

Exit Interview

A One Act Play

by Butch Maxwell

The Characters

Helen

Alex

Setting:

An office

Time:

The present

Alex sits with a coffee cup in front of him. Lid on. Helen is behind a desk, making notes as she talks.

HELEN

...And these responses become part of your personnel record.

ALEX

Of course.

HELEN

Over the last thirty days, would you say your performance has been consistent?

ALEX

Yeah. Consistent.

HELEN

No significant fluctuations?

ALEX

(Too quickly.)

No.

HELEN

You've been able to meet expectations as outlined?

ALEX

Yes.

HELEN

How would you describe your concentration?

ALEX

Good. I stay on task.

HELEN

Sustained throughout the workday?

ALEX

Yeah.

HELEN

Any difficulty completing routine tasks?

ALEX

No.

HELEN

How has your sleep been?

ALEX

Fine.

HELEN

Consistently?

ALEX

(Tiny pause.)

Yeah.

HELEN

Restful?

ALEX

...Yeah. I think so.

(First crack.)

He adjusts the lid on the coffee cup. Doesn't drink.

HELEN

Any changes in appetite or intake?

ALEX

I eat normally.

HELEN

And just to confirm—no concerns you'd like to report at this time?

ALEX

(Quickly)

No.

HELEN

Earlier you said your sleep is fine.

(A beat)

How many hours would you say that is, on average?

ALEX

Six. Seven.

(A beat)

Usually closer to six. Mostly.

HELEN

What time are you typically going to bed?

ALEX

Late.

(A beat)

Not – late, really. Just normal.

HELEN

How has your focus at work been?

ALEX

What do you mean?

HELEN

Sustained? Are there any periods where that becomes more difficult?

ALEX

(A beat)

I get everything done. I always do.

He reaches for the cup. Stops just short. Pulls his hand back.

HELEN

How would you characterize your energy level as compared to three months ago?

ALEX

About the same.

(A beat)

Maybe a little... lower. Not significantly.

HELEN

Have there been any changes in how you interact with colleagues?

ALEX

I get along with people.

HELEN

How would you describe your current level of motivation?

ALEX

Good.

(A beat)

I mean – it's there.

HELEN

In what sense?

ALEX

I do what I need to do. I get it done.

HELEN

Do you still find your work engaging?

ALEX

Yeah.

(A beat.)

It's... fine. It's fine.

HELEN

As much as before?

ALEX

... Mostly.

(A pause.)

It's just different now.

HELEN

You've used the word "fine" a few times.

(A beat)

What does "fine" mean to you in this context?

ALEX

It means –

(Stopping himself)

It's not a problem.

HELEN

Which of the following best describes your current state:
Improved, declined, or stable?

ALEX

Stable.

(A beat)

Maybe slightly down.

(Quickly)

But within normal range.

HELEN

Do tasks feel more difficult, or about the same?

ALEX

Sometimes – really – it’s about the same, I guess.

HELEN

I’m noticing some variation in your responses.

(A beat.)

I’d like to clarify them.

ALEX

I’m just trying to be accurate.

HELEN

Have you been feeling more tired than usual?

ALEX

Everyone’s tired.

(A beat.)

I mean—yeah. A little.

HELEN

Any changes in mood?

ALEX

No.

(Too quickly.)

Not really.

(A beat.)

Just normal stress.