

INT. BAKERY ELF HQ - MORNING

It is the Hour of Proofing, the end of a long day at Bakery Elf HQ, a large room that looks suspiciously like the Master Chef kitchen, only after a long night of glutinous mischief there is FLOUR everywhere, EGGS on the ceiling (how?) and someone from HR has helpfully hung MOTIVATIONAL POSTERS on each of the work stations. Things about Productivity and Teamwork and Goals. There is a SLIME TRAIL leading from the door around the work stations, indicating the passage of HR.

Everyone is very, very carefully avoiding the slime trail. It steams faintly in the warm light of morning. And is it... glowing? Best not to look too close.

The various BAKERY ELVES, festooned with FROSTING and powdered with SUGAR, someone wearing a PIZZA CRUST as a hat, lean at their work stations and wait to be dismissed. BIG BOSS prowls the front of the room.

BIG BOSS

As you--uh--may have noticed, HR has been by. They've got their eyes on us. All seventeen of them.

A HORRIFIED SILENCE falls.

BIG BOSS (CONT'D)

(full of false cheer)

But that was good work tonight. Numbers are looking better. Not like they could look any fucking worse.

(humorless laugh that no one echoes)

If you keep this up, maybe HR will go back to their caves. And if any of you have--uh--small pets or children you don't like any more, now would be the time to bring them into work and forget to take them home again.

SILENCE. The SOFT PLOP of an egg peeling off the ceiling and splatting onto the floor.

BIG BOSS (CONT'D)

Fine. Go home. Rest. We got to do even better tonight.

MUTTERING in a desultory fashion, the collected Bakery Elves begin filing from the room.

BIG BOSS (CONT'D)

Not you. No, I don't mean you. You.

JESTER, looking absolutely exhausted, his hat falling down over his eyes, points at himself.

BIG BOSS (CONT'D)

Yeah you. Fresh Bread. Get the fuck over here.

This can't be a good thing.

JESTER

But I'm--

BIG BOSS

Do I look like I care? It's come to my attention--

Here he brandishes a MEMO written in CHTHONIC CHARACTERS in what appears to be GREEN BLOOD, a precise hole through its center as if it was pinned in place with a spear, perhaps.

BIG BOSS (CONT'D)

That you haven't completed mandatory training.

JESTER

Well yeah, because--

BIG BOSS

Don't care. You have two days. Lucky you, it's all online.

JESTER

But--

BIG BOSS

No buts. Do you want to lose your job?

Jester appears to be thinking very hard about this; being a bakery elf was not exactly a planned career move.

BIG BOSS (CONT'D)

And by lose your job, I mean do you want me to stake you to the stone altar in front of corporate and leave you there for HR?

JESTER

Okay, no.

BIG BOSS

Then do the damn training.

JESTER

But--the memo says it's six months worth of training!

BIG BOSS

So what? Two days is what, 48 hours? We don't get that much training. You'll be fine. It's just videos.

JESTER

I have to sleep and work too!

BIG BOSS

You should be more worried that you could actually read the memo, kid.

(whispers)

The icy tentacle of HR is upon you.

He shoves the memo into Jester's hand and walks away. Jester stares after him, wide-eyed.

INT. JESTER'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jester sitting in front of his LAPTOP, CUP OF COFFEE steaming at his elbow. He pulls up the Super Sekrit Bakery Elf WEBSITE and reads the instructions off the Chthonic memo. There is a LIST OF JOB TITLES (eg: Bakery Elf, File Clerk, Secretary, Stygian Horror) in alphabetical order.

Jester clicks through to Bakery Elf and is informed by the website that he has 30 HOURS of unviewed training videos. Jester looks down at the coffee at his elbow.

JESTER

I'm going to need a bigger cup.

Click on the first video, HAND WASHING 101. Extremely bad SYNTH MUSIC starts playing.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

(droning)

Hand washing is very important. There is dirt everywhere. Murderous dirt. The dirt must be removed with hand washing. In this video we will explore the many ways to wash your hands.

Jester headdesks.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 Some might believe that soap is unimportant for hand washing. These people are sociopaths.

JESTER
 (mutter)
 Maybe I can just--

He tries to go to a different browser tab. The video pauses.

JESTER (CONT'D)
 Or what about--

Jester mutes his SPEAKERS. The video freezes with a warning popping up, informing Jester that his speakers have been muted.

JESTER (CONT'D)
 Oh for--maybe two at once?

Bleep bloop, denied.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 Choosing the appropriate soap is very important. There are many kinds of soap. Soap may be a liquid, or solid bars, or powdered flakes, or small, furry soap fairies.

JESTER
 Okay, fine. Well, I have dishes to do.

Jester gets up, moves away. Video stops with a nasty, buzzing ALARM.

JESTER (CONT'D)
 (leans back to look at screen)
 'Video automatically paused until your return'--are you kidding me?

He sits back down. Video resumes.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 Let us explore the many fascinating differences between liquid soap and solid soap. Many believe that liquid soap was invented by the elder druids, or came as a gift from the Great Old Ones.

Jester puts his head down on his desk again. Laughsob.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

Various shots of Jester sitting at his desk in front of the computer. A clock on the wall behind registers the passage of time. More and more coffee cups clutter his desk, as well as plates. As the shots progress, Jester becomes more and more exhausted. Sometimes he's spinning in his chair, playing with his phone, face in hands, etc.

INT. JESTER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jester, face in his hands, in front of another video.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Not everything that glows is a hazardous material. Be certain that the substance is not neon tubing, glow in the dark putty, or a designated Bakery Elf Lodestone(TM) before proceeding further. Improper reporting is a waste of corporate time and may be docked from your pay. But failure to respond appropriately to a real hazardous material will result in a reprimand from HR, delivered via the traditional reprimand sticks.

Jester's head thumps down on the KEYBOARD AND TOUCHPAD.

INT. JESTER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (LATER)

The video ends, returning to the main menu with all the professions listed. With Jester's face solidly on the touchpad, the arrow moves randomly until it lands on the job description two up from Bakery Elf: BADASS MURDERNINJA.

The NARRATOR VOICE, it should be noted, is the same boring drone as before.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

We will now continue to part two of Snapping Some Stupid Asshole's Neck. Make certain you are warmed up and have completed all of your stretches.

A BATTLE SCREAM emanates from the computer and Jester sits up with a jerk

JESTER
 (mumble)
 Oh shit band practice--
 (double take)
 Wait, what? Okay, that's new.

NARRATOR (V.O.)
 Are you ready?

JESTER
 Yes. Yes I am.

INT. BAKERY ELF HQ - NIGHT

The Hour of Yeasting approaches. The Bakery Elves gather. And there is Jester, curled up on his work station and SNORING quietly, hugging a COFFEE THERMOS to his chest like a teddy bear.

Big Boss walks up.

BIG BOSS
 You get all your training done?
 (beat)
 Aw, is someone sleepy? Wakey wakey,
 Fresh Bread.

Jester continues to snore in a thoroughly adorable fashion. Big Boss grabs his shoulder. Jester EXPLODES INTO ACTION. Punches Big Boss in the face, gets a scissor lock around his neck, and then flings him --CRASH-- through the nearest wall.

SILENCE.

Jester, still clutching his thermos with one arm, looks wide-eyed at the other Bakery Elves. Those around him take a slow step back.

PALMIER
 So. Uh. Training?

JESTER
 Yeah. It was... great. Really
 informative.