

Fiasco Foods

By

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Dedicated to Evan Schuler

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ACT IScene 1

Curtains up on a bustling grocery store, filled with customers going about their day and workers struggling to keep up with the hustle of their day-job.

Enter AMY, a mid-aged, single mother dragging her rowdy kid, RILEY, behind her

AMY

Hey quit it!

(trying to control her screaming child)

I swear to God Riley I will cancel your karate classes if you don't shut up!

RILEY

I HATE YOU MOM!

As Amy continues to drag her child around the store, LARRY, the store manager enters with MATT, an employee he is forcing to work as a store mascot in order to gain more traction.

LARRY

All right Matt! You look great, ladies'll love ya.
(Larry hands Matt a large box of cookies)

MATT

Sir...is the costume really necessary?

LARRY

Of course! How else do you expect to sell so much! When the kiddies see a friendly hot-dog man with a big box of cookies they'll be practically begging their parents to empty their money-bags for a pack of mint-thins. And the more people who YOU get to buy those cookies the more...??

MATT

Money for yo-

LARRY

Money for me!! And some for you of course, minus taxes.

Larry pats Matt on the back and ushers him away to go sell the cookies.

Enter MARK, a studious (and handsome)

businessman. He is attempting to get the attention of a store clerk.

MARK

Mam! Uh...mam'?

(The store clerk, HARPER, turns to face him)

HARPER

Mam? Do I LOOK like a grandma to you?

MARK

No uh...my apologies you actually appear quite young.

HARPER

22. Whadd'ya want?

MARK

OH! Uhm yes, I was hoping you could point me in the direction of the ground coffee.

HARPER

Two lefts and a right, stop when you see the milk isle, take one giant step forward and your there.

MARK

Got it! Thank you so much.

Mark leaves for his ground coffee.

Enter TEDDY, Harper's up-beat co-worker.

TEDDY

Gee Harper! You knew EXACTLY where the coffee was. Your definitely going to get employee of the month this time, I can feel it in my bones!!!

HARPER

Gross.

Amy, distracted by Riley's continuous chaos, bumps into Mark, hurrying his way to the check out line.

On impact, Amy drops her groceries and Mark quickly helps to pick it up.

MARK

Oh! My apologies miss!

AMY

No no it's completely my fault, I didn't see you there.

RILEY

MOMM YOU DROPPED MY LEGO SET

AMY

Be quiet, Riley.

Mark and Amy look up at each other. Making eye contact for the first time (both surprised by the attractiveness of the other)

MARK

Oh! Uh..

Matt walks up to the crying Riley.

MATT

Hey kid! How about a cookie? It'll cheer you up!
Plus, there's a big sale! 25% off for the whole box!!

RILEY

(to Amy)
Mom? I want a cookie.

AMY

Ugh, uhm....

RILEY

MOOMMMM PLLEAAASEEEEE

AMY

(sigh) How much?

MATT

\$5 for one, \$25 for the box.

AMY

And with the sale?

MATT

That is with the sale Miss.

AMY

THE HELL?! \$5 for one cookie is insane. No way!

MATT

Miss I don't make the rules, you can talk to my manager if you have a complaint.

RILEY

MOM PLEAASEEEE

AMY

No. Final answer.

RILEY

YOU'RE THE WORST MOM EVER I HATE YOU!

Riley starts having a fit, screaming and kicking his feet. Others in the store side-eye Riley and his mom, judging the mis-controlled child and the woman who let it happen.

AMY

Shh! No! Riley stop it!

Mark kneels down to the kid's height and hands him a \$5 bill, to which, upon sight, Riley stops crying

MARK

Here kid, go get your cookie. Just...be nice to your mom okay?

Riley happily goes and buys his cookie from the awkward mascot.

AMY

Thank you, but I really didn't need your help.

MARK

Heh, well I was just trying to stop his temper-tantrum.

AMY

Yea well, encouraging his behavior sure isn't going to solve any problems for me in the future.

(looking at her watch)

Shoot the store's about to close! C'mon.

Amy grabs Riley and without saying goodbye, heads to checkout.

HARPER

(on intercom)

Attention shoppers, the store will be closing in five minutes. Again, the store will be closing in five minutes.

LARRY

Hey Teddy, what's the goods from today?

TEDDY

About \$33,000 sir!

LARRY

Hell! That isn't anywhere near our daily quota!

