

Super Cashiers

Supermarket people

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DEDICATION

I wrote two books set in the mall and supermarket: *La città senza uscita* (in Italian version) and *Dear customer*.

The stories told in the format I'm about to initiate are partly inspired by those two texts, but also by probable situations.

Having worked for nearly thirty years in the field, I have been able to observe the category, but in this space, there is no demand of psychological or social analysis. Who is lonelier than those who work for the public?

Who is cashier?

From the dictionary:

Who in a company of friends administers the common money, who in an administration handles the cash with the task of performing the collections and the payments, who in a public business makes the receipts of the retail sale to the clients is a cashier.

Every cashier is the projection of the store where they work; and, being an image, represents the company. Some of these people sacrifice themselves, others don't give a damn, others suffer the situation.

Super people Supermarket's cashiers, to stand out from those of a normal business, like to define themselves as Super Cashiers.

Every day they work with the public and think of themselves as subtle psychologists, they believe they can understand someone's character from the items they buy. They often lose their temper, struggle to express their personality. Above all, they are persuaded of having a supernatural power that derives from managing a sacred thing: the queue.

CONDITIONS

Lady Poffin: – The girl in the red coat, please get ahead the line.

Male customer: – How come the girl can jump the line?

LP: – How come, how come, how come... because yes! I manage the line and I know what must be done.

Following customer: – But the sir is right. This way there is no reason to get in line at all.

LP: – So that's sisterhood, uh? I can get his whining, he's a man, but not yours, my dear and lovely...

Following customer: – Sisterhood *what?* We are all in a hurry here.

LP: – Can't you see in what state that girl is in? Hey, come here, don't hide yourself. Look at her: pregnant people, be they men or women, jump the line. That's the rule in a civilized country. Clear?

Girl in the red coat: – Thanks, but actually... I'm just a bit overweight.

LP: – Uh... just a bit? Are you sure you are not pregnant? You have a gaze that... You know, I have four children, I know what I say.

Girl in the red coat: – No, I'm telling you... I'm just robust. And also... I'm sure ma'am.

LP: – How can you be so sure? You are a bit presumptuous, my dear and lovely girl...

Girl in the red coat: – I can't have children, ma'am. I assure you...

LP: – Well, ok. Hey, folks: let the fat girl get back in the line! By the way, you never know in life, get you read fortune in the cards, don't waste your time. Go to my colleague Lola, she is very good...

Following customer: – Nice show, compliments, ma'am.

LP: – Obese or pregnant, fertile or sterile, it's always a condition. Don't be so sarcastic my dear lady...

FAMILY

- What a nice baby bump, my dear and beloved honey...
- I'm in the seventh month!
- Is it the first?
- Yes!
- Uh, okay, I already have four...
- Boy!
- Eh...
- How bravely!
- How are you gonna name him?
- It's a girl. We will name her Athena like the goddess of wisdom...

- It’s funny to choose the name because it’s true that “omen nomen”...
- Hopefully...
- No, it’s true, trust me.
- What’s your children’s name?
- Well, the first one is 9 years old and he’s name is Ronaldo, of course he’ll be a A-league soccer player but we would like him to play in England too. The second one is 7 years old and he’s name is Elvis because my husband is a fan and therefore, the kid will work in music industry. The third is a girl, she’s 4 y.o. and I named her Angelina because I want her to work in the motion picture business.
- And the last one?
- The last one is actually a girl and we named her Madonna.
- Uh, so another singer...
- No, like the Mother of God.
- Oh, I dare not to think of her future...
- My husband and I thought faith is important.
- Of course it’s important...
- Yes, indeed.

- This world is full of snares, dangers...
- Eh, tell me that!
- All those incidents you hear...
- A special care is never enough for a numerous household...
- You have such a nice family!
- Thank you. Family is a gift...
- Are you planning to stop here or...
- Who knows? It's over a year that I've been working, after my maternity leave...
- Well... with four kids, at least three years off work for each one...
- Of course, I take what's owed me, otherwise, why bother?
- I see, it makes sense...
- Uh, and it must be worth it!
- You're so right!
- If it's worth the risk, fine, otherwise bye bye...
- Then bye beautiful lady, see you...
- Goodbye honey, good luck for everything...

AGGRESSION

Vacca: - Can you please make the kid shut up? I have to work and my head aches...

Man in the line: - I'm sorry.

Vacca: - You're sorry but the kid is still messing around...

Man in the line: - You have to be patient with kids...

Vacca: - ... and what if I get the counts wrong?

Man in the line: - Whatever, you are right. You don't have kids, don't you?

Vacca: - Aside from the fact that I have two little daughters, it's not your business...

Man in the line: - Oh God, what a prickly man!

Vacca: - That's because I'm a discreet person.

Man in the line: - Alright. I need four bags.

Vacca: - Why do you need any bag if you have a carriage?

Man in the line: - Does it bother you even to give me some bags?

Vacca: - No it doesn't, but you make too many weird requests...

Man in the line: - You got up on the wrong side of the bed this morning, uh...?

Vacca: - My private life is none of your business!

Man in the line: - You are amazing: are you serious?

Vacca: - Who?

Man in the line: - No, it's my fault. I'm sorry. It doesn't matter.

Vacca: - Mmmh...

Man in the line: - I pay with credit card.

Vacca: - One thing at a time. I already have to make this count, which is long enough, and then we'll see if it's possible...

Man in the line: - "We'll see if it's possible" my foot. I pay with credit card!

Vacca: - The connection with the bank comes and goes...

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Man in the line: - That's not my problem, I'm warning you I'll pay with credit card...

Vacca: - Listen, you don't need to repeat things again and again, I'm not stupid!

Manager: - Vacca, what's the problem?

Vacca: - There is this guy here who's threatening me and insulting me!

Man in the line: - First thing, I'm not *this guy here*, try to learn how to manage with customers. Mr. Manager, you cashier is obstructing everything, it bothers him even to give me a bag... and then I didn't insulted or threaten anybody!

