

COLD OPENEXT. OFFICE BUILDING - MORNING

Establishing shot. A blank, modern West Hollywood building surrounded by others that look just like it.

INT. SECURITY OFFICE - MORNING

A camera flashes on the smiling face of LOTTE DONNERSTAG, [mid-20's, sunny, pretty and stylish in her own way.]

She stands against a plain white wall.

At his desk, Security Chief, TYSON, [30, could turn intimidating on a dime, but generally non-abrasive and non-impressed], loads the picture into a computer.

LOTTE
How's it look?

TYSON
Never good.

He shows Lotte her photo on the monitor. It's awful.

LOTTE
You know, what it is, is your light in here is really rotten. And shooting against this wall plays all kinds of heck with the white balance.

Tyson looks at her blankly.

LOTTE (CONT'D)
I have a BFA in photography from the University of Colorado. I did my thesis on indoor lighting.

Lotte closes a curtain over a window and adjusts a desk lamp to aim at a darker wall.

LOTTE (CONT'D)
Aim the camera over here.

Tyson aims his camera at Lotte, now well-lit, and takes a new picture. He checks the monitor and nods, impressed. She leans over and nods and smiles, too.

He returns to the computer as Lotte re-opens the curtain and resets the desk lamp.

Lotte's cellphone rings. She looks at it and grimaces.

LOTTE (CONT'D)

I'm -- Excuse me.

(answering the phone)

Hey Mom. I -- Yeah. Not yet.

Because, I'm getting my ID badge right now. Well, no, because I'm still downstairs. I'm not lollygagging! People in Los Angeles don't even know what that word means!

(to Tyson)

Do you know what lollygagging means?

Tyson nods.

Lotte wrinkles her nose with annoyed disappointment.

LOTTE (CONT'D)

He said no.

She mouths "Sorry!" to Tyson.

LOTTE (CONT'D)

Yes. OK. I have to go. Bye.

Lotte disconnects and puts the phone back in her bag.

LOTTE (CONT'D)

My mom. I think some part of my umbilical cord is still stuck in her body. I thought moving a thousand miles away would give us some distance but now she's calling me every five minutes!

Lotte regains her composure

LOTTE (CONT'D)

Sorry. My name's Lotte.

She smiles big.

LOTTE (CONT'D)

(after a beat)

Which you already know because I filled out that piece of paper so that you could make me an ID badge which you are handing me right now... Thank you.

Lotte looks at the ID badge. It's the first picture, the very bad one.

LOTTE (CONT'D)

Hey, what happened to the good one?

TYSON

No way, Colorado. That gets out and I spend my whole day overrun with idiots asking me for glamour shots.

Lotte looks at her ID badge with great sadness.

TYSON (CONT'D)

Why do you answer the phone?

LOTTE

Huh?

TYSON

Your mom. Don't answer the phone.

LOTTE

No. Here's what happens. If I don't pick up, she thinks I just missed the call -- so, instead of leaving a message she calls me right back but then when that call goes to voice mail, she thinks that I'm calling her back at the very same moment that she's calling me.

TYSON

I get it.

LOTTE

So, then she calls back again thinking she'll cut in on me leaving a message for her and -- Oh, look, I know you're trying to help but there's no solution. Believe me. It never ends.

BILLY PILLZ enters, [30's, very striking, in an aggressive cartoon-ish stereotype of a gossip columnist] He's wearing oversized sunglasses and a bandage on his wrist.

BILLY

(to Lotte)

Cute top.

He walks into a waiting elevator and the doors shut with perfect, magical timing.

LOTTE

Thank you... strange person, who I don't know.

TYSON

You work at Loose Lips, right?

LOTTE

(to the ID)

That's what it says right here underneath my horrible picture.

TYSON

That's Billy Pillz.

Lotte shrugs.

TYSON (CONT'D)

From Loose Lips.

LOTTE

Ah, okay. See, I haven't actually met anybody there yet. We did the whole interview over Twitter.

TYSON

But, you know what they do?

She hesitates just a beat.

LOTTE

Yeah. I mean, sure. I looked at the website. A little. Browsed it. Skimmed through.

Tyson raises an eyebrow.

LOTTE (CONT'D)

I had a lot to do! Moving and then my mom was -- Anyway, yeah. I know what they do. It's, like, celebrity news and stuff.

Tyson smiles mysteriously.

TYSON

And stuff.

LOTTE

Whatever. Anyway, I'm not planning to work here for the rest of my entire life. It's a starter job. I just need something to pay the bills, you know?

TYSON

Third floor. Down the hall. Next to
the trash bin. If you're on the
fire escape, you've gone too far.

Lotte enters the elevator, places her ID against the elevator
sensor and presses floor 3.

The picture on the ID is really bad.

Her phone rings and the elevator door closes.

END OF COLD OPEN