COLD OPEN

EXT. LOWER EAST SIDE - NIGHT

SAM and LAURA, two shy 25-year-olds, leave a bar together. They are slightly drunk and very nervous.

    LAURA
    Well hey, it was cool meeting you!

    SAM
    Yeah! Yeah.

They stare awkwardly at each other.

Eventually, Sam moves in for a kiss. But at the last second, he panics and transitions into a clumsy embrace.

    SAM (CONT’D)
    Later, alligator!

    LAURA
    Haha yeah! Okay.

Sam sighs with shame as Laura walks away.

    SAM
    Damn it.

He sits on a stoop and closes his eyes.

    SAM (CONT’D)
    (under his breath)
    Please...if you’re listening...I really like this girl...please make this happen. Please.

CUT TO:

INT. MAIL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A PRINTER spits out SAM’S PRAYER on an 8.5 by 11 sheet of paper.

The document features a picture of Sam’s face, a map of his location, and a date-stamped transcript of his request: “I really like this girl, please make this happen, please.”

SAM’S PRAYER flutters out of the printer and lands in an overflowing MAIL CART, amidst THOUSANDS of OTHER PRAYERS.
As a MAIL WORKER pushes the heavy MAIL CART across the room, we WIDEN to reveal HUNDREDS OF MAIL CARTS, carrying billions of desperate pleas from all mankind.

TITLE CARD:

MIRACLE WORKERS

INT. OFFICE - DAY

We follow BENJI, a laid-back manager, as he glides through the open-plan office on a MonoRover.

He smiles and waves at his chilled out coworkers. It’s a start-up type of vibe and everyone is taking it easy, playing ping pong, kicking a hackey-sack, goofing off.

As Benji heads to the far corner of the office, though, we reveal one employee who stands out from the crowd: CRAIG, an introverted CODER in his 30s.

He works at a STAND-UP DESK lined with MULTIPLE COMPUTER MONITORS. And in protest of the office’s “open-plan”, he has erected a MAKE-SHIFT CUBICLE out of STACKS of MANUALS and FILE BOXES. He wears a STAINED OXFORD SHIRT, KHAKI PANTS and a bulky pair of NOISE-CANCELLING HEADPHONES.

Benji PULLS off Craig’s headphones, startling him.

   BENJI
   Hey bud!

   CRAIG
   (icy)
   Hello, Benji.

   BENJI
   Whatcha grooving to?

   CRAIG
   It’s white noise.

   BENJI
   I don’t know them. You got a sec to vibe?

   CRAIG
   I’m actually working on something extremely urgent.
BENJI
(robot voice)
*Working, urgent, bleep-blorp bleep-blorp...*
He LAUGHS. Craig does not.

BENJI (CONT’D)
Listen, I’m sorry to interrupt, but I couldn’t help but notice you were about to commit a big-time Benji no-no. We don’t eat lunch at our desks!

He gestures at Craig’s half-eaten PEANUT BUTTER and JELLY SANDWICH.

BENJI (CONT’D)
Look, I know you’re busy. We all are! But the bean bag cluster is set up for a reason. To foster a spirit of creative social play.

CRAIG
Like I said, my work is urgent.

BENJI
How urgent can it be?

Craig puts his headphones back on.

As Benji MonoRoves away in disgust, the camera catches Craig’s overflowing INBOX: it is labeled “HUMAN PRAYERS.”

On the bottom of the pile, we see SAM’S PRAYER.

INT. HEAVEN INC. OFFICES - THE NEXT MORNING
Craig has pulled an all-nighter and is finally up to SAM’S PRAYER.

He’s about to reach for it, when the WHITE NOISE on his headphones CUTS OUT.

He looks up and sees with annoyance that a young woman has TRIPPED over his POWER CORD.

She is holding a MAP of the HEAVEN INC. OFFICES.

CRAIG
You must be lost.

She checks her map.
ELIZA
I don’t think so.

CRAIG
Interns are down on three.

ELIZA
I’m actually a coder.

Craig is surprised.

CRAIG
Which department? Snowflake Design?

She shakes her head, a little insulted.

CRAIG (CONT’D)
Rainbow Placement? Department of Clouds That Look Like Things?

ELIZA
Department of Human Prayers.

She shows him her PHOTO ID CARD: ELIZA HUNTER, ANGEL, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN PRAYERS. It’s emblazoned with a pair of GOLDEN WINGS.

Craig is horrified.

CRAIG
One moment.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Craig tries to keep up with Benji, who glides through the office on his MonoRover.

CRAIG
Why wasn’t I told about this?

BENJI
I announced it yesterday. Guess you had your headphones on.

CRAIG
I don’t need any help.

BENJI
You told me you were busy. All I’m trying to do is make things easier for you.
CRAIG
This actually makes things much harder, because now I’ll have to train an amateur, and from the looks of her that could take years.

BENJI
Eliza comes highly recommended from the mail room.

CRAIG
Sorting prayers is a lot different than answering them.

BENJI
Craig, relax. She’s just gonna take some of your workload. You’ll barely even notice that she’s there.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER
Craig walks back to his make-shift cubicle.

He is dismayed to see that Eliza is taking down one of the “walls” of his make-shift cubicle.

CRAIG
What are you doing?

ELIZA
Just trying to study up.

He burns with anger as she takes various MANUALS out of the stack and tosses them onto her empty desk.

ELIZA (CONT’D)
I gotta say, I’m surprised this department isn’t bigger.

CRAIG
It requires a lot of specific expertise.

ELIZA
There’s over 15 billion prayers a day. How are two angels supposed to answer them all?
CRAIG
Answering them all is not a realistic goal.

ELIZA
What is?

CRAIG
I’m typically able to process about half...

ELIZA
That’s not bad.

CRAIG
...of one millionth percent.

ELIZA
Oh. Well, don’t worry. From now on, you’ve got help!

She pulls a MANUAL out of the center of Craig’s STACK, causing the “wall” to crumble down.

INT. OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Eliza takes a prayer out of her INBOX and reads it out loud.

ELIZA
“Please let me sink one for once in my damn life.”

She flips in vain through a MANUAL. Every page is an INDECIPHERABLE JUMBLE of DENSE CODES and CHARTS.

ELIZA (CONT’D)
Hey, Craig?

Craig, white noise blaring through his headphones, types rapidly on his computer.

ELIZA (CONT’D)
Craig? Craig!

Craig reluctantly takes off his headphones.

CRAIG
Yes?

ELIZA (re: prayer)
How would you approach this one?
Craig grabs the prayer.

CRAIG
Standard wind code.

ELIZA
And how does that work exactly?

CRAIG
(exasperated)
It’ll be faster if I just do it for you.

He feeds the prayer into a SCANNER-like machine on his desk.

On his COMPUTER SCREEN, we see an AMATEUR GOLFER lining up a LONG PUTT.

Craig CRACKS his KNUCKLES and positions them over his keyboard.

The golfer puts the ball. It starts to veer wide, but as Craig types, the ball RIGHTS ITSELF and SWERVES into the hole!

The golfer celebrates with a series of PELVIC THRUSTS.

CRAIG (CONT’D)
Processed.

ELIZA
What did you type in?

CRAIG
Southwesterly gust, 17 miles per hour. It’s all in chapter two.

She flips her MANUAL to chapter two, revealing a COMPLEX TABLE marked GUSTS AND BREEZES.

ELIZA
Why couldn’t you just zap the ball into the hole?

CRAIG
We’re not allowed to break the laws of physics. It’s against company policy.

