

NO JOB FOR TENDERFOOTS

Written by

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INT. OFFICE - DAY

A nondescript office with a conference table.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Day 1: 9:27 a.m."

At one end of the table, a SCRAWNY FELLOW wearing glasses sits alone. He grips his briefcase, staring ahead nervously.

The door opens. A brawny guy in a suit enters. Looks around stoically. Notes the scrawny fellow, who swallows hard.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Manny Cruciano. Age 38. Hitman. Known for his ability to fix any situation. Nickname: The Mechanic."

THE MECHANIC takes a seat, calmly leaning back in his chair.

A large black man wearing a red sweat suit and gold chains enters. A toothpick dangles from his mouth, a comb sticks out of his prominent hair.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Jerome Dawson. Age 35. Hitman. Known for delivering swift punishment. Nickname: Judge Jerome."

Judge Jerome notices the Mechanic. They glare at each other. He takes a seat, fidgeting impatiently.

Quietly entering is a stern Native American Indian with long hair and a machete on the waist of his camo pants. He makes eye contact with no one.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Name: unknown. Age: unknown. Hitman. Known for saying prayers for his victims. Nickname: The Reverend."

THE REVEREND sits and folds his hands, closing his eyes.

A jolly Mexican stomps inside, wearing a top hat, loud Hawaiian shirt, white pants and sunglasses.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Joe Valenzuela. Age 51. Hitman. Known to recklessly leave clues at scene of crimes; some say it's intentional. Nickname: Sloppy Joe."

SLOPPY JOE nods at the others, takes a seat.

The hitmen eyeball one another, sizing each other up.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Until today, these four men have never met."

The Mechanic eyes the scrawny fellow at the end of the table.

MECHANIC  
What's this about?

SCRAWNY FELLOW

The boss will inform you. He  
should be here any minute.

As they wait, Judge Jerome combs his hair. The bored  
Mechanic stares at the ceiling. The Reverend bows his head.  
Sloppy Joe checks his phone.

Finally the door opens. They all look up and see the shadow  
of a large hat.

It's a nine-year-old KID dressed as a cowboy. He moseys  
inside, tips his hat.

KID

Howdy, pardners!

The hitmen study him, perplexed.

KID

How is everyone doing this fine and  
dandy morning?

No reaction. The kid takes the rope from his belt and  
attempts a rope trick, but fails miserably.

KID

Dad-gummit.

He puts the rope away, then he reaches into his pocket.

KID

Bubble gum?

He holds out the gum. They just stare at him.

He shrugs, unwraps a piece for himself. He nods at the  
scrawny fellow, who opens his briefcase and walks around the  
table, setting juice boxes down in front of everyone.

KID

Go ahead, wet your whistles!

The hitmen eye one another. Finally Sloppy Joe lifts his  
juice box and inserts the straw. The others watch him  
closely. He takes a slurp, satisfied.

JUDGE JEROME

Who are you?

KID

Just call me...  
(pausing to spit)  
Dusty.

He writes "DUSTY!" on the chalkboard, underlining it emphatically.

SLOPPY JOE  
Nice name, amigo! Very rustic!

DUSTY  
Didn't ask your opinion, Sloppy Joe.

Sloppy Joe shrugs, drinks his juice.

DUSTY  
Let's get down to business. I have a job for you fellas.

Judge Jerome stands.

JUDGE JEROME  
Okay, joke's over. I ain't got time for this.

He starts for the door.

A loud POP. Judge Jerome ducks, takes cover.

They all look at Dusty, who holds his cap gun in the air. He shoots again: POP... POP.

DUSTY  
Sit, cowpoke!

Judge Jerome studies him, uncertain.

Dusty points to the plastic sheriff's badge on his shirt.

DUSTY  
See this? That means I'm in charge.

Judge Jerome begrudgingly returns to his seat.

JUDGE JEROME  
So help me, if you weren't a little kid I'd...

Dusty skillfully returns the gun to its holster.

DUSTY  
I needed the best for this job. The baddest of the bad. That's you. Or so I've been told. This ain't no job for tenderfoots.

Circling the table, he studies each of them.

DUSTY

My dad runs a shaved ice stand on 8th Avenue. We've been there for a coon's age. But last week a new stand opened one street over. Some namby-pamby greenhorn -- too big for his britches. We need another shaved ice stand like I need another hole in my butt. It's hurting our business. Which means no comic books for me -- and no new washing machine for mom.

