

Socks & Co.

An absurdist retail comedy
by Alexander Utz

Characters: (2M, 2F, 2NB/Any)

CASEY	A new hire, full of sometimes-nervous energy. (20s)
HEATHER	The store manager, excitable and ineffectual. (F, 20s-40s)
DELIVERY DAN	The delivery man, super chill. (M, 20s-30s)
ROGER	The security guard. (M, 30s-60s) Also plays ANGRY WOMAN #1, REGINALD B. RICHLEY III, CONFUSED PERSON, FENCING PERSON #1
THE OWNER	The owner, very mysterious. (30s-50s) Also plays DANCING MAN, MR. HORNE
VICKI	A customer, entitled and obnoxious. (F, 20s-50s) Also plays ANGRY WOMAN #2, CAVEMAN, FENCING PERSON #2

Time: Now-ish.

Place: A luxury sock store called Socks & Co.

Notes on production:

- This play must be cast with diversity in mind.
- The play may be performed with or without an act break.

ACT 1**One**

Lights up. The interior of a luxury sock store: displays, a counter, a front door, a door leading into a back room. Night.

A big noise comes from the back room!

ROGER, a security guard, enters to unlock the front door and step inside. He shines his flashlight around the sock displays.

ROGER

Hello? Somebody there? Hello?

ROGER opens the door to the back room. His flashlight flickers off. He tries to turn it back on, to no avail. He sets the flashlight down and steps inside. The door closes behind him.

Transition.

Two

The sock store. Day.

HEATHER, the manager, stands behind the counter. CASEY, a new employee, enters and comes through the front door. CASEY's hand is fully wrapped in a bandage.

HEATHER

You're late.

CASEY

Oh my god, I'm so sorry —

HEATHER

I'm just messing with you, you're fine.

CASEY

Oh. Okay. Sorry.

Am I late, though?

HEATHER

— No.

CASEY

Cool. Okay. (Off to a great start, Case.)

HEATHER

You alright?

CASEY

Yes. Absolutely. I'm just nervous, I guess.
I don't want to mess this up.

HEATHER

That's fine. Your second day, you're allowed to be nervous.
Do you talk to yourself often?

CASEY

No, not at all. Not at all.

HEATHER

Great. Our clients can be very particular, so they might be thrown off if you're talking to yourself.

CASEY

Right, I totally understand. It's really only when I'm nervous.

HEATHER

Do you want to go over styles before we open? We've got a few minutes.

CASEY

Let's do it.

HEATHER *holding up a sock*

What's this one?

CASEY

Crew.

HEATHER

Specs.

CASEY

Six to eight inches, typically ending below the calf muscle. Great versatile option for casual or dress.

HEATHER *holding up a different sock*

Correct. This?

CASEY

Um — calf?

HEATHER

Nice. Tell me about it.

CASEY

Rests above the calf muscle. Great for coverage. Best for men with large calf muscles because it won't slide down the leg.

HEATHER *holding up a third sock*

Perfect. How about this one?

CASEY

No-show.

HEATHER

Or low cut.

CASEY

Or low cut. Sits below the ankle. Casual or athletic wear. Good for low cut sneakers.

HEATHER *a fourth sock*

Next up.

CASEY

Knee sock! Wear it with boots!

HEATHER *a fifth*

You got it! What's this?

CASEY

Another crew?

HEATHER

Nope! This is the quarter sock. Covers the whole ankle, can be casual or dress but tends to slide down the leg.

CASEY

Got it, got it.

HEATHER

One more. Know what it is?

CASEY

Sorry, I have to see it. Still learning.

HEATHER *holding up a sixth sock*

Here you go.

CASEY

Oh, of course! The liner sock. Ultra low cut, can't be seen outside of the shoe. Perfect for slippers, loafers, boat shoes, all of that.

HEATHER

And just like that, you got it. Nicely done.

This is going to sound crazy, but you're picking this up faster than most people.

CASEY

I'm a fast learner.

HEATHER

That's kinda surprising, actually.

CASEY

— Why?

HEATHER

Because on your resume, it looked like you haven't stayed long at any job you've had.

CASEY

Um, yeah, but that's because those jobs weren't quite the right fit. I still did okay at them.

HEATHER

Oh! Got it. Got it.

CASEY

Did you even call any of my references?

HEATHER

— I forgot a little bit.

And you interviewed so well, I figured you'd be perfect! And I was right!

CASEY

Well that's a relief. Hopefully I don't mess up too bad, I need this job.

HEATHER

Doing great so far!

CASEY *looking at the time*

Should I unlock the door?

HEATHER

Look at that, you're already nailing it! Go for it. Unlock that door.

CASEY unlocks the front door.

Yes! I love it!

CASEY

So there are a lot of people who didn't understand the styles at first?

HEATHER

Were. They don't work here anymore, obviously.

We've gone through fifteen sales associates in the last year.

CASEY

Woah. That's insane.

HEATHER

You're telling me, I had to train them.

CASEY

Why'd they all leave?

HEATHER

Some of them couldn't get the hang of selling luxury socks, some of them got other opportunities and left.

Lately it's been this weird security situation.

CASEY

Yeah, I've noticed there's no one at the desk —

HEATHER

No one. It used to be Roger, but he... disappeared.

CASEY

What??

HEATHER

He disappeared! He straight up vanished one night! They haven't been able to find a replacement.

CASEY

Oh my god. Why not?

HEATHER

Promise you won't quit on me.

He disappeared inside *this very store*.

CASEY

Okay, you're messing with me again.

HEATHER

I swear to god.

You never opened the door to the back room when you were in yesterday, did you?

CASEY *holding up their bandaged hand*

I tried, but the handle burned me, remember? I had to leave early.

HEATHER

Oh, right. Yes. Duh. That was really weird.

CASEY

Why was it so hot?

HEATHER

I wish I could tell you.

You're okay, right?

CASEY

Yeah, I'll be fine.

HEATHER

Do you want to try opening it again?

CASEY

Well, I'm curious now. Do you want me to?

HEATHER

Sure, go for it!

Be careful this time, too.

CASEY

I'm nervous.

CASEY opens the door to the back room. There is a DANCING MAN, dressed as if from the 1920s, doing a soft shoe number.

Who's are you?

DANCING MAN

Hello!

CASEY *to HEATHER*

Who is this?

HEATHER

Oh, I have no idea.

CASEY

Is he always in there?

HEATHER

First time I've seen him. Shut the door.

CASEY shuts the door.

CASEY

But who was that?

HEATHER

Open it again.

CASEY

Is this part of my training, or —?

CASEY opens the door to the back room again. There are now two ANGRY WOMEN waiting at what appears to be a bus stop.

