

Bully
by
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FADE IN ON:

INT. TRAVIS INDUSTRIES - BASEMENT R&D - EVENING

BEEPS rebound against cement walls. A high-tech "rummage sale" on display.

In between wires, the MT-2000 reigns supreme; a behemoth machine with two seats, helmets and glowing lights. One that'd make Stanley Kubrick proud.

DR. TIMOTHY KRUGS (30s) putters around his lab. His white lab coat flutters behind him, like a neurotic butterfly.

Tim twists a dial. Checks a gauge. Jots the numbers down.

EDWARD BROOKS (40s) watches from afar. His uniform screams "Janitor"; a true bull-moose of a man. Bulging muscles, shaved head, a tree-trunk neck. Someone busted his nose in the eighties. And it never got repaired.

Eddie hugs a paper wrapped OBJECT. Dusts equipment with one free, beefy hand.

The MT-2000 BEEPS. A galvanized Tim jumps in the air.

He darts past Eddie in a panic - towards a panel on the MT's side. He types in code like a math-meth freak.

Eddie grins at the little man, amused.

EDDIE

In a hurry? Didn't you see me standin' here?

Tim stares up at Eddie with fear-filled eyes.

TIM

I stepped on your foot, didn't I? Oh my God, I'm so sorry. I didn't mean to be rude. Did I hurt you - at all?

EDDIE

You hurt *me*? What do you weigh?

TIM

One hundred, thirty one.

EDDIE

You're joking, right?

Tim blinks at Eddie - still concerned.

TIM

People, um, say I have a sense of humor.
But I wasn't joking. This time.

(beat)

The cleaning crew usually comes at night.
Usually. I didn't expect you to be there.

Eddie glances at the clock.

EDDIE

It's six PM. That's night-time. Almost
time to order take-out at Hung Low
Mandarin.

Eddie lumbers over to a counter. Still clinging to his
package, he starts the task of dusting again.

EDDIE

What's your name, Mr. Scientist?

TIM

Tim Krugs, Ph.d.

Eddie looks at Tim with newfound respect.

EDDIE

"Ph.d?" Dr. Krugs, I'm impressed.

TIM

What's yours?

EDDIE

My what? Career? Janitor.

TIM

No. What's your name, I mean?

EDDIE

(shrugs)

It don't really matter.

He dusts off an MT helmet. Tim asks the question again.

TIM

Everyone matters. What's your name?

EDDIE

If you gotta know, I'm Edward Brooks. Or
"Eddie" to my friends.

TIM

(grins)

"Eddie" it is. Between you and me.

Tim fusses with a seat belt on the MT-2000's seat. Eyes the paper package in the big man's hands.

TIM

What's that? Cleaning supplies?

EDDIE

Nah. Something far more valuable. Not that my job's tools ain't important, too.

Tim wanders closer. Pokes the package with his finger.

TIM

Ow - that's sharp! What kind of tools?

Eddie places the package down and sighs.

EDDIE

I told you - it ain't tools. Wrong again. That means you got just one more guess. Three total - then you lose.

TIM

It's not a weapon. I hope?

EDDIE

What do you think I am, a thug? Bzzzt - thanks for playing. It's a statue. Surprise!

Eddie rips off paper, revealing: A SMALL CLAY SCULPTURE. A portrait of Eddie himself. Rough and unpolished; but the artist's talent shines through anyway.

TIM

That's good. You make that?

EDDIE

Hell no. My daughter did. Her name's Becky, and *she's* important. She just finished the third grade.

Eddie turns towards the MT-2000.

EDDIE

Speaking a' creations... what's that big thing over there?

TIM

Oh, that. The MT-2000.

EDDIE

(laughs)

That's what you call it? Funny;

I've dusted that bastard a million times.
But I always thought of it as the
'machine'. Never, ever knew its name.
What's it for?

TIM

Well, I'm not *supposed* to tell anyone.
But since now we're officially friends.

He leans close to Eddie, whispers in his ear.

TIM

MT stands for "Mind Transfer". You see
those seats? That's for the test
subjects. It's taken five years to iron
out the details. But we're gonna start
testing today!

Eddie's face melts in awe.