ELIZA
So we can’t make people fly, or resurrect the dead.
CRAIG
Of course not. *

ELIZA
Must make it hard to answer prayers.

CRAIG
Not if you know what you’re doing. *

He double-clicks his mouse and plays her some of his recent work.

CUT TO:

INT. CHILD’S BEDROOM – NIGHT

A 4th grader flips nervously through some flash cards.

CRAIG (O.C.)
This unintelligent boy human prayed for extra time to study Spanish.

Behind him, we see snow falling through a window.

CRAIG (O.C.) (CONT’D)
So I gave him a snow day.

CUT TO:

INT. DRIVEWAY – MORNING

A BUSINESSWOMAN, running-late, looks frantically around her SNOW-COVERED DRIVEWAY.

CRAIG (O.S.)
Then the next morning I did some strategic melt-work, to help out this absentminded female.

A RAY OF SUN has melted a CIRCULAR DRY SPOT in the middle of the driveway, revealing the woman’s CAR KEYS.

BUSINESSWOMAN
Oh, thank God.

She SWIPES them up.

CUT BACK TO:
INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME

Eliza squints at the next prayer in her inbox.

ELIZA
What do you do if you can’t crack one?

CLOSE UP on her prayer. It reads: “PLEASE FIX EVERYTHING.”

CRAIG
Unanswerables go in here.

He gestures at a RED BIN full of PRAYERS.

ELIZA
Where does it go?

Craig points up.

ELIZA (CONT’D)
You mean...

Craig nods.

ELIZA (CONT’D)
Whoa.

CRAIG
Yes, it’s a bit more pressure up here than in the mail room.

She bristles.

CRAIG (CONT’D) (twisting the knife)
How long did it take you to get promoted?

ELIZA (a little embarrassed)
Five-hundred years.

She carefully places the “please fix everything” prayer into the RED BIN.

ELIZA (CONT’D)
It was worth it.

CUT TO:
INT. EXECUTIVE WING - HALLWAY - LATER

A MAIL WORKER carries the RED BIN (with the “please fix everything” prayer on top) down a wood-panelled hallway, lined with leather couches and framed oil paintings.

He walks past a series of PROGRESSIVELY ANCIENT ANIMAL HEADS: a DEER, a WOOLLY MAMMOTH, a DINOSAUR.

Eventually, he comes to a pair of LARGE BRASS DOORS.

Alice, the CEO’s beautiful, English RECEPTIONIST, smiles at him from her desk.

ALICE
You can just leave those with me.

He dumps the prayers onto her desk and then lingers for a bit, eyeing the brass doors.

ALICE (CONT’D)
Thank you so much.

The worker sighs, picks up the empty red bin and walks back down the hall.

Alice waits until he’s out of sight, then picks up a phone.

ALICE (CONT’D)
Sir, some more prayers came for you? Yes, all human. Will do.

She hangs up the phone and starts feeding the prayers into a SHREDDER.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - THE NEXT MORNING

Eliza grabs a prayer from her inbox.

ELIZA
(reading)
"Please just let us catch one measly fish."

She feeds the prayer into the scanner on her desk.

On her computer screen, we see a FATHER and his YOUNG SON casting rods into a river.

ELIZA (CONT’D)
Don’t worry, I’m on it.
She cracks open a DIET COKE and confidently gets to work.

CUT TO:

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - ABOUT AN HOUR LATER

Eliza, now on to her THIRD DIET COKE, flips through her manual with frustration.

On her screen we see the father and son, still fish-less, looking bored and miserable.

SCIENTISTS (O.S.)
Hooray!/Hallelujah!

Eliza looks over at Craig. On his screen, a group of SCIENTISTS CHEER as their ROCKET successfully LAUNCHES.

CRAIG
Processed.

He grabs another prayer from his inbox.

Eliza, looking a little competitive, turns back to her work.

CUT TO:

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - ABOUT AN HOUR LATER

Eliza’s frustration mounts. Her humans still haven’t caught a fish.

OLD WOMAN (O.S.)
Bingo!

Eliza peeks at Craig’s screen. An old woman is celebrating her bingo victory with a wild dance.

CRAIG
Processed.

Eliza, annoyed, turns back to her screen.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - NIGHT

Eliza carefully types in a code.

On her screen, the young boy appears to catch something. But when he yanks his rod out of the river, it’s just a clump of seaweed.
Eliza curses under her breath.

FARMER (O.S.)
It’s a miracle!

Eliza looks over at Craig’s screen. A middle-aged farmer and his wife celebrate as OIL spurts out of their land.

FARMER’S WIFE
The farm is saved!

FARMER
Praise heaven!

CRAIG
Processed.

He walks over to Eliza’s desk, a smug look on his face.

CRAIG (CONT’D)
Is that the same prayer you were working on this morning?

ELIZA (defensive)
I’ve almost got it.

CRAIG
Doesn’t look that way.

ELIZA
I know what I’m doing.

CRAIG
Let me just process it for you.

He PULLS the PRAYER out of her scanner.

CRAIG (CONT’D)
This will take me thirty seconds.

ELIZA
I said I know what I’m doing!

She YANKS BACK her prayer.

CRAIG
Fine.

He walks away.
Eliza CRACKS OPEN another Diet Coke and stares at the FISH PRAYER with newfound determination.

CUT TO:

INT. EXECUTIVE WING - AFTERNOON

Alice is SHREDDING the last of the human prayers when SANJAY, a slick executive in his 30s, strides up to her desk.

SANJAY
How is he today?

ALICE
Not great.

She presses her INTERCOM.

ALICE (CONT’D)
God? I have Sanjay here for your weekly briefing?

The BRASS DOORS SWING OPEN.

ALICE (CONT’D)
If he asks about Bill Maher, pretend you didn’t watch.

Sanjay nods and nervously enters God’s office.

INT. GOD’S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

God sits in a swivel chair, his back to Sanjay (and us.)

SANJAY
...and so, to sum up, we’ve got six wars in progress, seventeen famines and a genocide.

GOD, a weary CEO in his 60s, swivels into view, scotch glass in hand.

GOD
Did you watch last night?

SANJAY
(playing dumb)
Watch what?

GOD
Bill Maher.
SANJAY
Who’s Bill Maher again?

GOD
Cut the horse shit, Sanjay.

SANJAY
Yeah, I watched.

GOD
He just kept twisting the knife. Pointed out bible inconsistencies. Brought up World War II. He’s in my head, Sanjay. He’s right in my head.

SANJAY
I could do what we discussed.

GOD
Even if we kill him, it won’t improve my numbers. Worship rates are down across the board. And the things people are saying about me online...

SANJAY
I told you not to read that stuff.

GOD
I can’t help it!

God downs his scotch and pours himself a refill.

GOD (CONT’D)
It used to be so easy. A little sun and some fruit and they were happy. Now they curse me out when their internet is slow. Do you know how long it’s been since anyone sacrificed a ram to me?

SANJAY
What about those voodoo guys? In the Caribbean?

GOD
It’s all chickens. Sometimes a goat. That’s, like, best-case.

He gets a far off look in his eyes.
GOD (CONT'D)
Sometimes I wonder if I should just pack it in. Pursue my other interests. Finally give painting a real shot.

SANJAY
Let’s give it a beat. Things could improve.

GOD
(ominous)
They better.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - NIGHT
The office is deserted except for Eliza, who continues to toil at her desk, amid a dozen empty Diet Cokes.

On her screen, the father and son set up their CAMPING TENT.

YOUNG BOY
You promised we’d catch a fish, Daddy.

FATHER
I know, son. I know.

He GLARES up at the heavens with CONTEMPT.

