

Patchwork: The will to move ahead

The smells and the colourful lights enchanted him. A woman with a red dot on her forehead, wrinkled and old, walked by him leaning heavily on her walking cane. In passing him she smiled back at him. The door wasn't far ahead now. Except that it still was.

He was in his livingroom doing the final preparations by checking his luggage. Content that he had everything he needed he moved ahead. He didn't need much after all. After closing the door behind him the elevator brought him down nine floors where he walked through the revolving doors made of glass onto the busy street. Because it was so crowded every now and then someone would touch him but that didn't bother him at all. He smiled because he had refound his purpose.

There were signs in neon above his head, flickering for attention of the people. Buy this, buy that, be happy, behave. His own radiance was enough for him. Someone stood still entranced by the advertorials of the new gods. Ilium walked by him and turned around just enough to bump his backpack against the man who abruptly came out of his trance. "You don't need that new piece to find peace" Ilium said, without even slowing his pace. The neon sign flickered as if angry.

These were the kind of things that Ilium would do. He wasn't necessarily friendly but he felt the inner drive to push people forward into reality even to the point where he had been fired by the company he last worked at, OilymCorp. They had told him it was mandatory for their survival that customers bought more of the new productlines, mainly Salvation and Obedience, two new fragrances that would ensure the compliance of the people. It had started to sell like crazy, not surprising considering the out-of-this-worldly marketing budget OilymCorp had provided to that new ruthless director of marketing Calista.

In a recent interview he had exposed the companies' tactics and that swiftly led to his dismissal. Not that he was too bothered about it. Somehow it had pleased him to see the darkred face of the screaming CEO. He had never liked the man that had replaced Iliums' father in the board.

Whenever he had a chance, he would help people connect amongst eachother and that created extraordinary results. Tonight he would attend a huge barbecue in the park with many people and he was excited about meeting new friends before his flight at eleven p.m.

The afternoon and evening went as planned with new ideas sprouting everywhere around him. Happy faces came to warm around the barbecue where he was grilling like it was a contest. It was a chilly day in early october and the temperature hadn't prevented people from coming out of their houses, thankfully. Before leaving for the airport he had started at least fourteen meaningful interactions that could lead to sustainable gain for him while he could still look at himself in the mirror.

Now he saw the traffic in front of him dissolve as the taxi came closer to the airport. After customs however, dutyfree shopping started to dull him down and as he neared the gate he had to slow his pace. He didn't like flying.

The plane took off from the runway after a major delay that didn't really get explained by anybody. It would be a long tiring flight but the chairs, just too small to fit a grown man would continuously prevent him from falling asleep. Half conscious, half unconscious, he saw the movies and the commercials of OilymCorp repeatedly trying to make an impression on his retina. It went on and on and his discomfort grew.

The woman sitting beside him was huge, further prevented him from sleeping. She told him about her recent purchases at the dutyfree. Her name was Elvira. After talking to her for a while she decided it better to move to another seat, leaving her bag behind, where she met the man of her dreams. He could almost see her loosing weight even as she crossed over to her new seat. He smiled but still couldn't sleep. At least she would now find real meaning instead of being tricked into believing in a heavily overpriced fragrance that nobody needed that didn't do any good anyway.

Occasionally he managed to sleep for a couple of unpleasant minutes as he kept his mind on what was to come at the other end of the flight. Then a storm started. Heavy turbulence shook the plane to the point where the cabincrew had to sit down, twice. According to the captain they would have a safe and easy landing after another ten long minutes of turbulence that was dead ahead of them, oh God – airsack – huge airsack! Oh god, the smell of puke was in the air, but even worse was the penetrating smell of Salvation and Obedience!

The bag that was left behind by Elvira had made quite a jump during the shaking. Sure enough the bottles had clanked together and were broken. The fluids had soaked his clothes. He was never going to get rid of the foul stench of OilymCorp now. But hey, he was still looking forward to this trip. All they now had to do was endure through the storm.

After another bit of shaking, the captain safely landed the plane and the cabin crew helped the passengers out of the messy cabin onto the warm tarmac of Jodhpur airport. Ilium was finally able to stretch his legs and move wherever he wanted to, even though the stench would probably follow him around forever.

After customs he was greeted by a friendly woman who was to be his guide on this meditative journey in India..