

THE ART AND CRAFT OF ASKING YOUR BOSS FOR A RAISE

GEORGE PEREC

*An extravaganza of everyday proportions adapted by Joshua Silver from L'Art et la Manière
d'Aborder son Chef de Service Pour lui Demander une Augmentation in one act and two scenes*

CHARACTERS *In alphabetical order*

MS Y *Ms Wye, an office administration assistant*

MR X *Mr Xavier, an office line manager, the boss of TECHNICIAN*

TECHNICIAN A *technician at the office*

SCENE 1

The lights have not come up yet. TECHNICIAN is humming and typing loudly on a typewriter.

Lights up on the offices of a large corporation; it might be an ad agency or industrial corporation or some kind of private research centre. Whatever it is, there's a lab. It is 1967. TECHNICIAN sits behind a wooden desk, one that is slightly old and shabby. On the desk is a beige-grey golf-ball typewriter; a cheap porcelain ashtray; a pad of lined, legal size paper; a beige-grey metal work-lamp which is off; an inbox-outbox; and a black telephone. To TECHNICIAN's right is a metal filing cabinet on which is a pile of papers and cerlox-bound report proofs. There is a calendar hanging on the wall. There are no windows and the only light comes from the fluorescent lights in the ceiling. The walls are white. Behind the TECHNICIAN's desk is a door to another office, presumably someone important such as the Head Archivist or the Corporate Efficiency Officer or some kind of Art Director. Who knows (our TECHNICIAN sure doesn't)? Down the hall from the alcove TECHNICIAN works in, is MR X's office. This office is large and spacious with room for a large extremely fashionable executive desk on which are: a leather writing mat; a pull-off calendar on a plastic mount; an executive pen ornament of bakelite on a heavy granite base; a "manager of the year" award (a spartan in full panoply made of bronze or, more likely, some much cheaper equivalent); a crystal ashtray; an empty inbox-outbox of wood; and a metal desk sign engraved with "MR XAVIER" under which is written in smaller letters "THE BUCK STOPS

HERE." Behind the desk is a very fashionable executive desk chair. Behind the desk assemblage is a large window, blinds partly drawn. Before the desk are two other chairs. These are both lower than the desk chair and are also very chic with their bright orange upholstery. Further than these is the office door which opens onto the hall. To the right of the desk is a long wood cabinet with sliding doors above which is a large piece of abstract expressionist art which almost seems like it could be done by Juan Miro but is most certainly done to look like it could be done by Juan Miro and which Mr X insists is in fact done by Juan Miro. Mr X is not in his office. Between Mr X's office and the TECHNICIAN is Ms Y's desk. Her desk is in a slight alcove outside another office, as is our TECHNICIAN's. Beside her desk is the same type of door leading into a different office. She also has no window with light only coming from fluorescent bulbs integrated into the acoustic-tile ceiling. Her desk is of metal, grey painted, with a filing cabinet to its side. She also has a beige-grey golf-ball typewriter beside which is a ceramic ashtray with an image of Venice on it beside which is a lined pad of paper. She has piles of paper in her inbox-outbox and a telephone on the filing cabinet beside a couple cerlox-bound books and a couple memos. On the wall is a calendar too. She is not at her desk when the lights come up. The rest of the hall is full of other office doors behind which may be labs, storage closets, offices, or some other esoteric room (perhaps a room for cutting toenails, who knows in this mad world!).

TECHNICIAN is still humming and typing, typing and humming until the end of a page is reached. TECHNICIAN then stands up and quietly looks around into the hall to check if MR X is visible. MR X is not visible, so TECHNICIAN goes back to the desk and opens one of the reports strewn on the filing cabinet, flips through it a bit, then stands up again and looks into the hall. No one. Back to the desk. Beat. Then footsteps in the hall, some hope! Maybe it's MR X. TECHNICIAN quickly

stands up and rushes casually down the hall towards MR X's office, slowing down to a nonchalant pace as the office approaches.

TECHNICIAN: [under breath] Damn!

MR X's office door is ajar and there is no one inside; however, MR X's jacket and hat are hanging on his coatrack. TECHNICIAN thinks a bit, deciding to hang around in the hall for a bit just in case MR X just went to the washroom or something.

MS WYE arrives at work, takes off her jacket and hangs it over the chair back, sits down and begins to look through the papers in the inbox. Finding a good one to begin with, she sets it down and begins to copy it on her typewriter.

TECHNICIAN stands about a bit. TECHNICIAN paces. TECHNICIAN reads one of the notices on the wall of the hallway. It's something to do with an office birthday party or something.

TECHNICIAN: [reading the tiny text, quietly, bored] Come one come all to a birthday extravaganza you'll never forget...

TECHNICIAN hums a bit of a tune. TECHNICIAN decides waiting around is useless and begins to go back to the desk. TECHNICIAN spots that MS WYE is in and makes a beeline for her desk.

TECHNICIAN: Mornin' Ms Wye, has Mr X been in yet?

MS WYE: [typing not looking up] Mr X went out to the kitchen a couple minutes ago, hun. He's always bustling about here and there, always running past my desk and blowing all the papers off! But I guess you know that—

TECHNICIAN: I guess...

MS WYE: He is your boss after all and not mine. [*beat*] Though he's always so polite to me, tipping his hat on the way in and wishing me a good morning. He even nods on the way past my desk!

TECHNICIAN: That's great, but—

MS WYE: But, that reminds me that my brother George [*MS WYE pronounces it gay-org*] says, oh I don't think you've met George, he's my brother—

TECHNICIAN: Right. I don't think I've met him yet.

MS WYE: —well people say we look nearly identical though I think we're worlds apart! [*titters*] He looks more like my dad and I think I look more like my mum—

TECHNICIAN: Mhm...

TECHNICIAN rolls with the conversation, letting MS WYE talk while she types. Every time MS WYE reaches the end of a page, she changes the paper mechanically, not really looking up.

TECHNICIAN checks if MR X is approaching down the hall.

MS WYE: And everyone else says I look like my dad and George looks like my mum. But hun, I'm gonna be honest, I think it depends on who we're standing beside. Though I can't see why it matters in the least. [*shrugging while still typing as mechanically as ever*]

TECHNICIAN: It doesn't does it?

MS WYE: No, it doesn't, especially when you're only seen with them at special occasions... you know, weddings, special birthdays, the like... Speaking of birthdays, did you see who's turning forty next week?!

TECHNICIAN: I noticed a poster in the hall but didn't really...