ELIZA
(to screen)
Give me a break! It’s my first day!

She closes the manual she’s been using (BASIC ANGELIC INFLUENCE) and flips through the other books heaped on her desk. We see their TITLES:

- DREAM PROGRAMMING (BETA)
- HEAVEN ACCEPTANCE RATES 1900-2000
- OFFICIAL SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY
- ADVANCED ANGELIC INFLUENCE

She grabs “ADVANCED ANGELIC INFLUENCE” and flips through the pages.

ELIZA (CONT’D)
Let’s try...this one...

She carefully types in a code and presses ENTER.
A line of text pops onto the screen: “Current Activated.”

ELIZA (CONT’D)
Yes!
She swivels around ecstatically in her chair.

Her smile fades, though, as her computer starts to BEEP.

An ERROR WINDOW on the screen reads: “CODE BLACK: TSUNAMI TRIGGERED.”

ELIZA (CONT’D)
No! No!

INT. OFFICE – EARLY MORNING
Craig enters holding a cup of coffee. He finds Eliza at her desk, frantically typing in codes.

CRAIG
Did you stay here all night?
Working on that one little fishing prayer?

ELIZA
Of course not.
(then)
Hey, out of curiosity, how do you reverse a Code Black?

CRAIG
You can’t.

He sits down at his desk and takes a new prayer out of his INBOX.

CRAIG (CONT’D)
“Please stop this horrible tsunami.” Not much I can do about that.

He TOSSES IT into the RED BIN.

ELIZA
How often does that red bin go upstairs?

CRAIG
Every other Tuesday.
ELIZA
(panicking)
That’s it?

CRAIG
He’s the CEO. He’s probably incredibly busy.

ELIZA
That tsunami’s halfway across the Pacific. If it hits Malaysia, it could kill a million people.

Craig shrugs.

CRAIG
Some things are out of our hands.

Eliza GRABS the Red Bin and takes off.

CRAIG (CONT’D)
Where are you going?

Eliza points UP.

Craig’s eyes widen with fear as she hurries toward the elevators.

CUT TO:

INT. GOD’S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

God, scotch glass in hand, watches Bill Maher give a monologue.

BILL MAHER (V.O.)
...and then it all comes out of a hole in our butts? If you ask me, that’s un-intelligent design!

SFX: LAUGHTER, APPLAUSE

GOD
(imitating Maher)
“that’s un-intelligent design...”

He downs his scotch and reaches for the decanter.

It’s empty.

GOD (CONT’D)
Damn it.
EXT. EXECUTIVE WING - MOMENTS LATER

Eliza plops the RED BIN on Alice’s desk.

    ALICE
       (big smile)
       I’ll see to it that he gets them.

    ELIZA
       He needs to read them now. Please.
       I’ve got a life-or-death emergency.

God swings open his brass doors.

    GOD
       Ditto!

He hands Alice his empty scotch decanter. She goes to refill it. *

    GOD (CONT’D)
       (to Eliza)
       Who are you?

Eliza is intimidated, but barrels ahead anyway.

    ELIZA
       I’m Eliza. Department of Human Prayers? I just got promoted from the mail room?

God stares at her blankly.

    ELIZA (CONT’D)
       It doesn’t matter. Listen, there’s a tsunami heading towards Malaysia and many human lives are at stake.

    GOD
       Sanjay?

Sanjay hurries over.

    GOD (CONT’D)
       Grab a pad, this is important.

Eliza sighs with relief.

    GOD (CONT’D)
       I’ve decided to kill Bill Maher.

Eliza looks confused.
GOD (CONT’D)
I wasn’t going to, but now, I’m just like, “I need to kill him. I need for him to be dead.”

SANJAY
(taking notes)
Any particular method?

GOD
Is it too crazy to explode his penis? Is that too crazy? Be honest with me.

SANJAY
(evasive)
I mean...it’s not a normal thing that happens to humans. But that doesn’t mean we can’t do it.

ELIZA
What about the tsunami?

GOD
That’s not bad. So Maher’s, like, filming his show or whatever and then a giant wave just crashes through and takes him. And he’s, like, “whoa!”

He LAUGHS.

GOD (CONT’D)
(thinking)
I gotta say, though, I keep coming back to exploding his penis. I mean, I’m not saying it has to be that, but I do think that’s the pitch to beat.

ELIZA
So you’re not going to stop the tsunami?

GOD
I’m pretty swamped today. But I’ll tell you what, I’ll put Pablo on the case.

ELIZA
Who’s Pablo?

GOD
My prophet.
He turns on a FLAT SCREEN TV.

On it, PABLO, a HOMELESS MAN dressed in ALUMINUM FOIL, is screaming at a FAMILY in a PARKING LOT.

PABLO
HEED MY WORDS! THE LORD IS REAL!
(speaking in tongues)
KALA-BAKA-SHABAKA-TASHAKA-KA...

Pablo notices God and waves, like someone who just got a Skype call.

PABLO (CONT’D)
Hey God.

GOD
Hey Pablo. How’d it go today? Win any followers?

PABLO
I’m striking out.

GOD
You make the sign?

PABLO
Just like you said.

He holds up a cardboard sign; it is covered in WILD SCRAWLS.

GOD
What about the crazy “Kala-baka-shabaka” stuff. Did that get anyone’s attention?

PABLO
Not really.

GOD
Huh. Maybe try being more aggressive. You know, really get in people’s faces and stuff. Go right up to their cars.

PABLO
Can do.

ELIZA
Your prophet is a homeless person?
GOD
It’s not his fault. Ever since I started zapping visions into his brain, people have been calling him crazy.

ELIZA
Why is he wearing all that tin foil?

GOD
Well, I want him to stand out. I mean, I don’t just want him to look like everybody else.

(he turns to the screen)
Pablo, listen, it sounds like there’s a tsunami cooking in Montana.

ELIZA
Malaysia.

GOD
Malaysia. Would you do me a solid and warn the folks down there?

PABLO
(re: sign)
Real estate’s kinda tight. I could make a new sign?

GOD
Nah, that’s okay. Just try to squeeze it in on the bottom. If you can’t, you can’t.

ELIZA
That’s all you’re going to do? What if no one listens to him?

GOD
Look, I’ve been giving Pablo the straight dope since he was 19. If the humans don’t want to pay attention, that’s on them.

Eliza, looking shell-shocked, starts to make her way back to the elevators.

As she staggers down the hall, she overhears an exchange.

ALICE (O.S.)
What should I do with these?
GOD (O.S.)
Eh, the usual.

SFX: SHRED

Eliza turns around and watches in horror as Alice feeds the PRAYERS into her SHREDDER.

ELIZA
You just shred them?

GOD
Ugh, not this "paper-free office" stuff again.

ELIZA
Don’t you think you should at least read them first?

GOD
I don’t want to sound cynical here, but what’s the point?

ELIZA
(rapid)
Look, I know running the earth is probably really hard, but if you’re not going to even try to fix things, if you’re just going to ignore all the problems, it’s like, honestly, why even keep the planet open at all?

She swallows, shocked by her own outburst.

Sanjay and Alice stare at the floor, terrified of how God will react.

God glares at Eliza for a beat -- but then his expression softens.

GOD
You want to know something? You’ve got a point.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - MOMENTS LATER

Craig shakes his head in amazement.

CRAIG
I can’t believe you went into his office. That’s completely insane.
Eliza smiles proudly.

ELIZA
You gotta be bold if you want to change the world.

SFX: BING

ELIZA (CONT’D)
What was that?

CRAIG
Company-wide message from the CEO.

