

The Interview

SIMON SV

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

MATT (mid-20s, plain crew cut hair) walks in the front door, briefcase in hand. He's wearing his work clothes, although his tie is loose and his shirt untucked, giving him an overall disheveled appearance. He yawns, and blinks rapidly, attempting to stay awake.

The house is small and disorderly, but not quite a dump either. He walks through the living room, which reveals a plethora of colorful band posters from the likes of THE GRATEFUL DEAD, SUBLIME, and FRANK ZAPPA. It's the ultimate "bro-pad" contrasting sharply with Matt's exhausted, overworked, cookie-cutter corporate appearance.

He walks towards the kitchen, but as he enters is quickly startled by his roommates, JAKE and ERIC (same age, each with long and unkempt stoner hair).

JAKE AND ERIC
(together)

FIVE...FOUR...THREE...TWO...ONE...RIP
IT!!!

Jake and Eric, each sitting at the small kitchen table, take rips from their own huge bongos. Matt grimaces, startled by their shouting, and notices the clock on the wall, which reads just after midnight. The calendar, next to it, reads APRIL 20TH.

Matt proceeds to walk down the hall towards his room, unnoticed by Jake or Eric. When he reaches his bed he falls, face first, across the bed horizontally and instantly falls asleep, with his work clothes still on and his shoes still on his feet, which are dangling off the side of the bed.

INT. MATT'S ROOM - MORNING

Matt awakens to his alarm clock ringing extremely loudly. He reaches to turn it off, but fails, since he fell asleep lying across the bed the wrong way. He finally hits it and turns it off; the clock reads 7:00AM. He rolls onto his back, and puts his hands over his face. After a pause, he slaps himself to wake up.

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

Matt stumbles through his bathroom routine. He brushes his teeth, dropping his toothbrush, showers, dropping his soap several times before resolving to simply leave it on the shower floor, and shaves, where you can see his eyes bloodshot with exhaustion.

INT. MATT'S ROOM - MORNING

Matt dresses in his work clothes. We finally see his room, which contains a similar display of colorful band posters as the living room. Matt sticks out like a sore thumb in his plain khakis and button down shirt and tie, looking almost gray compared to the vibrant colors in his room.

We see a CLOSE UP of a photo on Matt's dresser, which is of him (although a few years prior, with the longer, unkempt hair of his buddies) next to Jake and Eric. They're at the beach, wearing nothing but swim trunks and each holding joints the length of their forearms. What happened to Matt?

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Matt enters, fully dressed and holding his briefcase in his hand. He looks surprised and confused to see that Jake and Eric are still sitting at the table, which is covered in weed, bongs, and rolling paper. Both Jake and Eric's eyes are bloodshot as well, but they're high, not exhausted, as further indicated by their silly looking grins.

As Matt sits at the empty chair, Jake finally notices him.

JAKE

MATT! My MAN! What's good my dude?

Matt rolls his eyes and tries to put his briefcase on the table, but is unable to find room. He instead puts it on the floor.

MATT

Uh. Hey Jake. I'm going to work, like a regular person.

JAKE

Woah, heel bro-ski. I know your boss treats you like a dog but I didn't know he taught you to bite too.

(CONTINUED)

MATT

He doesn't treat me like a dog. I told you, I'm just paying my dues.

JAKE

Word. Hey, I'm just playing with you man! It's all good. You gonna smoke the morning J with us right? Traditional!

At this, Eric comes back to reality and out of his stoner daydream. He notices Matt sitting at the table.

ERIC

Matt! Dude we missed you last night. Too bad we couldn't do the good ole 4/20 bong rip trifecta, you know? It's all good though man, all good.

MATT

Yeah, sorry Eric. And Jake, I wish I could, but I really can't this morning.

Jake and Eric look disappointed. They've been waiting for Matt to smoke this joint, and he's crushing their bro-dreams.

JAKE

What? Matt, dude we always do a morning J on 4/20! You're killing the vibes!

MATT

I'm sorry guys! I've just got an interview today that I need to be sharp for.

ERIC

Interview? Like for a job? I thought you had a job?

MATT

No, it's for a promotion. At least, I think it is. They're interviewing everyone it seems, but some of the bigger offices have been cleaned out, so seems like they need to fill the spaces, you know?

(CONTINUED)

JAKE

Hmm...I don't know man. I heard that sometimes they, like, bring in these teams of people who say they're in "management" and they pretend they've got good news, but they're just there to fire you. Take your job and your pride at the same time.

ERIC

Yeah dude. Saw a movie like that. George Clooney was in it.

