

PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

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CHARACTERS:

MR. GRANT – a smug, high-powered businessman

JENNIFER – a professional, well-put together woman. An employee of MR. GRANT

LORI – an attractive woman, an employee of MR. GRANT

MARIA – An immigrant janitor, an emplottee of MR. GRANT

INTERIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICE, NIGHT

It's after-hours, lights are dimmed, nighttime cityscape can be seen through windows. MR. GRANT sits at his desk in a big, pretentious office chair.

In the chair across from his desk is a buttoned-up, professional woman. She's directing his attention to a chart, pointing at things. She is straightening her glasses, using a pen to indicate different items on the chart.

JENNIFER

So as you can see, I've used your feedback from my last performance review to target my proposals more efficiently, leading to a 16% increase of territorial sales and a 12% increase of sales overall. Given that our standards are 5%, I'd say these numbers speak for themselves ...

MR. GRANT not-so-surreptitiously glances at his watch.

JENNIFER

Well. I suppose that's the rundown. I've prepared a one-sheet for you as well, and some visual figures.

JENNIFER lays a well-produced, professional-looking form in front of him, then places a yellow form marked PERFORMANCE REVIEW on top.

MR. GRANT

Thanks Jennifer. That was very ... thorough. I'll be finishing up performance reviews by Friday. You should get a copy from HR next week.

He slides the two forms to the side of his desk and folds his hands on the table. Staring at her. It's clear this meeting is over, and he is waiting for her to leave.

JENNIFER

Well thank you for your time Mr. Grant. I'll make sure you get the minutes from tomorrow's call with Wilde. Enjoy your evening.

She packs up her papers efficiently into a tidy briefcase, and exits. We see her two-piece suit and sensible heels, her hair in a bun. She's all business.

As the door shuts behind JENNIFER, we hear the flush of a toilet & LORI appears from the private bathroom in MR. GRANT'S office. She is putting her tousled hair back into a ponytail, buttoning up her blouse & stepping back into her high-heeled shoes.

LORI

So I guess I'll see you tomorrow for my performance review.

She smiles coyly, wiping lipstick from her mouth with a tissue. She places a yellow Performance Review form on his desk in front of him and leaves the lipstick-stained tissue on top, partially covering JENNIFER'S yellow form and her well-produced page of charts.

MR. GRANT

Laughs. You & everyone else. They're even making me do them for the janitors & mail guys this year.

LORI stands & leans over desk. She slips a pair of panties onto the desk, to lay atop her performance review form, her hand remains on his as she leans close, seductively, and whispers:

LORI

A reminder of all the ... "accounts" ... I've closed this year.

LORI walks to the door.

LORI [coquettishly]

See you tomorrow, "Mister Grant".

Closes door.

MR. GRANT smiles & leans back in his chair. He drops the panties into the trashcan next to his desk, puts one earbud into his ear. He sips from a tumbler of brown liquid, closes his eyes.

A knock at the door, it opens. MARIA enters with her janitorial cart. She empties the trashcan closest to the door, then pushes the cart further into the room. She pauses nervously, fidgeting. She speaks with a thick accent (I don't care what kind of accent, whatever the actress is most comfortable with.)

MARIA

Um ... Mister Grant? My review tomorrow ...
I do a good job, yes?

MR GRANT cracks open an eye, grimaces at the interruption, & taps his earbud. He closes his eye & pretends not to have heard MARIA.

MARIA

Mister Grant?

MR GRANT makes an even more annoyed face, & taps his earbud again. His eyes remain closed.

We hear a loud crunching sound, like a bowl of tortilla chips being crushed underfoot. MR. GRANT cracks open his eyes. MARIA is nowhere to be seen – her janitorial cart stands alone near the door.

We hear the crunching sound again, closer this time. From around the corner of the desk, a long, monstrous neck stretches into view. MARIA has transformed into a grotesque, centipede-like creature (played by a contortionist), with a human head with insectoid mandibles, still recognizable as MARIA.

The MARIA creature makes eye contact with a horrified MR. GRANT. It does not break eye contact as it reaches into the trashcan next to his desk, and slowly chews and swallows the panties inside. It kind of smiles at him as it does this. Then the MARIA creature scuttles quickly into MR. GRANT's private bathroom.

MR. GRANT leaps up and presses his back against the windowed wall behind his desk, hand pressed to his mouth, eyes gaping. We hear scuttling & rummaging noises coming from the bathroom.

MARIA emerges, back to her normal human form. She carries the trash from the bathroom, eyes cast down, as if nothing unusual has happened. She crosses the room and empties the trashcan next to his desk, then places her yellow Performance Review form on his desk, partially covering both JENNIFER and LORI'S; JENNIFER'S with its page of charts, LORI'S with its crumpled tissue of smeared lipstick. MARIA'S is marked with several streams of thick, viscous goop – like alien insect saliva.

Out-of-focus in the background, MARIA diligently returns to her janitorial cart. She pushes it to the door, opens it, & stands with it partially ajar. She looks back at MR. GRANT, still plastered against the wall in horror.

MARIA
See you tomorrow, Mister Grant.

Closes door.

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