

One Day:

I had left the curtains open again before nodding off and my eyes were pried open by the harsh rays of the morning sun. What an idiotic way to lose fifteen minutes of precious sleep. After a quick shower I prepared my famed combo; anxiety coffee with an anguish sandwich. I know a sandwich at breakfast sounds odd but it reminds me that I do in fact possess some kind of free will. Today is Thursday. Why? I don't know, it just is and that bothers me. Many things do, but I'll never act on these countless grievances as I'm quite busy with my decision fatigue and the numerous work deadlines that have no significance but still send me to a state of inner turmoil.

Now comes what I call "The Commute". It's as boring as it sounds. All these people scurrying like cockroaches to places where only a lucky minority don't feel exploited, controlled and mentally drained. Unfortunately I am not a member of that minority. "The Commute" is an odd time as the destination is far from enjoyable but the actual trip itself is also miserable unless you like the array of different things that can happen in public transports. I might come across as a sour and sorry character so I'll let you in on one thing I appreciate. I enjoy walking, especially through the city. I detach from my daily reality and marvel at how every single window has its story, just like every passerby. All those stories are many times more interesting than mine and with that thought I return to my usual cantankerous self.

I opened the office doors and heard the usual cacophony. It's always so hectic here and I can feel a headache already coming on. Thankfully I've been a loyal little slave for five years now so I get a private office that helps me be more "productive". I won't even go into the details of what my work consists of. All you need to know is how uninteresting, pedantic and at times infuriating it is. The level of infuriation is directly related to the level of my colleagues' incompetence. The minutes piled on and my day withered away, hours upon hours wasted once again, the empty coffee cups amassing on my desk like a physical manifestation of the ever growing amount of totally avoidable and completely useless paperwork that I will have to do. Lunch time came around. This convenient break from existential dread gave me a golden opportunity to not enjoy other people's company and fake smiles and laughs for around 30 minutes until I "sadly" had to get back to work. The afternoon dragged on and the summer heat dropped from its midday peak. Soon, golden evening sun rays flooded my office and having worked well enough that day I decided to treat myself and leave early. I grabbed my bag and said goodbye to all the people I knew would have to work overtime which probably sparked some animosity but hey I'm the company's boring and loyal lapdog. I guess selling my soul does have some benefits.

I decided to walk home. It was a beautiful day and a slight breeze was making the trip very enjoyable. I spotted a café and said to myself "Why the hell not", and sat down for a drink. I gazed off into the distance watching the busy street, watching this metaphorical river of life. Today was more akin to a gentle flow rather than the habitual torrent. I hadn't noticed the café filling up and I suddenly became aware of a stranger sitting at my table. I didn't

mind, why would I? I said “Hi” and she reciprocated with a curt “Hello” followed by silence. She ordered the same drink as I had. Our eyes locked and scattered instantly. Repeat that process four times leaves one with no choice but to say something, so we did, both at the same time, resulting in that awkward silence when you try to justify yourself for speaking. We both chuckled and used the few tired icebreakers we had in stock to get us going. For one whole hour my sarcasm vanished, as did my cynicism. We talked, I can’t remember what of, but I do remember her face, those soft lips, that enchanting smile and those dimples that showed there was never a dull moment with her around. We asked for the tab as we both had to get going. It wouldn’t be “we” for long because the time had come for us to go our separate ways and resume our daily routines. I had fun, a lot of it. I hope she did too. That’s when I did something completely out of character, for once in my life I showed initiative and courage. I asked for her number. To my surprise she said yes and we parted ways. On a high from this successful social interaction with someone that seemed genuinely decent I walked home with a spring in my step and a grin on my face. It made me wonder, how many other stories are waiting to be written due to a slight change in routine. More to the point, how many of these stories are happening right now because they are surely more interesting than mine. But I then questioned myself about the aim of this query, why should I care if someone’s story is more riveting? Why should I care about what someone else’s day was like? Why should I care that today is Thursday? I shouldn’t.

As soon as I arrived home I sent her a message, I couldn’t not. I then started making myself dinner, waiting impatiently for a reply. Foolishly my small brain had gambled my entire next week’s happiness quota on the outcome of one single message. I was about to start eating when I heard it. One buzz was enough to make me smile.

