*The Slacker's Guide to the Office*

"Huh, where am I?" groaned Nick.  
 He had slept past his bus stop. Nick wiped the drool off his face and looked at his phone. He was supposed to be at work in seven minutes. Not only that, Nick wanted to leave work early to go on a date with his new girlfriend.  
 Nick wanted to run to work, but the most he could do was speed walk. The area he worked in was known to be dangerous. Police officers were frequently on patrol, and they frequently pulled over people for running and running red lights.  
 The outside of the office was painted a dull chestnut brown, but the top floor was left as exposed bricks. The City's Administration of Safety office was still under construction. The exterior was beginning to look modern, but the interior of the building was severely outdated.  
 Nick was running late, so he dashed up three flights of stairs. Upon leaving the stairwell, Nick slowed down to a casual walk, not wanting other office workers to realize how rushed he was. Nick ran to the archive room, where he worked, but his supervisor was not even there. What a waste of effort.  
 Shaking his head and sighing, Nick took a pen from his breast pocket. Thankfully, this office was so poorly managed that nobody had bothered to install a punch card system. and recorded that he came in five minutes ago on the attendance chart. Nick looked at the rest of the archive room, and his eyes widened in surprise.  
 'How can there be this many more boxes compared to yesterday? To think I planned to leave early.' thought Nick.  
 Seeing this maze of boxes left him dismayed. Nick walked into his private office that was connected to this room.  
 Despite being a mere intern at the office, Nick was given a private office, a privilege generally reserved for upper management. The predecessors of Nick all had quit within less than a year due to the monotony of the job. The internship was merely a cover-up for the fact that no adult wanted that job. The private office was there just to sweeten a bitter deal.  
 The office contained two doors. The smaller door led to the archive room, while the other door led to the main workspace.  
 Nick's desk was situated in such a way that when the larger door was left open, he could catch glimpses of the main workspace and eavesdrop on his coworker's conversations. If someone was about face towards Nick's room, he would just look down at his desk and pretend he was doing office work. Nick looked up and caught a glance at Vargas and Brandon.  
 Vargas was the supervisor of logistics for the office complex. He had a reputation amongst the interns for being indolent and incompetent, but his friendly attitude somehow prevented him from being fired. Beside Vargas was Brandon, who managed the archive room and was Nick's boss.   
 "Brandon, I didn't see you at the usual time," said Vargas.   
 " I left for a meeting half an hour before you came in," said Brandon.  
 A smile crept across Nick's mouth. Brandon and Nick usually arrive at work at eight in the morning. There was a sign-in sheet attached to larger door. Since Brandon was not present when Nick arrived at work, he could safely write that he came in twenty minutes earlier.  
 He ducked under his desk and crawled back to the archive room. Nick took out a pen. He crossed out the old time of 7:55 and replaced it with 7:40.  
 Nick quickly crawled back to his desk. He attempted to smile and exclaimed, "There you are Brandon. I didn't see you this morning!"  
 "Sorry for not leaving any work for you. Why are you smiling so weirdly?" asked Brandon.  
 "It's just the way I smile when I'm groggy," said Nick, "Anyway, what work do you have for me today?"  
 "You see that tower of cardboard boxes in the archive room? I want you to alphabetize all of it and put them into the file cabinets," demanded Brandon.  
 Nick clenched his fists, wanting to punch his desk. There were five cardboard boxes, and each of them was filled to the point the that boxes were to about to explode.  
 "Will do boss, will do," Nick replied.

As he began the monotonous task of filing paper, Nick began to concoct a scheme so he could leave work early. Nick knew that the boss would likely force him to read labels off another stack of papers and put the information on a piece of paper. Not only was this task boring, but it was something that only one intern would have a hard time finishing within one afternoon. He also knew that Brandon only bothered to check if the work was done. Brandon did not even bother to check if Nick was still in the office. Nick decided that he would get the other interns to help him.  
 The other interns were lucky with the amount of work they had. Their bosses did not give them work, sometimes they forgot the interns even existed. The interns were all too eager to do some sort of work. However, Nick could not ask them to help since he had not bothered to get friendly with them.  
 Nick's boss and the three interns took their lunch break at noon, while Nick took his one hour after. He would place stacks of paper on the intern's desk. On top of those stacks would be a note with Brandon's forged signature asking the interns to help him.   
 When Brandon left for his lunch break, Nick walked back to his private office. He typed up a note saying that Brandon needed the interns to do some extra work. Nick printed out three copies of the note. He looked around for something with Brandon's signature.   
 There was nothing with his signature in Nick's office. Nick walked over to the archive room and rummaged through some old boxes. As time passed while searching, Nick grew impatient. He knocked over a box to release some stress. A paper flew out of the box. Nick was about to put it back into the box, but then he noticed that the paper had Brandon's signature on it. Nick placed the box back and forged Brandon's signature on the three notes.   
 Nick had wasted too much time looking for Brandon's signature. He only had fifteen minutes before Brandon came back.  
Nick mustered all the strength he could, and picked up the three stacks of paper. He struggled his way to the elevator and hit the button for the fifth floor, where the three interns worked at. Nick dropped the stack of paper on the elevator floor, which gave a resounding thud.   
 As the elevator made its way to the fifth floor, Nick massaged his sore back. Then, he began the arduous task of dropping stacks of paper and the notes on the three intern's desks. Nick dashed back to the elevator, sweating.  
 Nick made it back to his private office ten minutes before Brandon dropped by to check on Nick.  
 "You know what to do with those stacks of paper every afternoon, right? I have to leave for a meeting now, see you later," said Brandon.  
 "Perfect--I mean, yes, I know what to do," stammered Nick. Brandon walked out of the office. After Nick heard him enter the elevator, he sat in his swivel chair and rolled to the window. Nick confirmed that Brandon had left the building, so he packed his own bag. On his way out, Nick wrote that he left at four.   
 The next day at work, Nick did not even fall asleep on the bus. The warm feeling of having a successful date had carried over to the next day.   
 He continued smiling until he saw the attendance sheet. Where it once was in the archive room was a note in bright red ink that said: "See me in my office."  
 As Nick inched toward the office, he could feel sweat dripping down his neck. He could already imagine the words in his head: "You're fired."

Vision Statement: If I were to take this manuscript further, I would make the descriptions more detailed. I imagine this as a trilogy, split into this major fragment, Nick's date, and Nick dealing with getting fired.

I hereby declare that this is the original work of Jonathan Quang. I have received feedback from Mr. Francis and my workshop group.