He opens the window and they watch God’s video address.

GOD
Hello, Heaven Inc employees. After much consideration I’ve decided to destroy the earth. I want to give a special thanks to Eliza from the Department of Human Prayers, who encouraged me to make this great decision.

Craig turns to Eliza with horror. She blinks back tears.

GOD (CONT’D)
The earth will be destroyed in 30 days, by either fire or ice. Haven’t decided. That’s all.

Eliza staggers over to her desk and collapses in her seat.

On her SCREEN, the father and son are celebrating.

They’ve caught a fish.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES – THE NEXT DAY

Craig is hunched over his computer, eating a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, typing rapidly.

On his screen, a nervous, unathletic 6-YEAR-OLD GIRL steps up to the plate in a game of KICKBALL.

Her parents cheer from the bleachers, filming her every move.

The girl MURMURS a desperate plea to heaven as her COUNSELOR rolls the red ball towards her.

Craig is about to type in a code, when Benji MonoRoves over to his desk.
BENJI
Craig, I thought we vibed about this. We don’t eat lunch at our desks.

CRAIG
I’m sorry. It’s just, mankind is about to be destroyed, and I want to improve their final days--

BENJI *(robot voice)*
Mankind, bleep-blorp bleep-blorp-- *(regular voice)*
Craig, it’s over. You’re gonna have to move on.

He MonoRoves away.

Craig eyes the screen just in time to see the 6-year-old girl miss the ball.

COUNSELOR (O.S.)
Strike three!

Craig BANGS his fist against his desk.

CRAIG
Damn it.

INT. EXECUTIVE WING – DAY
Sanjay watches as Alice unwraps a bunch of ART SUPPLIES.

SANJAY *(worried)*
Is that paint?

ALICE
It’s all he’s been doing since the announcement.

SANJAY
It’s not the still lifes again, is it? With the wooden bowls of cherries?

Alice holds up a WOODEN BOWL OF CHERRIES.

SANJAY (CONT’D)
Shit.

Eliza emerges from the elevator.
ELIZA
Do you have a second to talk?

SANJAY
Actually, thanks to you, I’m pretty much free from now on.

CUT TO:

INT. EXECUTIVE WING - MOMENTS LATER

Eliza sits beside Sanjay, who drinks a BRANDY while getting a SHOE SHINE.

SANJAY
(condescending)
You know, I actually started out in Human Prayers.

ELIZA
Why’d you quit?

SANJAY
I didn’t quit. I got promoted. Nobody stays down there unless there’s something wrong with them. Even Benji moved up and I think he * might actually be illiterate. That’s not a joke. I don’t think that guy knows how to read.

ELIZA
Don’t you miss making a difference?

SANJAY
(sarcastic)
You mean like you’ve been doing?

Eliza burns with shame.

SANJAY (CONT’D)
Look, I get it! If I were personally responsible for seven billion deaths, I’d feel guilty too. But you’ve gotta have perspective.

ELIZA
Perspective?

SANJAY
Mankind is a tiny species in a tiny solar system in a very tiny galaxy.

(MORE)
SANJAY (CONT'D)
It’s not like God created the universe for us.

ELIZA
Then why did he create it?

SANJAY
To manufacture chromium.

Beat.

ELIZA
I’m sorry, what?

SANJAY
Chromium. It’s, like, a type of gas.

ELIZA
So God is a chromium manufacturer?

SANJAY
One of the biggest ones around.

ELIZA
And human beings serve no purpose whatsoever.

SANJAY
I wouldn’t say that. Sometimes, when we exhale, we release a trace amount of chromium. But yeah, we’re not exactly keeping the lights on, if you know what I mean.

ELIZA
So why did he make us?

SANJAY
I think he was bored. And maybe a bit lonely. He’s sort of a complicated guy.

God emerges from his office, with an air of forced nonchalance.

He is dressed in a tee shirt and carpenter pants, which are both smeared with subtle paint stains.

GOD
Hey guys, how’s it going? Would you mind stepping into my office for a sec? I’d love to get your opinion on something, no big deal.
Sanjay sighs. He knows where this is going.

SANJAY
Come on.

Eliza, looking confused, follows him into God's office.

INT. GOD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS
God gestures at an amateurish painting of a bowl of cherries.

GOD
(stagey)
So, Alice just picked up this painting for me from an art gallery. It's by some local artist. I'm not sure who. I guess I was just wondering...like...what do you guys think of it?

Sanjay forces a smile.

SANJAY
I think it's great.

GOD
Really?

SANJAY
Yep. Definitely professional quality.

God turns to Eliza.

GOD
What do you think, Eliza?
Sanjay and Alice shoot her urgent looks.

ELIZA
(forced)
It's...good.

GOD
On a scale of one to ten, where would you put it?

ELIZA
I don't know. Uh...maybe a sev...
Sanjay and Alice glare at her.
ELIZA (CONT’D)
Ten. Definitely a ten.

God is so excited he can barely contain himself.

GOD
Alice? Would you mind telling
Sanjay and Eliza who painted this
particular work of art?

ALICE
It was God.

Sanjay and Eliza feign shock.

SANJAY
What? No. Really?

ELIZA
Wow! That’s amazing. Great.

God BOWS as everyone CLAPS.

GOD
Thank you. Who wants some absinthe?

He holds up a HUGE GLASS of absinthe.

ELIZA
(a little shocked)
What time is it?

GOD
You know what’s crazy? I don’t even
know. When I pick up the brush the
hours just fly by. I have no idea
how long this painting took me.
Could have been eight hours, could
have been fourteen. Alice, how long
was I working for?

ALICE
About an hour.

GOD
See, I have no idea.

He drinks his absinthe and marvels at his painting.

GOD (CONT’D)
I think it’s the best thing I’ve
ever done.

ELIZA
(trying)
What about the earth?
GOD
(waving his hand)
Juvenilia.

ELIZA
I think you’re being too hard on yourself. Earth is a really good planet.

GOD
Have you seen Africa lately? Two words: hachi-machi. Sometimes, I make myself look at it, for like ten seconds, just to see if I can do it. But usually after five, I’m like, “check please.”

He takes out his RED BIN.

GOD (CONT’D)
After you left yesterday, I went through the whole bin. Made myself sit down and read them, for the first time in years. It was a bummer with a capital B. Look at these...

(flipping through stack)
Sickness, poverty, Africa, Africa, hurricane, Africa, Africa, Africa. They’re all completely hopeless!

ELIZA
They can’t all be hopeless.

GOD
You think I’m exaggerating?

ELIZA
Maybe a little.

GOD
(losing patience)
All right, I’ll tell you what, I’ll make you a deal. If you can answer even one of these doozies, I’ll keep the earth open.

Vince and Alice turn to each other with shock.

ELIZA
What? Seriously?
GOD
Yeah, take your pick! It can be the easiest prayer in the whole bin! If you can crack it before Pablo gets to zero, I’ll cancel the fire ball.
(to Sanjay)
I decided to go fire.

Sanjay makes a note of it.

God hands Eliza the RED BIN full of PRAYERS.

She looks down nervously at the daunting pile.

ELIZA
Is it cool if I work with a partner?

CUT TO:

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - MOMENTS LATER

Eliza shows the RED BIN to Craig, who shakes his head pessimistically.

CRAIG
I sent those upstairs for a reason. They’re unanswerable.

ELIZA
There’s got to be one in here we can process.

CRAIG
Trust me, I tried.

ELIZA
Yeah, but it’ll be different this time.

CRAIG
Why?

ELIZA
You’ll have my help.

CRAIG
You’ve helped enough!

