

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

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Characters: JEFF, male any age shopper at big department store

RANDY, male 20-40 who works at store

MARY, female co-worker of RANDY, roughly same age as RANDY GROVER, store manager

(male or female), preferably older than RANDY/MARY Props: Cell phones for RANDY and

MARY, small shopping bag for JEFF

Setting: Large Department Store

At rise, JEFF is casually shopping (MARY and GROVER are off-stage) and RANDY runs to catch up with him

RANDY: Uh, sir...sir? SIR!

JEFF: (puzzled): Me?

RANDY: Yes, you. Now, we don't want to cause a scene, excuse me... what's your name?

JEFF (hesitatingly): Uh, Jeff.

RANDY (into cell phone): Customer's name is "Jeff". I think I can handle this without security but be ready just in case. (to JEFF): OK, Jeff, there's no need to make this unpleasant – especially if you don't have a criminal record.

JEFF: Of course, I don't! What is this about?

RANDY (into cell phone): Can you verify this, Travis, based on facial and first name? I THINK he'll be reasonable about this.

JEFF: Reasonable about what?

RANDY: I mean, please don't make a run for it. (into cell phone) Travis, your team has already sealed the exits, right? I COULD tackle him but I'd prefer not to. Yeah, this time it's the LEFT shoulder (back to Jeff): This should be over pretty quickly if you cooperate.

JEFF: Could you please tell me what's going on? I was just shopping like anyone else.

RANDY: Anyone else? Hardly, sir. We don't want to embarrass you so we won't make you

watch the security camera tape. (into cell phone): We've got it all on tape, though, right, Travis?

JEFF: Got what on tape?

RANDY: (into cell phone) You have to HOLD the gray button. (back to Jeff): Please don't make me spell it out for you – you know what you did.

JEFF: No, I don't!

RANDY (into cell phone): CLAIMS he doesn't know what he did (beat). Guess we'll do it the hard way. (to JEFF): Aisle 7... last chance, Jeff – we have audio and video.

JEFF: Not a clue.

RANDY: (into cell phone): It's a twister – category three, at least. (To JEFF): You farted in the bedroom section, Jeff.

JEFF (incredulous): What? That's it?

RANDY: The sign says "comforters" but just because you're a paying customer does NOT mean you can trash our place. Would you do that at home?

JEFF: Well, yeah, all the time.

RANDY: OK, bad example. At a friend's house?

JEFF (thinks about it): Depends on the friend.

RANDY: That's very disrespectful to your friend but THIS is criminal. Our pillows, surface rugs, quilts have all been compromised. Honestly, would you buy a pillow knowing that someone had uh, well you know...

JEFF: I'd just take another one that hadn't been uh,... "compromised".

RANDY: TAINTED. Yes, you would – because you VANDALIZED some of our merchandise. Now, if you'd just gone a few more feet into, say, the lawnmower section, nobody would care. But you didn't – and now we have merchandise that we, in good conscience, cannot sell. Unlike the on-line companies, WE have integrity.

JEFF: What if I buy the top quilt and pillow?

RANDY: We still have to disinfect the rest of the items with a special spray. Who's gonna pay for the spray?

JEFF: I'll pay for the spray.

RANDY (to cell phone): Discount for bulk still on? Good! (to JEFF): If you buy three cans, you can keep two for yourself & still get the discount. Handy around the house ... you'd actually be getting a bargain.

JEFF: Whatever it takes to get me out of here.

RANDY: So that would be 2 quilts, 2 pillows and those 4 surface rugs – the ones on the top of the stack. And the 3 cans. Would you like the protection plan?

JEFF: Protection plan? What could go wrong with this stuff?

RANDY: No, protection plan in case you go shopping here again and, uh, some of the food doesn't always agree with people – you wouldn't be the first --so you wouldn't have to pay any moneys should a similar incident occur. You've saved a lot on the bedroom stuff so no point being penny-wise and pound-foolish.

JEFF (resignedly): Sure.

RANDY: You're free to go then – all the merchandise is up front (JEFF exits and MARY enters from opposite direction):

MARY (shaking her head in admiration): You're an ARTIST!

RANDY: Couldn't have done it without your help, Travis.

MARY: I'm sure THAT one puts you over the top.

RANDY: I THINK I had it clinched without that one but it's nice to have some cushion.

MARY: So you've now won Employee of the Month every month since I've been here.