Vacca: - No, you really said *I'm WARNING you I'll pay with credit card!*

Everybody heard it, and then you repeated it many times, like implying I'm someone who doesn't get a thing!

Manager: - Vacca, stop! Can you please end it? Get back on your work and work off the line. And apologize to the customer!

Vacca: - No, I won't apologize with anybody. At this point, I refuse to cash his groceries and I'll go to the toilet.

Manager: - Vacca, if you throw a tantrum again I'll submit a suspension. I'm fed up with your freak-outs. We can't go on like this!

Vacca: - It's all that kid's fault, who made a fuss while I was having a headache!

Manager: - What kid, Vacca?

Vacca: - That guy's son... assuming that he's actually his son, he doesn't even look like him!

Man in the line: - Manager, please get him away from me before I rip this fool's head off!

Vacca: - Have you heard him, manager? He's insulting and threatening me, I don't know what else to say. It was better if I didn't leave the bed this morning!

Manager: - I agree with that, Vacca.

Vacca: - Can you see? When you use your brain, you agree with me! It was a real aggression, my dear manager...

OBSESSION

- Canapone? Come here a second, please...
- But I have to do something...
- Just a sec...
- But, if the manager sees us, then...
- Oh, right... because he doesn't want you to talk to me, does he?
- He doesn't want us to waste our time at all.
- Uh, because for you talking to me is a waste of time?
- What do you want from me, what's up?
- In your opinion, am I jerk?
- No...
- No, tell me, do you think are they mad at me here?

- What are you talking about, Ciccio...
- How did you just call me?
- Sorry, I meant Vacca!
- Eh, you even pick the wrong name, but we've known for a long time...
- I got confused, I'm sorry...
- Yes, but you called me with De Straccio's name...
- Forgive me...
- Alright, but how could you get confused? Do I look like Dello Straccio?
- No, you're right...
- Whatever, let's pick this up later...
- Eh...
- To get back to what I was saying, I mean, today the manager barely spoke one or two words to me...
- Well, maybe it was a coincidence...
- Ah no, I saw you two talking confidentially, about half an hour ago; to me, instead, he's distant...
- It's just an impression...

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- How many words did he say to you?
- I don't know, it's not like I count them...
- Next time, count them: you'll see I'm right...
- Fine...
- No it's not, because I need to speak, to communicate, to express myself... here, instead, it's like you're avoiding me...
- Absolutely no!
- So why are you sighing and looking up: I'm boring you, maybe?
- What are you talking about, are you crazy?
- Oh, I see. So you think I'm crazy?
- It was in a caring tone, Vacca.
- No tell me: am I obnoxious to you, Canapone?
- Vacca, you're the perfect colleague!
- Really?
- I'm saying that!
- But, earlier you called me with Dello Straccio's name...
- I got confused, Vacca...

– Mah, I don't know...

– Oh God, bollocks, Vacca...

– Ah, you're being rude to me... see?

– ... oh, fuck you, come on!

– Ah, no, what should I think? Canapone, tell me it's not true, here you have all the symptoms of a mobbing!

– What mobbing, Vacca: it's just that you are a jerk, obsessed pain in the ass: nobody can stand you, even the customers!

– Uh, well... see I was right? Now you admit it. Oh, you are stubborn and false, I always thought it and now I have evidences... ah, now I feel better!

HOROSCOPE

- Good morning.
- Mah... if it's a good morning for you...
- I just greeted you.
- Yes, but there's no empathy between us, or else you'd never say *good morning* to me.
- Miss, I'm no psychologist...
- About that, working with people, some help from a specialist could be useful!
- Oh dear: why?
- Nervous system suffers too many blows!
- They should allow you some benefits, then.
- I wish! We are too emotionally exposed and that causes problems.

- Everybody has problems. You just have to leave them behind.
- Whatever, like I didn't say anything. You didn't get my mood.
- No, I didn't.
- You said *good morning*, but sometimes you have to think before you speak.
- Please, explain. Now I'm curious.
- It's clearly not a good morning.
- I figured that out, but I don't understand all the rest.
- You don't watch TV, do you?
- Well, it happens that I work for the radio.
- Yes, alright... so, I was going out when they passed the horoscope on TV.
- Are you a Libra?
- Yes, how you... well of course, you can see I'm elegant, classy...
- I can see indeed...
- Bah... anyway, they only gave me two stars this month, can you believe it?
- I see...

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- No, you don't: otherwise you wouldn't have given me your reckless *good morning* and you would have gone to another check-out!
- I came to you because it's the only check-out open at 8 a.m.

- Oh, so you came to me because I was the only one available?

- Unfortunately yes, Miss.

- Ah, but I'm going on leave or, given my adverse fate, I can take a sick leave... otherwise I'm going to run away, I don't know, California maybe...

- Can you go after I pay my check?

- Card or cash?

- Credit card, Miss...

- Can you give me the card... Mrs... Simona La Perla? The astrologist on the radio?

- Yes, that's me.

- Uh, but I follow you everyday.

- Really?

- Yes, because I'm kind of a witch, and also a bit meteoropathic, empathic...

- Ah, I see...

- Miss La Perla, please tell me something good about Libras!

– On Libras? Measure, tare and equilibrium... Miss... ?

– Capovolta! I'm Lola Capovolta!

– Good Lola, remember: the horoscope is no verdict.

Tare and equilibrium for Libras? She mocked me and then, she's not that good. By the way, I'm putting the sign, so people will get it.

Patrons are reminded this checkout will give irregular service due to astrological issues of the operator. We apologize for the inconvenience.

MISS LOLA - PRONUNCIATION

- *Fopping* bag?

- What?

- I'm a *Fking* you if you want a *Fopping* bag...

- Uh, I thought it was: *flopping* bag!

- No, well, it's that today I'm *Fuffering* of a *liFp*... another lady earlier pointed it out to me. I *Fink* I have to put a warning...

Patrons are reminded that today this check-out will provide an imbecile service due to operator's pronunciation.

We apologize for the inconvenience.