Eliza takes a step back, startled by his outburst.
CRAIG (CONT’D)
Before you got here, I was doing a
good job! I had everything under
control!

ELIZA
I know I screwed up. But it’s not
too late to fix things. We can put
everything back exactly the way it
was. But it’s going to take
specific expertise. And someone who
really knows what he’s doing.

She holds out the RED BIN.

Craig takes it.

CUT TO:

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - MOMENTS LATER

Eliza and Craig sit side-by-side, sorting through the STACK OF PRAYERS.

ELIZA
...Africa, Africa, Africa...what
about this one?

She slides a prayer into the SCANNER.

On her computer screen, we see a KNICKS FAN praying in front of the TV SCREEN.

KNICKS FAN
Please let the Knicks be good this year.

CRAIG
Unanswerable.

ELIZA
Really?

CRAIG
I looked into it. You’d have to go
against the laws of physics.

A LINK pops onto the screen.

ELIZA
What’s that?
CRAIG
Identical prayers are cross-referenced.

He clicks on the LINK and the PRAYING KNICKS FAN dissolves into a GRID of 32 KNICKS FANS, all on their knees, praying for the same impossible miracle.

ELIZA
* Sorry guys. *

She PULLS the prayer out of the scanner and the knicks fans disappear.

Eliza flips through the remaining prayers.

ELIZA (CONT’D)
World peace?

CRAIG
Unanswerable.

ELIZA
Equality?

CRAIG
Impossible.

ELIZA
How about this one?

She feeds a prayer into the scanner. It’s SAM’S PRAYER.

The angels watch as the human murmurs his plea.

SAM
I really like this girl...please make this happen...please...

CRAIG
(rolling eyes)
No way.

ELIZA
What? Why?

CRAIG
Love prayers never work. There are too many variables. That girl he likes could be married or in love with someone else...

ELIZA
Yeah, I guess you’re right.
A LINK pops onto the screen.

CRAIG
Huh. That’s new.

ELIZA
Guess someone else wants Sam to get the girl.

Craig CLICKS on the link.

On the screen, we see LAURA, in her bedroom, closing her eyes in prayer.

LAURA
...I really like this guy...if you’re listening...please make this happen. Please.

Eliza and Craig turn to each other with excitement.

CRAIG
This could work.

INT. EXECUTIVE WING - DAY

Eliza pulls Craig down the hall.

CRAIG
* We’re not supposed to be on this floor.

ELIZA
* These are special circumstances.

CRAIG
* We don’t have clearance.

ELIZA
* It’s fine.

CRAIG
* I’ll just wait here.

He CROUCHES behind a plant. She tries to pull him along, but he won’t budge.

Eliza sighs and walks on to God’s office without him.

INT. GOD’S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Eliza waits patiently while God reads Sam’s prayer.
GOD
The wording’s a little vague. I mean, “make this happen?” What does that mean exactly?

ELIZA
I don’t think it’s vague. It just means these two humans want to become a couple.

GOD
Well, yeah. But at what point do two humans “become a couple?”

ELIZA
I don’t know. What do you think?

GOD
* Intercourse?

Eliza swallows.

ELIZA
That’s a lot to arrange in a month. How about this: we’ll say the prayer’s been answered if they go out on three dates.

Beat.

GOD
I think it’s gotta be intercourse.

ELIZA
How about a kiss?

GOD
What kind of kiss? We talking tongue?

ELIZA
Let’s say on the lips.

GOD
But with some tongue action, right?

ELIZA
(reluctant)
Okay, fine. With some tongue action.

GOD
Okay. Deal.
He extends his hand. Eliza shakes it.

GOD (CONT’D)
(laughing)
Good luck.

ELIZA
What’s so funny?

GOD
You picked the hardest one in the bin!

ELIZA
How hard can it be? They already like each other. They just have to go for it.

GOD
“Going for it” isn’t exactly mankind’s strong suit. You know how long it was before a human worked up the guts to try berries? Literally, like, fifty thousand years. They’re total cowards.

ELIZA
I think that’s a little bit harsh.

CUT TO:
*

INT. EXECUTIVE WING – SAME

Craig is still HIDING behind the plant.

Sanjay spots him and strides over, a condescending grin on his face.

SANJAY
Hi, Craig!

CRAIG
(averting eye contact)
Hello, Sanjay.

SANJAY
It’s been a while! Where are they keeping you these days?

CRAIG
Department of Human Prayers.
SANJAY
Wow, still! That must be some kind of record! Unless Benji’s still down there.

CRAIG
He got promoted.

SANJAY
Benji got promoted? Wow! Good for him!

Craig glares at Sanjay.

Sanjay grins and continues to twist the knife.

SANJAY (CONT’D)
I gotta say, I envy you. When you’re down in Human Prayers, no one cares if you screw up. Because it’s, like, literally nobody is watching. But when you’re an archangel, reporting straight to God, it’s like, all of a sudden, your work counts.

Alice hurries over to Sanjay.

ALICE
Have you exploded Bill Maher’s dick yet?

SANJAY
(ashamed)
Not yet.

ALICE
Please hurry. God wants it done by Friday at the latest. Balls, too.

Craig smiles as Sanjay hurries off.

A moment later, Eliza bounds out of God’s office.

CRAIG
How’d it go?

ELIZA
We’ve got work to do.

She grabs his wrist and leads him toward the elevators.
INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - MOMENTS LATER

Craig types some keywords into a youtube-style “SEARCH BOX” on his computer.

CRAIG
Okay, here’s Sam and Laura’s first encounter. Saturday night, 8:22 pm EST.

He presses “Play.”

INT. BAR - EVENING

Laura sits alone at a table, typing on a laptop.
Sam sits alone at a nearby table, drinking a beer and trying not to stare at her.
She looks in his direction and he shyly shifts his gaze back to his own laptop.

CRAIG (O.C.)
I’ll skip ahead.

We watch the scene unfold in FAST FORWARD. Glasses pile up on Sam’s table. He’s on his third beer when he finally works up the courage to talk to Laura. The clip returns to normal speed.

SAM
Working late, huh?

LAURA
What?

SAM
Working late!

LAURA
Oh! Yeah.

They smile awkwardly at each other and turn back to their computers.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Craig fast-forwards.

CRAIG
After that there’s another forty minutes of silence.
ELIZA
What’s wrong with them?

CRAIG
Apparently they’re shy.

INT. BAR - NIGHT
Sam finishes his third beer and nervously clears his throat.

SAM
What...are...you working on?

LAURA
Oh, just designing a flyer!

She shows him the GREEN FLYER she’s mocking up on her computer.

LAURA (CONT’D)
I work for the Wildlife Federation. We’re trying to save the Red-Tailed Chimpanzee.

SAM
Wow, they’re so cool-looking.

LAURA
I know, right? We don’t know why they’re dying out.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - DAY
Craig types in a search.

CRAIG
Airborne Ebola.

ELIZA
Holy shit.

INT. BAR - NIGHT
Laura explains her work.

LAURA
We’re raising money to send doctors to the animals, to study them up close. You know, really work amongst them in a hands-on kind of way.
SAM
That’s such a great cause.

LAURA
Thank you! What about you, what are you working on?

SAM
It’s my dissertation. I’m trying to build a fuel cell that can neutralize carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

LAURA
(amazed)
Would that stop global warming?

SAM
Hopefully! I mean, assuming my hypothesis is correct!

INT. OFFICE FLOOR - DAY
Craig types in a quick search.

CRAIG
Incorrect.

INT. BAR - NIGHT
A waitress comes over.

