

UP

DOWN

SHORT

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. ELEVATOR - DAY

We enter a hallway, focusing on a elevator door.

Above the door a number counts down. The door opens, spitting out a MECHANIC (40s, dressed in a blue overall, scruffy face) carrying a toolbox. He glances at the door when it closes.

BOB MILES, 26, dressed in a nice suit and carrying a leather suitcase rushes in.

BOB MILES
(yells)
Hold that door.

The mechanic pushes his hand between the door, forcing it to open.

MECHANIC
(smiling)
Just in time.

INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

Bob enters, settling for the right corner.

He glances swiftly over pregnant KIMBERLEY O'NELL (24, long hair) as she enters behind him, settling for a place in the left corner.

Bob fishes out a mobile from his inside pocket, submerging himself into the small screen.

Doors closes.

A big hand with hairy knuckles sweeps through the remaining opening, trying to push it open.

JOE (O.S.)
(muffled voice)
Help me, will ya?

Bob looks up from his screen, walks to the button panel and presses OPEN.

The doors don't respond immediately, so he hits the buttons a few times, each time louder then before.

Kimberley lifting eyebrows.

BOB
Wait, dammit, this thing isn't
working. Again.

With a big sigh he presses again.

BOB (cont'd)
(mumbles)
I thought they fixed it already. Why
do I even bother?

The doors swing open and big JOE MCGORMICK, 46, with a
three-days-beard and leather jacket steps in.

JOE
(sighs of relieve)
Thanks, mate.

Bob is all focused on his mobile again.

Joe carries a big duffel bag inside. The bag hits the door
by accident, a muffled CLONK can be heard. The doors close
behind him.

Kimberley reacts with a frown on her face.

Joe notice her looking at his bag. He swings the thing over
his shoulder.

JOE (cont'd)
(heatedly laugh)
Tools. Job on the 34th.

He gives Kimberley a closer look, before his eyes glance
over to Bob. His fingers are hovering the buttons.

JOE (cont'd)
Yes?

Bob, still looking at his mobile, doesn't get the clue.

JOE
(louder)
Hey buddy.

BOB
(a bit absent minded)
Oh, of course. Also the 34th.

Joe turns his head towards the young woman.

JOE

M'am?

Kimberley replies with a shy nod.

KIMBERLEY

Same.

Joe selects the 34th floor, the elevator starts moving.

The lights flicker, attracting the attention of everyone.

Kimberley reacts by pressing her body tightly against the metallic wall.

Bob only shakes his head in disbelieve.

Joe can be seen grinning for a brief moment.

KIMBERLEY (cont'd)

I hate elevators.

Bob reacts with a wide grin on his face.

BOB

Then you love this one. Last week,
when I was here, the doors wouldn't
even close. It took a tech guy
at least five minutes to get it
working again. I was glad he did
though, because I couldn't see myself
taking the stairs all up to the damn
34th floor.

KIMBERLEY

(surprised)

That's new.

Bob looks up, checking out the lights. The flickering stops.

BOB

(sighs)

I so hope this will be my last
interview.

Bob looks straight at Kimberley as if she asked an question.

BOB (cont'd)

I need the job, you know. It will
be my first real one. A proper one,
I mean. So I can get out of the
house. My parents are driving me
crazy.

Kimberley gives him an awkward smile.

KIMBERLEY
I understand. For me it's my last
day.

Kimberley looks down and strokes her belly.

KIMBERLEY (cont'd)
Maternity leave.

BOB
Aha. Right.

The elevator makes a stop.

DONG.

The doors open.

A CLEANER (20s, big headphones stuck to his thin head),
standing behind a trolley full with cleaning materials
appears in the opening. He doesn't notice the other people
in the elevator, as he pushes his trolley inside.

JOE
Sorry, buddy. Full.

The cleaner bops his head on the music playing on his
headphones, when he pushes his trolley further in.

When the trolley hits Joe's leg by accident, Joe pushes
back.

JOE (cont'd)
(shouts)
Hey.

Joe puts his back into it.

JOE (cont'd)
(louder)
HEY, man. There are people here.

No reaction.

Joe slams the trolley. He gets the attention of the cleaner,
who lifts one side of the headphones of his right ear.

The cleaner checks out the people.

Kimberley gives him a faint smile and a slight nod, Bob is
wrapped in his mobile phone, Joe looks annoyed.

JOE
(pointing two fingers
at his eyes)
Here, buddy.

CLEANER
Sorry. Didn't hear you.

JOE
(annoyed)
You are kidding, right?

Joe points at his own ears.

CLEANER
(mumbles)
I am sorry.

JOE
Take the next one. 'Nough time to
clean. Geez.

As the trolley moves out, Joe hits the control panel again
and the door closes.

The elevator starts to move again. On the display above the
doors, numbers start to count up...24...25...26...

With a sudden jolt the elevator stops at the 27th floor.
Kimberley almost loses her balance and needs to grab the
railing.

BOB
(annoyed)
What now?

Bob looks impatiently at his watch.

BOB CONT'D
Come on. I have that interview.

The elevator lights flicker again.

JOE
We're stuck.

BOB
(annoyed)
Ya think?

Bob walks towards the buttons. He slams the display.

BOB CONT'D
Damn elevator.

Kimberley points at the display.

KIMBERLEY
Press the HELP button, please.

Bob presses the yellow button.

Some static noise can be heard.

