

How to Feed Your Human and Other Important Tips

By

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HOW TO FEED YOUR HUMAN AND OTHER IMPORTANT TIPS

Episode 1

(STORY 1: LIVE A LITTLE)

SOUND: WE SHOULD HEAR THE TAPPING OF HIS FINGERS ON A WOODEN DESK, CONFUSED SIGHS, AND OFFICE SOUNDS THROUGH THE WALLS

MR. LITTLE

(ANNOYED)

Hello? Hello? What am I doing here?

DANIELLE

You're talking to a tree, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE

Oh...I didn't hear you-- I was talking to myself.

DANIELLE

That isn't really better.

MR. LITTLE

It's a little embarrassing.

DANIELLE

Is it?

MR. LITTLE

I guess I've done worse, but, you know, first impressions and all.

DANIELLE

Go on...

MR. LITTLE

What?

DANIELLE

You were talking about first impressions.

MR. LITTLE

What? No. I mean, you know, first impressions are important, and now you think I'm some kind of crazy tree whisperer.

DANIELLE

I would hardly consider that whispering.

MR. LITTLE

I don't-- Who are you?

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE

My name is Danielle. I'm the agent in charge of your case.

MR. LITTLE

My case?! Look, Danielle, I don't know what this is all about but I didn't do anything--

DANIELLE

I know you've been waiting for quite some time, Mr. Little, and I recognize that you are feeling distressed.

MR. LITTLE

Of course I'm distressed, I don't even know how I got here--

DANIELLE

Please take a seat so we can begin.

MR. LITTLE

I'll sit when you tell me why I'm here.

DANIELLE

You are here because claims have been brought forth against you, and it is my job to--

MR. LITTLE

WHAT CLAIMS?

SOUND: WE HEAR DANIELLE OPENING A FOLDER AND FLIPPING THROUGH PAPERS

DANIELLE

Okay, let me take a look here, one second. My apologies. Oh my. (Pause as if shocked) This is very odd.

MR. LITTLE

What? What does it say?

DANIELLE

It's all red.

MR. LITTLE

Is that bad?

DANIELLE

I knew this case was unusual, but this... Every single action is in red. Missed a bus. Killed a hamster.

MR. LITTLE

I never killed a hamster!

DANIELLE

According to your file, you definitely killed a hamster.

MR. LITTLE

I DROPPED a hamster when I was like 6 years old! I never killed a hamster.

DANIELLE

Did the hamster live?

MR. LITTLE

Not exactly. But, I--

DANIELLE

Killed a hamster, yes. It also says here that you didn't have your senior portrait taken?

MR. LITTLE

I'm 33 years old.

DANIELLE

Correct. And when you were 17 years old, you failed to have your picture taken for the High School year book. Let's see...

MR. LITTLE

What is this?

DANIELLE

Are you familiar with the term "distributed causality", Mr. Little?

MR. LITTLE

Obviously....

DANIELLE

Yes or no, Mr. Little?

MR. LITTLE

Just tell me what the hell is going on.

DANIELLE

I see that you've never smoked a cigarette.

Interesting. And, on the afternoon of August 8th, 2012, you ate a maple doughnut, is that correct?

MR. LITTLE

Come on! What is that? How do you-- What are you reading?

DANIELLE

Well, Mr. Little, this folder--

MR. LITTLE

Let me see that.

SOUND: WE HEAR THE SHUFFLING OF THE FOLDER AS MR. LITTLE GRABS IT AWAY FROM DANIELLE

MR. LITTLE

What the hell is this?

DANIELLE

That, for all intents and purposes, is you, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE

Holy crap. I'm dead. Am I dead?

DANIELLE

I'm afraid I don't understand the question.

MR. LITTLE

Is this some kind of purgatory? Are you going to, like, judge my actions to figure out if... Oh my god, am I going to hell because I ate a doughnut? I can explain.

DANIELLE

The doughnut?

MR. LITTLE

Yes.

DANIELLE

You can?

MR. LITTLE

No. I mean, I guess. I don't know what you want from me.

DANIELLE

I want you to sit down. We have been abnormally busy lately and, as you well know, people do not like being kept waiting.

MR. LITTLE

One question. (we hear him sit)

DANIELLE

Yes, Mr. Little?

MR. LITTLE

How did I die? When did it happen? Shouldn't I remember dying? Isn't that the kind of thing that a person might remember?

DANIELLE

You are very much, what they call in the medical profession, not dead, Mr. Little. Now, if you don't mind.

MR. LITTLE

Oh, uh... Sorry.

DANIELLE

As the Regional Accounts Adjuster, it is my duty to reconcile any abnormal discordance in the system, and as your case is fraught with irregularities, I'm afraid we may be here a while.

MR. LITTLE

You said something about "claims" against me?

