

A man, a squid and a clown walk into an elevator...

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A man, a squid and a clown walk into an elevator...

by [Thrills \(IWantToRemainASecret\)](#)

Summary

Branzy is crushing hard on the dutch man he and Chief share their elevator rides with, and he seeks to learn Dutch in order to form a connection with him.

Too bad he can speak English.

Too bad Chief isn't going to stop Branzy.

Notes

I can't speak Dutch and don't trust google translate! So many many of these Dutch moments were translated by someone you likely have heard of before within this fandom, the wonderful: [Kununo!](#) (Thanks again mate!)

Anyway, another one-shot thingy, my pacing in these short fics I know can definitely be improved... but I just wrote this during my animation class and thought it may hold people over until my uni ends and I can update the long fics I got going. (Vig au is in progress)

Thanks for the support as always, PEACE!

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Branzy and Chief moved to the office elevator with the ease of anyone who had done so too many times to count. They chatted aimlessly about anything that came to mind really, anything but work.

"So that's why I could only wear my suit everywhere." Chief finished his story and Branzy laughed with delight.

"Glad you got them back; I was so confused when I was told to not wear shoes to work one morning..."

Branzy was about to say something else as they settled into the elevator when he became hyper aware of a presence behind him. He turned his head and stumbled forward slightly as he realised a man was behind him.

The man's gaze was kept forward, only glancing down when he noticed Branzy's fumble away. He smiled down at him and waved.

Branzy sheepishly smiled back, waving as he ducked his head and whipped his gaze to look at Chief.

"Hey," He whispered, garnering his friend's attention, "Who's that?" His eyes darted to the side to show who he meant, "No one uses this elevator at this time of day."

Chief tilted his head, looking over Branzy toward the tall man.

He had dark hair that was pulled messily into a bun, a black button up shirt and work slacks. A lanyard was across his neck. Chief squinted at it.

'Pearce - (Clown)'

Chief's eyes lit up in recognition, "Oh! That's Clown!" He whispered back to Branzy, "I don't know much about him, except I'm pretty sure he's Dutch from what I was told. He joined from our partner company in the Netherlands."

Branzy smiled bright at the information, but then paused. "Does he speak English?"

Chief shrugged, "I don't know, why don't you ask him?"

Branzy nodded and turned around, Clown was already looking down at him with an easy and expecting smile.

Branzy gulped, "Uh, hi! I'm Branzy, do you speak English? Chief said you're Dutch." He explained, pointing to his friend.

Clown tilted his head in query. "Hallo, no English."

Branzy frowned slightly, "Oh, uh..."

He grabbed his phone from his pocket and held up a finger to signal Clown to wait. Clown did, smiling still.

He hit a button on his phone and Chief jumped as the Google translate voice rang out a sentence. Which Branzy struggled to repeat.

"Hallo mijn naam is Branzy leuk je te ontmoeten." He said, and even without being Dutch Chief knew he butchered it.

But Clown smiled warmly at Branzy, and repeated the sentence with his own name, shaking Branzy's hand kindly. Chief sighed as he saw his friend's smitten face, knowing he was absolutely down bad already.

They returned to silence after the introduction, Branzy giddily googling Dutch phrases and YouTube tutorials.

"Why do you want to get to know him so bad?" Chief asked with a laugh.

Branzy grinned at him, glancing over his shoulder at Clown, noticing he was looking elsewhere. He looked back at Chief, "Because he's really cute." He admitted

Chief shook his head fondly, and they both waved goodbye to Clown as he left at his floor.

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"Hallo!" Branzy greeted Clown fondly, it was their third time in the elevator with him, and Chief had to admit... He was a little bitter that their daily elevator chats had been disrupted by this Dutch guy.

"Hallo!" Clown said back, grin sharp, "Hoe is het?"

Chief frowned because it sounded a lot like "who is it?" It seemed Branzy got the message, as he looked very victorious.

"Goed! Hoe is het?" Branzy responded. Clown laughed and clapped his hands.

"Ooh geweldig werk!" He praised. Branzy instantly frowned at his lack of understanding, causing Clown to laugh more.

Branzy shifted over to Chief dejectedly, "It's so hard to learn a new language..." He pouted.

"Only you Branzy, only you." Chief chuckled.

Branzy pouted more, "Only me what?"

"Only you would try and learn a language to woo someone."

"Well I can't woo him in English now, can I?" He huffed, crossing his arms.

