A DARK DAY FOR HINKLEY, J.

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Characters: SUPERVISOR: Male/Female in charge of a mental hospital 40-60 years old

SPECIALIST: Female psychologist 20-30 years old.

JOHN: John Hinkley Jr., attempted assassin of Ronald Reagan

Setting: A small office or conference room within a mental hospital At rise, SUPERVISOR and SPECIALIST are talking and JOHN is offstage.

SUPERVISOR: I know you're new to this facility and haven't met all our patients but we have a crisis with one and you're a specialist so here's a chance to earn your money.

SPECIALIST: Who's the patient?

SUPERVISOR (looking down at clipboard) NJ1981 -- Hinkley, J. Goes by the name "John" these days.

SPECIALIST: What's the crisis with him?

SUPERVISOR: You're young so this was before your time but he tried to kill President Ronald Reagan back in 1981. He also shot two or three others, paralyzing one, James Brady, for the rest of his life.

SPECIALIST: Yes, I'm familiar with his case, though I don't know all the details.

SUPERVISOR: He was declared innocent via insanity and he's been in this place for a long time – before I even got here. I've done some homework on him. He hasn't raised any flags over the last few years and even has a girlfriend, Leslie, from what I can understand.

SPECIALIST: So you need me to step in because...

SUPERVISOR: We haven't had to adjust his meds and he has even made it to the #2 spot on the pool challenge ladder. But today...

SPECIALIST: He's obsessed with reaching the #1 spot? Well, having a goal can be a good...

SUPERVISOR: NO! That's not it at all. Did you read any of the entertainment news yesterday?

SPECIALIST: I thought we kept those magazines just for the patients. I've got better things to do.

SUPERVISOR: Maybe you should start. Anyway, Jodie declared she is a lesbian.

SPECIALIST: Jodie who? I thought you said his girlfriend is named "Leslie." Oh, there's some sort of love triangle you need me to resolve.

SUPERVISOR: Wow, you really are young. John did the whole shooting thing to impress Jodie Foster. He fell in love with her, watching "Taxi Driver".

SPECIALIST: Bob James

SUPERVISOR: What?

SPECIALIST: He did the theme song – very pretty – it's where Tony Danza and Danny Divito got their starts, right?

SUPERVISOR: NO! That was the TV series "Taxi". "Taxi DRIVER" was a movie. Jodie was 12 years old. John fell in love with her, stalked her, and attempted to kill the President to try to impress her. That's why he's here. Now after all these years, Jodie has come out as a lesbian and someone has to break the news to John. We have NO idea how he'll react – that's why we need YOU, you're the specialist at dealing with disappointment resolution.

SPECIALIST (big exhale): Tough way for me to start here but it IS what I do. Where can I find him?

SUPERVISOR: I'll send him in right now. (SUPERVISOR leaves, returns, and brings in JOHN)
John, this young lady is here to help you. You can trust her. She has some news for you. I'll be out in the hall if either of you need me. (SUPERVISOR leaves):

SPECIALIST: (warmly) Hello, John!

JOHN (very guarded): I'm here because Soapscum said I cheated at pool, right?

SPECIALIST (a bit taken aback): I haven't met the patient you call "Soapscum".

JOHN: Everyone calls him that. But I came up with the name after the bathroom incident.

SPECIALIST: Bathroom incident?

JOHN: One of the newbies couldn't find the bathroom. I told him to use the process of elimination. I'm very creative. (sullen) Not that it matters around here.

SPECIALIST: I'm sure you are. No, this is about something else. I've heard you've become proficient at using your tools to handle disappointment.

JOHN: I didn't burn the cue stick when I scratched on the 8 ball.
SPECIALIST: That's very impressive. But this is about something else.

JOHN: Jodie returned my last letter! That's it, right?

SPECIALIST: Now, you know she hasn't wanted to read your letters in a long time but ...

JOHN: How else will she know how much I love her?

SPECIALIST: But that shouldn't matter because you have Leslie now.

JOHN: Leslie says it's the Nazi party's loss for kicking me out. Bunch of wimps. I should've realized it when they said NEO Nazis. Don't fix what ain't broken.

SPECIALIST: The important thing here is that you've developed a support system. So I think you'll be a trooper when I tell you the news. How do I put this – it seems Jodie, uh, is not on the team we all just assumed she was on.

JOHN: Jodie joined the Nazi party?

SPECIALIST: Um, no. She never liked them.

JOHN: But my love could've conquered and overcome that! She just doesn't understand love.

SPECIALIST: Um by "other team", I mean something different...

JOHN (suspicious): Yeah?

SPECIALIST: Now, remember your coping tools....

JOHN (more suspicious): I don't like where this is going.

SPECIALIST: It seems that Jodie is a lesbian.

JOHN: Why? You thought she was flirting with you?

SPECIALIST: No, we've never met. But you get the internet here, right?