scanner's red dot at his forehead like a sniper's mark.

AMINA

Bro, don't ever say that! This is the wall of gold. Ain't no money in phones so the wall is sacred.

LUCAS

No money in phones? That makes no sense. It's a phone store!

AMINA

Phones are the bait. But this wall pays for my lifestyle.

LUCAS

It should be closer to the front then.

She swirls the red dot around his face.

AMINA

Don't fix what ain't broke. And *don't* disrespect the wall. Now, c'mon, bougie, clean your mess.

She fans another set. BLEEP! BLEEP! BLEEP!

Surrendering his last crumb of dignity, he makes his way to a seated position on the floor. Clancy approaches to grab a phone case from the wall.

AMINA (CONT'D)

Soon as I sell enough of this crap,
I'm gonna open my own beauty salon.
The kind where you get champagne
when you walk in. It's gonna be
real fancy. Like me.

Lucas perks up, interested.

CLANCY

Are you still talking about that
salon?

AMINA

Shut up, Mr. Stay-at-home-dad.
When's that happening? Never.

LUCAS

You're going to be a stay-at-home
dad? That's cool.

CLANCY

Just need to convince the wife.

AMINA

Like I said, never.

Clancy exits. Amina works her way up the wall. BLEEP! BLEEP!

AMINA (CONT'D)

Anyway, I'd low-key rather delete
my socials than be here forever.
Like him. So, how do I do that -
start my own business?

LUCAS

Can I see your business plan? Or
executive summary?

AMINA

Right now, all I got is talent and
a dream.

LUCAS

What about seed money?

AMINA

I've been saving my commissions.

LUCAS

So, no plan, no seed money, no
cashflow strategy, or how to scale--

AMINA
Yo, forget I asked.

BLEEP! She ices him out. With great effort, he gets on his knees to start a new row, praying they hold up.

LUCAS
Y'know, it's not a bad idea.

AMINA
I wanna open in two years. It needs to happen before my dad finds out I'm not at Mizzou.

LUCAS
(stops scanning)
What? Why does he think you're in college?

AMINA
Because he's paying for it.

Lucas is shocked, deeply offended. Amina aims the scanner at a new row: **BLEEE-IRKK! BLEEE-IRKK!**

AMINA (CONT'D)
Uh-oh. No, no, no, no, no!

She rushes to the nearest computer, panicked. She throws her scanner onto the desk and smacks the keyboard repeatedly.

AMINA (CONT'D)
This system sucks! It ate everything. We gotta start over.

Lucas short-circuits. The scanner slides from his hand like a defused grenade. CRACK! His knees give out and he falls back on his butt.

DEAN (O.S.)
Incoming!

A polo shirt hits Lucas in the face. Amina glances down.

AMINA
Welcome to HELL-ular Mobile, bro!

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - JUDGE'S BENCH - DAY

Amina and Carmen lean against the counter, the high front hides the fact that they're scrolling social media. Carmen notices Dean standing by Lucas who is on a swivel chair with his leg jettied out, re-scanning accessories.

CARMEN

Dean and his b.s. Straight-White-Dudes unite. Right?

Amina shrugs. Dean walks over to them.

DEAN

Carmen, it's your swing. Make him your wingman.

CARMEN

You're all buddy-buddy with him. You do it.

Dean laughs, thinks she's teasing. She isn't. He turns to Amina.

DEAN

Always boxes to break down. Trash to take out. Stickering.

Amina stays glued to her phone.

AMINA

(mimics Dean)
Pretending to care.

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - ACCESSORIES WALL - DAY

Lucas writes in his notebook: "System Sucks." Resumes scanning. His phone DINGS from his pocket. He reacts. RIP! A peg hook tears his sleeve. FUCK! He pulls out his phone only to find: YOUR MEMORY MOMENTS (aka The Carousel of Hell).

PHOTOS of happy moments with Emily, cheerful lies of a smiling Lucas flashing the peace sign with his fingers, while *she's* buried in her phone, oblivious. He stares at them in quiet shock, unwillingly sucked back to a sad memory.