WAITRESS
Another round?

SAM
I don’t know, it’s getting kind of late.

LAURA
Sure, I’ll have one.

SAM
Yeah! Me too.

They humans smile at each other -- and finally close their laptops.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - CONTINUOUS
Eliza and Craig inch closer to the screen.

ELIZA
These losers are pretty perfect for each other, huh?
CRAIG
I ran a Compatibility Check.

He opens an EXCEL SPREADSHEET.

CRAIG (CONT’D)
They scored extremely high.

ELIZA
(reading spreadsheet)
Complementary sleeping positions.
Matching pollen allergies. What’s
Life Saver-Consonance?

CRAIG
She likes the reds and oranges and
he likes the yellows and greens. So
if they buy a roll they can split
the candies without fear of
resentment.

ELIZA
(intrigued)
Skip to the end.

Craig skips to the humans’ awkward goodbye (the moment we saw
at the beginning of this episode.)

Eliza watches the clip with disgust.

SAM (O.S.)
Well hey, it was cool meeting you!

LAURA (O.S.)
Yeah! Yeah.

SAM (O.S.)
Later, alligator!

ELIZA
“Later, alligator?” What the hell
is that?

CRAIG
It’s a popular children’s
expression. I think he was trying
to be playful.

ELIZA
That was harder to watch than the
tsunami.
She gave him her phone number earlier in the night. But it’s been five days and he still hasn’t contacted her.

ELIZA
Did he at least send a text or something?

CRAIG
He’s written several drafts.

He PULLS THEM UP on his computer screen.

CRAIG (CONT’D)
(reading)

ELIZA
How do we push this thing along?

Craig clicks his mouse and the humans appear on his monitor in SPLIT SCREEN.

On the LEFT SIDE, Laura hands out her GREEN FLYERS on the street.

On the RIGHT SIDE, Sam toils away at a chalkboard.

Craig gets an idea.

CRAIG
Have you seen that gust chart?

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET – DAY

Laura tries in vain to get people to take one of the GREEN FLYERS she showed Sam at the bar.

LAURA
Excuse me, sir, do you have a moment for endangered animals?

As she holds out a flyer, a GUST OF WIND blows it out of her hands.

She tries to grab it, but it WHOOSHES out of sight.
INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME

Eliza watches excitedly as Craig types in more wind codes.

EXT. STREET - SAME

The wind shifts direction, causing the green flyer to flit around a corner.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - HOURS LATER

Craig types in a string of increasingly complex codes.

EXT. STREET - EVENING

We see the bright green flyer weave its way across the city, dodging cars and pedestrians.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - NIGHT

Craig types with increasing confidence.

His desk is piled high with empty coffee cups and candy bar wrappers.

He finishes a complicated code and proudly lowers his index finger onto the “ENTER” button.

INT. NYU CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

The GREEN FLYER has BLOWN all the way to the WINDOW of Sam’s office!

The window is open a crack; the flyer can’t quite get through.

It starts to slip down the window.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME

Eliza reaches for the keyboard.

    CRAIG
    What are you doing?

    ELIZA
    We should up the levels.
CRAIG
It could start a tornado.

ELIZA
It’s slipping! Come on, don’t you trust me?

CRAIG
Not even a tiny bit.

She GRABS the KEYBOARD and starts to TYPE.

CRAIG (CON’T)
Careful!

INT. NYU CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT - SAME
A HUGE GUST of WIND blows the flyer through the crack in the window!
It FLIES across the room and SMACKS into the chalkboard right in front of Sam’s face!

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME
Eliza shoots Craig an “I told you so” look.

INT. NYU CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT - SAME
Sam picks up Laura’s flyer and stares at it.

SAM
Huh.
He crumples it up, tosses it into a recycling bin and gets back to work.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME
Craig massages his temples.

CRAIG
Well that was a giant waste of time.

ELIZA
Why didn’t it work?

CRAIG
Signs are rarely effective.
ELIZA
But it was so obvious. We blew
Laura’s flyer right into his face!

CRAIG
Humans are dense. Look at Lincoln. "On the morning of his assassination, we sent him a dozen omens. Nothing worked." *

He pulls up the clip.

INT. LINCOLN BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS
Abraham Lincoln is getting dressed for the theater when a BLACK CROW lands on his windowsill and CAWS in his face. As he walks toward it, a gust of wind EXTINGUISHES the CANDLE on his desk.

MARY LINCOLN (O.S.)
Play’s about to start!

ABRAHAM LINCOLN (O.S.)
(cheerful)
On my way!

He steps over a BLACK CAT and walks out the door, whistling.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME
Eliza shakes her head in disbelief.

ELIZA
How much time do we have?

Craig types in a search and Pablo pops onto the screen.

PABLO
THE WORLD WILL END IN 27 DAYS!!

ELIZA
Why does that suddenly seem like not a lot of time?

INT. NYU CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT - MORNING
Sam’s advisor, PROFESSOR BORIS SHLOM, enters. He stares at Sam’s chalkboard, which is covered in dense equations.
SAM
What do you think?

PROFESSOR SHLOM
I think you should take break.

SAM
I can’t. I’m really far behind.

PROFESSOR SHLOM
What is the hurry? When I was 22, I had accomplished nothing.

SAM
I’m 25.

PROFESSOR SHLOM
By that age I had done some major work, but that is not the point. If I was young with working penis I would be out courting women.

SAM
I know, you say that a lot. But this project is really important to me. It’s my chance to save the world.

His chalk breaks.

SAM (CONT’D)
Damn it.

PROFESSOR SHLOM
(taking pity)
Here, take mine.

He hands Sam his chalk.

SAM
Thanks Professor.

CUT TO:

INT. LAURA’S APARTMENT - SAME
Laura carefully redesigns her “SAVE THE CHIMPS” flyer.
Her phone RINGS.
It’s an UNKNOWN NUMBER.
She picks it up with excitement.
LAURA
Hello?
(she fearfully covers the
mouthpiece)
Shit.

Her roommate, MARA, a confident pothead, enters the room.

MARA
Collectors?

Laura nods fearfully.

MARA (CONT’D)
Don’t worry, I got it.

Laura, relieved, hands Mara her phone.

MARA (CONT’D)
Hello, this is Laura.

She winks at Laura who gives her a thumbs-up.

MARA (CONT’D)
Yes, I’m aware the payment is late.
Yes I’m aware I’ve used all my
deferrals. Are you aware that the
student loan system is a predatory
scam?

Laura starts to get worried. She motions for Mara to give her
back the phone.

MARA (CONT’D)
Oooh, a ten-thousand dollar
penalty? I’m quaking in my boots.
I’m already down 60 large, you
think I give a shit about ten G’s?
This is Laura freaking Gerstein
you’re talking to!

Laura tries to grab the phone, but Mara evades her.

MARA (CONT’D)
I’m glad you’re recording this
call! Great, tell your supervisor!
Tell them all!

She hangs up.

MARA (CONT’D)
I think you should change your
phone number.
LAURA
I can’t.

MARA
Why not?

LAURA
I’m kind of expecting a call.

MARA
(excited)
From who? PHD guy?

LAURA
(forced laughter)
No! Come on, he would have called by now. If he was going to.

MARA
Then what are you waiting for?

LAURA
I don’t know! Maybe the next call will be something great, like a crazy prize, or a freak inheritance, or some other amazing thing that will change my life forever.

MARA
Like a miracle?

LAURA
Sure! Miracles happen. Sometimes. I think.

