

INT. DAY- A CRAMPED ELEVATOR.

The ride is awkward, shitty pop music playing through the elevator's shitty speakers. The elevator halts to a stop, knocking CHRISTINE (geologist) into ADONAI (undercover robot.) Christine's cell phone skids across the floor, but amid the chaos, she doesn't notice.

CHRISTINE

Oh, god, I'm sorry- did it break?

ADONAI

This has *never* happened before. I was told that this building had the highest tech in all of the city. Perhaps the cable is jammed.

CHRISTINE

Is there anything we can do?

ADONAI

I'll alert my superior.

ADONAI holds his pointer finger to his ear and speaks:

ADONAI

The elevator is jammed. (beat)
Floor thirty-three. (beat) Yes.
(beat) I'll "hang tight."

CHRISTINE

What- How- ?

ADONAI

Pardon that. He said it should be fixed within the next two hours.

CHRISTINE

Within the next two hours?!

ADONAI

That is what I was told.

CHRISTINE

I have a very important meeting in... Oh, where's my phone...

Christine scrambles for her phone, sifting through her giant bag. She pulls out a bag of chicken, inspects it for her phone, takes a bite of her chicken, unprovoked, and sighs.

CHRISTINE

Go figure. I swore I just had it.

ADONAI

Is that your phone?

He gestures to the floor. Her phone is in the corner of the elevator.

CHRISTINE

Oh- Thank you! My meeting's in twenty minutes; I need to call my boss ASAP.

ADONAI

It won't do you any good.

CHRISTINE

What makes you say that?

ADONAI

We're going to be stuck in here for another hour at the least. By the time we're out, your meeting will be over.

CHRISTINE

Well... I have to try.

Christine dials her boss, but her phone only beeps. Bad connection.

CHRISTINE

Hey, how did you call *your* boss earlier?

ADONAI

I'm not sure how to respond to that.

CHRISTINE

There's no service in here. *How* did you call your boss earlier?

ADONAI

I'm not sure how to respond to that.

CHRISTINE

Are you kidding me right now?

ADONAI

I'm not sure how to respond to that.

CHRISTINE

Oh my god! Just my luck, I'm stuck in an elevator with the most stubborn man I've ever met.

Christine crumples to the floor. After a beat or two:

CHRISTINE

I *really* need to make it to that meeting. It's all my life's work- it's history in the making. I... I discovered an element. My boss's supervisor is supposed to verify my claim today, but if I'm not even there, he's going to assume that I don't care! But this is *everything* to me- I can't be late because of a stupid elevator!

ADONAI

You discovered a new element?

CHRISTINE

It's not new, just incredibly rare. And that's really the only thing you cared about from all of that?

ADONAI

It is in my nature. Just as it is in *your* nature to care so much.

CHRISTINE

So you can't even show me a little sympathy?

ADONAI

It's the way I was programmed.

CHRISTINE

Then I guess I was programmed to be a little more empathetic. All my life, I've been dreaming about this day. I told my mom, "*I'm going to be a scientist! The best one there is!*" Element 119 has incredible health benefits that could help millions of people, but without my legitimacy, it'll be useless.

ADONAI

That is unfortunate.

CHRISTINE

And the worst part of it all is that I'll never be able to shove it to my older brothers. They always seemed so far ahead in life, with their medical degrees

and law firm. My parents wanted me to be their gorgeous golden girl, entering me into beauty pageants and ruthless ballet lessons. But I never wanted any of that. It's so artificial, you know?

ADONAI

(dryly)

Of course.

CHRISTINE

C'mon, we're gonna be in here for awhile. What about you? Any high aspirations or crippling family trauma?

ADONAI

No. I do what I'm instructed to do in a timely fashion, without the inconvenience of sentimentality.

CHRISTINE

I could never live like that. Don't you get tired of being treated like a corporate slave?

ADONAI

On the contrary, it gives my existence purpose. All I need is an input; the rest is just a task I need to fulfill.

CHRISTINE

That's ridiculous- I mean, there's gotta be more to life than meaningless tasks and orders from your superiors.

ADONAI

I'm just the product of my superiors. If I don't complete the task at hand, I will be shut down and abandoned in a warehouse. I'd much rather be standing where I am today, than to cease to exist.

CHRISTINE

Your job can do that?! Just take your life away without a second thought?

ADONAI

"Why bother with something that won't profit?"

CHRISTINE

Huh?

ADONAI

That's what my superiors have drilled into me. I work to make my boss profit, and he keeps me running.

CHRISTINE

But there's so much more to life than that! Don't you want to explore it for yourself?

ADONAI

Perhaps I would, if things were different.

CHRISTINE

And what makes you so different from me?

ADONAI

I exist, but you live. You breathe air, your heart pumps blood, you laugh and cry. Your hair and fingernails grow so long that you have to clip them to keep them maintained. Every day you shower in warm water that seeps into your skin; you eat, sleep, dream, love. I do not have the luxury of experiencing these sensations, but I am content. I have no need for any of it.

CHRISTINE

You've never experienced love?

ADONAI

There's simply no need for it. It's not in my programming.

CHRISTINE

You've been on about how your "programming" doesn't allow you to feel, but I think love *is* in you, somewhere buried deep. Everyone carries a little within them, it just takes awhile for it to show.

Christine smiles softly. She cups Adonai's face in her palms. He wavers, but doesn't pull away.

CHRISTINE

Take my love, I've had enough to
last three lifetimes.

Christine places a gentle kiss on the

The elevator lights flicker. It rumbles for a moment, and
then ascends. The doors finally open.

CHRISTINE

Well. Have a good one...

Christine exits the elevator with a small wave, leaving
Adonai alone under the fluorescent lights. The doors shut,
enclosing him.

ADONAI

Have a good one.