

Assigned

Stefanie Grafstein

INT. ELEVATOR DAY

LEO METLZER, 32, with rimless rectangular glasses and a well-kept afro, looks suffocated as he wears a shirt buttoned to the highest notch.

He stands uncomfortably unnoticed as he is surrounded by his busy co-workers who look as if they have just gotten off the runway.

The elevator rings when arriving at the 17th floor and he waits until the rest of his peers have exited.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE CUBICLE-DAY

Leo sits with poor posture at the desk in his unkept cubicle. Aside from him is a name plaque that reads "Leo Meltzer-Staff Writer." He scrolls through his "1,036 unread" emails.

With one hand scrolling and the other holding a desk phone to his ear.

LEO

Yeah mom, I'm looking at it right now. The Evite is...

He is staring at a frog waving with the words "Maurine's 53rd: Hop to see you there!"

LEO

Nice.

Leo changes his webpage to a list of writing assignments. He discovers that he has been assigned an article in the magazine "Nightlife" section.

We hear his mother on the other end of the phone-- a distinct Long Island accent:

LEO'S MOTHER (VO)

Is Annie going to be your plus one? She's such a nice girl, I just saw her mother on the track at the JCC. She's in really incredible shape...

He drowns out his mother as he investigates on his computer

(CONTINUED)

the hip NYC club "The Abyss" and its owner Jack Calvin. An article reads "The Abyss Nightclub opening THIS SATURDAY."

LEO

Uh huh.

LEO'S MOTHER (VO)

So should I put her down for egg or tuna salad?

LEO

Yeah...

(Realizing the conversation)

No, wait I'm sorry. I can't come. Unless they made an error, I have to work that night.

LEO'S MOTHER (VO)

Work? On a Saturday? They have you working like a dog, and only to have your name printed in 3 point font.

LEO

It's actually 7. But they said they would consider promoting me, if I write a cover worthy article.

LEO'S MOTHER (VO)

What do they have you covering?

LEO

A nightclub opening!

LEO'S MOTHER (VO)

Maurine's son goes to those. You should talk to him more, he's a doctor.

(beat)

It's not too late to go to medical school.

LEO

I'm okay, I have work. Bye, love you.

LEO'S MOTHER (VO)

Buh-bye hun. Be sure to wear the
new polo I bought you!

LEO

Alright, I will. Bye.

LEO'S MOTHER (VO)

You've never been to a disco
before, gotta look professional to
be taken seriously.

LEO

I know. Okay, I'll call you later.
Bye.

Leo ends the phone call and lets out a long sigh of relief.

DISSOLVE TO:

NYC STREETS-MONTAGE

While playing Frank Sinatra's New York, New York, Leo lives
out the daily occurrences of his awkward lifestyle.

He is accepting flyers from street solicitors, taking photos
for tourists, and holding the door for strangers-but never
going inside due to the overflow of people.

FADE TO:

INT. SUBWAY-DUSK

With New York, New York still playing-Leo is uncomfortably
sandwiched between a MOTHER with her screaming child and a
homeless looking MAN clipping his toenails as he holds onto
the subway pole.

Trying to ignore his surroundings, he begins to scroll
through Facebook and sees images of couples engaged.

Leo has a moment of excitement when he receives a
notification, but is quickly disappointed when he learns it
is only an "Animal Farm" request.

He starts playing the game and the virtual cow says "Hooray
Feed Me!" He tries to feed the cow, and another notification

(CONTINUED)

reads "Pay \$4.99 for more animal feed." He quickly makes the payment, and lets out a long sigh as he glances back at the screaming baby.

LEO tries to make funny faces at the baby, but it only makes it scream louder.

As the smile fades from his face, the subway car stops and Leo walks with no purpose as he exits the train.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABYSS NIGHTCLUB DOOR-NIGHT

Loud club music vibrates a door that reads "side entrance." Leo is dressed as if he is a dad going for a Sunday golf match: Kakis and a navy polo.