MS WYE: Janine from C15 section! I never thought they appreciated her enough down there, after so many years she deserves a promotion!

TECHNICIAN: [*absentmindedly*] Or a raise...

MS WYE: Or a raise! But I guess she's happy where she is... And you? How's life hun? I haven't been able to catch even a sliver of chit chat with you all week!

MS WYE is still typing. TECHNICIAN looks down the hall to see if MR X is passing by again.

TECHNICIAN: Well, I've been a bit busy, you know? Mr X had me prepping abstracts all last week, then he forgot and got me indexing a new report that just came in from L42 so I was pulling a couple hours of daily overtime.

MS WYE: [*with complete sincerity, but a bit absent-mindedly*] I feel for ya hun... My heart bleeds.

TECHNICIAN: But now everything has quieted down a bit.

MS WYE: Mhm...

The sound of footsteps as Mr X passes by and into his office without a mug.

TECHNICIAN: Well, I gotta run Ms Wye. [*huffs*] Gotta get back to the grind.

MS WYE: Have a good day hun, you're always welcome 'round here!

TECHNICIAN goes to follow MR X who has already entered his office, closed the door, found that he forgot his coffee in the kitchen, and gone back out to retrieve the mug leaving the door ajar again.

TECHNICIAN bustles down to MR X's office door. TECHNICIAN stands outside for a beat, plucking up the chutzpah to knock on the door. TECHNICIAN turns around, about to leave, but turns back again. Noticing that the door is ajar and MR X is not visible inside his office, TECHNICIAN scoffs.

TECHNICIAN: [under breath] Damn!

TECHNICIAN thinks a bit, deciding to hang around in the hall for a bit just in case MR X was just out briefly to fill his coffee mug (something that would be correct) and that he would be back shortly (something that would be incorrect).

TECHNICIAN stands about a bit. TECHNICIAN paces. TECHNICIAN reads one of the notices on the wall of the hallway. It's something to do with disposal of spent typewriter ribbons.

TECHNICIAN: [quietly] All personnel will bring used typewriter ribbons to the R32 section for reuse...

TECHNICIAN hums a bit of a tune. TECHNICIAN decides waiting around is useless and begins to go back to the desk, but instead goes back to MS WYE and nonchalantly leans against one wall of the alcove zone, but MS WYE has already noticed.

MS WYE: [amused] Can't get enough of me huh?

TECHNICIAN: Oh *[laughs while searching for an excuse]* I was just about to sit down when I forgot to ask if you had an extra typewriter ribbon, *[pretending to be embarrassed]* seems like I ran out....

MS WYE: You can always count on me hun! *[opens drawer of her desk to reveal it overflowing with office supplies: typewriter ribbons, pen ink cartridges, paper clips, note pads, hi-liters, pencils and other odds and ends]*

MS WYE Digs around and grabs three. Sound of a door closing signaling that MR X has returned to his office. He does not carry a mug since he drank the coffee in the kitchen.

TECHNICIAN: Thank you so much, *[almost jokingly]* I almost had a crisis on my hands!

MS WYE: No problem! Here *[proffering them]* Take your pick, I have royal blue or black.

TECHNICIAN: *[pretending to think hard]* Hmmmmm, maybe I'll go for the royal blue and change it up a bit.

MS WYE: Here it's this one... *[giving TECHNICIAN the ribbon cartridge, then back to typing]* That all?

TECHNICIAN: That's it! See you later!

MS WYE: Later hun!

TECHNICIAN slowly walks toward MR X's office. MR X is already sitting down and reading his mail. It is mostly internal corporate memos reminding of meetings, professional development sessions, that kind of guff.

TECHNICIAN reaches the office, thinks hard. Is bugging MR X right now such a good idea? Too late now. TECHNICIAN gingerly knocks on the door. MR X does not hear the knock. TECHNICIAN knocks again slightly louder. MR X ignores the knock completely and does not look up.

TECHNICIAN shrugs and thinks for a second. Maybe Mr X is busy with someone else? Maybe he's in a meeting with his boss Mr Zemothenes? Maybe he's asserting authority?

TECHNICIAN walks back to the desk, falls into the chair, and sits there for a second arms hanging down. Then, TECHNICIAN pulls a document out of the inbox and scrutinizes it. TECHNICIAN puts it down on the desk then begins to check the typewriter: opening it up, putting in the new ribbon, looking at the golf-ball to make sure it's not worn out, looking closely at the mechanism, thinking hard.

At the same time MS WYE, thinking that nobody is looking, goes quietly down the hall to her boss' office (the office of Alex Pha) to try and ask for a raise. Her desk is left empty.

At the same time MR X, remembering that his car is double-parked, leaves his office to remedy the situation, leaving the door ajar.

TECHNICIAN begins to type but doesn't get too far before firmly deciding that Mr X is sure to be in his office now and must definitely be available to see yours truly. TECHNICIAN then stands up and marches confidently down the hall to Mr X's office and knocks with intention on thin air since MR X, as we have discussed above, is out of his office.

Of course, TECHNICIAN decides to hang around just in case MR X returns soon; however, little does TECHNICIAN know but MR X cannot find a parking spot in this mad town and is forced to park a few blocks away.

TECHNICIAN stands about a bit. TECHNICIAN paces. TECHNICIAN reads one of the notices on the wall of the hallway. It's a motivational poster of a cat.

TECHNICIAN: [reading quietly] Hang in there... pffft...

TECHNICIAN hums a bit of a tune, then decides to see if MS WYE is at her desk. TECHNICIAN walks over but finds that she is out (as we know, seeking a raise too). The only thing left to do now is for TECHNICIAN to take a shpatzir around the various hallways, byways, and other such circulations spaces the totality of which makes up the entirety of this corporation of which TECHNICIAN is a part. This TECHNICIAN does.

In the meantime, MR X has returned to his office, but leaves again after straightening the stuff on his desk and pacing a bit to attend a meeting of middle managers. He leaves his office before TECHNICIAN returns from his quick peregrination.

Upon returning to the desk, TECHNICIAN sits down in the chair again. For the sake of simplicity (we always have to keep things simple, I've only got three months to get this all together would you believe), TECHNICIAN assumes that MR X must be in his office now. Assuming this, TECHNICIAN walks down the hall to MR X's office again and sees that MR X is not occupying the extremely comfortable looking office chair that is gathering dust behind his desk.

MS WYE has, by now, returned to her desk. She is frustrated by the fact that Alex Pha was out when she went to ask for a raise. She sits down in a bit of a huff and goes back to copying.