ANGRY WOMAN #1

— BECAUSE YOU ALWAYS ORDER THE BISCUIT WITHOUT ASKING ME WHAT I WANT, MEREDITH!

ANGRY WOMAN #2

YOU LIKE BISCUITS, SUSAN. I ORDER THE BISCUIT BECAUSE YOU LIKE BISCUITS!

CASEY shuts the door.

CASEY

Okay, what's going on here?

HEATHER

I wish I could tell you. It's been like that as long as I've been here.

CASEY

You've always had a *portal to alternate dimensions* in the store??

HEATHER

I wouldn't say alternate dimensions. We don't know if it's an alternate dimension. It could just be a time machine. Or a teleportation device. I'm not an expert.

CASEY

But that's where the security guy went. He's lost somewhere in there.

HEATHER

Apparently.

CASEY

Have you done anything to find him?

If it did this to my hand, geez, who knows what's happening to him.

HEATHER

What do you want me to do? It's scary. Plus I'm really busy selling socks.

CASEY

Should we tell anyone?

HEATHER

I've sent an email about it to our owner already, but he hasn't responded yet. He's really hard to get ahold of.

CASEY

Great. So what should we do?

HEATHER

I don't know. Like I said, really really busy selling lots of socks.

CASEY

Well, we need to do something. We can't just leave him lost in there.

HEATHER

He'll probably find his own way out!

CASEY

It's the right thing to do, Heather.

HEATHER

Hey, maybe this can be your first official project! That'd be fun, right? What do you think? Please say yes.

CASEY

— Um. Sure?

HEATHER

Awesome! I'm sure you'll do fine, you're a fast learner.

CASEY

I don't know how to start.

HEATHER

I don't know either, I'm not an expert. You'll pick it up!

CASEY

— Okay. Great. I'll pick it up.

HEATHER

And if you find him, that might lead to consideration for the Assistant Manager position...! If you don't, then I don't know, he'll probably die or something.

CASEY

Geez. This is a lot for my second day —
You're not going to do anything to help?

HEATHER

Of course I'll help! I'll be here for any moral support you need.
You've got this, Casey! I believe in you.

CASEY

Thanks?

HEATHER *holding up a sock*

Oh, and one more thing. What's this?

CASEY

A crew sock?

HEATHER

Wrong! It's a quarter sock. You really need to get this inventory stuff down, Casey.

CASEY

— Alright. Um. Yeah. I will.

HEATHER

Wow. Your first project! I'm so excited for you!

Transition.

Three

The sock store. Later the same day.

CASEY is on a laptop doing research. HEATHER is helping a client, VICKI. There are eight sock pairs — black, grey, brown, khaki, blue, purple, green, red— laid out on the counter.

VICKI

Seriously? These are the only colors you have available?

HEATHER

Yes, we run a custom set of about eight colors each year, to add to the exclusivity of the socks. So these are the colors we have right now.

VICKI

Do you have — orange?

HEATHER

No, the ones on the counter here are the only colors we have available right now.

VICKI

I hate this blue, I would never wear that.

HEATHER

Okay, no problem.

HEATHER takes the blue pair off the counter.

VICKI

And grey is so — I don't know — boring?

HEATHER

Agreed.

HEATHER takes the grey sock off the counter. VICKI sees the back room.

VICKI

What's back here?

CASEY

Oh, um, you can't go back there.

VICKI

Excuse me? Why not?

HEATHER

It's closed to the public at the moment.

VICKI

Can I just take a peek?

CASEY

No, it's closed right now —

VICKI

It's okay, I'll make it quick.

VICKI tries to open the back room door and CASEY pulls her away.

Excuse me, did you just *grab* me with a weird diseased hand??

CASEY

I'm sorry, I'm sorry. You can't go back there, though. And the hand is burned.

VICKI

Wow. Gross. Who even are you? Do you even work here?

HEATHER

Casey's a new hire. Now would you —

VICKI

You should look for someone better.

CASEY

What was that?

HEATHER *to CASEY*

Casey.

To VICKI

Would you like to take another look at your options?

VICKI

Fine. Do you have anything else besides these?

HEATHER

— No. These are the eight colors that we are carrying at this time.

VICKI

What about patterns? Do you have any patterns?

HEATHER

We don't carry any patterns.

VICKI

I thought you guys custom made your socks.

HEATHER

We do. But we don't work with any patterns.

VICKI

Why not?

HEATHER

Working with a single color increases the quality of construction of the sock, and adds to the luxury of the product.

VICKI

What if I wanted to custom order a patterned sock?

HEATHER

We wouldn't be able to do that.

VICKI

And you don't have orange, like I want?

HEATHER

I think the Rustic Red we're carrying right now is light enough to be close to orange, and still gives you that pop of color you're looking for. And the Rustic Red looks great with your complexion. Plus, I think orange might give you a Halloween-y look, which is going to limit you on what you can wear the socks with.

VICKI

Oh my god, that's so right.
You know what? I'll take them.

HEATHER

Excellent!

VICKI

I'm so excited to wear these.

HEATHER scans the socks.

HEATHER

That'll be \$540, after tax.

VICKI

— Um. How much?

HEATHER
\$540.

VICKI
Why is it so expensive? They're, like, socks.

HEATHER
We're the only place in the world to make custom socks at this level of quality.

VICKI
Yeah, but that's *way* more than I was expecting. I thought they'd be, like, \$100 at most?

HEATHER
Our price point is due to the quality of the materials, the manufacturing process, and the durability of the socks. Like I was saying earlier, these will last you forever. You won't wear a hole in them.

VICKI
Right, I *totally* get that, but there's *no way* I'm paying \$500 for *socks*. That's a *ripoff!*
You know what? I'm leaving, and I'm going to tell *all my friends* that this place is a *SCAM!*

VICKI storms out.

HEATHER
— Have a good day!

CASEY
Yikes.

HEATHER
She was just charming.

CASEY
Does that happen a lot?

HEATHER
We're selling \$500 socks.

CASEY
Got it.

HEATHER
And I know why you did it, but please don't grab customers anymore.

CASEY
She was going to get herself lost back there. And burned. Burned and lost.
Which, now that I think about it, might have been okay.

HEATHER

How's your research coming?

CASEY

Well, I'm not sure yet. I wish I could —

DELIVERY DAN, the delivery man, comes into the store.

DELIVERY DAN

Howdy howdy. Anything going out today?

HEATHER *handing over a stack of sock-sized boxes*

Got a couple things for you.

DELIVERY DAN

Nice. How's everything been in here?

HEATHER

Not too bad. Oh! We've got Casey working on where Roger went.

