

"Greener"
by Mark Glassman

FADE IN:

INT. UPPER WEST SIDE APARTMENT - BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

An alarm clock goes off at 7:17a.m., playing a pop song from the 1990s. JEREMY SPECTOR, a 24 year-old financial consultant, is asleep in his bed. He wakes up slowly.

JEREMY
(Groggy)
Mm... Shbza... Mm-

Jeremy fumbles with the alarm with one hand and eventually hits the snooze button. After four seconds the alarm goes off again, playing the same song.

JEREMY
Mm.. No.. oh..

Jeremy hits the snooze button again, another two seconds elapse and the alarm goes off again, playing still the same song.

JEREMY
Mmm...
(suddenly lucid and depressed)
Oh fuuuuck...

Jeremy stumbles out of bed, grabbing the walls for support on his way out the door of his room and toward his bathroom. He enters the bathroom and urinates audibly, then returns to his room with a towel around his waist and his hair wet. He tumbles toward his dresser, grabs a pair of boxer shorts and socks and throws them on his bed. He approaches his closet and sifts through his suits and deciding on one.

EXT. JEREMY'S APARTMENT

Now wearing a coat and carrying a shoulder bag, Jeremy locks his door from the outside. His fingers fumble with the keys, and he swears to himself under his breath with a deep and sleepy voice.

INT. B/C SUBWAY TUNNEL AT 110TH ST.

Jeremy stands a subway platform, in front of subway doors that are opening. He gets on and sits down, plugging

earbuds into his head. He listens to something soft as he drifts off once more, snoring.

INT. MIDTOWN APARTMENT - BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Clothes and financial magazines are strewn on and around the bed. A "Wall of Shame" (collection of rejection letters for various companies) hangs on the wall of the bed. MICHAEL DUNN, a 24 year-old out-of-work financial consultant lies in his bed, snoring loudly. A fly buzzes around his face, and he swats it semiconsciously.

INT. SUBWAY CAR

Jeremy sleeps and snores on the subway. The subway doors open and a MAN ON CRUTCHES walks in, pokes at Jeremy to indicate his desire to squeeze into the tight spot next to him. Jeremy waves semiconsciously to approve.

INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT

Michael snores.

INT. SUBWAY CAR

Jeremy snores.

INT. MICHAEL'S APARTMENT

Michael again.

INT. SUBWAY CAR

Jeremy snores, snorts loudly and gets up groggily to his feet, barely keeping his eyes open and nearly losing his balance. The subway doors open, and he walks off. The doors close behind him, and the train pulls away.

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE

Jeremy opens the door to the office and walks inside. DANA, an attractive receptionist in her mid-30s, is sitting at a largish receptionist's desk. She is wearing a telephone headset and talking.

DANA

...okay. We'll have that for you by this afternoon sir.
Bye now.

Dana removes her headset and turns her attention to Jeremy.

JEREMY

Hey, Dana.

DANA

'Morning, Jeremy. How was your-

(Phone rings. Dana sighs)

Just a second.

(She replaces her headset)

Good morning, J.L.C.

(Pauses)

Uh-huh.

(Rolls eyes)

Yes, well -

(Pauses)

Uh-huh.

Dana looks at Jeremy in desperation and points to her headset. Jeremy holds up his hand to indicate "That's okay," and leaves. Dana becomes increasingly frustrated with the call.

DANA

I don't know who prepared those documents, sir, but...

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE NEAR HIS CUBICLE

Jeremy sets his shoulder bag by his workstation and hangs his jacket on the side of the cubicle. It falls. He picks it up, replaces it, and it falls again. He leaves it on the floor. He sits down and turns his computer on. As it's booting up, JASON LEWIS approaches Jeremy's cubicle. Jason is a 23 year-old coworker of Jeremy's who is handsome, has his hair slicked back, wears glasses and frequently flashes a broad smile. He is fresh and unphased by the hour.

JASON

'Morning, Spector!

JEREMY

Good morning, Jason.

JASON

Rough night, partner?

JEREMY

No.

JASON

Oh? What time did you get out of here?

JEREMY

Eleven.

JASON

Do anything?

JEREMY

Ale House with Michael.

JASON

Michael? That guy who got canned in October? You're still hanging out with him?

JEREMY

Yup.

JASON

Has he found, I mean, is he still...you know?

JEREMY

Yes, he's still out of work.

JASON

Hmph... good for him. We could all smoke a couple more cigarettes and watch a little more "Captain Kangaroo," right? Uh? Am I right?

JEREMY

You have no idea.

JASON

Well, you should've come out with me. Davis and I took out this intern from Accounting and her friend. They were wild, man! Whoah!