EDDIE

Wow. This is gonna be history. And I can
tell Becky I was there!

His eyes slip to the statue; a wistful look on his face.

EDDIE

You know why she made that for me? 'Cause
she was proud of her Daddy working in a
research lab. She thinks I'm a scientist -
like you. I didn't have the balls to tell
her the truth.

TIM

(beat)

There's nothing wrong with being a
janitor.

EDDIE

I know. But ever since her mom and me got
divorced, I don't want hurt Becky's
feelings anymore.

TIM

I promise... your secret's safe with me.

Inspiration hits the small scientist. Tim looks at Eddie
and smiles.

TIM

How's about... we snap a Selfie of you
next to the MT? You can give that to your
daughter. And seal your place in history!

Eddie holds out his huge paw. They shake.

EDDIE

Thanks, Doc. Maybe I just met you, but I got a strong feeling; you and me's gonna make a spec-tacular team!

Tim's slim fingers are engulfed in Eddie's huge hand.

Eddie turns Tim's hand over. Plops in his second-rate cell phone. A picture of CUTE BECKY serves as wallpaper.

EDDIE

Here. I'll pose. You take lots of pictures. When we're done, the Chinese food's on me!

TIM

You sure you can afford it?

EDDIE

You kidding? I may be a working Joe. But tonight, we'll pretend I'm richer than Midas!

INT. HALLWAYS - TRAVIS INDUSTRIES

No cement on these walls. Modern art (less skilled but more pretentious than Becky's statue) covers every inch.

CEO DOUG TRAVIS (30s) bull dozes down the corridor, flanked by TWO SINISTER GUARDS.

His neon-orange hair blazes above his designer suit - one that cost more than Eddie's car.

GARY CIP (40s) slinks along in Doug's shadow. Doug glares at him, annoyed.

DOUG

Keep up. We're running late as it is!

Doug takes a step without looking - collides with a YOUNG INTERN. Papers fly in the air. Doug pins the kid, fury in his eyes.

DOUG

That's it. You're fired!

INTERN

But... I didn't mean to. Sir!

Doug continues on. Snarls over his shoulder.

DOUG
Incompetent nincompoop. Watch where
you're walking, kid!

INTERN
I just bought a coop. With a mortgage...

The intern starts to cry.

The guards and Gary blow on by. Terrified EMPLOYEES
freeze in their tracks.

Doug singles out an ELDERLY MAN and points.

DOUG
You there. I saw you roll your eyes.
You're fired, too. Pack your things,
Ebenezer. Go.

Gary whispers in his boss's ear.

GARY
Sir, you just terminated Rudy. He's been
here for thirty years. He's sixty-five.
His wife is sick with cancer.

DOUG
(grins)
Then, I'm doing him a favor. He should
retire. Stick by her side.

Gary nods. Doug continues down the hallway. AND continues
his tirade.

DOUG
Gary, if you want to move forward in
Travis Industries, you should never, ever
be so soft. Leadership requires a man to
cut out the fat - everywhere.
Stockholders appreciate the bottom line.

GARY
But Rudy is the Head of the Real Estate
division.

DOUG
What has he done for me lately? If
someone wants to keep their job, past
performance means no more than shit.
That's the True Art of the Deal. Which
reminds me of that pipsqueak
downstairs...

GARY

Oh. You mean Tim?

DOUG

Yeah, Einstein. The one we're on our way to see. He was useful up 'til now, but his job's over now. If the MT-2000 works tonight, we'll give him fair notice. Then we take over, and he's gone.

Gary shrugs. That's okay. He, the guards and Doug head downstairs.

INT. TRAVIS INDUSTRIES - BASEMENT R&D

Eddie poses dramatically next to the MT - a huge, goofy grin on his face.

Rebecca's statue rests in one of the seats - perfectly centered in camera-frame.

Tim holds Eddie's cell, lines up the shot.

TIM

Smile for the camera.

EDDIE

(through gritted teeth)

I am, okay. Shoot the picture slow-poke!
My face don't feel natural this way.

TIM

On the count of three. One, two, thr-

SLAM! The door bursts open. Doug, Gary and Guard make their dramatic entrance.

Tim drops the camera, surprised. The screen CRACKS. Eddie leaps to his feet.

