

SMALL TALK

by

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TODD

What? That's bananas! Just bananas! We should get someone. This is too **BANANAS** to deal with on our own. Come with me, Rivicka. Let us go to higher authority.

She starts to follow Todd out of the room. Then she stops.

RIVICKA

Wait...wait a minute, how did you..how did you know to come in here?

TODD

What?

RIVICKA

How did you know to come in here? You never stop by but suddenly today you show up just when Arlene--

TODD

Rivicka, we don't have time for small talk, let us go to higher authority--

RIVICKA

Our entire relationship is small talk, Todd. Every morning, you stop the elevator doors from closing just in time and we make small talk and...

(realizing)

Every. Single. Morning. You stop the elevator door **just in time**. How is that possible?

Todd takes a step towards her. She takes a step back.

TODD

Rivicka, please, come with me. We'll go get help from higher authority.

He steps closer still. Rivicka **swings Arlene's arm at him.**

RIVICKA

Stay the heck away from me, you r-robot wierdo!

TODD

Rivicka, you are acting irrational.

She swings HARD again.

RIVICKA

Irrational? I'm seeing rationally for the first time in...Shirley! Shirley always offers me a cup of coffee in the morning. **Every** morning. She gives me **her** cup of coffee. And then she brings me another one later on and I don't...I don't think I've ever seen Shirley drink...I don't think I ever saw **Arlene** drink or eat or--

TODD

You sound bananas! Please let us...

Rivicka **swings** Arlene's arm again. This time, she makes contact, hitting Todd's head hard. With a spark and a fizzle, **his entire head pops off** and rolls to the side of the room.

RIVICKA

I DON'T THINK I ACTUALLY
BELIEVED IT UNTIL **NOW!**

TODD'S HEAD

...go to hig..her
auth...ori...ty.

Todd's voice warps then blinks out as his head powers down. Shirley rushes into the room, a cup of joe in hand.

SHIRLEY

Mid-morning top up?
(takes in Arlene & Todd)
Oh WHAT?! This is BANANAS! What is
HAPPENING here? We should get someone.
Come with me, let us go to--

RIVICKA

Let me guess: higher authority?!

SHIRLEY

Yes! But first: Cup of joe?

Wielding Arlene's arm menacingly:

RIVICKA

You take one step closer with that cup
of coffee and I sweat...I swell...
(shaking her head)
I mean...I-I swerve. I sw--, I sw--

Shirley gives Rivicka a pitying smile.

SHIRLEY

Oh no, you're going to want to drink
the joe soon, Rivicka.

RIVICKA

W-what is happily to me? W-why can't I-

SHIRLEY

You're one of our most advanced Call Center Units. You can withstand water. You can digest organic matter. But because of all your labor-intensive operating capabilities, you do need several cups of J.O.E, AKA: Joule Optimization Extract, to function.

Shirley tips the cup. Rivicka sees: the "coffee" is BRIGHT BLUE.

RIVICKA

No. I-imposs--impos...Why?

SHIRLEY

We found that our Rivickas are better stock movers in the Maternity Product-Line if one: they're incapable of utilizing profanity, and two: they believe themselves to be human.

RIVICKA

I don't fu--, I don't fu--, I don't f-f-f-flipping believe you!

SHIRLEY

Fine. What is your last name, Rivicka? Where did you grow up? Or you know what, let's make it simpler: Where did you come from this morning?

RIVICKA

I...I came from...my...my house.

SHIRLEY

No, Rivicka. You came from our docking facility across the street at 7:02AM. Same as you do every morning. One of our Todds held the elevator open for you, same as he does every morning.

Rivicka looks at Shirley in horror as the truth of her existence finally sinks in.

SHIRLEY (CONT'D)

It's all right. Drink your JOE & we'll walk over to Higher Authority where we can erase this entire episode and you can go back to being who you are.

A pause. Then Arlene's arm CLATTERS to the floor as Rivicka takes the cup of J.O.E. and drinks.