He regards the stains on his shirt.

DUSTY

Also, I could use some new boots. These are plum worn out.

Sloppy Joe examines his tattered shoes.

SLOPPY JOE

It's true, muchachos. Those boots are toast.

DUSTY

With pops working longer hours, it's also cutting into father/son time. We never play catch anymore. Or horseshoes.

MECHANIC

Heartbreaking.

Dusty shoots him a look.

DUSTY

This new stand... it must go. Lickety split.

REVEREND

What's in it for us?

DUSTY

Free shaved ice. More than you can shake a stick at.

The scrawny fellow takes out a stack of cards, dividing them among the hitmen.

DUSTY

To get free shaved ice at my dad's stand, each card must be stamped ten times. You'll notice all of your cards have been pre-stamped. Gentlemen, your ship has come in!

Sloppy Joe licks his lips.

SLOPPY JOE

What flavors, amigo? Do you have Prickly Pear?

The Mechanic pushes the cards away.

MECHANIC

No deal.

Dusty sighs, frustrated. His expression hardens.

DUSTY

Let's get something straight, pilgrims. This ain't a yes or no proposition. It's yes. Yes sir.

He climbs onto the table, strikes an intimidating pose. He glares down at the Mechanic.

DUSTY

You. Your kitty cat sleeps on the back of your sofa. Every night. That sure is a nice kitty. I reckon you wouldn't want anything to happen to him.

The Mechanic eyes him warily. Judge Jerome snickers.

DUSTY

You, Judge Jerome! You have silver satin sheets on your bed. Very soft. Gentle on your sensitive skin.

Judge Jerome gawks at him.

DUSTY

You, Reverend! You enjoy watching Love Boat reruns.

The Reverend detects gazes from the others.

REVEREND

It's a good family show. No vulgar language. Comical yet romantic.

DUSTY

And you, Sloppy Joe. You have  
scrambled eggs with cheese every  
morning. Extra pepper. Also, you  
talk to trees.

Sloppy Joe nods, impressed.

DUSTY

I know everything about all of you.  
Don't cross me. Capiche?

The scrawny fellow holds up a photo of a shaved ice stand.

DUSTY

This is our enemy.

Clenching his fists, his face turns red.

DUSTY

I want that stand... gone! Their  
tables gone! Napkins gone! No  
raspberry, no mango, no tutti  
frutti...

(punching into the air)

I want the whole kit and  
caboodle...

(jumping and stomping)

Gone!

The hitmen note his ferocity.

Jumping off the table, Dusty rolls up his sleeve, checks the  
time.

DUSTY

I left my horse beside a meter. I  
don't know the rules on that. Are  
we done here?

They seem satisfied. He breathes a sigh of relief, becoming  
cheerful again.

DUSTY

Great! Sorry, fellas, I didn't  
mean to raise cain. I just... I  
have a lot on my mind. I made a C  
on my math test. Mom's not happy.

He places his hand on the center of the table, as if rallying  
a team for a sporting event. He encourages the others to  
join in the huddle. Hesitant, they finally place their hands  
atop his.

DUSTY  
 Yip-pee, on three. One, two,  
 three...  
 (raising their hands)  
 Yip-pee!

The hitmen appear gloomy. Dusty notices.

DUSTY  
 C'mon, cheer up, fellas! Don't be  
 afeared, you're gonna do just fine!  
 You have five days to get this  
 done. I have faith in you!

He reaches into his pocket.

DUSTY  
 Here, have some candy!

He tosses a handful of hard candy onto the table.

Judge Jerome tentatively raises his hand. Dusty nods.

JUDGE JEROME  
 Do you know where my kitty sleeps  
 at night?

Dusty grins, winking.

DUSTY  
 Time to skedaddle. Good day,  
 gents!

He straightens his hat and struts to the door. He pauses to  
 let an impressive FART. Giggling, he departs.

The hitmen eye one another silently.

The stoic Reverend takes a piece of candy.

EXT. SHAVED ICE STAND - DAY

The BOSS, wearing a paper hat and apron, cleans up behind the  
 counter. His 10-year-old daughter, DAPHNE, puts the "OPEN"  
 sign up.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Day 2: 11:59 a.m. - Partly Cloudy."

Daphne approaches a table, wipes it with a towel.

She moves to another table, where Sloppy Joe sits cheerfully,  
 enjoying the sunshine, his hat resting on the seat beside  
 him.