TEDDY

It's alright sir, we can make 2x more that amount tomorrow!

LARRY

Nah kid, it isn't alright. We haven't hit our quota in a few weeks, if things keep heading downhill I may have to let someone go!

TEDDY

But sir-

Suddenly, red lights flash throughout the store, along with an ear-piercing alarm.

Then, a calm voice comes over the intercom:

"Attention everyone, this is not a drill. A tornado with winds almost 200 mph has just been spotted and is charging across the state at an alarming rate. Get inside the nearest open building in your vicinity and do not attempt to leave, it's path is unpredictable. We will send word when the storm has ended and it is safe to go outside. Until then, remain calm and stay indoors."

Sounds of the storm roar throughout the store. Crashing noises can be heard from outside, along with sirens and the bangs of violent thunder.

Then, the inside lights begin to flicker.

RILEY

Mom? What's happening.

AMY

There's a storm Riley, but don't worry. Everything will be-

The lights go out.

Complete darkness.

AMY
okay.

SCENE 2

Complete panic, the ensemble screams and scrambles to find their sanity.

(Next lines of dialogue are heard throughout the screaming and panic of the rest of the ensemble)

LARRY
Teddy! Go find those old flashlights!

TEDDY
On it sir!!

AMY
Riley? Riley? Where are you?

MARK
Ah! Who's there?

MATT
I'm just an employee sir!

TEDDY
Sir the flashlights aren't here!

LARRY
What?! What do you mean they aren't there?

TEDDY
I don't know they just aren't here

HARPER
Use the ones we have in the back

MATT
Hey! Watch where you're going!

TEDDY
Found it!

Teddy turns on the flashlight

(Stage lights turn on but are dimmed)

Everyone takes sighs of relief, which quickly turn into gasps of shock when they see the state of the store

LARRY

Jesus! What the hell did you guys do to my store?

MATT

We have a bigger problem! The power is out...for the whole store.

CUSTOMER #1

What? What do you mean?

HARPER

Uhm...were you here when the lights turned off or did you just spawn from an alternate dimension?

MARK

If the lights shut off...its likely power for the rest of the store did as well.

CUSTOMER #2

Oh God!

AMY

Riley? Riley? Where are you? Oh no...

Riley is missing. Amy, hoping someone may know something, questions customers and employees, asking them if they know where he went.

LARRY

(while Amy is asking around)
Matt! Get over here.

MATT

Yes sir?

LARRY

Matt, I want you to go outside and turn the power back on. There's a generator in the back of the building.

MATT

Sir...I'm not going out there.

LARRY

'Scuse me?

MATT

There's a raging tornado outside!

LARRY

Kid, you work for me, you do what I say. Unless you

want to lose your job I advise you go out there and turn on the generator.

MATT

Nuh uh, no way.

LARRY

C'mon Matt. Tornado's probably not even near us, state's just taking a precaution that's all. I bet you its just like a thunderstorm out there. Plus, you could be a hero.

MATT

Why don't you get Teddy to do it? Or Harper?

LARRY

You mean my star employees? They work together like a nut and bolt, I can't afford to lose one. Literally.

MATT

But you can afford to lose me?

LARRY

Ah, come on. You'll be fine.

Larry, ignoring Matt's reluctance to go outside, pushes him out the door into the raging storm, which seems to swallow Matt whole.

TEDDY

Sir? Why'd you send Matt out to the storm?

LARRY

Why he's gonna fix the power kid! Then our refrigerators will be up and running again and we won't have to restock two thousand dollars worth of cheese and milk.

HARPER

Genuis.

SCENE 3

Amy makes her way over to Mark, who is trying to catch a signal on his phone, to ask the same question she's asked just about everybody else:

AMY

Excuse me? Have you seen Riley?

MARK

No, not since the last time I saw you

AMY

Shoot...you were the last one. I have no clue where he is. He ran off when the power went out and I can't find him anywhere.

MARK

Is he with his dad?

AMY

what? No, his dad isn't here. His dad isn't here at ALL. He left us two years ago.

MARK

Oh...my apologies I didn't realize...

AMY

Don't be, he was an idiot anyway. Plus, I could care less what you say to me right now, I just want to find my kid.

MARK

I'll go look for him.

AMY

What? No. It's too dark, and there's glass all over the floor.

MARK

Perfect reason why a kid shouldn't be wandering around alone.

