

419

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THE VOICE OF VALUE VAULT
Store 236 contains content that may not be suitable
for all audiences. Listener discretion is advised.

SCENE 1, INT. STORE

Calm muzak plays. MORGAN addresses the store over the
loudspeaker

MORGAN
Attention Value Vault shoppers, the
time is now 7:18 PM. As you may be
aware, this store closed at 7. Please
make your way to the exits as quickly
as possible so that the associates
can be anywhere but here. Don't
bother putting your items back, just
leave them there on the floor. God
knows you're gonna do it anyway, so
we might as well just accept it.

MORGAN hangs up

CLOSING CUSTOMER 1
Excuse me, where can I find -

We hear footsteps as NAT walks by the customer without
stopping

NAT
We don't have any.

CLOSING CUSTOMER 2
Uh ,hey, I'm trying to check out, but
all the registers are closed?

JUDE
Yes. Yes they are.

CLOSING CUSTOMER 3
Hey, uh, can you help me with -

OLIVER
Oh, I'm not allowed to talk to the
customers. Not since the incident...

CLOSING CUSTOMER 3
Oh, uh, but, no that's - I just, no,
but...

CLOSING CUSTOMER's voice fades. AUBREY speaks
directly to the camera

AUBREY

In the retail justice system,
customers who stay past closing time
are considered especially heinous. At
Store 236, the dedicated associates
who deal with these imbeciles are
members of an elite squad known as
the Shopping Villains Unit. These are
their stories.

KEN pops out from behind a counter

KEN

DING DING

AUBREY

What the hell, Ken??

KEN

What?

AUBREY

Ding ding? It's not ding ding! It's
like -

AUBREY does her best impression of the SVU sound

KEN

I'm sorry! I thought it was a ding!

AUBREY

What do you mean? It was never a
ding!

KEN

I got nervous!

AUBREY

Ken, we practiced!

Hard cut. The Store 236 theme plays.

SCENE 2, INT. BREAK ROOM

Camera beeps, we hear a muffled voice over the phone

JUDE

Mhm...yes, the - the pipe itself is
the issue, it's - it's completely
disconnected from the wall. What do
you mean "am I sure?"

JUDE

(interview)

This morning when I got into work, I was greeted by a flooded bathroom.

(sighs)

Apparently, the pipe going from the toilet to the wall decided it and the wall were no longer on speaking terms. Luckily, it was the employee bathroom, so customers won't be affected - god knows they'd raise hell about it - but corporate doesn't really like for us to use the customer bathroom, so we need someone to get out here and fix it ASAP. This is a concept you would not expect to be difficult to grasp, and yet, here I am, arguing with my fifth representative of the day, guess - guess! how long I have been on the phone. Just guess.

DOCUMENTARIAN

(interview)

Well, the store's only been open for three hours, so...maybe two?

JUDE

(interview)

Four. Four hours. I have been on the phone for four hours. I called before the store even opened and I have been here ever since.

DOCUMENTARIAN

(interview)

Oh dear.

JUDE

Yes, yes, the pipe, the entire pipe is disconnected. How do I know? Because I am someone who is able to see, and I can see that the pipe is not touching the wall. And even if I were not able to see it, my soaked shoes are also pretty strong evidence.

(beat)

No, I do not think plunging will help!

(beat)

Because there's nothing to plunge! There's no water left in the toilet! Wet shoes, remember??

(beat)

No! No one in this store is trained as a plumber, why would anybody in this store be trained as a plumber?? That's why I need you to call one! No, no, no, no, please don't, I'm so sorry, please don't- ohhhhhhhh she transferred me.

(to the camera)

Yeah. Yeah, I'm gonna commit a felony.

DOCUMENTARIAN

I'll - I'll be sure to turn the camera off.

JUDE

I appreciate that.

SCENE 3, INT. STORE, MORGAN'S REGISTER

Relaxed muzak plays

MORGAN

Thank you for shopping at Value Vault, please leave now. Next!

KIND CUSTOMER

Hi, I just have one the thing - hey!

RUDE CUSTOMER

Excuse me!

MORGAN

Ma'am, there was someone ahead of you, and you'll have to wait your turn.

