

Sketch: Big Promotion

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ACT I

Scene 1

The inside of an office building. WOMAN sits working at her desk when MAN enters, both dressed sharply in business attire. Man is trying too hard to appear happy.

Man approaches Woman's desk and pretends to knock on an invisible door. He grins.

MAN

Knock knock.

Woman doesn't look up.

MAN

I said, knock knock.

WOMAN

There's no door, Adam.

MAN

No door yet. I just wanted to congratulate you on that big promotion. Soon you'll have your own office! With a door...and windows...(wistfully) and sunlight.

WOMAN

Thank you.

MAN

No, really, congratulations. You know, a lot of people were up for that promotion--working double overtime, donating their kidneys, taking out a second mortgage to buy Mr. Turnbull a Christmas present... But you! You beat them all.

WOMAN

I'm excited.

MAN

I would be too. Between you and me, how did you do it?

WOMAN

Hard work.

MAN

Even with the whole "glass ceiling" thing? You know: women - *can they really have it all?*

WOMAN

Yes.

MAN

I bet the board loves this. Promoting a woman! We've really sprung into the twenty-first century with this one, eh?

WOMAN

Not really.

MAN

And it doesn't hurt that you're one-quarter...what was it?

WOMAN

My grandfather is American Indian. Cherokee.

MAN

Cherokee! Not a lot of companies have Indians. Cherokee, how exciting. Have you seen Pocahontas?

The woman glares.

MAN

Anyway. How's your wife?

WOMAN

She's great.

MAN

And your sister? She's transgender, right?

WOMAN

Yes, *he* is.

MAN

Excellent. Good for him. Consistency. (*beat*) How about your son? Still deaf?

WOMAN

Yes.

MAN

Your daughter, the one you bought...

WOMAN

Adopted.

MAN

What foreign country is she from again? Sudan? Syria?

WOMAN

Chicago.

MAN

(horrified)

Oh God.

WOMAN

Look, I have a lot of work--

MAN

All right, fine, let's cut right to it. We both know why you got the promotion.

WOMAN

Excuse me?

MAN

It's diversity! There aren't a lot of people of your kind, so we have to promote one every now and again. The board loves diversity. Doesn't matter who works harder, or who sells their kidneys--

WOMAN

Stop talking about that damn kidney!

MAN

I gave Mr. Turnbull my kidney, Mary! And I still came into work the next day. What have you done for him?

WOMAN

I worked hard for this job.

MAN

He gave it to you.

WOMAN

I put in my time!

MAN

He calls me Fido.

WOMAN

I earned this!

MAN

(slow, angry, on the verge of a
psychotic break)

Every night, I cry myself to sleep. Every morning, I cry myself awake.

Woman leaps up, exasperated.

WOMAN

All right! Fine, you're right. It was affirmative action, diversity. I was promoted just to make this place look good.

MAN

I knew it.

WOMAN

But you don't know what I've been through. You haven't walked in my shoes, experienced my pain, my struggles, my nightmares. I'm *different*, Adam. Whenever I look in the mirror, I see a monster.

MAN

But that doesn't--

WOMAN

You don't know what it's like to live in a world that's not designed for you. People call me a freak. They say that I'm possessed, that they can "change" me. They say I'm not suited for work but I can't be a proper mother, either. So I'm tired, Adam. *I'm tired.*

Beat.

WOMAN

This world is not meant...for left-handed people.

MAN

I'm sorry.

WOMAN

I have to use special left-handed scissors and special left-handed desks. When I write, my hand smears the ink. (*She demonstrates in the air.*) I can't use a baseball mitt or a can opener. I'm always bumping elbows at the dinner table. Did you know left-handed people die up to nine years sooner than right-handed people? It's because of all the stress! So dammit, I'm proud! I got the promotion because I'm left-handed, and I deserve it!

MAN

(meekly)

I gave him a kidney...

WOMAN

I can't use a spiral notebook.

MAN

You win. You deserve the promotion. Let's just call a truce. Okay?

WOMAN

Okay.

MAN

Shake on it?

They go to shake hands. Man offers his right hand, but Woman offers her left, thereby messing up the handshake.

WOMAN

Goddammit.

END.