

CHAPTER 18: Art is a Dish Best Served Killed

18.1:

AUTHOR

Shaindel sighed, having finished a grueling day of campaigning. Her campaign manager, the Sephardic heiress Dora Lopez, gave her a wry smile.

DORA

Long day?

SHAINDEL

You'd think running for state assembly wouldn't involve so much running. But I've been hoofing it from one meeting to another.

DORA

How'd it go?

SHAINDEL

Oy, the worst was at the Radical Trade Unionist meeting. I'm telling you about it now ...

18.2:

Flashback to the meeting.

LEADER

And now brothers and sisters even the fleas are with us. Workers Awaken! Now we have an independent candidate for the vacant seat up in Albany. Please welcome *Shyndel Bloom*.

SHAINDEL

Shaindel Blum. Thank you. I've lived here my whole life. And I've seen the failures of this society. And I'm not just talking about the failure of the suspenders on Lev Bubchick. Talk about a crack in the social fabric. Pausing for laughter. Right.

FITZ enters.

FITZ

Sorry I'm late. I was earwigging a dossier and he didn't a lick it off a stone if you get me.

SHAINDEL

Sergeant Fitz?

FITZ

What?

SHAINDEL

It's me! Shaindel! Almost Officer Doubles!

WORKER 1

Wait, he's a copper?

FITZ

Huh? No! No! I'm Biff Daniels. I don't know who this Fitz character is. I've certainly not been sent undercover to infiltrate and undermine this union.

SHAINDEL

What?

LEADER

He's trying to destroy us from within!

WORKER 1

Yeah, I gotta tell my bosses at Treasury about this!

WORKER 2

What?

WORKER 1

Oops. I mean I'm definitely part of the Secret Service. Not! Definitely NOT part of the Secret Service.

WORKER 2

And I'm not a Pinkerton.

LEADER

Wait! Is anyone here an actual radical or are we all just undercover? I'm a reporter looking to smear the unions.

SHAINDEL

So none of you are real?

WORKER 1

Ah forget this. Let's all go to the tavern and bill it to the office!

FITZ

Begora!

They all leave.

SHAINDEL

Does anyone want a button? Vote. If you can find a polling place. And figure out the day ... please?

Flashback ends.

18.3:

SHAINDEL

And then I said: 'please?' It was humiliating.

DORA

It could be worse.

SHAINDEL

How?

DORA

Locusts? Frogs. Rivers of blood. You're doing great. People know you. The Tribune wrote about you.

SHAINDEL

They called me "that mouthy Jewess."

DORA

Any press is good press. And those ads you did for the nerve tonic ...

SHAINDEL

Did you see the copy that guy put on them?

DORA

Who reads the copy?

SHAINDEL

It said: "I like this even more than I like controlling the banking industry."

DORA

It makes you sound fiscally responsible. They had a great illustration of you.

SHAINDEL

The Democrats and Republicans won't even tell us when the election is!

DORA

That means there's still time!

SHAINDEL

I joined the police force to make a difference and they just side-lined and made fun of me. I try to run for office and I'm opening for apes and giving speeches to men who just yell at me to take their tops off. They don't even want *me* to take *my* top off, they want me to take *their* tops off.

DORA

When you do a speech for the Specific Perverts Club you've got to expect they have specific perversions. You must have *pasensya*.

SHAINDEL

I don't want *pasensya*. I don't know what it means but I don't have patience for it.

DORA

It means patience.

SHAINDEL

I'm not a doctor and I'm not going to marry one no matter what my mother says. A Jewish doctor? In America? You think the goyim would trust us with touching their *shtiklekh mit pitzlekh*?

DORA

Listen, did I ever tell you about my great-great-and so forth Grandmother was a merchant in New Santiago? New Santiago was a New World colony considered a terrible place. It had none of the riches of Argentina nor the splendors of Mexico. New Santiago was for no one. Except the Conversos. The Jews of the Spanish Empire who hid their truth. But in New Santiago since no one wanted to be there no one cared what happened. They didn't care about the old words, the old ways, the Jewish ways. It was a cruel hardscrabble freedom but it was a freedom nonetheless. My great and such grandmother -- *mi avuela* -- also had a certain freedom as her abusive husband died from a not all suspicious infected sea urchin injury. He was nowhere near the water, but ... that also left her to raise her six children alone with a meager sugar resale business. But even on the worst island of the New World things can get worse.

