

Radio skit for sale.

Supersecret Signals Agency Goes Retail: At NSA, It's Data for the People!

The expanding use of cell-phone tracking apps has raised concern over their potential to compromise Americans' privacy. To be sure, there is much to fear from the police state. On the other hand, this new weapon for mauling personal privacy offers exciting new possibilities for government services that turn a profit for the taxpayer and while putting the people's data to use *for* the people, as illustrated in the following real-life anecdote.

HUSBAND STEVE

I made NO such promise and said NO such thing.

WIFE DIANE

Oh yes you did make "such promise and said such thing."
It was in a phone call.

STEVE

False memories. Very common.

DIANE

You said you'd drive the kids to the doctor and dentist
if I made the appointments.

STEVE

I never said dental! You know how I feel about that
office! (*Shudders.*)

DIANE

But now that an emergency bite-wing series conflicts
with your Saturday morning pickle ball, you
conveniently forget. I don't think so.

STEVE

OK let's all just take a breath. This is exactly what Doctor
Schmelling talked about — that we just have to agree to
disagree on a contested memory. Wouldn't you agree?

DIANE

Yeah. Not so much.

STEVE

Then I don't know what to tell you! It's not like there's a

third party who can give us an objective readout of a private phone conversation that took place three weeks ago.

DIANE

Actually there is. And it was TWO weeks ago.

STEVE

Who are you calling?

DIANE

WHOM. The objective form for an objective third party.

STEVE

Oh, please. Your mother isn't an objective party.

NSA REP JACK

(On speaker phone. Chirpy.)

NSA Retail Services. Jack Bundy speaking.

STEVE

What?! You're calling the National Security Agency?
On our home phone?

DIANE

Hi, Jack. My name is —

JACK

Your name is Diane Tribble and you live at 1789 Freedom Lane, Ho-Ho-Kus, New Jersey, and your favorite flower is the purple lilac.

DIANE

Wow! You're good!

NSA REP JACK

Please. We're the NSA!

(Concerned.)

How's Snowball doing?

DIANE

Much better. Thanks.

NSA REP JACK

Oh that's wonderful! I'm so relieved.

STEVE

Snowball's back from the vet?

DIANE

Jack, my husband and I are having a disagreement over a recent phone conversation, and we're hoping you could help.

NSA REP JACK

(Playful mumbling as he searches through computer files.)

1789 Freedom Lane, Ho-Ho-Kus, New Jersey, where are you? Come into focus, Ho-Ho-Kus. Ah! Here we go! "Domestic Division of Labor, August 24, 2020."

STEVE

Wait a second. How would — he can't — the law says — What the hell is going on?

DIANE

How much for the transcript, Jack?

NSA REP JACK

It's a three-pager, so that'll run you ...

(Sounds of an old-fashioned adding machine)

... \$24.99. For another five, you can get an MP3 of the actual recording. That's a pretty good promotion!

STEVE

Gimme that phone.

(STEVE and DIANE struggle.)

NSA REP JACK

Everything OK over there?

(Sound of a punch, and the thud of a body hitting the floor.)

DIANE

(Out of breath.)

Yeah, Jack. Fine, fine. Just had to — take care of something.

STEVE

(Marbles in his mouth.)

You broke my tooth! Now I have to go to the dentist! I hate the dentist!

DIANE

I'll make a dental appointment for you. Jack, we'll take the transcript and the MP3. Can I pay over the phone?

NSA REP JACK

Sure! I can open up an online account for you. For the future.

DIANE

No, thanks. I don't trust the Internet. All that identity theft.

NSA REP JACK

Oh I hear that. It's crazy scary these days! And what card will you be using today, Diane?

DIANE

Visa.

NSA REP JACK

The 5-2-7-3? Or the 1-8-0-6?

DIANE

How did — Oh, right!

(In unison)

NSA REP JACK

We're the NSA!

DIANE

You're the NSA!

(They laugh.)

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