

OFFICE JOKESTER

Louis Dorman

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Around a water cooler are a couple of co-workers listening to HANK tell funny stories. Among them are PETE and MARK.

HANK

...And she says to me "Hank, I never really loved you, and I've been having an affair with the tennis instructor!"

All the co-workers BUST into LAUGHTER around Hank. Pete's laughter dies down and he turns to Mark.

PETE

Hey Mark?

MARK

(Stil laughing)  
Yeah Pete?

PETE

Hank's joking right?

MARK

What do you mean?

PETE

I mean, Hanks wife isn't actually cheating on him, right? Sometimes I feel like Hank's stories are actually kinda sad.

MARK

Hank? No way! You're new here. Hanks the funniest guy in the office. His humor is just really dry. He's won "Office Jokester" four years and a row, you know.

Hank is still talking to the rest of the co-workers.

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HANK

For all these years, to think I've been working so hard just so I can pay for her damn tennis lessons. It's like this whole time I've been paying my wife to cheat on me!

All the co-workers BURST into LAUGHTER again. Other than Pete.

MARK

(Laughing)

Classic Hank! You're hysterical man!

PETE

I don't know Mark...

MARK

You don't know what?

PETE

I feel like Hank's serious.

MARK

Oh lighten up. Where's your sense of humor?

PETE

Sense of humor? What if Hank's actually going through all this. Don't you feel bad?

MARK

Seems like someones jealous...

PETE

Jealous?

MARK

I get it. You're new and you want to make a good impression by becoming the new Office Jokester.

PETE

What, no-

MARK

You gotta face it, Pete, Hank's too good.

Hank continues to speak to the co-workers around the water cooler.

HANK

And My kids! What if there's a chance there not even mine? I mean, people have always said I look nothing like them. That and how natural they always look on a... tennis... court... Oh God why!

Hank drops his head to his hands and this is met with enormous laughter and applause.

The BOSS walks in near Pete and Mark.

BOSS

Hows it going gentlemen?

MARK

You gotta see this, sir. Hank's doing one of his *classic* bits again.

PETE

Classic bit!? No this seems-

BOSS

(To Hank)

HANK, my man! What are you riffing on today?

HANK

My entire life is a lie.

The Boss ERUPTS into laughter, followed by the rest of the co-workers who now begin to chant "HANK! HANK! HANK!"

(CONTINUED)

MARK

(Laughing)

Wow Hank's on a roll!

BOSS

(Laughing)

Oh Hank, Keep this up and you may win Office Jokester for a fifth year straight!

PETE

Are you kidding me? That's not even remotely funny!

BOSS

Seems like someones jealous they're not Office Jokester

MARK

That's what I said!

PETE

I'm not jealous! Can't you guys see how clearly distraught Hank is?

(To Hank)

Listen Hank, I've been in your position. Me and my wife went through a nasty divorce a couple of years back. She took everything, the house, our kids. The only thing she left me was our dog, Skip. And well Skip is sick, you see. The doctor says he only has days left to live. On the outside I try to remain cool about the whole situation you know, but I on the inside I'm afraid. I'm afraid, Hank. Scared that once Skips dies so does any hope that one day I can be with my family again. Scared that my kids will grow up and never truly know their father just like how I didn't know mine. I feel your pain, Hank. And I just want you to know that I'm here for you.

There's a brief pause while the room is dead silent.

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This silence is broken by HANK who is laughing uncontrollably. There's a roar of laughter and applause from the rest of the co-workers as they pick up Pete and hold him above their shoulders and chant "PETE! PETE! PETE!

CUT TO:

An office plaque with a picture of Pete and the caption:  
*Fifth Annual Office Jokester*

Blackout.