LUCAS

(mutters to himself)
Smartphone, my ass. More like stupid. And cruel.

Lucas heads toward the back.

DEAN (O.S.)

Agnello! Where ya goin'?

LUCAS

The bathroom.

DEAN
Tie it in a knot. You got a
customer. You're on Carmen's swing.

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Carmen is laser-focused on her prey approaching the store.
Lucas follows.

The door CHIMES. BETHANY, (19), clearly distraught, enters.
Her eyes are red from crying, but she carries a spark of
desperate hope.

CARMEN
Welcome to Cellular Mobile --

BETHANY
I need a new phone.

CARMEN
Of course. Let's get you set up.

Bethany follows like a duckling, trying not to cry again.
Lucas holds out his hand.

LUCAS
Hi, I'm Lucas, what's your name?

She gives him a withered shake.

BETHANY
Bethany. I need my pics back.

Carmen offers her a chair at...

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - REP STATION 2 - CONTINUOUS

Carmen settles behind the computer. There's a Pioneer Pete
bobblehead next to it. Lucas stands beside Carmen.

LUCAS
(to Bethany)
What high school did you go to?

BETHANY
Kirkwood.

CARMEN
Oh, me too.

Taps the head of Pioneer Pete.

BETHANY
 (sad, with no enthusiasm)
 Go Pioneers.

CARMEN
 So, what phone do you have now?

BETHANY
 (teary)
 Well, I *had* a mePhone36, but I lost
 it in the river.
 (sniffles)
 I was white-water rafting on the
 Meramec, taking pictures and...I
 know, it was so stupid...

Duh! Carmen agrees but can't show it.

BETHANY (CONT'D)
 (increasingly upset)
 It happened so fast. It just flew
 out of my hands and...
 (wails)
 ...and it drowned!

LUCAS
 (leans in to Carmen)
 She's actually crying about this?

Carmen shushes him with glaring eyes, then turns back to
 Bethany, disingenuously gentle.

CARMEN
 The good news is, the new mePhone
 is out. They've got really cool
 cases now, too. You seem like a
 sparkly girl. What's your phone
 number?

BETHANY
 (digs through her pockets)
 My mom wrote it down for me.

She holds out a piece of paper. Lucas takes it. Carmen
 stands.

CARMEN
 (to Lucas)
 Enter that where it says *User ID*.

Carmen zooms off. Lucas types each digit with his index
 finger.

BETHANY

Please tell me you can get my pics back.

LUCAS

I'm just accessing your account. But you know, you don't need proof that you were happy. Just live in the moment.

Bethany looks up at him, listening intently. He believes he's getting through to her.

BETHANY

But there was a really cute one of my boyfriend hanging off the edge of the tube that I didn't post yet.

She cries. Lucas is uncomfortable. Carmen returns, hands full of accessories and a sample mePhone. She lays everything on the desk and holds up a case.

CARMEN

Sturdy glitter case.
(picks up a box)
Screen protector, gotta safeguard that glass.

She pushes Lucas aside and sits in front of the computer.

CARMEN (CONT'D)

And I'm setting you up with top tier insurance with warranty so this will never happen again.

LUCAS

Insurance can't prevent--

CARMEN

What color? Red, pink, purple?

BETHANY

(sniffles)
I like purple.

Bethany drops her head to the desk in despair.

CARMEN

You got it. Be right back.

Carmen heads toward the vault. Lucas follows.

LUCAS
 (firm whisper)
 Hey, she's crying, and you're
 bulldozing her.

CARMEN
 I told you to watch and learn. Not
 open your big fat mouth, *second*
 White guy.

She presses her key card to unlock the door and enters the...

INT. VAULT - CONTINUOUS

Shelves line the walls, stacked with products. A stand-alone safe is at the back. Carmen walks through looking for something. Lucas enters and cuts in front of her.

LUCAS
 (pointed tone)
 Stop hard-selling her.

She leans in to match him.

CARMEN
 Stop cock blocking my rent money.

LUCAS
 You're treating her like a cat toy.

She prepares to chest-bump him. Dean rushes in.