TECHNICIAN decides, for the sake of simplicity, to hang around again. TECHNICIAN stands about a bit. TECHNICIAN paces. TECHNICIAN comes prepared this time with a report from the pile on top of the filing cabinet. This will also ensure that attention will not be drawn if another journey

through the hallways is necessary. TECHNICIAN hums a bit of a tune while reading, then decides to see if MS WYE is at her desk. TECHNICIAN walks over and finds that MS WYE is at her desk.

TECHNICIAN: Hey—

MS WYE flashes a look at TECHNICIAN that would make a thirty-ton elephant run in fear.

MS WYE: Sorry hun! Not right now!

TECHNICIAN makes a rapid exit and promenades around the various halls of the department, reports in hand looking important as though, “on a mission.”

MR X returns to his office while the whole peregrination takes place. He closes the door to his office and continues to read mail from his inbox. There are a couple pieces of paperwork to sign which he proceeds to do, reading every statement closely before signing his name with a flick of his wrist using the novelty pen on his desk.

After the jaunt, TECHNICIAN returns to the desk and puts the reports carefully back on the filing cabinet, making sure they don’t knock over any of the precarious papers piled up. TECHNICIAN is unsuccessful and the papers fall all over the place. While bending down to clean it all up, TECHNICIAN notices that MR X’s door is closed, TECHNICIAN decides now is as good a time as ever to go in to MR X’s office to ask for a raise and quickly walks over.

TECHNICIAN is right! MR X is in his office! TECHNICIAN is feeling great and raps on the door confidently.

MR X: *[looking up, a bit ticked-off that now, just as he finally has some time to get down to brass tacks and do some executive things, someone has the gall to knock on his door] Yes?!*

TECHNICIAN: [*Through the door*] Good morning Mr X! Could I have a quick word perhaps?

MR X: Who's that out there?! [*before TECHNICIAN has a chance to respond*] ergggg it doesn't matter... just... why don't you... just come back at 2:30! Right... 2:30. I'll pencil you in. [*He does not pencil TECHNICIAN in*]

TECHNICIAN: Thank you, I'll come back then. See you at 2:30!

TECHNICIAN returns to the desk a bit dejected.

TECHNICIAN: [*muttering*] Maybe... [*fumbling for the calendar, taking it off the wall*] Maybe... It's Monday today... good... good... not hump day or Friday or anything. [*looking a bit more, reading the fine print*] Damn, but its still Lent and the cafeteria's gonna have...

TECHNICIAN starts digging in the pile of papers left in the inbox.

TECHNICIAN: [*flicking each paper as their listed*] Memo, copy, copy, copy, edits, hmmmm, edits, memo, memo... aha!

TECHNICIAN has found the weekly cafeteria menu listing.

TECHNICIAN: [*still muttering*] Ok, so we have some kind of quiche... eggs, so no chance of any swallowed bones or anything... So, should be all good to see Mr X later...

TECHNICIAN taps a foot while thinking. Then looks at the wristwatch. At this point MS WYE and MR X both also check the time and find that it is time for lunch. Mr X leaves first toward the executive lunchroom while MS WYE and TECHNICIAN take a bit longer and leave to the general employees' cafeteria.

Exunt.

Time passes on stage.

MR X is the first to return from lunch. He is feeling fine since the eggs in the quiche were definitely not off. He slides his window open upon entering his office and sits back down in his chair and slaps a large sheaf of report abstracts onto his desk. He begins to leaf through them absentmindedly.

MS WYE returns next and goes back to typing.

TECHNICIAN comes back in with full knowledge that the eggs were totally ok which means the all-clear to see MR X at 2:30 which is rapidly approaching. To TECHNICIAN, however, the time is passing at a snail's pace. TECHNICIAN goes back to typing, then starts humming the same song as before first a bit quietly, then at an increasing volume. As the volume reaches a pinnacle, banging is heard from behind the office door within the alcove. TECHNICIAN quickly quiets down and stops typing, broken from the trance of humming and writing. TECHNICIAN looks at the time. It's 2:25. Five more minutes.

Meanwhile MS WYE has left her desk to deliver a set of completed typescripts. Meanwhile MR X is in his office reading the newspaper.

TECHNICIAN tries to kill a bit of time without starting a new task per se. TECHNICIAN pulls a bundle of envelopes out of the drawer and starts filing completed copies into the envelopes, checking the time every couple seconds. Finally, TECHNICIAN is fed up with waiting since it is now 2:29.

TECHNICIAN stands up and goes over to MR X's office, sees that the door is closed (a sure fire way of knowing MR X is in) and knocks on it with vigour, ready to explain the situation. MR X does not look up, annoyed by the fact that someone is interfering in his enjoyment of the newspaper.

TECHNICIAN decides that MR X must be on the phone or something and decides to wait a couple minutes.

MS WYE is still making her deliveries leaving her desk empty.

TECHNICIAN goes back to the desk sits down, but then thinks the better of waiting, and tramps back to MR X's door.

TECHNICIAN knocks again with feeling.

No response. MR X is still engrossed and looks even more annoyed than before.

TECHNICIAN knocks again just in case MR X didn't hear.

MR X doesn't look up

MR X: Who the hell... [rumples newspaper]...errgggg

TECHNICIAN takes a second before knocking again even louder this time.

TECHNICIAN: [yelling] Sorry to bother you Mr X! But you asked me to come to your office at 2:30 and it's now [checks watch] 2:35! Do you have minute? It's completely fine if you don't right now, I'll just come back later maybe. Or we can schedule a meeting even?

MR X, startled hides his newspaper under his desk, hoping that the person knocking isn't Mr Zemothenes or someone even higher up on the managerial ladder like Mr O'Mega or something. If that were the case, his potential for a raise would be rock bottom.

MR X: *[bellowing through the door]* 2:30?! Two.... Oh just Go away! Haven't I made it perfectly clear that I'm busy?! *[beat]* That's a rhetorical question, don't bother answering. Yea.... Yea... come back later. When I'm less busy!

TECHNICIAN: Oh... I'll do that... *[louder]* Sorry to bother you!

TECHNICIAN walks dejected back to the desk.

MS WYE returns to her desk too. She has found, however, that the combination of lunch, the excessive amount of coffee consumed that day, and the long shpatzir around the various departments which make up this organization has left her with an upset stomach.

TECHNICIAN huffs and decides to go grab a coffee.

