

Small Talk

“Just these,” I say whilst placing *Small Talk for Dummies* on counter for man at cash box.
“These is all I need.”

“Alright...” say man at register. He is uncomfortable. I can tell just now by the way he glances up from scanning cost tag as if to say, *You are man. Why are you needing these?*

“These is not for me,” I say whilst laughing with more outward breath than noise, a laugh of nerviety, because it is culturally right for me to firmly say something stupid, and to pretend to realize it was stupid, and to then pretend I am embarrassed to have beened so stupid. So that is what I done, and man at cash box follow tradition when he say, “Oh,” whilst returning his laugh of nerviety to me.

“It is shame we are not brothers,” I say, and I think I have spoken too soon. I am wondering if I have put words in rightful order, or if he will think me now like lunatic.

“Oh...” says man. He laughs. I stumble over my fumbled words and he sees, and he tries to make up for my humiliation, “...Why’s that?”

“You know,” I say. I speak even fasterly this time, and it is second coming of risking my comradeship with my un-brother, “you have eyelids in shape of flimsy chestnut, they remind me of old elephant’s eyes ... Also! We share almost same balding spot on head... and the wrinkles you have, I can see in your face very well, like looking into mirror.”

“Hm,” says man at cash box. I am not sure to think if I have spoken too fastly, or if man with my face is just man of bore.

“Are you always this boring?” I ask, in quite earnest way. I try politely to mask my earnesty with nervous laugh. But it fails. I now try redeeming myself and ask man if he is just quiet. “Or are you just man with big brain? Not much to say, but much to think?”

“No,” he says while chuckling like big red clothed man on television at cold times of year—who gives cheerily presents to all of childs with money trees growing in backyards, but he salvage none for depriv-ed little childs in country like native own.

I want to tell about big man and how he laugh and how it sound like real laugh of man brother, not fake laugh of nerviety: “You laugh like big width-ed man on television, with white follicles all around facial perimeter, the man who gives to the childs of spoil and nothing to childs of poor.”

“Huh,” says man as he hands back book.

Man at cash box think me now like lunatic, and I know it is time to go.