AMY

Well, he's in here somewhere, he'll turn up by himself when he hears us.

MARK

Listen, I'm just going to go find him to ease your mind...okay?

AMY

No you really don't have-

Ignoring Amy, Mark walks off to go find Riley.

SCENE 4

Across the stage, Harper and Teddy are conversating about the situation. Amy, is

*picking up bits of trash and glass on the floor.
Some customers have circulated into groups.*

HARPER

This sucks huh?

TEDDY

I don't know I think it's kinda fun! Like a
sleepover! Oooo or like *Goonies*!!

HARPER

This is nothing like *Goonies*.

TEDDY

Sure it is! Or at least it's scary like *Goonies*.

HARPER

Listen, you're funny, but all I care about right now
is getting something to eat. I'm starving.

TEDDY

Oh....lady week?

HARPER

No weirdo, I'm just hungry. I'm going to find
something to munch on.

TEDDY

Oh okay! Just make sure to leave some cash on the
register after you grab what you want!

HARPER

What? No, Teddy, we're in a crisis. If I'm hungry I'm
going to grab something.

TEDDY

And pay?

HARPER

NO Teddy! I need food!

*Larry, having overheard the conversation,
interjects*

LARRY

Sorry sweetheart, but Teddy's right. You want
something you gotta pay.

(shouting to the rest of the store)

In fact! That goes for everyone! I don't care if
you're hurt, sick, or dying; if you use something,
you gotta pay for it.

CUSTOMER #1

What? But that's not fair!

LARRY

Business is business.

AMY

I bet you wouldn't pay if you needed something cheapo!

CUSTOMER #2

Hey he's the owner of the store, of course he doesn't have to pay.

TEDDY

Yea, as a loyal employee of Fantastic Foods, I have to support Larry's decision to charge you all for anything you take during this time of crisis.

HARPER

Teddy do you hear yourself?

CUSTOMER #2

Of course he does, it's coming out of his mouth.

AMY

No one asked you zoomer!

As they continue to argue, two groups begin to form, both on separate sides of the stage. One agreeing with Teddy, the other with Harper.

LARRY

(shouting)

I am the owner of this establishment! While you are on my premise you will obey me!

CUSTOMER #1

Don't tell me what to do!

Customer #1 picks a large metal rod off the floor and goes to hit Larry with it, but just before impact, both Matt and Mark (with Riley) come back.

Matt is drenched with rain from the storm, his costume is ripped and torn, his manner appears extremely disheveled.

MATT AND MARK

Stop!

AMY

Riley!

Amy runs over and hugs Riley.

LARRY

Matt! Why are you back? The power isn't on yet! Get back out the-

MATT

NO! I am NOT going back out there. You have NO IDEA what I just experienced. Just a thunderstorm huh? NUH UH, that was the most horrifying 20 minutes of my life!

LARRY

Kid I'm sure you're fine-

MATT

Look at me! I'm not fine! I'm never fine! You force me to do the most embarrassing shit and then give me no credit for it. And you know what? I don't think I want to work for you anymore.

TEDDY

What?

HARPER

Damn.

MATT

Yea, that's right, I quit.

MARK

Awh, c'mon kid.

MATT

No! Don't even speak. I'm going to the bathroom, and I'm STAYING there until this is over. No one, try and talk to me.

Matt storms off to the bathroom, shoving people in his way.

Harper exists.

AMY

Where'd you find him?

MARK

Oh haha, he was in the candy isle. He got into the

Fun Dip, I have no clue how much he's eaten.

Riley groans, he's holding his stomach like one would after Thanksgiving dinner.

AMY

Oh Jesus, Riley, you are GROUNDED when we get home.

RILEY

But Mooommmmm.

AMY

GROUNDED!

MARK

Hey, speaking of when we get home, I was thinking...

AMY

Yea?

MARK

Would you let me take you out to dinner when we're out of here miss...?

AMY

Amy, my name's Amy

MARK

Well, Amy, what do you say?

AMY

Yes of course! Just as long as I can find someone to babysit Riley haha.

Riley pulls out a package of Fun Dip from his pocket and grudgingly begins to eat it.

AMY

(Taking the Fun Dip from Riley)
Riley no! No more!

LARRY

Hey, where'd he get that? Is that from the store?

AMY

Yes, I'm sorry. I'd lost him and I had no idea he was taking them.

LARRY

THEM? Oh no, Miss, you're gonna have to pay for those.

