

HOUSE OF MADS

Screenplay and Story by

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She's 26, hair tied, quite pretty and dressed like every single receptionist in the room: navy blue suit, white shirt and a red scarf around the neck.

She looks up at him and starts talking pretty hastily as if she didn't expect somebody right now.

RECEPTIONIST

Uh, sorry sir. Welcome! How may I help you?

MEYER

Hi, I would like to submit a registration form as job seeker.

RECEPTIONIST

Sure. Have you brought it fully filled out?

MEYER

Of course. Here.

He gives her the registration form. She looks at it a little bit perplex.

RECEPTIONIST

Meyer Csikz...

MEYER

Meyer Csikszentmihalyi.

RECEPTIONIST

Yeah, sorry... I am sorry sir, but your form is no longer compatible with our new regulation. We have set up the B12 one which is... Here.

She hands him an A4 format form made of several pages. He takes it and starts looking.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

You fill it without forgetting any information, all written with blue ink and without any erasure, or I could not treat your demand. Do you have any question?

Meyer continues looking at the new form, now pretty confused.

MEYER

When will I touch the compensation?

RECEPTIONIST

About three weeks, the time for us to send the form, treat it and pay you.

MEYER

Alright. Thanks for the information. Goodbye.

RECEPTIONIST

Goodbye. Next one please!

He stores the documents in his satchel bag and leaves the building.

4

EXT. STREET - DAY

4

Meyer moves away from the building and stops while picking up his phone. He dials-up a number and waits a short moment.

MEYER

Hey sweetie, it's me! How are you?

He waits for his interlocutor.

MEYER (CONT'D)

No, complete failure. They changed the form or whatever.

His face is now reassuring.

MEYER (CONT'D)

Don't worry, she doesn't have a single doubt. She just has to not being warned I was fired, 'cause she'd throw me she does everything all the time and that I take profit from the situation... Even if it's kind of true... But this time it won't pass.

Suddenly, his phone vibrates.

MEYER (CONT'D)

Wait, don't quit, I have another call.

Meyer takes a look at the screen of his phone and gets back to his previous conversation in a hurry.

MEYER (CONT'D)

It's her, I got to go!

He closes his eyes a moment, like to find some words, and picks up.

MEYER (CONT'D)
Hi honey! Yeah, it's alright. It's lunch now. Everything's fine. My boss is a prick, but you know... I hang on.

He waits a moment, waiting for an answer.

MEYER (CONT'D)
I'm glad we reconciliated too baby. You know I love you so much!

He frowns.

MEYER (CONT'D)
What? I'm not lying, stop being paranoid! We've already talked about it anyway.

His face relaxes a bit.

MEYER (CONT'D)
Yeah, yeah. Listen, everything's fine at work, and this time I won't fuck up. Promise!

He takes a reassuring voice.

MEYER (CONT'D)
Don't worry. We continue the conversation tonight. Yeah, I love you too sweet heart. Bye.

He hangs up and puts his phone back in his trousers. His face turns pale.

He touches his eyes as if he wanted to wake up.

MEYER (CONT'D)
Shit... Okay... Now I know what I have to do...

He lays the left hand on the satchel bag, putting in relief the wedding ring on his ring finger.

FADE OUT.

Meyer gives his form to the same receptionist who welcomed him the first time. She examines it, but once the form opened she looks up.

RECEPTIONIST
Sorry Mr. Csik...milyi, but all is written in black.

She shows him lines he wrote with black ink.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)
We only accept forms filled out with blue ink. Here.

She hands him a blank form.

MEYER
And... You really can't make an effort? We don't care if it's in blue or black or red!

RECEPTIONIST
Sorry sir, rules are rules.

MEYER
Yeah, yeah... of course!

He takes the form and leaves.

6 EXT. STREET - DAY

6

Meyer moves away from the building, hands in his pockets, looking at the floor.

MEYER
(mumbling)
Fuck...

He continues moving away.

7 INT. UNEMPLOYMENT HOUSE - RECEPTION DESK - DAY

7

TITLE CARD: TUESDAY.

Meyer gives his form to the receptionist who examines it. After a little verification, she gives it back to him.

RECEPTIONIST
Sorry sir, you made several erasures. We absolutely need a form without any erasure.

He sighs.

MEYER

But, madam, information's complete.
What's the problem? First the color
of the ink and now that?

