

Price Check

by

David MacGregor

dmacgregor77@gmail.com

Setting

A dollar store.

Time

Present-ish.

Cast

KENNY - Male, in his late teens to 20s.

MANAGER - Male or Female, 20s-50s.

CUSTOMER - Male or Female, 20s-40s.

Synopsis

On his first day of work, a new cashier in a dollar store discovers the dark side of his job.

(KENNY the cashier smiles at a CUSTOMER who places three items in front of him. Nearby, a large sign reads, "Everything for One Dollar!!!")

KENNY

Good afternoon! Find everything you need today?

CUSTOMER

Oh yes! I'm in here enough, I know this store like the back of my hand! In fact, aren't you a new face?

KENNY

I sure am! My name's Kenny! This is my first day! In fact, you're my first customer!

CUSTOMER

Well, congratulations! This should be a wonderful place to work!

KENNY

Thank you!

(he picks up the first item and looks at it in confusion)

Uh...price check on one!

(the MANAGER approaches and KENNY holds the item up)

I need a price check on this.

MANAGER

It's a dollar.

KENNY

A dollar. Great! Thanks!

(The MANAGER adjusts the sign as KENNY looks at another item.)

KENNY

Um...price check on one!

(the MANAGER comes back to KENNY)

There's no price on this either.

MANAGER

Kenny, it's a dollar.

KENNY

Okay! A dollar it is!

MANAGER

(to CUSTOMER)

Excuse me a moment.

(to KENNY)

Kenny, do you see that sign in front of the store?

KENNY

Yeah! I sure do!

MANAGER

What does it say?

KENNY

Cashiers wanted.

MANAGER

No, not that sign. The big sign. The really big sign.

KENNY

Everything for One Dollar?

MANAGER

Right. Everything for One Dollar. That's the name of our store.

KENNY

Sure. I know that.

MANAGER

Well, doesn't that suggest something to you?

KENNY

You mean, I'm supposed to take that literally?

MANAGER

How else would you take it?

KENNY

I don't know. I guess I thought maybe it was like an average price or something.

MANAGER

No. It's Everything for One Dollar.

KENNY

Everything for One Dollar.

MANAGER

Right. Everything. For. One. Dollar. All right?

KENNY

All right.

(the MANAGER moves to leave as
KENNY checks the last item)

Um...price check on one.

(The MANAGER turns around.)

MANAGER

Kenny, what is the problem here?

KENNY

I'm sorry, but this one has a tag on it.

MANAGER

So what? It's a dollar.

KENNY

But the tag says, "Clearance."

MANAGER

It's a dollar.

KENNY

But how can that be? If it's a dollar to begin with, how can it still be a dollar if it's on clearance?

MANAGER

It's a miracle, Kenny. It's just a miracle. And it's a dollar. Trust me on this.

KENNY

Well, okay.

(KENNY takes some money from the
CUSTOMER, then bags the items and hands
them to the CUSTOMER, who exits.)

KENNY

Thanks for coming in! Have a nice day!

MANAGER

Kenny, tell me honestly. Are you going to be all right with this?

KENNY

Well, now that you mention it, I don't know.

MANAGER

What do you mean you don't know?

KENNY

Well, when I took this job, I was really fired up for it. I mean, cashier. There's a lot of responsibility there.

(MORE)

KENNY (cont'd)

The lifeblood of the whole business runs right through me. And then there's specials and coupons and returns and clearances and, you know, price checks. It's dynamic! At least, I thought it was going to be dynamic.

MANAGER

What are you saying?

KENNY

I guess I never really thought about it, but to be a cashier in a store where everything is a dollar, that's kind of hellish, don't you think?

MANAGER

Hellish?

KENNY

Yeah. Like this could be, what do you call them, one of the eight circles of hell.

MANAGER

There's nine circles of hell.

KENNY

There is now! Cashier in a dollar store!

MANAGER

Kenny, I don't know what to tell you. It's a simple store. It's a simple job.

KENNY

Can I ask you something?

MANAGER

Sure.

KENNY

What happened to the guy before me?

MANAGER

What guy?

KENNY

The cashier before me. What happened to him?

MANAGER

Oh. He...I don't know.

KENNY

You don't know?

MANAGER

How would I know?

KENNY

You're the manager! You must know. Did you fire him?

MANAGER

No.

KENNY

Did he quit?

MANAGER

No.

KENNY

Then what?

MANAGER

He didn't show up one day.

KENNY

Why not?

MANAGER

I couldn't tell you.

KENNY

I think you know.

MANAGER

You think I know what?

KENNY

Why he didn't show up. You know, but you don't want to tell me.

MANAGER

Why wouldn't I want to tell you?

KENNY

Why? Just tell me. Why didn't he show up for work?

MANAGER

You want to know?

KENNY

I want to know.

MANAGER

You're sure?

KENNY

I'm sure.

MANAGER

Okay, then I'll tell you.

KENNY

I'm listening.

MANAGER

He killed himself.

KENNY

He killed himself? Why did he do that?

MANAGER

I don't know. I have no idea. Complete mystery. Life is like that sometimes. There's some things you just can't explain.

KENNY

It was this job, wasn't it?

MANAGER

No! Kenny, it was very sad and very tragic, but it had nothing to do with being a cashier in a dollar store!

KENNY

How do you know that?

MANAGER

Because that's ridiculous!

KENNY

I don't think it's ridiculous. I think this job got to him. Day in, day out, every customer, every item, one dollar, one dollar, one dollar--

MANAGER

He had a tumor.

KENNY

What?

MANAGER

The guy who killed himself. He had a tumor.

KENNY

How do you know that?

MANAGER

It was the size of an eggplant. You couldn't miss it. It was right here.

(he gestures to his neck area)

Major league tumor.

KENNY

You're making that up.

MANAGER

I swear to God.

KENNY

No, you wouldn't let a guy with a tumor that size work the register. Stocking the shelves, sure, but not as a cashier.

MANAGER

Kenny, what do you want me to tell you? The guy killed himself. Who knows what was going through his head?

KENNY

Have you ever thought about it?

MANAGER

Killing myself?

KENNY

No, what working the register in a store like this could do to a person.

MANAGER

What about it?

KENNY

Well, imagine it. Imagine working this cash register eight hours a day, five days a week. And every day, every item-- one dollar. Imagine weeks of that. Months. Everything is a dollar. Not a penny more. Not a penny less. What would that do to a person?

MANAGER

Kenny--

KENNY

On the outside, they're all, "Did you find everything?" and "Have a nice day!" But on the inside...can I ask you something? Have you ever run the cash register?

MANAGER

Me?

KENNY

You.

MANAGER

I...that's not my job.

KENNY

You know, don't you? You know what it does to people.

MANAGER

I don't know anything. I just hire the cashiers.

KENNY

How many cashiers do you go through a year?

MANAGER

That's...that's company business.

KENNY

Every time I go past here I see that sign in the window, "Cashiers Wanted." Why is that? Why do you always need cashiers?

MANAGER

You...you can't prove anything.

KENNY

My God...you almost had me. You almost had me...

MANAGER

Kenny! Wait!

(KENNY runs off and exits, just as the CUSTOMER comes back in.)

CUSTOMER

Hey, are you the manager?

MANAGER

Yes, I am.

CUSTOMER

I was almost at my car when I remembered I wanted to ask you about that sign in the window. Are you still looking for cashiers?

MANAGER

Why yes. We're always looking for cashiers.

THE END.