JAKE

Thought it was Ron Livingston and Jennifer Aniston?

ERIC

Nah bro, definitely Clooney, I know my shit.

JAKE

Fuck, I'll look it up.

MATT

GUYS! It doesn't matter, I'm not gonna lose my job, or my pride. But I'm sorry, I can't take the joint, I'll blaze with you when I get home, alright?

JAKE

Fine, but I'm gonna let you keep this J in case some quote unquote management motherfucker tries to take your balls.

MATT

Fair enough.

Matt takes the joint and puts it in his pocket. He looks at the clock on the wall, which reads 8:30AM

MATT

Fuck, I'm gonna be late. You guys don't need the car today right?

JAKE

Oops. Sorry bro, we need to cop some more bud. We...uh...had a late night you know.

(CONTINUED)

MATT

Fuck! Are you serious? Guys I'm gonna be late!

ERIC

Bro. Chill. You can ride my bike.

Eric smiles stupidly, looking proud that he has come up with the solution. Matt looks at him, absolutely furious, but eventually just sighs.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - MORNING

Matt rides Eric's old and dirty bike into the parking lot. Not knowing where to put it, and realizing he is late, he simply drops the bike next to the front door and hurries in.

INT. OFFICE - MORNING

Matt enters the office, nervous and sweating from his bike ride. He passes the reception desk, where the clock says 9:12AM. He is late. We see a standard, large office, with bland fluorescent lighting and mostly an arrangement of cubicles. On one side, there is a conference room, enclosed by glass walls and two glass doors. In front of the doors we see Matt's boss, MR. GOLDSTEIN:

GOLDSTEIN

MATTHEW! God dammit boy you're late!

Cut to reveal Matt's boss standing at the door to a conference room. He is in his mid-40s, fat, bald, wearing a suit that must cost ten times what Matt makes in a year. He taps his gold Rolex watch, partially to show Matt that he is in fact late, but also just to show it off like he does everyday.

MATT

Sorry Mr. Goldstein! Really, really sorry. Just...um, traffic as usual this morning. Won't happen again, really sorry.

GOLDSTEIN

Alright quit your blubbering and get your ass in here for your interview. You'll be meeting with Mrs. Wright and Mr. Howard

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME TIME

They enter the conference room and we see both Mrs. Wright and Mr. Howard, the most boring, cookie-cutter people you could ever meet, wearing the most standard business attire imaginable.

They are each smiling a little too warmly and the only two people in the conference room, which suddenly seems gigantic with only three people. Goldstein closes the doors and leaves Matt alone with them.

MATT

Oh. Hey, um, hello! Nice to meet you both.

WRIGHT

Pleasure to meet you Matthew, absolute pleasure. Please take a seat.

MATT

Cool. Um, I mean thank you.

Matt sits, he's extremely nervous and uncomfortable in what has instantly become a way too formal setting. He is alone on his side in the middle of the conference table, which must have 10 chairs on either side of him. He looks across at Wright and Howard.

HOWARD

Nice to meet you son.

MATT

Nice to meet you too. Um, I'm surprised we've never met, do you guys work off-site or..?

WRIGHT

Oh. Well. We're in, how does one put our field?

HOWARD

Management.

They each smile warmly. Matt gulps nervously. He's sweating. He feels like his tie has gotten so tight that it's joking him. Could Jake have been right?

MATT

Oh, management. Cool. I mean, of course, makes sense.

(CONTINUED)

HOWARD

Anyway. Don't worry about us, we're here to talk about you and your bright future Matthew. Did you bring the time sheet and tax forms we requested?

MATT

Yes, yes sir. They're right...wait...

Matt realizes he has forgotten his briefcase. He looks confused, how could he have forgotten?

QUICK CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Jake and Eric are eating from a giant box of DUNKIN DONUTS. Taking bong hits in between bites, Matt's briefcase is on the floor, still next to the chair he was sitting in earlier.

ERIC

Didn't we like, have something important to do today?

JAKE

(finishing his bong rip)
Hmm. Nah, can't think of anything.

ERIC

What if we forgot something, and it was like, important, you know?

JAKE

Ehh. We're not like Matt, we don't have people determining our fate based on whether or not we remember stupid shit. We've got the universe on our side baby.

ERIC

(laughing)
Yeahhhh, rock on man!

BACK TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME TIME

Matt realizes the severity of his mistake and launches into full apology mode, basically on the verge of a panic attack

MATT

Oh god, I'm SO sorry. I must've left it in my car. Really, I'm really sorry. I'll get it to you as soon as I can I swear on my life.

