

Candy Machine

By

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FADE IN:

INT. OFFICE-DAY

An office looks fun and colorful. A big sign on the wall says "MARS." HARRY and STEPHEN are sitting on a couch in front of a coffee table. They have resumes next to them.

Stephen is in a nice suit vacillating between two magazines and has a spare tie sticking out of his pocket. Harry, dressed in business casual, looks at a stack of magazines and grabs one in a second.

HARRY

Are you going to make a decision?

STEPHEN

I'm thinking about it.

HARRY

You've been thinking about it for ten minutes. They're probably about to call us in.

STEPHEN

I know. I want to make the most of my time.

Harry rolls his eyes and digs into his magazine.

INSERT-STEPHEN'S RESUME

Stephen's resume is smudged with sweat and has a list of jobs, all lasting a short time.

BACK TO SCENE

The SECRETARY, a young, burned-out intern actually hoping for school to start, waves her hand at Stephen.

SECRETARY

Uh, excuse me, uh, dude in the suit?

Stephen looks up.

STEPHEN

Me?

(CONTINUED)

SECRETARY

Yeah, you. He's ready for you.

STEPHEN

Alright.

He turns to Harry.

STEPHEN

Here we go.

HARRY

You'll be fine.

STEPHEN

Thanks.

He gets up and walks over to the front desk.

SECRETARY

Right through the door.

She points to the door next to the front desk.

Stephen waits for her to open the door for him. She doesn't move.

He walks over to the door and opens it.

CUT TO:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM-OFFICE-DAY

The conference room is gray and dull, with a long table.

JIM JONCKERS, a middle-aged job interviewer who practically has "slimy" written on his face, is sitting at the table. He gets up and walks over to him.

JIM

Hi, you must be Stephen. I'm Jim.
I'll be interviewing you today.

He holds out his hand. Stephen shakes it.

JIM

Sit down.

Stephen and Jim sit down across from each other.

(CONTINUED)

JIM

So, why do you want to work for Mars?

STEPHEN

Um, I have very good grades, I'd do a good job, and I've always loved your products.

JIM

Now, there are lots of other candy companies. Like Nestle, for example. They have good products.

STEPHEN

Yeah, but they rejected my application.

JIM

Really? What a shame.

STEPHEN'S STOMACH GROWLS. Both he and Jim notice it.

JIM

Hungry?

STEPHEN

Yeah.

JIM

Come on. Let's continue this out here.

He gets up and walks over the door. Jim motions for Stephen to follow.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE-DAY

Jim walks over to the hallway, followed by Stephen. Harry watches with puzzlement.

CUT TO:

INT. VENDING MACHINE-OFFICE-DAY

Stephen and Jim are standing at a vending machine in the middle of a long hallway. The vending machine is the hallway's main feature.

(CONTINUED)

It's filled with Mars products, but one slot has Butterfingers.

JIM
So, what do you think?

STEPHEN
There's a lot of choices.

JIM
Yes, but-

He taps on the glass in front of the Butterfingers.

JIM
There's some Butterfingers.

STEPHEN
Those are by Nestle. Why are those there?

Jim shrugs.

JIM
I don't know.

Stephen look between the Butterfingers and the other products.

JIM
Between you and me, if I were you, I'd go for the Butterfingers.

STEPHEN
Why? They're not made by Mars.

JIM
Who said you had to be loyal to one company's stuff? Do you think if you work for Mars, you can only buy Mars products? That's kind of silly.

STEPHEN
You have a point.

JIM
You see, you can be loyal to more than one company. You can help them sometimes. Cash, assistance...

STEPHEN
What do you mean?

JIM
Helping them keep up. Giving them
helpful information.

Stephen is getting suspicious.

STEPHEN
You mean like surveys?

JIM
Perhaps more than that.

Stephen turns to face him.

STEPHEN
Are you a spy?

Jim smiles.

JIM
Forgive me, I seem I've forgotten
to give you my card.

He pulls a business card out of his pocket. It says "Jim
Jonckers, Recruitment. Mars Inc."

Jim looks up and down to see if they are alone. They are.

Then, Jim pulls out a pen with a flashlight at the top. He
presses on the TOP OF THE PEN, and it CLICKS. The flashlight
turns on. It's a UV light.

He shines it at the business card, revealing invisible ink
saying "Jim Jonckers, Industrial Espionage. Nestle."

JIM
Does that clear things up for you,
Stephen?

Stephen turns to look at the front desk.

JIM
Now, Stephen, you could report me,
and they might believe you. But, my
employer, Nestle, has sent me to
recruit, and we want you.

He points at Stephen

STEPHEN

Me? They want to hire me?

JIM

Yes. When all these other companies look at your resume, they see someone who can't hold down a job. I see someone who hasn't found the one to hold down. Do you agree?

STEPHEN

I don't know-

JIM

I think this will be the one. We have people at Nestle who are just like you.

STEPHEN

Really?

JIM

Really. All you have to do is say yes, and everything else will be taken care of for you.

Stephen looks back at the candy.

STEPHEN

I don't know. I need to think about it.

He turns back towards the candy machine.

Jim looks down the hallways to see if they are alone. They are.

JIM

Now, I want you to understand what you will have if you join Nestle. We are willing to pay much more than Mars ever will.

STEPHEN

Yeah, but it's also about the experience. Sick days, what the supervisors are like, other employees...

JIM

So what do you think?

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN

About what?

Jim points to the candy machine.

JIM

The candy.

STEPHEN

Depends. It's either Mars or Butterfingers, and I'm not sure about Butterfingers.

JIM

Why not?

STEPHEN

From what I've seen, it might not be a trustworthy brand.