SHAINDEL

Tell me about it. In the shtetl --

DORA

Aye! We are on my story. It's always the shtetl with you Ashkenazi. And the pogroms. Pogrom. Shtetl. Pogrom.

SHAINDEL

Also a lot of getting guilted into things.

DORA

Well this is a Sephardic story. So it's more haughty judgements and spontaneous eruptions of dancing. Now shut your shtetl hole and listen! My *avuela* she didn't know what was coming. The New World Jews thought distance kept them safe from the Inquisition but you know an Inquisition, nothing keeps them away for long. Soon the King was tired of these conversos, so the Inquisitors found their opening. They got an edict to cleanse the island of its heresy and bring New Santiago to heel under the boot of the church. The residents were given a warning that the priests were coming via the Pirate Rabbi Samuel Palache. He just showed up one day and was like: "the Inquisition is coming." The conversos they worried. They fasted. They prayed. *Avuela* was part of a council convened in secret. They argued and argued weighed their options and argued some more. It is said they even met with the famed Ottoman Jewish pirate Sinan.

SHAINDEL

There are a lot of pirates in this story.

DORA

Jews and Pirates are as intertwined as a havdalah candle. And *Avuela* and Sinan maybe even more so. As it's said that she and Sinan had a brief affair and that led to the birth of her seventh child - Abrav who is also my direct ancestor, so there's a bit of Moorish Pirate in my bloodline as well. But ... Anyway during this time the British and the Spanish were having one of their little wars. There was a British fleet really giving it to Hispaniola not far from New Santiago. But that island was well defended, because it wasn't some backwater jerktown like New Santiago. They wondered would the English let them survive, they knew the Inquisitors would torture and kill them. But how could they get to the English? They were the enemy! No one dared risk it!

SHAINDEL

Ah I bet your great --

DORA

Hey! Shush. But yes my avuela she smuggled herself onto the deck of the Admiral William Penn's own ship and convinced him -- through her usual way -- to invade! She risked it all for her people! But would the English beat the Inquisitors to New Santiago? Time ticked by. Who would arrive first? On the horizon -- sails! But who? It was ...

SHAINDEL

The British!

DORA

You know what build up is, right? Suspense?

SHAINDEL

I couldn't wait! I got too nervous.

DORA

I do delight in your enthusiasm.

(Beat.)

The British came. And they took over the island. And they changed the name cause that's what the English do. And that's how Jamaica was born. Avuela died later of yellow fever, but so did lots of people. And her son Abrav did own some slaves and later joined up with the Dutch and helped broker the transfer of Willoughbyland which led to splinter poisoning from clogs and ... but my family managed to end up in Mexico City for a while. Gold trading. Some light banking. Lost it all. Clawed our way up. Lost even more. Typhoid. Opened a dry goods store. Burned down. Diphtheria. Speculated. Robbed. Three third cousins murdered. Then my father got lucky mining bauxite. And here we are.

AUTHOR

The veracity of Dora's version of events is questionable in parts but family histories are always a mishmash of legends, misremembered moments, and abridgement. So I won't nitpick details though Sinan was probably long dead before the overthrow of New Santiago and bauxite was not of great value until the first world war but ... sometimes reporting history is reporting how people reported on history. Anyway after she finished, she put her hand against Shaindel's head and brushed away her curls.

DORA

Risk has great rewards. There is no shame in failing. There is only shame in giving up. We can fail until the Messiah comes. Together. *Te amo*.

AUTHOR

And then Dora leaned in and kissed Shaindel on the lips. It was a brief moment and the world seemed to stop. And then Shaindel pulled away.

SHAINDEL

What? What was? Did you try to clean my face with your face? Was their schmutz on my lips? Was that what that was?

DORA

It was a kiss.

SHAINDEL

No. I've never done. With. With anyone. Not. With. I have.

DORA

It's not.

SHAINDEL

I'm just. I need to campaign. Shake the babies. Kiss the hands. Not. Kiss. I don't kiss. Goodbye.

AUTHOR

Shaindel, her face flushed, ran off. But in Anjus and Eugene's office Cato Beech, it seemed, was tired of running schemes for his boss Flavius Flavors.

18.4:

CATO

I cannot let this stain on my soul continue. I shall aid you in your quest. I shall be Bessus to Flavor's Darius.

EUGENE

Great! I think. What's a Bessus?

ANJUS

Anything you can do to help.

CATO

I have heard tell of a plot. In Atlantic City there resides Cavity Jack the Taffy Baron. Flavius wants to absorb his sticky business.

