

The Boy Scout

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FADE IN:

INT. BOY SCOUT MEETING - NIGHT

A group of young boy scouts sits in a dimly lit library. Most scouts are dazing off, and twiddling their thumbs. An adult leader stands at the front of the room with a table and a whiteboard next to him, talking about various boy scout things.

ADULT LEADER  
(monotone and slow)  
-remember our hike coming up  
in...

A scout in the corner is asleep and begins to softly snore. The monotonous drone of the adult leader continues.

Sitting attentively in the front row is a younger scout in a spotlessly pristine uniform, sash and all. He looks to the board and speaker with wide-eyed awe while somehow simultaneously and furiously scribbling notes. This is LEO.

ADULT LEADER (CONT'D)  
Final reminder guys, our popcorn  
sales will be ending next week.  
Any scout who sells 50 boxes or  
more will get their MARKETING  
MERIT BADGE.

At the words "MARKETING MERIT BADGE" Leo's eyes get even wider and his jaw drops a little. He stops his scribbling for a second before flipping to a new page and writing '50 SALES' and aggressively circling it. All the scouts around him are getting up and starting to leave. The scout stares wondrously at the words on the page.

A lamp shuts off in the back of the room. A single light in the corner is all that's left illuminating the scout-still staring at the page, with a determined look on his face.

ADULT LEADER  
Leo. Leo? You can go home now  
Leo.

Leo looks up at the adult leader. He gives a small smile and nod. As the adult leader leaves, the door creakily closes and softly clicks shut. Leo looks down his paper again, smiling confidently and giving another strong nod. The lamp turns off, leaving Leo in the dark.

INT. LEO'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

A clock reads 5:00 AM as an alarm blares. Leo, still dressed in his boy scout uniform, enthusiastically smashes the off button silencing the alarm. He leaps out of bed and rushes out the door with a pep in his step.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - MOMENTS LATER

Montage: Leo sells popcorn

-- Leo throws his boxes of popcorn into a red kids wagon.

-- Leo marches up his suburban neighborhood road with a sunrise behind them.

-- Leo knocks on his first door, eagerly selling his popcorn.

-- Leo runs alongside a morning jogger pitching his popcorn.

-- Leo shows a graph labeled 'customer happiness versus popcorn owned' to a bored, uncertain buyer.

-- Leo crosses off numerous houses on his list of buyers.

-- A dog chases Leo off a suburban lawn, with bags of popcorn flying out of a cardboard box in his hand.

-- Leo aggressively shoves popcorn in the face of a crying baby while the mother, terrorized, hands over a crisp twenty dollar bill.

-- Leo crosses off the 47th, 48th, and 49th house on his list

END MONTAGE

Leo looks up from his list looking at a typical but worn looking suburban house. The name 'Erker' is messily plastered on a mailbox that sits crooked on it's post.

EXT. ERKER'S PORCH - MOMENTS LATER

Leo cheerfully strolls up the walkway to the front porch, which is in desperate need of a flower box and fresh paint.

Leo stands on the extremely weathered welcome mat, looking up at the door. He executes two knocks. Immediately, a dashing old man opens the door. This is MR. ERKER.

LEO

(In a monotone voice,  
reading from a scout  
book)

Good afternoon. My name is Leo,  
and I am a boy scout in troop 54.  
These are my merit badges, and as  
you can see, one is missing.

Leo points down to his sash of badges. There is a small gap  
between badges.

LEO (CONT'D)

If I sell 50 bags of popcorn then  
I will earn my MARKETING MERIT  
BADGE. Can I interest you in a  
delicious bag of the finest  
popcorn available?

MR. ERKER

No.

Past Mr. Erker, a dusty box labeled 'trash' lies forgotten in  
the corner. A small corner of what is clearly an old boy  
scout sash can be seen peeking out from under the lid of the  
box. Its unclear if Leo notices or not.

Mr. Erker attempts to slam the door in Leo's face. Mr. Erker  
looks down to see a little boy's shoe wedged in the door  
frame.

LEO

Ow.

Mr. Erker exasperatedly sighs and slowly re-opens his door.  
He opens his mouth and begins to say something but--

LEO (CONT'D)

Good afternoon. My name is Leo,  
and I am a boy scout in troop 54.  
These are my merit badges, and as  
you can see, one is missing--

MR. ERKER

No. I already said no.

LEO

Please Mr. I just need to sell  
one more bag and I will earn my  
MARKETING MERIT BADGE.