- Miss Capovolta, you put another warning: what's up today?

- Diction *iFfue*, manager. I even wrote it.

- Yes, I read it. What problem exactly?

- I have a lisp, I *F*putter, you know...
- It's called sigmatism. And does this lisp come and go?

- Eh *yeF*, *yeF*terday I hadn't, maybe it *burFt laFt* night...
- Everyday you have a now one, Miss.

- I can't help it if everything keep*FF* happening to me, darn... *Fee*, now I feel like crying...
- Miss Capovolta, stop it...

- Look I cant' do anything about it, it *muFt* be a *pF*ychological problem...
- Ah, sure...

- ...and you can't tell me off in front of everybody, *F*haming me and then who know*F* what people will think... see, now I feel like crying again...
- Have a tissue, Miss...

- Oh no, it's *juFt* I'm *Fo* emotional...
- I didn't get it, what did you say?

- That'*F* becau*Fe* I have a *liFp*! What, are you making fun of me now?
- I don't thing this condition prevents you from working...

- *YeF*, it doe*F*, becau*Fe* I work with the public and appearance is important...
- Well, what do you want to do then?

- I don't know, now I'm taking a *pauFe*, I'll have a cake and then if it *paFFeF*, we'll *Fee*...

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- You already took your break, Miss Capovolta.

- But now I don't feel well! What do you want, that I chatch *Fomething* bad? Then *Fay* that you are up*Fet* with me, my*Felf*: you're *Fo* in*FenFitive*!

ROBBERY

- This is a Robbery, empty the drawer!
- No, today, I don't touch money...
- By which you mean?
- In this cash only Cash card payments. I don't handle coins or banknotes...
- And why?
- I'm an objector. Cash disgust me...
- But does money in general make you this effect or just cash?

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- No, only cash.
- Why are you doing the cashier at the supermarket?
- Well, but what does it mean...
- You need respect even for cash...
- Look who's talking about respect!
- Well, rob is like any other job!
- Job?
- You don't know the risks that come in this craft...
- Craft?
- And you working for a multinationals of trade... Do you think you have a clean conscience?
- Yes, why?
- Because the concept of mall, where consumerism and surplus value and blah blah blah and then again blah blah blah and again blah blah blah...
- You're right. I didn't think about it. It is a wrong logic, though dominant.
- The logic of this world is foolishness in front of God!
- Hmm... what does it mean?

- This is a sentence from the first letter from Saint Paul to the Corinthians...
- Are you sure it Wasn't a spot?
- Yes, I'm... and anyway, do you know you're really great?
- Yes, of course I know... but you also have charm...
- How do you see a robber along with a cashier?
- ... objector...
- Of course, objector...
- Eh, I see them together! But do you know how I see you?
- Tell me...
- You're like Antonio Lupin who steals in supermarkets to give to starving...
- Well, thank you, but I work in my own...
- What a shame...
- Why?
- Because I was already deluding myself...
- No, don't do this...

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- I'm really pushover...
- Hear me: I wait for you after the robbery?
- But you're a little rascal, aren't you?
- Well, but it's your profession that takes you to this...
- Well, then when I finish the shift and you finish your turn, we'll meet at the bar around the corner!
- See you later!
- Miss Capovolta?
- Tell me, director.
- What's this about you sending customers to other queues?
- No, I don't throw away anyone, I only accept Cash card payments because today banknotes disgust me...
- Today are they disgust you?
- Yes.
- And not the other days, right?
- Well, but sooner or later, you have to start doing something against this system. I start today!
- Oh, but why don't you ever start working?

- Director, stop persecuting me or I'll say it to my boyfriend. He's a robber and he'll give you a lesson...

- Where are you going now, by God?

- Now I get up because I fell like crying...

MEDITATION

- Miss Capovolta?
- Tell me director...
- What happens to the cashier of Dello Straccio?
- Dello Straccio is doing meditation...
- What?
- Customers show they like it...
- Are you joking?
- Why?

- Tell him to resume work immediately!
- No, I don't go there...
- Are you afraid of Dello Straccio?
- I'm not afraid of anyone. But also we workers need our spaces!
- But are you all crazy here?
- Director... against the weariness of modern life, a little meditation works well!
- Now I'm going to Dello Straccio...
- No, director, you can't...
- What are you doing? Why don't you let pass?
- I meant... you don't have to do it, director...
- Don't I have to? What does it mean I don't do it?
- Those customers have paid...
- They paid for what?
- The cost of the course...
- Are you're telling me Dello Straccio holds paid meditation courses at work and during the service hours?

- That’s right, director...

- A meditation course in the vortex of confusion? Here in the belly of consumerism? If it wasn’t an idea of Dello Straccio, I’d say it’s brilliant!

- Why don’t you sign up too? You will do you good...

- Doesn’t it look like a demonstration of weakness?

- No, indeed...

- What is the course?

- You just have to be silent.

- That’s all?

- Yes.

- And how much does it cost?

- Fifty euros a month, once a week...

- Fifty euros just to stay silent?

- Sure. It’s very therapeutic.

- Capovolta: How long has this story been going on?

- For a week. The minister has had a recent appointment...

- The minister?

- Yes, Dello Straccio is practically a kriya minister...
- Hmm... do you think I could get a discount?
- And why?
- Well, after all, I'll let you do it in the supermarket's spaces...
- I think so, Director. I think we can reach an agreement...
- Speaking of which, Miss Capovolta. What's your role in this business?
- Yeah, I didn't think about it. I have no role. Now I'm going to talk to Dello Straccio...

###

- Dello Straccio?
- Hi, Lola.
- I have to talk to you...
- I know...
- How do you know?
- Eh, I'm practically a kriya minister... I know what I must know.
- What role do I have in this business?

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- A very important and fundamental role!
- Ah... By which you mean?
- You are my first assistant!
- Really?
- Sure!
- What have I to do?
- You must precede me, announce me, take notes...
- And what do I get out of it?
- Nothing.
- Nothing?
- You said cash disgust you and I chose you for this reason!
- Cash disgust me, not money in general.
- I know, but the matter is set up in this way...
- Well, but remember you can't practice at work and during the working timetable...
- Who says this?
- I say so!

