

Excerpt from *In The Tank*

STU

Humans carry within them the seeds of their own destruction. And they do stupid things. Sometimes they invent stupid things.

HARRY

Like what?

STU

Oh, like, plastic explosives, 357 magnums, unbuckled seat belts, frozen margaritas, atom bombs, lucky strikes, breast implants, separating tire treads, thick steaks, toxic waste, crack cocaine, too much aerosol, not enough sunblock, six-packs of lager in twenty-ounce cans---

HARRY

How come they never figure all that stuff out?

STU

That's easy. See, you and I and every other living thing, we all have something they haven't got.

HARRY

What's that?

STU

Instinct. We have lots and lots of instincts.

HARRY

And they don't?

STU

Uh-huh. Just brains. Lots of brains. The way I see it, there wasn't any room left for instincts after they put in all the brains. See, instincts automatically tell you many things.

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HARRY

You mean, like something bigger than us is in charge?

STU

Exactly. We just naturally get that.

HARRY

Hey! I'll bet because they got that brain thing going, they think they're in charge.

STU

Correct.

HARRY

So, they've got no instincts at all?

STU

Well, there is one major exception. The basic plan had to be altered to make sure there would be enough of them to go around. They did get the mating instinct but it was wedged in, sort of, added on at the last minute? And feature this. When that kicks in, their brains shut down completely.

HARRY

Huh. So they can't mate and think at the same time?

STU

It's a physical impossibility. They get to do one or the other. Never both simultaneously.

HARRY

Whoa! The screwups that must lead to! And I always thought they had it made.

STU

The seaweed always looks greener in the other tank.