EDDIE

That six hundred dollars! Boost Mobile's gonna kill me.

Doug storms across the lab in tyrant mode - almost like he owns the place. (Which - ironically - is true.) Orange hair flapping, Doug glares at a frightened Tim.

DOUG

Dr. Krugs - is the MT-2000 operational?
Why are you wasting time, playing games?

TIM

We were waiting for you to arrive.

Doug growls and swings on Eddie. As big and mean as CEO Travis is; Eddie's a physical match.

DOUG

"We"? Who is this... person?

TIM

His name is Edward. Eddie.

EDDIE

I work in the janitorial wing.

DOUG

(snarls)

In other words, you shouldn't be here.

EDDIE

That ain't so. I clean this gizmo every day!

DOUG

Like the cleaning crew's job is so important. What's crucial is staying out of my way. And how much of your *job* have you even done?

He runs a finger across one dusty counter.

DOUG

This is disgusting. Look at me!

Doug throws around trash-cans like a three year old. Sweeps gear off counters to the floor - whether they're important or not.

DOUG

There. Two seconds. Now it's clean!

Eddie bends down and picks up his cracked phone. Dismay bubbles on his face.

EDDIE

I don't have insurance for this. I hope the camera's not shot.

TIM

(squeaks)

Don't worry. I'll pay for the damage.

Doug storms around the lab, in search of more things to nitpick. His eyes fall on Becky's statue. Score!

DOUG

What in fucking blazes is this?

With one petulant thrust, Doug knocks the statue off the seat. Clay SMASHES to pieces on the ground.

Gary and Tim cower. One guard SNICKERS.

GUARD #1

Damn, that's mean. Like his Daddy was.

Eddie lunges for Doug's spray-tanned throat.

EDDIE

You bastard. That was art!

The guards whip out Tasers and take Eddie down.

Doug steps back, not even grazed. He sneers at Eddie's twitching form.

DOUG

You lazy punk. It's people like you that are destroying our country's legacy. You're fired! Thugs like you should rot in jail.

Guard #2 ZAPS a prone Eddie for emphasis. A freaked out Tim jumps in the way.

TIM

Don't hurt him. That was his daughter's. Please. Stop and understand!

Guard #1 shoves Tim back several feet.

Doug grabs Tim by his lab-coat collar, stops his fall. Guides him over to the MT-2000.

DOUG

Okay, Mr. Scientist... this is your boss speaking. Ignore the puke stain on the floor. I came here to see a machine. This one, specifically. Stop stalling - show me what you got.

(to Gary)

You - haul that thug away.

GARY

But he's -

DOUG

Inconsequential and harmless. Bring him to security. Let *them* throw him out, if you're so scared.

Gary escorts a still-stunned Eddie to the door.

Tim sadly watches the men leave.

Then glances down at the remains of Becky's artwork.

Then back up at the guards. Their faces are stone. Emotionless eyes shielded by mirrored shades.

Each guard approaches a seat on the MT-2000. They sit down. Doug stares impatiently at Tim.

DOUG

Get to it. I don't have all day.

Tim fumbles in his lab coat, and pulls out two filled syringes. He injects each guard in the neck. The gorillas instantly relax.

DOUG

You're drugging my guards?

TIM

It's a sedative. To make the transfer less traumatic.

Tim lowers helmets to the mens' heads.

He types in codes. The MT-2000 HUMS. A multitude of BEEPS fill the air. Followed by a resounding...

ZAPPPPPP.The guards twitch. Then look up; amazed.

GUARD #1

Holy Hell. Did we switch seats?

Tim glances at Doug, proud.

TIM

It works! First the guinea pigs. Now this.

DOUG

Not bad. Did you register all your research notes?

TIM

Of course. I'm a scientist.

A nasty grin grows on Doug's face.

DOUG
 Good. Then you're fired. Travis
 Industries thanks you for your years of
 service.

TIM
 But -

DOUG
 But... you're not needed anymore.

The switched guards high five.

Tim's face falls. His shoulders droop; he slinks away.

INT. EDDIE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Eddie's still in uniform. He slumps on the couch, a half-guzzled whisky bottle in his hand.

