

It's My Friday

It's My Friday

a play by  
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(Lights come up on the deli counter of a natural grocery store in Boulder, Colorado. Two deli clerks staff the line – Jodie and Dan. There are two more people in the kitchen upstage – Jesus and Juanita. The supervisor, Angela, is off stage. Two customers wait for service.)

Jodie (to Dan)

I thought you were going to be off today.

Dan

I was, but Alex called off sick.

Jodie

What a surprise.

Dan

(to a customer) Hi there! How can I help you?

Customer 1

I need a half pound of no-salt no-gluten no-preservative extra lean turkey – not quite shaved but really, really thin.

(Dan cuts a slice and shows it to her)

Dan

How's this?

Customer 1

Oh, it's not for me, it's for my dog. I'm vegan. But that looks fine. Could you put a little extra paper in there so that I don't have to actually touch it?

Dan

Sure.

Jodie (to Customer 2)

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Hi there! It's a great day in the deli! How can I help you?

Customer 2

What's good today?

Jodie

I really like the quinoa surprise salad and today it's on sale.

Customer 2

What's the surprise part?

Jodie

Corn flakes.

Customer 2

Corn flakes? That doesn't seem very healthy.

Jodie

They are naturally not sweetened and well, they taste good and they're crunchy.

Customer 2

Corn? Corn? Do you realize how evil the corn empire is? How they put GMOs in everything and force small third world farmers into submission and offer only one sinister seed? Don't they train you around here?

Jodie

I hear you. I stopped eating GMO's too, but this is non-GMO corn from the non-evil supplier – a small local farmer whose organic fields are carefully protected by massive buffer zones and reverse engineered counter wind mills that blow any GMO seeds out of the area and back to the evil farm of origin.

Customer 2

Really?

Jodie

It's My Friday

Pretty sure.

Customer 2

I do miss that crazy, tasty corn flake crunch.

Jodie

Would you like to try some? You can totally have some guilt-free.

Customer 2

Sure.

(Jodie gives a sample)

I don't taste the corn.

Jodie

It *is* light on the palette.

Customer 2

Just let me have the kale salad.

Jodie

Absolutely.

Customer 1

Of course, Zeus may be getting tired of turkey. How is your bologna?

Dan

Sorry, we don't have any bologna.

Customer 1

No baloney?

Dan

No baloney. It's kind of a policy.

Customer 1

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Oh, this is so hard when you're vegan and have a carnivore dog.  
What do you think she would like?

Dan

Dogs everywhere seem to go for the roast beef.

Customer 1

Really? That seems so unnatural though, I mean what dog would  
ever hunt a cow? How would they, you know...

Dan

Bring it down?

Customer 1

Yes. Perish the thought. Better give me some roasted chicken.

Dan

That's probably best.

Customer 1

It seems more natural.

Dan

The circle of life...I'm sure that Zeus could totally catch a  
chicken. How much would you like?

Customer 1

Just a quarter pound. Shaved. Zeus is developing a tooth issue I  
think.

Dan

One quarter pound. Shaved. Coming up.

(gives her the item)

Anything else for you?

Angela (entering)

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*What* else can we get for you?

Customer 1

That'll do.

Angela

Thank you very much! (turns to Dan) Always ask *what* else you can help them with. Get more in their basket. Do more than provide what the customer asks for – provide them with what they really need. Fix your hat. And stand *up*, you're taller than that.

(Angela leaves to the kitchen, we can still hear her).  
*Como estas! Bien! Bien! Mucho trabajo!*

Customer 3

I need some pepperoni.

Jodie (checking)

Sure, let's see... Oops. It looks like we're all out of pepperoni.

Customer 3

What?

Jodie

No more. So sorry.

Customer 3

How can you be all out of pepperoni? I really need that!

Jodie

Sorry. I guess it's been a big pepperoni week. We should have more later in the week.

Customer 3

I need it right now! How can you be all out? You are ruining my life!

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(Pause. Jodie and Dan are silent. A take as they sheepishly look at each other. Then Angela bursts back in, grabs some pepperoni from the pizza station and gives it to the customer quickly)

Angela

Here you go. Is that enough?

Customer 3

Yes. That's just right. I knew you couldn't be completely out. (to Jodie) How come *you* didn't know that?

Angela

No charge. It's on me. What else can I help you with?

Customer 3

Sauce? And cheese?

Angela

Making a pizza?

Customer 3

Yes, for a party.

Angela

How about some of these mushrooms, finely chopped, for another topping?

(before the customer can finish nodding "yes" Angela has them chopped, wrapped, weighed, and tagged.)

What next?

Customer 3

That'll do.

Angela

Thanks for coming in today!

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(to Dan and Jodie, with a brisk but friendly pat on each of their backs)

Find a way kids – you can do better. (she leaves)

And I do expect better!

Jodie

What just happened?

