

Dear Reader,

Grueling is a word meant to convey how difficult something is, in a way which makes you weary and tired just thinking about it. If you have ever been exposed to grueling work conditions, you know they cause you to feel things like misery, fatigue, hatred of lumber mills, and a wish to be anywhere else.

To avoid exposing you to the details of a very grueling situation, I advise you to set this clue down and not pick it back up. By doing so, you avoid learning about miserable happenings including an unlicensed optometrist, altered states of consciousness, a ruthless man named Sir, a tactile means of communication, and sawdust that is coarse, rough, and irritating.

I have committed to report on the manner of difficult things related to this treacherous Get A Clue plot. You, on the other hand, are here at will, meaning you may walk away from this disastrous work location at any time, for any reason for something more fulfilling, including for a mandated break, for lunch, for a doctor's visit, or forever.

With all due respect,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lemony Snicket". The script is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends under the word "Snicket".

Lemony Snicket

A body is shambling strangely towards you, not in the usual exhausted-from-long-hours kind of way. As they get closer, you notice that they appear to be hypnotized! You know from your extensive experience that in order to help this person you will need to figure out what the release word is. The zombie-like form, a word here which means “in desperate need of your help”, extends a hand and gives you their punch card:

[illegible]