JEREMY

'd you score?

JASON

Well, we didn't close the deal last night, but mark my words my friend, huh huh, it's in the works.

JEREMY

Of course it is.

JASON

Anyway, how's the quarterly coming? I know Lopez has been on your ass to finish it by the end of the week. But that's no problem for you, huh, big boy? Huh? Huh?!

JEREMY

Nope. No problem! End of the week! And how's your stuff going, Jason? Say, oh, the new database?

JASON

Done.

JEREMY

Right. The client report?

JASON

Done.

JEREMY

Uh, the stock presentation?

JASON

Done.

JEREMY

New logo?

Jason holds up a sheet of paper with a logo in the upper left-hand corner.

JASON

Done and on the company stationary, my man. Hey, you sure you're okay with that

quarterly, Spector?

JEREMY

Ah... yeah. Yeah, I'm fine.
Thanks, Jason.

JASON

Because I could -

JEREMY

No!

(Recovering and laughing nervously)

No, ah... ha ha... I'll be fine.
Thanks, Jason. Thanks very
much. But I'll be fine. Fine.

JASON

Hey, man, that's what I'm
here for. I'll see you later,
dude.

Jason fires a six-shooter with his fingers and winks as he leaves. Jeremy puts his hands in his head again. He hears Jason in the distance say, "Davis! My man!" He sits in misery for several moments. The phone rings, startling him.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM

Michael answers his telephone, though we have not heard it ring.

MICHAEL

Mmm... Yeah? Hello? ... Uh-huh...
Uh-huh... Yeah...

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE - HIS WORKSTATION

JEREMY

(Already having picked up the phone)

Ah... good morning. Yes... Yes.
Of course by the end of the
week... Yes, but -

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM

MICHAEL

No, no. I'm happy with my
long distance carrier.

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE

JEREMY

Right... Right... Right. Jason
already offered to help, sir.
But he's -

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM

MICHAEL

(Hangs up first and then says groggily)
Goodbye. - bye.

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE

JEREMY

Ok, sir. Thank you. You too.
Take care. Bye.

Jeremy hangs up and walks slowly through a maze of cubicles to the men's room, whistling "Flowers On The Wall."

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE - MEN'S ROOM

Jeremy opens the door and sees ANOTHER EMPLOYEE on his way out. They exchange "heys," or head nods. Jeremy walks to the sink and runs his hands under the water before rinsing his face several times. He then opens the door to a stall, closes the lid of the toilet and, with his pants up, sits down and hangs his head and sleeps.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM

Michael climbs slowly out of bed, limb-by-limb. He is eventually standing, eyes squinting, smacking his lips repeatedly. He stumbles toward his bathroom.

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE - MEN'S ROOM

ANOTHER EMPLOYEE looks at the feet under Jeremy's stall.

INT. MICHAEL'S BATHROOM

Michael begins brushing his teeth.

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE - MEN'S ROOM

Jeremy snores audibly through the stall door. TWO MEN stare at Jeremy's feet, then at each other, as ANOTHER MAN approaches.

INT. MICHAEL'S BATHROOM

Michael gargles.

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE - MEN'S ROOM

Jeremy continues to snore. A crowd has gathered around Jeremy's stall and all are whispering, snickering, pointing at their watches, etc. Jason is closest to the door.

INT. MICHAEL'S BATHROOM

Michael spits and looks up into a mirror to see a tired, unshaven face staring back.

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE - MEN'S ROOM

JASON

(Knocking on the stall door)

Oh, Spector? Everything okay in there, big man? Must be quite a project you've got in there!

JEREMY

(Now from within the stall; waking up)

Uh... everything's fine. Just, ah... just some bad potato salad, or, ah... Nothing to worry about... I'll be fine...

JASON

Just making sure your okay, buddy. Keep up the good the work!

Jason laughs silently as he motions for all to leave the bathroom.

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE - DANA'S DESK

Jeremy approaches Dana's desk. She is just getting off the phone again.

JEREMY

You're so lucky you have people keeping you awake all day.

DANA

(Removing headset)

That's pretty much all they're doing. Jesus.

JEREMY

See "E.R." last night?

DANA

No, how was it?

JEREMY

I don't know. I was here late. That's why I was asking you.

DANA

Oh. No, sorry, I didn't see it.

JEREMY

Oh, that's cool. Hey, did anything from Amazon arrive for me?

DANA

Uh, no. I don't think so.

JEREMY

Oh...

(Leaving)

Well, if any packages arrive for me, could you message me? Thanks.

DANA

No problem...

(With Jeremy out of earshot)

It'll keep me awake.

