

Ryan Veeder - "Dial C for Cupcakes"

The main protagonist of "Dial C for Cupcakes" is Rae, a disgraced former police officer, now a cashier at a gift shop. The game begins when her former partner Bob (a considerably worse person than Rae) calls her over to ask for a favor. The following section of the game is a "playable flashback" in which Bob explains the background of a daring heist he's planning.

Security Office

So like I said, I'm a security guard, which is the closest thing to being a cop that they'll let me do anymore. But I've got an office.

The office is basically a broom closet. If it were any smaller I'd have to stand at my desk. Out the door to the east is the hallway. The door opens in, which I'm pretty sure is a fire hazard.

Anyway I was standing around in my office.

>look at desk

The desk is where all the important security stuff is, i.e., the display with the feeds from the cameras, and the hard drive that holds all the footage, and the TI-85 that I play Tetris on while I'm waiting for something to happen.

>look at display

There's four feeds, and they're in backwards order for no good reason. Camera One is the alley behind the building; Camera Two is the counter where people order cupcakes; Camera Three is the boss's office, which, creepy; and Camera Four is the sidewalk out front.

>look at calculator

You know, when they kicked us off the force, I almost thought they were gonna confiscate my calculator. But they couldn't, 'cause it's mine! I've had it since high school! And I'll never get rid of it. I don't need a stupid *smart phone* to keep myself busy. I mean, I do have one, but I typically forget it at home.

Anyway, it's pretty beat-up, but it still does everything a calculator is supposed to.

>go east

North Hallway

Standing outside my office, the hallway goes south to the front of the shop, and north to the alley. And my office is on the west side.

>go south

South Hallway

At the south end of the hallway, the boss's office is on the west side, and the room where you actually buy the cupcakes is on the east side. The exit to the street is south.

>go east

Counter

I was over at the counter, where all the cupcakes are displayed for people to drool over and then purchase.

Kate the cashier was behind one cash register.

Deb the cashier was behind the other one. They need two cash registers, that's how well this place is doing.

>look at Deb

Deb is the shorter one, with the glasses.

>look at Kate

Kate is the taller one, with the mole.

>talk to Deb

I asked Deb if she had any spare cupcakes for me, but she told me that the boss told her that I was not to be given any more free cupcakes. The justification, according to what Deb said the boss told her, was that my proclivities were cutting into the profit margins, but now that I tell the story out loud I wonder if it's not the cupcake staff trying to get me to lose weight.

>talk to Kate

I did not bother talking to Kate, because she hates me.

>go west

South Hallway

At the south end of the hallway, the boss's office is on the west side, and the room where you actually buy the cupcakes is on the east side. The exit to the street is south.

>go west

I try to stay out of the boss's office whenever possible, since the only reason I ever end up in there is because of bad news.

>go south

Sidewalk

So then I was standing outside the front door of the Sugar Comma building.

Gail was there, sitting behind a card table.

>look at Gail

Gail is the boss's favorite; he trusts her more than anybody else who works there. Definitely more than he trusts me. She's insufferable.

>talk to gail

I asked Gail what was going on with the card table. She said there was a contest going on: You guess how many jelly beans are in the jar, and the closest guess wins.

I said, wins what? She said, wins a dozen cupcakes. So now I had a goal.

>look at jelly beans

The jelly beans were all orange and black and green. Apparently those are the scariest colors.

So I leaned in and I counted. I didn't count all the jelly beans, obviously. But I had a strategy. I had this idea when I was like seventeen years old, and finally I had a chance to put it to use.

It was a cylindrical jar, and at the top of the jar, from the center to the edge, I counted eight jelly beans. Down the side of the jar, I counted fourteen jelly beans. Obviously they weren't distributed with perfect mathematical regularity, but approximate figures were all I needed.

I also needed to use my calculator for a little bit.

I guess I must have also picked up one of the little cards, because I remember I was holding one at this point.

Sidewalk

I was standing outside the front door of the Sugar Comma building.

Gail was there, sitting behind a card table.

>go north

South Hallway

At the south end of the hallway, the boss's office is on the west side, and the room where you actually buy the cupcakes is on the east side. The exit to the street is south.

>go north

North Hallway

Standing outside my office, the hallway goes south to the front of the shop, and north to the alley. And my office is on the west side.