DEAN
 Whoa, whoa! Dial it down. They can
 hear you at Busch stadium.

CARMEN
 (to Lucas)
 You're so naive.

LUCAS
 Because I don't want to exploit a
 crying customer?

CARMEN
 Back off motherfu--

Dean flings himself between them.

DEAN
 That's enough.

CARMEN
Get a leash on your boy!

DEAN
(eyes Lucas)
What's your problem, bud? She's
closing a sale.

Carmen resumes her search. Dean leads him out of the vault,
the door shuts behind them.

LUCAS
You shouldn't let them treat people
like that to make a buck.

DEAN
(firm)
That's the job, bud. Now get back
out there. And put your polo on.

Dean walks off.

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - REP STATION 2 - CONTINUOUS

Lucas returns, dumbfounded. Amina notices his expression.

AMINA
What's with you? You look pale-er.

He doesn't respond. She turns back to Bethany.

AMINA (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, honey. There's no
backup.

BETHANY
They're gone? Everything?

Amina gives her a gentle nod. BWAH! Bethany completely breaks
down into sobs as if she got the news that a close relative
died. Or worse. Her dog.

AMINA
Hey, girl, you've still have your
socials. Friends can share some
pics.

Bethany nods, wipes her tears.

LUCAS
Memories are better than photos.
Trust me.

Carmen returns, waving the new phone in its sparkly case and hands the bag of goodies to Bethany.

CARMEN

Here you go! Brand new, ready for your next adventure. Thirty-day warranty and fully insured.

Lucas picks up Carmen's Pioneer Pete and hands it to Bethany.

LUCAS

For you.

Bethany smiles for the first time. Carmen's jaw drops - WTF?

BETHANY

Aw, thank you.

Bethany shuffles to the door and exits.

CARMEN

(hisses at Lucas)
Bitch, that wasn't yours.

AMINA

Nice hustle, girl! Accessories, insurance, and warranty? Bank!

Amina high-fives her. Lucas is sickened. Carmen gathers the UNSOLD ITEMS in her arms and stops in front of Lucas.

CARMEN

(in his ear, low and menacing)
You're my cat toy. *Old guy.*

She glares at him as she walks away. Dean passes them on his way to the commode. appears and pulls Lucas aside.

DEAN

Old guy. I like that. Go take your break. I'm gonna take a dump.

He walks away. Through the glass, Lucas sees Bethany in her car, texting on her new phone, like a digital junkie.

INT. CASEY'S TAVERN - NIGHT

Casual dining room, busy but not crowded. Lucas stands at the bar with his notebook open. Under **Things To Fix**, he has written "Accessories Wall - Overhaul?" and "Coat Sleeve." He writes: "Carmen???", then "Customers..."

LUCAS
(mutters to himself)
What was I thinking?

He makes a call.

MARGIE (O.S.)
What now?

The weight of Lucas' reality hits him.

LUCAS
I can't do this, Margie. I'm
surrounded by kids half my age
upselling glitter cases to people
crying, *crying* because they lost
their photos. Everyone's gone
insane over a box in their pocket.

MARGIE (O.S.)
Phones aren't widgets.

LUCAS
No shit! They're wretched
distractions, erroneously still
called phones!

MARGIE (O.S.)
What do you want?

LUCAS
I needed a new project to rehab my
reputation and get back to normal
but this...the emotional
baggage...how do I fix people?

MARGIE (O.S.)
Phones are lifelines, dummy.
(off his silence; softens)
Lucas, you've spent your career
building other people's dreams. As
long as you work in that store
you're their hero. Go save the day
for someone. That's your
superpower.

BARTENDER
Pick up for Lucas!

Lucas slides the receipt over and takes the bag of food.

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - NIGHT

Carmen huddles on her phone in a corner. She barks at someone on the other end in Spanish.

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - MANAGER'S DESK - NIGHT

Pride of place is a photo in a frame, the bottom engraved with "Purdy Family" - Dean and his WIFE, (30s), a vivacious redhead and young DAUGHTER (7) at an amusement park.