Chief frowned, "Come to think of it, it's kind of weird for him to come to an English-speaking company without knowing any English..." He narrowed his eyes and glanced up at Clown, gaze suspicious.

Clown's eyes were facing forward but glanced down to meet Chief's. He smirked.

Then winked.

Chief let his jaw drop, embarrassment settling itself deep in the pit of his stomach. He whipped his head to Branzy, suddenly getting a wave of second-hand embarrassment for him.

"Hmm, I don't know, maybe he works in programming and doesn't need to speak or use English much?" Branzy said, too good for this world Branzy, stupid, naive, Branzy.

Chief looked back up at Clown with horror.

The man slowly rose a finger to his lips.

"Shhhh," He whispered, 'He's cute' He mouthed, pointing at Branzzy.

Branzy noticed Chief staring at Clown and lightly smacked him.

"Chiefy! Don't stare! That's rude." Branzzy chastised.

Chief slowly looked back at Branzzy, "A-And talking about someone behind their back isn't?"

Branzy rolled his eyes, popping his hip, "We're not talking behind his back, we're literally talking in front of him. Besides, we're only saying nice things."

Chief dug his nails into his palms and debated whether or not he should tell Branzzy that Clown could absolutely understand all the nice things they had been saying.

"Speaking of nice things," Branzzy begun, "His hair is down today! How pretty is that!"

Chief hesitantly glanced at Clown, who subtly flipped his hair, biting down his smile.

Chief withheld the urge to glare.

Oh this *bastard*.

"Yeah, it looks nice." Chief gritted out.

"Nice?! It looks *so* beautiful Chief! It's so voluminous! Such style!" Branzzy quickly glanced at Clown and back to Chief, "Do you think it feels as silky as it looks?"

Chief internally screamed. "Probably."

The elevator dinged for Clowns stop, he waved at the pair like usual, Chief glared at him coldly.

Clown nodded his head to the side, eyeing Chief. Chief nodded slow in reply.

"Uh, one sec Branzzy, I actually have to talk to Cube for a moment. I'll see you upstairs, alright?" Chief said, stepping off the lift.

Branzy frowned but nodded, "Alright, see you there!"

The doors slid shut and Chief crossed his arms as an attempt to appear menacing.

"Alright, what the hell dude?"

Clown grinned, "You gotta admit, it's hilarious, right?"

Chief sighed and nodded, "Yeah, okay, but you can't play with my boy Branzzy's heart like that! He's too good for this!" He defended.

Clown just continued to beam, "He's learning Dutch for me." He said, so softly and warmly that Chiefs previous assumptions went out the window.

"Oh, oh god, you like him too? You like him too and you torture him this way?!"

Clown rifled through his pockets and pulled out a ten dollar note, smacking it into Chiefs hand.

"Are... Are you bribing me to not tell him?"

"Yep." He said slyly. "How much is Branzzy's pride worth to you?"

Chief paused, thinking.

He shoved the first note into his pocket and held out his other hand, fingers wiggling expectantly. "Twenty bucks."

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Chief walked into the elevator the next day twenty bucks richer, guilt gnawing at his brain for the betrayal he committed. But also... Clown was right, it was kind of funny.

Branzy had learnt another sentence today, clearly, because he was bouncing on his feet as they headed to the elevator.

"Jij ziet er knap uit... Jij ziet er knap uit... Jij ziet er knap uit..." He repeated in a mutter, he took a deep breath before they turned the corner to the lift.

"What's wrong?" Chief said with concern.

"Uh, no, I'm fine just... Um." He shook his hands, "I can do this, I can do this..."

Chief rose a brow and put a hand on his shoulder, guiding him to the elevator, "We're gonna be late Branzzy, calm down, you're probably pronouncing it right."

"Hah! Yeah!" Branzzy said quickly, he gulped as they neared the lift, Clown just stepping in, his eyes lit up and he waved. "Ah!" Branzzy said as they entered, "Hallo!"

"Hallo!" Clown greeted joyously, "Je ziet er prachtig uit zoals altijd." He said pleasantly, "Hoe is het?"

"Uh, good! I mean uh, goed! Yeah, goed." He gulped, and Chief noted his hands were shaking, "You- Uh, Jij ziet er..." He smiled, pausing "Laat maar." He said firmly, turning around and whining silently into his hands.

"That wasn't what you said on the way here..." Chief frowned, "You okay?"

"I couldn't do it Chief!" Branzzy whisper-hissed, "He-He, how am I meant to focus when he looks at me like *that*!?"

