

THE RATINGS GAME

"Child's Play"
(sample)

FADE IN:

INT. RATINGS OFFICE LOBBY

We're a part of the film crew standing in the lobby of The Ratings office looking at the BOSS. The walls are colourful yet the office crew look somewhat bored in their cubicles.

BOSS

Welcome to our world, gentleman. And ladies. I hope you like what you see.

The camera zooms in to see the various people behind the BOSS sitting at their desks looking fairly bored, playing Solitaire, reading books, throwing scrunched up paper balls at another employee.

BOSS (O.C.)

All our staff have been told what you're doing - the documentary - and have been asked to be on their best behaviour.

CUT TO:

INT. RATINGS OFFICE LOBBY - CORRIDORS

The BOSS is now showing the documentary crew the office complex. While there aren't too many people working here, the facilities given to this office by the government make for some interesting showings.

BOSS

Our meeting room is in a different section, but this is the fun stuff.

The camera pans to the left as they're walking and we're treated to a kitchen decked out with nearly every appliance.

BOSS

You could say this is our water-cooler. Our kitchen, the staff love it.

CUT TO:

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM

BOSS

The public has mixed opinions on what we do so the government in all its wisdom has appointed a watchdog to look at the system and see if it needs changing.

CUT TO:

INT. RATINGS OFFICE LOBBY - CORRIDORS

We're being shown the cooler section of the office now with the little cinema inside the building.

BOSS

This is the part people really love. Our cinema. We get to watch all the new movies before they come out. This is the one place in Australia where it's not illegal to watch unrated movies.

That and the PM's home, of course. He wields all the power. Hi Kevin!

CUT TO:

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM

BOSS

That's always going to be the problem with changing what we do. When we decide something, half the people agree, half of the people disagree.

CUT TO:

INT. RATINGS OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM

The office conference room is filled with the staff of The Ratings Office, plus the documentary team and its camera people & boom mike operators. They're watching everything.

BOSS (V.O.)

The government has sent Sheryl Cootes to be our watchdog. She's sort of like an impartial tax agent you don't want to get on the wrong side of... in a dress.

At the front of the room stands the BOSS, with a new person SHERYL COOTES standing behind him. She is dressed professionally and looks out of place from everyone else who is just dressed however they want to.

CUT TO:

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM

BOSS

A nice dress though.

CUT TO:

INT. RATINGS OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM

BOSS

Ok, you know that some things are changing. Not yet, but they might. The government, well, they look at us and they respect us. We're all doing great jobs. But the public, well they have some doubts.

(pause)

So, I'd like to introduce you to Miss Sheryl Cootes who will be here with us for the next few months looking at what we do, making notes, and hopefully improving us.

SHERYL steps into the limelight, taking the reins of the group who seem more disgruntled and worried than curious. A couple of the staff members clap, the sort of applause that makes you feel as if you're living under the rule of a communist dictator and not someone you're going to have to work with. Those who didn't clap give those who did an evil eye.

SHERYL COOTES

Thanks for that.

(pause)

Look, it is a pleasure to be here with so many professionals in this field. I have heard such excellent things about what you do so I don't want to get in any of your ways--

Another officer, FRY WILLIAMS, speaks up from behind, the camera zooming quickly to dig him out from the staff.

FRY WILLIAMS

Then why are you here?!

The BOSS steps out from behind SHERYL to try and ease the situation. He makes hand gestures to lower the tension, mumbling

BOSS

Patience, people. Patience.

SHERYL COOTES

Look, the truth of the matter is that I'm here to make you all better. To make the system better. To put the faith of the people back into what you're doing.

(pause)

The government spends lots of money on this department and right now there's a bit of concern over just what it is you do. So I'm on your side and I'm here to help the government realise your true potential.

Some staff members are put to ease, some aren't.

CUT TO:

INT. RATINGS OFFICE - OUTSIDE THE CONFERENCE ROOM

As the staff piles out of the conference room, two are recorded by a camera team as they make their way back to their desks.

ARTHUR

I don't get it. Why is she here
again?

TAMARA
Something about making us better.

ARTHUR
I like me the way I am.

TAMARA
Look, as long as she doesn't get in
my way...