DELIVERY DAN

Who?

CASEY

Hi!

DELIVERY DAN

Oh hey! Didn't see you there. New hire?

CASEY

I started yesterday.

DELIVERY DAN

Nice to meet you, Casey. I'm Delivery Dan. I like your bandage, that's cool. You could call it a *handage*. Right? Haha.

Anyway. Enjoying the sock business so far?

CASEY

It's — interesting.

DELIVERY DAN

Don't quit on us.

CASEY

Um. Okay.

HEATHER

Casey's the fastest learner I've trained so far.

CASEY

Delivery Dan? Is that really your name?

DELIVERY DAN *to HEATHER*

The fastest learner? You sure?

To CASEY

I'm the delivery guy. Delivery Dan the Delivery Man. I deliver socks to our in-town clients.

CASEY

We do that?

HEATHER

It's a special service we offer. Socks On Foot.

DELIVERY DAN

Socks On Foot, baby!

CASEY

Socks On Foot?

DELIVERY DAN

Hell yeah! Came up with the name myself.

It hasn't technically been approved by the owner, but he's, like, really hard to get ahold of.

CASEY

So I've heard.

DELIVERY DAN

Oh, you've heard? Did Heather show you the —

HEATHER

No, we haven't talked about any of that yet.

CASEY

What? What haven't we talked about?

MR. HORNE enters the store.

MR. HORNE

Hello Miss Heather —

HEATHER

No! No! You get out!

MR. HORNE

I was just hoping to look at some socks —

HEATHER

Not today, Mr. Horne! Get out! *Now!*

MR. HORNE

Alright, I'm leaving, I'm leaving.

MR. HORNE exits.

CASEY

Geez, what was that about?

HEATHER

That's Mr. Horne. He's not allowed in the store.

CASEY

Why not?

HEATHER

Don't worry about it.

DELIVERY DAN

So you're working on where Roger disappeared to, huh?

CASEY

Um, yeah. It's my first project.

DELIVERY DAN

You've seen the back room, right?

CASEY

Yeah, I'm trying to figure out what's going on there.

DELIVERY DAN

I think it has to be some sort of teleportation portal, or something.

CASEY

Why's that? Why not a time machine?

DELIVERY DAN

Well, every time I've seen it open, it's been something that looks like it's from our time period. Our world. So I don't think it's manipulating time.

CASEY

I think it might be a doorway into different dimensions.

DELIVERY DAN

I don't know about that. I've never seen anything *really* weird in there. It's all stuff that seems like it could be happening here and now.

If it were going into different dimensions, we'd see some crazy interplanetary shit, right?

CASEY

I guess so. But I've only looked in twice.

What have you seen?

DELIVERY DAN

Oh. I've only looked in twice too.

But I have to make these deliveries now. I'll tell you more about it another time. Wish I could help more!

CASEY

No, it's okay, I think you did.

DELIVERY DAN

Is Heather helping you out?

HEATHER

You're doing great, Casey! Keep doing what you're doing!

CASEY

Moral support.

DELIVERY DAN

Excellent. Moral support is huge.

Alright, I gotta get going. See y'all later!

HEATHER

Bye Dan!

DELIVERY DAN exits. MR. HORNE has been waiting by the door and tries to come in again.

No no no! I see you trying to get in, Mr. Horne!

MR. HORNE

I'm not doing anything wrong!

HEATHER

You know you're not allowed!

MR. HORNE

But I —

HEATHER

NO! GET OUT!

MR. HORNE exits, grumbling.

CASEY

What is his problem?

HEATHER

You just have to yell at him, he scares away pretty easily.
Actually, you should probably practice.

CASEY

Practice what?

HEATHER

The yelling. As part of your training. It's an important skill! Okay, imagine I'm Mr. Horne and I've just come in. What do you do?

CASEY

Um, you can't be in here?

HEATHER

Not authoritative enough!

CASEY

You can't be in here.

HEATHER

I'm not leaving —

CASEY

You can't be in here!

HEATHER

What did you say?

CASEY

You can't be in here!!

HEATHER

Try something different —

CASEY

You can't be in here! You're banned!!!

HEATHER

Ooh, very nice! I think that would've done the trick. Maybe you could use your gross hand to scare him, too! He's squeamish. Anyway, good job, Casey! You're such a fast learner. But hopefully you won't have to yell at anyone while you're here.

CASEY

I hope not.

HEATHER

If you do have to yell at someone, though, I'll be here for moral support!

CASEY

Thanks, Heather.

Transition.

Four

The sock store. The next day.

CASEY is still researching on the laptop, and taking notes. HEATHER is putting up new sock displays.

HEATHER

You know what I hate?

People who wear socks with sandals. So annoying, right?

CASEY

I guess so, yeah.

HEATHER

It's gross. Just decide on one or the other!

My aunt Gertie married a guy who likes to wear socks with sandals and I haven't spoken to her in, like, six years.

CASEY

Geez, because of her husband's footwear?

HEATHER

Well yeah.

Plus she's been dead.

We weren't very close anyway.

CASEY

Oh. I'm sorry.

HEATHER

Don't be. She made bad decisions.

Alright, I'm going to go to lunch! Will you be okay here alone for a bit?

CASEY

Yeah, it seems to be pretty slow today. I think I'll be alright.

HEATHER

Sounds good. See you soon!

HEATHER exits. CASEY continues taking notes. Then, CASEY looks up at the door to the back room.

CASEY

I wonder...

CASEY goes to the back room door and knocks. There are knocks heard coming from the other side.

Oh geez. Oh geez. Okay.

As CASEY is about to open the door. MR. HORNE bursts into the store.

MR. HORNE

I see Miss Heather isn't here —

CASEY

Um, no — wait! You can't be in here!

MR. HORNE

I'm just having a looksie...

CASEY

No, you have to get out.

MR. HORNE

Don't mind me.

VICKI enters the store.

VICKI

Hi. I'm back. I decided to go with those socks.

CASEY

Oh! Great. Okay. I think I can ring you up. Sorry, I'm still in training. The Rustic Red knee socks, right?

VICKI

Yeah, weren't you paying attention yesterday?

MR. HORNE

Well hello, miss.

VICKI

Hi.

CASEY putting VICKI's socks on the counter.

Okay, that's going to be, um —

VICKI

Can you not touch them with your weird hand?

CASEY

I'm sorry, I —

MR. HORNE

So what size are you?

VICKI

Excuse me?

MR. HORNE

What size are you?

VICKI

Oh. Like, an 8?

MR. HORNE

Mmm. That's a good size.

VICKI

Thanks.

