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THIRTY MINUTE SYNC

Dialogues / Workplace Drama / 3 min
Cast 2 Female x1 Any x1

Diane has to lay off the best person on her team. Jordan read the calendar invite and figured it out before walking in. Jordan has questions, and Diane owes real answers.

CHARACTERS

DIANE - 40s, an engineering manager who fought for her team and lost, trying to do this the right way

JORDAN - 20s, the strongest engineer on the team, sharp enough to see it coming and too angry to make it easy

SETTING

A small glass-walled conference room in a mid-size software company, 9 a.m. on a Thursday.

A small conference room. Glass walls, blinds half drawn. A closed laptop and a folder on the table. DIANE is already seated. JORDAN enters, sees the folder, and stops.

JORDAN

Oh.

DIANE

Hey. Come on in. Close the door.

JORDAN

Is Marcus from HR coming?

DIANE

He's, uh. He's on his way.

JORDAN

So yeah. Okay.

DIANE

Jordan, sit down.

JORDAN

I'm gonna stand for a second.

DIANE

That's fine.

JORDAN

The calendar invite came from your assistant. You always send your own. And it said "Sync," with a capital S, and you don't capitalize stuff. And the room's booked for thirty minutes and you don't do thirty-minute anything.

DIANE

You should've been a detective.

JORDAN

I should've been a lot of things.

(beat)

Is it just me?

DIANE

I can't talk about other people.

JORDAN

That's a no, then. Just me on the team.

DIANE

Jordan.

JORDAN

Because you've got what, eight of us? And Priya's been on a performance plan since June. And Tom does half of what I do and everybody knows it. So I'm just trying to understand the math.

DIANE

It's not about performance.

JORDAN

Then what's it about?

DIANE

It's a restructure. The whole org. They cut a number, and the number came down to me, and I had to fill it.

JORDAN
With me.

DIANE
Yes.

JORDAN
Why?

DIANE
Sit down and I'll tell you.

JORDAN sits.

DIANE
You're the highest salary on the team under director level. You got the raise in March. The one I fought for.

JORDAN
So the raise is why.

DIANE
The raise is part of it.

JORDAN
You gave me a raise, and that made me expensive, and now I'm the one that's easy to cut. That's, wow. That's a real full circle.

DIANE
I know how it sounds.

JORDAN
Did you fight this one?

DIANE
Yes.

JORDAN
How hard?

DIANE
Hard.

JORDAN
How hard, Diane?

DIANE

I offered to take a pay cut myself. They said that wasn't the kind of number they were looking for.

Pause.

JORDAN

Okay.

DIANE

Okay?

JORDAN

I believe you. I don't know if that helps.

DIANE

It doesn't, really.

JORDAN

What's the package?

DIANE

Marcus has the details. It's twelve weeks. Health through the end of the year. Your unvested stuff, that's gone. I'm sorry.

JORDAN

What about the Callahan launch?

DIANE

What about it?

JORDAN

It's in three weeks. I'm the only one who knows how the data layer works. Nobody else has touched it.

DIANE

We'll figure it out.

JORDAN

You won't, though. Tom can't do it. He'll say he can, and then it'll be Tuesday night before launch and you'll be on the phone with me.

DIANE

I won't call you.

JORDAN

You will. And I'm telling you now, I'll answer. And I'll charge you. Consultant rate. Which is a lot.

DIANE

(almost a smile)

Noted.

JORDAN

Write it down. You're gonna want that in the file.

DIANE opens the folder and actually writes something.

JORDAN

One more question.

DIANE

Go.

JORDAN

Did you know when you did my review? Last month? You said I was the future of the team.

DIANE

I didn't know.

JORDAN

Would you have said it anyway?

DIANE

(beat)

Yes. Because it was true.

JORDAN

Okay.

JORDAN stands, then stops.

JORDAN

I'm gonna need you as a reference.

DIANE

Anything you want.

JORDAN

I'm gonna need it to be a really good one.

DIANE

It'll be the best one I've ever written.

JORDAN

Yeah. Well. You said that about the raise.

Marcus knocks on the glass. JORDAN sits back down, straightens up, and waits.

END OF SCRIPT