

Gym Misunderstanding

by

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INT. GYM - DAY

A row of running machines with electronic displays on their fronts, face several windows that go from roof to floor. GYM MEMBERS of both sexes and from 18 to 50 years old work out on them. On the other side of the room is a row of rowing machines. In the middle of the area, MEMBERS do press-ups, sit-ups, lift weights, etc. Techno music plays.

THOMAS (25) waits to use a running machine patiently. He looks over the shoulder of a FEMALE GYM MEMBER (40). He widens his eyes as he reads the display.

THOMAS

I'm sorry to interrupt your workout,
but I have some terrible news...

The GYM MEMBER keeps running.

GYM MEMBER

Oh yes? What's that?

THOMAS

I don't know how to tell you this,
but... the display says you have no
pulse...

GYM MEMBER

Oh I wouldn't worry about that! None
of the displays work here!

THOMAS

They work for me. Say... do you know
what a zombie is?

GYM MEMBER

I'm sorry?

THOMAS

Not all of them are clumsy and
sluggish you know? There are some
zombies that are perfectly agile. And
that's what you are.

GYM MEMBER

Ha! Good one!

THOMAS

You haven't bit anyone have you?

The GYM MEMBER scratches her head but keeps running.

GYM MEMBER

Errrr....

THOMAS

Tell me. This is important. We could have a pandemic on our hands.

GYM MEMBER

Look, the machine is just a bit dodgy! Please believe me!

THOMAS

Do you know how long it would take for a zombie apocalypse to wipe out humanity?

GYM MEMBER

No...

THOMAS

Just 30 days. Which is why I'm so concerned.

GYM MEMBER

Well would you look at that? I've burned exactly 47 calories. I guess it's time for another member to use this machine.

The GYM MEMBER stops the machine and gets off it. THOMAS backs away.

THOMAS

Where do you think you're going?

The GYM MEMBER stares through THOMAS.

GYM MEMBER

Home!

THOMAS

So you can infect your family members? I'm not going to let that happen. How many people live at home with you?

GYM MEMBER

Four...

THOMAS

And if you bite all of them, they're going to bite everyone too and before you know it everything goes to (expletive).

GYM MEMBER

Wow. Anyway, I'm going to go.

The GYM MEMBER turns her back on THOMAS and walks away.

THOMAS

You continue walking away and I'll call the police. They'll have to go for a head shot, it's the only way they'll kill you.

The GYM MEMBER stares at THOMAS again.

GYM MEMBER

Are you threatening me??

THOMAS

Yeah. I'm going to look at the pulse rates of the other people here. Then I'll KNOW if you've been biting people.

THOMAS looks over the shoulders of the other MEMBERS. He backs away slowly.

THOMAS

Just as I thought. All of them, dead. That explains why they've been ignoring our conversation.

GYM MEMBER

They've been ignoring you because they're scared. They want to pretend this isn't happening. Why don't you go on the running machine and check if YOU have a pulse?

THOMAS

Alright, I will.

THOMAS does so and starts to run.

GYM MEMBER

Well?

THOMAS

Oh no.

GYM MEMBER

See? You're not a zombie are you?

THOMAS

I'm just not running fast enough, that's all.

THOMAS taps the display and runs faster.

GYM MEMBER

All ok?

THOMAS

(out of breath)

I'm just feeling very relaxed, that's all.

GYM MEMBER

Are YOU going to start biting people now?

THOMAS

No! I just need some coffee. My heart will start beating any second now...

GYM MEMBER

Shall I call for an ambulance?

THOMAS

No!

GYM MEMBER

And what about a morgue?

THOMAS

Nope.

GYM MEMBER

Or the zombie patrol?

THOMAS nearly trips over himself. He then continues running.

THOMAS

What's that??

GYM MEMBER

There have just been rumours that zombies have been using this very gym, so a special zombie unit has been set up. Nearby, too.

THOMAS

Aha! I knew it all along! Hang on, wait a minute...

GYM MEMBER

Yeah. I'll come clean. We're both zombies, now. And you really are.

THOMAS

I mean... as long as we don't bite people, that's fine? What harm can benevolent zombies do?

GYM MEMBER

Oh you'll have to bite people eventually. That's just the zombie way.

THOMAS

I suppose I do bite into foods. Maybe it's not such a big leap attacking strangers...

GYM MEMBER

Right, you'll think of them as food.

THOMAS

How much time is left before that happens?

GYM MEMBER

Google says about 23 hours...

THOMAS

Oh no.

THOMAS wipes his forehead as he keeps running. He then stares hard at the display.

THOMAS

That's funny...

GYM MEMBER

What?

THOMAS

My heart rate... It's 500 bpm...

GYM MEMBER

The same rate as a hamster?

THOMAS

What's it mean?

GYM MEMBER

What's it mean? Simple. You're a hamster now.

THOMAS

How??

GYM MEMBER

I honestly have no idea. Would you like some lettuce?

THOMAS

No! Well yes, I'm hungry. No, I mean give me people food.

(MORE)

THOMAS (cont'd)
Even better I'll get some. I'll get a
burger.

THOMAS stares at the display again.

THOMAS
Ahh. My pulse rate is 160. That's
normal. Well, I think I'll be going
now.

THOMAS turns the machine off and walks to the GYM MEMBER.

GYM MEMBER
This is just a normal day for you
isn't it?

THOMAS
The important thing is that I'm fine.

GYM MEMBER
I disagree. In just a few seconds,
you've gone from zombie to hamster to
at least some kind of human. If I
were you, I'd see a doctor.

THOMAS
I'll just take a Strepsil.

Two armed POLICEMEN enter the room. THOMAS and the GYM
MEMBER stare at them. The POLICEMEN march up to them.

POLICEMAN 1
There has been a complaint by an
overhearing gym member that there
could be zombies here. Is that true?

THOMAS
No, no. Not me.

GYM MEMBER
If anything, he's a gerbil now.

POLICEMAN 2
Is that true?

THOMAS
Check my pulse rate.

POLICEMAN 2 puts his hand on THOMAS' neck.

POLICEMAN 2
That's roughly 500 beats per minute..
.

GYM MEMBER

What's going to happen to him?

POLICEMAN 1

Time to go to the local pet store, I
guess...

THOMAS

Nooo!