Dean stares at the social media page that belongs to his Wife. He moons over her profile picture, smitten.

Lucas enters with purpose wearing the store polo over his dress shirt. He marches over to Dean, who quickly shuts his laptop. Lucas opens his notebook, prepared to read from his list.

LUCAS

So, I have some ideas about how to improve the store.

DEAN

Adorable. How 'bout you make a sale first?

MIDWESTERN GRANDPA

Bye, all.

Dean notices Midwestern Grandpa leaving the store.

DEAN

Take good care.

Midwestern Grandpa exits. Dean looks at Clancy.

DEAN (CONT'D)

Nice! One phone in three hours. That's a record for you.

Dean hands Lucas a name tag.

DEAN (CONT'D)

You're officially one of us.

Lucas glances at the name tag that reads: "Angello." He holds it up to Dean's face.

LUCAS

It's misspelled.

DEAN
 (reads it and laughs)
 Really? Ann-gello. Like jello!
 Sounds cool.

LUCAS
 It's AG-nello.

Dean takes a Sharpie and changes the letters to correct it.

DEAN
 There! We'll getcha a new one
 later.
 (lowers his voice)
 Look, rough first day. I saw you
 trying to connect with that
 customer, ok, great, but that don't
 pitch strikes that get me my bonus,
 you see?

Lucas bristles. Dean hikes up his pants, tucks his shirt in.

DEAN (CONT'D)
 Gotta meet the wife. You married?

Caught off guard, Lucas freezes like he's been gut-punched,
 doesn't want to answer.

DEAN (CONT'D)
 Yoohoo? Earth to Jello? Married?
 Divorced? Playing the field?

LUCAS
 Something like that.

DEAN
 Which one? C'mon, you can tell me.

LUCAS
 Separated. Divorcing.

Dean's posture changes. He feels bad for pushing, but there's
 also sadness behind his eyes, something deeper than sympathy.

DEAN
 (softens)
 Damn. Well, hey, let's grab a
 drink. On me.

Lucas shakes his head. Dean pats his arm, holds it a moment
 longer than necessary.

DEAN (CONT'D)

Raincheck, then.

(to everyone)

That's it for me, guys.

(points at Lucas)

Teach him how to make lots of money!

Dean exits. Lucas watches Carmen, Amina, and Clancy - all absorbed in their phones.

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - LATER

Amina and Carmen straighten desks and put things away. Clancy enters with keys.

CLANCY

Vault's locked up. That's a wrap.

AMINA

I got the lights.

The door CHIMES. Everyone turns to stare daggers at the frantic INDIAN CUSTOMER (60s, male) who enters.

CARMEN

Son of a bitch, man. Never fails.

Indian Customer holds his phone with both hands like it's an injured bird.

INDIAN CUSTOMER

Please? I need help.

CLANCY

You guys mind if I cut out? It's the baby's bath night and it's my turn.

CARMEN

Go clean your kid. The newbie's got this.

Lucas glances at Carmen, who has the look of hoping he fails. Clancy gives her a "Namaste" gesture and hurries past Indian Customer, out the door. Lucas approaches Indian Customer with confidence, warm and engaging.

LUCAS

Welcome to Cellular Mobile. How can I help you?

INDIAN CUSTOMER
Yes, sir. Please. My just died.

LUCAS
Oh, no, let's have a look.
(takes it carefully)
Ah, it's a Robot 6. Same as mine.

INDIAN CUSTOMER
(upset)
I was talking to my son in India
and it cut off. I can't get back
on. I need you to fix it.

Carmen butts in.

CARMEN
We don't fix phones but we can get
you a new one.

INDIAN CUSTOMER
I don't want a new phone. Please. I
need to call my son back.

CARMEN
A new phone will let you do that,
sir.

INDIAN CUSTOMER
You won't fix it?

LUCAS
Let me see what I can do.

He pokes around on the phone. Amina steps up.

AMINA
Sir, the internal antennas on these
old phones are famous for randomly
dying. There's nothing we can do.

INDIAN CUSTOMER
I'll buy the antenna!

