

Screenplay Treatment: *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia: The Gang Does Dog Day Afternoon*

Type of Screenplay:

Genre: Comedy

Rating: TV-MA (Mature Audiences)

Length: 22 Minutes (Standard Half-hour TV episode)

Target Audience: This episode targets an audience aged 18-45, particularly those who enjoy dark, absurdist comedy with a satirical tone. The humor will appeal to fans of subversive, irreverent comedy who appreciate shows like *Arrested Development*, *Workaholics*, and *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. Viewers of this episode are likely to be adults, predominantly urban and suburban, with a mix of working-class and middle income demographics. Psychographically, these individuals enjoy unconventional humor, satire, and often have a cynical view of what some consider societal norms. They are typically drawn to flawed, morally dubious characters that exist within unpredictable, chaotic storylines.

Characters:

Dennis Reynolds: (played by Glenn Howerton) A narcissistic, self-proclaimed "golden god" with sociopathic tendencies. He tries to bring order to the group's schemes but ends up frustrated when plans fall apart.

Dialogue Example: "Mac, for once, just stick to the plan! We are in and out of this store in thirty minutes tops."

Dee Reynolds: (played by Kaitlin Olson) Dennis's sister, a failed actress with a biting personality and desperate need for attention. Awkwardly tries to look stylish but often looks out of place. Self-absorbed, insecure, and easily manipulated by her brother. In this episode, she reluctantly agrees to distract the deli counter worker but complains throughout.

Dialogue Example: "Oh, I'm supposed to flirt with the lonely hot dog guy? That's...awesome."

Charlie Kelly: (played by Charlie Day) A dim-witted janitor and wild card of the group with bizarre proclivities, limited intelligence, but surprisingly strong street smarts. Here, he becomes fixated on a crossbow he finds in the store and insists the bar needs it.

Dialogue Example: "Frank, I just wanna hold the magnets. Just for a second."

Mac: (played by Rob McElhenney) A self-proclaimed badass who constantly tries to prove his toughness. He's put in charge of high-demand items but obsesses over security for their cart.

Dialogue Example: "I'm just saying, it's strategic for me to protect the cart."

Frank Reynolds: (played by Danny DeVito) A morally bankrupt, money-loving schemer. Frank concocts a ridiculous plan to rig the deli scale with magnets to get discounted meats.

Dialogue Example: "I'm not paying full price for meat, Dennis. Not when I got magnets. The

Magnets are key to manipulating the Deli scale. Just follow my lead, Charlie.”

Setting: The episode primarily takes place in a fictional big-box store in Philadelphia, resembling Walmart. The store is massive, brightly lit, with towering aisles full of bulk goods. It’s bustling with employees and shoppers, creating a chaotic environment that quickly spirals out of control. The time period is present day, and the mood is frenetic and tense, with an underlying absurdity.

Plot Structure:

Exposition

The gang is at the bar drinking on an early Saturday afternoon. The bar has been neglected as of late and Dennis is irritated at how Paddy’s Pub is now nearly “completely bereft” and concocts a quick and strategic trip to the local big-box store to stock up on essentials. The gang jumps into Dennis’s 1996 Range Rover and heads to the store. On the way Dennis assigns each member of the gang a task that’s part of his efficient plan that is sure to make the shopping a painless experience. Dee is tasked with getting garnishes for drinks like: Olives, limes, and cherries in bulk and distracting the deli clerk. Charlie is in charge of finding bathroom and cleaning supplies. Mac is sent to buy as much Coor’s light that he can find in the store. Meanwhile, Frank will work his magnet scheme with Dee to manipulate the deli scale and obtain the meats and cheeses at a discounted price.