EUGENE

That's no good.

ANJUS

We should stop it. But how?

CATO

I do not know. But I do know that there is an 11:15 train leaving from platform seven of Grand Central Depot. I happen to have two tickets. Maybe you can use them, board the train, take it the twelve stops to Atlantic City. Then follow this map I hand drew starting at the Reading Railroad station near Oriental Avenue, walk down and turn left at the jail then up past St. James Place and by chance spot Kentucky ave and then a quick right on Marvin gardens -- and follow that to the door of Cavity Jack's office on Park Place. A standing appointment is made for half after three. Maybe that gives you an idea?

EUGENE

Yes of course! What if we send him a letter warning him!

CATO

Oh ... yes that could be a solution.

ANJUS

But is it enough? What if we took your tickets, boarded the train, passed go, and warned Cavity Jack ourselves.

EUGENE

Rude! Those are Cato's tickets. He probably wants them for his scrapping book. I assume you have a large memory book of various tickets. For trains. Museums. Maybe even a ticket of love? I think I recognize a fellow scrapper!

CATO

My hobbies are varied but I wish I had the time to collect my scraps for a book. Alas the business of business keeps me occupied. So I do think these tickets are best gifted to you both. And the map as well.

EUGENE

No! That's too much, we can never repay you. Mostly because we're broke. I mean not real broke. We're children-or-wards-of-rich-people-living-on-a-small-allowance broke. But here, have this. It's a wrapper I found in the street.

CATO

A street wrapper? Why do you have this?

EUGENE

I pick up things I find in the gutter, whether I should or not.

CATO

You should not. Here I shall take this wrapper and quickly deposit it in a trash receptacle -- oh it smells of rotted fish.

EUGENE

I think there's an eyeball in there, too.

CATO

Huh. But you should hurry to the station. Take my carriage outside. I could use a walk. And some bleach to clean my hands of that horrid fish-stink wrapper I just touched.

ANJUS

Thank you Cato, I'm glad you're with us on the side of the angels.

CATO

I merely pray that you are not too late. In the words of De Tocqueville --

EUGENE

Tootles madoodles!

CATO

No that was not the quote.

AUTHOR

But Anjus and Eugene were gone. Cato's hand smelled of fish even after he washed them. Several times. And then he dunked it in tomato juice which should have helped. But did less than hoped. In fact several stray cats had shown up mewling for a lick of his fish hand. He did eventually scrub the smell off. And he also found homes for all the stray cats. But cat fostering is not our tale. Heh, tale. Cat tails. No. Focus. Grand Central Depot. Anjus and Eugene arrived with little time to spare.

18.5:

EUGENE

He said platform seven, so I should check which platform the train leaves from. Where's the departure board?

ANJUS

There!

EUGENE

Let's see the 11:15 Pork Roll Express leaving from ... all the departures just say: "gotcha" what does that mean?

HAWTHORNE

Gotcha! Ha!

EUGENE

Ah! The departure board is alive!

HAWTHORNE

Alive with the sound of disguise!

ANJUS

Hawthorne?

HAWTHORNE

Indeed! Fooled you good! Now what's the play?

ANJUS

We're going to --

HAWTHORNE

I'm in! My usual fee. I knew I'd find you sops here.

ANJUS

Wait. Your plan was to disguise yourself as a departure board at a train station in the hopes that we'd get a case where we needed to take a train?

HAWTHORNE

Yes.

ANJUS

From this station ...

HAWTHORNE

Yes.

ANJUS

Entering from this particular door ...

HAWTHORNE

Yes.

ANJUS

Needing to check the board ...

HAWTHORNE

Yes.

ANJUS

That's madness!

HAWTHORNE

I can also peek down women's blouses as they look for their trains ... bonus! Shake my hand for that Gene!

ANJUS

Don't.

EUGENE

No.

HAWTHORNE

Gene and Angus founders of the Wet Blankets of America Club. Let's get to the train!

EUGENE

We don't have a ticket for you.

HAWTHORNE

Tickets are for chumps! I shall sneak a ride on the roof! Free bugs to eat that way! That's a tip you can take to the bank!

ANJUS

Great. Let's go.

AUTHOR

They boarded the train and headed to Atlantic City. But back at the Governor's Manhattan office Theodore Roosevelt was re-thinking his third cheeseburger.