Carmen grabs the phone from Lucas and hands it back to Indian
Customer.

CARMEN
Antennas are built into the phone.

Lucas freezes in fury.

CARMEN (CONT'D)
Do you want the new phone?

Indian Customer's face contorts in barely masked rage. Internally, he's in ruins. He slowly turns and walks out. Lucas watches him through the glass. Indian Customer turns back, makes eye contact with Lucas and walks off.

AMINA

Yay, we're done. My boyfriend freaks if he has to wait.

CARMEN

They never listen. Clueless.

LUCAS

You could've at least tried to help him, for God's sake.

CARMEN

If you're not here to make money, you're in the wrong place.

LUCAS

Hey!

Lucas' tone stops Carmen and Amina in their tracks. He points at the door.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

He needed our help.

CARMEN

Yeah. And he refused.

LUCAS

Nobody around here knows anything about customer relationships.

(points to Amina)

You're smart, but unmotivated. You want out? Do something about it.

Amina balks, defiant. He points at Carmen.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

And you. I don't know what I did to get onto your shit list, but never interrupt me when I'm with my customer.

Lucas realizes he just said all that out loud. Carmen assumes a fighting stance, excited by confrontation.

CARMEN

¡Te has pasado de la raya! You with your fancy clothes and five hundred dollar haircut, you might *have* money but you know nothing about it. Only people who've had to stretch a dollar understand money. So don't ever lecture me about how I earn, got it?

VROOOM! THE SOUND OF CAR REVVING. Their heads turn.

CRASH! A COMPACT SUV smashes through the front doors, shattering glass.

Carmen grabs Amina and yanks her out of the way. Lucas is catatonic staring at Indian Customer who grips the wheel, his eyes blazing like the devil.

AMINA

What the hell, bro?!

He flips his middle finger at them, peels out of the store, and speeds away. Carmen surveys the mess. Lucas snaps out of his stupor.

CARMEN

(to Amina)

You okay?

Amina dials 9-1-1. She boots up a computer.

AMINA

That was wild! I gotta get that footage on my feed.

CARMEN

(to Lucas)

Get the broom.

Lucas kicks a pile of glass and looks up at the camera.

INT. CELLULAR MOBILE - NIGHT - LATER

Lucas staggers toward the gaping hole in the store like a war survivor. He hoists a canvas flap. Steps around REPAIR PEOPLE and their materials - a physical struggle to leave this goddamn place.

EXT. CELLULAR MOBILE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Chaos at the crash site. Blue and red lights swirl from police cars. Firefighters work on repairing the hole in the store. Looky-loos. Police speak to Carmen.

INT. LUCAS' CAR - NIGHT

Lucas opens the notebook to review what he's written. He flips to a new page. Writes:

FIX THE CULTURE!!!

He underlines it twice.

AMINA (O.S.)

Lucas, wait!

He turns to see Amina running toward him. A CAR HORN HONKS, flashing its lights. Amina jerks her head in that direction.

AMINA (CONT'D)

God, Eric! I'm still working!

Lucas rolls down his window.

AMINA (CONT'D)

Hey. I thought maybe you really could help me get outta here.

LUCAS

(frustrated, tired)

C'mon Amina. I already told you--

AMINA

No, hear me out. So, you need to survive here, right? Cuz seriously, one day and look at you. How 'bout some kind of alliance like on those shows my Dad watches. We could help each other.

LUCAS

Amina, I--

AMINA

Look, I know you think I'm not serious. But you're wrong. I'm totally motivated and ready to get outta here, so you should help me. Just tell me what to do.

Lucas studies her. Really seeing her now.

LUCAS

Tell you what. This store is a shit-show. But I'm gonna figure out how to take it to number one. If you're willing to learn, and keep me from murdering Carmen and Dean, I'll teach you how to build something real. Right here. Deal?

AMINA

(squeals)

Deal.

LUCAS

But--

Her excitement halts, curious what else.

LUCAS (CONT'D)

Tell your dad you're not in college.

AMINA

Bro!

Eric HONKS the horn again.

END EPISODE