MR X's phone rings.

MR X: Hello, Xavier speaking! *[someone blathering on the other end]* What do you mean the A14 is out of date? *[someone blathers again for a bit]* Uh huh.... Yea.... Well why don't you send it over to them? *[more talking]*... No, I haven't a clue.... Uh huh... *[more talking, pleading perhaps]*... Well you're going to have to deal with it, cause I'm *[looks toward the newspaper crumpled on the floor and tries to grab it again]* extremely busy right now, you know... And it was you who got yourselves into this whole mess so... *[More talking]*... Oh Mr Zemothenes is with you? *[beat]* Tell him... No!... I'll be right with you, just gimme 30 seconds.

MR X slams the phone down in its cradle and storms out of his office, leaving the door ajar.

TECHNICIAN returns to the desk after MR X has stormed out missing him completely.

TECHNICIAN carries a generic coffee mug and a folded newspaper with the crossword printed thereon.

TECHNICIAN lays the coffee on the desk and decides its time to try MR X again. TECHNICIAN saunters casually down the hall with the crossword, notices MR X's door is ajar and (for the sake of simplicity) thinks it best to wait a second.

TECHNICIAN stands about a bit. TECHNICIAN paces. TECHNICIAN hums a bit of a tune while thinking about crossword answers.

TECHNICIAN: [under breath] "Love for strangelove"... "Love for Strangelove..." hmmmmmm...

TECHNICIAN decides to see if MS WYE is at her desk. TECHNICIAN walks over and finds that MS WYE is at her desk.

MS WYE: [slightly uncomfortably] Hi hun, is it just me or were those eggs in the quiche a bit off?

TECHNICIAN: [a bit worried, voice shaking a bit] Uhhhhh, well I feel ok... They didn't taste fishy or anything.

MS WYE: Maybe all this coming and going and going and coming gave my stomach a bit of a knot... [pained] Maybe its too much coffee...

MS WYE starts to stand up and go down the hall.

MS WYE: [tapping technician on the shoulder] I'll talk to ya later hun...

TECHNICIAN: [tsk] Hope you feel better! [exhale, seems like it wasn't the eggs]

TECHNICIAN decides that it's a perfect time to take a peregrination through the various departments which together constitute the organization that is here now within this building.

TECHNICIAN passes by the desk on the way to pick up a random sheaf of papers to make everything seem legit and takes the walk around.

Meanwhile, MR X returns to his office and closes the door. He opens the newspaper again and keeps reading, now with his feet up on the desk.

TECHNICIAN returns from the walk, places the papers down on the desk and decides that now would be a perfect time to see if MR X is back in his office. TECHNICIAN doesn't bother sitting down, but instead floats the rest of the way to MR X's office.

TECHNICIAN knocks on the door.

MR X: [fumbling with the newspaper, stuffing it into a drawer and removing his feet from the table] Yes? Come in!

TECHNICIAN opens the door.

MR X: Ah! It's you! [gesturing to a chair] Take a seat why don't you!

TECHNICIAN takes a seat and relaxes.

MR X: So, what can I help you with? Always here to help.

TECHNICIAN: Well, you see...

MR X: Yes...

TECHNICIAN: Well, right now it seems to me—

MR X: Yes.

TECHNICIAN: —that I make around 750 franks give or take.

MR X: I see.

TECHNICIAN: And, it seems that, this very month wouldn't you know, the price of food went up by a couple percent give or take.

MR X: And?

TECHNICIAN: Well, I would like to be making 7,500 franks but I'm sure you would say that's—

MR X: Entirely out of the question!

TECHNICIAN: Right. So, Instead I'm asking for a compromise of 785.

MR X: Uh huh.

TECHNICIAN: With, an annual bonus pegged at the equivalent of 40 business days, you know... to compensate for inflation and all that.

MR X: Yes.

TECHNICIAN: And, yah...

MR X: Well [*standing up, annoyed that he has to deal with this and trying to find a way to pass the buck*] you sure that's not a T60 issue? It sure sounds like a T60 issue to me. Most definitely something for the AD4 section. And not for me.

TECHNICIAN: [*lying*] You know, I talked to the people at the T60 office and they said I should come see you.

MR X: Oh. Well... [*grunting a bit*] Remind me what project you're assigned to?

TECHNICIAN: Well nothing as such right now... [*before MR X can say anything*] But I have this idea!

MR X: [*annoyed, sitting back down*] Go on.

TECHNICIAN: Well, I have this idea...

MR X: Yes...

TECHNICIAN: I have this idea that... Let me start from the beginning. This office uses quite a bit of tape, you know... to close envelopes, to stick this to that, and whatnot. And that takes up 0.003 percent of all corporate expenditures. Do you have a pen?

MR X: Oh! Right! [*pushing the pen stand thing and the pad towards TECHNICIAN*] Here!

TECHNICIAN [*writing while talking*] So, that's 0.003 of, what, 12 billion franks, and that makes that [*writing*]. And if we take this into account and apply the Alfredson Transform we get this... [*writing*] So, right now, our tape usage is like this [*writing*].

MR X: Mhmmm...

TECHNICIAN: And with a movement towards an, albeit more expensive tape dispenser, we can make our capital expenditure look like this [*drawing*]. Over only six months or so if we do this! [*drawing then making a hard period on the page*]

MR X: [*not convinced*] You know, I'm not entirely convinced. But, leave this paper with me. I'll look into it, cross-reference the maths, maybe send the idea up the managerial ladder, get a few big wigs taking a look... know what I mean?

TECHNICIAN: Great! I'll just come back later and see what you think.

MR X: Yes, of course. Come back anytime! [Getting up and *ushering TECHNICIAN out the door*] Great talking to you. [*lying ironically*] My door is always open!

TECHNICIAN: Yes, have a great day!

MR X closes the door quickly behind TECHNICIAN, walks slowly over to his desk, looks again at the writing on the pad, scoffs, crumples it up and throws it straight into the bin.

TECHNICIAN walks back to the desk.

While that was happening, MS WYE has returned to her desk with a glass of water and looks better though still a bit grumpy. She goes back to work.

TECHNICIAN decides now is the perfect time to flesh out the tape dispenser idea so that MR X will be blown off his feet when you next see him. So, TECHNICIAN pulls a pad over and starts to do sums, all the while muttering.

MR X picks up the phone and dials in the code for his friend, another line manager in the A14 section of the complaints department, Mr Rho. He keeps having to go through layers of extensions and keeps having to dial in various numbers.