INT. MICHAEL'S LIVING ROOM

Michael sits on his couch in boxer shorts with a box of Cookie Crisp and is on the phone.

MICHAEL

Yes, mom. I sent out 30 today
on the good stationary.

(Pause)

Well, I'd rather be working,
too, but right now—

(Pause)

I am trying, but the economy
is still sluggish, and I'm
not the only guy in New York
out of work right now, so if
you could just — oh, mom,
hang on a second, I have
another call.

JEREMY

Hey.

MICHAEL

Hey.

JEREMY

What's happening?

MICHAEL

On the phone with my mom.

JEREMY

Shit, man. I'm sorry.

MICHAEL

Whatever. What's up?

JEREMY

I have a work-related
question for you.

MICHAEL

Can I bill you?

JEREMY

No, but you can suck my
penis.

MICHAEL

Excellent. What do you need?

JEREMY

Ah, so, remember when you combined the August and September figures in that spreadsheet that only you could read because you used that asinine table format?

MICHAEL

Lopez is making you do the quarterly.

JEREMY

Lopez is making me do the quarterly.

MICHAEL

Sorry, dude.

JEREMY

Hey, it could be worse. I could be talking to your mom.

MICHAEL

Touché.

JEREMY

Anyway, how do I read this fucker?

MICHAEL

The original data files are archived on Zip disks. Dana knows where they are. They should be easier to interpret and much more import-friendly.

JEREMY

Gotcha. Hey, what are you doing later?

MICHAEL

You mean, like, Scooby-Doo later or Star Trek later?

JEREMY

Right. Drinks?

MICHAEL

I guess.

JEREMY

How's 10?

MICHAEL

I'll clear my schedule.

JEREMY

Yeah, I cleared your mom's schedule.

MICHAEL

Right. What does that even mean?

JEREMY

It means you're mom's a slut.

MICHAEL

Not as big a slut as your sister.

JEREMY

Fair enough.

(Laughs)

What are doing until then?

MICHAEL

Besides clicking "Send" on another 9,000 resumes?

JEREMY

Dude! Get out of your apartment. Go to a museum or something. Go to the Park. Christ. I'd kill to get out of here.

MICHAEL

Whatever. Maybe. We'll see. I gotta get back to my mom.

JEREMY

Yeah, I got back to your mom.

MICHAEL

Idiot. Bye.

(Presses "Flash.")

Hey, mom. Sorry about that.
Business stuff.

(Pause)

Yes, REALLY!

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE, NEAR DANA'S DESK

Jeremy approaches Dana's desk again. She is bent over a file cabinet.

JEREMY

Hey, Dana? Do you have a minute.

DANA

(Still hunched over)

No, your package has not arrived in last 3 minutes.

JEREMY

It- no, it's not about that.

DANA

(Gets up)

Then what can I do for you?

JEREMY

Hey, if this is a bad time, then I can come back.

DANA

What do you need, Jeremy?

JEREMY

Zip disk backups from August and September. Any idea where they are?

DANA

Yeah. Jason's office. He asked for them this morning. Why?

JEREMY

Wait. What?!

DANA

Jason said he needed them
this morning. I'm sure he
must still have them. Just
go and-

JEREMY

When did he ask for them?!

DANA

This morning, like I said
eight seconds ago.

JEREMY

Why would he...? Oh, that
fuck! I can't believe that
guy!

DANA

Hey, I'm sorry. He asked for
them, and I -

JEREMY

No, it's fine. Just don't
worry about it. Thanks.

Jeremy leaves.

EXT. GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM. - MICHAEL'S VISIT

Michael stands outside alone and looks up at the museum.
He walks inside and gets a ticket for his coat. He moves
apathetically through the permanent collection. He stares
blankly at various paintings and sculptures. A group of
three or four middle school students dart in front of him
with worksheets and pencils. Using the floor, the
pillars, and the walls as surfaces, they fill out their
worksheets, as Michael watches. The students turn toward
him and nod.

STUDENT

Mr., you are so lucky you can
just be at the museum and not
have to do this crap.

Michael laughs nervously until he appears dumbfounded.

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE - NEAR JASON'S CUBICLE

Jeremy storms toward Jason's cubicle.

JEREMY

Alright, man. Where are they?

JASON

Hey, hey, buddy. Calm down.

JEREMY

Where ARE they?

JASON

If you mean the quarterlies, they're done and on Lopez's desk. I took the liberty of finishing them up for you.

JEREMY

Jesus! Jason! Why did you finish them? You knew Lopez gave 'em to me. You knew they were my project.

JASON

And I knew that they'd take you another four solid hours, minus catnaps in the men's room! Come on, Spector. I did you a favor. Appreciate it.

