Her only name is Sadisah, and it's safe to say that she's never heard of Michael Jordan. Nor is she spending her evenings watching him and his Olympic teammates gliding and dunking in prime time from Barcelona. But she has heard of the shoe company he endorses—Nike, whose logo can be seen on the shoes and uniforms of many American Olympic athletes this summer. Like Jordan, Sadisah works on behalf of Nike. You won't see her, however, in the flashy TV images of freedom and individuality that smugly command us to JUST DO IT!—just spend upward of $130 for a pair of basketball shoes. Yet Sadisah is, in fact, one of the people who is doing it—making the actual shoes, that is, and earning paychecks such as this one in a factory in Indonesia.

In the 1980s, Oregon-based Nike closed its last U.S. footwear factory, in Saco, Maine, while establishing most of its new factories in South Korea, where Sung Hwa Corp. is based. Sung Hwa is among many independent producers Nike has contracted with. Nike's actions were part of the broader "globalization" trend that saw the United States lose 65,300 footwear jobs between 1982 and 1989 as shoe companies sought non-unionized Third World workers who didn't require the U.S. rubber-shoe industry average of $6.94 an hour. But in the late 1980s, South Korean laborers gained the right to form independent unions and to strike. Higher wages ate into Nike's profits. The company shifted new factories to poorer countries such as Indonesia, where labor rights are generally ignored and wages are but one seventh of South Korea's. (The Sung Hwa factory and others like it are located in Tangerang, a squalid industrial boomtown just outside Jakarta.) Today, to make 80 million pairs of shoes annually, Nike contracts with several dozen factories globally, including six in Indonesia. Others are in China, Malaysia, Thailand, and Taiwan. By shifting factories to cheaper labor pools, Nike has posted year after year of growth; in 1991 the company grossed more than $3 billion in sales—$200 million of which Nike attributes to Jordan's endorsement—and reported a net profit of $287 million, its highest ever.

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"Pendapatan" is the earnings column, and five lines below the base pay figure for the month (50,400 rupiah) is one for overtime. Sadisah and the other workers in this factory are compelled to put in extra hours, both by economic necessity and by employer fiat. Each production line of 115 workers is expected to produce about 1,600 pairs of Nikes a day. According to the column at left, next to "OT (JAM)," Sadisah worked 63 hours of overtime during this pay period, for which she received an extra 2 cents per hour. At this factory, which makes mid-priced Nikes, each pair of shoes requires .84 man-hours to produce; working on an assembly line, Sadisah assembled the equivalent of 13.9 pairs every day. The profit margin on each pair is enormous. The labor costs to manufacture a pair of Nikes that sells for $80 in the United States is approximately 12 cents.

Here are Sadisah's net earnings for a month of labor. She put in six days a week, ten and a half hours per day, for a paycheck equivalent to $37.46—about half the retail price of one pair of the sneakers she makes. Boosters of the global economy and "free markets" claim that creating employment around the world promotes free trade between industrializing and developing countries. But how many Western products can people in Indonesia buy when they can't earn enough to eat? The answer can't be found in Nike's TV ads showing Michael Jordan sailing above the earth for his reported multiyear endorsement fee of $20 million—an amount, incidentally, that at the pay rate shown here would take Sadisah 44,492 years to earn.

The words printed on the pay stub are in Bahasa Indonesia, a language created by fusing Roman characters with a dominant Malay dialect. The message, however, is bottom-line capitalism. "Per hari" is the daily wage for seven and a half hours of work, which in Sadisah's case is 2,100 Indonesia rupiah—at the current rate of exchange, $1.03 per day. That amount, which works out to just under 14 cents per hour, is less than the Indonesian government's figure for "minimum physical need." A recent International Labor Organization survey found that 88 percent of Indonesian women working at Sadisah's wage rates are malnourished. And most workers in this factory—over 80 percent—are women. With seldom more than elementary-school educations, they are generally in their teens or early twenties, and have come from outlying agricultural areas in search of city jobs and a better life. Sadisah's wages allow her to rent a shanty without electricity or running water.