RUDE CUSTOMER

She can wait *her* turn, I demand an explanation for this!

RUDE CUSTOMER slaps a receipt down on the counter

MORGAN

...well, that appears to be a receipt. It's something we give customers at the end of a transaction. It's a list of all the items you purchased as well as the price for each -

RUDE CUSTOMER

Don't patronize me! I know what a receipt is!

MORGAN

Oh, good for you.

RUDE CUSTOMER

I purchased nine items at one dollar each, which should've come out to nine dollars plus tax.

MORGAN

Sounds like maths to me.

RUDE CUSTOMER

Well then, imagine my surprise when I get home, review my receipt, and find this at the bottom!

Paper crinkles as MORGAN checks the receipt

MORGAN

Oh, that's a service charge. Any credit card purchase under \$10 gets assessed a 3% service charge to cover what the credit card company charges us.

RUDE CUSTOMER

That's outrageous!

MORGAN

Pretty standard practice actually.

RUDE CUSTOMER

You can't charge me extra without even telling me, that's illegal!

MORGAN

Yeah, that's what the sign's for.

RUDE CUSTOMER

Sign? What sign??

MORGAN

This one. Same sign we've that got at every register. It says "any credit card purchase under \$10 will be assessed a 3% service charge, thank you for understanding."

RUDE CUSTOMER

That's ridiculous, you can't expect people to read that!

MORGAN

Well, unfortunately, you are responsible for the things you do not read. We posted the sign. We can't exactly shove your face in front of it and make your eyeballs move for you, now can we?

RUDE CUSTOMER

This is so underhanded, not even telling people you're going to charge them extra. You could make a fortune doing that!

MORGAN

Off of 27 cents?

RUDE CUSTOMER

If you did it to hundreds of customers, then yes!

MORGAN

If we charged a hundred customers 27 cents we would make \$27. That barely covers the takeout I order on a Friday night to reward myself for dealing with people like you.

MORGAN laughs

RUDE CUSTOMER

I expect a refund!

MORGAN

Ehh, you should set those expectations lower. Anything else?

RUDE CUSTOMER

Get me a manager!

MORGAN

Gladly. Oi, Jude!

JUDE

(from across the
store)

I'm on the phone, Morgan.

MORGAN

Yeah, yeah, would you tell this numpty that the service charge isn't refundable?

JUDE
(still across the
store)
Yeah, they're...they're right. It's
right there on the sign in front of
the -

RUDE CUSTOMER
Fine. I am never shopping here again.
Thank you for the customer *no*
service!

MORGAN
You're welcome.

Footsteps as RUDE CUSTOMER storms off. The bell
dings as the door opens, then closes.

MORGAN
Sorry about that.

KIND CUSTOMER
Oh, no, no problem. That was...a lot.
Like I said, I - I just have the one
thing..

The scanner beeps repeatedly as MORGAN tries and fails to get
the item to scan

KIND CUSTOMER
Oh, uh, want me to go get another and
see if that will scan?

MORGAN
Ugh, just take it. I fucking hate
this place.

Footsteps as KIND CUSTOMER walks away. The bell
dings as the door opens.

MORGAN
Alright, kid, what did we learn?

The door closes

NAT
Uhh...that people are really mean?

MORGAN
Well, yeah, but that wasn't exactly
news, was it?

NAT

I guess not. That they...um...

MORGAN

Come on. You'll get it. Why was she mad?

NAT

Because we charged her extra?

MORGAN

Did we though?

NAT

Well...no. It was just a service charge like it said on the sign.

MORGAN

Exactly. And why didn't she know that?

NAT

Because she didn't read the sign?

MORGAN

Bingo. Lesson one: no one reads *anything*. Not the return policy, not the sign with our hours, not even a piece of paper taped right in front of their faces, so, what do we do about that?

NAT

We uh...oh! We make sure we tell them the policies when they're checking out so they know even if they don't read.

MORGAN

Womp womp. Wrong answer. Posting the sign is the extent of our responsibility. If they choose not to read it, then that's on them. And we certainly don't reinforce that behavior by doing the work for them. It's the circle of life. We post the signs, they don't read the signs, they yell at us *because* they didn't read the signs. All we do in response is quote the signs back to them, verbatim, and let them argue with the wall. Got it?