A voice starts to answer.

OPERATOR
Hello?

BOB
Hey, we are stuck here, buddy. Can
you do something about it? Pronto?

Pause.

OPERATOR
Right. Hold on.

Bob walks back to his spot at the wall and looks at
Kimberley.

BOB
I hate this elevator.

Then Joe moves towards Kimberley. He offers her his hand.

JOE
Since we're kinda stuck here, my
name is Joe.

Kimberley is startled by his sudden movement.

KIMBERLEY
Oh... eh... Kimberley, Kimberley
O'Nell.

Joe grins before turning to Bob.

BOB
Bob, Bob Miles

Bob offers him his hand, but Joe ignores it. Instead he's
inspecting him from top to bottom.

JOE

Fancy suit.

BOB

(surprised)

This thing? Actually I had to rent it. My wife thought it would be best if I dressed myself up like a monkey for the interview.

Bob loosens up his tie.

BOB (cont'd)

To be honest, I rather wear jeans and a sweater. This tie is killing me. But everything for the job, right?

JOE

I had a suit once.

Joe places his back against the wall and nods to Bob's jacket.

JOE CONT'D

Much like yours, but nicer. Expensive too. Nice fabric, perfect quality. I figured "why not". I had a good job, a great wife and a baby on the way. The perfect life, if I say so myself. Yes sir-e, the good life. But it's all gone now.

BOB

What happened?

JOE

Someone happened. My wife got killed. A car accident 'caused by a corporate prick. No offense. He didn't even get punished. His lawyers claimed it was an accident, but mine said the guy wasn't using a car kit. He looked at his phone, instead of paying attention to the road. My wife never saw him coming.

KIMBERLEY

(upset)

I am so sorry to hear that.

Joe replies her worries with a short nod. He looks down.

JOE

There wasn't enough evidence to convict him. Sure... he couldn't drive his car for awhile. But that didn't bring my wife back. I still remember that smile the prick gave me. He didn't even bother to apologize.

Kimberley takes a step closer and touches Joe's arm. Without looking up Joe pulls his arm back.

KIMBERLEY

I'm sorry.

JOE

I lost my job soon afterwards.

He looks at Bob, a bit angry.

JOE CONT'D

I figure they hired some young guy now. How old are you?

BOB

(Stuttering)

Sorry. I'm--

Joe opens his mouth, but he gets interrupted by a sudden sound from Kimberley.

Both men look at her.

KIMBERLEY

(laughing)

Sorry, the baby kicked. She does that sometimes.

BOB

She?

KIMBERLEY

Yes, my husband wanted to know the sex. He always wanted to have a girl. For me it doesn't matter. I'm just happy that we are getting a baby. It took us forever, but with the help of IVF we will soon have a beautiful baby girl. Julia.

Kimberley smiles.

KIMBERLEY CONT'D
She kicks again.

BOB
Maybe she wants to join in on this
interesting conversation.

Kimberley strokes her belly, then she turns to Bob.

KIMBERLEY
You want to feel her?

BOB
Sure, why not. As I have nothing else
to do anyways.

With some hesitation Bob walks towards Kimberley and places
his hand on her belly.

KIMBERLEY
You feel her?

BOB
(smiles)
Yes, she is feisty.

Kimberley turns to Joe.

KIMBERLEY
I'm so sorry about your wife and
daughter. Sometimes justice isn't
working at all.

BOB
Your damn right.

Bob presses on the help button again.

BOB CONT'D
(annoyed)
Hello?

Kimberley looks at Joe.

KIMBERLEY
You want to feel my baby kick?

Joe looks at her with a puzzled look in his eyes and he
shakes his head.

KIMBERLEY CONT'D
It's okay. She doesn't bite. We are
no strangers anymore. Right?
(MORE)

KIMBERLEY CONT'D (cont'd)
(nodding towards Bob)
The corporate suit did it.

Joe hesitates, he straightens his back and gently touches the belly.

Then he smiles, until static sound can be heard.

OPERATOR
Hello?

BOB
(sighs)
Finally.

BOB CONT'D
We are still stuck here. Is there
by any change you can get this
thing moving?

OPERATOR
Sorry sir, we had to reboot the
system. It should be working again.

The elevator starts to move again.

BOB
Thank you.

KIMBERLEY
(loud voice)
Finally.

Joe grabs his duffel bag from the floor as he stares at the numbers counting up.

29...30...31...

DONG. The door opens.

Bob and Kimberley want to leave the elevator, but Joe blocks the exit.

JOE
Sorry, this is the end of the line
for you.

Joe turns to Kimberley.

JOE CONT'D
Take good care of your daughter.
Cherish every moment. You never
(MORE)

JOE CONT'D (cont'd)
 know when it will be your last. Good
 luck.

Joe bends over to the button panel and presses the down
 button.

BOB
 (angry)
 What are you doing? I have my job
 interview. I need to be there.

Joe roughly pushes him away.

JOE
 No, you don't. Find yourself lucky.
 Go home, kiss your wife, count your
 blessings. Have a coffee and
 remember what I've said. Don't
 waste your time on companies like
 this. Before you know it, you are
 replaced. Jobs like this are
 killing you.

Joe steps out, carefully opening his duffel bag when the
 doors close, leaving two speechless people behind.

Short pause.

BANG, BANG, BANG.

Multiple gun shots can be heard firing.

FADE OUT.