

SOPHIE

(reading quickly) I represent the caregivers who work at Vital Vista Village #5, as well as the 14 other Vital Villages. Beginning at 12:30 pm, today, we are going on strike.

*They all look at their phones, except for Brad who is confused.*

BRAD

What...?

SOPHIE

The lead caregiver will remain on duty at each community to assist and instruct any supervisors or GMs who may wish to take over the care staff duties.

BRAD

(overlapping) What the hell...

TIMA

(overlapping) ...my phone's blowing up.

SOPHIE

Here are our requests: An across the board wage increase of 2 dollars an hour.

TIMA

(overlapping) Everyone's calling out.

BRAD

(looking at his phone, overlapping) Shit! It's corporate!

SOPHIE

We are requesting proper staffing with a ratio of residents to aides that we find acceptable.

CHERYL

Is this on the news?

NICK

Don't know about the news but it's all over Facebook and Twitter.

CHERYL

I have two tours today!

BRAD

Call the agency!

TIMA

(already calling) What'd you think I'm doing!?

SOPHIE

(reading) We will no longer be lifting or transferring residents with less than the required number of aides. Working last-minute double shifts will no longer be mandatory. Our 2 ten-minute breaks, required by law, will be taken whether or not it is convenient and whether or not there is adequate coverage. Here is a detailed list of our requests.

*She hands out the pages.*

BRAD

You can't strike, you're not union!

NICK

Anybody can strike, dude.

TIMA

(on her phone) They're not answering.

*She makes another call. Sophie continues reading.*

SOPHIE

Many of our brothers and sisters who contract out with employment agencies such as Angels Without Wings, Grandma's Got a New BFF!, We Love Coots & Codgers, April Showers and Bathes Your Mom, the Daughter You Never Had Home Services, and others are standing with us in our fight and have agreed not to respond to agency calls today.

TIMA

(holding up her phone) "We are currently experiencing a high call volume..."

BRAD

You can't spring this on us! We need time to look at your demands and then—

SOPHIE

This is the same list we gave to you 18 months ago, 12 months ago, and 6 months ago. You said "we need time to look at your demands."

CHERYL

This isn't negotiating! This is blackmail.

SOPHIE

Negotiating didn't work.

BRAD

So you're just going to leave sick old people to take care of themselves?

SOPHIE

According to you, the majority of our residents are independent and those on services need very little care.

BRAD

YOU LITTLE PIECE OF—

*Brad's ringtone: The Roof is on Fire!*

BRAD

Holy fuck!!!

NICK

Daddy's gonna be mad.

SOPHIE

I'm not finished.

*Brad walks to the corner of the room with his phone.*

BRAD

Oh, you're finished, Ms. Tamale! You're fired!

TIMA

No, she's not! (to Sophie) You're not fired.

BRAD

(into the phone) Hey, big Joe, what's going on...? Yeah, yeah, I'm just hashing out the details right now—pretty out-of-nowhere but everything's totally handled. I—

*He listens to his father-in-law blow up on the phone, occasionally saying: Uh-huh.*

SOPHIE

Should I keep going or wait for him?

NICK

Keep going. He got the gist of it.

TIMA

(still making phone calls) Are you sure you want to do this?

SOPHIE

Yesterday, it took 3 of us to clean up Mr. Hale. He pooped in his bed and it got everywhere—in his hair, between his toes, the sheets, his glasses, his dentures, even.

CHERYL

(overlapping) Please, my gag reflex...

SOPHIE

(to Cheryl) Mr. Hale weighs over 250 pounds and can barely walk, so getting him to the shower? He fought us every step of the way and then two of us holding him and one trying to soap him up and rinse, but he was so slippery he smacked Mona right in the mouth—split her lip wide open! Then, he pooped again in the shower. That was the first 30 minutes of my shift and it wasn't even the worst part of my day.

*Brad hangs up.*

BRAD

You want to hear about the worst part of my fucking day!? Listening to non-grateful people talk about how hard they have to work! Listen, princess, my great-grandmother worked in a basement laundry, no windows, summer and winter, New York city, 24/7! No 10-minute breaks. No vacation. No L & I. No nothing! My great aunt died in that, in that, you know, that shirt factory fire. Hell, all my relatives came to this country and took whatever shitty job they could get, coal miner, sewer, whatever, and they were GRATEFUL FOR IT!! Who are you to come here from god-knows-where and tell us, "This job isn't enough! I want more pay! More breaks! My back hurts, you have to pay me while my back gets better! I can't work because it's a holy day in my country. I'm pregnant, leave of absence! My baby's sick, leave of absence! I'm pregnant again! Leave of absence!" You want to know how many fucking breaks my family got? ZERO! Zero fucking breaks! We waited generations to get ahead! I am sick up to here with all the whining from people who have been in this country for 5 minutes and instead of learning our language, they learn the loopholes to get everything they can. How about you do what my family did, huh!? How about you WORK HARD AND SAY 'THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY!' Jesus fucking Christ. How about you improve yourself in order to get somewhere. I have a problem with reading words and stuff, right, but you don't know that because I WORKED TO IMPROVE THAT SHIT! No, you just want to strike and make demands and everybody suffers because you won't take your place in line and work like people do when they come to a new country!

*Pause.*

SOPHIE

I was born here.

BRAD

I. DON'T. CARE!!!