

A Count On Reality

By

Sam Klein

QINT. ACCOUNTING OFFICE

ACCOUNTANT works feverishly at his desk.

MASTER: ZOOM SLOWLY INTO CLOSE-UP

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)

As the most humble of men find
dread in ego, and the most
egocentric of them all find fault
in modesty, I lay somewhere in the
middle of these opposing dualities.
While I honor my position of
subservience to the highest degree,
I as well find myself a
braggadocio. Now, do not find
yourself confused at my position.
It is not often, or ever, that I
let slip my pretentiousness outside
the realm of my mind. No, the
average man, and even the above
average man, would not second guess
placing me in the likes of modesty.
The impossibility of knowing my
true psyche cannot exist without
first balancing in and on my
internal axiom; a feat that is
truly undoable. Some say my
profession is one of intelligence
and patience, which to me hints at
both arrogance and bashfulness.
With that said, I am surprised that
no one can pick up on my true
nature. Business is booming, and as
long as I can count on reality, the
foundation of my profession, I will
remain in my good state of mind.

INT/EXT. LOCATIONS - VARIOUS. DAY/NIGHT

Voice-over continues through Montage.

MONTAGE:

Accountant writes quickly, looks through stacks of paper.

Accountant breaks his pencil as he writes too quickly.

Accountant wakes up in his bedroom, looks in the mirror,
brushes his teeth, gets dressed.

Accountant drinks a cup of coffee.

Accountant enters his office building and sits down at his desk.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)

For years I've been in the field of accounting. Some say an occupation of such sorts can drive one insane, as my job consists of crunching numbers on endless accounts in a repetitive fashion, so mesmerizing I could probably do it in my sleep now. But I, I disagree. The bitter fruits of insanity are yet to implant their seed upon me. The same old "day in the life" is rather refreshing to me, as I always know where I am going, what I am doing, and where I am doing it.

INT. ACCOUNTING OFFICE - DAY/NIGHT

Voice-over continues through Montage.

MONTAGE:

Several wealthy clients come in and out of the office separately, each has their own muted experience with the Accountant.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)

I see a vast array of people during the heat of my season: rich people that deserve wealth, rich people that do not deserve wealth, and even rich people that are not really that rich, but act as they are. These people are far from friends of mine- merely inferior minds that I must dutifully interact with in order to earn a small portion of their fortune. It would be a lie for me to say that I enjoy the occasion in which these clients visit my office, but this is all a part of the job I suppose.

INT. ACCOUNTING OFFICE - NIGHT

A rainy night. Accountant works feverishly on a client's account. Looks flustered. The door opens and the client, DR. SCHMIDT, walks in. Dr. Schmidt still has his white doctor's coat on, and is a very snobby, condescending man.

ACCOUNTANT

Doctor, hello, I-I, wasn't expecting you tonight, may I help you?

DR. SCHMIDT

I, uh, trust you are nearly through my numbers, banker? As I must pay off what I owe in but a night or two.

ACCOUNTANT

Doctor, unfortunately tonight I'm having some trouble with your numbers, please, let me be and soon I will be done

DR. SCHMIDT

What?! I hired you for the finest service! Does your reputation exceed your ability? You had better be done by tomorrow if you wish to see a dime of your salary!

ACCOUNTANT

Doctor, I truly apologize, but if you leave me to it I will surely be done by morning.

DR. SCHMIDT

Yeah, you'd better be...

ACCOUNTANT

Let me walk you out, Doctor.

Accountant gets up from his desk chair and walks Dr. Schmidt to the door.

EXT. OUTSIDE OFFICE BUILDING

As Dr. Schmidt takes his first step out the door, thunder booms and he falls to the ground. Accountant smirks at first, then looks worried, and goes to give him a hand.

ACCOUNTANT
Goodness! Dr. Schmidt, take my
hand.

Dr. Schmidt lays motionless on his stomach.

ACCOUNTANT
Dr. Schmidt?

Accountant bends down and turns the doctor over. Accountant gasps and backs up, as he sees a scalpel in Dr. Schmidt's chest and lots of blood.

Accountant looks panicked. He looks around and looks at Dr. Schmidt's body.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
What terrible odds this Doctor has
been dealt! He had rushed from the
hospital to my office so quickly
that he never even had taken the
scalpel out of his front chest
pocket! Upon impact with the
ground, the instrument had impaled
his chest, killing him instantly.

He picks up the body, drags it to the basement.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
What am I to do? I cannot report
this! I need to finish his account;
I can not rest until it is done! I
am the best accountant in this city
and have never not finished the
job!

Accountant opens the basement window and throws the body in.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
But what about all of the blood in
the street? It has already set into
the ground, and would be impossible
to expel!

INT. ACCOUNTING OFFICE

Accountant gets a mop from the closet and runs back
outside.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
But no, I could not sully the clean
reputation of my business by having
(MORE)

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.) (cont'd)
a giant pool of seemingly human
blood right outside my door!

EXT. OUTSIDE OFFICE BUILDING

Accountant mops the blood stained ground, but it is not effective. He stops mopping, and looks up with a deviant glare.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
What an obvious solution!

INT. ACCOUNTING OFFICE

Accountant runs into the office and into the next room. There, his pet cat is next to the food bowl. He grabs the cat, runs to his office, grabs a letter opener from his desk, and runs back outside.

