

Financial Trouble
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INT. OFFICE - DAY

The room here is almost bare, only featuring a desk with a landline phone on it and two chairs facing it. JAMES is sitting wearing a pink dress, awkwardly looking at his suited and seated BOSS (50s).

BOSS

Hello, James. It is good to see you.

JAMES

Thank you.

BOSS

Do you know why I've brought you here?

JAMES

Nope.

The BOSS crosses his arms.

BOSS

James, no one is willing to sponsor you. In fact they haven't been for many, many months now. I'm surprised you haven't noticed!

JAMES

I did notice something different, I just couldn't put my finger on it. It seems so obvious, now!

The BOSS exhales deeply.

BOSS

You're going to have to rely on audience donations, but no one will be willing to give you any money as you're so unlikeable.

JAMES

Oh.

BOSS

Just so you can continue with your show, you'll need a donation of £100 a day. Right now you have nothing.

JAMES

Can I have some money from you, just so I can keep working for the time being?

BOSS
 Sorry, no. I will be willing to give
 you a donation of £99.99, though.

JAMES'S eyes light up.

JAMES
 That's very helpful!

BOSS
 Of course it is, it's more or less
 the same amount, isn't it? I was
 trying to annoy you just then, and my
 attempt didn't make sense.

JAMES
 I know, right?

BOSS
 In that case I won't give you
 anything.

JAMES looks down.

JAMES
 Oh.

BOSS
 You're next radio show is tomorrow. I
 will of course need the money by
 then.

JAMES looks more confident.

JAMES
 I'll get you the money. Somehow.

BOSS
 That's what I wanted to hear. Good
 day.

JAMES
 You're not expecting a phone call,
 then? An uplifting message to save
 the day?

BOSS
 Sorry no.

JAMES
 It's just that I've had so many
 sponsors, albeit briefly, so I was
 thinking there must be someone out
 there how can help me...

BOSS

I doubt that very much. You must have noticed that almost all the companies that have sponsored you in the past, if not all of them, have brand names that are alliterations. There simply aren't any of such companies remaining in the whole country!

JAMES

What about Professional Pete's Proper Promos?

BOSS

I guess we'll have to wait and see.
Bye, James.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE PATH - NIGHT

JAMES is alone, walking on a dry, muddy path with trees on both his sides and far into the distance. It is a starry night and the moonlight provides just enough light to see.

JAMES

(talking to himself)
Ah, the calmness of nature. Only here can I think clearly, and boy do I need to think clearly, now.

A FROG jumps in front of JAMES. He crouches down to talk to it.

JAMES

Stupid frog.

The FROG stares at JAMES.

JAMES

What has a frog ever done, exactly? Mankind can fly, put people on the moon, build vast civilisations and all you can do is hop. Also, if someone were to put you in a bath and gradually heat up the water more and more after a long amount of time, you wouldn't even know if the water is boiling in the end! You'd just think it was slightly warmer than before, idiot! And your legs taste of chicken, how is THAT original?

The FROG stares again.

JAMES

Cat got your tongue? And I can jump way higher than you, and that's one of your only skills! And if I want to kill and eat a fly? I'll use an electric fly killing racket, you don't even know what electricity is!

The FROG jumps away.

JAMES

Don't you dare hop away from me!

A MAN taps on JAMES'S shoulder from behind and JAMES turns to face him. It's his BOSS.

BOSS

Oh hello, James, fancy seeing you here... Nothing like the peace of nature to gather your thoughts, right? I've been thinking about you, you know? But what's going on?

JAMES

I've been taunting a frog, sir.

BOSS

Why?

JAMES

Self-esteem issues, sir.

BOSS

But you're giving the frog self-esteem issues...

JAMES

Not true, it was very arrogant.

BOSS

How do you know?

JAMES

I know frogs.

BOSS

Ok. James, I have good news.

JAMES

You do?

BOSS

People like listening to people like you, they really do!

(MORE)

BOSS (cont'd)
Me hiring you could be seen as
exploitation, but that's a risk I'm
willing to take.

JAMES
Who will sponsor me, though?

BOSS
Professional Pete's Proper Promos! I
contacted him, myself!

JAMES
What did he say?

BOSS
He said a company priding itself on
professionalism will likely have its
reputation damaged by you, but then
he said he found you entertaining,
anyway. I'll tell him about the frog
story, now.

The BOSS retrieves a mobile from his pocket and makes a
call.

BOSS
Yo, Pete? Guess what James has done,
this time...

JAMES looks hopeful.

BOSS
Nope, guess again... Ok, ok, I'll
tell you. He got into an argument
with a frog!... I know, I know, it
was beautiful... Yep, the ratings
will go through the roof!... Ok, bye!

JAMES
I really have a show, then?

BOSS
It certainly looks that way!

JAMES
Will it be a good show?

BOSS
It will be spectacular.