

OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME

Written by

Claudio Torres

[claudiotorreswriter@gmail.com](mailto:claudiotorreswriter@gmail.com)

FADE IN:

INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

The manager's office is smaller than one would expect from a big company. Old-school motivational posters decorate the walls, and significantly tall stacks of paper guard each side of the desk.

On the desk are a glass of water, two cheap pens, and a box of tissues. An wrinkled sheet of paper with something written on it also lies on the desk.

LISA, a woman in her mid-twenties, grabs a tissue from the box and wipes her palms. Her right knee is shaking, and her heel sounds like a woodpecker pecking on the floor.

Someone opens the door. Lisa turns just enough to glance at the door, holding her knee to stop it from shaking. The hiring MANAGER walks in. We can only see the worn-out black high-heels stepping in and then the long black dress.

MANAGER (O.S.)

You're...Lisa?

Lisa stands up and extends her hand to the manager, but what she sees makes her eyes widen. She starts panting and sits down again, shocked.

LISA

You're...It can't be...I mean,  
not...

The manager walks to her desk with her head lowered. She is reading from a piece of paper.

MANAGER (O.S.)

Give me a minute, please. Let me  
finish reading this.

The manager plops down on her desk chair. Face covered by the piece of paper, and she continues reading. Lisa's right knee starts shaking, making the woodpecker sound again.

MANAGER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Can you stop that, please...oh  
my...Who are you?... I mean...how  
did you get here?

LISA

I...I'm freaking out too.

Lisa gulps. She takes the glass of water from the desk and drinks. She holds back her shaking knee and stares at the manager for a while.

LISA (CONT'D)

Okay. Let's calm down. It's not that bad. At least you got this job, I mean...

MANAGER (O.S.)

No. It's terrible. I'm working so hard on this crap that I'm going insane.

LISA

Are you kidding? It's the opportunity of a lifetime at the most exciting tech startup in San Francisco. I've been preparing for this moment for months. Now I know I have a chance...I mean, kind of.

MANAGER (O.S.)

I know what you've been through to be here, but beware of your dreams. They often become nightmares.

Lisa stands up and walks around the room, one hand on her waist, the other on her forehead.

LISA

This can't be happening to me. I need to think.

MANAGER (O.S.)

That's your problem. You overthink, and then you make decisions based on your first impression.

LISA

You think you know a lot about me, don't you?

MANAGER (O.S.)

Sure I do. After you graduated in engineering, you spent months investigating every tech startup in San Francisco. You assumed that you were so talented that you had to find the perfect fit.

LISA

Yes, and I chose this company and invested months to prepare for this interview.

MANAGER (O.S.)

You didn't pick this...crap, based on your research. Your girlfriend convinced you based on a fashion magazine article she was impressed by.

LISA

What are you talking about? She helped me figure out that this is a great option.

MANAGER (O.S.)

Great? Did you look into it?

LISA

I know that it's the opportunity of a lifetime.

The phone RINGS. Lisa sits down, and her knee starts shaking again. The manager picks up the phone.

MANAGER (O.S.)

Yes, sir.

(beat)

No, I am in an interview, sir.

(beat)

Yes, I'll go right now.

LISA

Where are you going?

MANAGER (O.S.)

Don't move. We have a lot to talk about.

The manager walks out, and the door closes with a BANG.

Lisa takes the glass to drink more water. She sees that the manager has left her resume on the table. She tries to pick up the document, but the wrinkled paper below it comes along.

Lisa turns her head to see if the door is closed. She turns the wrinkled paper, and starts reading it.

LISA

What the heck...

We hear a NOISE from the other side of the door. Lisa set the sheet of paper back and the resume on top.

The door opens, and the manager walks in and locks the door. We only see the worn-out black high-heels stepping in and hear the sound of her plopping down on her desk chair.

MANAGER (O.S.)

Damn! This sucks.

LISA

Why did you lock the door?

MANAGER (O.S.)

I did it for our own sakes. I don't want anybody else to see you here.

LISA

What happened?

MANAGER (O.S.)

My boss just said...forget it.

LISA

Please, I want to know.

MANAGER (O.S.)

Oh, do you? You think you've already figured out how this works? Do you know the rules and the consequences?

LISA

What do you mean?

MANAGER (O.S.)

I've been wondering while I was out. I can't tell you anything about me or this job. Otherwise, we'll face the consequences.

LISA

Do you mean that something bad may happen to us?

The manager picks up the wrinkled sheet from the desk.

MANAGER (O.S.)

Did you touch my stuff?

LISA

No, I mean...

MANAGER (O.S.)

Oh, I see. You believe it's okay to invade my personal space because of our situation, right?

LISA

Come on. What are you talking about? Okay...I'm sorry. I...I was checking my resume and saw...I read it.