CASEY

Sir, you have to go —

MR. HORNE

I'm just having a nice conversation with the young lady —

CASEY

No, sir —

MR. HORNE

Are these the socks you're buying?

VICKI

Yes, I was going to go with orange but I decided on these.

MR. HORNE

Excellent color.
Let's see them on!

CASEY

Excuse me —

VICKI

Oh! Well, I guess it can't hurt.

VICKI takes her shoes off and puts the socks on.

CASEY

Mr. Horne, I'm going to have to ask you to —

MR. HORNE

Yes, that's a lovely color.

CASEY

Mr. Horne, you can't be in here!

VICKI

Why are you being so mean to this man?

CASEY

I'm just trying to —

VICKI

You have terrible customer service here, you know that?

MR. HORNE

Can I touch them?

CASEY

Oh my god — you need to get out!

VICKI

What, my feet?

MR. HORNE

If you don't mind —

CASEY

GET OUT NOW!!!

MR. HORNE scuttles out the front door.

VICKI

I can't believe you would yell at that man!

CASEY

He was being a creep! He was trying to touch your feet!

VICKI

This is the rudest place I've ever been. I've decided not to buy these socks.

CASEY

Fine! I don't care!

VICKI, with a string of huffs, takes the socks off and storms out again.

VICKI

This is the last you'll see of me!

CASEY

I was trying to help!

— And she's gone.

DELIVERY DAN enters through the front door.

DELIVERY DAN

What's that lady's problem?

CASEY

She's mad I wouldn't let a creepy foot fetish guy touch her feet.

DELIVERY DAN

— What?

CASEY

Mr. Horne came into the store and I couldn't get him out fast enough.

DELIVERY DAN

You gotta yell at that dude, Case.

CASEY

I know, I know, I was trying. I was thrown off because I heard knocks through the door to the back room.

DELIVERY DAN

Wait, knocks —?

CASEY

Yeah. I don't know what it was. Before I could open the door, there he was, like a, um — like a guy with a foot fetish in a sock store.

DELIVERY DAN

Good metaphor.

CASEY

It's a simile.

DELIVERY DAN

That's still a metaphor.

CASEY

Oh, right. Thanks.

DELIVERY DAN

So. Somebody was knocking on the back door.

CASEY

Gross.

DELIVERY DAN

You know what I mean.

Anyway, I've personally never seen anybody go back there.

CASEY

Gross.

DELIVERY DAN

Stop it.

CASEY

So — whoever was knocking must be trapped, right?

DELIVERY DAN

I guess so. If they could open it, they wouldn't be trapped.

You didn't see the Owner go back there, did you?

CASEY

I haven't seen anybody.

Do you think it's Roger the security guard?

DELIVERY DAN

It might be.

CASEY

But either way, if somebody can knock from the other side, that means this doorway can be accessed from the other side. Which means Roger can come back out!

DELIVERY DAN

It's a long shot, but yeah. That would have to be the case. He could re-enter.

CASEY

Gross.

DELIVERY DAN

I swear to god, bro —

CASEY *handing DELIVERY DAN a few delivery boxes*

Alright, here are your deliveries, thanks, bye!

Transition.

Five

The sock store. Later that day.

CASEY is reading a book about portals, HEATHER is folding socks.

HEATHER

Do you ever think about how cool our product is?

CASEY

— They're socks, but sure?

HEATHER

Right, but they're part of people's lives! People have traveled the world in these socks.

CASEY

I'm sure people have traveled the world in a lot of socks.

HEATHER

I think it's cool that it becomes, like, a part of the person. Part of their personality. People wear these like a badge of honor.

CASEY

The price tag probably has something to do with that.

HEATHER

What are you thinking your first pair will be? I was thinking you'd look good in blue.

CASEY

Oh! Um. I hadn't thought about it.
I don't think I can afford a pair yet.

HEATHER

But we get a discount!

CASEY

It's still a lot to pay for — socks.

HEATHER

Good socks. They'll last forever.

CASEY

I know that.

HEATHER

If you're not passionate about the product, Casey, then there might be a problem here.

CASEY

No, I am passionate —

HEATHER *chipper*

Don't worry, I believe you! Just making sure!

CASEY

— Was that a test?

HEATHER

And you passed!

She holds up a sock.

Part two: what's this?

CASEY

Oh! Quarter sock!

HEATHER

Wrong! Crew sock this time! Come on, Casey, get your head in the game!

CASEY

They look the same!

The front door opens and THE OWNER enters. They are wearing sunglasses, a scarf, gloves, and a long trench coat. What little can be seen of their face is obscured by a white face bandage. The flashlight is in their coat pocket.

THE OWNER

Hello.

HEATHER

Hi there! How are you?

THE OWNER

Fine, fine.

CASEY *referring to the OWNER's bandages*

Hey, um, I guess we match!

Pause. THE OWNER regards CASEY.

THE OWNER

Who is this?

HEATHER

The new hire. Casey.

THE OWNER

Casey. How do you do.

CASEY

Oh, I'm fine, thanks. Nice to meet you!

THE OWNER

If you say so. Back to work.

CASEY

Right, of course, of course. (Don't mess this up, Casey.)

THE OWNER

Hm?

CASEY

Nothing! (That was close.)

HEATHER

What brings you in today?

THE OWNER

Errands.

THE OWNER goes to open the back room.

CASEY

Wait!

THE OWNER

Yes, Casey. I am waiting.

HEATHER

It's fine, Casey.

CASEY

But —

HEATHER

Don't let us keep you from your errands.

THE OWNER

You wouldn't be able to if you tried.

THE OWNER opens the door to the back room and disappears into it.

CASEY

Um — that was the owner?

HEATHER
Yep.

CASEY
What happened to his face??

HEATHER
An accident, I guess. He hasn't told me.

CASEY
What does he usually look like?

HEATHER
Oh, I don't know. He's always had that bandage.

CASEY
Does he usually go into the back room like that?

HEATHER
Every time he's in.

CASEY
And he comes out?

HEATHER
I don't ask questions.

CASEY goes to the back room door and knocks on it. No response.

CASEY
He doesn't get lost?

HEATHER
I guess not. Like I said, I don't ask questions.

CASEY
Don't you want to know??

HEATHER
My job's to sell socks. I come in, I sell socks, I go home. That's all I'm getting paid for.

REGINALD B. RICHLEY III enters through the front door. Very rich.

REGINALD
Miss Heather!

HEATHER
Well look who it is! Good to see you, Reggie!

REGINALD

Good to see you too, darling. I hope you've been well.

HEATHER

I'm doing just fine. How are you? How's the wife?

REGINALD

She hated our trip to Milan.

HEATHER

Oh no!