MR. ERKER

No. I don't want your popcorn.

Mr. Erker slams the door again.

Leo eyes turn downcast, he sighs and looks disappointedly at his toes. Leo turns to step off the porch, but to the side of the porch he notices a window slightly cracked open. Leo's eyes squint slightly as the gears turn in his head.

LEO

(lips pressed through  
the opening in the  
window)

Good afternoon. My name is Leo,  
and I am a boy scout--

Mr. Erker looks down at Leo in the window from a dark, dated, and dusty living room.

MR. ERKER

Kid if you don't get off my  
porch! I already told you I don't  
want any...

Mr. Erker's expression turns from angry to bewildered.

MR. ERKER (CONT'D)

... whaat? What are you doing?

INT. ERKER'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Leo stands up from the window and slips his fingers into the crack, getting a firm grip. He tugs upward until the window begins to squeakily slide open. Once the window about reaches Leo's head, he clambers through the window, tossing his clipboard on the ground before him.

MR. ERKER

What the hell do you think you're  
doing?

Leo brushes himself off and picks his clipboard up off the ground.

MR. ERKER (CONT'D)

Look kid, I already told you no.  
No popcorn. I'm just not in the  
mood. I'm more of a cookie guy  
anyway.

LEO

But Mr pleeeeaase! I really want  
to earn my MARKETING MERIT BADGE.  
It means a lot to me.

Mr. Erker stares disgustedly at Leo and walks over to the door.

MR. ERKER

I think it's time you get going  
kid.

Leo laughs nervously. Mr. Erker opens the door and gestures to show Leo the way out. Leo takes a step towards the door but stops.

LEO

No no ummh... I haven't finished  
my pitch. I am selling lots of  
delicious flavors. We have  
caramel uh caramel corn. We have  
sea salt, and uh uh chocolate  
drizzle. I have 3 different  
varieties of low-fat kettle corn  
and-

MR. ERKER

(roars)

GET OUT!

Leo looks at Mr. Erker one last time, his lip trembling. He takes a step towards the door. Just then, Leo's eyes flick to the box of 'trash'. His eyes gaze past Erker and lock onto the corner of the sash.

LEO

(pleadingly)

WAIT! You were a scout too!

Mr. Erker looks even angrier than before.

MR. ERKER

That was a long time ago boy! I  
hardly even-

LEO

But-

MR. ERKER

ENOUGH! Get out of my home. Now.

Leo hangs his head low. He takes a step back and looks at Mr. Erker one more time before spinning around and running out the door.

Erker slams the door and stands alone again in his silent, dark, living room.

Mr. Erker stares into the door, seconds pass. Erker walks over to his well worn recliner and practically drops into it.

MR. ERKER

(sighing)

Humpf.

Erker stares into the floor, a clock ticks somewhere in his house. Seconds pass. Erker looks at the dusty box of 'trash'. His face fills the frame as he blinks a few times, almost like he's trying to avoid tears.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY - FLASHBACK (1960)

LITTLE JIM holds a clip board, standing on the front steps of a large house. His bright eyes look up hopefully at large front door looming over him.

ADULT HOMEOWNER

(annoyed)

What do you want?

LITTLE JIM

Hello I am Lil' Jimmy Erker from boy scout troop 54. These are my merit badges and as you can see I am missing one. It is my MARKETING MERIT BADGE,

The ADULT HOMEOWNER looks down at LITTLE JIM, bored and slightly annoyed.

LITTLE JIM (CONT'D)

but if I sell 50 bags of popcorn then I can earn it. Would you like to purchase any popcorn to help me earn my badge?

ADULT HOMEOWNER

Not today, sorry kiddo.

The adult homeowner slams the door. Little Jim bursts into tears.

INT. ERKER'S LIVING ROOM - PRESENT DAY

Mr. Erker hasn't moved from his chair, eyes still pointed at the dusty sash but not focused on it. Erker snaps back to reality and his jaw drops slightly as a wave of empathy hits him. Erker rapidly stands up, and angrily walks over to the box. He tears off the lid, and grabs up the sash, brushing it off. His eyebrows furrow in determination, and he snatches his wallet off the coffee table before hastily walking out the door.

MR. ERKER

(chuckling)

Seems I'm in the mood for popcorn.

EXT. ERKER'S HOUSE

Leo, frustrated, storms away from Erker's house, continuously looking back and glaring at the house. He walks down the sidewalk, dragging his red wagon behind him.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - CONTINUOUS

Leo walks to the next yard, gathering himself up with a deep breath. As he turns off the sidewalk and onto a house's driveway, two scouts run up to him, both holding clipboards.