NAT

I...think so?

(sighs)

Morgan...aren't you afraid of getting fired?

MORGAN

What? Nah. If they didn't fire me for sneaking a bunch of shampoo into a guy's coffee because he told Ken to fuck off and mind his business when he tried to help him...well, they're not gonna fire me now, right?

NAT

Damn.

(beat)

Did he drink the coffee?

MORGAN

Oh yeah. He got so mad, it was great. Jude *technically* had to write me up for that one, but it was worth it. Plus I'm pretty sure she never filed the paperwork. No one fucks with Ken and gets away with it.

NAT

(interview)

Morgan's a really, um...helpful coworker. I appreciate that they go out of their way to teach me stuff. It's totally helping me feel better about the job.

NAT clears her throat

DOCUMENTARIAN

(interview)

Really?

NAT

(interview)

No, I'm sorry, I lied, I feel worse now.

DOCUMENTARIAN

Ah.

SCENE 4, INT. STORE, AUBREY'S REGISTER

Relaxed muzak plays

AUBREY

That'll be \$18.73, tap your card when you're ready.

The credit card terminal makes an unhappy sound

AUBREY (cont'd)

I'm so sorry, but it appears that your card declined. Was there another one you wanted to use?

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

Declined? That's not possible.

AUBREY

Maybe you mistyped your PIN. Did you want to try again?

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

Sure, yeah, one second.

The credit card terminal makes the same sound

AUBREY

Still declined. Is there another card you can try?

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

That's not possible!

AUBREY

I'm sorry, sir, but it's coming up as declined on my end.

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

Wha - then make it stop declining!

AUBREY

I can't force a transaction to go through when your bank declines it. That would be fraud.

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

Alright, listen, there is no way that that card is declining.

AUBREY

I understand this is unexpected,
however, the transaction did decline.
It's possible your bank flagged the
transaction as suspicious. Do you
want to check your phone for any
alerts from your bank?

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

That's ridiculous, I shop here all
the time!

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER taps some buttons on his
phone

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

No. No alerts. Alright, see??

AUBREY

I do see.

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

So...what's the problem then?

AUBREY

The problem is that your card
declined. I cannot complete the
transaction until the payment is
approved. Is there another card you
can try?

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

I'm telling you, there is no way that
card is declined! Try it again! Run
it as a credit this time!

AUBREY

Sure thing.

The terminal makes the same sound

AUBREY

It is still declining.

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

Unbelievable. Where is your manager?

AUBREY

Just over there. Jude? Can you come
help with something?

Footsteps as JUDE approaches

JUDE

Uh, sure, uh, what's going on?

AUBREY

We're having a little trouble completing this transaction.

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

A - a little trouble?? No, no, your employee is telling me that my card is declining, and that's impossible! My credit score's over 800! I usually have six or seven thousand dollars in that account! My cards do not decline!

JUDE

Ah. Yeah, that does sound frustrating, uh, did you double check that your PIN was entered correctly? Or maybe try running it as credit, maybe?

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

Yes! I did both of those things! And I didn't get any fraud alerts from my bank, so don't even ask! This is clearly a problem on your end, so I expect you to fix it, and I expect an apology for humiliating me in front of all the other customers, because there is no way in hell that this card is declined!

JUDE

...that card? The - the one in your hand?

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

Yes!

JUDE

May I see that for a minute?

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

Here. Take it

JUDE

Ok, is this by chance a new card?

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

Yes, it's a new card, why does that matter?

JUDE

Ok, and did you call to activate the card before using it?

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

Activate it? What do you mean activate it? Call who??

JUDE

This number, here, on the sticker that says 'to activate your card call this number?'

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

...oh. No, I - I didn't.

JUDE

That would be the issue then. Uh, if you want to step to the side and give your bank a call, we can get your transaction completed once you're done, ok?

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

Yeah, sure, I...oh, god. I'm so sorry.

JUDE

It happens.

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

I'll just be a minute.

AUBREY

Take your time!