REGINALD

She said it got boring after the first two months.

I told her that as long as she keeps spending my money on purses, I keep choosing the vacation spots. Ha ha!

HEATHER

Sounds like you two are doing great.

REGINALD

We really are.

So, I came in today to whet my sock appetite once again. Got anything for me?

HEATHER

Do !!

Putting a pair of socks on the counter.

Tell me this Gunmetal Grey isn't just delicious.

REGINALD

Beautiful! You know me too well, Heather.

HEATHER

Hey, I'm just doing my job.

REGINALD

Your job apparently is to take money directly out of my pocket! They're my size?

HEATHER

11 right on, no more, no less.

REGINALD

I'll take them.

HEATHER

\$540 after tax.

REGINALD B. RICHLEY III gives HEATHER cash.

REGINALD

Wonderful. Just wonderful.

HEATHER

Here, I'll box them up for you.

HEATHER puts the socks in a box.

And you're all set.

REGINALD

Great seeing you as always.

HEATHER

Same to you! Give my best to the Mrs.

REGINALD

Will do.

REGINALD B. RICHLEY III notices CASEY.

Ah! I see we've got a new face in here.

HEATHER

This is Casey, our newest hire.

REGINALD *extending a hand*

Reginald B. Richley III. A pleasure.

CASEY *shaking his hand awkwardly*

Nice to meet you.

HEATHER

Mr. Richley's a world-renowned physics professor.

REGINALD

Please, you flatter me.

CASEY

Physics? Really?

REGINALD

Physics, really.

CASEY

Can I ask you a quick question?

REGINALD

Ask away.

CASEY

Do you think parallel universes, or alternate dimensions, are probable?

REGINALD

They're possible, but I wouldn't say probable.

CASEY

Would it be possible for a portal into one to exist on Earth?

REGINALD

I wouldn't know. A portal? Based on the current evidence, it's very very unlikely.

CASEY

Okay. I see. In that case, how would you explain — this!

CASEY opens the door to the back room. THE OWNER is standing there.

REGINALD

Well, Casey, I'd have to say that's a door.
Love an inquisitive mind, though. Keep it up!
Nice to see you as always, Heather. Ta ta!

REGINALD B. RICHLEY III exits. THE OWNER steps out of the back room.

THE OWNER

Did somebody knock?

CASEY

I did, a few minutes ago.

THE OWNER

Don't.

THE OWNER leaves the store.

CASEY

Do you think he has Roger trapped back there?

CASEY opens the back room door.

Roger!

CASEY's voice echoes back, as if through a canyon.

HEATHER

Oh that seems fun! HELLO!

HEATHER's voice echoes back.

CASEY

Heather —

HEATHER

BUY SOME SOCKS!

HEATHER's voice echoes back. CASEY closes the door.

What? I thought we might be able to get a sale out of it.

Transition.

Six

The sock store. Evening.

CASEY and HEATHER are closing up.

CASEY

Listen, I wanted to ask you about the owner —

HEATHER

You know where all the light switches are, right? I have a family thing I need to get to, so I kinda need to run.

CASEY

Yeah, I can take care of it. But do you have a minute to talk about —

HEATHER

See you later, bye!!

HEATHER exits. CASEY locks the door behind her.

CASEY

Something's up, something's up.

CASEY turns off the lights in the store. CASEY pauses at the back room door.

Are you in there, Roger?

DELIVERY DAN enters and knocks loudly at the locked front door, scaring

CASEY.

DELIVERY DAN

Let me in!

CASEY

Christ, you scared me!

DELIVERY DAN

Just unlock the door!

CASEY *unlocking the door*

What's wrong? What's going on?

DELIVERY DAN

The door was locked.

CASEY

Yeah, but is everything okay? Why were you yelling?

DELIVERY DAN

So you could hear me.

I was just looping back around to see if there were any more deliveries from the end of the day.

CASEY

No, nothing.

DELIVERY DAN

Are you okay?

CASEY

I'm fine, why?

DELIVERY DAN

You're, like, really jittery. Are you on something?

CASEY

I wish.

It's just this Roger thing is freaking me out. And I met the owner today, and that was... weird. I don't know.

DELIVERY DAN

Damn, you met the owner already? I didn't meet him until I'd been working here for six months or something. He's really hard to get ahold of.

CASEY

He gave me a super weird vibe. I feel like he's hiding something.

DELIVERY DAN

Besides his face?

CASEY

Yeah, other than that. He was really defensive about the back room.

DELIVERY DAN

Woah. That's so crazy.

Maybe he's, like, a space traveler and the back room is his ship! Or he might be a crazy alien creature, which is why he keeps his face covered.

CASEY

Wow, I — I really hope not.

DELIVERY DAN

But maybe! Can't you let a guy dream that his boss is an alien??

CASEY

I don't think that should be my problem.

DELIVERY DAN

You know what you need to do, right.

CASEY

No, I'm completely confused about all of this.

DELIVERY DAN

Is Heather's moral support not helping?

CASEY

What do you think?

DELIVERY DAN

Honestly, man, I think moral support is key.
But here's what you need to do: you need to confront the owner.

CASEY

Yeah, no, I'm not doing that.

DELIVERY DAN

You have to! You need to get some answers!

CASEY

What would I even say? "Are you an alien?"

DELIVERY DAN

I don't know! You just have to grill the guy. Throw him off. Maybe you can get some information.

CASEY

How do you expect me to do that? Like you said, he's really hard to get ahold of.

DELIVERY DAN

You're right about that. You'll have to trap him or something.

*A CONFUSED PERSON appears outside the door and tries to get into the store.
When they find the door locked, they start banging on it.*

CONFUSED PERSON

Hello? Hello??

CASEY

Oh — we're closed!

CONFUSED PERSON
Why's it locked??

CASEY
We're closed — the lights are off!

CONFUSED PERSON
Let me in! I want to look at the socks!

CASEY
You'll have to come back tomorrow!

CONFUSED PERSON
What??

CASEY
We're closed!

CONFUSED PERSON
Why won't you let me in?? Don't you want my business???

CASEY
Oh my god.

DELIVERY DAN
Having fun?

CONFUSED PERSON
Hello???

DELIVERY DAN
Maybe if we stay really still, they'll go away.

CONFUSED PERSON
I see you in there!!!

DELIVERY DAN
Well, it was worth a shot.

CONFUSED PERSON
What kind of a store doesn't let people in???

CASEY
We need to get out of here.

DELIVERY DAN

They're blocking the door at the moment. And if we try to leave, they'll definitely try to get in here. We have to wait it out.

CONFUSED PERSON

HELLO???

CASEY

I don't think that'll work.