SCOUT 1

Hiya Leo! How's the sales going?

Leo grins a cocky smile and regards the scouts with careful observation-trying to determine whether to be humble or brag.

LEO

(proudly)

Going dang well Phineas. This house here is my last house then I'll have made fift-

SCOUT 2

(friendly laughing)

Not your last house anymore! We already sold to this house, and to the rest of the street!

Leo stiffens, and looks between the two scouts, concerned.



LEO

(rushed)

You mean to tell me that every other house in this neighborhood has already bought popcorn?

SCOUT 1

Darn straight! Ferb and I are master salesman!

The two other scouts look at each other and laugh, then high-five. Leo stares off into the distance between them, mouth hanging open slightly. His eyes are unfocused, overwhelmed with the realization he can't possibly hit fifty sales. The other scouts notice Leo's strange gaze.

SCOUT 1

(concerned)

Uhhhh Leo you OK there? Earth to Leo, Earth to Leo.

Scout 1 waves his hand in front of Leo's face, but gets no reaction. Scout 2 chuckles nervously.

SCOUT 2

Um OK Leo. See you at the meeting tomorrow then?

The two scouts walk around Leo, with bemused looks on their faces. Once past Leo they exchange a confused look and speed up a little.

Leo remains standing, unmoving. A tear slowly starts to drip from his eye onto his cheeks. When the tear drop hits the ground, Leo falls to his knees and screams.

LEO

No no no NO!

He shakes his fist towards the sky, then lets his arm fall and shoulders slump as his head drops to face the pavement. Tears stream from his eyes.

A mini-van slowly drives by, stopping on the street next to Leo. The window rolls down, inside is MR.SALMANS in the passenger seat and MR.KOWALSKI driving.

KOWALSKI

D-does that kid need help?

SALMANS

Hmm I'm not sure. Let me inquire.

Leo remains on the pavement, slumped over. Tears pour down his face. He looks back up at the sky.

SALMANS (CONT'D)  
Excuse me sir, can we be of  
assistance?

Leo doesn't hear Mr. Salmans, and pays no attention to him. He continues his episode of denial.

LEO  
NOOOOOOOOOO!

SALMANS  
(casually)  
Ah gah bless'.

Salmans turns back to Kowalski, like nothing is wrong.

SALMANS (CONT'D)  
Well I guess not.

Kowalski shrugs and they drive away. Leo is left alone to weep on the sidewalk.

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A group of young boy scouts sits in a dimly lit library. An adult leader stands at the front of the room with a table and a whiteboard next to him. Most scouts are dazing off, and twiddling their thumbs. Most miserable of them all is Leo, sitting in the very back row, slumped in his chair with his head hung low. He's sniffing and quivering slightly.

ADULT LEADER  
Alrighty guys! It's time to turn  
in your popcorn sales. Remember  
if you got 50 sales you've  
successfully earned your  
MARKETING MERIT BADGE!

The scouts get out of their seats and shuffle up towards the front of the room, envelopes in hand.

Leo drags himself to the back of the line, looking down at his sheet with only 49 sales. Tears fall from his face onto the sheet. He shuffles a step forward. The adult leader can be heard in the background, congratulating scouts for earning their merit badge.

Suddenly, Erker bursts through the doors.

MR. ERKER

NOW HOLD ON A MINUTE! I believe I  
owe a certain scout a popcorn  
sale!

The room freezes--eyes on Erker. Leo turns to face him, his mouth forming an incredulous 'o'. Leo snuffles one last time and wipes a tear from his face. His eyes light up as if someone hit a switch.

INT. BOY SCOUT MEETING - DAY

The room changes around Leo. Erker and Leo stand at the front of the same room in the library, but it's whole look has changed. Cheery and bright flags decorate the sides of the room, balloons and congratulations signs are all around. A large "congrats" banner hangs from the ceiling over Erker and Leo. A full audience of scouts and parents sits attentively looking at them.

Erker, holding the safety-pin and badge, reaches down to put the badge on Leo's sash. As he does so, confetti rains from the ceiling. The audience rises to their feet, clapping, whistling, and cheering. The scouts all salute.

Erker firmly attaches the badge to Leo's sash, steps back and salutes Leo. Leo salutes back. A cartoon-style black circle closes over the scene, with Leo's new MARKETING MERIT BADGE in the center.

FADE OUT.