

Special Technique (Inspired by real events)

by

Simon Wiedemann

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INT. MEETING ROOM - DAY

A female PSYCHOLOGIST (21) sits at a table facing a male PSYCHIATRIST (40) in a cozy and carpeted room with a cupboard by the side of a wall. Both wear watches.

PSYCHIATRIST

Good morning. I've called you in because we have to discuss some very strange behaviour. James Ziegler has been threatening people whilst dressed as Father Christmas, and we need to find out why.

PSYCHOLOGIST

How?

PSYCHIATRIST

In my opinion, I think we should keep things simple. I know you're fresh out of university and you want to make the most out of your education, but the best ideas are the most basic.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Ok...

PSYCHIATRIST

After you ask James a question and he answers it, wait at least three seconds. The wait will make him feel awkward and therefore will make him add extra details to what he just said. Waiting is a great way to get information from people.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Of course.

PSYCHIATRIST

Good. If you want extra help from me as you're interviewing the patient, just call me and I'll take part in the therapy session with you. Understand?

PSYCHOLOGIST

No problem.

PSYCHIATRIST

Ok great, you can leave now. Oh, and please take this list of things I want you to ask him. Just to jog your memory if need be.

The PSYCHIATRIST pulls a piece of paper from his pocket and hands it to his COWORKER. The PSYCHOLOGIST then shakes the PSYCHIATRIST'S hand and leaves the room.

INT. THERAPY ROOM - DAY

Here is a similar room. This time however, a seated JAMES faces the sat PSYCHOLOGIST and an empty chair. There is no table. The latter smiles warmly. A clock hanging on the wall says it's 11:00 AM.

PSYCHOLOGIST
Hello, James! How are you, today?

JAMES
A bit nervous, you?

PSYCHOLOGIST
Not bad. And why are you nervous?

JAMES
Just am.

PSYCHOLOGIST
Ok. James, how would you feel if I were to say... I'm not feeling very festive?

JAMES
Err...

PSYCHOLOGIST
Please be honest. I'm just trying to get to know you.

JAMES
I guess I'd be upset...

PSYCHOLOGIST
And why is that?

JAMES
I just love Christmas.

PSYCHOLOGIST
But why do need everyone else to?

JAMES
Non festive people just bring me down...

PSYCHOLOGIST
I see. So you dress up as Santa and threaten people?

JAMES

Yes.

The PSYCHOLOGIST pauses for three seconds and looks at her watch. JAMES twiddles his thumbs. Another few seconds pass. The PSYCHOLOGIST looks serious. JAMES coughs nervously. Another few seconds pass. Then a few more.

JAMES

Are you ok?

PSYCHOLOGIST

I'll ask the questions.

JAMES

Oh...

Soon enough, a couple of minutes of total silence go by. The PSYCHOLOGIST is calm.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Wait a second...

The WOMAN leaves the room. After a minute or so, she is back with the PSYCHIATRIST. Both sit down to face JAMES.

PSYCHIATRIST

Hello, James. Are you well?

JAMES

I'm fine... A bit bored.

PSYCHIATRIST

There's nothing to fear, here...

JAMES

Ok.

PSYCHIATRIST

Great, you understand. James, what we're trying to find out is, why did you break into other people's houses, and all of that stuff. It's been explained to me that you haven't been giving the fullest of answers...

JAMES

I was just saying I need other people to feel festive...

PSYCHIATRIST

Can you remember how long you've been feeling that way? Did it start as a child, maybe?

JAMES
I'm not completely sure...

Both MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS wait in silence for a few seconds. JAMES looks around the room, blankly.

JAMES
(confused)
Not this again...

Another few seconds pass.

JAMES
Dumpty-dum...

The clock on the wall says 11:10.

JAMES
So... seen the latest football match?

PSYCHIATRIST
We'll ask the questions...

There is more silence.

The clock says 11:20.

JAMES
How do you like the weather?

PSYCHOLOGIST
Would you like to talk about the weather?

JAMES
I like it...

The two keep on waiting for JAMES as patiently as ever.

JAMES
Er... It's great. Cooool.

JAMES gives a thumbs up and smiles. The other two look at their watches again.

PSYCHIATRIST
Sometimes it's nice to be in one's company. Alone with their thoughts...

JAMES
May I ask how much you're getting paid?

PSYCHIATRIST
I'm sorry, again, this interview
really is about you.

JAMES
Huh.

PSYCHIATRIST
Yes.

JAMES
I was thinking these last few
minutes, maybe I could be a
psychiatrist? I really do think I'm
qualified...

PSYCHIATRIST
Dear God no.

JAMES
Why??

PSYCHIATRIST
Because.

The clock finally says 11:30.

PSYCHIATRIST
Well, it was nice meeting you James,
but our time is up.

JAMES sighs with relief.

JAMES
Finally. But I do think I've grown.

PSYCHIATRIST
Great. Would meeting the same time
same place next week be good for you?

JAMES
I guess. Could I maybe bring a
newspaper to pass the time?

PSYCHIATRIST
Whatever makes you comfortable.

JAMES
Awesome. I have to say though, I
really didn't picture therapy being
like this...

PSYCHIATRIST
And why not?

JAMES

I was just expecting... I don't know.
.. Maybe some more interaction?

PSYCHIATRIST

And why is that?

JAMES

Just an assumption, I guess...

The two PROFESSIONALS stare at JAMES in silence.

JAMES

Errr... Should I go?

PSYCHIATRIST

Of course. Have a great day!

JAMES stands up, pulling the funniest face imaginable. He then leaves the room in silence.