RECEPTIONIST

I am sorry sir, but I have to
follow the rules...

MEYER

Okay, I've got it! You're robots!
Give me another one... Please!

He takes the form she's handing him and leaves.

8 EXT. STREET - DAY

8

Meyer moves away quickly from the building, hands in his
pockets, pretty angry.

MEYER

Fuck!

He continues moving away.

9 INT. UNEMPLOYMENT HOUSE - RECEPTION DESK - DAY

9

TITLE CARD: WEDNESDAY.

Meyer gives his form to the receptionist who's looking for a
new paper. She hands it back while he looks at her taken
aback.

MEYER

What? Don't you open it?

RECEPTIONIST

Actually, the regulation just
changed. The B12 form has been
simplified, and a complementary
one, the B52, must be joined...
Totally filled, of course.

MEYER

You're kidding me? Have you ever
treated a form in your life?

RECEPTIONIST

Yes sir, everyday actually. You just have to follow the rules and everything will be fine.

He takes the new blank form and the complementary one she's handing him.

MEYER

I swear it's the last time you treat me like a fucking idiot.

He leaves.

10 EXT. STREET - DAY

10

Meyer moves away from the building in a hurry, hands in his pockets, and takes them away suddenly in a frustrating move.

MEYER

Complementary form MY ASS!

He continues moving away.

11 INT. UNEMPLOYMENT HOUSE - RECEPTION DESK - DAY

11

TITLE CARD: THURSDAY

Meyer gives his form to the receptionist who rotates her chair to take a look at the building clock behind.

The needles show 4:45 p.m.

She turns around him.

RECEPTIONIST

I am sorry sir, we can't take your form at this time. You had to come earlier.

MEYER

Wait, what? But you close the doors at five o'clock. There are fifteen minutes left, aren't they enough?

RECEPTIONIST

We just use these fifteen minutes to minor cases and office closing. Please come back tomorrow.

Meyer smashes the desk with his hand.

MEYER

You're throwing me bullshit since Monday actually! You say you help the unemployed people, but you're the wankers. Fucking officials!

He's strongly caught by a GUARD's hand. It's a thickset man wearing a suit who doesn't seem to be kidding.

GUARD

Sir, come with me please.

MEYER

Alright, alright I've got it, leave me now! If it's not possible to protest in this country!

He escapes and leaves the building settling his pea jacket.

12 EXT. STREET - DAY

12

Meyer walks hastily, and see an ice block on the floor. He prepares a kick.

MEYER

FU--

He misses and slips, falling on his back.

13 EXT. STREET - DAY

13

TITLE CARD: FRIDAY.

Meyer arrives in front of the Unemployment House. The doors are closed.

He tries to open them several times by pushing and pulling, without success. He looks at his watch.

It indicates 1:00 p.m.

He reads the opening hours sign stuck on the left door.

It indicates the office is open on Friday from 9:00 a.m to noon.

He sighs.

MEYER

Shit, this can't be real... I'll never drop this goddamn form...

He moves away slowly, lost in his thoughts.

14

EXT. STREET - DAY

14

Moving away, Meyer feels his phone vibrating in his pocket. He takes it, looks at the screen and stops immediately.

MEYER

Oh crap! It's not the moment...

He picks up.

MEYER (CONT'D)

Hi honey, how are you? Work's good?

His face starts wrinkling.

MEYER (CONT'D)

The banker called? What did he want?

He exclaims suddenly.

MEYER (CONT'D)

What do you mean by "we have no money"? I thought we had a little leeway and--

He stops and listens, calming down.

MEYER (CONT'D)

Of course honey, don't worry. We've got a little late at work, but the money should come in three weeks.

He waits for an answer and wrinkles once again.

MEYER (CONT'D)

No, it's not another lie.

He listens to the answer, and hesitates a moment.

MEYER (CONT'D)

I swear.

A YOUNG WOMAN, about 20's, wearing a skinny fit jeans and a plunging neckline passes just in front of him.

Her bottom waddles from left to right in a regular rhythm.

While listening his phone, Meyer stares at her, smiling discreetly. He continues.

MEYER (CONT'D)

Don't worry honey, we'll talk about it tonight, okay? Lunch's almost over. Yeah, I love you too honey. See ya.

He hangs out. Then, he touches his eyes with his fingers, and let them falling down.

MEYER (CONT'D)

Well, this time no choice. I must do it.

He moves away.

CUT TO:

15 INT. UNEMPLOYMENT HOUSE - RECEPTION DESK - DAY

15

TITLE CARD: MONDAY.

Meyer gives his form to the receptionist who managed his case the previous week. She opens it and starts looking. A COLLEAGUE arrives handing her a cup fully filled of hot coffee.

RECEPTIONIST

Thanks.

She takes the cup pretty hastily and spills its content on her hand. She drops the cup which spreads some liquid on the precious filled form.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

(half-whispering)

Oh, fuck!

Meyer breathes deeply as if he wanted to control a bad move.

16 INT. UNEMPLOYMENT HOUSE - RECEPTION DESK - DAY

16

TITLE CARD: TUESDAY.

Meyer stands next to the desk. A twenty years old man wearing an oversized suit takes the form. He's an INTERN.

MEYER

Uh, excuse me, where is the woman usually treating the registration forms?

INTERN
 Sorry, she's sick. I'm just an
 intern.

The intern looks at the first page of the form.

INTERN (CONT'D)
 Besides, I'm not able to treat your
 demand. I just can redirect you to
 the good staff.

MEYER
 Wait... What's your work here if
 you can't treat the form?

He thinks a little.

INTERN
 Redirecting you... to the good
 staff...

Meyer looks at him biting the bullet.

MEYER
 Okay, so redirect me, like right
 now!

The intern seems looking for words.

INTERN
 Uh, yeah... But like I said the
 person responsible for the new
 forms is sick. So right now I think
 I just can redirect you... to the
 exit?

Meyer throws him a frustrating look.

CUT TO:

17

INT. UNEMPLOYMENT HOUSE - RECEPTION DESK - DAY

17

TITLE CARD: WEDNESDAY.

The receptionist checks up the form she has in her hand.
 Suddenly, an alarm rings.

RECEPTIONIST
 Sorry mister, the alarm is ringing,
 everybody has to go out.

Without looking at her, he takes his form back, and enters
 the group stuck in the entrance hall.

18 INT. UNEMPLOYMENT HOUSE - RECEPTION DESK - DAY

18

TITLE CARD: THURSDAY.

Meyer enters the empty building. The intern stands in the entrance hall.

MEYER
Where are the employees? What's that joke again?

INTERN
Uh, now they're striking.

MEYER
What? What's the fucking reason?

INTERN
The government wants to remove an hour during lunch, so we'd have one hour instead of two...

Meyer looks at him as if he would about to kill someone.

INTERN (CONT'D)
But don't worry, it's only for one day. You know, Christmas on the way, gifts to buy, that stuff.

MEYER
But, you, what are you doing here then?

INTERN
I'm intern sire, my job is--

He cuts him.

MEYER
Redirecting, I get it! See ya tomorrow!

He moves away.

INTERN
Exit's this way...

He shows the exit door while Meyer continues moving away.

19 INT. UNEMPLOYMENT HOUSE - ENTRANCE HALL - DAY

19

TITLE CARD: FRIDAY.

Meyer stands in the long line, disheartened.

The line progresses slowly. He follows.

As usual, he waits behind the confidentiality line, and as usual, he hears the receptionist calling him.

RECEPTIONIST

Next!

He moves toward the reception desk.

20

INT. UNEMPLOYMENT HOUSE - RECEPTION DESK - DAY

20

Meyer gives his form to the receptionist. She looks at him desperately and gives his form back accompanied by another sheet.

RECEPTIONIST

I am so, so sorry Mr. Csikmilyi, but we have changed the main forms, so the B12 plus the B52, and a new one, the B83, has to be filled to facilitate the forwarding of the two others.

Meyer sighs.

MEYER

You know what, I'm not surprised anymore... Give me all the stuff you want, and I'll hire someone to do it. I think it's the better solution right now...

The receptionist continues looking at him, now worried.

RECEPTIONIST

Uh, I am deeply sorry sir, but the government has voted a new law and--

He interrupts her.

MEYER

What law?

RECEPTIONIST

Well, as of today, it is not possible to submit more than one form every three months. The government wants to regulate the numbers and--

He interrupts her.

MEYER

You're fucking kidding me!

His eyes are getting wet.

MEYER (CONT'D)

Don't you think it's hard enough?
You've still got long damned forms
to fill and you add fucking new
stupid rules!

RECEPTIONIST

Listen up sir, I understand, but--

He interrupts her.

MEYER

Goddamn no! No you don't
understand! I'll tell you
something: You don't understand
NOTHING! You, are not unemployed,
okay? It's not you who moves
everyday to quickly get out like a
dog!

Little tears flow now across his cheeks. She looks down.

MEYER (CONT'D)

It's not you who has the rope
around the neck! It's not you who's
about to divorce because of this
fucking unemployment issue... And
don't tell me you're sorry, I think
I get it now!

He takes a handkerchief and blows his nose. The receptionist
raises her hand, indicating the guard approaching she
controls the situation.

MEYER (CONT'D)

Well, I must congratulate you! You
can be proud, you destroy one more
fool. But it's not so bad. You'll
see the result in your three
goddamned months when I'll come
back...

He takes his satchel bag and stores his elastic pouch in it.

The receptionist, touched by his speech, takes a look on the left and right to check up who's observing them.

RECEPTIONIST

Wait! Listen, I have to respect the regulation, I have no choice.

MEYER

I think I've got it two weeks ago, thanks!

RECEPTIONIST

Listen to me before blaming me, sir! Well, I am sure we can work this out. I will do as if you have not given me anything today.

MEYER

Oh, it's nice of you, but I don't think it'd change any--

She interrupts him.

RECEPTIONIST

Yes, but let me finish, please. I propose to fill it for you. Thus, no error possible.

Meyer's surprised. He relaxes.

MEYER

Are you serious? Or is it a bad joke to kill desperate people?

She smiles.

RECEPTIONIST

No sir, I assure you!

She continues in a low voice.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

But what I am going to do is forbidden, so please, do not yell it around you, okay?

MEYER

No problem!

RECEPTIONIST

(looking for a pen)
Okay... I will recopy the information, I hope there is no mistake...

MEYER

I don't think so. And I don't worry since you seem good to find any of them.

She smiles, and takes a normal voice again.

RECEPTIONIST

Well, we finally found an arrangement!

MEYER

Thank you so much. You save my life!

She starts filling the fields.

Meyer looks around him to see if someone's coming, and watch the limit clock. He looks around him once again, pretty nervous.

She ends the form.

RECEPTIONIST

Here. Look, I put it in the box. It will be treated by the High Council by next week.

She puts the form into the sending box.

MEYER

You did it quickly!

RECEPTIONIST

Experience.

MEYER

Well, you took a weight off. Thank you!

RECEPTIONIST

You are welcome, sir! And remember!

She does a zipping move on her mouth.

MEYER

Don't worry. Thank you so much again! Goodbye madam!

RECEPTIONIST

Goodbye sir. Next person!

He moves away from the reception desk, smiling, relieved.

FADE OUT.

21 INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MORNING 21

TITLE CARD: 2 WEEKS LATER.

A heavy door slamming rings. Meyer wakes up in his double bed. He rubs eyes, half-sleeping and looks next to him.

Nobody's here.

He checks up the alarm clock on a low table next the bed.

It indicates 11:50 a.m. A doubt pops in his mind.

MEYER

Oh, Shit!

He stands up and leaves the bedroom in a hurry.

22 INT. APARTMENT-ENTRANCE HALL - MORNING 22

Meyer finds a bunch of letters laid on the floor in a messy order.

Among them, a big brown one gets his attention. He takes it.

Meyer notices with amazement the stamp of the Unemployment House, and checks it up.

It has been opened.

He extracts feverishly the form inside.

On the top-right of the form, it's possible to read "REJECTED" written in red ink.

On the top-left, a pink sticky note is visible, with the following message:

"Meyer, if you have an explanation of this, it'll be with my lawyer. Sincerely, your future ex-wife".

He puts his hand on his mouth, as if he wanted to contain a giant shout.

Then, he notices another sticky note, yellow this time, stuck under the official stamp. He reads it and suddenly drops down the letter.

MEYER
FUCKING BITCH!

He exits the apartment slamming the door in a hurry.

It's possible to read on the sticky note:

"Mr. Csikszentmihalyi, if you encounter difficulties to write your last name, you can ask our desk clerks. They are able to help you at any moment. Kind Regards, the High Council of the Unemployment House".

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.