

BOXED IN SALESMAN

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INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

WE OPEN on a shot of a phone sitting on a coffee table. The phone vibrates and text notifications pop up.

ON PHONE SCREEN

"Reminder: Electricity bill Due"

"LANDLORD: I need your rent by the end of the week, I have given you multiple extensions and you still haven't paid me. This is your last chance"

"NEW Recipe - Make this sponge cake in just 12 easy steps!"

"Missed Call - Landlord"

"Missed Call - B&B"

JOHNNY (Mid twenties, lazy, messy) sits on a couch and looks down at the phone. He cusps his hands over his mouth and rubs his eyes.

There is a knock on a door. Johnny looks up at it, the knocks grow louder and more frequent. Johnny sighs, walks over to the door, and opens it.

BOBBY (short, hot headed) stumbles in, BENNY (incompetent, oblivious) walks in after him.

BOBBY

Hey J man, we've been trying to reach you, what gives? You tryna ghost us or something?

JOHNNY

Sorry, I, uh, musta missed you. I've had a lot of stuff going on recently.

BOBBY

Yeah, well putting us on hold is very bad form

Bobby looks around Johnny's apartment. There are clothes all scattered around, stains on walls, trash is strewn around.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Though from you, that seems to be
expected.

Johnny lets out a halfhearted laugh.

JOHNNY
So what did you need from me again?

BENNY
Don't play dumb, J. You know what
this is about.

JOHNNY
Right, well the thing about the
money is-

BOBBY
You are unbelievable. UN-
believable. We give you an
extension and you still don't got
our money? You know how important
it is you get us your money, right
J?

JOHNNY
A-and I will get it to you, just
give me another week, I got
somethin' I promise. Look the boss
owes me, just ask.

BOBBY
Alright, alright, since you seem so
insistent an' all

Bobby and Benny chuckle. Bobby pulls out a phone and taps on
it, holding it up to his ear.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Yeah boss? It's me, J's making
things real tough on us. Mhm. Yeah
he wants another extension, he said
you owe him. That's right.

Bobby stares at Johnny.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
Is that so? Ok, thanks boss.

Bobby hangs up the call.

BENNY
So? What'd the boss say?

Bobby looks at Johnny

BOBBY
You get one week.

INT. JOHNNY'S APARTMENT - DINING SPACE.

Johnny sits at a dining room table, he scrolls quickly on a laptop. A TV is on in the background

CLOSE ON TV-

A family is huddled around a box, with a KID in the middle. The kid opens it up and a golden glow emits from inside of it. The family smiles at the glow and all hug each other.

(V.O.) ADVERTISER
-But mystery box is by far our hot
ticket item. What's inside? That's
a mystery for you to solve!

The commercial cycles through different people opening the box. We see a couple smiling at the glow, a man dropping his jaw, and children laughing at what's inside.

(V.O.) ADVERTISER (CONT'D)
Do YOU want to be a part of the
mystery box magic? If so call the
number on the screen.

A phone number flashes on the screen

(V.O.) ADVERTISER (CONT'D)
And if you, yes YOU, are looking to
make some big money quick, then
call HERE to become a part of
Direct-O's mystery box outreach
program!

Another phone number flashes on the screen. Johnny looks at the TV and fumbles in his pocket to pull out his phone and dial the number.

JOHNNY
Yeah, hi, I saw your commercial.
When you say big money quick, how
quick would that be?

INT. DIRECT-O OFFICE

Johnny is sitting in a chair in front of a desk. Across from him is THE BOSS (sleazy, mysterious).

THE BOSS

...You will get paid at the end of the week in correspondence to how many boxes you manage to sell. Do you have any questions?

JOHNNY

Uh yeah, what am I selling, exactly?

THE BOSS

Didn't you see the ad, kid? Mystery boxes.

JOHNNY

Yeah, but like, what's inside the boxes? Shouldn't I know what I'm selling?

THE BOSS

It's not your job to know what's in your boxes, it's just your job to sell them, capiche?

JOHNNY

This is really shady man

THE BOSS

Do you want the job or not?

JOHNNY

Ok, ok, I hear you. No more questions.

THE BOSS

Ok, now get out there and get selling!

SALES MONTAGE -

- Johnny rings a doorbell, holding a piece of paper. A LITTLE GIRL opens a door and looks up at him.

JOHNNY

Hey there kid can I interest you in a-

- A OLD MAN opens a door

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
-mystery box from direct-o?

- An EMO TEEN looks at Johnny

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
It's really hip with all the cool
kids right now and-

- A DISINTERESTED GIRL stares Johnny down

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
-you'll never know what you'll get!

- The little girl shuts the door on Johnny

- The old man shuts the door on Johnny

- The emo teen shuts the door on Johnny

- The disinterested girl looks down at Johnny

END MONTAGE

DISINTERESTED GIRL
Really? That's the best you could
come up with?

She finger quotes

DISINTERESTED GIRL (CONT'D)
You never know what you'll get?

Johnny crosses his arms

JOHNNY
Oh yeah? What's wrong with how I
pitch things?

DISINTERESTED GIRL
You sound like you're reading off
of a script.

Johnny hastily hides the piece of paper he's hiding behind
his back.

JOHNNY
That's entirely absurd

DISINTERESTED GIRL
Right.

The disinterested girl shuts the door on Johnny's face.

