

Sell Out!
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Characters

Harper	Female, 25.
Liam	Male, 23.
Jane	Female, 39.
Sophia	Female, 33.

Setting

The cheaply furnished conference room of the company these friends started together.

Time

The present.

*Lights rise on Jane, seated yoga-style facing the audience.
Liam and Harper enter disruptively, but she holds steady.*

Liam

... and then they kept their coins in the nut-sac.

Harper

I know.

Liam

You know?

Harper

I'm the one who told you about necropants.

Liam

What?

No, I read about it on Mental Floss.

Harper

Because I told you about it.

Liam

No...

Yes, yeah, that's right.

Harper

Imagine thinking that wearing a dead guy's skin for pants will make you rich.

Liam

Iceland, that place is messed up, am I right?

Seeing Jane

Ah!

Harper

Jeez, Jane, lurk much?

Liam

Can you cut it out?

You make this place like a Hieronymus Bosch hellscape, all twisted up.

Jane

Okay, fine.

Couldn't focus with you talking out of your ass anyway.

Liam

It's all true.
I looked it up!

Jane

I know.
It was only one guy, though, not a coven of warlocks.
The by-product of a society so broken that when the senior with no family lost his mind, dug up his last friend's corpse to peel his lower torso, so that he could wear the skin while he begged, there was no one to do anything about it.

Liam

Come on, that's funny.

Harper

I think "too soon" was 300 years ago.

Jane

Think America 2027 or so.

Liam

Will you make a pact with me, Jane?
Can I have your leg skin when you die?

Jane

Yet another reason to get cremated.

Harper

Better for the earth, Liam won't skin your corpse.

Liam

You sure know a lot about necropants, Jane.
Are you a witch?

Jane

Maybe.
Or maybe I also looked it up after the conversation where it came up in the first place.
You know, because I was there, too.

Liam

No you weren't.
Wait, okay, maybe.
Yes, you were.

Sophia enters, holding a file folder.

Sophia

Hi, everyone, thanks for all being early.

Liam, Jane, Harper

Hi, Sophia.

They all stare expectantly.

Sophia

Okay... I told you I was applying to the Gates Foundation.

Liam

Wait, we got it??

Harper

Amazing!

The three celebrate as Sophia calmly watches.

Sophia

We didn't get it.

Liam

What the heck, Sophia?

Sophia

But, I mean, not to brag but... Bill Gates did call me, you know, personally.

Jane

What, really?

Sophia

Not figuratively, not metaphorically... yes, really!

Harper

The REAL Bill Gates?

Sophia

Yes, the real one.

Liam

On your actual phone?

Sophia

These are weird questions, you guys.
Yes, the man himself called me... with an offer.
He wants to buy our company and all related technologies.

Harper

That was never on the table.
We dreamed this together, we are going to change the world with or without Mr. Gates.

Liam

Our dream!

Sophia

The deal comes out to forty-four million dollars.

Liam

Okay, yeah, I'm in.

Harper

... how much?

Sophia

We'll each walk away with a little over... Drum roll please!

Liam obliges.

Just over seven million.

Harper

A piece??

Liam

You are a god, Sophia.

Sophia

Please no, it was a team effort.

Liam

What was he like?

Sophia

I honestly was wondering if I dreamt it, but then a messenger delivered this contract.

Jane

When was this?

Sunday. Sophia

Three days ago? Jane

That's a long time to wait. Harper

Last week. Sophia
Ten days.
I wanted to look into everything before I got anyone's hopes up.

You didn't even know if we'd be interested. Harper

After a pause, they all laugh at her.

Sophia
Okay, yeah.
I had the contract reviewed, then I had that review double-checked.
Now it's easy.
Liam, you dreamed for us, inspired us.
Harper, your precision and your passion made you our heart.
Jane, your moral compass guided us every step of the way.
My friends, it is time to get paid.

Liam
Whoo!

Sophia
We need everyone's signatures.

Jane
Why don't we all take a copy home, come back and sign in the morning?

Sophia
It needs to be tonight.

Liam
I want to be the John Hancock and have my signature first!
Grabs the file.
Aw, no fair, you already signed it.