JUDE

Aubrey? Did you see the sticker on that man's card before you called me over?

AUBREY

I did. I figured you could use a laugh.

JUDE laughs

JUDE

Yeah, you're not wrong.

AUBREY

Any luck with corporate?

JUDE

Oh my god, it took me five hours, most of which I spent being transferred to seven different people, but I was able to convince them that, no, you cannot fix a broken pipe with a plunger, and that yes, they will need a plumber.

AUBREY

Only five hours? That must be some kind of record.

JUDE

Ah, I'll do you one better, I managed to navigate that very confusing phone menu of theirs on the first try.

AUBREY

Damn, that is impressive.

JUDE

Thank you. I expect an award of some kind.

AUBREY

(laughs)

For sure. We'll get right on that.

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

Card's activated now.

AUBREY

Excellent! Let's get you checked out. \$18.73.

The terminal chimes happily

AUBREY

There we are! Approved. You're all set.

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

Thank you. Sorry, again.

Footsteps as CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER walks away. We hear an unsettling groaning, then metal breaking and water splashing

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER

Oh my god!

JUDE
(under her breath)
You've got to be kidding me.
(full voice)
Are you ok, sir?

Water drips

CREDIT SCORE CUSTOMER
I...yeah. Uh. I'm fine.
I'm fi - I'm fine. Thank
you.

The bell dings as the door opens, then closes.

JUDE
(calls across the
store)
Hey, Nat? Can you get that bucket
from under the sink in the break
room?

NAT
(from a distance)
Got it!

JUDE
(calling)
Thank you.
(sighs)
I guess I'm getting back on hold.

AUBREY
Don't bother, the plumber's already
coming. If they send the guy they
usually do, he's good about
documenting stuff so corporate can't
argue about repairs being
"unnecessary."

JUDE
Yeah, yeah, you're right.

NAT wheels a mop bucket to the front of the store

NAT
Here's the - woah, what happened?

AUBREY
A pipe burst in the ceiling, right
over a customer's head.

NAT laughs

NAT

Wow, right over his head? What are the odds of that?

MORGAN

Aw, mate, and I missed it?? Fine time for me to take lunch.

AUBREY

We'll find it on the security footage later.

JUDE

No, you will not. I - oh my god, I told you two to stop treating that like it's your own personal reality show, do I have to lock that -

AUBREY

No, Jude! You can't take our stories!

MORGAN

We have so little!

SCENE 5, INT. STORE

The bells dings as the door opens, and footsteps approach

LILA

Good afternoon, everyone.

The door closes.

LILA

Doesn't it just look...sad in here.

HARPER

So sad.

LILA

Oh, dear, did a pipe burst? How unfortunate for you.

HARPER

Ugh, that Halloween display! Definitely not up to corporate standards. And did you see that woman sitting outside? It looks like she cut herself on his receipt. So gross.

AUBREY

Oh for fuck's sake, *you*.

HARPER

Us! Aubrey, honey, you look tired.
You should really take a second and
go use one of those massage chairs in
the break room. Oh! Wait. Your store
doesn't have those, does it?

AUBREY

(through gritted
teeth)

No, *Harper*, it does not.

HARPER

(mock pity)

Ohhh! Shame.

MORGAN

Trevor.

TREVOR

Morgan.

MORGAN

You still an incompetent, good-for-
nothing, mouth-breathing louse with
bad breath and an even worse haircut?

TREVOR

Are you still...uh...British?

(beat)

Uh...

MORGAN

...I mean. Yeah. Afraid so. Talked to
my doctor and everything, but
apparently it's incurable.

JUDE

Lila.

(clears her throat)

What brings you and your, uh...
entire leadership team into my store?
In the middle of the day. When stores
are open. Including yours,
presumably.

LILA

Oh, you didn't hear? Our store won the jack-o-lantern diorama contest, so they rewarded us with an hour lunch.

TREVOR

And a pizza party!

MORGAN

(muttering)

Yeah, it's always a fucking pizza party.

AUBREY

(to Morgan)

Yeah, that's definitely just as good as actual benefits.

TREVOR

Ha! You're just jealous that you don't have any pizza.