He picks up a framed photo of LITTLE DAUGHTER BECKY. He stares at it lovingly. Tears shimmer in his eyes.

EDDIE
 Baby, you gotta know I'm proud of you.
 And I wanted you to be proud of me.

His cracked cell phone RINGS. Eddie jumps, but picks it up. Cuts his finger on the screen.

EDDIE
 Yo.

Tim's voice crackles through static on the line.

TIM (O.S.)
 Eddie? It's Tim.

EDDIE
 Who?

TIM (O.S.)
 Your co-worker from Travis Industries.
 You remember - we met today?

EDDIE
 I'm trying to forget today. Totally.
 Understand?

Eddie stares glumly at his bottle.

EDDIE

Which isn't working like I planned. How'd you get my number anyway?

TIM (O.S.)

I have top level security clearance. I accessed the HR mainframe.

EDDIE

Then you know I'm not employed anymore.

TIM (O.S.)

(beat)

Neither am I. Travis fired me, as well.

EDDIE

Shit, I'm sorry. Was it because a' me?

TIM (O.S.)

No. Let me tell you why I'm calling. You left something at the lab.

EDDIE

Becky's statue? It's busted.

TIM (O.S.)

Not quite. But there's something you have to see. Please - come to Travis Industries. Meet me in the basement R&D.

Eddie wobbles to his feet.

EDDIE

Got nuttin' *else* to do. I'll be there.

INT. TRAVIS INDUSTRIES - CEO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Even more pretentious than the hall.

Doug lounges in a leather chair, on the phone. Feet propped on a desk. Broad back to the door.

DOUG

Oooo, honey-pie. You on your knees would be a sight to see. Unlike Heidi Klum, you're a ten. You wanna come over? No, my wife Melanie won't be there. She's busy doing - woman things. Get on the job, and meet me at the Penthouse in one hour. I'll order in Taco Bowls, and *really* make it worth your while.

Doug hangs up, and swivels towards his computer.

He types in a site: *Immigrant Hotties.Com*. He slicks back what's left of his hair and grins.

DOUG

Tonight's gonna be a real sweet deal.

...and doesn't notice Tim inching up behind him. A syringe clutched in his hand.

Tim pounces! He jabs Doug in the back of his neck.

The surprise attack's over in seconds. Doug's heavy frame THUMPS to the ground.

INT. HALLWAYS

Tim drags/rolls the CEO's limp body through the halls. Given Doug's almost dead weight, it's a lot of inertia to withstand. Nonetheless, Tim perseveres.

A preoccupied Gary wanders by.

GARY

Yes, Sir. Of course, Sir. Gary, you know Mr. Travis is a blow hard - stop being such a pussy all the time...

Tim yanks Doug into a stairwell. Gary doesn't see.

INT. STAIRWELL

Tim drags the CEO down - towards the basement lab. THUMP. THUMP. Each and every stair.

DOUG

(groans)

My suit's getting dirty. Gary just got it dry-cleaned...

TIM

Shh! Stop whining. Almost there!

INT. TRAVIS INDUSTRIES - BASEMENT R&D

A plastered Eddie throws open the door, stumbles inside.

EDDIE

Tim! Where are you, Buddy? I came like I promised. It's so dark!

The first thing he notices: Becky's statue on the counter, glued together haphazardly. Not as good as it was. But clearly, someone *tried*.

EDDIE

Did you do that for me, Tim? That's so sweet.

Eddie lolls a drunken head towards the MT-2000. Freezes at an unexpected sight.

Tim's strapped a catatonic Doug into the machine's seat.

EDDIE

Mr. Travis? Tim?

TIM

We're having a little party. Join us, please?

EDDIE

Tim - little Buddy. What have you done?

TIM

I'm fixing the mess. With your help.

Tim waves Eddie forward. The big man stumbles, but obeys. And squints into Doug's drooling face.

EDDIE

(gasps)

You gave our CEO a lobo-ectomy?

TIM

That's a "lobotomy" - and no. Just a taste of his own medicine. An anesthetic one, that is. And I see your face. Don't feel bad for him. It's a drug needed for the transfer. The MT-2000 isn't painless. Come closer. Take a seat.

DOUG

(mutters incoherently)

I got dibs on First Class. Stick that dirty, lousy Janitor in Coach.