DANIELLE

I'm getting there, Mr. Little. Please be patient. You see, this is an incredibly peculiar case. I mean, it's just beyond bizarre. I've never seen anything quite like it. To be perfectly frank, I'm not confident that there is a simple solution.

MR. LITTLE

But, there is a solution? Right? I mean, I'm not going to hell or anything?

DANIELLE

Once again, Mr. Little, you are very much the opposite of dead.

MR. LITTLE

Had to check.

DANIELLE

My folder, please?

MR. LITTLE

Oh, yeah, sorry. Here.

SOUND: DANIELLE TAKES THE FOLDER AND SHUFFLES THROUGH ITS PAGES. PAPERS FLIPPING. SHE HUFFS.

DANIELLE

Mr. Little, it appears that the entirety of your life was thrown into complete and utter disarray around the age of 17.

MR. LITTLE

No. What? No. I don't think so. I mean, I don't always get along with my parents, and I guess I don't really have any close friends or anything, but I'm not sick or

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MR. LITTLE (cont'd)
anything, so, you know, there's that. It's not like
I'm--

DANIELLE

(CLEARS THROAT AS IN A LOUD, CARTOONISH EHT HEMMM)
My apologies, Mr. Little. I must have mistakenly used
an upward inflection at the end of my sentence. Let me
assure you, I was not asking a question. I am stating
the facts of your circumstance.

MR. LITTLE

But, seriously, I'm fine. Really. Everything's fine.

DANIELLE

It isn't.

MR. LITTLE

Agree to disagree, I guess?

DANIELLE

No. Mr. Little, from the age of 17 you have been, with
your every action, wreaking absolute havoc on the world
and the entirety of its population.

MR. LITTLE

This is absurd. Tell me why I'm here.

DANIELLE

You are here because there was a plane crash.

MR. LITTLE

A plane crash?

DANIELLE

Yes, Mr. Little. A plane crash. You see, a passenger
flight, carrying 156 people fell from the sky
yesterday, and--

MR. LITTLE

That's awful.

DANIELLE

There were no survivors.

MR. LITTLE

Wow. I'm... What happened?

DANIELLE

You happened, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE

What does that mean?

DANIELLE

According to our records, on the afternoon of February 12th of this year, you stopped your car to assist a turtle.

MR. LITTLE

I what?

DANIELLE

You helped a turtle cross the road, Mr. Little. It's right here in black and white.

MR. LITTLE

What does that have to do with a plane crash.

DANIELLE

I don't understand the question.

MR. LITTLE

I'm pretty sure you do.

DANIELLE

That particular turtle was abducted, redirected, and absconded against its own volition and without proper consideration for its intended, and predetermined course.

MR. LITTLE

It was going to die! I almost hit it, so I stopped and did the right thing.

DANIELLE

Incorrect.

MR. LITTLE

How is it wrong to stop and help a turtle?

DANIELLE

Of course, it isn't wrong to stop and help a turtle.

MR. LITTLE

You just said--

DANIELLE

Mr. Little, please. That particular turtle was to continue across the aforementioned street, causing a Blue Hyundai Accent to swerve into a near by median, frightening a pedestrian enough to drop his beverage onto the hood of a passing Green Volkswagen Jetta, which, in turn, would cause it to career violently off

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DANIELLE (cont'd)

road, at which time it would hit a tree and flip onto its side. This series of events would, of course, cause the driver of said Jetta to be Late. For. Work.

MR. LITTLE

So, you're saying I saved a turtle, and prevented an accident?

DANIELLE

The driver of the aforementioned Jetta was the pilot of the crashed passenger plane, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE

Oh...

DANIELLE

Of course, had the events unfolded as expected, that is, without any unnecessary, or wholly misguided, interference the pilot would have been appropriately obstructed, causing the airline to replace him aboard the plane. Naturally, the trauma of the car crash would have inevitably motivated the pilot to seek treatment for his alcoholism, inspiring him to reevaluate his priorities, and recognize his place in the universe, as a father, husband, and as a human being in general.

MR. LITTLE

That doesn't make sense. How do you know that's what would happen?

DANIELLE

I beg your pardon?

MR. LITTLE

How would you know?

DANIELLE

There is very little, if anything, that we don't know, Mr. Little. I will need to take a close look at your manual in order to assess the origin of the divergence. May I?

MR. LITTLE

May you what?

DANIELLE

May I have your manual?

MR. LITTLE

My manual?

DANIELLE

Mr. Little, if these infractions are due, in any part, to a systematic error, a typo, a missing page, some form of translational buffoonery on our account, we will take the necessary steps toward finding a solution. I understand your trepidation, and assure you that I will handle your literature with the utmost care.

MR. LITTLE

I literally have no idea what you're talking about.