- Ah, so you stab me in the back? I didn't expect a thing like this from you...
- So, can we end everything like this?
- A moment, why end...
- Do you think we can't find a solution?
- I can do a step back, you can do step back...
- Meaning what?
- We can agree on tips.
- I didn't know classmates left tips.
- They aren't really tips. Let's say we do them a subscription and a free but compulsory offer, and that's what you get.
- Really?
- Yeah. It's a bargain. Sometimes you will earn more than me.

ADVERB

- Are you free?
- Freedom is a question mark, ma'am.
- Oh, a cashier-philosopher, good!
- Super-Cashier, ma'am... Not only a philosopher though, I paint too...
- Oh, a full-formed artist...
- For that matter, I'm a poet too!
- Darn! ... anything else?
- Yes, I also have a socially responsible soul...
- Really?
- Well, I was the first of those unelected at local council elections...
- Were you a nominee of the neighborhood?

- Yes ma'am, my slogan was: Ciccio Dello Straccio, from the verb "to do"!
- A piece of work, indeed!
- Why, you didn't recognize me?
- I've been living here for a month...
- So, you mean, you didn't vote for me?
- No, I'm sorry...
- What a pity... are you living in the neighborhood for working reasons?
- I work at the hospital, I'm a gynecologist and recently I've been transferred here...
- Ah, so you are graduate, aren't you?
- Well, of course I hold a degree...
- I'm *practically* graduated too...
- What does *practically* mean?
- I dropped university, because ma'am, it's life that gives you a degree...
- Well, you don't seem to need any, being already a poet, a painter, a politician...
- Uh, don't believe that's easy... sometimes I wish I was a normal person...

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- Is there something that prevents you from pursuing it?
- Responsibilities, ma'am... actually I'm *practically* the manager of this place too...
- In conclusion, this adverb causes you a lot of commitment...
- Which adverb?
- No, it's like a metaphor. I mean, the fact you are *practically* graduate, *practically* the manager...
- Oh... well, yes, I don't need an official post, but I know how to do it and so I do it...

PLIN PLON: *Mr Dello Straccio is wanted at oil aisle with some sandust. Urgent!*

- As you can see, ma'am, I also know how to stay humble and to side with the lasts.
- Sure. Even not *practically*...
- What do you want to say with this gag?
- Nothing, I was joking, don't mind me...
- Well no ma'am, it's not fine... aside from the fact that, if I don't want to I won't go!

- Do as you please, I'm leaving, have a nice day...

- Wait and see... now it's my turn to speak...

PLIN PLON: *Mr Vacca is needed with supreme urgency at oil aisle with specific equipment for vinegar battle breaking corridor cleansing...*

PLIN PLON: *Mr Dello Straccio it's your job, Vacca is busy with another task, I'm kindly asking you to get going quickly...*

- Oh... if he is kindly asking me, then... heard, ma'am? K I N D L Y !

- Well yeah, another adverb. It looks like it's your doom...

I don't like this person. Too witty to be a gynecologist... given that I would never let her see me even if she was the last on Earth...

CLARIFICATION

- *Mr Dello Straccio is wanted in the office!*
- Tell me, Mr Manager. Here I am, I'm ready, agile and industrious.
- Go out and call the boy asking for charity at the parking.
- Why, Mr Director? What happened?
- Don't worry, Dello Straccio, it's my business.
- I'm going.
- Here I am, Manager. Could I bring him in?

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- Yes, and leave us alone.

- Perfect, Mr Manager.

- Good morning. Are you in charge of parking?

- Yes, I am.

- Good. Then, let's come: you place yourself at the enter of the point of sale and greet people. From this gesture, you ask people to tip you. Is it right?

- Really, Manager, I don't expect. I ask for food.

- No, I don't discuss the practice. I discuss the theory. If you want money because you greet, at this point I greet you and we're even. Right? Or, don't greet me at all, and it's the same to me, indeed: we don't know each other, don't we?

- Manager, I ask for a gesture of solidarity to eat.

- I understand you want to eat, but what does that mean? Be clear and ask for the money! Don't use the sly means of greeting, otherwise we will become charity a kind and good job as everyone else.

- Manager, I don't understand...

- The problem, my dear, is some people have complained, you wouldn't happen to you've been a bit aggressive, wouldn't you?

- I attack? No, manager, I just ask for some coins and stay there calm...

- I don't know, maybe you showed a fierce face...
- This is only my face. What can I do?
- You have to be quite and serene. I'm not here to send you away. I just want a discussion because I care about relationships.
- Yes, Manager, I understand, I also don't want to scare a person.
- So we worked it out, didn't we?
- Yes, Manager. But there's no need.
- No, there's a need!
- Then I'll go, Manager.
- Good. And... I ask you a secret thing.
- Say, Manager, say...
- But you don't say this secret thing around.
- No, Manager, I don't say. Say, say to me...
- From tomorrow... find me a place for my car. I'm tired of waiting for half an hour. This car park is always full.
- You don't worry, Manager. Tomorrow you will find a place.
- So we worked it out, didn't we?

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- Yes, Manager. All clear.
- Last thing.
- Say, Manger, say.
- Do you know someone who washes machine for friendship?
- Yes, Manager, my friend washes the car.
- Then can I use your help?
- Of course, Manager.
- So we worked it out, didn't we?
- Yes, Manager, all clear.
- Well, I know you're a good person.

JEALOUSY

- Good morning, Pinocchia.
- Good morning, manager.
- I saw you cashed Miss Lola's shopping.
- Whom?
- Come on, Pinocchia: Ms Capovolta.
- Uh yeah, a dear friend of mine.
- Do you remember what she bought?
- Uhm... two baguettes, five kilograms of pasta, one kilogram of sausages...
- Oh! Don't you wonder about all that stuff?