DAPHNE  
Tables are for customers only.

He steps away, apologetic.

                  SLOPPY JOE  
Pardon me, señorita!

She resumes cleaning as he observes.

Moving to another table, Daphne raises the umbrella. She notices the Reverend standing nearby, watching her.

                  DAPHNE  
No loitering.

He doesn't budge.

She moves on to the garbage can, where the Mechanic stands staring at her. She eyes him suspiciously.

Next she hauls a trash bag behind the stand, where Judge Jerome wanders around, scoping the place out.

                  DAPHNE  
You lost?

He just stares at her.

                  DAPHNE  
If you're looking for the other  
members of your boy band, they're  
out front.

Finishing her work, she heads back inside.

Daphne now looks out and sees all four hitmen standing together, glaring at the stand, their best tough-guy poses. She begins to clap slowly.

                  DAPHNE  
Congrats, guys. You're now  
official members of the Standing  
Around and Looking Stupid Club.

The hitmen glance at one other, taken aback.

                  DAPHNE  
This is a hooligan-free zone. No  
lowlifes, no bad attitudes, no dumb  
faces. Looks like you're guilty on  
all counts. Also, you have  
extremely poor posture.

Concerned, the Reverend straightens up.

DAPHNE

Unless you have an order to place,  
you best be moving on.

Sloppy Joe eyes the others.

SLOPPY JOE

Oh, wait, I forgot my hat.

He approaches the table where his hat rests, but Daphne is already there waiting.

SLOPPY JOE

Um, maybe tomorrow I will try one  
of your snow cones!

DAPHNE

We don't sell snow cones, slick.  
We sell shaved ice. There's a  
difference. Look it up.

He nods. They both regard the hat, then glance up at each other. They glare into each other's eyes, squinting, like an Old West standoff. Finally Sloppy Joe makes his move, going for the hat.

Daphne rolls up her wet towel and flicks it, a loud THWACK as the hat is knocked to the ground.

Sloppy Joe picks up the hat, which is now in two pieces -- sliced perfectly in half.

DAPHNE

Get going. All of you. And clean  
up that trail of slime you left  
behind.

JUDGE JEROME

You'll be seeing us again.

DAPHNE

I can hardly wait. Don't forget to  
write!

They turn and depart. Judge Jerome notices Sloppy Joe's hat.

JUDGE JEROME

That's cold! She's got spunk, I'll  
give her that.

REVEREND  
Looks like a simple job. One  
adult, one little girl.

SLOPPY JOE  
A little girl who hates hats.

MECHANIC  
We have plenty of time. We'll shut  
'em down tomorrow.

Back at the stand, the concerned boss watches them go.

BOSS  
Who were those guys?

DAPHNE  
Nobody, dad. They were nobody.

EXT. SHAVED ICE STAND - DAY

Several customers stand in line.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Day 3: 12:20 p.m. - Wind SW 7 MPH"

A customer buys shaved ice and departs. Next in line: the  
Mechanic.

MECHANIC  
Piña colada.

The boss looks to Daphne, who fills a cup of ice with syrup.

BOSS  
That will be \$2.50.

MECHANIC  
I'm afraid your mistaken, chief.  
That will be no charge.

Daphne spits into the cup, hands it to him.

DAPHNE  
No charge for that, either. It's  
Thug Thursday!

The stunned Mechanic wanders off.

Sloppy Joe, with duct tape holding his hat together, reads a  
sign: "Today's Special: Blue Raspberry."

Finding a magic marker, he erases "Blue Raspberry" and writes  
"Sardine Delight".

A customer approaches and reads about the sardine special, repulsed. Sloppy Joe snickers.

Nearby, a lady sits at a table while enjoying shaved ice. Judge Jerome takes a seat beside her.

JUDGE JEROME

Mam, I wouldn't eat that if I were you.

She gives him a look.

JUDGE JEROME

The owner... I've been observing him. He scratched his butt. Then he sneezed all over everything and wiped his nose. Then he scratched his butt again -- dug down in his crack real good. Never washed his hands. Not once.

The lady gazes down at her cup, uncertain.

Nearby, an old farmer sits at a table. When he attempts to eat shaved ice, the Reverend shoves his hand, knocking the ice out of the spoon.

The farmer gets another spoonful, but the Reverend knocks it away again. They continue this until the frustrated farmer finally gives up and departs, leaving his cup. The Reverend takes the shaved ice and samples it.