CONFUSED PERSON

If you won't let me in, I'll never shop here!

CASEY

Sounds good to me!

CONFUSED PERSON

I hope you go out of business and starve!!!

The CONFUSED PERSON exits, furious.

CASEY

Geez, that's a bit severe.

DELIVERY DAN

You've gotta trap him like that.

CASEY

What?

DELIVERY DAN

The owner. You've gotta trap him, like that person just trapped us in here. Just be freaking crazy about it.

CASEY *thinking*

They trapped us by blocking the door—

Okay, I think I have an idea.

Oh, this is not going to be good.

DELIVERY DAN

Proud of you, Case. You're doing great.

CASEY

Watch it — moral support is Heather's job.

DELIVERY DAN

Oh! Right. How could I forget?

Speaking of Heather, did she ever show you the flashlight?

CASEY

What flashlight?

DELIVERY DAN

Roger's flashlight. The security guard.

CASEY

No, she hasn't mentioned it.

DELIVERY DAN

Weird. I figured since you were working on this, she would've shown you.

DELIVERY DAN goes behind the counter and pulls a flashlight out.

When Roger disappeared, this flashlight is the only thing left. It was right here in the store. I guess we held onto it, but I don't know why. It doesn't work.

CASEY

Can I see that?

DELIVERY DAN hands the flashlight over.

DELIVERY DAN

Like, what good's a flashlight that doesn't work?

CASEY

Why didn't she show me this?

DELIVERY DAN

I've put new batteries in it and everything. I think it's a piece of crap.

CASEY

Delivery Dan — can I hold onto this?

DELIVERY DAN

I was going to suggest we throw it out.

But sure, if you want.

CASEY

Thank you.

DELIVERY DAN

I guess you can use it to not see things in the dark.

CASEY

— Sure. I maybe had other plans for it.

DELIVERY DAN

This flashlight is the perfect choice if you're in a dark room and you want it to stay that way.

CASEY

You know, Dan? You're really really funny.

DELIVERY DAN

Hey. That's *Delivery Dan* to you.

Transition.

Seven

The sock store. Later that night, around 2am.

CASEY enters the store, holding the flashlight, making sure to lock the front door again once inside.

CASEY

Okay, Roger. We're figuring this out.

CASEY goes to the back room door and opens it. There is a CAVEMAN there, trying to light a fire.

Oh my god.

CAVEMAN

Hurgh.

CASEY

Um, I'm sorry to bother you.

Suddenly, the flashlight turns on, and light shines onto the CAVEMAN. The CAVEMAN stands up.

Oh no, oh no, oh no.

CAVEMAN

Hurgh!!

The CAVEMAN starts to walk towards CASEY. CASEY drops the flashlight and shuts the back room door. Then, the sound of keys unlocking the front door. CASEY ducks behind the counter as THE OWNER enters.

THE OWNER

Socks, socks, socks.

THE OWNER picks up the flashlight, looks around the store, and opens the back room door to the lights and music of what sounds like a rave. He closes the door behind him.

CASEY

Okay, Casey. Okay. Now's your chance. Trap the guy. Grill him.

Like a steak. Grill him like a steak.

Yum.

I guess I'm hungry.

CASEY waits, but THE OWNER does not come out.

Any minute now...

Silence. THE OWNER does not come out. CASEY yawns.
 I guess I'm tired too.
 Maybe if I just close my eyes for a second —

CASEY, eyes closed, soon falls asleep.
Transition.

Eight

The sock store. The next morning.
HEATHER enters the store to find CASEY, asleep.

HEATHER
 Casey! What are you doing?

CASEY wakes up.

CASEY
 Hm? What's going on?

HEATHER
 Were you sleeping on the ground, in the store?

CASEY
 Oh. Um — I guess I was.

HEATHER
 Casey, you can't do that! I don't mop very often!
 Also, this is a luxury store and we can't have clients seeing employees on the ground like
 we're homeless or something.
 You have a home, right?

CASEY
 I have a home, Heather.

HEATHER
 Then why aren't you sleeping there?

CASEY
 I — I was working on the Roger thing.

HEATHER
 Honey, you need to leave work at work. Come on, get off the floor.

HEATHER helps CASEY up.

CASEY
 Sorry, I —

HEATHER

No need to apologize. Just go home and get some rest. I'll cover the store today.

CASEY

No, I have to stay. I want to stay.

HEATHER

You need to relax. The bags under your eyes are so dark they're like — really dark bags.

CASEY

Good simile.

HEATHER

Um, it's a metaphor.

CASEY

Okay. Whatever. I just really need to figure this out.

HEATHER

I totally get it, and you're doing great!
Sleep is helpful too, though.

CASEY

Can I stay for a little bit, at least? There's something I'm waiting for —

HEATHER

I wish I could say yes, I really do, but no. Nope. I can't have you in the store looking like this, it'll scare clients away.

CASEY

Who's going to be scared away?

HEATHER

People spending \$500 on socks. Rich people are easily frightened.
Boo!

CASEY doesn't flinch.

Yep, that's what I thought.

Now go home and take a break! I'll see you tomorrow, okay?

CASEY

Sure. Yeah. I'll see you tomorrow.

CASEY exits.

HEATHER *to herself*

Oh, Casey. Will you ever be Assistant Manager material?

Not if you're sleeping on the floor like that. Assistant Managers definitely do *not* sleep on floors.

VICKI enters.

VICKI

Hi. Do you remember me?

HEATHER

Yes, you were in a few days ago. How are you doing?

VICKI

I'm fine. Your helper, or whatever, didn't remember me when I came in again. Then they yelled at this nice old man, so I left and didn't buy the socks like I was planning.

HEATHER

I'm sorry to hear that.

VICKI

You should fire them.

HEATHER

Who? Casey?

VICKI

Sure, whatever their name is. They were so rude.

HEATHER

Thanks for the feedback, I'll take that into consideration.

VICKI

Well, anyway, I'm here to buy those socks. I've decided to take them.

HEATHER

Oh, great! Let me get those for you.

HEATHER pulls out the red knee socks.

Yep, we've still got one pair left of the Rustic Red knee socks in your size!

VICKI

It's the last pair?

HEATHER

Until more are made, yes. Being a custom store, most of our inventory are samples.

VICKI

Oh. Well, since they're the last ones, can I get a discount?

HEATHER

No, we don't offer discounts.

VICKI

Even if they're the last ones?

HEATHER

They're not the last ones, we just have to make —

VICKI

So you'd rather not sell them at all, than accept a lower price?

HEATHER

That's not the case, we just don't offer any discounts.

VICKI

Hm. That's interesting.

HEATHER

It's just policy.