- Why should I? Can't an employee, when they end their turn, do some grocery shopping?
- I tell you what it is: she's expecting people at home!
- And so?
- Yeah, it must be this, it means she's got guests. Right, Pinocchia?
- What should I know?
- You said she's a dear friend of yours, so you might know if someone goes visit her...
- But what is it, a trial?
- So, Pinocchia: speak!
- We are all free people and we can see whoever we want...
- Pinocchia, you have to choose: either you are my friend or Ms. Lola's friend!
- What do you mean, *my friend*? This way you make my heart beat, I already feel butterflies on my stomach...
- Pinocchia, how dare you!
- Then I won't speak...
- Pinocchia, you're covering that woman, consequences will be terrible!

- Are you threatening me, manager?
- Pinocchia, don't make me lose my temper, or I'll kick you in the back!
- Ugh... may I keep my mouth shut!
- Pinocchia, speak, I'll ask you one last time!
- Manager, I don't understand: if you weren't married, I would say you're jealous...
- You're not supposed to understand, Pinocchia, you're supposed to answer!
- I know those like you: they only want to make their harem bigger. Do you think you're a sultan?
- Pinocchia, I'm aching like a dog!
- You deserve that. You all go chasing people that don't want you back...
- I thought you would understand the situation, I thought you were a... man... of the world!
- What do you find in *that* simpering one?
- Thank goodness that she is your friend: imagine if she were an enemy!
- What does that have to do with anything, manager? War is war...
- I didn't expect this attitude from you, Pinocchia...

Supercashiers

- Don't do that, manager, what's that? Are you crying?
- I never cry, Pinocchia...
- Tonight you and I will go to a bar, we'll take a cocktail looking into each other's eyes and you'll tell me everything...
- Do you think it's a good idea?
- Yeah manager, it will be good for you.
- Yeah it will, I really needed to talk to someone...
- Uh, but I'm not *someone*, manager. I'm your friend...
- Thanks Pinocchia, thank you.

SATURN

- Good morning Pinocchia.
- Bye, manager.
- Pinocchia!
- Oh... manager... I mean: Good morning.
- Uh, here it is.
- Did you sleep well, manager?
- Wonderfully, Pinocchia
- I'm happy about it, manager: hurray!
- Did you arrange the posters in the shop windows?
- Yes, I did.

- In the elevator too?
- Of course.
- Did you clean the shopping carts?
- Yes, sir.
- Good. How does my tie look?
- The knot is too tight, manager.
- Fix it, please.
- Of course, manager.
- Well, don't get too close, Pinocchia...
- Ehm, but if I have to make you the knot...
- And don't touch me too much...
- But you're nervous, manager...
- Pinocchia, how many times do I have to say that working in contact with people is a serious business?
- Yeah, I know, I see... Ugh!
- Come on, Pinocchia, hurry up... people are looking at us...
- Manager, I think you have a problem!

- Problem? What problem, Pinocchia?
- Are you sure you don't have Saturn in opposition?
- What do you mean with Saturn in opposition?
- Saturn is the master that gives punishments...
- By Jove! Are you sure?
- Sure, manager...
- It's a tragedy... I'll go to my office, Pinocchia, hold my calls!

###

- Chicca?
- Good morning, thank you and sorry for the inconvenience, manager.
Please, tell me, manager.
- Dial the doctor's number and pass it on my line. Now!
- Of course, manager, thank you and sorry for the inconvenience. But, what is going on? Do you feel sick?
- Let it go, Chicca, it's a serious problem...
- Here it is, manager, the doctor is coming, in a few minutes he'll be here...
thank you and sorry for the inconvenience...

Supercashiers

- Dear doctor, it's such a relief to see you...
- What's going on, manager?
- Oh, doctor, I woke up in a good mood, but then I found out I have Saturn in opposition...
- Well, it's not dangerous... you have to take three drops of Spasmacon, to push away negative vibrations, then three glasses of dehumidified water – you can take some from the air conditioning's bin – and squeeze half of a lemon in it: you'll see, within half an hour you'll feel fine, manager!
- You know, doctor, I didn't even started the therapy and I already feel better?
- Well of course, manager, the... science is never wrong!
- Thank you, doctor, thank you!

FASHION

– Vous ne pouvez pas accéder au supermarché avec le chariot de la propriété, madame!

– Eh?

– Je répète: you can't get in with your cart, you have to leave it out, avez-vous compris?

– And if someone steals it?

– C'est impossible...

– Eh?

– I am here, don't worry madame... kiss!

– Excuse me. Where can I find saffron?

– Demandez au bureau, s'il vous plaît...

Supercashiers

- Eh?
- Ask for it in office, madame...
- Thank you...
- Bye...
- Pinocchia?
- Oui, monsieur le directeur?
- By god, you have to speak Italian with clients, not French!
- Oh oui, tu as raison, mon cher, but french is more chic...
- Personal initiatives here are limited, you know?
- What a bore... in this place there's a need for color...
- Pinocchia, try not to write poetry and to keep a sober behavior.
- Oh, in this way I can't breathe...
- I don't care! During work you have to respect standardized principles...
- And anyway, at least uniforms could be customized...
- What does it mean to customize?
- Director, for example: a belt of cloth would suit you. You'd be a more fashion...

- I don't understand sorry...
- Yes, take off that horrible leather belt. You look like a cow boy! Leave it to me. That is, put on my silk scarf and look: you're fine, look like an odalisque...
- Pinocchia, you push me into a deep abyss...
- Why would that be?
- When I look at you, I don't understand you... that is, Pinocchia... I... you confuse me!
- Oh... that's nice to show your sensitivity... you're a sugary, manager...
- Pinocchia... How dare you?
- What is that all about?... Do you feel upset?
- Actually, there is too much confusion nowadays. Even here, by God!

FORMALITIES

- Sorry Miss, can I leave my cart here in the box?
- Yes, Ms, good morning thanks and sorry.
- I put it here to the side so it will not bother you...
- Yes, Ms., good morning thanks and sorry.
- Hello. Can I make a club card?
- Yes, Ms, good morning thanks and sorry.
- Thanks, miss, good morning.
- Sure, good morning thank you very much and sorry.

