

**BEING JOHN MALKOVICH**

**INT. LESTER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Craig enters. Lester, a giant of an old man, sits hunched behind his tiny desk.

**LESTER**

Come in, Mr. Juarez. I'd stand, but, well, you know.

**CRAIG**

(extending his hand)  
Actually, my name is Craig Schwartz, Dr. Lester.

Lester flips an intercom switch.

**LESTER**

Security.

**CRAIG**

No, it's okay, sir. Just a mixup with your secretary.

**LESTER**

She's not my secretary. She's what they call an executive liaison, and I'm not banging her, if that's what you're implying.

**CRAIG**

Not at all, Dr. Lester. I simply misspoke.

**LESTER**

Tell me, Dr. Schwartz, what do you feel you can bring to LesterCorp?

**CRAIG**

Well, sir, I'm an excellent filer.

**LESTER**

(crafty)  
You think so, eh? Which comes first, L or... Glooph?

**CRAIG**

Glooph is not a letter, sir.

**LESTER**

Damn, you are good. I tried to trick you. Okay, put these in order.

Lester hands Craig a bunch of index cards. Craig orders them with amazing speed and dexterity. Lester watches, eyes wide.

**LESTER (CONT'D)**

(flips intercom switch)  
Floris, get Guinness on the phone.

**FLORIS (O.S.)**

Gehginnis ondah foam?

**LESTER**

Forget it.

**FLORIS (CONT'D)**

Fork ah did?

**LESTER**

(flips off switch)  
Fine woman, Floris. I don't know how she puts up with this damn speech impediment of mine.

**CRAIG**

You don't have a speech impediment, Dr. Lester.

**LESTER**

Flattery will get you everywhere, my boy. But I'm afraid I have to trust Floris on this one. You see, she has her doctorate in speech impedimentology from Case Western. Perhaps you've read her memoirs, "I can't understand a word any of you are saying."

**CRAIG**

No.

**LESTER**

Pity, it tells it like it is. That's why the eastern, read Jewish, publishing establishment won't touch it. That's a quote from the book jacket. George Will, I think.

(beat)

I apologize if you can't understand a word I'm saying, Dr. Schwartz.

**CRAIG**

No. I understand perfectly.

**LESTER**

(choking up)

Thank you for being kind enough to lie. You see, I've been very lonely in my isolated tower of indecipherable speech. You're hired. Any questions?

**CRAIG**

Just one. Why is this floor so short?

**LESTER**

Low overhead, m'boy. We pass the  
savings on to you.

(laughs heartily)

But seriously, that's all covered in  
orientation.