MR X: Hello? Operator? Can you connect me with Mr Rho? [*voices on the other end*] Yes, he's in the A14 section. [*beat*] Correct, the complaints department. [*beat*] Correct... Yah... [*voices*]

There's two Mr Rhos? *[beat]* I do know his extension code. *[beat]* Right. Get ready, It's one... eight... S as in Sierra...H as in Hotel...M as in Mike...U as in Uniform... C as in Charlie... K as in Kilo. Got it? That's *[spells out]* 18SHMUCK. *[beat]* Perfect!

MR X waits while hold music plays. It's some bad period muzak. The audience should be able to hear its reediness through the phone.

TECHNICIAN has stopped doing sums and begins to type up the idea frantically, writing as quickly as possible and intently hunching over the typewriter.

MS WYE has left to go and get another glass of water.

Muzak stops

MR X: Hello? Mr Rho is unavailable? *[to himself]* Dammit... *[into the phone]* Guess I'll call him later. Thank you. *[Hangs up]*

MR X stands up, stretches, picks up a sheaf of paper, and goes off to see if Mr Zemothenes is available to read his report on lowering corporate spending through replacing paperclips with staples.

Now finished typing up a brief abstract of the idea complete with the general math necessary to prove the point, TECHNICIAN collects the document and goes to see if MR X is in to ask for a raise. Now is as good a time as any!

TECHNICIAN, upon arriving at MR X's office finds that he is not in and decides to hang around (for the sake of simplicity, for we must always be trying to keep things as simple as possible.)

TECHNICIAN stands about a bit. TECHNICIAN paces. TECHNICIAN hums a bit of a tune while looking over the report, then decides to see if MS WYE is in for a bit of a chat.

MS WYE is not in since she has gone to get a glass of water, so TECHNICIAN decides to take a quick shpatzir around the various departments of which this organization has many and in which TECHNICIAN is but a single piece.

MS WYE returns with her water just after TECHNICIAN has left.

MR X does not return yet.

TECHNICIAN returns from his peregrination and decides to see if MR X is in before returning to the desk.

MR X is not in, once again so TECHNICIAN decides to hang around again just in case.

TECHNICIAN stands about a bit. TECHNICIAN paces. TECHNICIAN hums a bit of a tune, then decides to see if MS WYE is in for a bit of a chat.

TECHNICIAN walks over to MS WYE's desk and leans nonchalantly against the wall.

MS WYE: *[before TECHNICIAN can start to say hi, in a very stressed tone, and while typing]* Sorry hun! After all today's excitement I'm a bit behind. Though I feel much better now, I'm definitely known to get a bit of a queeze from too much coffee in the morning and not enough water, don't worry I've gotten that for years! *[chuckles]* And it still freaks me out after so long... But would you look at me, I'm babbling again! Better be getting back to work!

TECHNICIAN: Definitely, I'll leave you to that and good luck!

MS WYE gives a stressed smile and goes back to speed-typing.

TECHNICIAN decides to do another lap of the various departments and starts on the way.

Just as TECHNICIAN turns to leave, and unnoticed, MR X returns to his office. He sits down, leans back, then remembers the newspaper he shoved in the desk drawer. He retrieves it, lays the crumpled mass on his desk and tries to flatten it out first with the heavy pen holder, then with the bronze award. Failing both times, he decides to just read it as-is and pages through to the right section.

MS WYE is still working, typing, changing pages as needed, going from one document to another.

TECHNICIAN returns from the quick lap and finds that MR X's door is now closed, marking the fact that he is in! The perfect chance! It's nearly the end of the day and TECHNICIAN needs to catch MR X before he leaves.

TECHNICIAN knocks on the door.

MR X: [immediately and not looking up] Go away!!

TECHNICIAN is taken aback slinks back to the desk. Technician sits down, looks at the time and sees that it's nearly time to leave for the day. TECHNICIAN starts to pack up the briefcase with documents to read and such, orders the desk space, puts on outerwear and whatnot.

MS WYE is finishing up the documents and is now packing them into envelopes, then deposits them in the outbox for the internal mail service.

MR X checks the time; sees that it is time to be going; puts on his hat and coat; gathers his briefcase and stuffs the newspaper inside; then leaves the premises quickly.

Exit MR X.

TECHNICIAN decides to check one more time to see if MR X is in.

TECHNICIAN goes to MR X's office and finds the door ajar. TECHNICIAN hangs around for a second, then looks inside the room and notices that the jacket and hat are gone.

TECHNICIAN goes over to MS WYE who is getting ready to leave herself.

TECHNICIAN: Has Mr Xavier left yet?

MS WYE: I didn't see him leave, but [*beat while she checks the time*] I think he's usually out by now but you know hun, he's always coming and going, going and coming and as soon as I need to give him fresh copies! But I can't be bothered today... It's his own fault you know.

TECHNICIAN: I guess I'll try and find him tomorrow then.

MS WYE: [*ready to go, checking watch*] Well hun... Oh my! I'm a bit late! See you tomorrow!

TECHNICIAN: See ya!

Exunt TECHNICIAN and MS WYE.

Lights down

SCENE 2

Lights up on the same scene except it is Friday. The personal effects and work materiel of the three characters has not yet been set out on their desks since it was all stored before leaving. There is no one on the set when the lights come up.

Enter MS WYE. She is not in a good mood due to the lack of morning coffee and a pretty rough commute. MS WYE Sits down and starts organizing her desk.

Enter TECHNICIAN who comes in from the other direction, not passing MR X's office nor MS WYE's alcove.

TECHNICIAN sets down the briefcase, takes off both coat and hat, then proceeds to MS WYE's desk.

TECHNICIAN: Morning Ms Wye, has MR X come in yet?

MS WYE: [*tired glare*] Coffee first, hun...

TECHNICIAN: You walk by his desk on the way—

MS WYE: Coffee first, hun!

TECHNICIAN stands stunned for a sec as MS WYE bustles around him to the kitchen.

TECHNICIAN decides to get ready for work, then take a quick walk around the lab to collect the work material for the day.

This TECHNICIAN does, setting everything up quickly, grabbing a leather folder and taking a quick shpatzir.

ENTER MR X while TECHNICIAN is doing the peregrination. He enters his office, flings his hat onto the hat stand and hangs his coat below.

MR X straightens the stuff on his desk before sitting down and removing a pulpy sci-fi novel from one of the desk drawers. Its title is something menacing like Invaders from the Second Dimension or something. He also removes a large bundle of mail from his briefcase and lays it out on the desk. He begins to sort the letters based on size and importance.