The manager presses the wrinkled sheet of paper against her chest.

MANAGER (O.S.)

Did you read this letter?

LISA

I think you're making a huge mistake. My...your...she loves you.

MANAGER (O.S.)

You know nothing about her. I married her. I got this job and married her; that was the big mistake.

Lisa bends forward with a big smile.

LISA

Did you marry her?

MANAGER (O.S.)

Yes.

Lisa laughs with excitement.

LISA

Don't you see? Your dreams have been fulfilled! The job of a lifetime and the love of your life. How old are you?

MANAGER (O.S.)

Why do you need to know that?

Lisa looks at the manager.

LISA

Come on.

MANAGER (O.S.)

I'm 38...Okay, 45.

LISA  
So you've been married for twenty years? Oh, I can just imagine your life. Do you have...

MANAGER (O.S.)  
Eight. Only eight.

LISA  
Eight? Do you have eight kids?

MANAGER (O.S.)  
No. Are you stupid? We don't have any kids. I was married for eight years.

LISA  
Eight? How's that possible. Are you saying that you were engaged for more than twelve years before you got married?

MANAGER (O.S.)  
(Showing the wrinkled sheet of paper)  
Do you think I wrote this today?

LISA  
Yes. It's on your desk.

MANAGER (O.S.)  
Spring cleaning.

Lisa seems shocked. Her right leg starts quaking again, and the woodpecker sound is back.

LISA  
You're still married, right?

MANAGER (O.S.)  
I've already said too much. There must be some implications, I guess.

LISA  
You're still married. Aren't you?

MANAGER (O.S.)  
Why are you here...I mean, now...This is wrong.

LISA  
When I woke up today, I was confident that I would get this job and move forward.

(MORE)

LISA (CONT'D)

And now you're telling me that everything was a big mistake, that this job sucks, that your wife left you, that your life is-

MANAGER (O.S.)

She didn't leave me.

LISA

Did you leave her?

MANAGER (O.S.)

(standing up)

The interview is over. You must go now. I'll send your resume over to another hiring manager and you'll probably be hired, okay? You need to leave now.

The manager goes to the door. Lisa stands up and meets the manager midway. Lisa grabs the manager's arm.

LISA

What happened? Please, tell me. Don't do this to me.

MANAGER (O.S.)

(sad)

If I knew you.

(excited)

Oh, my goodness. That's it. Maybe if I-

The manager holds Lisa's hands.

MANAGER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Look, we have only one shot, but maybe we can save her.

LISA

Save her from what?

MANAGER (O.S.)

Just listen carefully. You'll walk away from here. You'll go to Spain with her. Open that restaurant in Sevilla she always dreamed about. She'll cook, you'll write. That's the plan.

LISA

No. That's crazy...I already agreed with her that...

MANAGER (O.S.)  
You're not listening to me.

LISA  
Yes, I am. You're a crazy,  
resentful person who wants to ruin  
my life. I'll never quit...

MANAGER (O.S.)  
She dies...eight years after our  
marriage.

Lisa steps back. She looks haunted; her eyes are watery.

LISA  
How?

MANAGER (O.S.)  
We got married just after I took  
this job. I was so excited that I  
started working long shifts, trying  
to get the best out of this job. I  
stopped writing, and she stopped  
cooking. We started having  
arguments each week, then every  
day, and then we stopped talking to  
each other. I was so sure I was  
doing the right thing that I missed  
the point. Time passed, and she  
grew sad and distant. And then...it  
happened...I don't know if it was  
bad luck...or her way out, but  
she...

We hear the manager start to weep.

LISA  
Do you think we can save her?

MANAGER (O.S.)  
I'm not sure, but maybe.

LISA  
A maybe is good enough for me.

MANAGER (O.S.)  
I always wonder what would have  
happened had we moved to Spain.

LISA  
And?

MANAGER (O.S.)

She was right. Maybe I was born to do it. I mean...to write...not to work here.

LISA

I'll do that. Thanks.

MANAGER (O.S.)

You're welcome.

INT. OFFICE RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS

Lisa leaves the office. She stops and turns to the manager. For the first time, we see the manager's face. It is a tired, dreary, 20-year-older version of Lisa.

MANAGER

You know what, my life...our life wasn't bad. I miss her. Maybe this interview was the opportunity of a lifetime for both of us.

LISA

What will happen to you when I walk away?

MANAGER

I'm not sure. Maybe I'll vanish...just cease to exist.

LISA

Or maybe you'll wake up in Spain.

MANAGER

Oh yes, I like that version.

LISA

See you there in twenty years.

MANAGER

Have a good life.

The manager watches Lisa walk away. Then the manager slowly vanishes until we only see an empty office through an open door.

FADE TO BLACK.

**THE END**