Sloppy Joe reads another sign: "We LOVE our customers!" He changes it to: "We HATE our customers. You're all ugly and stupid!" He giggles, proud of himself.

A WOMAN approaches the counter.

WOMAN

Large root beer, please.

Judge Jerome steps in front of her.

JUDGE JEROME

Sorry, mam, the stand is now closed.

DAPHNE

No, it's not.

JUDGE JEROME

Yes, it is.

DAPHNE  
No, it's not.

                  JUDGE JEROME  
Yes, it is!

He puts the "CLOSED" sign up.

                  JUDGE JEROME  
Health code violations.

The woman examines Judge Jerome's sweat suit and gold chains.

                  WOMAN  
You're a health inspector?

                  JUDGE JEROME  
Um, yes mam. Plain-clothed Shaved  
Ice Division. They got a health  
score of, umm, two.

Sloppy Joe yells out at the remaining customers.

                  SLOPPY JOE  
Two! Did you hear that, amigos?  
They scored a two! Prepare for  
massive diarrhea and worm  
infestation! Ha ha!

Daphne scowls at Judge Jerome, who scowls back.

                  DAPHNE  
I'm not scared of you, ya know.

                  JUDGE JEROME  
Maybe you should be. I have a  
tenth degree black belt. I can  
disable a person in 49 different  
ways.

                  DAPHNE  
Second place trophy, winter  
spelling bee, Riverside Elementary.  
And I know all 50 state flowers.

                  JUDGE JEROME  
Rhode Island.

                  DAPHNE  
Violet.

                  JUDGE JEROME  
Alaska.

DAPHNE  
Forget-me-not.

They glare at each other.

The Reverend approaches, enjoying his shaved ice. Sloppy Joe points at him.

                  SLOPPY JOE  
Your tongue!

The Reverend sticks out his tongue: it's blue.

                  SLOPPY JOE  
Ha, it looks like you've been  
licking a Smurf!

Sloppy Joe notices his own tongue: purple.

Judge Jerome sticks out his: orange.

They all make fun of one other, amused.

The annoyed Mechanic marches to the counter, glares at the boss.

                  MECHANIC  
Pack up and move out. Today. And  
don't come back.

The Mechanic departs, followed by the Reverend and Sloppy Joe, who snap photos of their colorful tongues.

                  SLOPPY JOE  
It's a shame we have to shut this  
place down. It's like a magical  
land of colors and flavors and  
happy faces... and tasty snow  
cones!

                  REVEREND  
(snapping back)  
It's shaved ice. Snow cones are  
different.

Sloppy Joe shrugs.

Judge Jerome starts off, then pauses, looks back at Daphne.

                  JUDGE JEROME  
Puerto Rico.

She regards him blankly. He grins slyly.

DAPHNE  
Not a state. But... hibiscus.  
                  (spelling it out)  
H-I-B-I-S-C-U-S.

Irritated, Judge Jerome storms off.

EXT. SHAVED ICE STAND - DAY

The boss places a new trash bag in a container, then he heads back inside.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Day 4: 5:06 p.m. - Current Conditions Unavailable"

The hitmen approach, stunned by what they see: an "OPEN" sign and happy customers everywhere.

Daphne notices the hitmen in the distance. They march forward, none too pleased.

Daphne cracks her knuckles in anticipation.

EXT. SHAVED ICE STAND - LATER

The boss and the Mechanic conduct a meeting behind the stand.

                  BOSS  
I wanted to shut down, but she--

                  MECHANIC  
Are you saying you can't control  
your employees? She's just a  
little girl.

                  BOSS  
What can I do? She's her mother's  
daughter.

                  MECHANIC  
Do you know who we are?

                  BOSS  
My daughter mentioned that you're a  
band. What instrument do you play?

A harsh SCREAM from nearby. They rush to the front.

Judge Jerome lies on the ground, holding his leg, his sweat pants ripped. Looming over him is Daphne with her rolled up towel.

JUDGE JEROME

She got me! She got me good!

He attempts to crawl away, glances at a lady customer.

JUDGE JEROME

Oh, the pain. How's my hair?

The lady hands him a mirror, he frowns at what he sees.

Sloppy Joe runs up in a panic, holding a cup of shaved ice, appearing extremely uncomfortable.

SLOPPY JOE

Restroom? Where's your restroom?!

