

Pizza O'Clock: Job Filling (Preview)

By: Firingwall

A small, twin-tailed college girl peeked her head into the dining room of her older sister's home. Waiting for her at a dining table was a scrawny, scraggly-haired woman that was almost smaller than her. The brown-haired woman adjusted her thick-rimmed glasses and looked to the newcomer. "Oh, Cathy, right? Glad you could make it."

Cathy nodded, stepping into the room. She glanced at herself and thought nervously, *okay, good dress shirt, knee-length skirt, nice dress shoes, and resume in hand. I can do this!*

The woman finished her energy drink with one big gulp before getting up to meet Cathy. She gave her a faint smile, pleasantly stating, "I hope you're ready for this. The job is a bit... out there, but it is pretty nice and fulfilling from my experience."

Cathy snapped to attention, clutching her blue folder with all her documentation in it tightly. She gave a nervous laugh. "Y-yeah. B-but really, I'm up for anything, I assure you!"

Cathy had finished her most recent semester in college and had the summer off, choosing not to take any classes at that time. Instead, she wanted to build up some life skills and job experience during this free time, hoping it would look good for any future resumes.

Plus, extra money. She could always use that.

When Cathy mentioned she was job hunting to one of her older siblings, the middle sister, Rachel, got this excited grin on her face. A few days later, Rachel's roommate, Melissa, called her up, saying her new job had an opening she would be perfect for. Didn't say what, but she at least trusted her that the job wouldn't be bad or illegal.

Melissa stretched, cracking her shoulders and letting out a big yawn. "Alright then," she mumbled, stretching her back, "Let's get going then."

Melissa nodded towards an odd door in the back, unattached from any walls or frames in the room. She walked over and grabbed hold of its doorknob, twisting and pulling it forward. It swung open like a normal door, despite there being no hinges, and a strange light shine through some kind of opening.

Also pouring through the opening was the distinct, strong smell of tobacco.

"Follow me please," Melissa spoke nonchalantly, stepping through the new door portal and into some different room.

Cathy flinched, rubbing her eyes in disbelief. Sure, her world was full of strange, magical, unbelievable sights, but she had never seen such a thing this close before.

Her body shook nervously, but the young woman took a deep breath and clenched her hands. *Let's do this...*

Cathy hurried through the portal and left her sister's house behind, entering into the middle of a storefront now. She expected it to be much more... impressive to walk through some kind of portal or gap in space. Yet, it felt so mundane and boring.

Her surroundings weren't though. The scent of tobacco was much stronger in the air, her nose twitching and wanting to sneeze. She was in the middle of a smoke shop with boxes and shelves full of odd, large cigar and tobacco-based products. Despite the brown and darker color palettes, everything seemed to just pop out in such a bright, visual tone.

However, Cathy did not really focus much on such trivial things in the grand scheme. For all around her, except for a positively bored, unimpressed Melissa, were large, hefty toon animals. Big guts, big belly buttons, big muzzles, and bigger packages tucked into their pants that made her blush with embarrassment. She was in a sea of toon men, most of whom paid her no mind as they browsed selections or chatted with the bear and hippo employees.

"Wha-what the hell?" Cathy stuttered, "Wh-where am-m I?"

Melissa took her hand and dipped through the large crowd. "Alright, enough gawkin' out of you," the scrawny woman mumbled, leading her out, "Let's get going."

"W-w-wait! Where are we? What is this place?" Cathy looked around rapidly, baffled by the sights. She caught the eye of the fat brown bear employee, who gave her a big grin and wave. The bear felt familiar, but she had no time to dwell on it before she bounced off the gut of a big pig toon (the toon merely chuckled at the impact) and was pulled through the front door.

Cathy and Melissa stepped outside, and everything became clear. All around her, from the bright sights, weird architecture of the buildings, to colorful characters, both literally and figuratively, around them... it all made it sense.

"We're in Toon Town!" Cathy declared loudly.

"WE HAVE A WINNER!!!!" The blare of game show alarm filled the streets, confetti suddenly falling from nowhere. A thin, cheap-suit-wearing skunk toon appeared from behind Cathy, causing her to jump forward in horror. He shoved a microphone into her face, declaring in a goofy voice, "Congratulations Miss Blue Glasses Lady, you are the one millionth person to state the obvious about Toon Town this year!"

"Ahhhhh, okay?!" Cathy whimpered, adjusting her glasses and backing away further, "Does this mean I win something?!"

"Of course, my dear! You win an all-expense paid trip to-" Melissa suddenly reached forward and grabbed his muzzle, squeezing and squishing it like a foam toy.

"Sorry, but we got places to be Gamey Gantly. No time for prizes or awards or whatever you're hawking today." Melissa glared at him and let go, the toon huffing in frustration. He

snapped his fingers and a living, toon vacuum cleaner with eyes appeared, quickly sucking up all the confetti before driving off.

The toon skunk walked away, a storm cloud forming above his head and pouring water all over him as he disappeared down the road. Cathy looked between him and Melissa, who was starting to walk the other way. “What was that?!”

Melissa shrugged and spoke, “Just a toon. Don’t mind him. Not everyone is this zany.”

“O-okay, but... but why are we here?!”

“Because this where I work and where the job is,” yawned Melissa, casually walking past a toon dog couple taking a leak on a fire hydrant. Cathy took one look at the sight and ran past them as fast as she could.

“This place is really weird, and I’m not sure about a job around here,” Cathy whispered to Melissa, walking shoulder and shoulder with her. “Honestly, I’m not even sure how you can stand being here.”