With a pen and notepad in hand, Leo knocks on the door. He waits patiently as he looks at his digital watch. He gives the door a forceful knock.

A short but intimidating, well-dressed BOUNCER opens the door. He looks pissed off, as if someone interrupted the moment before the winner of The Bachelor was announced.

BOUNCER

Can't you see this says "side door."

Leo extends his hand for a shake, but is quickly rejected.

LEO

Leo Meltzer, I'm with the Elite press. I'm doing a story on the Abyss and I wanted to know if I could have a moment with Jack Calvin?

BOUNCER

Are you for real?

LEO

I left a message with your answering machine.

(CONTINUED)

BOUNCER

I've seen some pretty convincing stunts to get in, but this is a new one. Nice try buddy.

The Bouncer slams the door in Leo's face.

CUT TO:

EXT. NYC STREET CORNER-NIGHT

Leo sits slumped on a bench aside a hot dog cart with his notebook by his side. He takes a large bite of his soggy and undressed hot dog and gulps his water.

A HOT DOG VENDER, 56 with a deceitful smirk on his face stands over the boiling water that brings sweat to his mustache. He hands a water bottle to AVIVA, 28, who towers over the hot-dog cart at 5'11 (6 inches of height added by her stilettos).

Aviva is magazine cover perfect in her sequin dress. She is intimidatingly gorgeous, but with kind eyes. She stands with her back to Leo and looks incredibly out of place on the street corner.

HOT DOG VENDER

That will be six dollars miss.

Aviva reaches into her purse and scrambles to find her wallet. Overhearing the exchange, Leo interjects.

LEO

Whoah wait, you just charged me three for a water and hotdog.

(to Aviva)

He's ripping you off.

Aviva and the HOT DOG VENDER looked puzzled. There is an awkward silence.

With the most cheesiest of smiles-

HOT DOG VENDER

For a pretty lady like yourself, I charge two.

Revealing her thick and sexy Russian accent

(CONTINUED)

AVIVA

Thank you sir.

She gives the Hot Dog Vender two dollars and walks over to Leo. He is sitting on the bench focused on his hot dog.

Leo doesn't notice her standing over him. She taps him on his shoulder to get his attention. He flinches and drops his hot dog.

AVIVA

Oh, didn't mean to startle. Thank you for your comment. I'm not from here and wouldn't know. Would you like me to buy you another weiner?

LEO

Excuse me?

He glances at his half eaten hotdog on the concrete.

LEO

Oh, nah I'm good too many make me queasy. But thank you.

AVIVA

Of course, it's not often to find such nice people. I'm Aviva.

She extends her hand for a shake to Leo. He stands up and is caught off guard by her height as she towers over him.

He shakes her hand.

LEO

Leo. And of course. It was lovely meeting you, enjoy your visit.

He starts to walk away. Speaking down to Leo.

AVIVA

Are you going home to your children?

LEO

Kids?

He glances at his attire.

LEO

I'm dressed for work. I'm a writer for the Elite press. I was covering the nightclub. The Abyss?

AVIVA

Oh yes. I too work in publishing. Have you ever read Sports Monthly?

LEO

Occasionally. Kinda stopped once they introduced the swimsuit edition. I feel like I haven't seen any articles in a while.

AVIVA

Too bad, swimsuit is my specialty.

(beat)

This is kind of how you say...random? But since you been and know the area, would you mind showing me where The Abyss is? I'm meeting friends there for cocktails.

Extremely taken back by her proposal.

LEO

Ugh, yeah. Yeah, sure. No problem, it's near the subway anyway.

AVIVA

Great, we shall be off!

Leo and Aviva begin to walk down the street towards The Abyss. Aviva towers over Leo who keeps an appropriate distance to her as they walk side by side.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE ABYSS FRONT ENTRANCE-NIGHT

Aviva and Leo approach a red velvet rope that bypasses the entrance line that goes down for blocks. Aviva greets her friends who are just as stunning as she is. She tugs Leo by the arm to go inside. Uncomfortable in the situation, Leo resists.