CUT TO:

INT. HEAVEN INC OFFICES - MEETING ROOM -- NIGHT

Craig and Eliza work in a meeting room, surrounded by CHARTS, GRAPHS, MANUALS and PILES OF RESEARCH on SAM and LAURA.

ELIZA
Is there some code we can type in to make this guy less of a coward?

CRAIG
He’s got free will. Unfortunately.

ELIZA
What if we increased his testosterone? By, like, 5,000%?
CRAIG
We’ve been over this. It would damage his testicles and turn him into a kind of beast.

ELIZA
We have to do something. He’s never going to make a move.

CRAIG
Then we’ll have to make it for him.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - MOMENTS LATER
Craig pulls up a MAP of the LOWER EAST SIDE.

CRAIG
It’s extremely difficult, but with proper preparation, it is technically possible to force a chance encounter.

ELIZA
How hard can it be? They’re only twelve blocks from each other.

CRAIG
In New York, that’s like twelve light years. Take a look.

He ZOOMS IN on the twelve blocks that separate Sam and Laura.

CRAIG (CONT’D)
They’re separated by hundreds of walls and thousands of people. And we have to get them to the exact same spot at the exact same time.

ELIZA
What if we burst their appendixes?

CRAIG
What?

ELIZA
If we pop ‘em at the same time, they’re sure to cross paths in the ER. It’s fool proof!

CRAIG
It’s a little messy.
ELIZA
Who cares? The world’s at stake!

CRAIG
I think I’ve got a more elegant * solution.

EXT. LOWER EAST SIDE - DAY
Laura stands outside an Apple store with her clipboard, approaching customers as they exit.

CRAIG (O.S.) (CONT’D)
She’s going to be in front of that Apple Store until 5pm.

CUT TO:

INT. NYU CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT - DAY
Sam is on his laptop, googling “Laura Gerstein.”

CRAIG (O.S.)
All we have to do is destroy Sam’s computer. He’ll go to get it fixed and there she’ll be.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME
Eliza and Craig sit down at a computer. *

CRAIG
Nice and tidy. *

He CRACKS HIS KNUCKLES and gets to work.

INT. NYU CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER
Sam types on his keyboard.
Behind him, we see a student lighting a BUNSEN BURNER.

INT. OFFICE - SAME
Craig types in a code.
INT. NYU CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT - SAME

The GAS PRESSURE abruptly INCREASES on the BUNSEN BURNER, causing the FLAME to TRIPLE IN SIZE.

STUDENT
Shit!

The student turns off the gas, but it’s too late.

The SPRINKLER SYSTEM GOES OFF, drenching everything, including Sam’s LAPTOP.

SAM
Goddamnit!!

INT. OFFICE - SAME

Craig and Eliza look hopeful.

CRAIG
So far so good.

INT. NYU LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Sam, soaking laptop in hand, hurries down the hall.

He’s almost out the door when he passes a group of fellow graduate students in a lounge area, huddled around a TV.

SAM
What’s going on?

STUDENT
Bill Maher died.

SAM
The comedian? Geez.

Sam sits down with the students and watches the news broadcast.

INT. OFFICE - SAME

Craig nervously checks his watch.

CRAIG
We don’t have time for this. Laura’s shift ends in an hour.
It’s okay, he won’t watch for long. It’s not that interesting a story.

INT. NYU STUDENT LOUNGE - ABOUT THIRTY MINUTES LATER

Sam watches the news, rapt.

SAM
This is the craziest story I’ve ever seen. He just exploded?

STUDENT
That’s what they’re saying.

A NEWS ANCHOR reports the story.

NEWS ANCHOR
Maher’s family has announced that the funeral will definitely be closed casket. They are asking for privacy during this, quote, “sad and confusing time.”

SAM
Do you guys want to order a pizza?

The other students nod.

INT. OFFICE - SAME

Craig looks worried.

CRAIG
Thirty minutes left.

Eliza reaches for the keyboard.

He pulls it out of her reach.

ELIZA
Come on, don’t you trust me?

CRAIG
Not even a tiny, little--

ELIZA
Please.

CRAIG
(after a beat)
Okay.
He hands her the keyboard. *

ELIZA
Where are those lightning codes? *

Craig looks worried.

EXT. POWER PLANT - MOMENTS LATER

Rain starts to fall on a power plant in industrial New Jersey.

We can see the SKYLINE of NEW YORK in the distance.

SFX: THUNDER

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME

Eliza types in some complex codes while Craig peeks through his fingers at the screen.

She checks her work and presses ENTER.

EXT. POWER PLANT - SAME

A STREAK of LIGHTNING hits a POWER GRID.

Sparks FLY everywhere.

INT. NYU STUDENT LOUNGE - SAME

Sam is watching the news when the TV GOES BLACK.

SAM/STUDENTS
Shit!/Noooo!

They try to turn it back on, but there’s been a BLACKOUT.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME

Craig is impressed, in spite of himself. *

CRAIG
Not bad. *

ELIZA
Thanks. How much time?
CRAIG
Twenty minutes.

ELIZA
Should be fine, he’s only seven blocks away.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - SAME
Sam is walking briskly down the sidewalk when he passes a BREAK DANCING TROUPE, performing for a crowd of tourists.

BREAK DANCER
Y’all ready to see a show!

The crowd cheers.

INT. OFFICE - SAME
Craig shakes his head.

CRAIG
Oh no.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - SAME
Sam claps along with the crowd.

BREAK DANCER
When I say hey, you say ho! Hey!

SAM/CROWD
Ho!

BREAK DANCER
Hey!

SAM/CROWD
Ho!

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME
Eliza watches as Craig types in a code.

ELIZA
What are you doing?

On the screen, a window pops up: BURST APPENDIX?
Craig hesitates, his finger hovering over the “ENTER” button.
CRAIG
Screw it.

He JABS the button.

EXT. WASHINGTON SQUARE PARK - SAME
Sam watches with horror as one of the dancers COLLAPSES.
He WRITHES around on the ground, clutching his midsection.

DANCER
AAAAAAGGGGH!

A second break dancer comforts his fallen friend.

SECOND BREAK DANCER
Give him some air!

SFX: AMBULANCE
The crowd disperses.
Sam, looking a bit shaken, keeps walking down the street.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME
Eliza and Craig HIGH-FIVE.

EXT. APPLE STORE - MOMENTS LATER
Laura looks at her watch: it’s 4:59pm.
Sam is walking towards her, but her back is turned.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME
Eliza watches, worried, as Sam heads for the entrance of the Apple store.

ELIZA
He’s going to walk right by her!

Craig types in a code.

EXT. APPLE STORE - SAME
A LARGE PINE TREE sheds hundreds of NEEDLES into the air.
LAURA and SAM begin to SNEEZE.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME
Eliza nods, impressed.

ELIZA
Matching pollen allergies.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME
The humans continue to SNEEZE WILDLY, getting LOUDER and LOUDER.
Eventually, they notice each other.

SAM
Laura?

LAURA
Sam!
The humans are excited, but also overcome with anxiety.

SAM
What a coincidence!

LAURA
Yeah! I know!

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME
Eliza PUMPS HER FIST.

ELIZA
(proudly)
Processed!

She and Craig SHAKE HANDS.

EXT. APPLE STORE - SAME
Sam and Laura converse shyly.

LAURA
So, what are you doing...
INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME

Eliza talks impatiently at the screen.

    ELIZA
    Tonight, what are you doing tonight.

EXT. APPLE STORE - SAME

Laura chickens out.

    LAURA
    What are you doing at the Apple Store?

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME

Eliza starts to look worried.

    ELIZA
    Uh-oh.