EXT. OUTSIDE OFFICE BUILDING

Accountant walks over to the blood stained ground.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
My pet cat, a spoiled feline which served merely to take ten dollars a week from my pocket for cat food, would play in this perfectly! For what reason did I even have a cat, I could not say. Some assert it is good company, but in my experience this was not the case.

Accountant kneels down over the stain, holds the cat above it.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
Demanding, prudent, and unfriendly, just like my former Mrs, and now the two can share another common bond: being discharged from the comforts of my home.

Accountant takes the letter opener and holds it above the cat.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
Only this time, my second dispensation is a bit more harsh.

Accountant stabs the cat to death, as it bleeds out over the stain. He lays the cat's body over the stain.

Accountant calmly walks back into the office.

INT. ACCOUNTING OFFICE

Accountant peers out the window. He smiles and walks back over to his desk. He calmly begins to work again.

NEXT DAY.

INT. ACCOUNTING OFFICE - NEXT DAY

Dr. Schmidt's SECRETARY, a pleasant, young woman, knocks on the office door and walks in.

SECRETARY

Hello, is this the office of Dr. Schmidt's accountant? A mister-

ACCOUNTANT

Yes, it is. To whom do I owe the pleasure?

SECRETARY

I'm the Doctor's secretary, I-

Secretary pauses as Accountant opens his draw and takes out two glasses and a bottle of Scotch.

ACCOUNTANT

Let's take this to the seating area if this is a non-business meeting.

Accountant walks over to the seating area, with two glasses and a bottle of Scotch in hand. Secretary follows. They sit down.

SECRETARY

I was wondering if you had an idea of the Doctor's whereabouts, seems he has run off again. I know, however, he stopped by here last night, correct?

ACCOUNTANT

Yes, yes, he did, but unfortunately I am of no help, as I hadn't heard of where he planned to go next.

Accountant pours two glasses of Scotch and hands one to the Secretary.

SECRETARY

(lightheartedly)

Well, let's not make this visit a complete waste of time.

ACCOUNTANT

Yes, of course, this is some of my finest scotch, my pleasure to share it with the employee of such a fine gentleman, the Dr. Schmidt.

SECRETARY

Come on, a fine gentleman? You know as well as I that he is a nightmare.

Accountant sips on his Scotch.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)

She knew! She knew what I had done and was going to turn me in! But no, maybe she didn't, maybe she sincerely disliked the man.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)

Yes, he is quite an irritant I do regretfully say.

SECRETARY

What I wouldn't give for him to just-

Secretary begins' to cough. Secretary violently gasps for air.

SECRETARY

You! Help! Can't breathe!

ACCOUNTANT

What?! Maddam, breathe! Breathe!

The Secretary, with a sharp, accusatory face, points her finger at Accountant and fully collapses on the floor.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)

Had she thought this was my work?! My luck had so recently ceased to exist, as my ordinary routine I was so used to seemed to

(MORE)

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.) (cont'd)
have shunned my being these past
few days.

Accountant, panics, checks Secretary's heartbeat, checks the
glasses, looks around in horror.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
Death was in my shadow, haunting my
existence! How can I escape this? I
cannot! I must wait it out, soon
normality will cast over me once
again.

Accountant begins to drag the body out of the room. He drags
her up a set of stairs, and stops at a door. He opens the
door.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
This is the only obvious solution!

INT. ATTIC

Accountant drags Secretary's body up the stairs to the
attic.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
She must remain in the deepest
depths of my closet. Nobody would
go back there. I was in the clear,
my business would be fine, and this
accident need not be reported.

Accountant drops her body in the back of the attic. He walks
rapidly down the stairs.

INT. SECOND FLOOR - HALLWAY

Accountant walks quickly through the hallway and pushes into
the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM

He looks in the mirror. He looks very disheveled. His shirt
is torn, his hair is tangled, and he is out of breath.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
 I look mad! I needed a change. For
 once this creature of habit wished
 to rattle the cage! I-

Accountant is cut off, and falls harshly backwards. He is shocked. He looks around, then looks at his chest. He has been stabbed and is bleeding.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
 Someone had stabbed me in the
 chest! As I was caught off guard,
 they came from behind and sliced
 right through my core! But who had
 done it? There was nobody around;
 had the secretary not actually
 died?!

Accountant gets up and staggers out of the bathroom.

INT. SECOND FLOOR - HALLWAY

Accountant staggers down the hallway and opens the attic door. He staggers up the stairs as he holds his chest.

INT. ATTIC

Accountant staggers to the back of the attic, where the Secretary's body is. He falls a few times on his way over. He gets to her body to discover she is still dead.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
 Of course she is dead, what was I
 thinking? But then who had stabbed
 me?

Accountant takes the weapon out of his chest. It is a scalpel. He throws it away immediately.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
 Oh, the irony!

Accountant looks around wildly, confused.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)
 But, all of the doors had been
 locked, windows shut, and the
 ghostly silence that I so greatly
 enjoy in my office was not
 disturbed. The possibility of
 another intruding my domain was not
 real.

Accountant has a look of horror and question.

ACCOUNTANT (V.O.)

Then who could have given me this
final blow to end my life; aside
from... myself...?

Accountant has a look of horror and realization.