WRIGHT

Oh don't be silly! We can wait, just head down to your car and get it.

MATT

Shit, I mean, did I say car? I left it at home. I didn't bring my car. I mean, normally I do but not today. I'm sorry just a change in my routine. It won't happen again.

Matt is fumbling for excuses and seems excessively desperate.

HOWARD

Woah, woah, okay. Calm down son. Just relax.

MATT

Sorry.

HOWARD

It's alright, just take a breath. We don't need any of that stuff for now. Let's just... move on.

Wright and Howard look at each other and nod. It's so in sync and creepy, Matt is really starting to shit himself with nervousness. Wright pulls out a large folder, with brochures and forms falling out of it.

WRIGHT

Here, Matthew. Take this. Don't worry, just relax, we're not here to talk about the past. We're here to talk about the future.

Matt takes the folder, which on the cover has a picture of the sun, only with a smiley face, just like the sun in the Teletubbies. In bubble font it says YOUR FUTURE AWAITS!

(CONTINUED)

MATT

Huh. Okay. Is this like a, employee motivational seminar we need to do now?

HOWARD

Not exactly. We're just here to explain your new place, within the business. There's a world of opportunities opening up for you Matthew.

WRIGHT

So fantastic to see a young man ready to turn the page and start his future.

MATT

Why do you keep saying that? Future? What is this future stuff? I'm sorry, what is going on here?

HOWARD

Relax, Matthew, if you'd turn to the first page, you'll find the terms and conditions for our new arrangement. It's all laid out for you, very simple, you don't have to worry about anything.

MATT

Terms? Arrange...

He trails off. He turns around and looks outside the glass walls of the conference room. Several of the employees are cleaning out their cubicles, each holding a box with their belongings. Many of them are crying. They are being let go.

MATT

Oh my God. What the fuck?!

WRIGHT

Hey, relax Matthew! We understand this is hard, but this is just the first step on a bright road.

Matt looks down at the folder. It's fake smiles and bright colors are insulting.

FLASHBACK TO THE KITCHEN EARLIER: Jake, bong in hand, all of a sudden seemingly like a wise visionary as opposed to a dumb stoner.

(CONTINUED)

JAKE

(slowly)

...they're just there to fire you.
Take your job and your pride and
the same time.

JUMP BACK TO THE CONFERENCE ROOM: Matt looks across the table at Wright and Howard, they are each smiling their fake, pathetic smiles. Matt looks the most miserable we've seen him so far. He brushes his plain, crew cut hair, which used to be long and unkempt like Jake and Eric's...

Exasperated, he puts his hands in his pockets, where he accidentally grips the joint he had put in his pocket. He smiles; it's time to fucking blaze.

MATT

Hmm. Yeah, bright road. Not sure if
I want that if it's paved by you
cookie-cutter motherfuckers.

HOWARD

Woah! Easy there son, I know anger
is a naturally reaction but...

MATT

Oh no! No sir, this isn't anger.
Trust me, I've never been happier a
day in my fucking life. If you'd
just excuse me a moment.

Matt gets up, his attitude has changed. He feels triumphant, not about to let these suckers take his pride. He turns, but when he's just about to open the double glass doors, Howard rushes over and quickly appears by his side.

HOWARD

Hey, HEY! Matthew. Take it easy.
Um...maybe we got off on the wrong
foot?

Howard looks at Wright, as she nods in agreement. The cookie-cutters are changing their game-plan it seems. Howard shakes Matt's hand, attempting to shift gears and reassure him.

WRIGHT

Okay Matthew, maybe it's time for
us to level with you.

MATT

I'd say.

(CONTINUED)

HOWARD

We're not in management. Mrs. Wright and I work for a firm that specializes in corporate downsizing.

WRIGHT

Your company was preparing to let you go.

MATT

See, THAT is the best news I've heard all day. You guys are soul-suckers, you know that, right?

HOWARD

Relax. Matthew. What do you say we call this whole interview water under the bridge?

MATT

And how the fuck do we do that?

WRIGHT

See, with that kind of attitude, we could offer you a higher position. One where you could use that fiery and really be part of what makes this company tick.

HOWARD

Do you understand son? We're willing to fix this whole downsizing problem and give you a chance to be more than you are right now. Let us help you.

MATT

HA! Like I'd seriously believe you two. Sorry, I'd don't need Thing One and Thing Two over here to make me better, I think I can take care of that on my own. Now, if you'll excuse me, fuck you very much.