VICKI

Fine. Whatever. That doesn't make any sense. I'm so sick of arguing with you guys.

HEATHER

I'm sorry if you feel —

VICKI

Um, I'm still going to buy them though. How much was it again?

HEATHER

\$540 after tax.

VICKI

Ugh. That's ridiculous for socks.

HEATHER

They are made from premium materials and they'll last —

VICKI

Yeah, I know, I know. I've heard the spiel. Can you just take my payment?

HEATHER

Sure. Cash or card?

VICKI

Card.

HEATHER

You can swipe here.

VICKI swipes a card.

And let me box these up for you.

VICKI

It's fine. I'll just take them.

HEATHER

Oh! Alright. Here you go! Thanks so much.

VICKI

Okay, bye.

VICKI takes the socks and exits. HEATHER takes a deep breath.

HEATHER

"Um, can I get a discount?"

Geez.

THE OWNER enters from the back room, flashlight in hand.

THE OWNER

Hello.

HEATHER

Oh, hi! I didn't know you were back there.

THE OWNER

I was.

Where is the new person?

THE OWNER sets the flashlight down on the counter.

HEATHER

Casey had to take a sick day.

THE OWNER

Casey. Yes.

HEATHER

But they're doing really well so far!

Except for the fact that I found them sleeping on the floor here this morning.

THE OWNER

They shouldn't do that.

HEATHER

I know.

THE OWNER

If they mess up again, we can't have them working for us. That isn't in line with the Socks & Co luxury image.

HEATHER

Don't worry, I told them. But like I said, they're doing really well so far other than that!

THE OWNER

Yes. Yes. Good.

HEATHER

You alright?

THE OWNER

Why?

HEATHER

You seem distracted.

Like, more distracted than usual.

THE OWNER

I'm fine. My work back there is getting to my head.

You are selling lots of socks?

HEATHER

Just made a sale, before you came in.

THE OWNER

Good. These are the best socks, you know.

HEATHER

I know! I tell all of our customers that.

THE OWNER

Ever made.

HEATHER

There's a reason they're \$500!

Haha.

THE OWNER doesn't laugh.

THE OWNER

I hope you take this product as seriously as I do.

HEATHER

Of course.

Could I ask you, what is it you're doing back there?

THE OWNER

Your only concern should be selling these socks.
I have to get going now.

HEATHER

Sorry, don't let me keep you!

THE OWNER

You won't.

THE OWNER exits out the front door. HEATHER takes another deep breath.

HEATHER

What is going on today?

Transition.

Nine

The sock store. The next day.

CASEY is inspecting the flashlight. DELIVERY DAN enters.

DELIVERY DAN

Heyo. Heard you had a sick day yesterday. You feeling okay?

CASEY

What? Oh, yeah. Is that what Heather told you?
I actually fell asleep in the store.

DELIVERY DAN

— Do you need a place to sleep, Casey?

CASEY

I'm all set, thanks.
Well, for now. The rent on my apartment went up again and I can barely afford it, so I might have to take you up on that! Fun!

DELIVERY DAN

Geez, that sucks. You okay?

CASEY

I'm fine. Don't worry about me.
Anyway, after you gave me the flashlight the other night, the Owner came in so I stayed behind to try and confront him.

DELIVERY DAN

Oh man! Did you? What happened?

CASEY

— No. I fell asleep.

DELIVERY DAN
Oh. Right.

CASEY
But he took the flashlight with him into the back room. So I'm trying to figure that out.

DELIVERY DAN
Slow day in here, then?

CASEY
Heather's been on lunch for an hour and a half, and no one's come in.

DELIVERY DAN
Hey, at least you have time to, um —
What do you guys even do in here all day?

CASEY
Oh! I didn't even tell you the most interesting part from the other night!

DELIVERY DAN
Besides you falling asleep?

CASEY
Yes, besides that. Shut up.
I opened the door to the back room before the Owner showed up, and there was a caveman back there! Like, an actual caveman! So maybe it is a time machine and you're super wrong.

DELIVERY DAN
Damn, really? Okay, that's awesome.

CASEY
And the flashlight started working. So there's gotta be something about the back room that makes it work.

DELIVERY DAN
I think we should test it out. Mainly because I really want to meet a caveman.

DELIVERY DAN starts toward the back room. MR. HORNE enters the store.

MR. HORNE
Where's Miss Heather today?

CASEY
Oh, come on. Not today, Mr. Horne. You know you're not allowed in here.

MR. HORNE
I'm having a looksie. I'm considering a purchase.

DELIVERY DAN

Hey man, you gotta get out of here.

MR. HORNE

You can't tell me what to do. You don't work here.

DELIVERY DAN

I do, I'm the delivery — never mind.

CASEY

Are you actually here to purchase today?

MR. HORNE

I am.

CASEY

Why should I believe you?

MR. HORNE slaps a wad of cash onto the counter.

DELIVERY DAN

Casey, get him out of the store. He's just here for trouble.

MR. HORNE

I'm looking for something blue.

CASEY

Well, um, this is the shade of blue we're running this year.

CASEY shows MR. HORNE a pair of blue socks.

MR. HORNE

I'm a size 9. Do you have something in blue in a size 9?

CASEY

We have crew, calf, quarter, low cut, but we don't have knee socks in blue in that size right now.

MR. HORNE

I like calf.

CASEY

You're looking at them.

MR. HORNE picks up the socks.

MR. HORNE

Mmm. Nice.

DELIVERY DAN
Casey —

CASEY
It's okay, I got it.

MR. HORNE
These are very nice socks.

CASEY
They'll last forever. No holes either.

MR. HORNE
I like how soft they are.

CASEY
Yes, they're very soft. Do you want to buy them?

MR. HORNE
I would like to buy them.

CASEY
Great! I can ring you up. They come to \$540 after tax.

MR. HORNE *gesturing to the cash*
It's exact.

CASEY *to DELIVERY DAN*
See?

CASEY takes the cash into the register and takes out a box to package the socks.

MR. HORNE
Thank you.
Now, I'm buying them on only one condition.

CASEY
— What's that?

MR. HORNE
I'm buying them for you to wear. So you have to wear them. It's a gift.

CASEY
— Um. No thank you.

DELIVERY DAN
Hell no, man. That's not happening.

MR. HORNE

But I paid good money for these! You have to.

CASEY

I don't want to.

DELIVERY DAN

Nope, no way. You get out now.

MR. HORNE *trying to grab CASEY over the counter, waving the socks*

Put these socks on! Put them on!

CASEY

Woah!

DELIVERY DAN

Hands off, man!

DELIVERY DAN lunges and pushes MR. HORNE away.