JIM

That's the nature of the beast, my friend. Of course, if you want, you can change it, from the inside.

STEPHEN

Then you'd be out of a job.

JIM

Don't worry, I won't be going away! Listen, I think you need time to think. Let's take a break, and come back over here when you've made a decision. If you need to take some more time, here's my card.

Jim hands Stephen a business card.

STEPHEN

Thanks.

Jim and Stephen shake hands. Jim is giving a slimy smile.

Stephen quickly walks back to the office.

INT. OFFICE-DAY

Stephen walks back to the office and sits down next to Harry. He puts down his magazine.

(CONTINUED)

HARRY
How'd it go?

Stephen doesn't respond.

HARRY
Stephen, what happened?

Stephen glances at the Secretary. She's on the computer.

STEPHEN
I can't talk about it in here.

He gets up and goes outside. Harry follows him.

INT. HALLWAY-DAY

The hallway is dull and looks endless.

Stephen and Harry sit down on the floor.

HARRY
What happened?

STEPHEN
The guy is a spy.

HARRY
What?

STEPHEN
He's a spy for Nestle.

HARRY
No way.

STEPHEN
I can prove it. I gave me his
business card.

He pulls out Jim's business card.

STEPHEN
It has invisible ink on it.

HARRY
Why would it have invisible ink on
it?

STEPHEN
Because he's a spy!

Stephen gets up.

(CONTINUED)

STEPHEN

Follow me.

He goes back inside the lobby. Harry follows him.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE-DAY

In the corner of the room is a lamp on a small table.

Stephen enters the room and walks over to the lamp. Harry follows him.

STEPHEN

I don't know if this will work,
but-

Stephen puts the card right up to the lamp's light bulb.
Harry watches the card.

At the front desk, the Secretary is watching as if this is
the most interesting thing she has ever seen at this job.

The invisible ink on the card is revealed by the harsh
light. Harry's eyes widen.

HARRY

He's a-

Stephen puts his hand on Harry's mouth and glances at the
Secretary. Harry looks at her and nods. They go outside.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY-DAY

Stephen and Harry quickly close the door behind them.

HARRY

He's a Nestle spy!

Stephen puts the card back in his pocket.

HARRY

What is he doing here?

STEPHEN

He's offered me a job for them.

(CONTINUED)

HARRY
For Nestle?

STEPHEN
Yes.

HARRY
Are you going to take it?

STEPHEN
I don't know. On the one hand, it's dishonest, but on the other, it would be easy. He said everything would be taken care of for me.

HARRY
Easy choice to me. Don't take it.

STEPHEN
I don't know.

HARRY
Why? It's dishonest.

STEPHEN
I just don't know! I need time to think.

HARRY
Fine. I need to cancel my interview, anyway.

Harry gets up and walks back down the hallway. Stephen is alone.

CUT TO:

HALLWAY - MONTAGE

Stephen is searching the internet on his phone.

Stephen is writing things down on a t chart that has "Mars" on one side and "Nestle" on the other.

Harry walks out of the office and down the hall without looking at Stephen.

Stephen crumples up the paper.

Stephen searches the internet on his phone some more.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY-DAY

Stephen tosses aside his phone and puts his hands on his face in frustration, moaning.

Harry walks up to him.

HARRY

What's wrong?

STEPHEN

I don't know what to do! They're both such good choices?

HARRY

Why would you even want to work for Nestle?

STEPHEN

It's a good offer. Good pay-

HARRY

Stephen, the people are all assholes.

STEPHEN

What do you mean?

HARRY

They use spies. You really want to work for people who do that?

STEPHEN

Well, um-

HARRY

You'd really be happy working for those guys?

Stephen is silent for a few moments.

STEPHEN

No. I wouldn't.

HARRY

So would you want to work for Nestle?

STEPHEN

You're right. No. He probably won't hire me for Mars, though.

(CONTINUED)

HARRY

So what? There are plenty of jobs out there.

STEPHEN

Thanks, Harry.

CUT TO:

INT. VENDING MACHINE-OFFICE-DAY

Stephen confidently walks over to Jim.

JIM

So, what are you thinking? Mars or Butterfingers?

STEPHEN

I think Butterfingers have a lot of pluses, but I'd rather have something more reliable.

JIM

How so?

STEPHEN

I think Nestle's not very consistent with its products.

JIM

That's not what I've heard. From what I hear, they're stuff is much better than Mars' stuff.

STEPHEN

And ultimately, they're not that trustworthy.

He turns to the machine and puts in the change.

Jim's hand snaps out and grabs Stephen's wrist.

JIM

Stephen, I'm going to give you one last chance. If you come with me, you will make more money than you will know what to do with!

Stephen jerks himself out of Jim's grip. Then, he selects M&M's. The MACHINE drops the candy into the slot with a CLUNK.

Stephen reaches in and pulls out the M&M's.

(CONTINUED)

JIM

Thank you for coming here today,
Stephen. We have other applicants
that we need to go over, but we
will let you know if we have
anything for you.

He extends a hand. Stephen takes it, and is crushed by it.

CUT TO:

INT. LOBBY-DAY

The lobby is as colorful as the office.

Stephen and Harry step out of an elevator and walk over to
the door.

HARRY

So, what are you going to do now?
Back to job searching?

STEPHEN

No way. I'm through with this. I'm
starting my own business.

Harry raises his eyebrows.

HARRY

Really? That's a big risk.

STEPHEN

So?

HARRY

Uh, that's great. I'd love to work
with you on that. I don't really
have a job right now.

STEPHEN

Thanks, Harry.

They walk out the door.

FADE OUT

THE END