"Like what? Like he enjoys your company?" Chief snorted.

"Yes!" Branzzy sighed, "I-I wanted to call him handsome but, well, I can't do that, we've only seen each other like, what, four times now? God. I can't do that." He played with the buttons on his

shirt.

“Aw, Branzy, I’m sure he’d be flattered.” He sent a sneaky glare at Clown, he *better* be.

Clown stepped next to Branzy and bent his knees, so he was eye level, and he frowned as he looked remorseful.

“Ben je oké?”

“Ja.” Branzy drawled with a sigh, looking up to meet Clown’s gaze, he blushed brightly. “Ben je oké?”

The corner of Clown’s eyes creased, “Ik ben nu.”

Branzy jolted and look at Clown in confusion, the man stepped back and smiled to himself, looking at Chief and shooting him a thumbs up as soon as Branzy turned to his back to Clown.

Branzy’s scrambled over to Chief, grabbing his arm and looking at him with wide eyes.

“Chief, Chief, I think, I think he just flirted with me.”

Chief laughed in shock, “What? Really?”

“Well-I don’t know, maybe, uh, I’m unsure. If I understood that correctly he said, ‘I am now.’”

“Branzy that doesn’t help when I didn’t understand the rest of the conversation.”

“Right, of course, um, he asked if I was okay, and I said yeah are you okay.”

“And he said, ‘I am now?’” Chief said, glancing at Clown, “Hm, smooth.” Clown shot him a victorious smile. “You know Branzy, if he did do that, clinging onto me may give him the wrong idea.”

Branzy let go of Chief like he burned him, “Oh my god, you’re totally right, I did not show any signs of interest. Shit, what’s thanks in Dutch? Wait, no, that isn’t a good answer to that, how do I respond to that anyway?!”

“Easy,” Chief said, watching the elevator ding for Clown’s stop, “You don’t.”

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Chief could see Clown getting slightly frustrated with Branzy, each time he came in, a new compliment on his tongue, he would flounder and divert to something else. Chief found himself hiding his grin as Clown would openly gesture behind Branzy’s back to Chief, as if to say: ‘Are you seeing this guy?!’

Chief would just smugly grin, no longer regretting earning twenty bucks, it seemed Branzy was messing with Clown back in his own, oblivious way.

Today was a Friday, and Chief was hyped for the weekend. It also marked the third week of Branzy meeting Clown, and he wondered if Branzy had a new sentence to say today.

Branzy walked in with him as always, looking nervous, Chief snorted, “What you gonna say today Branzy?”

Branzy’s eyes darted to Chief with worry, “Hey, don’t you think it’s um... It’s funny that Clown hasn’t learnt any English? You’d think if he actually wanted to talk to me like I want to talk to him, that he’d try to learn some English, right?” Chief blinked at the word vomit, “Maybe, maybe I really have no chance with him.” He whined, shoving his palms against his eyes

“What? Hey, no, he is clearly super hyped that you’re learning Dutch!” Chief defended, they started toward the elevator, and Branzy worked on fixing his hair; messy from how his fingers had carded into it.

“I don’t know... He barely even tries to talk to me.”

“That’s just because he knows you wouldn’t understand him!”

“Then why doesn’t he make the effort to get me to understand?” Branzy frowned.

They waved as they entered the lift, Clown brightened instantly.

“Hallo Branzy!” He greeted brightly, “Ik hou van jou.” He said softly, a serious expression across his face.

Branzy froze and looked at Clown funny, then shook his head, “Uh, must have misheard that, um, hallo Clown!”

Clown beamed, and waited, Branzy paused.

“Um... Jji bent,” He grit his teeth and turned around, “Ah! I can’t do it!” He whined.

Clown sighed very loudly in frustration, but it went unheard as Branzy started muttering to himself about “he’s too pretty I can’t, I can’t, oh my god, I couldn’t even date him I can barely talk to him!”

Clown looked at Chief and gestured for him to do something. Chief grunted and leant near Branzy, “Branzy, if you don’t confess to him first thing next week, then I am going confess and steal your man, so help me.”

Branzy paled and looked at him with fear, “You wouldn’t.”

“I would.”

Branzy glared, and knew he was being serious, Chief did the stupidest stuff to prove a point or just to see if he could.

“Fine... Fine, next week, Monday, I’ll... I’ll say something.”

“You better!” Chief said, he sent Clown a withering glare as Branzy glanced at the man briefly.

Olive branch is out Clown, your move.

