

Daily Mike

'Help Wanted'

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EXT. BUS STOP - 8:00AM (OVERCAST)

MIKE, 25, a baby-faced desk jockey with no backbone, sits twiddling thumbs waiting for the bus to arrive. A woman with her baby approaches the bus stop and sits as far from Mike as she can.

MIKE

And how are you this fine morning?

WOMAN

(Uninterested)

Yeah.

The bus pulls up to the stop. The doors open to reveal BUS DRIVER, ancient and shaggy with a handlebar mustache.

Mike causes an awkward exchange as he waits for the woman to board despite him being much closer to the door. Of course, he thinks he's a gentleman. She thinks he's a weirdo.

Mike boards and slides his fare into the box and tips an invisible hat towards Bus Driver.

MIKE

And how are you this fine morning?

BUS DRIVER

(Uninterested)

Yeah.

Mike jaunts to his seat and gazes out the window. A minute or so passes and the bus has yet to move.

MIKE

Oh, bus driver! I don't think there was anyone else at the stop so we can probably take off now.

Bus Driver turns slowly to meet Mike's gaze with a haunting visage.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Well, you wouldn't want to make us late, now would you? I'm sure this nice woman has somewhere important to be and as for me I'm starting my new job this morning so I definitely can't afford to be late.

BUS DRIVER

You're gonna die today.

Mike's smile turns to worry for a moment before he picks it back up and bubbles.

MIKE

(Laughing)

I know, right? Like who am I, your scheduler.

Bus Driver stares solemnly.

MIKE (CONT'D)

(Wiping Tears)

Ahh, I'm sorry, I'm sorry.
Take your time.

Bus Driver turns slowly and nods his head slightly at no one as they board the bus. The doors shut behind them and the bus takes off.

INT. CITY BUS - 8:30AM (ALMOST BUSINESS TIME)

Mike skims an article on his phone about hauntings and ghostly happenings at Hazard Center.

BUS PA
Stop Requested.

Mike's gaze follows the crackly PA. He looks down to see the baby staring at him from across the bus. He smiles and waves and starts making goofy faces and goo-goo-gah-gahs. The baby's mother catches notice and grabs her baby making a face of disgust towards Mike. Mike smiles slightly and shoos at them when the bus stops suddenly and Mike smacks his head against the seat in front of him.

MIKE
Crikes! ...Well I guess that
means we're here.

Mike goes to exit the bus and stops on the last step, gazing out at the skyscraper in front of him.

MIKE (CONT'D)
There it is, Hazard Tower, I
can't wait to see the view
from the top!

Mike steps down to the sidewalk then turns back and waves to Bus Driver.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Thanks, Mr. Bus Driver, see
you tomorrow!

BUS DRIVER
(Uninterested)
Yeah.

The doors close behind Mike trapping his waving-hand in the doors. The bus begins moving and he starts panicking as he pounds on the door and jogs alongside the moving bus. As the bus begins to turn a corner Mike digs his heels into the sidewalk and his hand pops free. He pants and rubs his wrist. He looks around and sees the woman and her baby scoffing at his idiocy. He waves meekly to them both before

pressing the crosswalk button and turning back towards Hazard Tower.

MIKE

Geez, that was a close call. I hope he wasn't still mad about my joke. Well, nothing to do but brush it off, brush it off, Mike. Get focused, get in the game, you've got a job to do and you're gonna do a damn good job at that job 'cause it's your job! They hired you for a reason, and that reason is 'cause you're so damn focused. They're lucky to have you, ain't no bus jam in the world that can change that, wooh!

Mike starts bouncing in place and rolling his neck, trying to get loose.

SANDRA DOBBS, a 33 year-old business woman at the top of her game, strides to the cross-walk and looks up from her phone to see Mike making a fool of himself. Her phone rings and Mike turns to see her answering it.

SANDRA

Yeah, what's up? Uh-huh, yeah.
No, I'm just getting here.
Yeah, I'm at the crosswalk,
there's some asshole doing
jumping jacks or something.
Mmhmm, yeah. Okay, byee.

Mike shuffles awkwardly in place. Sandra goes back on her phone.

MIKE

I was just trying to get myself pumped. Today's my first day.

SANDRA
(Uninterested)
Mmhmm, yeah.

MIKE
So, uh, how long have you been here? I'm sure you have some advice for a newbie.

Sandra looks at him dumbfounded. The crosswalk chirps and the signal changes to walk.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Welp, I won't hold ya. See you around!

Sandra flashes a mean-girls smile and strides across the street. Mike gawks at her.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Gosh, she's nice. Welp, not gonna get to work standin' here!

