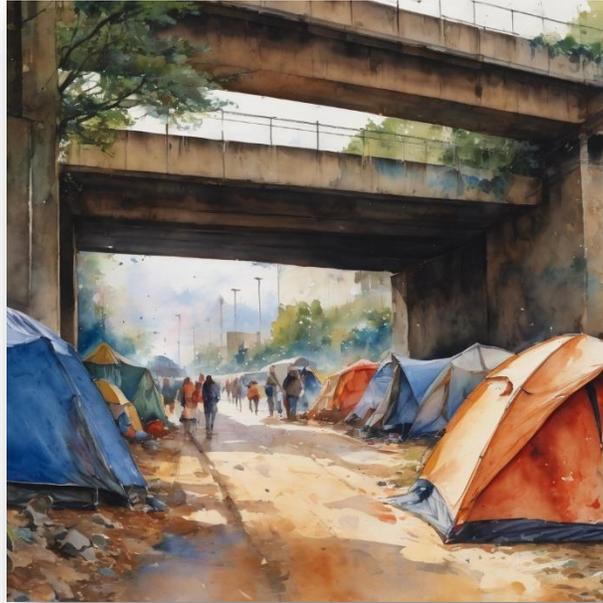


CORPORATIONS CARING FOR THE PEOPLE (LOGIC DICTATES SARCASM)



Yesterday, I received news - my Instagram is under attack by trolls who are outraged because I posted videos of myself enjoying meals at McDonald's.

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Apparently, these trolls believe supporting McDonald's means supporting Israel, and they're determined to make their displeasure known.

Normally, I wouldn't condone willful ignorance, but lately, I've reached a point in my life, at the age of 63, where I simply can't handle any more news. These trolls can go to hell. I refuse to take their bait or engage in their willful ignorance, where they try to convince people, the world is divided into two sides and nothing else matters. I don't want to align myself with either side.

What I do know is the senseless violence we witness in the world is too heavy to comprehend. It is rooted in the darkness that resides within humanity.

Killing is wrong.

Revenge is wrong.

It doesn't matter who is responsible.

I can't fathom why we still struggle to grasp this simple truth.

At 63 years old, my family is on the verge of homelessness. Every day, I desperately search for a solution to stop the financial bleeding caused by losing my job at the start of the pandemic. The company I dedicated fifteen years of my life to saw an opportunity to replace me with someone younger and cheaper. Poof, my career vanished.

Now, I find myself competing for menial jobs against people thirty years my junior.

Logically speaking, I don't stand a chance. But I keep trying.

Thankfully, I am a creative soul - a writer, an image creator. Yet, even in the creative world, technology is advancing rapidly, and artificial intelligence threatens to take over. Another blow to my hopes and dreams.

Still, I keep trying.

I've learned to stay away from the news. It's like venturing onto dangerous moors. Instead, I focus on my own little world.

Inside my apartment (for now), I sit at my desk and work.

I make mistakes, like turning on the TV to watch Morning Joe.

Joe seems to be on a rant, discussing major stores closing due to rampant theft. *He pretends to care about those living in tent cities*, but then he shifts his focus to organized crime and how they orchestrate these thefts through groups of thieves.

The stores don't know what to do, so they decide to close down, supposedly to protect their valued employees by putting them out of work.

Where is the logic in all this?

Joe continues his tirade, blaming weak lawmakers for not putting these thieves behind bars unless they steal over a certain amount.

Apparently, stealing less than \$850 means they're back on the streets.

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But here's the thing - if we truly got tough on crime and punished the thieves, not the organizers, wouldn't it send a message to those suffering and vulnerable individuals? Joe screams. They might think twice before stealing, and the hardworking employees corporations claim to care about could keep their jobs.

Logic |in a weak sarcastic moment|: And maybe, just maybe, the organized crime groups would be forced to recruit younger individuals again.

Joe doesn't mention any of that. I guess logic, *not the rapper*, hasn't infiltrated Joe's entitled thinking. I wonder if Joe realizes the poor people he wants to help and imprison in the same breath probably aren't watching his show to get his privileged stilted message. They're out there, homeless and suffering, and some might even be committing crimes to find warmth and shelter in jail instead of living outdoors on a day with a heavy rainfall warning. But of course, since they are homeless, they don't know about the rain that is coming their way.

What's wrong with a society that tries to solve complex problems by pointing fingers at the most vulnerable among us?

Still, I keep trying. I'm now one of the most vulnerable.

I know I shouldn't turn on the news, but curiosity gets the better of me.

Locally, in Vancouver, a major drug store is closing its doors due to constant shoplifting.

They claim it's to protect their employees, their most valuable asset.

Logic, please step forward.

Logic: I'm not everyone's logic, but maybe I'm yours. Let me ask you a few questions, and I'll incorporate your answers into my words, so we don't have to go back and forth.

How old are you? 63. Okay.

Why are you so passionate about this issue?

Because you lost your job at 60 and you're terrified for your future. That makes sense.

How many jobs have you applied for?

Over 100, and only the ones that see you as older have shown any interest. They assume you have connections they can exploit because of your age. It's disheartening.

Now, when the executive of a company appears on the screen and says, "We must close the stores to protect our people," you feel sickened.

Why?

Because putting more people out of work under the guise of caring is the exact opposite of what should be done. It will only lead to more suffering, more poverty, and, for heaven's sake, more shoplifting.

News, can you lighten the mood and tell us something about Taylor Swift?

No?

You're beyond terrified about your family's future. In fact, you're hoping your medication runs out, so you won't have an excuse to face the inevitable. Damn, when your cat's food runs out, she dies.

But still, you keep trying.

When the stores close, your impossible task of finding employment at 63 will become even more daunting, if not downright whatever the heck comes after impossible.

You feel like you're being pushed towards something worse, something rhyming with "Beth."

That's the reality of being 63 years old, on the brink of homelessness, when you watch the news, possibly for the last time.

I'm scared out of my mind.

If I become homeless, I won't survive. It's as simple as that.

I've tried pitching my story (Becoming Homeless at 63) to the news, but it doesn't seem to interest them. They seem to be too busy focusing on executives and talking heads who claim to solve complex societal issues by protecting products instead of people. *If only they threw the thieves in jail, poverty would disappear, and we'd be living in a utopia.*

Blame the poor, right?

I can't help but feel that the war on poverty is in full swing.

So, shut off the news. Care about the people you see suffering around you.

For now, I still have a roof over my head, but in a week or two, that will change, and I'll become just another dying, suffering, hopeless, statistic. All because I dedicated fifteen years to a company that saw me as expendable, easily replaced by someone younger and cheaper – on day one, of a once-in-a-century pandemic.

I don't want to die.

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