

BRUCE

Hey, there's my man. Thanks for the flowers, Keith.

KEITH

Oh, sure, Bruce. You're not just a boss to me. You're also my friend.

BRUCE

Well, there's something you don't hear every day.

(Heading back to office.)

I have an important call to make right now, Keith. But maybe we should go fishing some time, huh?

KEITH

Sounds cool, Bruce.

BRUCE

Talk to you later.

(Exits to office as RODGE approaches KEITH.)

RODGE

Nice bouquet there, Keith. That musta cost you a day's pay.

KEITH

Yeah, pretty close.

RODGE

Yeah, that's nice.

(Suddenly pinning KEITH to the wall.)

Now you listen to me, you little rat! That HPA job is mine, got it? I been here for sixteen years, and I'm not about to let my promotion be taken away by some snot-nosed little punk who I trained not three months ago!

KEITH

Get your mitts off me, old timer!

RODGE

Old timer, eh? Think I'm washed up? I was out there pumpin' gas when you were in still draggin' on a tit! And I'm still young enough to whip your butt!

LILIAN

Rodge, knock it off. What is wrong with you?

RODGE

Shaddap! This is between me and the kid! Now look, Keith. I ain't afraid of you. I know Bruce is gonna pick me. But if you get in my way, I'll remember it when I'm Head Pump Attendant. And I'll see to it that you suffer. You think this job is hard now? You ain't seen nothin', boy.

LILIAN

Guys, customer on 11.

KEITH

Your pumpin' days are numbered, Rodge. And you know it. Yeah, you know it. I can see the fear in your eyes. There comes a time in every gas station when an era ends. I'm gonna put you in your place, old man. My time has come.

LILIAN

Customer!

RODGE

If you'll excuse me, punk! I'd like to earn my promotion. We can't all of us get through life on a pretty face and a pretty bouquet.

(RODGE exits. KEITH rushes to an aisle, picks up a bottle, and takes it to the counter.)

KEITH

Hey, Lilian. I wanna buy this.

(LILIAN goes to counter.)

LILIAN

(Ringing it up.)

Krakafloa, Volcanic Strength Laxative. Too many doughnuts?

KEITH

(Taking his change, and pouring laxative into RODGE'S coffee.)

That old fossil won't be able to outperform me if he's makin' a break for the can every five minutes.

LILIAN

Keith! This is--

KEITH

Sh-sh! Customer coming.

(CUSTOMER#1 enters.)

LILIAN

Morning.

KEITH

(Very loud.)

Good morning sir!!

CUSTOMER#1

(Pause.)

Morning. Boy, that guy you have out there is weird. He tried to carry me in here.

LILIAN

Oh, he's just trying to go the extra mile for you, sir.

RODGE

(Poking head in.)

You sure you wouldn't like your oil checked, sir?

CUSTOMER#1

No, thank you!... For the fourth time! Boy!

(Puts money on counter.)

Fill, please.

RODGE

(Digging into his wallet.)

This one's on me, Lil.

LILIAN

What?

RODGE

(Putting money on the counter.)

I'll take care of it.

CUSTOMER#1

What are you doing?

RODGE

Going the extra mile for you, sir.

CUSTOMER#1

No thanks.

RODGE

Sir, I insist.

CUSTOMER#1

No!

RODGE

But it's my pleasure.

CUSTOMER#1

That's very nice of you, but I'll pay my own—

KEITH

Yeah, he's as dedicated as they come. They just don't make 'em like old Rodge anymore. I still have so much to learn from him. I mean, the guy's the master of his trade, and still ahead of his time. I'm lucky to be your pupil, Rodge. Why don't you take a break.

(Handing RODGE the lax-laced coffee.)

Here, have a cup of coffee, buddy.

RODGE

(Pause. Looking at the coffee, then
at KEITH.)

Nice try, greenhorn.

KEITH

What?

RODGE

Is this the best you can do?

KEITH

What.

RODGE

You can't outfox the fox, kid. You hand me this cup of coffee, I drink it, and then what?

(Pause, while KEITH stares at him.)

Then Bruce comes out here and thinks I'm slacking off while you're working. You're not fooling me.

KEITH

Yeah, guess you got me, Rodge.

RODGE

Your youth betrays you, tenderfoot. One of these days you'll learn to pay attention to what's really important. You were so busy in here thinking up ways to burn me that you missed your opportunity to serve this fine gentleman.

(He sees that KEITH is looking outside.)

Even now you're not paying attention. I can see it in your eyes. Here you are, standing around doing nothing while that gas nozzle sprays gasoline all over this man's \$40,000 pickup. Now what kind of service—

CUSTOMER#1

What?!! You idiot!!!

KEITH

I'll get it, sir!

(CUSTOMER#1 and KEITH run outside.)

LILIAN

Sharp as a marble there, Rodge.

RODGE

Don't blame me. The kid distracted me.

LILIAN

You really are sly as a fox.

RODGE

Shut up. He shouldn'ta gave me this coffee. He shoulda left me alone.

LILIAN

Oh, crap. He's gonna need a mop and some sand.

(LILIAN goes to broom closet, and begins digging around.)

RODGE

Little maggot. Just let him try to give me a cup of coffee again.