

THERAPIST: So, now we're all seated, is it ok if I record this therapy session?

MAN 1: Fine by me.

JAMES: Yep.

MAN 2: Yip.

WOMAN: No problem.

THERAPIST: Great! Now, let's go around the room. Say your name and explain why you're here. Let's all just get to know each other. James, you're first.

JAMES: Well... It all started a couple of years ago...

THERAPIST: Go on...

JAMES: I thought I'd get one milkshake. What could be the harm? What's wrong with a little treat? Well. Before long it was a milkshake a month. Then a week. Then a day. Then every...

THERAPIST (Interrupting): I'm going to have to stop you, there. This is therapy, not milkshakes anonymous.

JAMES: I thought talking about milkshakes could be part of my therapy.

THERAPIST: And how do milkshakes relate to you 'owning people'?

JAMES: I don't own people, I pown them.

THERAPIST: What's the difference?

JAMES: There's a big difference, actually.

THERAPIST: Which is?

JAMES: I thought you said it doesn't matter.

THERAPIST: No, I said milkshakes don't matter.

JAMES: You don't matter.

THERAPIST: I see.

MAN 1: What's up with you being a pigeon, James?

JAMES: I'm not really sure.

THERAPIST: And how are you adapting to being a pigeon?

JAMES: No one takes you seriously, people just throw you bread and seeds. It's humiliating.

THERAPIST: Well, we're all friends here. It's ok, James. Now it's your time to introduce yourself, Man 1.

MAN 1: I've been struggling with depression.

JAMES: Boring!

THERAPIST: Excuse me?

JAMES: It is a bit boring. Not like me changing into another species and still hosting a podcast. How many pigeons can you think of that have any kind of role in the media?

THERAPIST: That's not the point. The point of this meeting is to learn how to grow.

MAN 1: All I could think about was where I could find the next drink.

THERAPIST: That must have been very hard for you...

MAN 1: Sure was.

JAMES: How come THAT'S a legitimate concern??

THERAPIST: Alcohol destroys lives...

JAMES: Oh. I thought he was talking about Ribena.

THERAPIST: Why Ribena?

JAMES: Just an assumption.

THERAPIST: Did you get the idea from a voice inside your mind?

JAMES: Sure did.

THERAPIST: Man 2, would you like to introduce yourself?

MAN 2: I went bird hunting illegally.

JAMES: Who the HELL do you think you are?

THERAPIST: And what psychological problems do you have?

MAN 2: I have anger problems.

JAMES: Oh, big man. A real toughie with your stupid anger.

MAN 2: Watch it...

JAMES: Screw you!

THERAPIST: It seems like you've been triggered, James...

JAMES: Damn right I'm triggered! I should peck him!

(Flapping sounds)

THERAPIST: Don't peck Man 2, James.

WOMAN: He's pecking him! He's pecking him!

MAN 2: Get off me!!

WOMAN: I'll attack him with my umbrella.

JAMES: Ow!

THERAPIST: Sit down, James.

JAMES: Fine.

WOMAN: Anyway, I'm here because I keep attacking people with my umbrella.

THERAPIST: So why did you bring it with you?

WOMAN: That's what I'm saying. I can't stop...

THERAPIST: Do you have any coping mechanisms? Maybe you could think happy thoughts to help you control yourself?

WOMAN: Hitting people does make me happy.

THERAPIST: So you can't control yourself at all, then?

WOMAN: That's why I'm here...

THERAPIST: Well, first things first, give me your umbrella.

WOMAN: Why? Are you a kleptomaniac?

THERAPIST: That's not the point, I'm trying to help you.

WOMAN: Are you, though?

THERAPIST: The most important thing is I have coping mechanisms.

WOMAN: Doesn't look like it to me...

THERAPIST: I just want to steal one more thing. Your umbrella. That's all.

JAMES: Can I pown just one more person?

MAN 2: You better not pown me...

JAMES: Oh, you're gonna get powned.

MAN 2: How?

JAMES: Would you like a bar of chocolate?

MAN 2: Eh?

MAN 1: He's trying to buy you.

JAMES: It worked in prison...

