

MEAT AND GREET

(A RADIO SHORT)

There is the beep and a crackle of a radio transmission

We hear David Attenborough/Brian Cox style narration...

NARRATOR

What follows is the verbatim transcript retrieved from a hacked NASA computer file, derived from the International Space Station's listening satellite orbiting the extreme outer rim of our solar system. The transmission is estimated to have come from a source some thirty-seven trillion light years' distance, and features a conversation between the Lieutenant of an as yet unidentified alien Invader Force, speaking via a form of telecommunication device with his Chief Intelligence Officer aboard an Intergalactic Deep Space Probe Vessel.

Apart from the transcript having been translated into English for ease of understanding, everything you are about to hear is absolutely true. Only the facts have been changed.

C.I.O

They're made out of *what?!*

LIEUTENANT

Meat, Sir. They're made out of meat.

C.I.O

Are you shitting me, Lieutenant?

LIEUTENANT

There's no doubt about it, Sir. We've harvested hundreds of 'em from every corner of their planet - which, by the way, *they* call "Earth."

C.I.O

Ha, what... like soil? Dirt??

LIEUTENANT

Yes Sir, the very same. We took the humans aboard and probed 'em all the way through. They're completely meat.

C.I.O

All the way through!? That's impossible. What about those radio messages we've been picking up?

LIEUTENANT

They use radio waves to talk, but the signals don't actually from them. The signals come from machines.

C.I.O

So, who made the machines? It's the intelligent life behind those machines, Lieutenant, and the messages who we want to contact.

LIEUTENANT

But that's what I'm trying to tell you, Sir. Meat made the machines.

C.I.O

Sentient meat! Ha, that's a good one!

LIEUTENANT

No joke, Sir. These creatures are the only sentient race in the sector.

C.I.O

Well, fuck me. Ah, I know: maybe they're a carbon-based intelligence that simply goes through a 'meat' stage.

LIEUTENANT

Nope. They're born meat and they die meat. We've been studying them for several of their life spans, which didn't take too long.

C.I.O

Okay, Lieutenant, I got it. They're only part meat. You know, like the Sylbatrons we came across on Ursa Fractotum. A meat head with an electron plasma brain inside.

LIEUTENANT

Sorry Sir, we thought of that already. Sure, they do have meat heads like the Sybs, but like I said - we probed 'em all the way through and all we got was meat.

C.I.O

No brain?

LIEUTENANT

Oh there's a sort of brain alright. A small one, made out of meat!

C.I.O

So Lieutenant, would you mind explaining to me what does the thinking?

LIEUTENANT

Apparently the brain does the thinking, Sir.

C.I.O

Thinking meat!? You're asking me to believe in thinking meat?!

LIEUTENANT

Yes, thinking meat! Conscious meat! Loving meat. Dreaming meat. The meat is the whole deal.

C.I.O

Let me tell you Lieutenant, this is the weirdest crap I've heard in my entire *lives*. They're made out of meat... all the fucking way through?

LIEUTENANT

Yes, Sir. And they've been trying to get in touch with us for almost a hundred of their Earth years.

C.I.O

So what does this meat from "Earth" have in mind?

LIEUTENANT

I guess it wants to talk to us. Then I imagine it wants to explore the universe, contact other sentient life-forms, swap ideas and information. The usual stuff.

C.I.O

Hang on one nano-second, Lieutenant. We're supposed to talk to meat?

LIEUTENANT

Evidently that's the message they're sending out, Sir. "*Hello. Anyone out there? Anyone home?*" That sort of thing. They also insist on playing what passes for their idea of music... for instance, we hear an awful lot of someone called 'David Bowie' who they claim is a singer.

C.I.O

Singing meat?!

LIEUTENANT

Exactly, Sir. It's all done by meat sounds. You know how when you slap or flap meat it makes a noise? That's how they communicate, by flapping their meat at each other.

C.I.O

This is really doing my head in. So Lieutenant, what do you advise?

LIEUTENANT

Officially or unofficially?

C.I.O

Both.

LIEUTENANT

Officially, Sir, we're required to contact, welcome, and file any and all sentient races in the quadrant without prejudice, fear, or favour.

C.I.O

I see.

LIEUTENANT

Unofficially, I advise that we erase the file records and forget the whole thing.

C.I.O

I was hoping you would say that. Seems harsh, but there is a limit. I mean, do we really want contact with meat?

LIEUTENANT

I agree one hundred percent, Sir. What's there to say? *"Hello meat, how's it going"* Nah, best we simply pretend there's no one at home on Earth.

C.I.O

And the ones who have been aboard our vessels? The ones you have probed?

LIEUTENANT

Sorted. We already went into their meat brains and smoothed it all out so that we're just a dream to them.

C.I.O

Excellent work, Lieutenant. And we can mark this sector officially unoccupied. Case closed.

END OF SCRIPT