Conflict

Upon arrival, Dennis’s plan unravels immediately. Initially, Mac is obsessed with protecting the gang’s cart. Dee is unable to distract the deli clerk with her terrible attempt at flirting and gets side tracked when she stumbles upon a wedding clearance aisle. Mac and Charlie find Dee in the wedding clearance area and begin to berate her for how pitiful it is for her to be shopping for wedding items when they become engrossed by a display of survival gear. Frank finds the deli counter and, spotting an opportunity to cut costs, conspicuously attempts to use a giant cartoonish magnet to counter the weight of the meat weighed out by the clerk. While continuing to peruse the sporting goods area of the store Charlie discovers a crossbow in the hunting aisle and becomes fascinated. Charlie is convinced that the bar needs the crossbow “for security purposes”. Mac has moved on from the sporting goods area and is now arguing with an employee about purchasing limits as he fills a second cart with cases of beer. Mac claims he is being discriminated against for being gay; his sexuality has nothing to do with purchasing limits, nor did the employee consider Mac’s sexuality when stopping him from buying all the Coors light. Mac completely misreads the situation.

Complication

Dennis is becoming increasingly agitated because no one is following his plan. He tries to wrangle the gang back together and regroup. Mac is convinced that he’s being discriminated against and must fight back. Frank’s scheme goes awry when a store employee notices the

magnets. Frank, to avoid getting caught, improvises and tells the employee that he's a deli inspector on a covert assignment, the employee isn't convinced. Meanwhile, Charlie has snagged the crossbow and is unable to put it down. In an absurd moment, Charlie brandishes the crossbow and accidentally fires a bolt into a display near where Frank is lying to the employee. Shoppers devolve into chaos while the gang barricades themselves in an aisle with a handful of store employees they have encountered so far. Charlie, in a panic, holds the crossbow and orders the employees to stay put. Mac now sees this as an opportunity and begins to patrol the store, creating more chaos, herding shoppers and employees, making them line up.

Climax: Customers and employees are in a panic, the gang is now completely barricaded in an aisle attempting to negotiate their "escape". In a comedic homage to *Dog Day Afternoon*, Dennis, in the role of Pacino, shouts at the staff, "We just want to get out of here with our groceries!". Unfortunately, Dennis lacks any real threat and holds no real leverage. Dennis and Charlie argue about returning the weapon. Charlie refuses to relinquish control of the crossbow when Mac interrupts the two abruptly stating that the gang's current situation reminds him of the movie *Dog Day Afternoon*, specifically that they have been saying lines almost verbatim. Dennis and Charlie begin to argue about which one of them represents 'Sonny' from the 1975 Sidney Lumet film. As the two bicker between themselves they come to an agreement that they both embody a piece of the character and that Mac is DEFINITELY 'Sal'. Mac strongly refutes this claim, proclaiming to be the representation of the Irish Police Negotiator, working to diffuse the situation in the original film. Mac even goes so far as to name check the actor, Charles Durning, immediately referencing and commending his performance in the TV show *Rescue Me*. Dennis and the gang completely disagree, pointing out multiple times when he made the events worse.

Resolution:

The police, completely baffled by the scenario, eventually enter the store with the store's single security guard and unceremoniously end the stand-off by confiscating the crossbow. The gang is banned for life and escorted out of the store, but not before Frank is able to shove a handful of deli meat into his pocket. Now back at the bar: Frank is making sandwiches in his mouth with pilfered meat, Mac is determined to gain reentry to the store and although they acknowledge their failure, the gang is laughing off the experience as another successful adventure when a package arrives at the bar. Charlie opens it to discover a crossbow that Mac ordered from the big box same day delivery service.

Production Techniques:

Camera setups and composition:

Mostly handheld camera work with quick cuts between each gang member's schemes. High frenetic motion during chaotic scenes with extreme close-ups and expansive overhead wide shots of the store. Close-up shots of Frank's face as he tries to be inconspicuous and use his magnet to manipulate the deli scale. Medium shots will be used during ensemble scenes.

Transitions will be quick and often jump between characters to maintain the fast-paced, disjointed energy of the episode.

The iconic *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia* orchestral score will be used throughout the episode. It plays ironically over chaotic scenes-keeping in line with the show's style. During the stand-off, a more dramatic score that mirrors the music heard in *Dog Day Afternoon* will be used to further amplify the comedic contrast and to point to the source the show is referencing.

This episode follows the classic Sunny formula: a simple errand derails into an escalating disaster, showcasing the gang's characteristic dysfunction and inability to blend in with societal norms.