Mike takes one overconfident step over the curb as a bright red sports car with the top down flies through the intersection and swerves, hitting Mike and sending his noodle body flying 100 feet in the air! He comes crashing down with a boney crunch onto the asphalt.

The car screeches and stops. ROB RANCOR, slicked-back 40-some year old CEO of Hazard Inc., turns to look back at the limp body of his victim lying in the street. His eyes go

wide under his sunglasses. He turns forward and gulps before flooring it and skidding away.

The woman from the bus screams and clutches her baby while Sandra stares at the scene, mouth agape. Her phone rings and she answers, slowly raising the phone to her ear.

ROB (over phone)
Hey, Sandy, change of plans.
I'm not coming in today.

SANDRA (into phone)
W-why not...

ROB (over phone)
Oh, you know... it just turns
out I'm... feeling under the
weather. Yeah, you know it's a
really bad cough and I just
don't think I can-

Rob musters a lousy fake cough.

ROB (CONT'D)
-make it in today, I'll see
you tomorrow, sound good? Okay
bye!

Rob hangs up and Sandra stares ahead in disbelief.

EXT. OUTSIDE HAZARD TOWER - MOMENTS AFTER THE ACCIDENT

Mike stands up from the asphalt, eyes wide. He pats himself all over, not believing he's still alive. He looks at the screaming woman.

MIKE
I-it's okay. I'm fine, I'm all
good, see. Welp better get
going.

Mike runs across the street past Sandra and towards the building entrance.

MIKE

(To himself)

Oh my God, that was so embarrassing. And on my first day. Now I'm gonna be known as the guy who got his sandwich tossed before he even made it to lunch. I'm gonna be the laughing stock of the breakroom.

Mike gets to the entry and sees HENRY HORKS, a paunchy, skirtchasing doorman, holding the door for a high-powered businesswoman. As she passes he lets the door fall shut. Mike waits a moment for him to open it. He doesn't. Mike smiles awkwardly.

MIKE

Oh, no worries, I've got it.

Mike opens the door slightly and slips in. Henry cocks an eyebrow as Mike enters.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Gee, I hope he didn't see me eat it too...

Mike enters a huge gilded foyer with business-people strutting around, shouldering the weight of the world. He stumbles meekly through the foot-traffic and makes his way to an elevator where he is surrounded by a crowd of others waiting for a ride up.

The elevator dings and Mike gets jostled as everyone piles in, the elevator is packed full before Mike can get in.

MIKE

Ah, no worries, I'll catch the
next one.

As the elevator doors close, the people in the foyer start
thinning out until Mike is alone in the massive hallway.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(Taking notice)
I guess business hours have
officially begun.

Mike presses the elevator button again and checks his watch.

MIKE
Hope I'm not late.

The elevator dings and the doors slide open. The interior is
different than before, it's dilapidated and old timey.
REAPER, currently in the guise of a Tower of Terror lift
operator, stands inside, generating unease in his
contentment. Mike hesitates.

MIKE
Say, are there two lifts in
this shaft?

Reaper smiles calmly at Mike. Mike steps into the lift.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Right, well, to the top floor
please.

Mike looks forward as the doors creak to a close. The
operator pulls at a rusted lever and the elevator slowly
begins ascending.

MIKE
So I guess this building must
be pretty old judging by the
state of this lift.

REAPER
Yes, very old indeed.

The lights flicker.

MIKE
And how old would you say?

REAPER
Well, the place we're headed
predates your earthly notion
of time but the structure
itself... some 80 years.

MIKE
(Confused)
Ahh haha...

The lights flicker and the elevator shakes.

MIKE (CONT'D)
(Nervous)
Well, I sure hope this lift isn't
that old... right?

REAPER
Oh, no.

Mike sighs in relief.

REAPER (CONT'D)
Much older.

The lights fail completely and the lift screeches to a halt.

MIKE
Ah! Is everything alright?

REAPER
Peachy.

MIKE

Is the lift going to keep moving
or...

REAPER

Shortly.

The elevator rattles.

MIKE

I'm sorry, I've always had a thing
about faulty elevators. Are we
going to be stuck in here long?

REAPER

Hey, hey don't worry, mate. Look,
come here, everything's gonna be
alright, you old sod.

Mike's shadow moves into the embrace of Reaper's shadow.

MIKE

Really?

REAPER

No!

Reaper's head erupts in flame as the flesh melts away
revealing a wicked skull. Mike begins screaming in terror.
Reaper begins screaming in delight. Reaper grabs the lift's
lever and cranks it all the way down, making it spark. The
lift begins plummeting in the darkness. Sparks fly from the
corners of the lift, illuminating the room with a fiery
glow. Reaper is howlin' and cacklin' at Mikey and it looks
sorta like the scene from Shrek where the titular
protagonist shouts out all the villagers' torches.