WOMAN: Did it, though?

JAMES: Yeah! I have evidence.

THERAPIST: Yes, about your prison diary, James. It sounds like you've been having panic attacks. Would you like to talk about those?

JAMES: Of course I was having panic attacks, I was in jail!

THERAPIST: Ok, THAT makes sense. But what caused your mental breakdown when you pretended to be a teacher in a school?

JAMES: You know about that?

THERAPIST: It's all in your record.

JAMES: Ummm... Not sure. I guess pretending to be a teacher just felt right.

THERAPIST: So you just did it?

JAMES: Yep. It's like an addiction. Like being an alcoholic. We're the same, Man 1.

MAN 1: I've never heard of fraudulent teacher addiction...

JAMES: It's a rare condition, but very serious.

THERAPIST: Even I've never heard of it...

JAMES: Noob.

THERAPIST: No... I think you've made it up.

JAMES: So what AM I suffering from, then?

THERAPIST: That's what I'm here to find out.

MAN 2: Why not simplify things and just diagnose James as a fraud, rather than a teacher fraud?

THERAPIST: Fair point. Ok! Now we've got to know each other, it's time to discuss how we can all grow. James, stop pecking people, Woman, stop jabbing people with your umbrella, Man 1 stop drinking, and Man 2 stop shooting birds.

JAMES: It's really that simple?

THERAPIST: It's a start. James, you've spent a lot of time in jail where normal rules don't apply, and you've hosted a podcast that rewards your... dramatic behaviour, in that it gets you listeners. When you're around other people in general, they're so shocked by you, they don't know how to react, so they don't complain. What you need is someone to tell you the way you're behaving is wrong.

JAMES: I once pecked every member of The Beatles.

THERAPIST: See, that's exactly what I mean. How is anyone supposed to react to that?

JAMES: Ahhh...

MAN 1: You even pecked John Lennon?

JAMES: Sure did.

MAN 1: When?

JAMES: Just now.

MAN 1: He's dead.

JAMES: Didn't stop me.

THERAPIST: Stop this nonsense, now!!

JAMES: It's hard for me...

THERAPIST: WHY?!?!

JAMES: Noob.

THERAPIST: Arrgh!

WOMAN: You are a bit of a noob. Can you explain the actions of anyone, here?

THERAPIST: Yes! After I get to know you!

WOMAN: Anyone can do that...

THERAPIST: It seems James and Woman aren't going to benefit from therapy. That leaves Man 1 and 2.

MAN 1: I'm drunk right now. You can't tell because I've just drunk 15 cups of coffee. My heart rate must be around 200 bpm...

JAMES: Thrash metal tempo.

MAN 2: I shot a bird just this morning.

JAMES: I'm going to kill you.

THERAPIST: Ah. No one here is going to benefit from therapy.

JAMES: That's not true, you could get therapy from us...

THERAPIST: And why do I need therapy?

JAMES: You don't know? Lack of insight, much?

WOMAN: Let us get to know you.

THERAPIST: You know what? You're all fine. James will continue getting good ratings, unless of course, his co-stars get tired of him and don't bother chasing foxes away...

JAMES: You know about that?

THERAPIST: And some people need to be jabbed with umbrellas. Alcoholism is hard to condone, so I'm not going to bother with that subject, and some birds are pests. So SOMETIMES maybe you SHOULD shoot them.

JAMES: We're all fine, now?

THERAPIST: On the contrary, I think I've just this second made you all worse.

JAMES: That's not good therapy.

THERAPIST: Yeah, well some people can't be treated.

JAMES: For starters, you could keep Woman's umbrella.

THERAPIST: I will. But she's still going to buy another one.

JAMES: Take that away.

THERAPIST: She'd buy another one.

JAMES: The world doesn't have an unlimited supply of the things you know? They're not water.

THERAPIST: I've never heard that argument before.

JAMES: Noob. Or maybe you could tape a note to her back saying 'Don't give me umbrellas'.

WOMAN: Is it just umbrellas you have a problem with? I could poke people with walking sticks if that makes you feel better...

THERAPIST: Go home!