DANIELLE

You are required to temporarily surrender your manual in order to facilitate the adjustment process. It's standard procedure.

MR. LITTLE

I don't... have a manual?

DANIELLE

Your manual should be on your person at all times, Mr. Little. This is a rather serious infraction.

MR. LITTLE

I mean, like, I don't have a manual. Like, at all. Am I supposed to have a manual?

DANIELLE

Are you insinuating... No. This can't be. Mr. Little, don't tell me. You couldn't have- You mean to say that you've- All this time? Oh god. No. It can't-- I can't-- You can't--

MR. LITTLE

Do you have an off switch or are you solar powered?

DANIELLE

Mr. Little, please. This is much worse than I anticipated. I need a moment to think.

MR. LITTLE

Sorry, that was mean. I'm just-- this is a lot for me. I don't want to cause trouble or anything, it's just, I was in the kitchen making a snack and then I turned around, and things went dark then suddenly I'm sitting here being accused of mass murder, and you're asking about some kind of manual--

DANIELLE

Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE
Yeah?

DANIELLE
SHH!

MR. LITTLE
Sorry. Sorry.

SOUND: FINGERS TAPPING

DANIELLE
(SLIGHTLY FLUSTERED AND LESS FORMAL)
Okay. Listen. Just to be perfectly clear, and to ensure that we know exactly what we are dealing with here, I need you to answer the following questions as precisely as humanly possible.

MR. LITTLE
Uh huh.

DANIELLE
Your answers must be absolutely truthful and unequivocal. Do you understand?

MR. LITTLE
Uh huh.

DANIELLE
Did you receive a package in the mail on the day of your 16th birthday?

MR. LITTLE
No. Wait, like a present?

DANIELLE
Yes.

MR. LITTLE
No. Maybe. Probably like a card or something.

DANIELLE
Present was the wrong word. A package.

MR. LITTLE
I don't know. My grandpa used to send a card like every year with nothing in it but the word "grandpa" scribbled in the corner. So, I probably got one of those.

DANIELLE
Seriously...

(CONTINUED)

MR. LITTLE

Yeah, weird right? Who does that? He wasn't even that old. I know I should be thankful but, it just felt lazy. No money, no special note, he didn't even write happy birthday.

DANIELLE

No, Mr. Little. I meant-- Never mind. Did you receive a manual similar to this in the mail, on or around your 16th birthday?

SOUND: DANIELLE SHUFFLES IN HER SEAT AND WE HEAR HER SLAP A MANUAL ON THE DESK.

MR. LITTLE

(READING)

How To Feed Your Human and Other Important Tips? Is this a joke?

DANIELLE

Yes or no?

MR. LITTLE

Are you saying I was supposed to--

DANIELLE

Concentrate, Mr. Little. Stay focused here. Do you remember a package arriving at your house?

MR. LITTLE

No. On my 16th birthday?

DANIELLE

Yes.

MR. LITTLE

No.

DANIELLE

This is unprecedeted.

MR. LITTLE

So, I was supposed to get one of those?

DANIELLE

Yes.

MR. LITTLE

What is it?

DANIELLE

A manual, Mr. Little. Please pay attention.

MR. LITTLE

A manual for what? Can I see it?

DANIELLE

I'm not sure how to broach this subject. Given your absolute ignorance, and your advanced age.

MR. LITTLE

I'm 33.

DANIELLE

Given your advanced age, I'm afraid the usual method of acclimation is out of the question...

MR. LITTLE

Acclimation? What is it?

DANIELLE

A manual.

MR. LITTLE

Can't I just get a new one?

DANIELLE

A new one?

MR. LITTLE

A new manual. Can't we just make a copy of that one or something?

DANIELLE

A copy of my manual?

MR. LITTLE

Xerox, email, whatever.

DANIELLE

Mr. Little, each manual is tailored specifically, and fastidiously, to the life and times of a particular individual. This, of course, is mine.

MR. LITTLE

You still haven't answered my question. What is it? And don't say "a manual".

DANIELLE

Within the pages of the MANUAL are the rules, guidelines, time-lines, quotations, routines, and methods by which individuals may live their lives to the greatest extent of its potential.

MR. LITTLE
It tells you what to do?

DANIELLE
Precisely.

MR. LITTLE
I don't believe this.

DANIELLE
Of course you don't.

MR. LITTLE
So, you just carry that around all day?

DANIELLE
Yes, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE
And it tells you what to do?

DANIELLE
Yes, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE
Isn't that kind of sad?

DANIELLE
I don't understand the question.

MR. LITTLE
What about, like, making choices?

DANIELLE
Each manual is meticulously rendered with full regard to, and appreciation for and or of each respective users predilection, aversion, or indifference, toward the illusion of free will.

MR. LITTLE
Illusion?

DANIELLE
Mr. Little, we hardly have time for this.