###

- Chicca, could you change my money? Today with spares is a drama...

- Hello my beautiful love! Sure: could you wait for a moment? I end up with the lady and I'm right back to you. Good morning thanks and sorry, dear love.

- Miss. Did you print the timetables for the coming week?

- I'm sorry manager. I didn't print them, thank you. Isn't this day maybe Wednesday, good morning?

- No, Miss, we are already on Friday...

- Good morning thanks and sorry, Director: I thought it was Wednesday, today...

- But no...

- How time goes by! Good morning thanks and sorry, manager. I immediately print the timetables.

###

- Chicca, did you remind the director of leaving me free Saturday?

- Of course, Vacca. You have a day of rest. Good morning thanks and sorry.

- No, because I had an appointment...

- Of course, darling...

Supercashiers

- No, because you said day of rest, but I have an appointment...
- I understand, Vacca, but it's the same thing, isn't it? Good morning thanks and sorry...
- No, it's just to clarify... thanks and sorry, Chicca...
- Good morning thank you and apologize for a tops, darling, huh!
- Then I go...
- Of course, darling, go home... Good morning thanks and sorry, Vacca.

###

- Hello? Hi Mom, I'm in the office. See you at dinner. Yes, don't worry.
Good morning thanks and sorry, Mom.

PRANK CALL

- Hello: Supermarkets SuperPeople, good morning thanks and excuses thousands. Can I be of any assistance?
- There's a bomb at the point of sale which can explode at any moment.
- Well, thank you very much for the information, but who speaks?
- What does it mean?
- Thanks, you have to tell me who's speaking, otherwise I can't start the emergency. Do you understand?
- No, I don't. If I say there's a bomb, you need to get everybody out of

there: what would be this new?

– You see, dear love, there are procedures without which we don't proceed. Do you understand, excuse me a thousand?

– No.

– That is, I can't take you seriously. Excuse me and thank you very much, sweetness!

– How don't you take me seriously? I'm a certified bomber!

– Ah, good. Good morning my dear. So give me a serial number...

– Bah... I have the right to anonymity...

– Look, good morning and sorry again. About the matter of the rights, in you I wouldn't insist, and then we can say there are also duties. Can you tell me at least if you are calling personally, in the name of a society or a subversive group?

– What does it mean?

– It means, good morning and thank you, I have to put you in the list and schedule the event. Before that I can't accept your request. Do you understand me? I'm sorry and thank you very much, but you have been doing this job for a while now?

– Yes, in a manner of speaking it's a second job... but I'm the bomber and I gave you the information, then you take the responsibility of what might happen...

– Yeah, it's soon to say bomber, for me you could be anyone... Hello?
hello, good morning thank you and excuse me, do you hear me? Hello?

– Hello?

– Hello. Do you hear me? Good morning very much?

– The line comes and goes, it's very disturbed...

– Yes, in fact, now I hear you again, good morning.

– Good morning. Yes, it's there's no signal here in warehouse...

– How would it be in warehouse? Good morning and excuse me a
thousand: but are you Vacca?

– ...

– Hello? Good morning, I'm sorry: Vacca? Vacca answer me, thank you
very much!

– ...

PLIN PLON *Mr Vacca is wanted in the office with the utmost urgency, good morning!*

- Here I am!

Supercashiers

- Vacca, good morning and sorry, but are you crazy about making these phone calls? Thank you so much.
- What calls?
- Do you think I'm dummy? Good morning, thank you so much and sorry!
- But I...
- You also gave me a stroke: but why are you doing these jokes?
- Well, I... I...
- And you and you and you... Vacca: sorry, huh!
- Anyway, it wasn't a joke...
- So excuse me Vacca. If it wasn't a joke what was it?
- I don't know. It is there's too much dullness in this world and I... and then, Canapone told me to call, I didn't do anything. I just put the voice, but the idea was of Canapone. For theoretical things you have to talk to him!
- Vacca, let's finish it here, go to work, go...
- Well... but sorry Chicca, how did you recognize me through the phone? I also put a cap...

SELECTION

- Why does she jump the line?
- This is the line for those who don't want to queue.
- What does it mean?
- You understand my language, white man?
- How dare you, you wretch... I'm calling the manager!
- Please go, be quick and bring some acquaintance, so he can fill my curriculum!
- What's happening?
- Are you the manager?
- Yes, how can I help you?

Supercashiers

- Your cashier is very rude!

- No, what are you talking about? He's our main attraction, just think: there is people who queue just have him insult them!

- Mah... what is this place?

- Well, look... you need to diversify the offer, our checkout park is the most original on the market, just think that we choose them with certain featuring after a severe selection!

- Bah... I can't imagine who are the others!

- Canapone, now that we are alone, I'm telling you I'm tired of covering you up and saying bullshit to the customers, clear?

- I don't get it, manager...

- Oh, you don't get it? Well, I just prepared yet another disciplinary action against you...

- But, manager...

- Scared, uh?

- No, it's not about the disciplinary action, at all... it's just that I already had four this month, another one would ruin my average grade.

- Your average grade?

- Yes manager: wouldn't you please keep it warm until the beginning of next month?

- There is always a disciplinary action kept warm for you, don't worry about that, mister Canapone!

AGREEMENT

– Good evening, May I?

– Good evening what?

– I was greeting you...

– ... stop with these agreements...

– Pardon?

– Again? Pardon for what?

– I don't understand you...

– Oh, don't you understand?

– No...

– I'm doing the afternoon shift, I have so much things to do outside here
and you say me good evening?

- Oh, you're a little burdened...
- Tell what you really think, once in a while... good evening, thank you, sorry, you're welcome... stop it!
- You're out of your mind...
- My life is flying away, yours too. Our lives are a non-existence and you're still going out saying good evening?
- It's not the case to make these dramas...
- Ah no?
- No. These are normal pleasantries, your philosophical discourses seem forced to me.
- Forced?
- Are you a little stressed...
- It's your fault!
- Ours?
- Of the clientele...
- Meaning what?
- You take my breath away...