TECHNICIAN returns from a lap of the departments which presently, here and now, concurrently make-up the organization which TECHNICIAN currently is a cog within.

MS WYE returns with a coffee, still looking a bit groggy.

TECHNICIAN returns to the desk and removes the sheaf of papers from the leather folder, placing them in the inbox. The outbox is currently empty.

MR X is finished sorting the mail and opens up the first letter, the smallest. It is a wedding invitation.

MS WYE sets the first document of the day and begins typing with intermittent sips of coffee.

TECHNICIAN decides that MR X must be in his office by now and that it would perfect to slip by and ask for a raise.

TECHNICIAN stands up and goes quietly over to MR X's office. The door us closed so he must be in!

TECHNICIAN knocks.

MR X: *[looking up, bellowing through the door]* Who's that!?

TECHNICIAN: Good morning Mr Xavier! We talked a couple weeks ago about my tape dispenser plan?

MR X: Oh! It's you. Come back at 2:30, I'm busy right now. *[gruffly, tearing open the next letter]*
Yes, quite busy.

TECHNICIAN does not respond but goes back to the desk, hopeful that at 2:30 a raise will finally be forthcoming.

TECHNICIAN sits down, taking the calendar off the wall.

TECHNICIAN: *[muttering]* Let's see... Friday, so Mr X might be a bit more pliant... But let's see...

TECHNICIAN digs in the pile of papers on the filing cabinet, then remembers that the cafeteria menu is in the briefcase. TECHNICIAN retrieves it.

TECHNICIAN: *[muttering]* So today is... Eggplant parmesan with rice pilaf. Seems ok to me. No fish, so no possibility of choking and no egg so no possibility of food poisoning so I think we're all good.

TECHNICIAN sets up and starts to work.

It is lunch and ALL file out, MR X first to the executive lunchroom while TECHNICIAN and MS WYE go toward the cafeteria.

TIME PASSES

MS WYE and TECHNICIAN are the first back in. They enter together in conversation.

MS WYE: ...but he insists it's a real Miro and when I told George, my brother, he's older than me by a couple years but we're thick as thieves even so [*laughing*] anyways, George was most skeptical so when Mr X was out of the office, he is out of the office a lot don't you think hun?

TECHNICIAN: Yea...

MS WYE: Always going to see Mr Z or puttering about with papers... [*beat before getting back to it*] So, I stole in and took a good look at that painting and of course it was signed in the bottom corner—

TECHNICIAN: Mhm...

MS WYE: —And I looked closer and squinted so I could read it better, you know I'm a bit farsighted, the eye-doctor said its not bad but I got glasses anyway and the difference [*touches TECHNICIAN's arm as though telling a secret*] incredible hun, it felt like someone squeegeed my eyes. [*sigh*]

TECHNICIAN and MS WYE have now reached her desk. MS WYE sits down and continues.

MS WYE: Anyways, I read the name and it seemed to me to say "Jean Mira" and I said, to myself of course, "Jean Mira? Who the hell is that?!" And I told George and he got a kick outa that one [*laughing, petering off*]

TECHNICIAN: [*laughing*] I wonder if he knows? [*calming down*] Well, better get back at it!

MS WYE: Yep, back to the ol' grind! Bye!

TECHNICIAN: Later!

MR X enters and goes back to his office, returning to the mail.

TECHNICIAN goes back to the desk, sits down and puts in some good work. TECHNICIAN types up an abstract that has been corrected by someone with extremely illegible writing.

TECHNICIAN: [*under breath, reading along to keep track of the chicken scratch*] Ok, this one's... Inhibition and superactivation... ie195-1 dimersdimers... got it, that hasn't changed. [*title typed in*] Ok. [*reading along*] "It was show previously that chronic exposure to [*beat to try and decipher writing*] opiate organists... [*quieter*] opiate organists, opiate organism? Aping organisms? Opiate.... Oh, got it! [*returns to writing*] opiate agonists increases adenylyl cyclase (AC) activity, a phenomenon termed... [*peters off, grumbling*]

TECHNICIAN finishes the quick abstract with a couple more stops. Then removes it from the machine and places it into the outbox. TECHNICIAN checks the time. It is 2:30 and MR X is probably waiting for you.

MS WYE's phone rings.

MS WYE: Hello... [*speaking*] Yes, I'll be right over... Perfect... Bye. [*hangs up*]

MS WYE picks up a leather file folder and leaves to collect the documents.

MR X's phone rings.

MR X: [*picking up the receiver*] Hello, Xavier speaking. [*blathering on the other end*] Yes, I know my car is double parked. [*more blathering*] Do you KNOW who you're talking to? [*beat*] Oh, you do... Well, I can't move it until 5:00. [*speaking*] Yes, I understand perfectly that it won't matter a toss at that point whether it's double parked or not. [*more stuff on the other end*] Oh... Oh...

Wait... Mr Zemothenes said... He's with you now? [*beat, now in an extremely honey voice*]
Well, I'll just go ahead and move it right away! Sorry to trouble you and all that. [*beat*] good
bye.... Good bye.... Bye. [*hangs up the phone and grabs his coat but not hat*]

MR X leaves the office to move his car.

TECHNICIAN stands up to go to see MR X, but the door is ajar and MR X is not in.

TECHNICIAN: [muttering] Probably just moving his car...

TECHNICIAN decides to hang around again just in case.

TECHNICIAN stands about a bit. TECHNICIAN paces. TECHNICIAN hums a bit of a tune.

TECHNICIAN goes over to the hallway's wall and reads a notice about intramural sports.

TECHNICIAN then decides to see if MS WYE is in for a bit of a chat.

*TECHNICIAN goes over to MS WYE's desk. She's not there, so TECHNICIAN decides to make a
quick lap of the department, though not every single department in the entire organization, in
hopes that someone will show up sooner rather than later.*

*MR X returns while the lap is happening. He takes off his jacket and hangs it on the coatrack
then sits back down in his desk chair. He wheels around to look out the window, then turns back.
He goes back to opening mail.*

*TECHNICIAN returns via the direction of MR X's office to find the door is closed and MR X is most
likely in his office.*

TECHNICIAN awkwardly stands outside thinking whether or not it's a good idea to knock, then knocks.

MR X does not notice at all and doesn't even look up from what he's doing.

TECHNICIAN thinks again, looks down the hall to see if MS WYE is in for moral support. She is not of course.