The flaming elevator falls screeching into the darkness.

INT. ELEVATOR SHAFT - TIME UNKNOWN

Mechanics crash in the fiery darkness and for a moment all is silent. The elevator doors open and light pours into lift, illuminating Mikey's sobbing face.

REAPER

I believe this one's your mate.

Reaper shoves Mike out of the elevator and the doors close behind him. Mikey is sniveling as he looks to the scene before him: an average American office space save for one key difference. The office space is filled with monsters of unfathomable horror! Demons drink coffee round the copy machine, devils file fingers of paperwork, and behemoths battle brutally by the water cooler. Mikey clutches his chest and faints to the floor.

UNKNOWN VOICE

Hey, hey buddy are you alright?

Mikey's eyes flutter open to reveal the face of a kindly man looking down at him.

MIKE

W-was it all a dream?

KINDLY MAN

No.

Kindly Man's face turns to tentacles as he gurgles and spits eldritch evils down Mikey's throat. Mikey screams in horror as he falls unconscious once more. DRETCH, a chaos demon in a tattered suit, reverts to his true form.

DRETCH

Aaaalright, Mikey, that's enough horsing around, let's get you up to speed on things around here!

Dretch lifts Mikey's limp body from the floor by his shirt and begins ushering him around the office.

DRETCH (CONT'D)

Well now don't you worry Mikey, I know the first day on a new job can really get your guts crawling but once I'm done with you, you'll be working the coffee machine like a son of a bitch, you got that? That or my name isn't The Head of Human Resources! Nope, hold on, that's just the job title. Sorry I'm a bit new around here myself. This is still only my first century with the company, before that I was with the firm of SCREECH & GARGLE. Oh, why did I make the change from the most prestigious infernal law firm to this shithole? Well, I'm legally not allowed to say unless I want to be eternally spitfire roasted in the dungeons of old Belle Z, but let's just say the whole situation was nonconsensual. Aaanyways, the names Dretch, and you're gonna want to remember it, I can get you far here, kid. Or I can dismember you, muahahaha. But for real I think you and I are really gonna get along cuz you've got that whole completely silent thing going and I've got that can't shut up to save his life thing going, so something tells me this is gonna work out. What do you say, partner, put her there!

Dretch shakes Mikey's limp hand. A fiery contract apperates beside Dretch and he signs it with a glowing finger as he continues talking.

DRETCH (CONT'D)

Ouch watch it there killer, this is my Harassment-Claim-Filing hand, so I wouldn't go crunching if I were you, mostly cause you look like you're gonna want to take full advantage of its services if I'm shooting straight with you, sugar lumps.

Dretch runs a sensual finger stroke down Mikey's chest and belly, ruining his shirt with his fiery finger.

DRETCH (CONT'D)

Well, now if you're done getting handsy, let's get on to the next stop on Dretch's Tour de Force! Or was that "Tour By Force"?

Dretch looks to Mikey whose head lolls back.

Dretch zips over to the lunchroom.

DRETCH (CONT'D)

Here we are in the room to end all others: the lunchroom. Now if you're half as good at your job as I am, you'll likely end up spending most of your time in here. This room is about so much more than lunch, this is the heartsoul of the office, where you get to see Linda and hear all about the spelling bee her little Danny stole third place in, where Ryan will tell you all about the

beautiful blue-footed booby he
spied on his last birdwatching
trip, where good old Ronnie will
compliment you on your sheer legs
and itty-bitty waistline. Yep,
this is where you go to get away
from the ear-splitting whine of
that goddamn printer and tell
yourself that its okay, its
alright, its only 10 more hours
then you can go home and plant
yourself firmly in the couch seat
and watch the same movie you've
seen two-hundred and fifty seven
times, because who gives a fuck,
you like it and the familiar
characters and unforgettable
one-liners center your ill-fated
soul and forgive you of your
sinful acceptance of the punching,
grinding theatrics that you give
yourself up to day-in and day-out,
again and again until you battered
little psyche shrivels up and
dies.

Dretch glares at Mikey to discern his expression, which is
unchanging in his slumber.

DRETCH (CONT'D)

Awesome! Just wanted to make sure
you weren't one of those jackasses
cause to be honest you've been
giving off some pretty strong
milquetoast energy and I just
can't have my new contractually
obligated best friend bringing me
down like that. But looks like
that's not gonna be a problem!
Next stop, the mailroom!