Eddie points.

EDDIE

I gotta sit next to *him*?

TIM

Quick! Before someone sounds the alarm!

EDDIE

Wait - this machine switches bodies?

TIM

So I invite *you* to switch with *him*. The Prince and the Pauper. The CEO and Janitor. That's poetic - don't you agree?

EDDIE

You want me to sacrifice my life. My family -

TIM

Not at all. You'll still be alive. But now *you'll* be Mr. Doug Travis, CEO. Of Global Travis Industries.

Tim types quick code. The MT HUMS.

TIM

And a man in the perfect position to get your little girl what she wants and needs. She'll be able to go to any college. Be what she deserves to be. Travis had his chance. He's got billions.

DOUG

(babbles)

Which I earned...

TIM

Correction. Inherited. From your Daddy. Now it's time to give someone else a chance. Eddie. And his daughter as well.

A drunk and bewildered Eddie drops into the other seat.

EDDIE

I got Tasered once today. I guess this won't hurt worse.

Tim grins; flips a switch. Lights dance across the room.

LATER

Light filters in the lab window. Birds CHIRP outside.

The two guards and Gary storm in the door. Worry contorts Gary's face - a sign of an anxious, sleepless night.

GARY

Mr. Travis, are you here? We've been looking everywhere!

All three stop dead at an unexpected sight.

A chipper Tim and "Doug" wait by the MT-2000, a trussed up "Eddie" at their feet.

"Eddie" struggles against his ropes. Duct tape pinches his mouth and cheeks.

GARY

Sir... what happened?

"DOUG"

Isn't it obvious, Gary? It is to me. You may have escorted Mr. Brooks to the door. Somehow he flew right back in.

The two guards exchange glances. Do a double-take at their name tags. Moving quick, they switch pins. Rectify the mistake.

Gary pins Tim with the stink-eye; he's not sure how to take this. Yet.

GARY

Sir - you fired Mr. Krugs as well. So what is *he* doing here?

"DOUG"

I changed my mind. I'm the boss. It's allowed. Dr. Krugs is a valued asset to our company. So he will stay, and things will change. For instance - now *you're* fired. You only had one job Gary: removing Mr. Brooks. Do it again. Then go away.

"Eddie" staggers to his feet. Chews away a bit of the duct tape.

"EDDIE"

Gary, help! They're both lying. I'm Doug Travis. Not him!

GARY

Uh, you look nothing alike.

"EDDIE"

They used the machine. Can't you see?

GARY

What kind of idiot would believe -

"EDDIE"

An idiot like you - obviously!

"Eddie" barrels towards Gary. The guards Taser him to the floor. He twitches and writhes. One guard laughs merrily.

GUARD #1

Damn. Twice in one day.

GUARD #2

Dude, it's morning.

GUARD #1

Okay - twice in twelve hours. Okay?

Gary glares down at "Eddie". Spits in his face.

GARY

He's a stupid thug. Take him away.

(to "Doug")

I did a good job this time, right?

"Doug" turns to the guards.

"DOUG"

You. Take *both* of them away.

The guards pounce. One seizes Gary. The other scoops a slack "Eddie" off the floor.

Tim and "Doug" watch them leave.

GARY

Sir - please have mercy! I've been your assistant ten whole years!

"DOUG"

An "assistant" who never learned his lesson. Good leaders rule by example. They can't be thugs or bullies. Though they do have to keep the business lean. Your service will therefore no longer be desired. Dr. Krugs and I will take the reins... from here.

Moments later, Tim and "Doug" stand alone. Tim winks at "Doug" and smiles.

TIM

How's it feel?

"DOUG"

Fine. The whiskey helped. I think.

Tim holds out his hand. They sit down. The MT's shut off, but it's still got seats.

TIM

You're starting that Trust Fund for
Becky, like we discussed?

"DOUG"

Yeah. Though 'legal stuff' blows my mind.

TIM

That's what lawyers are for. I know some
stand-up guys in the estate planning
division.

A familiar, goofy grin spreads across "Doug's" face.

"DOUG"

Doc, I got a feeling. You and I are gonna
make a spec'tacular team!

FINAL FADE OUT: