

JAKOB

## WORK (FIVE)

001: [The sounds of kitchen noise can be heard.]

Coffee?

002: There's, uh, cream in the fridge if you want some, and the sugar is in that pourer there.

003: Yeah, I'm a bit, uh, that party really did a number on me.

004: Uh-huh. [pause] Have you started?

005: Oh, uh, OK. My name is Jakob Parsons, and I work for Madison and Cowley Temporary Staffing Services. As, well, a temp.

006: The entire time I've been there I've only had one assignment, and that's been over at Fieldhammer Investments. I've been there, I don't know, two months.

007: They've got me doing data entry.

008: Like, scanning documents, burning the scans onto CD-Rs.

009: Yeah, it's hell.

010: I don't know. Supposedly Fieldhammer is happy with my performance, I guess—I guess they get a lot of incompetents or whatever, I don't know, I've seen some people working there who aren't quite... all together? [laughs] So, yeah, supposedly there's a position opening up in Human Resources, and they're talking about hiring me away from the agency. That would be good, I guess, I mean at least I wouldn't be stuck in front of the scanner all day, but...

011: I don't know. I guess I never saw myself ending up at an investment firm.

012: Yeah, I mean, the whole reason I even *took* this job in the first place was because my girlfriend got sick of me moaning about being unemployed.

013: Yeah, Freya. [pause]

014: What?

015: Oh, nothing. But, so, yeah, as I was saying... it's just not what I really set out to do.

016: I don't know. I mean, it sounds stupid, but I just really was into the idea of being, like, a *scholar*.

017: Yeah, like, someone who studies for a living. I mean, that just seems *ideal*.

018: Yeah, but, no. Academia's really fucked right now.

019: Oh, there's no jobs for anybody; there are less and less tenure-track positions and more and more positions for like part-time teachers or just, like, I don't know, academic shit-workers, people hired for a semester here or there to pick up the courses that no one else wants to teach.

020: I guess it's *possible* to still get a tenure-track job, but it just seems like you need to specialize so insanely in one particular area of thought—you need to like stake out your little parcel of intellectual territory and like that's *it*—that's all you get to think about for the rest of your life. And that's not really what I'm into. I mean, I still like reading books for *pleasure*, you know?

021: No. I mean, I've seen what happens to the people who go down that route. Let me tell you, by and large they don't look like happy people.

022: They look *tired*.

023: Yeah. And I'm not talking about *tired* like *I stayed up too late last night, NewYear's Eve, partying* kind of tired. I'm talking *tired* like *tired of life* tired.