

"The Audition" script pages sample #02  
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Producer: Here's the setup: you're in the office of your supervisor assigning you to the most dangerous case of your career, and you don't like having to break in a new partner. Play it tough!

Irwin: "Steel, I'd like you to meet your new partner on this case."

Jake: *(Referring to the script, he clears his throat, and stands taller as he begins delivering the lines. He points a finger at Irwin.)* "Hold it right there, Brock. What's this... uh, stuff about a new partner? I prefer to work alone, you know that."

Irwin: *(Looks up at him for a moment uncertainly, then delivers his lines.)* "Not any more, Steel. Headquarters says you're too much of a loose cannon."

Jake: "That's a load of... baloney. I'm not called Lone Wolf for nothing. Forget it."

Producer: He turns to walk out of the door.

Irwin: "You walk out that door, Steel, you'll never work for the Bureau again!"

Jake: "Tell Headquarters that they can kiss... uh, kiss my foot. That idiot Breckenridge is a paper-pushing, um, bean-counting... uh... bureaucrat who can go to... uh, hades, before I'll take a... uh, dumb partner like the last one."

Producer: Uh, hold it a minute. Jake, you're changing the lines.

Jake: To be honest, Mr. O'Neal, I'm... uncomfortable with some of the language in it. I thought that I could just substitute something less offensive and still get the meaning across.

Producer: The swearing has to stay, to make the scene work. Your character isn't a Boy Scout, he's a seasoned field agent. Now read it again, with the lines done right.

Jake: *(Reluctantly, he starts again.)* "Hold it right there, Brock. What's this... what's this..."

*(He stops and lowers the script.)*

Producer: What's the problem, Jake?

Jake: I'm sorry, I just can't do the lines with all the cursing in it. I don't use that kind of language in my life, and I can't bring myself to do it on camera with everyone watching. If I play a hero, the kids watching will imitate me, and I don't want to be responsible for that.

*(Irwin has lowered his script in amazement as he hears this.)*

Producer: *(After a moment's silence.)* You're... you're kidding me, right? *(Laughs.)* Yeah, you're kidding, showing me you can do comedy! *(Chuckles.)* That's funny stuff. But this scene isn't supposed to be funny. Now let's try again. Really let loose on him and show him you mean business!

Jake: I do mean business, Mr. O'Neal. I'd prefer not to do it with the swearing and blasphemy.

Producer: *(Unbelieving.)* This guy sounds serious. Is he serious, Irwin?

Irwin: *(Turning toward the light.)* I think he is, Mr. O'Neal.

Producer: I don't believe this. What are you, a Ward Cleaver or something? This audition ain't for a Superman movie, it's for Lone Wolf. He's tough, a man's man.

Jake: I have no objections against playing a tough man. One of the toughest men ever portrayed in the movies was done without saying a single dirty word. Remember Jesus in his recent record-breaking

smash movie?

Producer: Jesus? *(It dawns on him.)* You're a Christian.

Jake: Yes, sir, I am.

Producer: *(Under his breath.)* Mohammad on a Moped! Why don't they screen these people better than this? *(To Jake.)* Look, kid, you got the look for a leading man in Hollywood. You carry yourself well and you could go far with the right contacts. But all the contacts in the world won't help, if you won't take a role just because you have some personal moral objection to it. You might as well forget about making it in *this* town with that attitude.

Jake: So you're telling me there are no movie producers with morality? *You* have personal morals, don't you?

*(Irwin makes a sarcastic "p-h-h-t-t-t" sound through his lips as if amused.)*

Producer: *(Sharply.)* Yes, Mr. *Do-Right*, I have morals, they just happen to be different from yours.

Irwin: *(Snickers under his breath.)* You can say that again.

Producer: *(Darkly.)* I heard that, Irwin.

Jake: Besides, Mr. O'Neal, it's not just the language. I was having trouble with the violence and sexual promiscuity the hero, so-called, endorses by his lifestyle. I can't go against my convictions.

Producer: Mr. Sheldon, thanks for...

Jake: Shelby.

Producer: Yeah, whatever. Thanks for coming to the audition. We'll look at your tape, and if the director thinks you have potential, you'll get a call-back. But personally, I wouldn't lose any sleep waiting for one. Thank you. Good day. Irwin, bring on the next one.

Jake: Now just a second. Let me get this straight... you're dismissing me just because I'm not a foul-mouthed, unprincipled heathen like most of the other actors around here? What about talent? Doesn't it count for anything any more?

Producer: *(Exasperated.)* Irwin, escort the young man out of the studio.

Jake: No! *(Shaking off Irwin's hand from his elbow.)* Wait just a doggone minute! I spent a week's pay on airline tickets to get here. You owe me an explanation!

Producer: *(Angry now.)* Okay, kid, I wanted to spare you, but you want the truth, I'll give it to you straight.

Irwin: *(Looking up at the lights.)* Come on, boss, let me just show him out.

Producer: *(Ignoring him.)* Here it is, straight-up. *(Visciously.)* You ain't got what it takes to make it in this town.

*(Jake listens, stricken, and seems more deflated with each statement.)*

Producer: You want specifics? Here you go. You flailed around like Barney Fife in the action scenes. Audiences would laugh themselves stupid seeing that on the big screen. And as a romantic lead? Even worse. You couldn't get a dog to kiss you with ridiculous mugging like that. A pizza boy's delivery is better than yours. Your voice sounds like a smashed fiddle. Your profile looks like a traffic pileup.

*(Jake stands with his head bowed as the producer heaps on the abuse.)*

Irwin: *(With sympathy toward Jake.)* I think he gets the picture, Mr. O'Neal... *(Continues...)*