

LEERY

Written by

Scott Danzig

FADE IN:

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM - DAY

The seats of a lecture hall begin to fill with students.

STUDENT #1
You sure this is the right class?

STUDENT #2
Go ask Jackie Chan over there.

LARRY LI, skinny and hesitant, keeps his head down as he settles into his seat amongst sea of white students.

PROFESSOR (O.S.)
Again, if you're not here for
Introduction to Software
Engineering, I'm afraid you're in
the wrong class.

A short-haired MEI WANG, wearing a gay pride T-shirt, takes stock of Larry from a couple seats away, then moves to sit next to him. Larry visibly relaxes and introduces himself with a handshake.

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS GROUNDS - DAY

Larry and Mei stand in caps and gowns in front of school building. Mei waits with interest as Larry finishes a phone call.

LARRY
I got the job? ... Yes! ... Yes,
that sounds great! ... I'm at my
graduation ceremony. ... Yep, see
you soon Bill.

MEI
Wow, they hired you already?

LARRY
Yeah, they were my top choice by
far.

Larry smiles a toothy grin at Mei.

MEI
Nice work! They're in a pretty old
building, aren't they?

Larry's smile falters.

INT. HOME OF MEI'S PARENTS - DAY

Larry closes the door and enters a comfortable living room where Mei stares out the window.

MEI
I still can't believe you spent
that much on a car.

LARRY
It's fun to drive. You'll see.

MEI'S MOTHER walks in, dressed up, fastening on her second earring.

MEI'S MOTHER
How are you, Larry?

She joins Mei at the window.

MEI'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
Is that your new car? It's
beautiful. Mei, if you had worked
harder, you'd be able to afford
that.

Larry grimaces.

LARRY
Actually... Mei, my company is
hiring. I could probably put in a
good word for you.

MEI
Seriously? You think so?

INT. OFFICE SPACE - AFTERNOON

Mei in a loosely fitting sweater and jeans browses over Instagram feeds on his phone. A sharply dressed Larry traces his finger over a screen cluttered with thirty windows. He stiffens.

LARRY
Finally! I fixed it! Hey, rookie,
you want to check my work?

Larry turns toward an unresponsive Mei, stares for a moment, then shakes his head and turns back.

INT. HOTEL BAR - NIGHT

BILL, 40, with wet hair and a gray suit, sets down a tray of champagne flutes and his dripping coat. He joins Larry and Mei, both seated at the bar.

BILL

I made it! Everyone, let's have a toast!

Bill grabs a flute and raises it. Mei and three others follow suit. Bill notices Larry empty-handed and hands him a glass, which he barely lifts.

BILL (CONT'D)

To our success tomorrow, winning a huge client! And let us officially welcome our newest employee, Mei, to the team!

After everyone else downs their champagne, Larry throws back his own.

MEI

Hey guy, looks like we're officially coworkers! This company can't be more awesome.

Larry silently stares toward the bar's lounge area.

MEI (CONT'D)

What's so interesting?

Mei follows his gaze and sees an attractive brunette scanning her phone.

MEI (CONT'D)

Oh, nice taste, but a bit out of your league, Larry. Or should I say Leery?

Larry stares daggers.

LARRY

I wasn't leering.

Mei holds up her hands in mock surrender. Larry grabs another flute and finishes it as Bill approaches.

BILL

Larry, not too many, okay?

LARRY
I'm not gonna be staying much
longer anyway.

Larry sets his glass down.

BILL
Before you go, I've been meaning to
tell you...

Bill notices Larry's hand over the bar.

BILL (CONT'D)
Hey, that's a nice ring.

Larry brightens, admiring his ring, then opens his mouth to
speak as Mei leans in to look.

MEI
That looks so uncomfortable. Take
it off.

LARRY
No, my Dad gave it to me. And don't
tell me what to do.

MEI
Okay, okay, calm down Leery. I
won't talk about your fashion
choices anymore. Wear what you
like, I won't say a word.

BILL
Leery?

MEI
Yeah, he's been stalking a woman
out there.

LARRY
I'm not fucking stalking her.

MEI
C'mon, talk to her.

Larry squares with Mei.

LARRY
I said, don't tell me what to do.

Larry turns toward Bill.

LARRY (CONT'D)
She wasn't always like this, but
I'm seriously tired of her shit.

MEI
He gets temperamental sometimes.

Larry's eyes roll back toward the champagne tray. He grabs another and drains it. Bill shifts his eyes uncomfortably.

BILL
Larry, you're not driving anywhere
tonight, right?

MEI
We carpooled since we share an
apartment. Anyway, I wouldn't want
Leery to crash his fancy car. It
could be a classic by the time he's
sober.

Bill chuckles.

BILL
But seriously, Larry, I wanted to
tell you...

Larry spins toward Mei.

LARRY
I knew it'd be a mistake to tell
you about this job. Bill, you know
what my (air quotes) friend said
when I told her I got my dream job?
She said it was in an old building.
Just subtle enough.

MEI
Tell me, are you done with your
little tantrum?

BILL
(to Mei)
Give us a minute?

Mei steps away with a sigh.

LARRY
I just can't take her anymore. I'm
done with her.

BILL

Look, I'm not sure of the history here and you don't need to be friends, but...

LARRY

Friends. It's bad enough she knows them all. I'll just pay my last three months of rent and be done with her.

BILL

Wait, sure, but, you can at least work with her, right? She has skills that are hard to find. Also...

LARRY

No.

Bill purses his lips and looks over his shoulder.

BILL

Mei, help me out here.

He waves Mei back over.

BILL (CONT'D)

Ya think you can you stop giving Larry a hard time? I need you both to get along.

LARRY

And I need her out of my life.

MEI

You're going to have to deal with me at some point. We'll be in the same building.

LARRY

Not if I quit. The building's too old anyway.

BILL

But you love your job! And one more thing...

LARRY

Please Bill, I can't work with her!

MEI

(whispering to Larry)
Behind you. Now's your chance!

Larry freezes as the brunette he's been staring at steps up to the bar and places a drink order. Dave's nudges only result in Larry's nervous glances. The woman walks away without incident. Mei shakes his head and leans toward Bill.

MEI (CONT'D)
Ya gotta understand, Leery's Dad
wasn't around long enough to teach
him about women.

Larry stands, his eyes stabbing into Dave's, the corner of his mouth twitching.

LARRY
You asshole.

Larry pushes himself away from the bar.

LARRY (CONT'D)
I'm so done with this. I quit.

Larry turns to leave but Bill moves to intercept.

BILL
Wait, Larry...

Larry shoves past him.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Larry stands at the front desk, wheeled suitcase in hand, talking to a RECEPTIONIST.

RECEPTIONIST
Just a minute while I check you
out.

LARRY
Can you call a cab for me too
please?

The elevator dings and releases a frantic Bill.

BILL
Larry!

Bill races up to Larry while he's trapped in line.

BILL (CONT'D)
Larry, you've been working on this
for two years, and it's about to
pay off! I need you!

LARRY

I'm sorry. I just need a clean break. You saw...

BILL

I know. I understand. But, Larry, there's something I was trying to tell you the other night.

LARRY

Oh?

BILL

We weren't just there to celebrate Mei joining the company. I want to promote you, to manager.

LARRY

Wait, what?

BILL

Mei would be reporting to you.

After a moment of consideration, Larry's eyes meet Bill's. Larry grins.

FADE OUT