>go west

Security Office

The office is basically a broom closet. If it were any smaller I'd have to stand at my desk. Out the door to the east is the hallway.

>inventory

At this point I was carrying an answer card.

>x card

There was a field for my name, and some contact information I think, and of course there was a space to write my guess about how many jelly beans were in the jar.

>use calculator

With the numbers of jelly beans that I had counted firmly set in my mind's eye, I plugged those values into the formula for the volume of a cylinder, which obviously I have memorized. I had the answer within a few seconds.

You wanna make a guess? > **999**

Really? No, there were more than a thousand jelly beans. Try again.

Come on, a serious guess. > **2034**

Um, close. Definitely in the ballpark. The answer I got was actually 2,815—don't worry about it.

I wrote 2,815 on the card, and I filled out the other information obviously, and then I was ready to win the contest.

>go east

North Hallway

Standing outside my office, the hallway goes south to the front of the shop, and north to the alley. And my office is on the west side.

>go south

South Hallway

At the south end of the hallway, the boss's office is on the west side, and the room where you actually buy the cupcakes is on the east side. The exit to the street is south.

Now, at this time, as I passed by the boss's office, I observed that his door was slightly open. And I heard some people talking in there. So I decided to hang back for a second and eavesdrop.

It was my boss and your boss, talking about plans for their doofy costume party. My boss was saying that he was bringing a bunch of his famous cupcakes from the shop, but he didn't want to invite any of his employees. And then *your* boss said "Oh but I invited Rae, I hope she comes, she's such a fun-lover," and *this* is how I know that you've been working for Claire over at the Squiggle Factory.

The rest of their conversation was pretty boring.

>go south

Sidewalk

I was standing outside the front door of the Sugar Comma building.

Gail was there, sitting behind a card table.

>give card to gail

I didn't want to get Gail started on any kind of conversation, so I shoved my card into the slot of the big box without making eye contact. I was supremely confident that my guess would be closer than anybody else's. I felt like such a champ. Now it was just a matter of time.

>go north

South Hallway

At the south end of the hallway, the boss's office is on the west side, and the room where you actually buy the cupcakes is on the east side. The exit to the street is south.

>go north

North Hallway

Standing outside my office, the hallway goes south to the front of the shop, and north to the alley. And my office is on the west side.

>go west

Security Office

The office is basically a broom closet. If it were any smaller I'd have to stand at my desk. Out the door to the east is the hallway.

With nothing to do but wait until my victory was announced, I sat around in my office and played games on my calculator.

A few hours later, Gail dashed by my door and told me the boss wanted to talk to me in his office—then she immediately dashed away.

>go east

North Hallway

Standing outside my office, the hallway goes south to the front of the shop, and north to the alley. And my office is on the west side.

>go south

South Hallway

At the south end of the hallway, the boss's office is on the west side, and the room where you actually buy the cupcakes is on the east side. The exit to the street is south.

The boss's door was wide open.

>go west

Leo's Office

So I was in the boss's office, which is, there's his desk, and behind that is his chair, and on the other side is the smaller chair.

He told me to have a seat.

>sit

As I sat down, I started thinking: Hey wait a minute, maybe I wasn't called down to get lectured at this time: maybe I'm here to accept my prize of a dozen cupcakes! But then the boss started talking, and I realized that was not going to happen.

He said that they had just had a little closing ceremony for the jelly bean contest, and they announced the winning entry to everyone, and it turned out to be a Sugar Comma employee, and it was a "massive embarrassment", and I should have known better than to enter a contest for children.

There may have been a bunch of little kids running around the whole time; I don't remember.

So I said, then, do you have to give me my prize secretly? And he said no, I would not be receiving any prize, and the next time there's a contest of any kind at the shop I should assume that I'm disqualified in advance.

"But I earned those cupcakes."

"Absolutely you did."

"And I'm gonna get them."

"Of course you are."

"And you're gonna help me."

"Are you asking me, or telling me?"

"Well, we haven't talked in a long time, I didn't wanna presume—"

"Oh, good grief. Obviously I'm gonna help you."

"Oh! Good."

"So, how are we getting you your cupcakes?"

"Well. Like I said, I know my boss is taking a bunch of them to his and your boss's costume party. And I know you're invited to that costume party."

"Oh, come on, Bob, I don't wanna go to—"

"Too late! You said you'd help!"