

Coffee, smiles, and a bottle of wine

In all honesty it was a bad day. Nearly twenty-four hours ago when I fell asleep the night before, I had dreamt of sleeping in. It was not to be, as a motorcycle driver sped up my street at just past five starting off what was planned to be a relaxing, carefree day of simple email pushing.

Exiting the apartment complex after a small energy-filled breakfast of oatmeal and a pot of coffee, I could virtually foresee that today would be anything but relaxing. Not one to be superstitious, the idea that the disaster that lay ahead was a self fulfilling prophecy is bulls***. I did not will the driver into my life in any way.

"Morning." It was my standard greeting to those who I passed by daily on my way to the office. Thinking it would in one instance say hello, while in the other create a polite noncommittal tone to any possibility of a conversation. Fortunately from the front door to the elevator to my desk, there were only a few who like me were turning the clogs of the behemoth company this early in the day. The basics were enough and more often a mirrored response was quickly given, although not without genuine recognition. As I sat at my desk, the pot of coffee only finished half an hour ago was wearing off as per the norm. My addiction to the nasty tasting generic brand was without a doubt more me in the morning time than any other part of myself. Each day the desire for coffee, for energy, was the only drive in the morning and the most basic. An autonomous machine, fuelling up for a day of non-stop toil in a mine many stories high and with a vast number of workers. We all considered ourselves the one digging in the part with the most valuable riches to be found. It is a necessary thought after all which all hold onto whether a shred of truth to it exists or not. The wiser ones realize that the first however-many years equates to unloading the rubble while only a very select few tap into the stone which conceals a precious gem. That is something that cannot be questioned. Yes, it was no-name brand coffee which fuelled me. Had it been a dark or mild roast with some flavour, perhaps things would have gone smoother. Perhaps I



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could have transported myself back to a time when I lived in my home country, in the safety of the known.

As I sat in my cubical, alone on the floor safe for a few other die-hards, I must have stared at my small little company coffee mug with logo in hand for a good three minutes before thinking whether I should feed the habit immediately or postpone it for just a little longer while I address the contractual arrangement for a partner in India. Thinking a complete caffeine induced haze of energy might do me well, the water cooler and perhaps several more courtesies were the order. I had made this route countless times, and it was no different in the mind than going from the living room to the kitchen. The bubble of my work and world in this process naturally expanded to those who I met and theirs. Worlds merged. A senior staff member whose work crossed the region and tight lipped passed his standardized early morning greeting. "Good morning". Perhaps the years of experience availed to him the advice of adding good to set a better starting mood than mine. The coffee cart employee whose life is all but alien, "Hello, how are you?" Then several who pass a nod,

names and faces of people who work in the same building, live in the same city but altogether experience life differently. The environments around them, I assume of course, offering an undisputedly different world. Metaphysics does wonders and when a philosopher finds himself in a paid job, it is always, as with me, a necessity to find ways in which to ensure the mind does not degrade. Working on a pilot project rolled out in three countries fortunately does a number on the ability to jump from one scenario to another. Telecommunications meant that all days, including today, were spent with a drifting mind going from one major metropolitan city in one country to another in an entirely different country. The haze helped a little today but thinking back to late afternoon, the crash was particularly bad and lasted for nearly two hours. Only until the hive of activity on the floor had surpassed around 5 with most returning home, a blissful period allowed for actual thinking.

With post cards from home tastefully taped to my wall, I was actually able to plan ahead and to reflect for the future. Post cards are something like CERN I suppose. A massive effort for a tiny piece of information of immense

value. Of course the information for me was that of the Northern Canada, it was important in sending me when need be to the times spent for hours on end sitting on my Aunt and Uncles dock, looking over the lake with wilderness all around.

"Go home." Of course not what the normal response used to be when I took the driver more regularly but brushed it aside after several arduous hours past six. He could have as easily said "You are a cheap and disgusting pig" and I would not have mind. My thought of home being my apartment so close to the office was something apparently not shared.

Entering my Xanadu, a spacious and entirely ridiculously spotless apartment, I thought about what lay ahead as I opened and thoroughly enjoyed a moderately priced bottle of white wine. Long ago the apartment had become merely a place to sleep and as the lounge music stopped, as did the wine and an empty bed found company.