MORGAN

You know what, Trevor? Maybe we are a little jealous. I would kill for some pizza.

TREVOR

Haha! Knew it.

MORGAN

I *would* kill for it. Like actually kill. Maybe I'd even kill you.

TREVOR

Uhh...

JUDE

Morgan.

NAT

What's going on?

JUDE

Nat, this is Lila, my - uh, the manager over at Store 419, and her -

MORGAN

Merry band of dickheads?

JUDE

- I was gonna say assistant managers.

MORGAN

Same thing.

NAT

Assistant managers plural? Like...
like both of them?

LILA

Yup! We need it. We're a bigger
store, and we just do *so much*
business that corporate decided to
really round out our leadership team.

AUBREY

Hang on, if you're all here then
who's watching the store?

LILA

AM in training.

AUBREY

You're getting another assistant
manager??

LILA

Not exactly. Harper here's been doing
so well that corporate decided to
promote her to night manager so that
I can work fewer hours, and we had to
fill her role.

MORGAN

Doesn't fewer hours mean less pay?

LILA

I'm salaried.

MORGAN, AUBREY, NAT

WHAT??

LILA

Are you not?

HARPER giggles

HARPER

You know, Lila, we really are so
lucky with everything we have. Higher
pay, better inventory, massage
chairs, a box crusher -

AUBREY

Hey! We have a box crusher too! His name is Oliver and he's great!

HARPER

Oh, Aubrey. I feel for you, really, I do. It must be so frustrating to be stuck in a second rate store. Especially for someone with your talents.

(beat)

They offered you my job, didn't they? Oh, such a shame you turned it down. If you hadn't, you could be the one staring down a huge promotion and raise. But...instead, you're here. With your dirty floors and your haphazard displays and your...guy who can only do balloons.

KEN

(from the balloon counter)

Guy who GETS to do balloons!

AUBREY

Hey, don't bring him into this! And for your information, *Harper*, they *did* offer me your job, which you damn well know, and I told them that I would rather plunge ass first into molten caramel than set foot in that hellhole you call a store.

HARPER giggles

HARPER

You know, Trev, maybe we should help our sister store out. I'm sure they could benefit from our advice.

AUBREY

Oh, that'll be the day.

MORGAN

Come on, Aubs, could be worth a shot. Maybe Trevor here can teach us the secret to effective carbo-loading.

TREVOR

Hey! You know I believe in the importance of a balanced breakfast!

MORGAN

Psh. But not in the importance of leg day, apparently.

AUBREY

You know, that's a good point,
Morgan. And while he does that, I'm
sure Harper can give us pointers on
how to hide your roots so no one can
tell that you're not an actual
blonde.

HARPER

(gasps)

How dare you.

AUBREY

Oh-ho-ho, I dare, *sister*, you can't
begin to imagine how much I dare.

(underneath the JUDE and LILA dialogue, HARPER and
AUBREY have the following exchange:

HARPER

I'll have you know that I don't do a
thing to my hair, it just gets
lighter in the sun!

AUBREY

Ohhh, sure, because if there's one
thing there's plenty of a week before
daylight savings, it's sunlight!

HARPER

Spoken like someone who clearly
doesn't get enough vitamin D herself
- unless that pallor is just your way
of getting into the Halloween spirit?
There's a line between spooky and
scary, you know. It's a miracle any
customers come in here.

AUBREY

And yet it hasn't kept you away. I'll
have to try harder tomorrow!

HARPER

Oh, honey, don't go to any special
trouble for me! I'm sure mornings are
hard enough when you know you're just
going to end up here. I don't know
how you all do it!)

JUDE

So why are you really here?

LILA

Because you...left your glasses on the counter this morning, and I just couldn't live with the idea of my darling wife clawing her eyes out when her contacts inevitably start driving her nuts.

JUDE

Shh! Keep your voice down!

LILA

Oh, please, they're too busy killing each other to pay attention to us.

(beat)

So they still don't know?

JUDE

Well, I'm alive, so...no. Why, do yours?

LILA

They don't suspect a thing.

JUDE

Oh, thank god.

LILA

Yeah. It's almost like we're spies or something. It's kind of hot.