AMY

I'm sorry but my ten-year-old did it behind my back!
I just don't find it fair that I should have to pay,
especially not in these conditions.

LARRY

These conditions are causing extensive damage to the
store, even more reason you should be feeling
generous enough to PAY for the things you STOLE.

AMY

I didn't steal them.

LARRY

Really? Well, if there isn't \$30 on the register by
the time these lights turn back on...I'm filing you
for theft.

AMY

What?? But-

TEDDY

Sir- I'm sorry to interject but uhm, I think you
should just let her go.

LARRY

Teddy, keep quiet.

TEDDY

Uhm-

LARRY

You keep up with that attitude and you're not gonna
like what happens.

TEDDY

Sir, I'll report you to Human Resources for worker
safety violations.

LARRY

What? The Hell are you talking about boy?

TEDDY

You sent Matt out into a 200 mph tornado, despite his
dis-concent. Correct me if I'm wrong but I believe
that is considered a MAJOR worker safety violation.
And...if you don't let her go, I'll report you.

LARRY

I- Uh- Uhm- You-

Then, just as he is about to rebuttle, the lights turn back on. The ensemble gasps and takes sighs of relief.

ENTER Harper.

HAREPR

Power's back.

TEDDY

Harper- how did you? I thought it was too dangerous to go outside- I mean, Matt came back totally destroyed!

HARPER

There's a fuse box in the back. Which apparently none of you idiots knew about. Even you, Larry, and you own this place.

LARRY

Well, I usually just have Matt deal with that technical stuff.

HARPER

Huh, typical.

MARK

That's good news right? That you managed to get the power working? Or else the electrical lines would be destroyed by the storm.

Then, that same calm, voice from earlier comes over the intercom:

"Attention everyone, storm winds have calmed to about 40 mph, it is now safe to leave your premise. However; roads may still be slippery and there may be a few fallen trees across them, be cautious while on your way home. Thank you for your patience and cooperation. Stay safe."

Everyone is still for a moment.

Matt peeks his head out the bathroom door.

MATT

Is it over? I can go?

AMY

...yea!

MATT

OH HELL YEA!

(handing his uniform to Larry)

You'll be hearing from my lawyer.

Goodbye everyone! I'll see you in my nightmares!

AMY

(to Riley)

C'mon, the storm's over. We're going home and you're staying in your room...for a loonnnggg time.

MARK

Hey! You never gave me your number!

AMY

Oh!

Amy awkwardly takes a crumpled up sheet of paper from her pocket and attempts to write her number on it.

AMY

Sorry, I haven't done this since I was a teenager!

MARK

No, no...it's cute.

Amy blushes, hands Mark her number, waves goodbye, and grabbing her kid, leaves.

LARRY

She got lucky. Teddy, if you hadn't stopped me from going kookoos back there, that poor lady could be in the hospital right now. And for that, I think you deserve Employee of the Month...again.

TEDDY

Thank you sir, but I don't think I was the one who stopped you, I think it was that guy (pointing at Mark) coming back in that caused you to stop...he's pretty big. Harper's the REAL hero, she's the one who fixed the lights!

HARPER

Nah, I'm just the only one with a brain around here

TEDDY

And also...I think I quit too.

LARRY

You WHAT?

TEDDY

Yea, this whole thing caused me to notice how you treat people around here and, I don't think I like it. So I quit! Goodbye sir.

HARPER

I'm with him, I'm sick of this hell-hole. I don't get paid enough to put up with this shit.

(nudging Teddy)

Plus, we work as a team right?

Teddy and Harper hand the stunned Larry their aprons and begin to exit. As they leave they are greeted by Mark.

MARK

Hey, you two ever thought about working in a law firm? I'm hiring.

Teddy and Harper give each other a silent nod, an implication of agreement.

The rest of the ensemble staggers out with the cast, leaving Larry alone in the store.

Larry looks at the rubble left from the store.

Then, as he stands in the middle of the destruction we hear:

"I'm sorry, the caller you are trying to reach is not available at the moment, please leave a message at the tone: 'Hello Mr. Bernstein, I'm Ryan calling from the IRS to discuss your recent unfiled taxes, please call this number back when you have the time. If we do not receive a call back within the next week we will have to send someone over to your house to get your attention in person. Have a good day Mr. Bernstein.'

LARRY

Shit.

FIN

