

Scene 1:

*Interior department store, before opening. SHIRT is alone.*

SHIRT

Fun fact: the average price for a T-shirt in the U.S. is forty dollars. Now, I know that sounds like a lot, and the truth is—you're right. But that's the average. The median price is much lower, around twelve dollars. That's how much I cost. Eleven ninety-nine.

The thing about averages is that outliers drive the entire average up, and with commerce, you only get outliers on one end: the high end. You can't make and sell a shirt for much less than 12 dollars. It's not sustainable for your business.

Some T-shirts get sold for thousands of dollars. If you count high-fashion celebrity purchases, that number goes into the millions. Logan Paul bought a shirt in 2021 that cost 1.2 million dollars. For reference, that's one hundred thousand times more than what I cost.

Outliers systematically misrepresent the average, which is why we use the mean. It's a better model for assessing the worth of everyone in the middle. Most of us are in the middle, and when there's nowhere to go but up, the middle and the bottom tend to group together. That's just statistics.

*A bell chimes on the intercom. Lights start turning on as the department store begins to open.*

I'm boring you. Gah! Don't be boring, can't be boring. No one wants boring.

*ANOTHER SHIRT enters and starts lining up next to SHIRT*

ANOTHER SHIRT

Morning.

SHIRT

Good morning.

ANOTHER SHIRT

You're up early.

SHIRT

I have a good feeling about today. It's a Saturday, most clothing sales happen during the weekend. All you can do is be in the right place at the right time. For me, the right time is *early*.

ANOTHER SHIRT

Course it is. Grab me a hanger?

SHIRT

Can't, I'm already wearing mine. If you need one, you'll need to grab it yourself. I'm not risking getting caught on something and tearing a sleeve.

ANOTHER SHIRT

Jesus Christ.

*ANOTHER SHIRT crosses the stage to grab a hanger, which they mime putting into their neckline. The rest of the lights turn on, and ambient music begins to play. A voice comes on over the intercom.*

SALES CLERK (offstage)

Good morning shoppers, and welcome to Sporeberry's Department Store! Attention Associates, can we get all cashier-trained personnel back to the front of the store? Thank you.

ANOTHER SHIRT sneezes, right on SHIRT.

SHIRT

Oh my God, do you MIND?!

ANOTHER SHIRT

My bad, sorry.

SHIRT

You should cover up your sneezes, I don't need your germs all over me! I can't afford to get sick. If I'm sick, then I can't be here, and then I can't be sold, and then—

ANOTHER SHIRT

I said I was sorry, okay? What do you want?

SHIRT

I want—

*Two shoppers enter the space, distracting SHIRT. SHIRT stands tall, presenting itself to the shoppers. ANOTHER SHIRT slouches, uncaring. The shoppers look at ANOTHER SHIRT first.*

SHOPPER #1

What about this one?

SHOPPER #2

Yeah, that's good.

*SHOPPER #2 walks to SHIRT*

What about this?

SHOPPER #1

Oh hell yeah. Let's go try these on.

*SHOPPER #2 grabs onto SHIRT and tries to pull them off the wrack. In the effort, SHOPPER #2 grabs SHIRT's sleeve and tears it clean off. SHIRT grabs onto the sleeve before it falls off of their arm.*

SHOPPER #2

Oh damn. It's the last one.

SHOPPER #1

Hey, that's okay. We'll find something else. Come on.

*SHOPPER's #1 and #2 exit, taking ANOTHER SHIRT along with them. SHIRT stands alone, mortified, and holding their torn-off sleeve with their opposite hand.*

SHIRT

WHAT?!?!

No no no no no, this isn't happening, this isn't happening, I've just gotta, I gotta...

*SHIRT tries pushing the sleeve back up into place. As soon as they let go, it slides back down their sleeve.*

Okay, new plan.

Hey! Hello! Anyone there? Hellooo?

*A WORKER enters the space with their headphones on, dancing and using a large push-duster.*

Oh, here we go.

*SHIRT wriggles off of their hanger and lays themself down on the ground, in front of the WORKER. The worker approaches SHIRT and picks them up.*

WORKER

Fuck this job.

*The WORKER starts to put SHIRT back on the hanger and then notices the sleeve.*

Are you fucking kidding me? Okay.

*The WORKER takes the hanger out, and starts dragging SHIRT off towards the front, tossing them in a pile of clothing downstage center.*

END OF SCENE