18.6:

ROOSEVELT

My stomach. I need some bicarbonate. The acid is fluxing. I should sign this bill that -- oops. Onto the floor. So far away

let me just ... get up and look down. My toes! Where are they? I can't see them through this -- what is this? My stomach? No. No. I'm a trim bull moose not some obese elk! I need to whip myself into shape!

AIDE DE CAMP

Um, sir? We were kind of in the middle of something?

ROOSEVELT

Oh right! Yes? What was it?

AIDE DE CAMP

You need to approve the final construction plans for the seven world pavilions of the Fair of Past and Future.

ROOSEVELT

Oh? Including Slavs on Ice?

AIDE DE CAMP

Indeed they are importing the ice from Franz Josef Land.

ROOSEVELT

Slavs do love their ice. Approved!

AIDE DE CAMP

There's some concern that the Rhombus of Prhogress was built on and that was --

ROOSEVELT

Am I fat?

AIDE DE CAMP

Sir?

ROOSEVELT

Be honest.

AIDE DE CAMP

I'd rather not.

ROOSEVELT

(Blubbering.)

That means I'm fat!

(Pulls it together.)

This needs to stop. All these eateries offering all these ... things! I ate all these donuts. They said it was a health food because you save the calories of the hole, but ... and the

cheeseburgers, the bon-bons ... I've gone soft. Being governor has made me soft!

AIDE DE CAMP

You've only been Governor for --

ROOSEVELT

Enough of that! I've got to get back into stick-shape! Real muscle. I need sporting and athletics! I am going to declare a state of emergency ... FOOTBALL GAME! Yes a clash of titans! Extra tackling! Hard hits right to the dome! That will help! With myself in charge of course! Requisition the Polo Grounds! Start painting the yard lines! This will save the city!

AIDE DE CAMP

Sir the city is not in danger ...

ROOSEVELT

My poor sweet fool, you don't even see it. Set up a press conference, I'm to announce it immediately! Roosevelt you've done it again!

AUTHOR

And so the mandatory emergency football game was officially announced and preparations began. But with no good segue the train arrived in Atlantic City.

18.7:

ANJUS

New Jersey. America's stinkiest state by both volume and density.

HAWTHORNE

Indeed, Angus.

ANJUS

Still Anjus.

HAWTHORNE

Good on you! Now go solve the whatever. I'm here for the ladies. They say Jersey girls show their ankles. And are trash. And I like to pick up trash!

EUGENE

Me too! From the gutter?

HAWTHORNE

Gutter? I hardly know her! Anyway see that row house? You can tell from the shingle shape it's pre-war but the trim is the trademark of a Southern madame. The dust pattern on the latches? Home to a left hander. And that smudge? Remnants of a French pastry, by the luster and sheen an eclair. That there is a messy bordello of a southpaw Virginian choux pastry loving woman who I plan to enjoy.

ANJUS

Must you always be so disgusting?

HAWTHORNE

What? I'm a big supporter of women's rights. The right to bangle my jangles. Remember my finder's fee.

ANJUS

We found the case! It's --

EUGENE

Let him have this. He obviously is very sad, And also very good at disguises and deductions.

ANJUS

Just because you're brilliant at something doesn't mean you can just be a callous hedonistic jerk and everyone defers to you because you do one thing really well.

EUGENE

Maybe he's just misunderstood.

ANJUS

He just shoved a widow into the mud to get to that brothel faster.

EUGENE

I'm not condoning his behavior; I just enjoy watching it for some reason.

ANJUS

Let's follow Cato's map and talk to this Cavity Jack fellow.

AUTHOR

And after stopping only to stop to admire some sea birds and seaweed they found their way to The Happy Fun Family Taffy Factory and its owner Cavity Jack

18.8:

CAVITY JACK

Welcome, welcome! Ha ha! So nice to see you! Saltwater taffy at its finest! Don't worry, no saltwater in it. Just a name! What can I do for you both?

EUGENE

(Chews on a piece.)

It's so chewy. We want -- still chewing -- we're here to -- still. Sorry. Mouth full of. We -- chewing. Really chewy.

CAVITY JACK

No rush, savor the flavor.

ANJUS

Flavor is why we're here. Flavius Flavors the snack baron.

CAVITY JACK

Never heard of him.

EUGENE

I'm still chewing! It won't stop.

ANJUS

He forcibly takes over rival candy companies.

CAVITY JACK

Why?

ANJUS

Because ... I'm not sure. Profits? It's not. It's kind of a case in progress.