Chief did not have a peaceful weekend, because Chief liked to hang out with his friends on the weekend, and one such friend was Branzzy himself.

Of course, it meant all their other friends, very hyper aware of Branzzy's crush, were now aware of his now impending time limit. And suggestions on how to go about it were thrown out into the air with various levels of quality.

"Just kiss him." Ash suggested in a monotone voice, "That's something anyone can understand in any language."

"He doesn't even know I like him! I'm not going to do that." Branzzy shot down.

"Kiss his hand then." Ash shrugged.

Branzy tapped his chin, then whipped out his phone and added the suggestion to his notes.

"Just say he looks nice, that'll give him the hint. Plus, Dutch is probably more complex than English, maybe you can say he looks nice with like the intention to flirt? So then there's no guessing." Rek suggested.

"I probably am just going to say as much, I'm not going to go for the 'I love you' off the bat. I mean, I really don't know much about him. I did once ask his favourite colour though, it's red." He smiled into his hand, "Rood."

"Wow, that's an easy one to understand."

"It's not actually as different as you'd think, at least hello is obvious, hallo."

"Branzy, I think no matter how you choose to confess, it'll all work out." Chief said, patting his friend on the back. "Just go for it!"

"Or you will?" Branzzy snarked.

"Or I will." Chief agreed with a smug smile.

-

Monday came slow and fast all at once, and Chief could nearly feel Branzzy approach him from how jittery the man was, his energy was practically palpable.

"Good luck soldier! Seduce the man!" Chief cheered, and Branzzy gulped.

"I, uh, I'm gonna try."

"You got this! It's easy, just say, 'Hey I have a crush on you' in Dutch!"

"I had no idea how to translate that without it translating to literal crushing." Branzzy admitted. "I'm just gonna say he looks nice."

Chief sighed, "I doubt that'll make him think you have a crush on him, but it'll at least help with something."

“I’ll... Wink afterward?” Branzy offered sheepishly.

“Sure,” Chief laughed, “Sure, that’ll work.”

Branzy’s joking attitude switched back to one of jitters as they spotted Clown, he was waiting by the elevator, perking up as he saw them and calling the elevator with a press of a button.

“Hey Clown!” Chief greeted, waving his hand, smug.

“Hallo!” Clown greeted, turning to Branzy, “Hallo, Branzy.”

“Hallo.” Branzy squeaked, the elevator door opened and Branzy ran in. Clown frowned at the reaction, glancing at Chief, Chief shrugged and walked in.

The three stood, Branzy didn’t say anything as the door slid shut, nor anything as they hit their first level.

“Branzy, come on.” Chief urged, “You’re losing your chance.”

Branzy shook, “I don’t know if I can do this actually...”

“Branzy.” Chief scolded, “You’re a catch, now go let Clown know you’re interested.” He shoved him toward Clown, who looked at him at hearing his name.

Branzy stumbled on his foot but stared up at Clown, playing with his fingers. “Um, hallo...”

“Hallo.” Clown responded again.

“Uh, um,” Branzy stared deep into Clown’s eyes, and became instantly entranced. He slumped forward and sighed dreamily, “Jji bent knap...” He nearly whispered, just loud enough for Chief to hear, but said quietly, nonetheless. Chief grinned proudly.

Way to go, lavender.

Branzy’s confidence dissipated as he realised, he did in fact say that out loud, he winced, “Uh, ja, I mean, so yeah. Um...”

Clown laughed, “Thank you.” He said softly.

Branzy jolted, “Oh! Oh you know how to say that!”

“Ja.”

“Oh, that’s good- Wait,” He narrowed his eyes, “You could understand that sentence?”

Clown just continued to smile.

Chief decided he had enough of this game, and wanted to start a new one to get it to end, “Argh, see Branzy? He got the compliment but that wasn’t enough!” He jutted a thumb at his chest, “Therefore! I win.”

“What?” Branzy snapped, “No way! I said it! I said he was beautiful! That counts!”

“No it doesn’t! You needed more than that.” Chief crossed his arms, “Now I get to confess.”

“But you don’t even like him like I do!” Branzy defended, “You haven’t even bothered to try and

talk to him!”

“I don’t need to try.” Chief said boldly, “I just do.” He stepped up to Clown, lightly pushing Branzy away from him. “Hey Clown.” He said grinning, “Wanna go on a date with me?” He winked, hoping Clown got where this should be going.

Branzy shoved Chief out of the way, “Hey! No! Besides, that won’t even work! He won’t know what that means!”