Supercashiers

- This is a commercial business, I go here for shopping, not for friendship or start a discussion. You only should do your job. Then, in confidence, if you accept a suggestion, you should also do other things...
- And what? Enlighten me...
- Have sex, for example...
- Ah, why do you think a fuck is enough for...
- In your case, no. A fuck would be really too small.
- But how dare you?
- Come and see me, Canapone. I have an apartment.
- But what have you in your head? Do you think you know what I need?
- It was just a suggestion, Canapone. Be quiet, you don't have to be fear.
- Fear for what? Me? But look what...
- Canapone, listen: it wouldn't be for attraction but for solidarity...
- I don't understand this confidence...
- Sorry but... you started this discussion against conventions...
- Don't joke. The bill is thirteen euros and fifty cents. Get moving! I have to work and you're wasting my time...
- Ok. Here's to you. And if you change your mind, this is my business card.

Vanessa: prostate and relaxing massage. Apartment with independent entrance, maximum privacy. Call immediately because who has time and is waiting time, loses time.

PROBLEM

– I'm really tired of this life. It's not easy, it's not that easy at all.

– I know. I understand you. Do you want an envelope?

– No thanks. I brought it... you see, I lost my wife on the eve of the golden wedding. I'm alone. I can do everything in house, but I'm tired of pulling on.

– Do you have children?

– Yes, three, but they all have to do. For heaven's sake, I understand them, but now talk to them and see them has become more complicated than talking to the president!

– I'm so sorry.

– The other day I saw a science fiction film.

– I don't like science fiction...

- Yes, but listen... it was the story of a particular hospital where was possible die.
- How would it be, where to die?
- Yes, where a person, when is tired of life or sick and can't take it anymore, can go to this hospital.
- Ok. Go ahead.
- There's not much to add. You go into a room where they play a music.
- What type of music? That is, can you choose?
- I don't know, in the movie there was a relaxing music. You kept listening to this preparatory music.
- Preparatory?
- But Canapone, do you listen to me? Preparing for death. They gave you an injection and you listened to music until...
- I understand. Do you know it's not bad? Sometimes, looking at this shit world, also death can be sweet.
- Yeah, you have to be in that situation. Even though I have a problem of conscience.
- That is?
- Only God can take life away or give it. I don't know if it's right to make

certain choices.

– Dunno! But do you know how to tell you?

– Tell me.

– There are some songs of Jimi Hendrix, of the Led Zeppelin, and there's one of the Beatles on Sgt Pepper entitled *She's living home*, all done with viola and violins, and if one has to die, well, those would be nice things like last thing to listen to: in my opinion, in paradise they listen to that stuff...

– Ah, well, yes... I like jazz, Canapone...

– So why don't you go to the tape library in the center when you finish here and taking a good jazz CD to listen to in the afternoon?

– I'll do it, Canapone.

– It's like being in heaven without getting too far away, right?

– Yeah. That's, in a manner of speaking, Canapone, so ... thanks for your words. Sometimes you impress me...

– Oh, sometimes I impress myself too...

PAUSE

– Canapone? Get me the snack ticket immediately, so I'll take a break ...

– Yes, Vacca, but ask the customer if you'll get you in...

– Excuse me. Could I make me do the receipt of this snack? I have to break.

– Yes sure, please.

– Are you sorry?

– No, go...

– Because if you're sorry, I'll wait...

- Absolutely...
- Really?
- You are welcome...
- Sure?
- Come on, Vacca, don't drag it out...
- Ah, you're a bit aggressive, I just made you an polite request...
- Okay. Mr Vacca? Please, go ahead...
- Thank you.
- Canapone?
- Eh?
- Did you hear that customer?
- By which you mean?
- He was really aggressive!
- Mah...maybe you're always critical...
- Me? Would you say he was right?
- No, not exactly he was right...

Supercashiers

- Ah...well, because I just did a polite request...
- Sure...
- Are you agreeing with me as to say the reason is of madmen?
- What?
- Oh, so are you saying I'm mad?
- No, Vacca.
- Ah... well, because it didn't seem. As usual, you explain yourself in a wrong way...
- Ok, Vacca...
- Eh, no, why...
- Vacca? Forgive me if I stop you, but time runs out, I don't want your break ends!
- Oh! Eh, but you make me talk again and again... and again...

SOMETHING IN COMMON

- Where is the comptroller? I'm waiting for five minutes...
- MISTER CANAPONE IS WAITING FOR A PAYMENT!
- I'm in a hurry!
- Here I am!
- Eh, but where did you go?
- I was stocking the shelves, madam.
- You shouldn't move. People can't wait for your own needs...

Supercashiers

- I was working and then, if we start discussing, you'll lose more time...
- Ah, you're a rude man!
- Maybe you'll not believe it, they hold me for this reason!
- And you're also very unpleasant...
- If we employees were writing a list of customers' liking, even if you were the last one. Do you see we have something in common?
- How dare you to insult me in front of my grandson? Marlon, come on, don't hear this lout...
- How did you say it's call this kind of baby?
- Marlon, why?
- I bet you have a granddaughter called Brenda!
- I have a granddaughter, but her name is Sharon.
- Sure, Sharon: all names that somehow trend, what's more?
- What do you want?
- People like you are the ruin of this society, the mediocrity that becomes common; you are the dull fashion, the bottomless sordidness, you are trend-addicted...
- One moment...

– What?

– By chance, do you know Walter?

– And who would be this Walter?

– My daughter's husband.

– And why should I know him?

– Oh, but do you know you're right?

– Meaning what?

– I always told Loredana not to marry that idiot and that with time she would fall behind him. Within me, I felt things you said. Do you study sociology or something similar?

– No. Only... cashier. That is, I'm just a supermarket cashier.

– Oh, not a simple cashier, though: you're a super cashier!

– Thank you.

