

ZOOM

01/08

MAKING THE CUT



From left,
"The Man Who
Wasn't There,"
"Barbershop,"
"Sweeney Todd"

Adam Sandler is a Mossad agent who yearns to be a hair stylist in New York City? That's the plot of the new comedy "You Don't Mess With the Zohan," which opens Friday. It sounds absurd — not even a top secret agent could survive the pressure of coloring, bobbing and styling the hair of Manhattan's fussiest, most demanding clients.

But Hollywood specializes in fantasy, and a great hair stylist is as much of a hero to the desperately needy as any secret agent. Here are some of Hollywood's favorite hair-care specialists.

SHAMPOO (1975)

Wash, rinse, repeat: Warren Beatty proved once and for all that there's nothing sexier for a woman than a man who can instinctively give her the perfect new hairstyle.

Split ends: Not even Beatty can talk his way out of sleeping with the wife, daughter and mistress of a potential backer for his own salon. Limp hair and a limp wrist won't cut it any longer.

SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET (2007)

Wash, rinse, repeat: In this Gothic musical, Johnny Depp is a man on a mission — to prove he's the best barber in London and win the business of evil Alan Rickman.

Split ends: Depp is indeed a full-service barber, providing a shave so close that you might even object — if your throat weren't already cut. Also has a side job providing the filling for some lovely meat pies.

BARBERSHOP (2002)

Wash, rinse, repeat: The black community traditionally has had only a few sanctuaries, among them the church and the barbershop. Ice Cube makes a much more convincing barber than preacher; hence this hit comedy.

Split ends: Doesn't Jesse Jackson realize you can say anything in a barbershop? Jokes about Jackson and Rosa Parks are what "Barbershop" is all about.

LEGALLY BLONDE (2001)

Wash, rinse, repeat: When Elle Woods (Reese Witherspoon) needs a safe place to get away from the stress of Harvard Law School, she heads to a beauty salon.

Split ends: Waiting there for her is mentor and friend Jennifer Coolidge with a shoulder to cry on. Now if only someone could help Coolidge make a delivery to the hot UPS man.

THE MAN WHO WASN'T THERE (2001)

Wash, rinse, repeat: Barbers are like bartenders — they seem to know everyone's secrets. But Billy Bob Thornton has some secrets of his own: His wife is sleeping with a business-

man and Thornton is none too pleased about it.

Split ends: Some people should stick to cutting hair. Thornton's plan to blackmail his wife's lover and open a dry cleaning store gets as messed up as a bad coloring job. Didn't he realize this story was in black and white?

Michael Giltz