EUGENE

WHEN WILL THIS END! I'm -- oops I swallowed it. Oh. At last I'm free of it. Can I have another piece?

CAVITY JACK

Of course.

EUGENE

Just glad to be done with -- oh no! The cycle starts anew.

ANJUS

At least take our card in case anyone suspicious approaches you about selling your business.

CAVITY JACK

Will do. But remember, Fun Family Taffy Factory is just a little operation in a little state --

The Foreman (an adorable child) enters.

FOREMAN

`Scuse me, mistah Jack?

CAVITY JACK

Da fug? What are you doing here!

FOREMAN

The puller is stuck.

CAVITY JACK

You're the foreman, get to it! What do I pay you for!

FOREMAN

Sowwy, sir.

ANJUS

Is that a child?

CAVITY JACK

He's six.

FOREMAN

Five and three-quarters.

CAVITY JACK

Shut up! That's a gentleman's six.

ANJUS

Is he your son?

CAVITY JACK

This uggo? No way! He's the factory foreman.

BABY

Goo-goo!

ANJUS

Is that a baby?

CAVITY JACK

That's the floor supervisor.

FOREMAN

He made a boom-boom in his diapy.

CAVITY JACK

And that's my problem? He's not on diaper break! Get back to work you lazy tykes!

(Beat.)

Sorry about that. Business, right?

ANJUS

You force children to work for you?

CAVITY JACK

Force? I pay them. Besides, kids love candy. And kids also love cleaning, packaging, shipping, and operating the machines that make candy. For kids, by kids. Their little hands barely get cut up by the threshing blades. Look at this picture of the little dickenses operating the automatic taffy puller.

ANJUS

It looks very dangerous and they look terrified.

CAVITY JACK

Terrified with delight! The taffy puller is only dangerous if you are thrown directly on it and pulled part being turned into a gelatinous mess while still conscious and cognisant of the horrible sluice you've become. But that rarely happens and we always clean the machine before we make more taffy. Even though the government allows a certain amount of child parts per piece, I can assure you our taffy is well below the official limit.

EUGENE

My jaw hurts from chewing.

CAVITY JACK

But thanks for the warning about this Floobius Boobers or whatever. I'll be sure to be extra careful. Goodbye now!

AUTHOR

And with that Cavity Jack quickly escorted Anjus and Eugene to the street and slammed the door shut.

18.9:

EUGENE

That guy was kind of a jerk.

ANJUS

It's odd that every titan of industry we've ever met has been cruel and terrible. I'm sure there's a millionaire who is kind and honest.

AUTHOR

And just at that moment Henry Clay Frick the industrialist drove by in his human-o-cycle, a carriage made of poor people. He kicked the wretches to make them move faster. He liked it because it didn't waste any horses as the poor were a more renewable resource. But he did say --

FRICK

Hey aren't you those two idiots they made that show about? With the inflatable shark?

EUGENE

Very loosely based on us!

FRICK

You sang that song about how much you love birds!

EUGENE

It wasn't *me*. That was an actor playing a role based on me.

FRICK

You really love those birds!

EUGENE

I do love birds, but it doesn't define me. I'm also very clumsy. I'm not one thing.

FRICK

Sing that song from the show! About the birds.

EUGENE

That was not me it was --

FRICK

I'm over it! I throw this apple at you!

EUGENE

Ow!

FRICK

Enough! Peons! Forward! Hiya!

AUTHOR

Frick kicked the human-o-cycle and it shuddered to life as the people lurched forward carrying him off to his seaside mansion.

ANJUS

I hate that play they made about us.

EUGENE

They did explode a shark every night.

ANJUS

I did not see it and I never will.

EUGENE

It was forcibly closed because of the smell.

ANJUS

Good.

EUGENE

It seems like Cavity Jack had no idea about Onesimus Sweets.

ANJUS

There was something shady about him. I think he knows something. Cato seemed convinced and he's Flavor's right hand man. Hmmm, our train doesn't leave until tomorrow, what should we do?

EUGENE

Look at all those Canada geese! Delightful! Honk! Honk!

ANJUS

Stop running after them.

EUGENE

It's fun. I might just chase after these wild geese for a while. It just feels right.

ANJUS

I did want to double back and check on some of that seaweed. It looked so wet and green. It's been ... I had to leave that shrub, it wanted too much of my attention and my mulch. Much mulch. So

...

EUGENE

I get it. Rebound weed.

ANJUS

What does 'rebound' mean?

