

## William and Jeff

JEFF. What?

WILLIAM. A social call on you?

JEFF. (*Laughs.*) No, on one of the tenants.

WILLIAM. Can I see your book?

JEFF. Sure. (*William looks at the sign-in book at Jeff's station.*) It was just what's-his-name. That one you're —

WILLIAM. (*On "that."*) Who, Bill?

JEFF. Yeah.

WILLIAM. Is that why you didn't write it down?

JEFF. Um —

WILLIAM. Do you know you're supposed to write it down?

JEFF. Um, yeah.

WILLIAM. Do you know that whenever the police come to the premises you're supposed to make an entry? That's what this Special Remarks is for, right here.

JEFF. Yeah, I —

WILLIAM. Did you know that?

JEFF. Yes.

WILLIAM. Then how come there's no entry?

JEFF. Because he was here on a social visit, that's why.

WILLIAM. Then how come there's no entry on the sign-in sheet?

JEFF. Because I'm a fuck-up?

WILLIAM. See? No record in the Special Remarks and nobody signed it in the book. No record. No entry.

JEFF. Do you make the cops sign the book?

WILLIAM. Yes. Or I sign it for them. Yes. And that's what you do too. That's what everybody does, who works under me. Now — (*Jeff starts to speak.*) No no no, look, if you stick to the rules, then you never have to have a discussion about whether or not you were justified *not* sticking to the rules, you understand? Now next time the cops come, if it's official business, make a special entry. If it's a social visit and you don't wish to offend, then enter the visit yourself. OK?

JEFF. OK.

WILLIAM. Now write it down. And estimate when he arrived and when he left. (*As Jeff does so.*) See, man, it's sloppy. It's sloppy. Every time I come in here, man, you're always laughing and telling jokes and putting on the charm, and you're sloppy on the job. Look at this. Look at this. (*Opens the drawers of Jeff's station.*) Look at this

mess in here, man. It's — Look at this shit. You got gum wrappers, sandwich bags, pornographic magazines — This is a disgusting mess. Now I want you to clean this shit up, man. Tonight. After you're through with your shift. Because I don't want you cleaning up this refuse while you're on duty, man. That's on your own time.

JEFF. Hey William, gimme a break.

WILLIAM. No, man —

JEFF. I am like the most conscientious guy in this whole building. The rest of these guys are like a bunch of crack addicts and degenerates —

WILLIAM. Not for long they're not.

JEFF. Not for long? They're a bunch of —

WILLIAM. (*On "They're."*) Any man on my command who can't straighten out and fly right is gonna get busted, man. I'm giving you guys fair warning, and that means you too, Jeff, man. You're a good man, OK? But you're always making jokes. (*Jeff starts to protest.*) No, listen. Every time I turn around I'm hearing one joke after another and it makes me question how serious a person you are.

JEFF. How else am I supposed to stay awake? (*William is not amused.*) I'm just kidding.

WILLIAM. I'm glad to hear that, Jeff, because if I ever catch you or anybody else ever sleeping on a shift I will fire your ass on the spot, just like I did last week with Louie Moore, over on Fifty-eighth Street. He was two years away from retirement, I found him asleep on his shift, and I stood him up and I ripped the badge right off his shirt and I'll do the same thing to you. Do you understand me?

JEFF. Yes, yes, I understand. That certainly was terrific how you fired that skinny old man right before he was supposed to retire.

WILLIAM. He wasn't doing his job, man. Nobody's paying him to take a nap. Now I'm gonna ask you again. What was that cop doing here?

JEFF. I *told* you why he was here.

WILLIAM. Because if he was here asking to see me, Jeff, I want you to tell me. Even if he told you not to. I want you to tell me. Do you understand?

JEFF. What? He didn't ask about you.

WILLIAM. OK.

JEFF. Why would he be looking for you? Or shouldn't I ask.

WILLIAM. It's none of your business, man.

JEFF. OK, I'm not askin'.

WILLIAM. See? Always gotta be invading somebody's private business.

JEFF. Hey, get off my *back*, all right?

WILLIAM. Excuse me?

JEFF. I said get off my back. I didn't *do* anything to you. And this is not even my shit in here, it's Manuel's. (*He slaps the drawer closed.*)

WILLIAM. All right. I'm sorry. I got a call — my fuckin' brother got picked up by the cops — I don't even want to *tell* you what for — and I just want to be prepared if the police come around asking about his whereabouts.

JEFF. Oh. (*Beat.*) OK, I'm sorry.

WILLIAM. That's all right.

JEFF. Well — they really weren't here to see you.

WILLIAM. All right. It just seemed like a strange coincidence.

JEFF. Well, I mean — is your brother all right?

WILLIAM. I don't know. I haven't spoken to him.

JEFF. I didn't even know you had a brother.

WILLIAM. Well, I do.

JEFF. What did they bust him for? (*William shakes his head.*) OK, skip it.

WILLIAM. My brother's fucked up. He's always been a fuck-up. Always been selfish. Always been wild and selfish: You know the type. Living like a free spirit or what have you, while everybody else is trying to work. You know the type? I mean — I don't know, man. Sometimes you just have to wash your hands of a person. Because you just get no recompense. You know what I mean there, Jeff? You must know what I mean. You've seen something of the world. I've never seen anything of the world. I've been working for security firms since I was sixteen years old. Do you know I'm the youngest captain in the history of this firm? But I'm square, man. You know? I'm square. I'm no fun.

JEFF. That's very true.

WILLIAM. And I will bust your ass, all you guys, if you mess up on my shifts, because I don't *let* people mess up on my shifts. That's how I got to *be* the youngest captain in the history of this fucking no-account security firm. I can't believe some of the people they hire,

man. Can you? I mean — Did you happen to see that article in *The New York Times* about security companies in New York City? Guys with long prison records, rapists, murderers, anybody at all who can sign his name they stick a gun on his waist and set him up to protect somebody. You want to explain that insanity to me? I personally got rid of three guys they had working for this company, man, because these guys were just out-and-out criminals. You can't just hire anybody who looks like he can manhandle a person, you know?

JEFF. Sure.

WILLIAM. Anyway, I'm just rambling.

JEFF. Ramble away, man. This is the highlight of my night.

WILLIAM. So how's it going with you anyway, Jeff? Everything all right?

JEFF. Yeah, pretty good. I been looking for apartments.

WILLIAM. Oh yeah? How's that going?

JEFF. Pretty good. I saw this one place today that was actually really pretty nice, but it was a little out of my range. I still owe my brother a lot of money.

WILLIAM. Maybe he'll forgive the debt.

JEFF. I don't want him to forgive the debt. I wanna pay him back every cent I owe him — with interest. The hell with that. I'd rather live in that room for the next five years if it meant I couldn't pay him back. I'm a reformed character, man. I don't take nothin' off of nobody, no thank you, no more.

WILLIAM. I can see I've been a very positive influence on you, Jeff.

JEFF. You have, man. You're a positive inspiration. (Silence.) Hey, you know, I got that book you told me about ... *The Six Habits of Self-Motivated People* ...?

WILLIAM. Oh yeah? Did you read it?

JEFF. Well, I *tried* to read it ...

WILLIAM. All right, you know what?

JEFF. — I just couldn't get past the first two habits.

WILLIAM. Yeah, all right —

JEFF. — I guess I wasn't really that motivated.

WILLIAM. — All right, never mind.

JEFF. No, seriously, I did try to read it. I just don't usually respond to that kind of stuff. I mean I'm sure it has good stuff in it ... It just kind of seemed like bullshit to me.