(CONTINUED)

LEO

Well, this is it. Enjoy your night.

He turns to walk away.

AVIVA

Wait! Why leave so early?

LEO

It's getting late and I have work tomorrow, but thank you.

Grabbing his arm to keep him from leaving.

AVIVA

Please, you friendly Americans never ask for anything in return...let me buy you a drink.

Leo glances at the never ending line.

LEO

I don't know, this line seems too long.

AVIVA

Just come!

Aviva grabs Leo by the arm and the walk past the red velvet rope with no problem. The same Bouncer that rejected Leo earlier is guarding the door.

A smile brightens on his face when he sees Aviva and her entourage, but quickly fades when he sees Leo.

Stopping Leo from entering

BOUNCER

Aye, miss I'm so sorry that this guy is giving you a problem.

Getting in Leo's face

BOUNCER

Tried to get in before through the side door.

AVIVA

No, you have it wrong! He's with me.

BOUNCER

My apologies.

With a grin that looks like it hurts. Motioning toward the door-

BOUNCER

Right this way.

Aviva, Leo and her group enter through The Abyss nightclub door.

CUT TO:

INT. THE ABYSS NIGHTCLUB-NIGHT

The Abyss is a club like no other-an adult play land. Acrobats swing from the ceiling and colorful bars are lit up aside indoor pools of sting rays. Anything that is over the top and extremely unnecessary can be found in The Abyss.

The patrons of nightclub are dressed in trendy but experimental "high fashion." They are the type of people who take pictures of their food, but would never dare consider eating.

Leo looks incredibly out of place as he stands aside Aviva. Screaming over the blasting dubstep music.

LEO

It's very loud.

The music gets increasingly louder. Unable to hear him over the noise.

AVIVA

What?

Trying to compete with the music that is building and increasing volume even more.

(CONTINUED)

LEO
It's very loud!

Unable to make out what he is saying, Aviva mouths to Leo "I can't hear you" while pointing to her ears. The music has finally built up to a blasting and exhilarating moment before an intense beat drop.

Screaming on the silent beat drop.

LEO
IT'S VERY LOUD!

Having made a scene, the patrons of the club stare at Leo. They immediately ignore him after the music comes back.

Screaming over the music and motioning towards the bar

AVIVA
Let's get drinks!

Aviva and Leo walk to the bar as they leave their entourage behind.

CUT TO:

INT. THE ABYSS NIGHTCLUB BAR-NIGHT

The bar is lit up with bright colors and has an elaborate display of every type of alcohol imaginable. The drinks are served in trendy glasses that look as if they should be on display in a museum more so than a bar. The music remains blasting.

Aviva and Leo approach the female BARTENDER who is standing in sleek black attire. She is well groomed with pin-straight hair and a perfect tan.

AVIVA
Vodka soda please?

Motioning toward Leo.

BARTENDER
And for you?

(CONTINUED)

LEO

Do you have a menu?

The bartender gives Leo a confused and repulsed look.

LEO

Agh forget it, surprise me.

The Bartenders face lights up with a smirk-as if she is being told that she will never have to work weekends again.

BANTENDER

You want "The Surprise"?

LEO

Yeah, I like a surprise.

BANTENDER

The Surprise?

LEO

Sure, I like anything citrus flavored.

With a devious cheshire cat grin

BANTENDER

Okay, one The Surprise coming up.

Leo and Aviva wait at the bar as the Bartender prepares their drinks. Out of Leo's peripheral The Bartender opens a plastic bag that reveals pills. She opens the pills and pours the powder into Leo's drink. She hands Leo and Aviva with their drinks.

Aviva takes a large gulp of her drink and hands the bartender a fifty dollar bill.

AVIVA

Thank you.

Before Leo can take a sip

BANTENDER

Wait-

She places a lemon on Leo's drink.

LEO

Thank you!

Trying to compete with Aviva, he quickly downs his drink.