Sophia

Leadership comes with privilege.

Jane

Hancock wasn't famous for signing first, just for making it so prominent.

Liam

Jane, I know you think I don't understand when you're putting me down—

Sophia

Liam.

Liam signs and goes off to pout.

Liam

Okay.

Harper

Everybody, please, can we talk about this?

Sophia

Of course we can.

Harper

I want you all to think about what this means.

Liam

It means we're rich.

Harper

Everything comes with a cost.

Liam

Oh no, I will have wasted three years of my life for only seven million dollars, what will I tell my parents, my ancestors would be so ashamed!

Harper

Rich gazillionaire geezer offers buckets of cash for plucky youngster's idea for saving the world. That plot sound familiar?

Sophia

It's not a plot, it's our lives.

Liam

I think Bill Gates' track record is pretty good.

Harper

We don't have to do this.

We're doing just fine.

Sophia

I'm trying to understand, Harper.

Harper

Jane, you're our moral compass, help me explain it to them!

Jane

You're out of your mind if you think our company is going to do more good with its tech than Bill Freaking Gates.

We need to get this done, because this company is about five seconds from imploding.

Sophia

Come on now, Jane.

It's not that there's anything wrong with us.

It's that this is too great a deal to pass up.

Jane

This coming from the boss who is sleeping with one fourth of her company, a guy who's slept with half the company.

We're only four people.

And let's talk about the him in this scenario, the so-called dreamer.

Liam

I am a dreamer.

Jane

Or maybe our "idea guy" is a one-hit wonder.

Did you get that one, Liam?

I don't want to be accused of trying to sneak one by you.

I'm saying you had one good idea

Liam

I know what a one-hit wonder is.

Jane

Because you is one.

Liam

I'm an imaginative dreamer, so, so, so... fuck you.

Harper

It's selling out.

Jane

If we don't sell out, what do we get?

The warm feeling of moral superiority can't even get on the scale with 77 million dollars.

If we don't sell out, other groups copy us, catch up with us.

This is our moment.

You've seen too many movies where people turn down money over principle.

Don't confuse fear of success with morality.

Of course we should take the money.

Jane crosses and signs.

All three turn on Harper.

Harper

At least let me think about it.

Sophia

We have to do this right now.

Jane

Why?

Sophia

Bill Gates called me a second time, okay?

Harper

What?

Sophia

This morning.

He was not happy with me.

Told me I was being selfish and that he was withdrawing the deal.

I convinced him to give me until tonight and we'd sign everything as he originally sent it to us.

Harper

The fact that he's this interested means we're in no hurry.

Sophia

I'm scared he's going to reverse engineer everything, and we will get nothing.
 We are swimming with sharks, Harper.
 Once they're that rich, nothing is equal.
 They're more powerful.
 So much more powerful.
 We're lucky he's even making an offer.
 We can turn it down, sure, but if you think they'll let us win on our own terms, you're dreaming.
 Gut check time.
 Are you strong enough to get over yourself and claim your prize?

Harper

But it feels...
 Not one of you thinks this is—

Liam

If you hold the rest of us back from this, you are the worst person in the world.

Jane

Just sign it.

They wait for her to sign.

She does.

They look around at each other...

And start pumping their fists and waving their arms like newly super-rich people.

Everyone freezes, probably in a silly position, except Sophia.

She gathers the contract and takes a few items from the frozen people as she speaks to the audience.

Sophia

They're never going to see me again.
 I like to think of it as them getting an education instead of money.
 For example, they learned not to trust someone telling them "there's no time to think."
 Jane moved back in with her mom, where they became closer... well, at least physically.
 Liam learned how awkward it gets when you "hit it and quit it" with a co-worker.
 Harper learned that she had no self-respect... she and Liam dated for the next four months.
 All three went from visions of fabulous wealth to nothing over two days of realizing I was gone.
 Think any of them tested the necropants spell?
 I don't feel bad, either for them or because of what I did.
 All I'm really guilty of is greed, the same as them.
 Really, who isn't?

Blackout. End of play.