Matt turns and pushes open the double glass doors and begins to walk towards the cubicles. Without turning around, he puts his hand up, giving both Wright and Howard a solid middle finger and leaving them dumbstruck in the conference room.

INT. OFFICE - SAME TIME

Matt walks past sad, mostly crying employees, who are packing up their things, and calling their families to break the bad news. Unlike them, Matt is smiling brightly and walks right up to his cubicle. His desk is very bland, hardly a picture or personal item on it.

MATT

Jesus, what the fuck was I doing here?

Just then, Goldstein rushes up to Matt's desk.

GOLDSTEIN

MATTHEW! What are you doing? You're not finished with your interview. This is important.

MATT

Mr. Goldstein! Nice to see you! Hmm. I was going to call you Doug, but I'm not even sure if that's your fucking name. Is your name Doug?

GOLDSTEIN

It's Richard.

MATT

RICHARD! Love it. Well, I'm gonna call you Dick from now on, if that works for you.

GOLDSTEIN

I'd prefer if you didn't.

MATT

Great! We'll go with asshole. Suits you better actually, changed my mind.

GOLDSTEIN

MATTHEW! You need to get your ass back in the conference room. You understand what's going on here, don't you?

MATT

Yes! I do! Thanks asshole, you've given me a lot of clarity today, don't know if I can thank you enough. I've got a real hard on for

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MATT (cont'd)
my "bright future" thanks to your
goons in there.

GODLSTEIN
I swear to God, you have ten
seconds before I let you go, on the
SPOT, without any of the benefits
the consulting group was offering
you.

MATT
Consulting! First they said they
were in management, then they told
me they specialized in corporate
downsizing. Are we downsizing? Be
real with me cause it ain't cool to
lie, gives off bad vibes.

GOLDSTEIN
TEN!

MATT
Wuh oh, let me help you with that.

Matt looks at his desk and knocks everything off it.
Computer, stacks of paper, a stapler, everything, you name
it.

GOLDSTEIN
NINE!

Matt notices a lighter in the breast pocket of Goldstein's
suit.

MATT
Ahh! Let me borrow that bro, could
use a picker-upper right now, you
feel me?

GOLDSTEIN
EIGHT!

Matt takes the lighter. The sad, recently let-go employees
are beginning to notice the scene, and are coming closer to
investigate.

GOLDSTEIN
SEVEN!

Matt sits down in his office chair.

(CONTINUED)

GOLDSTEIN

SIX!

Matt kicks off his shoes and props his feet up on his now bare desk.

GOLDSTEIN

FIVE!

Matt loosens his tie, takes it off and tosses it on the floor. Some of the members of the crowd cheer him on, impressed.

GOLDSTEIN

FOUR!

Matt untucks his shirt and rips it open, not even caring to undue the buttons. More cheers from the crowd, with almost everybody joining in. They love Matt.

GOLDSTEIN

THREE!

MATT

Hey! Slow down! Gotta gimme a chance to light up, alright?

Matt takes the joint out of his pocket and puts it in his mouth. The crowd goes absolutely wild. Standing on their own desks and chanting for Matt.

GOLDSTEIN

TWO!

Matt begins to light the joint. Goldstein is getting increasingly red in the face from all his yelling.

MATT

Easy there, hoss. You could use one of these, seriously. Not sure if it's medicinal here but if you can afford that Rolex you probably have some swing in the state legislature, am I right?

CROWD

HELL YEAH!!

MATT

THAT'S MY PEOPLE!

(CONTINUED)

GOLDSTEIN

ONE!

The joint finally lit, Matt takes a huge hit and holds it in his lungs, preparing for the ultimate breath of relief. Some members of the crowd can be seen drinking from flasks, smoking cigarettes or joints of their own. Matt has freed them all!

GOLDSTEIN

THAT'S IT! MATTHEW JOHNSON,
YOU'RE...YOU'RE...

Goldstein is so red and exasperated he can't finish his sentence. He is FUMING with anger. Matt finally breathes out his hit, and goes limp with relaxation in his chair. He smiles a REAL, wide smile and turns to Goldstein, smoke now taking up most of the air between them.

MATT

Hey. Bro, don't worry about it. I
quit.

Goldstein looks equally furious and astounded that Matt has gone out in such a fashion. Someone in the office has started blasting "(You Gotta) Fight For Your Right (To Party)" by the Beastie Boys on an old school boom box. Matt has started an office party and revolution all at once. He is the ultimate bro-hero.

Matt puts the joint in his mouth and begins to breathe in again. He looks like the happiest person in the world and the screen FREEZES just as light at the end of the joint grows to its brightest.

THE END.