RANDY: Which hasn't been long at all, though, right? Two months or so.... (GROVER walks in)

GROVER: You won it last month but we're discontinuing it till further notice.

RANDY: Why? MARY: What? You should at least give him THIS one. He earned it! He worked really hard.

GROVER: That would be two in a row and would not reflect the values we're trying to represent.

RANDY: What are you talking about?

MARY: Uh-oh, I see where this is going.

GROVER: You're clearly a white male, Randy – no Native American heritage, right?

RANDY: I've lived here all my life if that helps.

GROVER: You know what I mean.

RANDY: I've never even left the country!

GROVER: Answer the question: Any Native American heritage?

RANDY: For all I know, I COULD have ...

MARY: Better be honest, Randy – you've SAID you'd never run for political office but you may one day change your mind.

RANDY: OK, as far as I know, I do NOT have any.

GROVER: And you're clearly not gay.

RANDY: How do you know that? Not that I am but...

GROVER: I've seen you flirting with Mary the last two months.

RANDY: I wasn't flirting! I was just...

MARY: You were flirting – it just wasn't GOOD flirting – it was way too...

GROVER: I could tell it was flirting and I was halfway across the store.

RANDY: I just wanted her to feel welcome as a new employee.

GROVER: Yeah, right.

MARY: Two months in?

RANDY: So am I in some trouble for that?

GROVER: Relax, there's no harassment that I know of. Mary?

MARY: Of course not. I thought it was all pretty funny. He kept calling me by last name for one thing.

RANDY: Just trying to keep it professional. It sounds cool when they do it on "NCIS."

GROVER: Back to my original point, though – You're a straight white American male.

MARY (To GROVER): Maybe he hasn't always identified as a male.

RANDY: I took cooking classes a few years ago. And I like watching chick flicks.

GROVER: Didn't help you with your flirting, apparently.

MARY (To RANDY): And your name is gender-neutral. But have you always had a...what's the politically correct word these days?

GROVER: An "Outy". You've always had an "Outy", right, Randy?

RANDY: Yeah, pretty sure about that . Mary?

MARY: Always had an "inny". Just because I know a lot about lawn mowers? Wow, this flirting has sunk to a new low.

RANDY: That's not what I was gonna ask you.

GROVER: So there you have it. You're not giving me anything to work with. We simply cannot have a White American Straight Always Male win Employee of the Month twice in a row. It sends the wrong message.

RANDY: That we reap what we sow?

GROVER: That we're not embracing diversity.

RANDY: How about if I credit Mary with my last three sales? Then SHE would be Employee of the Month. That would give us diversity.

MARY (very touched to RANDY): You'd do that?

RANDY (To GROVER) She did help me a lot. So that would work, right?

GROVER: No, because it looks even worse – two months in a row to the same INTRA-racial and straight married couple. Eww.

RANDY: We're not married! We haven't even been on a date...

MARY: Yet.

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GROVER: You two WILL be. I've been doing this a long time and all the signs are there. Look, I gotta make corporate happy. Just live with it, Randy – life is full of disappointments – do you really think MY dream was to be manager here? (GROVER walks off briskly, as he sees a potential crisis elsewhere)

RANDY (yells out to GROVER): I always assumed it was! (MARY laughs at this).

MARY: That's a complete rip-off that you didn't get the award this month. Just because he didn't wanna look politically incorrect.

RANDY: You know, I kinda hate to make him look bad about the other thing.

MARY: What other thing?

RANDY: About US one day, uh....don't we OWE it to our manager to at least see where it goes?

MARY: You really are bad at this flirting thing – are you asking me out?

RANDY: I'm TRYING. But I wanted to do it after winning Employee of the Month – that way we could go to a real nice place.

MARY: I thought you took some cooking classes. Did you forget what you learned?

RANDY: Hey, right now it's hard to remember everything because just being near you is intoxicating.

MARY: Now, THAT's a pretty good line. Grover give it to you?

RANDY: Nope, thought of it myself.

MARY: Impressive!

RANDY: It took me two months. Well, one month for the line itself – another to figure out how to work it into the conversation.

MARY: You're an artist. Our shift is just about over... hey, do you see that guy in aisle 8?

RANDY: Yeah, he looks like the kind of guy who would...

MARY: Go get him, Randy. Travis has got your back.

RANDY (briskly walks off stage). Excuse me... Sir? Sir? We don't want any trouble...

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