AVIVA

Whoah, I didn't take you for a hard baller.

LEO

I'm not hard...I'm a loose goose!

AVIVA

Oh you will be...

LEO

Oh nah, I'm not a lightweight...

Finishing his last sip, Leo lets out a long refreshed and satisfied sigh.

LEO

Well this has been really great, but I think I should get going. I need to get ahead on my artic-

Suddenly Leo's The Surprise finally hits him as Aviva's face morphs into the cow from Animal Farm. In his drugged state, a screen pops before Aviva that reads "Do you want to pay \$4.99 for more animal feed?" Leo clicks yes.

CUT TO:

INT. THE ABYSS NIGHTCLUB-MONTAGE

It is the party of the century. Leo having the time of his life: Breakdancing with models, throwing dollar bills at the bartenders, dancing on stage with a stripper pole, and doing shots with the bartender.

Leo is the man of the night and infamous throughout the club as he endlessly pops bottles.

CUT TO:

INT. THE ABYSS NIGHTCLUB VIP ROOM-NIGHT

The Abyss nightclub VIP room is even more elaborate than the rest of the club. Confetti explodes from the ceiling as fire displays dimly light the room.

The couches placed in the middle of the room have enough pillows to fully stock a Bed Bath & Beyond.

Leo with his shirt now around his neck, sits on a couch surrounded by models. He is completely trashed, but not in a mental state to mind.

LEO

Oh, no no no...hands down.

(beat)

Fantasia is wayyyy better than
Beyonce.

Keeping it cool while sipping his drink.

LEO

There's absolutely no comparison.

Leo and the models laugh, as they pass around bottles. The music plays and JACK CALVIN, 28 enters the room like he owns it (because he actually does-with daddy's money).

He is shorter in person-much shorter. His bald head shines like a fresh wheel of Italian cheese. He is polished in his slick black attire-like a cleaned up cast member of the Jersey Shore.

Jack Calvin's ENTOURAGE follows him as they walk with attitude to the bottle placed on the cocktail table in front of the couch Leo is seated on.

Leo's eyes widen as he realizes that Jack Calvin, the man he needs to interview is standing before him. He stands up, unable to gain his balance and quickly stumbles into Jack Calvin-spilling a cocktail on his \$600 black t-shirt.

JACK CALVIN

Are you kidding me?!

JACK CALVIN stares at his entourage for a reaction. Not realizing the situation, their reaction is delayed.

(CONTINUED)

ENTOURAGE

What the hell? Are you fucking kidding me.

Leo regains his balance; having no idea what he's done. Swaying back and forth-

LEO

Hey man, I have quishy's for you

Jack Calvin and his Entourage exchange an "ew, what is this peasant doing here" look with each other.

MIRACLE, 26 an South African, NFL linebacker reject and a member of Jack Calvin's entourage pulls him away from the group.

MIRACLE

Yo, JC this guy is seriously drugged up.

They glance over at Leo swaying back and forth.

JACK CALVIN

Let's get him out of here.

Enraged, JACK CALVIN begins to walk toward Leo, but is quickly stopped by Miracle.

MIRACLE

Nah boss, we can have some serious fun with this.

He walks over to Leo and is followed by Jack Calvin.

MIRACLE

Yo, Bob Ross you trippin'?

LEO

I'm not tripping, I'm falling.

He points at Miracle.
for you.

Leo lets out a schoolgirl giggle. Miracle and Jack Calvin stare at each other, but then chime in and laugh along.

MIRACLE

Hey man you want molly?

LEO

Nah, I'm more of a brittany fan.

MIRACLE

Not Miley. Molly, like you rollin'?

LEO

Druuuuugggggsssss? I don't do those.

Miracle whispers to Jack Calvin.

MIRACLE

We can make some serious cash, I'll give him like half we normally do...for double the price.

JACK CALVIN

No, wait. I have a better idea. I'll be right back.