Dan

Another Angie miracle I guess. Don't trip on her cape.

Angela

(from off) I heard that. Don't get fresh.

Dan and Jodie

Thank you!

Angela

Get busy!

Customer 4

Excuse me.

Jodie

Hello there! How can I help you?

Customer 4

I'm having a party in an hour and I need forty two sandwiches – some roast beef, some chicken, some turkey, some vegan, some vegetarian, some gluten-free and ho yes, no nuts or dairy on some but not all because some people do like those things and... how fast can you do that?

Jodie

Did you say forty-two sandwiches?

Customer 4

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How fast can you do that?

Jodie

Wow, uh, that's a lot. With special requests it could take..

Customer 4

Are you going to help me or not? Now there's only fifty-six minutes until my party and I also need some things from the bakery.

Jodie

Sure, well – let's get exactly what you want while I get some extra help, OK? Could you please write exactly what you want, including the quantities, on this catering form while I go to get some help?

Customer 4

You want me to write all those down? That will take a long time. I've only got fifty-five minutes left.

Jodie

Well, yes, I know – and that way we'll know exactly what you want and be able to make that for you.

(Dan is busy helping another customer)

Customer 4

Well, you'd better do it fast. And they'd better be good. I can't disappoint my guests!

(Jodie goes to the kitchen) Jesus, could you please give us a hand for a few minutes?

Jesus

Sure. (he comes out) Whatever you need *Sobrina*.

(Jodie grabs phone to page for help)

Angela to the deli. Attention team members – Angela could you please come to the deli to help with a special order?

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(to Jesus) This customer has forty-two sandwiches to make and we could use some help.

Jesus

*No problema Sobrina* – we'll get them done. Let me grab some more bread.

Customer 4

Alright, I'll also need forty-two mixed, fresh cookies, some of them nut free, some gluten free, some sugar free.

Jodie

No sugar free cookies, sorry.

Customer 4

No sugar free?

Jodie

Well, they are cookies...and we don't use any artificial sweeteners.

Customer 4

Have you ever heard of apple juice? Or some other fruit? Where's your creativity?

Jodie

That's a great idea. And, we certainly *could* do that with fruit juice. We'd just need more time.

Customer 4

(handling the catering list of sandwiches to Jodie) Huh! Anyway, here.

Jodie

Did you include what cookies you want in your list?

Customer 4

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You want me to write that too?

Jodie

How about we get this started while I grab someone from bakery to help you with the cookies?

Customer 4

Hurry! Before you ruin my party!

(Jodie hands the catering form to Jesus, who is just back with several loaves of bread. Jodie then pages for bakery help)

Customer 4

And make sure you wash your hands before you touch my food!

Jesus

Si Senora. It is my pleasure to. (he puts down the wrapped bread, washes his hands)

(Angela appears, sees Jesus in action, jumps beside him to help. They are partially hidden from their arms down but appear to be cranking out sandwiches and wrapping them incredibly fast. Dan continues to help another customer. Jodie starts making sandwiches as well but not nearly as fast as Jesus and Angela)

Angela

We'll have these ready in a moment. Dan, be sure to find out what salads she needs.

Dan

Absolutely.

Customer 4

All I need are the sandwiches. And the cookies. Just please get them done. Oh wait. What's in the kale salad?

Jodie

Kale, orange, lemon, pecans...

Customer 4

No nuts! Are you paying attention to me? Are you trying to kill my guests?

Angela

The watercress salt is nut free, gluten free, sugar free, salt free and yet amazingly delicious. Would you like to try some?

(Dan offers the customer a sample. The following series of customer lines blends together and overlaps.)

Customer 4

Hmmm. No, no, no. I need something with more taste.

Customer 1

I forgot something...

Customer 2

This isn't exactly what I wanted.

Customer 3

Is the store manager here?

Customer 4

I need something with more taste!

(Black out. Pause. Lights come up on Jodie and Dan cleaning. The store is closed)

Jodie

Can you believe that night?

Dan

Another day in paradise.

Jodie

Well, at least it's my Friday.

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Dan

Lucky you.

Jodie

Yes, sir, two whole days off in a row. I can't even remember the last time that's happened.

Dan

Me, either. Wow, two whole days. Doin' anything special?

Jodie

Biking or hiking for sure. Then maybe check out the music festival on Pearl Street. Then, who knows. It may be my Friday but it's not pay day.

Dan

I hear that.

Angela

More work, less talk! I want to be out of here in 15 minutes. Dan, let Jodie get this – you help with the salad bar.

(Dan leaves. Angela heads for the kitchen)

Who's on these dishes? Holy crap what a stack!