– You're welcome. I greet you and wish you a good day. It's a pleasure to share something which lies in our deep. Goodbye.

– Have a nice day.

Supercashiers

Crazy stuff! I have to be more careful when I tug on some heartstrings. That nana has vanished my provocation efforts. Never received so many compliments all together: what a shitty day!

SPECIAL OFFERS

- Manager, why did you call us beyond the working hours?
- So I call you to show the new promotion of SuperPeople Supermarkets.
The name says it all!
- Well, but why this show in grand style?
- Yours is a smart question, Lady Poffin. Well... this will be a special promotion.
- Yeah... by the way, how is this promotion called?
- Well, another smart question, Dello Straccio. Bravo!
- And so?
- Hold on to your hats. The name is *Be bop!*
- *Be bop?*

- Yes, Canapone. Isn't it fantastic?
- Well...
- I see doubts...
- No, no, Manager, good morning thanks and sorry. What doubts... it's really a good name for a promotion, though, good morning and sorry.
- Oh, Thank God you, Chicca, can look beyond...
- Thank you very much, Manager.
- You're welcome, Chicca.
- Sorry, manager.
- Nothing Chicca.
- And good morning.
- And thank you, Chicca!
- You're welcome, Manager...
- Stop, Chicca... but there's also a musical spot you'll have to learn!
- No, Manager, not the spot...
- Yes, Canapone, the spot is...
- And what would be the spot?

– The spot is this: *be bop, who marvels our discounts; be bop, you will not believe yet it's true!* What do you think about it?

– Eh...

– Ah...

– I still see doubts... maybe you didn't listen to it with careful. Do you want I sing it for you again?

– No, Manager, it's beautiful!

– Oh, thank you, Chicca, if you weren't here...

– Thank you very much, Manager.

– You're welcome, Chicca.

– And good morning, Manager.

– Good morning to you, Chicca. But it's not over...

– Ah...

– Eh...

– Yes, there are also our wonderful slogans!

– For example?

– For example, dear Dello Straccio, I'll declaim you all verse of the slogan

for cosmetics!

– Wow for cosmetics, Manager, thank you very much!

– You're Welcome, Chicca.

– Good morning, Manager.

– Good morning, Chicca. So, do I read?

– Yes Manager...

– Thank you, Chicca...

– Thanks to you, Manager...

– So:

Be Bop to Beauty:

the whole cosmetic line for the care of your body!

Ask Be Bop points for the contest!

A Be Bop trick on your face to make you more fascinating into your him eyes!

Come to our Be Bop stores!

– But it's wonderful, Manager!

– And it's not over!

– Oh...

– Ah...

– Eh...

– Uh...

– Ih...

– Yup! Think the SuperPeople supermarket chain, to make you feel more affiliated with the company, decided each of you will adopt the business suffix “super” in front of your last name. Happy?

– Ah...

– Eh...

– Oh...

– Uh...

– Ih...

– Meaning what, Manager? Can you explain it better?

– Of course, Miss Capovolta. So:

you will be SuperCapovolta;

Canapone will be SuperCanapone;

Chicca will be SuperChicca;

Supercashiers

Pinocchia will be SuperPinocchia;

Ciccio dello Straccio will be SuperCiccio;

Lady Poffin will be SuperPoffin;

Vacca will be SuperVacca.

What is it, Vacca, why raise your hand like a school?

– Manager, I don't like SuperVacca.

– Why doesn't it like you? Vacca, are you crazy? But it's beautiful...

– No, I... to me... huh? It doesn't convince me...

– Eh, it doesn't convince you... by now, Vacca, it's decided. After all, it's not anyone's fault if your last name is Vacca!

– Well, but it's not my fault too.

– Yet, I have the right solution for you, Vacca.

– By which you mean?

– I will call you VaccaSuper!

– Oh Yeah, VaccaSuper seems better than SuperVacca!

– Do you see Vacca? In Supermarkets SuperPeople, we also sell solutions!

– Eh... thank you Manager. Indeed, I really feel VaccaSuper!

ILLNESS

- What a boring day, Mister Vacca!

- So what?

- Few customers, few deals: at this rate, the proceeds collapse!

- So what?

- Don't you care about job security? Then let's see what will you do if the store closes...

- I don't see what I could do about it, Pinocchia...

- Well, at least you could worry a little...

- Would it change something?

- You are the personification of indifference...

- Bah...

- You look dead...

- I feel pretty good...

- Sure?

- Well... at least I think... can you feel my pulse?

- What?

- Now that you mention it, it seems to me that something is wrong...

- But Vacca, I was referring to your attitude...

- Well, but you said I look dead...

- No, I wanted to point out your cool and collected ways...

- It's true, you know? I don't feel well. I feel I have the cool, too...

- Vacca, what are you saying?

- I'm going to lie down in the storage room...

- Vacca, don't exaggerate...

- A little rest is what I need...

- Oh My, how hypochondriac are you!

Supercashiers

- Yes, I must also have some lines of hypochondria... what a bad time, everything keeps happening to me!
- Are you kidding?
- I have to go to a doctor...
- Vacca...
- It's this job's fault, I don't like being around people...
- Are you a misanthrope?
- What?
- It's a joke... I said you're a misanthrope.
- No, I'm just discreet...
- But...
- Well, I'm going. Can you inform the manager? I don't want to be seen in these conditions...

THE AUTHOR

I was born in an Italian city, the capital of that State, washed by a river, built on seven hills, of which I prefers not to make the name for privacy reasons. I started my career as a humourist, but an experience as a basic union delegate made me passionate about issues related to working environments. Humour and social, therefore, live together in my books. Special thanks to the visitors of www.enricomattioli.com because in the complicated world of publishing it is very difficult to achieve a following of readers.

I am grateful to all those who want to subscribe to the newsletter and download the first chapters of *Stars of dust* exit free of charge. On each page there is a module at the top right and another at the bottom.

"Telling the false notes is what I propose to do in my books."

A hug

Enrico

To purchase the paper version of the book, click on the link
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