**A Short Interesting Story**

I don't know what it is.

I don't know if it's a lack of confidence, or a fear of being judged, or just plain old-fashioned shyness. But I've found that when I try to make small talk with new people I meet, the conversation tends to fizzle out before we even get started.

And it makes sense: Who wants to be the one who asks the first question? You never know what kind of weird thing might come out of your mouth and you always end up looking like an idiot in front of anyone who doesn't know you well enough to pity you for having asked something dumb.

So instead, I've found that when I'm at parties or events where there are lots of people milling around in groups, I'll just walk around observing other conversations and people's behavior. And then, when it comes time for me to interact with someone new after an hour or two has passed, I'll just… make a joke about something they just said and It works like a charm! People always seem surprised by how quick our conversation goes, and they often have no idea where my story came from until later on when they realize who I am and why they remember that particular comment from earlier