TECHNICIAN knocks again, a bit louder this time.

MR X hears this time but ignores the knocking.

TECHNICIAN goes back toward the desk but decides halfway there that the knocking wasn't nearly loud enough to attract the attention of such a seasoned executive as MR X. TECHNICIAN returns to the door and knocks on it hard this time.

MR X: *[annoyed]* Errggg... What is it!? Mr Zemothenes?

TECHNICIAN: No... You asked me to come to your office after our quick chat this morning. So *[beat]* here I am!

MR X: *[disappointed]* Oh, it's you again. Well, you caught me at a bad time, come back at 2:30 why don't you.

TECHNICIAN: But Mr X, it *[checks watch]* already is —

MR X: Well come back later!

TECHNICIAN: *[quieter]* —2:30...

TECHNICIAN slinks back to the desk.

MS WYE returns to her desk with a bulging file folder full of papers. She deposits them in her inbox and places the folder on the filing cabinet. She then sits down and gets back to work to try and make a dent in the large pile. She is, however, in a good mood.

TECHNICIAN sits down and starts work again.

MR X picks up the phone and dials in a code. MR X waits while the phone rings on the other end.

MR X: Hi, it's Mr Xavier calling from— *[interrupted]* Yes that's Xavier... X... A... V... yes, you got it... Great. I'm calling from the C25 department, can you connect me with Mr Zemothenes?

[beat] What?... Spell it?... Ok... Z, E, M, O, T, H— *[talking on the other end]* Great, right, got it...

[talking] He's not in? *[blather]* Where?... Business lunch with who? *[explanation]* Alex Pha?

Never heard of— I guess you'd better call me when Mr Zemothenes returns to the office.

Thanks... Bye... Bye...

MR X hangs up, then stands up, slaps his thighs and decides to go see if the report on the phone was true.

MR X leaves his office.

TECHNICIAN decides that the time for waiting is over, checks the time, stands up and looks down the hall. Now is the time.

TECHNICIAN goes to see MR X, walking past MS WYE who is in and humming a little while typing.

MR X is not in and the door to his office is left ajar.

TECHNICIAN decides, for the sake of simplicity to hang around again.

TECHNICIAN stands about a bit. TECHNICIAN paces. TECHNICIAN hums a bit of a tune.

TECHNICIAN goes over to the hallway's wall and reads a notice about lab safety protocols.

TECHNICIAN: [*quietly*] D-glyceraldehyde 3-phosphate is a reactive organo-catalyst and must always be left in marked bottles...

TECHNICIAN then decides to see if MS WYE is in for a bit of a chat.

MS WYE is in and in a good mood!

TECHNICIAN comes by and leans on the alcove wall.

MS WYE: Hi hun! What's new?

TECHNICIAN: Not much just taking a bit of a break [*stretches back*], my back's been a bit tight...

MS WYE: [*still typing*] I really sympathise hun, my back was horrible for years so I went to my doctor and said, "you know doc, my back is killing me!" and then he gave me this paper with stretches on it and said I should do it once in the morning and once before bed and since then my back's been a dream [*titters*], no problems at all, although I did get a new mattress recently and you know what they say about a good mattress—

TECHNICIAN: No, what do they— [*a bit antsy, looks down into the hall to see if Mr X is there*]

MS WYE: [*still typing*]—the mattress is the most important thing so splurge on it! So, I got this new mattress, then I got a new pillow and that did wonders for my sleep, hun. It's one of those

newfangled ones made of foam, nice and stiff, but that's just me... [*looking over to TECHNICIAN and stopping typing*] When was the last time you got a new pillow?

TECHNICIAN: Well, I'm not sure how long— [*technician looks down the hall again and spots MR X going to his office*]

MS WYE: You should get one! It did wonders hun!

TECHNICIAN: [*antsy, trying to find a way to end the conversation*] I'll look into it... Sorry, Ms Wye, I gotta go.

MS WYE: It's ok hun, we always gotta be somewhere!

MS WYE gets back to work.

TECHNICIAN makes a sprint and gets to MR X's office right when he returns and closes the door.

TECHNICIAN decides to wait a bit for MR X to get comfortable.

MR X gets comfortable.

TECHNICIAN knocks on the door.

MR X looks up.

MR X: Come in!

TECHNICIAN enters.

MR X: Ah! [*laying it on thick*] Just the guy I want to see right now! How are ya doing?

TECHNICIAN: Great! Yourself?

MR X: Well, there's this terrible bout of Measles going around, and my daughter seems to have caught it.

TECHNICIAN looks visibly worried at this news.

MR X: Oh! But don't be worried! I'm completely healthy and she is recovering.

TECHNICIAN relaxes.

MR X: But, I forgot my manners! Do take a seat!

TECHNICIAN sits down, relieved it was all a misunderstanding.

MR X: So, what can I do for you?

TECHNICIAN decides that this time a direct approach might not be the best one and goes for a it of a different bent.

TECHNICIAN: Well, let me see how to put this... [*beat to think*] It seems to me that our department is an incredibly important piece of this organization, wouldn't you agree?

MR X: Yes, and?

TECHNICIAN: And I think we both agree that good work, work which benefits the organization, should be rewarded in turn.

MR X: Yes...

TECHNICIAN: For instance, someone with such lofty stature as yourself, a real pillar of the community, should know that appreciated employees are productive employees.

MR X sits up straighter as though to fully register the fact that he feels like an absolute Olympian god in the face of such ego stroking.

MR X: Yes...

TECHNICIAN: And perhaps someone, someone who has just last week come up with an idea that could reduce corporate expenditures through the use of an electric tape dispenser...

MR X: *[excitedly, perhaps this technician will put in a good word to Mr Z]* Get to the point...

TECHNICIAN: Perhaps someone, such as myself, *[MR X's face falls]* has an imbalance in their reimbursement for such an idea.

MR X: *[grunting a bit, looking dour]* I see, this makes so much sense. I thought you were talking about a raise!

TECHNICIAN: But—

MR X: *[slowly thinking, then starting to smile again]* I see now that this is all just a misunderstanding, most definitely a T60 issue.

TECHNICIAN: But—

MR X: Either that or a U120 issue of some sort. *[beat]* You'll have to ask the AD4 section, this is outside of my jurisdiction.

TECHNICIAN: But—

MR X: No buts! I'm really sorry, but there's nothing I can do on my end. [*MR X stands up and draws TECHNICIAN out of the office*] Hope this helps! Good day! Come back if you have any issues!