MR. LITTLE
So, you're saying, everyone is just doing what they're told?

DANIELLE
(ANNOYED)
Not everyone, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE

Wait... If everyone is just doing what they're supposed to do... wouldn't the pilot know he was suppose to crash? Why didn't he just crash on purpose, or show up a few minutes late? Why would he get on the plane at all?

DANIELLE

Any and all deviations are to be recognized as unfortunate, albeit necessary editorial events that exist to accommodate for the natural spectrum of unforeseeable variance.

MR. LITTLE

Come on, man.

DANIELLE

Because of you, Mr. Little. These events, as seemingly insignificant or inauspicious as they may seem to you, are necessary in order to restore balance when such divergence occurs. The pilot would have simply recognized a change, which would lead any manual-carrying citizen to trust that the proper editorial adjustments have been made to facilitate the altered narrative.

MR. LITTLE

So, he thought it was just a change of plans?

DANIELLE

Of course he did.

MR. LITTLE

He didn't know the plane was going to crash...?

DANIELLE

How could he?

MR. LITTLE

Then it was my fault. All of those people... All of the.. Everyone who... It was my fault...

DANIELLE

Of course it wasn't, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE

I hate you.

DANIELLE

Of course you do, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE

This is too much. You expect me to believe that everyone in the world is following some script...

DANIELLE

(MORE ANNOYED)

Not everyone, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE

What about all of the horrible things that people do. All of the awful violence and senseless--

DANIELLE

We've been looking into it, Mr. Little, and have already retired several problematic authors in an attempt to reestablish equilibrium. Hence, the long wait. We're busier than we've ever been and exceedingly short-staffed.

MR. LITTLE

I don't know how to feel about all of this.

DANIELLE

Which is precisely why you need a manual.

MR. LITTLE

So, where do I get one?

DANIELLE

I'm afraid it's far too late for that.

MR. LITTLE

You mean...

DANIELLE

Unfortunately, given the circumstance, there is nothing we can do to accommodate you, Mr. Little. We have no choice but to allow you to continue as you were, stumbling through time as a living, breathing wrench in the works of an otherwise perfect system. Thankfully, with your eating habits and lifestyle choices, you won't be causing trouble for much longer.

MR. LITTLE

You mean, you want me to go back out there and--

DANIELLE

Live your life, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE

I can't do it. Not now. Not knowing that everyone else...

DANIELLE

You can.

MR. LITTLE

Am I the only one? I mean, the only one without a manual?

DANIELLE

Of course, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE

This is ridiculous. I don't see why you can't just type one up, or make a copy or something. It isn't fair.

DANIELLE

Have you reevaluated your stance on being told what to do? A second ago you called it... Sad.

MR. LITTLE

A second ago, I didn't know I was the only one in the world winging it. I can't be the reason the world is in ruin. How am I supposed to live with myself?

DANIELLE

If you are having suicidal thoughts, I can redirect this interview to the department of population control and I'm sure they would be happy to--

MR. LITTLE

Are you sure you can't just give me something?

DANIELLE

(SIGH)

Okay, Mr. Little. I have an idea. Bear with me.

SOUND: THE QUICK SOUND OF FINGERS TYPING ON A KEYBOARD. A DOCUMENT IS BEING PRINTED. A LOUD DING.

DANIELLE

There. It isn't perfect, but, it is... something.

SOUND: WE HEAR DANIELLE DROP A MANUAL ON THE DESK

MR. LITTLE

This is my manual?

DANIELLE

Yes, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE

And, I just... Do what it says and--

DANIELLE

If you do exactly as is written within the pages, you should find yourself adjusting to the world quite nicely, and I should never have to see you again.

MR. LITTLE

Do I have to?

DANIELLE

Is that the entire question, Mr. Little?

MR. LITTLE

What if I don't want to do EXACTLY what this book says?

DANIELLE

Do you remember those horrible things that you mentioned?

MR. LITTLE

Are you saying that if I ignore it...?

DANIELLE

Complete and utter devastation.

MR. LITTLE

(OPENING THE MANUAL)

Wait, what the hell?

DANIELLE

Is there a problem, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE

It says "Don't be a jerk, Mr. Little.". That's it? That can't be it.

DANIELLE

It is.

MR. LITTLE

What am I supposed to do with this? What do I do now?

DANIELLE

You leave, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE

How can I just go out there knowing what I know and-- What the hell am I supposed to do?

DANIELLE

The same thing you've always done, Mr. Little.

MR. LITTLE

Kill hundreds of people to save a turtle?

DANIELLE

You never saved a turtle.

MR. LITTLE

Fine. I sacrifice hundreds of people, and briefly delay the death of a turtle.

DANIELLE

No.

MR. LITTLE

Then what?!

DANIELLE

You improvise, Mr. Little.