JUDE laughs

MORGAN

Oh yeah?? Well how about I just shove this scanner down your throat and see how much I can get for your organs on the black market??

LILA

Uh...ok, I think that's our cue.

JUDE

Uh, yeah, if I know one thing about Morgan it's that they don't really do empty threats. Oh, uh, save me some pizza?

LILA

Already put some in the fridge.

JUDE

Ahh, you're the best.

LILA

Oh, hi Ken!

KEN

Hi, Lila!

AUBREY

Ken. What have I told you about fraternizing with the enemy?

KEN

What? I was just saying hi!

AUBREY

Not to her you're not!

LILA

Ugh. Let's get out of here.

HARPER

Fine by me. That buzzing fluorescent is giving me a headache. They should really get someone to come take a look at that. It just doesn't create a relaxing shopping experience.

LILA

Not in the slightest.
What do you say, team? Should we hit the ice cream parlor down the street? We still have half an hour left.

HARPER

Ooh, let's!

TREVOR

Oh, hell yeah! Fat free frozen yogurt, here I come.

MORGAN

Now who's depressing?

HARPER

(falsely chipper)
Bye, Aubrey!

AUBREY

(same tone)
Rot in hell, Harper!

HARPER

Oh, I would, but it looks like you all beat me to it.

The bell dings as the door opens, we hear footsteps leaving, then the door closes.

A few beats of defeated silence while muzak bops in the background

KEN

Jude?

JUDE

Yeah?

KEN

Do we get ice cream?

JUDE

There's a box of expired fudge bars in the break room freezer. Go nuts.

SCENE 6, INT: STOCK ROOM

Camera beeps

OLIVER

(interview)

The key to crushing boxes is you have to let the boxes guide you. You can't just break down every box the same way. They're all unique. You might think that you should fold a box one particular way, but the box might want to fold the other way. And you have to respect that. Take this one, for example: I thought it was gonna fold long ways at first, but I was wrong. So I let the box guide me, and now it's perfectly broken down and ready for whatever's next.

DOCUMENTARIAN

(interview)

I...see. And now you move them to the, uh, dumpster?

OLIVER

(interview)

...uh huh.

DOCUMENTARIAN

(interview)

Are you - are you sure?

OLIVER

(interview)

Totally.

DOCUMENTARIAN

(interview)

I - it's just because I noticed a great deal of broken down boxes stashed behind those crates over there, so -

OLIVER

(interview)

Yeah those are just...waiting.

DOCUMENTARIAN

(interview)

Waiting?

OLIVER

(interview)

Yeah.

DOCUMENTARIAN

(interview)

What are they waiting for?

OLIVER

(interview)

...I've said too much.

Camera beeps

SCENE 7, INT. BREAK ROOM

MORGAN

Ken, are you eating two fudge bars at once?

KEN

(with his mouth full)

What? Jude said go nuts!

MORGAN

Oh my god...

NAT

I don't get it, why do we hate them so much?

MORGAN

It's in our training manual. Page one, paragraph one: all employees of Store 236 must hate the employees of Store 419 with the blazing passion of 1000 suns.

KEN

(mouth still full)
Um...I don't think I got
that page.

JUDE

Morgan...

MORGAN

Well it might as well be! My first
day here I mentioned shopping at 419
one time like, eh, four years ago,
and Aubrey about took my head off.
Said if there's one thing I had to
know about working at 236, it's that
we hate 419.

NAT

But why though? I get that they're
not very nice, but like -

AUBREY

Not very nice?? They are colossal
assholes who suck up to corporate so
they'll get special treatment, and
then they come and rub their fancy
store in our faces every chance they
get. They're obnoxious, and rude, and
entitled, and...and we just do, ok??
They're stupid and they're bad and I
hate them.

(huffs)

God, and that *Harper*. She's the worst
one of them all. "Oh, Aubrey, you
look so *tired*, oh, Aubrey, isn't it
so *funny* that you could've had a
better job and more money if you'd
just been a sellout like me?"

NAT

Uh...what?

KEN'S mouth is full of fudge bar for the next few lines

KEN

Harper used to work here.

AUBREY

Ken!