MR X slams the door behind him then goes back to his desk beaming. He successfully avoided another problem!

TECHNICIAN stands outside of MR X's office briefly, then slowly plods back to the desk.

TECHNICIAN sits down and pulls a large cerlox bound directory out of the filing cabinet.

TECHNICIAN frantically flips through the pages.

TECHNICIAN: Let's see, AD4... AD4... Aha!

A look of disappointment fills TECHNICIAN's face as it is revealed that there is no location listed for the AD4 section and, in fact, no information beyond the fact that it exists.

TECHNICIAN stands up and goes over to MS WYE to see if she knows.

MS WYE: What now hun?

TECHNICIAN: Do you have any clue where the AD4 section is?

MS WYE: The AD4 section? That's a new one!

TECHNICIAN: What about a T60?

MS WYE: T60? Haven't heard of that either. Is that some kind of form or something? [*beat, looking over to TECHNICIAN*] Are you pulling my leg?

TECHNICIAN: No, but Mr X just sent me to look into it and I thought you—

MS WYE: Ha! Not me hun! *[laughing]* Must be a joke from those upper-ups in CA99. They've got a real joker up there... he's always circulating gag memos... whoopie cushions... juvenile, if you ask me, but then again, I've always thought that humour a bit crude.

TECHNICIAN: I see. I guess I'll go and ask around a bit, see if I can find anything out. What was that section again?

MS WYE: Which one?

TECHNICIAN: That one *[gesturing]*... With the...

MS WYE: Oh! Its CA99... But that's contract administration and, hun, they're a real intense bunch.

TECHNICIAN: I'll be careful, see you!

MS WYE: Bye!

TECHNICIAN leaves and makes a lap of the offices looking for the AD4 section.

MR X, at this time remains in his office. He has finished reading all the mail and pulls out his secret Sci-Fi novel. He puts up his feet on the desk and begins to read.

MS WYE leaves her desk at this time to grab a glass of water.

TECHNICIAN returns to MR X's office after failing to find the AD4 section.

TECHNICIAN knocks on MR X's closed door.

MR X: Yes? [*quickly throwing the book in a desk drawer*]

TECHNICIAN: It's me again, I've had a few problems...

MR X: Ok, come inside and tell me what the issue is.

TECHNICIAN enters.

MR X: So?

TECHNICIAN: Well, I couldn't find the exact office that deals with T60 issues, and that got me thinking that you were right, I am really here to ask for a—

MR X: Oh you should have asked in the first place! Here's how to get to AD4! Just follow these directions and your problems will be over.

TECHNICIAN: But that's not—

MR X: Ok, so, [*as quickly as possible*] you go out then right then left to the elevator then you go down four floors and right past corporate then left right and another left where the washroom is then you make three lefts in rapid succession, got it?

TECHNICIAN: Uhhh...

MR X: Good, cause then you have to make two rights through legal, if anyone asks I sent you through here, and if they say, "what are you doing here?" then you might have to go around and make one left and three rights, or was that one right and three lefts, but anyways once you get past the legal eagles and law lizards you have to make three rights and then now it gets

tricky cause you have to avoid the lab since The Professor hates it when people from our section disturb his experiments...

TECHNICIAN: But—

MR X: You gotta be attentive here, come on! Come on! Stay with me! So you have to look beside the big blackboard outside cause there's a storage closet with a through-path, so go through there and you have to be careful cause it's The Professor's storage closet and he might get mad and complain to Mr Zemothenes and we don't want that do we? [*TECHNICIAN tries to say something but it cut off*] and make a right a left and a right and blammo! You're there at the AD4 section.

TECHNICIAN: [*head spinning*] But—

MR X: No buts! Now go forth! [*MR X pushes TECHNICIAN out the door*]

TECHNICIAN stands dejectedly outside and decides that maybe the instructions were at least half-intelligible. TECHNICIAN heads off for a schpatzir around the various departments which make up the entirety of the organization.

MS WYE returns and sits down at her desk and gets back to work.

MR X decides to pick up the phone and see if he can get a hold of MR Zemothenes and ask for a raise. MR X dials the number.

MR X: Hello? Can you connect me with Mr Zemothenes? [*beat*] Yes... [*beat*] He's in? Perfect.

MR X waits a bit on hold, hold music plays. Hold music stops.

MR X: Hello, Mr Zemothenes, Xavier here! [*Mr Z talking, the audience can't hear this*] I'm doing great but I've got a bit of an issue here, maybe something you can help out with. [*MR X puts his feet up on his desk while Mr Z talks*]

TECHNICIAN returns at this point having not found the AD4 section and visibly shaken from being yelled at by The Professor.

TECHNICIAN decides to knock on MR X's door again and see if he can clarify.

TECHNICIAN knocks.

MR X does not respond since he is on the phone.

MR X: Well, it seems as though my bonus, which usually comes in around this time, was a little bit thin this year. I was hoping you could rectify that and maybe add an increase in salary to the deal? [*talking*]

TECHNICIAN tries again, a bit louder this time.

MR X is still on the phone.

MR X: Oh, uhhhh, I haven't a clue what a U120 is. [*beat*] Is that a bit like a T60? [*beat*] No? I guess I'd better go look into that. Thanks. Goodbye Mr Z... Bye...

MR X hangs up the phone and takes his feet off the desk. He is frustrated and goes to straightening the stuff on the desk.

TECHNICIAN knocks even louder this time.

MR X is nearly finished straightening everything, huffing.

MR X: *[muttering]* The infernal knocking... One minute, one minute...

TECHNICIAN tries one last time and knocks.

MR X: *[bellowing]* Ok! Ok! Ok! Come back later! I'm busy! Come back at 2:30!

TECHNICIAN waits a second, checks the time.

TECHNICIAN: But, it's nearly 5:00!

MR X: Well, come back tomorrow at 2:30!

In light of the time, TECHNICIAN returns to the desk and begins to pack up. MS WYE also begins to pack up.

MR X packs up quickly so as to avoid any other annoying interventions and quietly steals out of the building.

TECHNICIAN finishes packing and goes toward MR X's office to see if he can be caught on the way out.

MS WYE: He already left, you just missed him hun.

TECHNICIAN: Damn!

MS WYE: *[shrugging]* There's always tomorrow...

TECHNICIAN: I guess there is...

Exunt TECHNICIAN and MS WYE together. TECHNICIAN is humming the same tune from the beginning.

Lights down on the empty office.

FIN