EXT. APPLE STORE - SAME

Sam holds up his computer.

    SAM
    My computer broke.

    LAURA
    Oh! Bummer.

    SAM
    Yeah.

Beat.

    SAM (CONT’D)
    Well hey...it was nice running into you!

INT. OFFICE - SAME

Craig and Eliza shake their heads in disbelief.

    CRAIG
    Oh no.
ELIZA
Shit.

LAURA (O.S.)
Nice running into you, too!

EXT. APPLE STORE - SAME
Laura and Sam say goodbye.

SAM
Well...later alligator!

LAURA
Haha yeah! Okay.

Sam sighs with shame as Laura walks away.

SAM
Damn it.

INT. CRAIG’S CUBICLE - CONTINUOUS
Craig and Eliza stare at the screen with dismay.

ELIZA
What happened?

CRAIG
They blew it.

CUT TO:

INT. GOD’S OFFICE - THE NEXT DAY
Eliza slides a prayer across God’s desk.

GOD
(reading)
“Please let the Knicks be good this year.”

ELIZA
I’ve done some research. If we crash a plane into the All Star Game, and paralyze everyone but Carmelo Anthony...

GOD
It’s too late to switch. You already called your shot.
ELIZA
It’s not my fault! Those humans are hopeless!

GOD
That’s what I’ve been trying to tell you.

He walks over to an easel and starts a new painting.

INT. OFFICE – MOMENTS LATER
Benji MonoRoves over to Craig and Eliza.

BENJI
Hey guys, good news. You’re both getting promoted.

ELIZA
To where?

BENJI
Eliza, once the earth is destroyed, you’ll be helping with chromium distribution. And Craig, we’re shifting you over to chromium waste management.

Craig and Eliza hang their heads.

BENJI (CONT’D)
Here are your training manuals. Start jamming on ‘em!

He hands them each a MANUAL and MonoRoves away.

ELIZA
(re: manuals)
I think he switched these up.

CRAIG
(nodding)
He might not know how to read.

They switch manuals, sit at their desks and crack them open, trying their best to concentrate.

COUNSELOR (O.S.)
Strike one!

Craig looks up from his manual.
On his screen, the unathletic 6-YEAR-OLD GIRL is striking out again at kickball.

CRAIG
   Sorry, left a window open.

He about to turn his computer off, when the girl whiffs again.

COUNSELOR (O.S.)
   Strike two!

The girl murmurs more pleas to heaven, while her parents aim their cameras at her.

ELIZA
   Why does she suck so much at kickball?

CRAIG
   She keeps closing her eyes.

ELIZA
   It’s the sun.

Craig turns to Eliza.

CRAIG
   One more?

ELIZA
   One more.

They rapidly get to work, whispering so that Benji doesn’t notice.

CRAIG
   We’ve got to somehow block it from her eyes.

ELIZA
   Can we cloud up the sky?

CRAIG
   If we shift the atmospheric pressure.

ELIZA
   Chapter 8?

CRAIG
   Chapter 8.
She opens the BASIC ANGELIC INFLUENCE manual and passes it to him.

He types in a code.

On the screen, the sky becomes overcast.

The girl opens her eyes as the red ball rolls toward her.

She boots it with her toe and it flies into the air!

Craig and Eliza smile.

The ball is easily caught by the shortstop.

COUNSELOR
Out.

6-YEAR-OLD GIRL
Shit!

COUNSELOR
Language, Madison!

6-YEAR-OLD GIRL
Fuck you!

The girl’s parents run onto the field and drag the girl away, while she kicks, screams and bites at them.

6-YEAR-OLD GIRL (CONT’D)
FUCK YOU! FUCK YOU!!

Craig closes the window.

ELIZA
That went badly.

CRAIG
Yeah.

Beat.

CRAIG (CONT’D)
One more?

Eliza nods.

ELIZA
One more.

They shove aside their chromium manuals and rifle through their INBOXES, looking for more prayers to answer.
INT. NYU CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

Sam returns to the chemistry department, holding a new computer.

Shlom is staring at his blackboard, which is now covered in yellow chalk equations.

SAM
What do you think?

PROFESSOR SHLOM
I think, after so many years, you are finally onto something.

SAM
Really?

PROFESSOR SHLOM
No, that was prank!

He LAUGHS. Sam does not.

PROFESSOR SHLOM (CONT’D)
I plan that all day and it went great. Sam, it is Friday night. What are you doing inside classroom?

SAM
Listen, I’ve had a pretty rough day. I don’t really feel like talking.

PROFESSOR SHLOM
You should be outside courting woman.

SAM
Thanks for the advice.

PROFESSOR SHLOM
When is the last time you even spoke to woman?

SAM
(defensive)
Just now, actually.

PROFESSOR SHLOM
The person who sold you computer?

SAM
No, it was a girl I know.
PROFESSOR SHLOM
(wild excitement)
Who?

SAM
(reluctant)
Her name is Laura. We met at a bar last weekend. And then I just ran into her again.

PROFESSOR SHLOM
When will you see her next?

SAM
I don’t know, we kind of left it open-ended.

PROFESSOR SHLOM
You must call her right now.

SAM
That would be kinda weird. I mean, just calling her out of the blue, at night? Isn’t that creepy?

Shlom takes out an ERASER and HOLDS IT UP TO SAM’S WORK.

SAM (CONT’D)
What are you doing?

PROFESSOR SHLOM
Call her or I will erase.

SAM
That’s not funny.

Shlom starts to ERASE a line!

SAM (CONT’D)
Stop! Hey!

PROFESSOR SHLOM
I will erase whole thing!

Sam GASPS and holds up his palms, terrified.

SAM
Okay, fine, I’ll call her! I’ll call her.

He reluctantly takes out his phone.
INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME

Eliza goes through her inbox, looking for an answerable prayer.

ELIZA
Africa, Africa, Africa...

CRAIG
Look!

He gestures at his screen: Sam is calling Laura.

ELIZA
(amazed)
What did you do?

CRAIG
Nothing. Pull up the female.

Eliza types in a search for Laura and a window pops up on her screen.

ELIZA
Oh shit.

CUT TO:

INT. ELECTRONICS STORE - SAME

Laura talks to a SALESMAN.

SALEMAN
Okay...you’ve officially got a new number.

LAURA
It’s all set?

SALEMAN
Yep. You just have to press this button here to activate it.

She about to press the button when her PHONE RINGS.

It’s an UNKNOWN NUMBER.

INT. NYU CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT - SAME

Shlom paces while Sam waits for an answer.
PROFESSOR SHLOM
What is happening?

SAM
It’s ringing.

PROFESSOR SHLOM
Now?

SAM
Still ringing.

INT. ELECTRONICS STORE - SAME
Laura stares at her ringing phone.

SALESMAN
Do you need to get that?

LAURA
No. It’s probably nothing.

Other customers start to eye her, annoying by the phone’s annoying ring tone.

SALESMAN
You can just hit “ignore” to silence--

LAURA
Yeah, sorry.

She reaches slowly for her phone.

INT. NYU CHEMISTRY DEPARTMENT - SAME
Shlom watches on anxiously as Sam waits for Laura to pick up.

INT. HEAVEN OFFICES - SAME
Eliza and Craig stare at the screen as Laura grabs her phone. *

INT. GOD’S OFFICE - SAME *

God is trying to concentrate on his painting, but he can’t take his eyes off his TV screen.

He’s watching Laura, too.

Her index finger hovers over the “Ignore” button.
BLACK OUT

Beat.

LAURA (O.S.)

Hello?

(OUT)

*