BOSS

We don't have one.

Panicked, Sloppy Joe tosses his cup of ice and runs desperately for the woods, holding his backside as he goes.

MECHANIC

What's with him?

DAPHNE

He wanted the special. So I made it extra special. What can I say, we got a health score of two.

A MUFFLED scream. The Mechanic turns to see the Reverend tied to a table, his mouth taped. Standing guard is the old farmer, who grins, grasping a pitchfork while a goat terrorizes the Reverend.

MECHANIC

What the...

The Mechanic studies Daphne.

JUDGE JEROME

Run, while you still can! She's small, but she's shifty. And she knows all the state flowers -- even Delaware!

She rolls up her towel. The Mechanic swallows hard.

EXT. SHAVED ICE STAND - DAY

Several customers sit at tables.

SUPERIMPOSE: "Day 5: 1:14 p.m. - A Pleasant Day."



An ELDERLY LADY steps to the counter.

ELDERLY LADY  
Tutti fruiti, please.

Daphne nods, looks behind her. Approaching with the cup is the Mechanic, wearing an apron and paper hat.

MECHANIC  
There you go, mam. I gave you an  
extra squirt!

He winks at the lady, who grins, pleased.

A young couple at a table enjoy shaved ice. The Reverend waves a giant paper fan, attempting to keep them cool.

Sloppy Joe uses a magic marker to write the daily specials, drawing smiley faces, pretty flowers and hearts. Examining the sky, he removes his hat and takes a breath of fresh air.

SLOPPY JOE  
What a pleasant day!

Judge Jerome adjusts an umbrella for a woman, trying to keep the sun off her. She nods, thankful. He limps to another table, where a beefy BUSINESS MAN enjoys shaved ice.

JUDGE JEROME  
Would you like a massage with that,  
sir?

BUSINESS MAN  
Don't mind if I do!

Judge Jerome begins rubbing his neck and shoulders.

From afar, someone with binoculars observes the shaved ice stand. It's Dusty.

DUSTY  
What in tarnation?

Pulling up his britches and straightening his hat, he throws a leg over his stick horse and gallops off toward the stand.

The Mechanic notices the stick horse approaching, dust a flying. He ducks behind the counter.

Judge Jerome dives behind a garbage can.

The Reverend runs behind the stand.

Sloppy Joe climbs a tree.

SLOPPY JOE  
Greetings, Señor Oak! My name is  
Joe. Please forgive the intrusion.

As Daphne wipes a table, a figure approaches her.

DUSTY (O.S.)  
Hey! Hey you!

Gripping her wet towel, she turns and faces Dusty.

They lock eyes. Dusty's mouth drops open. He's smitten.

She checks out his cowboy costume.

DAPHNE  
Nice get-up.

He checks out her syrup-stained apron.

DUSTY  
(nearly speechless)  
You too.

DAPHNE  
How may I help you?

Dusty considers her question.

DUSTY  
Uh, well... will you marry me?

Daphne looks him over a bit more. She shrugs.

DAPHNE  
Okay.

Dusty smiles the biggest smile of his life.

The boss watches, stunned.

BOSS  
But...

Judge Jerome excitedly places his hand down at the center of a table. Dusty adds his hand, and Daphne hers. The Reverend joins in, along with the Mechanic and Sloppy Joe.

JUDGE JEROME  
Yip-pee, on three. One, two,  
three...

EVERYONE  
(in unison, raising hands)  
Yip-pee!!!

They all congratulate Dusty and Daphne.

The hitmen hug one another, the Mechanic sniffing.

Dusty looks deeply into Daphne's eyes.

DAPHNE  
By the way, what's your name?

DUSTY  
Dusty. What's yours?

DAPHNE  
Daphne.

Dusty nods, pleased.

DUSTY  
Hi.

DAPHNE  
Hi.

An awkward silence.

DUSTY  
I have bubble gum.

Daphne smiles.

EXT. SHAVED ICE STAND - DUSK

The hitmen and the boss watch as Dusty and Daphne climb aboard the stick horse.

BOSS  
But she's only ten years old...

REVEREND  
She's a mature ten.

Daphne turns and waves. They all wave back.

Dusty spits on the ground. So does Daphne.

DUSTY  
Giddy-up!

And Dusty and Daphne gallop off into the sunset.

SLOPPY JOE  
So what's the special tomorrow,  
muchachos?

FADE OUT.

THE END