Jack Calvin exists and enters the door that reads "Water Closset"

CUT TO:

INT. THE ABYSS BATHROOM-NIGHT

Jack Calvin reaches in a toiletry basket aside the sink and pulls out a green NyQuil tablet.

CUT TO:

INT. THE ABYSS NIGHTCLUB VIP ROOM-NIGHT

With the NyQuil in hand, Jack Calvin enters from the bathroom door and walks back to Leo and Miracle. Leo is hanging on to an annoyed Miracle for balance.

With slurred speech.

LEO

I'm telling you, go to your grandma's and save those YuGiOh cards...gonna be worth a fortune.

(CONTINUED)

To Leo

JACK CALVIN

Only the top of the line for my
man.

He holds up the NyQuil pill
Two thirty.

Leo sloppily hands Miracle his entire wallet in exchange for
the pill from Jack Calvin.

Leo takes the pill and hangs his arms around Miracle and
Jack Calvin.

LEO

Thanks, you guys are the best pals
I guy could ask for-

QUICK CUT TO:

EXT. NYC STREET CORNER BENCH-DAWN

Leo is snoring on the same park bench that he sat on the
night previous. He is a wreck-no shirt, missing a shoe and
lying in a pile of his own drool. He is face planted in the
bench and covered in origami and paper airplanes with his
notebook by his side.

He wakes up in a haze and unsure of his location. He sits up
and grabs his head in pain as he glances at his digital
watch that reads "9:30am, Sunday, June 6th-Reminder: Article
due 10:30am." He lets out a long sign and slowly sits up.

Leo opens his notebook to find that his pages are gone and
were ripped out to make the paper creations beside him.

CUT TO:

INT. ELEVATOR-DAY

Leo stands shirtless and with his shoe in hand aside his
extremely well dressed co-workers. He looks as if he was a
sorority girl coming from a three night stand at a frat
house.

They all try not to stare at him, but can't resist. Once the
elevator stops on the seventeenth floor, they wait and let

(CONTINUED)

him exit the elevator first.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE CUBICLE-DAY

Leo sluggishly enters his cubicle and plops at his desk. In the background, the fast paced publishing environment is shown as people race back and forth though the office.

He turns on his computer and opens his email account. He lets out a frustrated growl as he reads "you got mail." Without reading his messages he clicks "Mark all as read" and sits back in his chair.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE CUBICLE-DAY

Leo slowly opens his eyes to find TED, an attractive blonde and well groomed 37 year old shaking him awake.

TED

Leo? Leo! Wake up, it's 10am!

Slowly rubbing his eyes as he gains conciseness

LEO

I'm here, I'm here.

He sits up and looks at his surroundings.

LEO

How long was I sleeping?

TED

I don't know, I was looking at the agenda for todays staff meeting and saw you haven't submitted yet.

He glances at Leo's shirtless attire.

TED

It's not like you to hand something in thirty minutes before it's due.

(beat)

Are you okay?

(CONTINUED)

Trying to play cool.

LEO

Yeah, yeah. I'm good, just having some writers block. I don't have any notes.

TED

At this point, just scrap the idea. Write anything, we need to get to print by six.

LEO

Alright, I'll get you something.

Ted attempts to pat Leo on the back, but once realizing he shirtless touches his head instead.

TED

Great, see ya in thirty.

Ted exits the cubicle and Leo opens and stares at a blank writing document. He attempts to write, but is stuck.

Trying to procrastinate Leo goes through his phone pictures from the previous night: Leo pole dancing, Leo swinging from fabrics hanging from the ceiling, Leo breakdancing...

He scrolls through and finds several pictures of himself with Jack Calvin and Miracle. The three look like they have been lifelong best friends.

Leo click to "email" the picture and his screen reads "1 Unread message."

CUT TO:

EXT. NYC MAGAZINE STAND-DAY

The hustle and bustle of the fast-paced street remains consistent. It is revealed that Elite Magazine's cover is a picture of Leo, Jack Calvin and Miracle with the headline-Club Friendz: Broke, Drugged, and Alone by Leo Metlzer