“Oh yeah? Then you should have no problem saying it to his face then.”

Branzy rolled his eyes, “Ah, yeah, obviously,” He cleared his throat and faced Clown head on, “Clown, I have a huge crush on you, would you like to go on a date with me?”

Clown’s warm and soft smile returned, “Sure, I’d love to.” He said softly.

“See?! It’s that easy!” Branzy said, whirling on Chief, then freezing up, and looking at Clown, “Uh, sorry, could you repeat that?”

“I said sure, love to.” Clown kindly informed, hands going behind his back as he rocked on his heels, he smirked, “Took you long enough, you dork.”

Branzy stared, the elevator dinged, Clown hummed. “Looks like that’s my stop.” He took an exaggerated step forward, Branzy’s hand quickly snatched his wrist, tugging him back in. Clown grinned wider.

“What.” Branzy hissed, “The fuck?” He asked, the door slid shut, and the elevator moved again.

“Branzy, darling, I’m going to be late for work.”

Branzy blushed, but his surprise quickly flickered back to rage, “You, you... You could speak English?! This whole time?!”

“Mhm!” Clown confirmed, “Chief knew, too, by the by.”

Branzy snapped his head to look at Chief, a fury in his eyes Chief had forgotten he could have.

“Uh, okay, to be fair... He did pay me to keep quiet.”

“He what?” Branzy growled lowly, he grabbed Clown’s shirt, tugging him down to his eye level, “You BRIBED him?!”

“Twenty bucks.” Clown confirmed with a nod, he leaned forward and lightly kissed Branzy’s nose, “You’re still cute when you’re angry.”

Branzy stammered, letting Clown go and stumbling back till his back hit the elevator wall, he whined and slid down it to he was on the floor. “I can’t believe this, Chief, how? How could you let me embarrass myself this much, for so long, FOR ONLY TWENTY BUCKS?!” He shouted, voice echoing off the small container’s walls, the two other men jumped. Branzy shot to his feet, beginning to pace.

“Only twenty?! Are you serious Chief?! Take at least fifty! I’m worth more than that!” He pointed at Clown accusatorily, “You had this guy at your fingertips! You could have had anything in exchange for keeping quiet, and you chose twenty bucks?! Dream big Chief!”

Chief felt a laugh rise to his nervous throat, “I’m sorry, Branzy, are you more upset about me

being bribed for twenty, and not that Clown has been able to understand you this whole time?”

“Oh I’m mad about that too, but at least that shows he was never uncomfortable about it! I think? Hey!” He darted back towards Clown, who backed up, hands risen defensively with palms up, “Did it make you uncomfortable?”

“Nope.” Clown said with a shaking head, “Thought it was cute you were taking the effort to learn Dutch for me.”

“Yet you still thought it was funny to withhold the vital information of you speaking English for THREE WEEKS?!”

Clown grinned, “Yes!”

Branzy slumped, “My god, you’re a prankster too,” He reached up and cupped Clown’s cheeks, “We’re *perfect* for each other.”

Clown’s eyes lit up even more than they had been, he giggled, “I agree! So, wanna go out for coffee after work?”

“Yeah.” Branzy croaked, then smirked, “Hey, so you DID say you loved me that day huh? I thought I misheard you.”

“He said what?” Chief spluttered.

“Yeah.” Clown hummed, holding a hand over the one on his cheek, “Ik hou van jou.”

Branzy melted. “Yeah, yeah, me too.”

The elevator door opened, and the three occupants inside froze.

Zam, their fellow co-worker, stood on the other side midway through a sip of his coffee. He paused, seeing Branzy leaning up against Clown, who was pressed against the corner of the elevator. And of course, Chief stood on the opposing corner, slightly flustered to be seen near such an open display of affection.

Zam sipped his coffee, slowly, then shrugged, “Alright then.” He muttered, “I don’t think I want to know.” He walked away from the three, and the elevator, having expected the occupants to have left by now, slid shut again.

End Notes

Translations:

Hallo mijn naam is Branzy leuk je te ontmoeten = Hello my name is Branzy nice to meet you

Hoe is het = how are you

goed = good

geweldig werk = good work

Jij ziet er knap uit = you look very handsome

Je ziet er prachtig uit zoals altijd = you look as beautiful as always

Laat maar = nevermind/forget it

Ben je oké = are you okay?

Ja = yes

Ik ben nu = I am now

Jji bent knap = you are beautiful

ik hou van jou = I love you

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