(Black out. Dream-like music plays softly. Non-sensible and incoherent page announcements are heard in German, French, and Farsi. Pause in the darkness we hear a montage of voices, overlapping: )

Various Customers

Well if you can't cut it any thinner than that then I don't want it...where's your manager...I said a half a pound, how much are you cutting there...Faster! Faster! Faster! That better now have any gluten in it...why do you sell so many fattening foods? How can you be out of rotisserie chickens? You know all of this is cheaper at Safeway...they've got lots of chickens at Lucky's...I want more I said! Faster! Who is in charge of this place! Did

you wash your hands first? Is this Kosher? Is this organic? What's the difference between natural and organic? How long have you worked here? Faster! Could I have a sample of that salmon? Where are the forks for the salad bar? Where's the rest room? I told your manager that you're not going fast enough!

Angela's voice

Dan – Dan – roll over! You're sleeping on the wrong side!

(Lights up. Same people as before but there's just something a little odd about their chef coats and their hats are different colors. There are now signs/chalk boards on the wall saying "Got a question? Shut up" "We're doing our best so back off!" and "If you mention the price it's not for you!")

Dan

Who's next? Welcome! How can I help you?

Customer 1

I need a couple of sandwiches.

Dan

Sure! What can I make for you?

Customer 1

I need seventy-five sandwiches in ten minutes or less.

Dan

Sorry. You're in the wrong place. Crazy ass miracles are handled next door in the hospital.

Customer 1

What?

Jodie

Bye bye! Run along now...

Customer 2

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Is there corn in this salsa?

Jodie

Well, let's see – it's salsa so, of course there is!

Customer 2

Do you know about the corn conspiracy? About GMOs and monoseeds and the Evil Farm Empire?

Jodie

I don't really care about all that. Do you want the salsa or not?

Customer 2

Well! I don't want anything from you.

Dan

Run along there. Scoot. Skedaddle. *Vamos*. Scram!

Customer 2

Wait till I tell your boss!

Angela

Tell me what you want, I'm right here.

Customer 2

Did you hear that?

Angela

Absolutely. And I am so surprised! Kind of shocked even. What are you still here? Adios!

(Customer 2 leaves, slips on the way and falls. Dan runs to her rescue)

Dan

Are you OK? How can I help? Should I get a doctor?

Customer 2

I think I hurt...I think I hurt my back.

Dan

Let me fix that for you. (he makes a minor touch to her back and the customer springs up, totally fine)

Customer 2

Wow, I've never felt better in my life.

Jodie, Dan, and Angela

Me, either!

(Customer 2 leaves, dancing to a polka playing over the sound system)

Customer 3

I need some pepperoni.

Angela

No you don't.

Customer 3

What?

Angela

You mean you want some pepperoni. No one really needs pepperoni. How much do you want?

Customer 3

About fifty pounds.

Angela

Then you're a moron. You can't buy that much pepperoni here. Here's a quarter pound. Hit the road. Oh, wait. Here's some cheese and some sauce and some dough.

Customer 3

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I didn't ask for that.

Angela

I didn't ask you if you did. Now split.

(Customer 3 starts to leave, a big box starts to fall right above and would hit the customer except Jodie jumps, grabs it, falls to the ground saving the customer, and then bounds up smiling)

Jodie

Oops. Overstocked!

Customer 4

Excuse me. I notice that you're all out of chickens. What on earth am I going to have for dinner?

Jodie

How about, oh I don't know...SOMETHING ELSE?

Please, indulge me for a moment and look at this case. It is full of food. Pick a few things. Mix up your life. Go out on a limb. There are people starving in the world who would do anything for any of these.

Customer 4

How rude. Does your boss know you talk like this?

Angela

Yes. Yes I do.

Customer 4

Well, I never!

Jodie

Guess you do now.

(page announcement: Attention team members. Please report to the break room at your assigned time for Customer Service

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training...but only if you want to...Today's topic is "Drop Kicking that Troubling Talker" ha ha ha ha ha ha ha)

Shifty

Caught another one!

Angela

Another shop lifter?

Shifty

Yep.

Angela

Did you kick her out of the store?

Shifty

I will. I will eventually. But for now I have her tied up in the walk in. About an hour in there ought to cool her off.

(Paging voice: Attention Team Members – please report any rude or irrational customers to the store manager and we will have them removed immediately. Ha ha ha ha ha ha)

(Black out. Sound of an alarm clock going off. Radio voice "Good Morning Colorado! It's another beautiful day in paradise – time to start your day, get on your bikes, and cut off a motorist or two". Pause. Brief waking-up music. Lights up on the store.)

Dan

You'll never believe the dream I had last night.

Jodie

Yes I would – I had a wild dream, too. Maybe we had the same dream because you were in my dream.

Dan

And you were in mine. Hey, I thought yesterday was your Friday?

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Jodie

It was. Alex called out sick.

Dan

Again?

Jodie

Again. Guess he got a new game. Anyway, I needed the hours.  
Things are tight financially.

Dan

Another day in paradise!

Jodie

Another day in paradise.

(Black out. Curtain.)