

GLORIA

(GLORIA stares at him for a long time, like she's about to say something, hands trembling in her pockets. Then, suddenly, she just stalks off, leaving DEAN behind, completely weirded out.)

MILES

Was that Gloria?

DEAN

Yes.

MILES

Yikes.

DEAN

I know. She's a little weird.

MILES

Yeah - I heard you guys talking about her just now.

DEAN

I thought you had your headphones on?

MILES

Yeah but I haven't really been listening to any music for a while.

(beat,)

Hey, Dean.

DEAN

Yes?

MILES

I only glanced at the cover letter, but I thought your book sounded good. I'd totally read it.

DEAN

Thanks.

MILES

I had no idea you were a Buddhist.

DEAN

I'm not a Buddhist. I worked in a Buddhist monastery. And it was only, like, a few months. It was bullshit.

MILES

Then why did you do it?

DEAN

I was dating someone in college who was really into Buddhism and it was this person's idea to basically try and live there and work there and I thought it would be interesting and worth writing about, but then I realized that Buddhist monasteries are just boring as shit and they work the volunteers like slaves. And the person I was dating turned out to be a total psycho. So I just left. And moved to New York.

MILES

Ah.

(beat,)

Do you think I should write a book?

DEAN

Uh, do you have something to write about?

MILES

Not yet, but I feel like I could figure it out. Did you know what you were going to write about before you decided to be a writer?

DEAN

Not exactly.

MILES

Then how did you know that you were a writer?

DEAN

I've just known since I was young. But it took me a while to start writing anything good. I needed some experience.

MILES

I admire people who've always known what they wanted to do. I've never known.

DEAN

I bet you're just naturally good at everything, huh?

MILES

(with a laugh,)

No - I can't even figure out what I'm going to do after college. I was thinking about Grad School or J school or something but now I think I want to wait maybe. I don't even know if I want to be a writer or an editor or work in magazines, really. My professor just thought I would be good at it.

DEAN

Yeah. Richard loves you -

MILES

Do you like working in magazines? Well, obviously not, since you're writing a book -

DEAN

That's not true. I'm just ready for a change.

MILES

Me, too. I just realized that I've spent my entire life being in school. I think I need to experience the real world. I'm actually thinking about maybe going abroad and just like teaching English. Just somewhere really far away and random. Like Germany or Japan or something, but I'm really interested in Africa, though. Did you know that, within our lifetime, they're expecting like two-thirds of the population of the whole continent to just be... gone? Just totally wiped out. I suddenly feel this deep anxiety about the future, about how everything I know now could just be gone one day - or like everything on the Earth right now at this exact moment could be totally different tomorrow.

DEAN

Yeah. Listen, I've got to get back to rescheduling these meetings.

(Beat before MILES goes back to his cubicle.)

MILES

So Nan's going to be gone tomorrow?

DEAN

Yeah. She's flying out this afternoon for the Edinburgh Book Fair.

MILES

When is she leaving?

DEAN

Well, she's about to leave for a noon lunch, and then I don't really know if she'll be back to the office before she heads to the airport.