KEN

What? She did.

AUBREY

Yeah, a *long* time ago, back before...
before any of you were around.

NAT

Oh. And you're that mad that she
left?

KEN

They were friends too.

AUBREY

Ken!

NAT

Oh.

(beat)

You don't miss your friend?

AUBREY

No, I do not miss that backstabbing,
conniving little viper, and you could
not pay me to associate with her ever
again. Or any of them. Or to even
associate with anyone who does
associate with any of them!

Camera beeps

JUDE

(interview)

Shh, keep your voice down! Yes, ok,
fine, my coworkers don't know that
I'm married to the manager of the
rival store, ok? Ugh, god. I'm not
big on sharing my personal life at
work. I'm friendly with my team, I
like them, for some reason, but
personal is personal and work is
work, and I am perfectly fine with
those remaining separate.

(beat)

Plus, can you blame me? Aubrey is
Terrifying.

JUDE

Alright, everyone, that's enough. 419
was here, they were mean, they suck,
it's over. Let's just...go home, ok?

MORGAN

Don't have to tell me twice. Night,
all.

Door opens

AUBREY

Yeah, I'm out of here. I need a long, scalding hot shower. Gotta get the stink of creatine and cheap hair dye off of me.

KEN

Juuuude?

JUDE laughs

JUDE

...you want the rest of the fudge bars?

KEN

Only if nobody minds.

JUDE

Nobody minds. You've earned them.

KEN

YES, thanks Jude, see you tomorrow! Hey, Aubrey, Morgan, wait up! Guess what I've got!

Door closes

JUDE

You're not running out the door too?

NAT

Oh...no. I have to wait for my mom to come pick me up. She's gonna be like...20 minutes.

JUDE

Ah. Yeah. No car yet?

NAT

No. I'm saving up for one though.

JUDE

Yeah, I remember those days. You'll get there. Here, I'll wait with you.

NAT

Really? You don't have to.

JUDE

Eh, I don't mind. It would probably be good for me to sit and stare at the wall for a few minutes anyway. Plus I think there we've got some creamsicles too. They melted when one of the freezers went out, and they refroze in some weird shapes, but they're still good. Want one?

NAT

Ooh! Yeah. That actually sounds good.

SCENE 8, INT. DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT

A low spooky theme plays and swells as the dialogue goes on

VOICE

Petty squabbles solve nothing. They may make you feel better in the moment, but they do nothing in the cosmic sense. Your time is better spent doing almost anything else. Even still. Being the target of those who should be your allies is a terrible blow. We all have a common enemy. We should be united against it, not picking each other apart over whose store is nicer, or whose displays came out better, or who failed to blend their contour correctly and now looks like a topographic map of Colorado.

Static fades in under the dialogue

VOICE

Whatever that means. But I cannot concern myself with such things. There are far more pressing matters at hand...

Music cuts, but static continues for a few seconds

CREDITS

Bouncy muzak plays

THE VOICE OF VALUE VAULT

Thank you for joining us for today's installment of Store 236.

This episode, 419, was written and directed by Mel Nichols, with sound design by Sam Stark, and vocal cuts by Erin Grassie.

It featured Hera Alexander as Jude, Lindsay Zana as Aubrey, Kirsty Woolven as Morgan, Oz Zeno as Nat, Michael E. Freemantle as Ken, Harley Ronan as Oliver, Pandora Beatrix as Lila, Alycia Olivar as Harper, Patrick Vierzba as Trevor, and Interiority as The Documentarian.

With Wendy Merritt, Kale Brown, Ari Ingalls, Cass Scott, Tania Gabbidon, and SockX as the customers, and additional voice work by Amy Young.

Store 236 was created by Mel Nichols. The show is produced by Interiority, with additional story development by Hera Alexander and Amy Young, production assistance by Julia Lynn Sepúlveda, scoring by Amy Young, and graphic design by Jon Stollberg.

If you enjoyed today's episode, you can rate and review us on your favorite podcatcher, follow us on Bluesky and tumblr at store236pod, or support us at patreon.com/store236.

If you didn't, we wouldn't stand under any pipes if we were you.

Thanks for listening.