EUGENE

It's like when you're bound up in bandages and then you take them off and put them on again and re-bound yourself.

ANJUS

Wouldn't that be rebind?

EUGENE

No, not to us cool centennials, that's what we call our generation of young people who are coming up at the turn of this new century.

ANJUS

You're not a young person, you're only two years younger than me.

EUGENE

It's a big two years you wouldn't understand since you're a Gettysboomer. Always talking about the Civil War.

ANJUS

I was eight when the war ended.

EUGENE

For some of us it never ended. Thank me for my service in the Spanish American War.

ANJUS

Where's that seaweed?

ANJUS exits.

EUGENE

Your welcome.

AUTHOR

And then Eugene remembered captaining the boat on the Pacific. He was supposed to capture Spanish island territories, but he put the map upside down and ended up bombarding a deserted island. But there were several Albatross nests. He ordered the birds captured. Several of his sailors slipped off the island and were injured. Eventually he was able to claim the island for

the United States because of the Guano Act. The Guano Act let Americans capture islands if there were deposits of guano or seabird dung which was used for fuel. The island was named Idiot Atoll after Eugene and would eventually be gifted to Britain because of a bet Whitelaw Reid lost to H. H. Asquith in a snail race. Snail racing having had a brief popular heyday in the UK the 1910's. But that was in the future and Eugene's mind was in the past. He still looked back fondly on his time in the Navy. The next morning just before they were to board their train back to New York a police officer found Anjus and Eugene. He demanded they come to the Fun Family Taffy Factory.

18.10:

JERSEY OFFICER

We found your card amongst his possessions.

ANJUS

What happened?

JERSEY OFFICER

According to our investigation Cavity Jack accidentally jumped into the taffy puller and was pulled apart. Into taffy. To death.

EUGENE

This taffy puller?

JERSEY OFFICER

Yes.

EUGENE

Into this taffy?

JERSEY OFFICER

Yes.

EUGENE

That I am eating.

JERSEY OFFICER

Yes

EUGENE

That I'm still eating.

JERSEY OFFICER

Yes

EUGENE

Has bits of Jack.

JERSEY OFFICER

Yes

EUGENE

I should stop eating it.

JERSEY OFFICER

Yes.

ANJUS

This looks like murder.

JERSEY OFFICER

Looks like, yes; looks is, no. It was ruled an accident.

ANJUS

But he --

JERSEY OFFICER

But he nothing. The case is closed. We only called you here to return your card.

ANJUS

But maybe it's --

TELEGRAM DELIVERER

Telegram for a Mr. Eugene Needy.

EUGENE

It's Neddly, but I am ... that's me.

TELEGRAM DELIVERY

Huh, I thought you'd not be such a pansy. Oh well, here you go pansy.

EUGENE

He seems nice. Let's see, oh it's from the Governor.

ROOSEVELT (via telegram)

Eugene STOP. You have been forcibly drafted into a mandatory football game. STOP. I'm calling it the Roose-bowl. Or maybe the Bowl Moose. STOP. I haven't decided. STOP. I probably shouldn't

have put that in there, they charge by the letter. STOP. How much per letter? What? That's highway banditry! No don't put this in the message! Stop. No for real, stop. STOP. STOP. --

JERSEY OFFICER

Well you best make your train, don't want to upset a governor. Once I upset George Werts and he never let me forget it. I can't go near Trenton now.

ANJUS

Fascinating story, friend, let's go.

EUGENE

What about Hawthorne?

ANJUS

He'll find his way back.

EUGENE

Or maybe he's already here?

Beat.

ANJUS

Eugene?

EUGENE

I thought, maybe he was here in disguise. Or you were him!

ANJUS

I'm not him.

EUGENE

This isn't a mask?

ANJUS

Stop pulling my face.

EUGENE

Maybe he's your fake hand.

ANJUS

Let's go.

They exit.

JERSEY OFFICER

I hate New Yorkers. Oh well. Oh! I should have mentioned that right before he died Cavity Jack signed a contract that said if anything should happen to him his company would be sold to a mysterious company whose name was redacted but was co-signed by a Flavius Flavors. Ah, I'm sure it's not important. Whooo, I would be considered a bad cop if this was anywhere but New Jersey.

AUTHOR

In fact he was later awarded Officer of the Year and given New Jersey's highest honor the Camden Cross and a Raritan handshake. That's where they cover you in garbage and punch you a lot. Such is the way of New Jersey.

END OF CHAPTER 18