MR. HORNE

It's my right!!

DELIVERY DAN

Nope, you're out. Time to go.

DELIVERY DAN pushes MR. HORNE toward the exit.

MR. HORNE

You can't do this! This is an outrage!

DELIVERY DAN

You bet I can.

Casey, keys.

CASEY

What?

DELIVERY DAN *struggling with MR. HORNE*

Toss me your keys!

CASEY

Oh! Okay!

CASEY fumbles in a couple pockets before finding the keys and throwing them to DELIVERY DAN. The keys don't make it very far.

Shoot, sorry.

DELIVERY DAN

Okay, never mind, hold on a second.

MR. HORNE

I am a paying customer!!!

DELIVERY DAN

You shut up!

DELIVERY DAN manages to push MR. HORNE out the door and hold it closed.

MR. HORNE tries to push his way back into the store.

Alright, keys now.

CASEY

Got it, got it.

CASEY gives DELIVERY DAN the keys. DELIVERY DAN locks the door. MR. HORNE pounds on the door, trying to get in.

DELIVERY DAN

What a creep.

MR. HORNE

Open the door!

CASEY

Go away, Mr. Horne!

MR. HORNE

You can't do this to me!!!

CASEY

You can't force people to put socks on for you!

MR. HORNE

It's a free country!

MR. HORNE storms away. CASEY slumps to the floor.

DELIVERY DAN

You okay?

CASEY

I'm fine.

Thank you.

DELIVERY DAN

I know that was a pretty messed up thing to experience, so now probably isn't the best time to say this, but — I told you so.

DELIVERY DAN sits.

CASEY

Wow. Thank you, Delivery Dan.

DELIVERY DAN

Call me Dan.

HEATHER appears at the door and finds it locked.

HEATHER

Casey! Why is the door locked??

And I thought we talked about not being on the floor! I still haven't mopped!

DELIVERY DAN

I'll let her in.

DELIVERY DAN unlocks the door and HEATHER enters.

HEATHER

Casey, what's going on with you? This type of behavior is not approved by the Socks & Co. Employee Handbook. Did you read the handbook?

To DELIVERY DAN.

Do we have a handbook?

DELIVERY DAN

If we do, I didn't read it.

CASEY *standing*

I'm sorry, Heather. I —

HEATHER

Everybody's been acting weird lately. You, the clients, the Owner — well, I guess clients are always weird —

CASEY

I think the Owner has something to do with Roger going missing.

HEATHER

Does he have something to do with you always being on the ground, too?

— Wait, with Roger going missing? You think so?

CASEY

Absolutely. The Owner is the only person I've seen go into the back room and come out of it without getting lost in whatever goes on back there. He's got some sort of control over it, so he must have the answer about Roger.

HEATHER

He did come out of that room very distracted last time I spoke to him. Maybe something is going on here.

DELIVERY DAN

We're going to confront him. Casey and I. Ask him some questions.

CASEY

We?

DELIVERY DAN

Yeah! I'm really curious now, and I don't want to be left out of the interrogation.

HEATHER

Wait wait wait. You're planning on staging an interrogation?

DELIVERY DAN

An intervention of sorts.

CASEY

Well, not really.

To HEATHER

We need to find Roger. He's been missing for too long.

HEATHER

How do you expect to get the Owner to answer your questions? He's really hard to get ahold of.

CASEY

I know. And that's what we still need to figure out.

Do you have any ideas on what to do?

THE OWNER enters.

HEATHER

My idea is to not do it!

THE OWNER

Hello.

CASEY

Wait, why not?

DELIVERY DAN

Oh my god, it's happening. Go for it, Case.

THE OWNER starts toward the back room. CASEY blocks his way.

CASEY

Excuse me, sorry, sir.

THE OWNER

Yes? Who are you?

CASEY

I'm Casey?

HEATHER

That's the new hire. You've met Casey.

THE OWNER

Right. Casey. Of course.

CASEY

Before you go back there, I have a few questions to ask you.

DELIVERY DAN

We have a few questions to ask you.

THE OWNER

I'm happy to answer your questions, Casey.

CASEY

Okay. Great. Number one: what are you doing in the back room?

THE OWNER

Skip. Next?

CASEY

Um. What is the back room? Why are there always strange things happening back there?

THE OWNER

Two questions in one. Skip.

CASEY

Hold on, you can't skip the questions. That's against the rules.

DELIVERY DAN

Not cool, man. You gotta answer the questions.

THE OWNER

Then ask me a question I want to answer.

CASEY

Where's Roger? What did you do with him?

THE OWNER

Who?

HEATHER

Roger. The security guard for the building? He went into the back room and got lost. I told you about this.

THE OWNER

I didn't do anything to Roger. I don't know Roger.

CASEY

Why should we believe you when there's something different in the back room every time I open the door?

THE OWNER

I'm taking care of it.

DELIVERY DAN

How about you answer Casey's question?

THE OWNER

How about Casey doesn't open the back room? That's an owners-only room.

CASEY

I'm trying to find someone who's *missing!*

THE OWNER

I'm not trying to be mean here.
I have to get to work. You all should consider it too.

DELIVERY DAN

Casey's trying to be a good person and you can help, there's no need to be such a jerk!

THE OWNER

You don't know what you're talking about.

DELIVERY DAN

And do you? Huh?

DELIVERY DAN is getting dangerously close to THE OWNER.

CASEY

Here's a question you should answer: can you explain this?

CASEY opens the door to the back room. There are sounds of heavy wind and snow is blowing around. The top of a mountain.

THE OWNER

Don't open that!

CASEY

What is going on here? What are you hiding from us??

DELIVERY DAN

Answer the question!

HEATHER

Guys —

THE OWNER

I'm taking care of it!

DELIVERY DAN

Yeah? Well take care of this!

DELIVERY DAN pushes THE OWNER into the back room and slams the door shut.

CASEY

Dan!

HEATHER

What did you do??

DELIVERY DAN

He wasn't answering the questions.

CASEY

Okay. It's fine, it's fine. He goes in there and always comes out. So we've got him cornered. He'll have to answer us.

CASEY opens the door to the back room. There are two PEOPLE FENCING, dressed in 18th-century attire. They look up. CASEY closes the door.

Um.

CASEY immediately opens the door again to the lights and faint music of a rave.

HEATHER

What's going on?

CASEY shuts the door and immediately opens it again. All that is behind the door are THE OWNER's sunglasses. CASEY picks them up.

CASEY

He's not there anymore. He's gone.

DELIVERY DAN

That's not what I thought would happen.

CASEY

No.

DELIVERY DAN

So. Um. What now?

Beat.

Blackout.

End of Act 1