JOHNNY

Well shit.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Johnny sits on a bench with his head in his hands. A mystery box sits next to him. Johnny sighs and looks at the box. Johnny's phone rings. He feels around his pocket and fishes it out. He answers it.

BENNY

Hey uh boss wanted us to check up on you, make sure you're getting the money ready.

Johnny holds the phone away from his head and lets out a sigh. He puts the phone back up to his ear.

JOHNNY

Things are going great, Benny.

BENNY

Yeah I'd hope so, you got only half a week left, you know.

Johnny rolls his eyes

JOHNNY

Yes Benny, I know I only have half a week.

BENNY

Yeah, well, just letting you know. Uhh bye.

Benny hangs up. Johnny looks at the box again, tears well up in his eyes. He yells and punches the box, it falls to the ground. He kicks the box in, creating a big hole in it. Johnny freezes.

JOHNNY

...fuck

Johnny picks up the box and slowly lifts it up. He peers inside. The box is empty.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

...What?

INT. DIRECT-O OFFICE

Johnny swings open the door, causing the boss to flinch.
Johnny throws the destroyed box onto the boss's desk.

JOHNNY

What is this?

THE BOSS

That is one of our boxes, a pretty
beat up one too.

JOHNNY

The box is empty.

THE BOSS

That is true.

JOHNNY

You were usin' me for a scam?

The boss puts his hands up in defense.

THE BOSS

I figured you already knew! Surely
you didn't think you'd be makin so
much money so quickly off of a
legal endeavor. If you're not comfy
with it you can walk away.

JOHNNY

I- I just don't know how to sell
people on nothin'

THE BOSS

Sure you do, that's why you were
brought on board! You just gotta
sell em on the promise of somethin'
good, that's all. Let them figure
it out! Now go make m- us some
money!

EXT. DISINTERESTED GIRL'S HOUSE

Johnny rings a doorbell, the disinterested girl opens the
door and stares at Johnny.

DISINTERESTED GIRL

You again? I thought I made it
clear I didn't want any bo-

JOHNNY
Hear me out at least?

The girl crosses her arms.

DISINTERESTED GIRL
Ok, fine, but this better be more
entertaining than the last pitch
you gave me.

Johnny clears his throat.

JOHNNY
Do you want to know what's inside
the box?

DISINTERESTED GIRL
I dunno, is it something stupid?

Johnny shrugs and holds the box up to her.

JOHNNY
Wouldn't be much of a mystery if I
told you, now would it?

DISINTERESTED GIRL
Fair enough.

Johnny quickly looks around, and leans forward

JOHNNY
Here how 'bout this, just for you,
if you buy a mystery box and I'll
see to it that you get a second one
for free. Don't tell my boss that I
said this, but that's a real steal
for what's inside.

The girl raises an eyebrow.

DISINTERESTED GIRL
You have my attention

EXT. DISINTERESTED GIRL'S HOUSE

Johnny walks away from the house with a dumb grin. He
whistles as he walks.

INT. DIRECT-O OFFICE

Johnny sits across from the boss. Johnny's eyes dart up to a clock on the wall behind the boss.

THE BOSS

Well kid, your week started off pretty, well, weak, but I must say that you really pulled through near the end, you turned out to really b-

JOHNNY

Yeah, uh huh, do ya have my money?

The boss chuckles

THE BOSS

Hold your horses there son, you'll get your money, just gimme a sec

The boss rummages around under his desk and brings up a band of cash. Johnny quickly grabs it.

JOHNNY

Thanks.

THE BOSS

Pleasure doing business with ya kid. If ya ever need to make some money, we're always lookin for more salespeople.

Johnny is already halfway through the door. He turns and waves.

JOHNNY

I'll keep that in mind, thanks Mr. boss man!

EXT. DIRECT-O OFFICE

Standing out front of the office, Johnny feels around his pocket for his phone, he hears a click and stops. He looks over to see Bobby pointing a gun at him, with Benny standing behind Bobby.

BOBBY

We've been tryna reach you J.

Johnny raises his hands and takes a step back.

JOHNNY
Oh you have? What a coincidence I
was just about to call yo-

BOBBY
You really gotta get better about
answerin', we's started to think
that you bailed on us.

Johnny nervously chuckles.

JOHNNY
Me? Bail? C'mon guys you know I
wouldn't do that to you, you're
funny. Look, I have your money,
just check my pocket.

Bobby looks over at Benny, they lock eyes and nod at each
other, and turn their gaze back to Johnny.

BOBBY
Benny go check his pockets

BENNY
Why does it gotta be me?

BOBBY
I got the gun and you don't, now
move it.

Benny sighs and walks over to Johnny. He sticks his hand
inside of Johnny's pocket.

JOHNNY
Wrong pocket.

Benny grunts and checks Johnny's back pocket, pulling out the
band of cash, and holds it up. Bobby shuffles over and yanks
the money out of Benny's hand.

BOBBY
Lemme see that.

Bobby flips through the money, counting under his breath.

JOHNNY
Well?

BOBBY
That's all of it, frankly J, I
thought you were a dead man.

Johnny laughs nervously

JOHNNY
Yeah me too.

BOBBY
With that said, you did put us
through it, makin' us wait.

Johnny raises his hand

JOHNNY
I hear you, say no more. I'll throw
in a little bonus for your time.

Johnny looks at the Direct-O building, and then at Bobby and
Benny.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
How would you like a mystery box?

THE END