JEREMY

Yeah? Whose name is on the document?

JASON

Spector.

JEREMY

Whose?

JASON

Well, I finished them!

JEREMY

Of course you did.

Jeremy leaves.

INT. MICHAEL'S LIVING ROOM

Michael sits on his couch again, this time in pants. He stares blankly at the TV, clicking the remote.

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE - JEREMY'S WORKSTATION

Jeremy sits at his desk. He stares blankly at a spreadsheet, clicking the mouse.

INT. MICHAEL'S LIVING ROOM

Michael clicks.

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE

Jeremy clicks.

INT. MICHAEL'S LIVING ROOM

Michael lands on an episode of "Saved By the Bell."

INT. JEREMY'S OFFICE

Jeremy is playing solitaire when he picks up the phone.

JEREMY

Hey.

MICHAEL

Hey.

JEREMY

Ready?

MICHAEL

It's five o'clock, dude.

JEREMY

I'm done.

MICHAEL

Everything alright?

JEREMY

After my ninth gin and tonic,
everything'll be fine.

MICHAEL

Jesus.

JEREMY

Which episode?

MICHAEL

The one where Zach hatches some scheme to get in Kelly's pants, but then is somehow foiled by Screech and Principal Belding.

JEREMY

Fuck you. That's every episode.

MICHAEL

I know. I'm fucking with you. Ale House?

JEREMY

Sure.

MICHAEL

Half-hour?

JEREMY

Whenever.

MICHAEL

Jesus, man. I'll see you in 30. Bye.

JEREMY

Bye.

EXT. 9TH AVENUE MIDTOWN MANHATTAN

Jeremy walks up 9th Avenue and approaches a BUM.

BUM

Change. Spare change...

Jeremy stops and gives him two dollars.

BUM

God bless ya', sir. God bless.

Jeremy acknowledges him and keeps walking.

INT. ALE HOUSE

Michael sits at the bar. Jeremy sits down next to him.

MICHAEL

Rough day?

JEREMY

Let's not talk about it.

MICHAEL

Right.

JEREMY

Right.

MICHAEL

Right.

JEREMY

(Addressing a bartender)

Gin and tonic, please.

(To Michael)

'Dya make it off the couch?

MICHAEL

Yeah. I actually went to the Guggenheim.

JEREMY

No shit? How was it?

MICHAEL

Fine.

JEREMY

Just fine?

MICHAEL

Yeah, I got bored. There were these school kids there working on some art assignment or some shit.

JEREMY

Really? I wish my school did that shit.

MICHAEL

Yeah, but you know it was some asinine East Side school.

JEREMY

That's probably true. So they were doing some assignment.

MICHAEL

Yeah, and for a minute - no, I'm lying - for, like, the entire time I saw them, I was actually jealous.

JEREMY

You wanted to be back in school?

MICHAEL

No. I just wanted to do the assignment.

Michael takes a swig of his drink.

JEREMY

Really? What was it? Like "Find the breasts in the Cubist shit?"

MICHAEL

Asshole. No, I don't know. Some questions about the permanent collection. But it looked like it made them think, and, well, I haven't done that in a while. At least not since we had that debate about Jabberjaw and Scooby-Doo.

JEREMY

You know they're the same character.

MICHAEL

Whatever! Jabberjaw is Rodney Dangerfield under water. Scooby couldn't even talk, and there was no Shaggy-analogue, and - we are not having this argument again.

JEREMY

Fine.

JEREMY

Same.

MICHAEL

I was telling a story.

JEREMY

Okay, alright. So, you were jealous. You should've just asked the teacher for an extra worksheet.

MICHAEL

Right.

(In Peter Lorre voice)

May I have a worksheet? I'd like to work with your children!

(Normal voice)

Let's just tattoo "Catholic priest" on my forehead while we're at it.

JEREMY

I'm sure it would've been fine. You're making too - oh, I'm vibrating.

Jeremy takes out his phone.

MICHAEL

Take it.

JEREMY

Spector... Yeah... Oh, you gotta
be kidding me. No. Oh...
come on... Alright! Alright.
I'll be back in a few
minutes.

(Hangs up)

Fuck me.

MICHAEL

Uh-oh. I remember those
calls.

Jeremy stands up.

MICHAEL

Should we pick this up again
in a few hours?

JEREMY

If I'm conscious.

MICHAEL

Don't work too hard.

Jeremy smirks weakly and leaves. Michael remains at the
bar alone and drinks.

EXT. 9TH AVENUE

Jeremy walks by the same bum, who again asks him for
change.

INT. ALE HOUSE

Michael continues to drink.

FADE OUT