

# Going Bananas

*by* Dorothee Lang

## **(back then)**

In the clinic. "Drink it," the man in white says. I shrug and drink. The juice tastes sticky sweet. "What's it for?" I ask.

Instead of answering, he hands me the rolled up bills. Easy money. All they need is another blood sample in a week.

## **(24 hours later)**

Out for a snack. I am just chucking my empty cup in the bin and heading for the door when this incredibly cute guy goes "Hey monkey" and I look around to see who he is talking to. It takes me another three seconds to realize he means me.

Now, I normally never get chatted up these days because a) I'm often with my bf when I venture out and b) I think I have this contented kind of vibe about me that says 'I'm happily attached thanks very much'. So not much on the old flirtation front, and thus a bit out of practice. Yet, I am still able to judge that the look this guy gives me is nowhere near light hearted eye contact. It is pure puzzlement. I decide to smile back nevertheless. He points towards my rear end.

Turning around, I get a glimpse of a long bushy tail. The whole place falls silent. Then someone starts to scream. Panicked, I dash out. The paparazzis will be here soon, that much is sure. I need to escape. And hailing a cab is no option. I run, I jump. I wriggle my tail. Then I go for the next facade. Up and up I climb, until I reach an open window. I peek in, the room is empty, so there I am, saved for the moment.

## **(in the kitchen)**

The panic made me hungry. I open the fridge, hoping to find something to eat. Not so. It is a plastic desert with some cheese and a bottle of tomato ketchup on the lower shelf. I grab the last of the surviving oranges from the fruit bowl.

Back to the living room, into the leather armchair, which was a water buffalo when it was still alive. At least that is what I imagine, while I zap through channels. There is the news, but I haven't made the headlines yet. Maybe I never will. In a city like that, it probably takes more than this to get the helicopters in the air.

**(an hour later)**

TV, the eternal opium for the masses. Reruns of NYPD Blue. The police cars dashing through the roads like dragon flies, chasing bad guys around the block, bargaining with kidnappers. A million for a life, a bullet for the wrong move. The black box draws me inside, I am the hereon, I am the gold chained gangster.

The street is flashing in blue and red colour. If I opened the window now, they would shoot me live. I demand a wagonload of milk shakes and freedom for all monkeys caged in zoos. It's too much and not enough. There must be a better deal, there always is. I zap through channels for inspiration.

**(on the road again)**

We race down a highway. "You will really need to know how to use equations when you grow up," they said. Wrong they were. All it takes is a fast car. And a driver.

On and on we go. The road leads towards the jungle. That is what they promised. It's a long ride, and I get tired of holding the driver at gunpoint. So I skip the gun, and grab one of the shakes.

That's when the driver turns to me and says "You're pretty trusting going into the middle of nowhere with someone you barely know, aren't you?" He eyes me up, bushy tail and all. I feel a little scared, but I just make a joke of it. "Don't you dare touch me, or I call my brother," I tell him.

**(showdown)**

The driver doesn't want to believe. He stops the car and starts to get into my hair. "King Kong," I scream. The driver laughs and laughs. "Just kidding," I say, to keep him distracted and amused. But I can hear his steps already, coming closer.

The shadow of my brother falls upon us. It stops the driver's laughter flat. Alas, it's too late. And there is no option of bargaining. Not with K.K. He lifts him up in the sky, to throw him as far as he can. Like in the movies, yet better, as it happens in full panorama size.

Humming a melody from an old black and white movie, my brother waits until the vultures are silent again. Then he takes me in his hairy hands and carries me home.

