

Great. TUCKER

Silence.

NEIL
(blurts it out)
You want to go someplace?

What was that, Neil? TUCKER

Forget it. NEIL

TUCKER
"You want to go someplace?" What's going on here?

NEIL
Oh, I was just thinking we could, you know, sort of go
someplace. Or not.

Am I in trouble? TUCKER

I guess you can't ever rule that out. NEIL

TUCKER
I thought you might be the guy they sent to whack me. My
numbers are down.

NEIL
Everybody's numbers are down.

Really? TUCKER

NEIL
My own numbers are way in the toilet. If I cared, it would
be truly embarrassing.

TUCKER
Excellent. I mean if everybody's numbers are down then no
one's down.

NEIL
That's our safety net. That's what gives us strength.

TUCKER
Thanks for telling me, Neil. I thought this was it.

2/4

TUCKER

"THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS"



3/4

TUCKER

"THE RESULT OF HAPPINESS"

NEIL

That day will surely come, but not today.

TUCKER is ready to go.

TUCKER

So, I guess I'll see you tomorrow.

NEIL

Right-o.

(beat)

I just wanted to talk.

TUCKER

Are you in trouble, Neil?

NEIL

Why would you think that?

TUCKER

You have a ghostly pallor.

NEIL

I don't get any feeling in my extremities until I'm home.

TUCKER

This office is like an experiment in cryogenics. So what's on your mind?

NEIL

I don't want to talk here. I keep losing my breath. I'm going to die in here.

TUCKER

We're all going to die in here.

NEIL

I used to think it was the lights or something invisible shooting in through the vents, but it's not that simple.

TUCKER

It's a combination of psychological warfare, emotional abuse, sensory deprivation, and bad coffee. Where would you like to talk?

NEIL

I'm fond of pretty much any place that isn't here.

TUCKER

You're just talking about talking, right, Neil? I mean just...talking. You know what I'm saying.



NEIL

I don't really know you, Tucker. I've been passing you in the halls for six years. So I thought we could talk. We might find out we hate each other. But let's give ourselves the chance. Unless you have to go home.

TUCKER

Want to know what happens when I go home, Neil? I turn on the TV, then I get out a can of beef stew and put it on the burner and crack open a beer and look at the mail. Which is mainly connected to the extreme shopping adventures of my ex-wife, for which I am somehow still responsible. Then I take the stew off the stove and eat it straight from the can, usually burning either my hands or my tongue. On a good night the phone will ring with someone asking for money and I try to draw them out so I can have one conversation in the entire day before I go to bed. I don't feel good, intruding on the precious time of telephone solicitors, but that's what happens when I'm home.

STOP

LIGHTS FADE on NEIL and TUCKER.

LIGHTS UP on THE HOUSE. ANNIE and JODI are sorting and folding laundry.

JODI

I'm the one who has to go off and live in a dorm and stay up all night on amphetamines studying and dealing with suicidal roommates and binge drinking and date rape and huge introductory lectures by unqualified teaching assistants--

ANNIE

Honey, college is so much more than that. After the first year.

JODI

I don't care. I can't do it just to make you happy.

ANNIE

Listen to me. I have had a strange catharsis while away. I honestly do not care about my own happiness. I care about your happiness.

JODI

But my happiness is what makes you happy.

ANNIE

That is so grandiose. It sounds pathological.

JODI

It's true.

4/14
Tucker
"THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS"

3 pages

NEIL

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LIGHTS FADE on NEIL and TUCKER.

LIGHTS UP on THE HOUSE. ANNIE and JODI are sorting and folding laundry.

START!

JODI

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8/13
JODI
"THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS"