“Takes time getting use to it among other reasons. C’mon, it’s not *that* bad here. People are nice and pleasant, if out there and incredibly weird. Trust me, if you can make it here, you can make it anywhere with normal, boring people.

“I-I guess, but I’m not sure if-”

“Here we are, Pizza O’Clock!” The twin ponytail young lady looked to the right where Melissa now pointed. A small pizza shop with a big, colorful sign was nearby. The windows were foggy, making it hard to see inside, but Cathy could still smell the familiar, tasty, scent of pizza from within.

Cathy’s mouth watered, drool dripping from her mouth. Feeling it passing down her chin, she blushed and quickly wiped her face. Melissa, noticing, smiled softly and walked towards the building. “It’s okay. The food is as good as it smells.”

Cathy followed swiftly right behind, not wishing to be left behind in the strange setting. Entering, the place was thankfully not as oddball as the rest of the town. It had a 50’s Diner aesthetic going on for the pizza joint from the tile flooring, the countertop and stools, the lighting, and even all the small booths. It was a bit larger than a diner though, having plenty of room for tables, but the place had a classic, warm feel to it.

Still, the pizzeria was not without its toony side. Wiping down the counter was a very large, hefty toon in particular. It was an orca, around at least seven feet tall and smoking a cigar. He was massive with powerful arms and a wide, bulbous gut that pressed tightly against the counter. His shirt didn’t even cover all of his belly, standing out quite prominently on him.

He looked up from his wiping and noticed the women, giving them a smile. He took out his cigar and spoke, “Heya Melissa. Dis dat girl you were talkin’ about?”

“Yep!” she responded, “This is Cathy. She’s taking the summer off and is looking for a job. I assume the opening is still available.”

“Heh, why would ya thinks it wasn’t?”

“Cause because you tend to make rash choices without thought,” Melissa sighed. The orca chuckled before leaving the counter, walking over to the young college girl.

He towered over her, a strong scent of pizza, cigar smoke, and something else emanating off of him. Cathy couldn’t help but blush, quivering slightly as he held out his hand, his mere presence and aura sending weird signals throughout her body. “Da name is Hefty McOrckee, da fine owner of dis establishment!”

Cathy nervously took his hand and shook it. It was incredibly hard to move with how heavy and dense it was. Comparatively, when he shook back, she found herself almost yanked around like a ragdoll. Thankfully, the orca realized what he was doing and stopped right away.

“I’m-I’m Cathy Groves,” she stuttered, trying to compose herself. It wasn’t easy. The large toon made her feel incredibly awkward. “I’m a college student and... ah, I’m really a hard worker and fast learn-”

The orca held up his gloved hand, wagging a finger at her. “Heh, easy there. Slow down, dere will be plenty of time ta talk during da interview... maybe.”

“Maybe?” Cathy gulped. Was she already being turned down before she handed over her resume?

“Wells, it’s up ta manager.” The orca smiled, nodding at somebody behind Cathy. Turning, she only saw Melissa there, busy checking her phone.

It then clicked with her. “W-wait, you’re the manager here?”

Melissa glanced up, pocketing her phone before answering her, “Sort of. I’m kind of the brains behind the operations here, or at least, its the place’s rebirth.”

“And she’s been one heck of a go-getter!” Hefty declared with a deep chuckle, patting Melissa on the shoulder. The scrawny girl shook a bit by the impact, looking rather razzled as he went on, “I’s would be nothin’ without her help ands influence around here! She’s da man with plan, or da ratman if yous was!”

Cathy looked confused, glancing back at Melissa. “Wait, what did he mean by-”

“Let’s just go to my office if you don’t mind,” the brown-haired woman sighed again, “It’ll be easier to get this over with. Plus, I gotta switch into my uniform.” She took Cathy’s hand and led her away again, the orca owner stepping out of the way and waving good-bye.

“Yous two have fun, ands I’s look forward to workin’ with ya!” he called out to Cathy.

Cathy wanted to answer, but she had to focus on following Melissa. She led her into the kitchen and to another door. It then led them upstairs to a small hallway with two more doors. One said, “Hefty” on it and the other read, “Memphis”, Melissa pulling them through the latter.

As Melissa closed the door behind them, Cathy took a look around. It was pretty messy in the room with tons of pizza boxes, all of them empty and covering the tables, file cabinets, and some of the floor. The room smelled of pizza and cigars as well, though the smoke scent was certainly thicker up there than downstairs. The only thing clean were the two chairs, one in front and one behind a messy desk that housed many important documents on it.

Cathy looked back to Melissa, who walked behind the desk. Both of their cheeks were red, and their bodies anxious, though Melissa’s a lot less. It was more like she was used to the strange, strangely tempting odors that filled the building.

Melissa took a seat in the office chair and stretched for a moment before reaching into a desk drawer. Cathy glanced around, noticing “Memphis” on the nameplate on the desk too. Curious, she asked, “Sooooo, who’s “Memphis”?”

Without missing a beat, Melissa answered nonchalantly, “That would be me.”

“...what?”

“I’m Memphis, Memphis Ratterton.” There seemed to be a sense of frustration as she said the last name, like she found it incredibly stupid to say out loud.

Answering now, she casually took out a few items from a desk drawer. One was a large, red baseball cap with the company’s name on it, a large cigar, a gold lighter, and lastly a pair of oversized, white four-fingered gloves. She casually put the gloves on, continuing, “So, yeah, I’m Memphis, the manager here, and I’ll be conducting the “interview” for today. It’s more of an “awakening” and “filling” if you will.”