

The Kiss

You misunderstood that kiss..no, please do not interrupt Miss Bradshaw, I'm sorry to ring you out of the blue, and I'm sorry to come so abruptly to the point but this is not the time for shillying or shallying... please, please let me have my say, I would like to get this out in the open, off my chest, to clarify the situation so that we can most properly address the issues that the kiss has perhaps raised.. no, please be absolutely silent, have the decency to let me explain, I will allow you every opportunity to have your say in a short while.

Thank you.

So. Our eyes met yesterday, as I drove past you at the bus stop, you seemed to be looking for something, I believe I can help you in your search. Please.. please let me continue, I can tell by your voice you are overwrought, please allow me to take a little of your time. I need to explain my position vis-a-vis the other night, absolutely no further interjections if you please.

I hope it won't disturb you too much to hear that insofar as it relates to any change in the relationship between us, that kiss was of little significance, no more important than chatting in a queue at the butcher or a walk by a canal. In normal circumstances of course, a passionate kiss between two adults is of great significance, but we had chosen to step outside normality, the usual rules of behaviour were waived due to "drunkenness". The checks and balances, the codes of behaviour, that maintain the outward appearance of properly functioning social intercourse were swept aside and other forces held sway. The veneer of our world is but a skin that contains and constrains a jumbled and writhing mass of gore, guts, piss, shit and blood, a skin we choose not to look through, a skin we paint, decorate, adorn, festoon and, to some extent, control, this very skin was breached, the doors opened, with the key of alcohol. This is acceptable, our society and many others, allow for this unlocking, alcohol, or other similar drugs, allow us release from the confines of a world that we humans can coexist in but that does not serve our true needs and desires, feelings that seethe within the blood and guts and shit that makes us who we really are. Humans have used alcohol as a key to release them from the rules for time immemorial. Madness, war, love and religion are some of the other, less convenient keys.

So that kiss, Miss Bradshaw, symbolised not so much a bond or attraction between ourselves, but more the attraction that exists between any sentient being and another sentient being in close proximity. Like the irregular orbit of a moon betrays the existence of planets or stars hidden from view, that kiss hints at the swirling torrent of lust and selfish passion that lurks just beneath any civilised skin. It is not simply that we humans are animals, in fact all social creatures maintain a veneer beneath which the innards of life pulsate, any creature that must coexist with another must curb and control its inner self. A particularly well-known and childish experiment, which I'm sure you are familiar with, illustrates my point. Two rats are placed in a cage with an electrified floor and are given painful shocks regularly and often. Soon of course the unfortunate animals, beside themselves with frustration, rage and pain, vent their feelings on each other in a frenzied attack, a fight to the death. Note that the frequency and the intensity of the electric shock does not abate when they fight. Note also that rats are intelligent and social animals, that they can clearly see that their fellow prisoner is also experiencing the agonising shocks and that the white coated humans observing them (most probably with a palpable pleasure) through the bars of their cage are the ones responsible for administering the agonising pain. yet despite all this the rats attack each other. You know why don't you Miss Bradshaw? Perhaps because it distracted them from their pain? Yes, perhaps, but if so only in part. The most important reason is that the dark desires, to kill, to fuck, to eat, to win, are, by far, the most important desires in any creature and these desires were allowed free reign, they were let loose from their cells because the pain those poor animals experienced effectively unlocked every door in their being. And what of the scientists who watched their rats dance and die? Can we really expect that they felt no thrill, no pleasure, no gratifying sense of power, as they peered and jotted down their notes. Were they not simply pulling the legs off spiders? Give schoolboys white coats and laboratories. Let them loose! Watching the boys (or the scientists) perform their tests will provide us with much more useful data than watching the rats.

But back to that kiss. You are an attractive middle-aged woman and I occasionally feel strong surges of desire for you. But I also frequently feel erotically inclined to all manner of folk. I also, less frequently, want to attack, maim, dismember and torture various of our colleagues. That kiss, in the context of our daily lives, holds no more significance than an urge to destroy a recalcitrant photocopier with a sledgehammer or to slay the entire board with a machete. These feelings are normal, we all have them. You, no doubt, have them too and I encourage you to explore them in your private moments, as I do. I invite you to travel within, to a place where there are no distractions, no excuses, no barriers. Where you are going there are no colours, there is no sound, there is no time. Within yourself all is red, the red of love, of pain, of rage, of lust, so there is no red. Within yourself all sound is your sound, the gurgling, beating, creaking, bubbling of inside, so there is no sound. Within yourself all time is encompassed in each heartbeat, there is no past and no future, there is no present, there is only "is", so there is no time. You might expect that one would feel trapped within oneself,

but have no fear, in actuality the reverse is true. Once we travel within, accept our innards and our true selves we find the world has no limits. The confines of our earthly existence suddenly seem startlingly, shockingly narrow. As a youth I travelled the length and breadth of Europe. One night, on a French sleeper train, I awoke suddenly, for no apparent reason. I peered out of the window, expecting to see the dense forest we had been travelling through for hours, but could see only blackness. Then, like a crescendo or a phenomenal orgasm, the day exploded upon me. As the train came out of the tunnel I could see the mountains for the first time. It was a bright morning, snow had fallen, the dazzling view spread out in front of me for hundreds of kilometres, light flooded my soul.

I hadn't realised I was in a tunnel, I hadn't realised it was morning. This is how most people live. They are in the tunnel and yet the inness is on the outside, it is within where there is true distance, where there is true light. People are contained without. Perhaps because humans now rely too heavily on one sense, their eyesight, to the detriment of others. Humans no longer know how to interpret smell and no longer trust their instincts. They can hear but what sounds do they choose to listen to, what noises do they fill their worlds with? We are befuddled by outer distractions and cannot "see" with ourselves. They hide their natural smells, cover their bodies (many are embarrassed by their natural form - even hate it!), they abhor their waste matter, deny their intuition. But just as that train took me out into a new world we can all, with a little application, transport ourselves through our trite veneers and into our true selves. It just takes will and the desire to acknowledge the truth. Believe me, it's well worth getting your hands dirty.

Each day every one of us is forced to suppress our true selves. Most of us no longer realise we are doing it. But the tension is building throughout the world. Those that escape their societal shackles and allow their true selves to shine are shunned and punished, incarcerated, even killed. The release valves exist for token waywardness, just like our "drunken", fumbling kiss, but they are not enough. Although our kiss does not signify a development in our relationship I hope you will come to see it as the first step towards your enlightenment, the beginning of your own journey within. No-one can lead you and when you arrive you will see, as I do now, you will never need anyone again and it will make the puppet show of life on the outside tolerable, even amusing.

But what if you are not ready to leave your tunnel? Between the two of us our crime, our kiss, is a minor one. According to the rules within the tunnel it's entirely forgivable, easily forgettable, a wayward embrace at an office party (a cliché - but surely everyone of us is but a labrat, trapped and predictable), allowable within the parameters of our being "drunk" (actually I was stone-cold sober). We were "letting our hair down", it was an aberration, a sweet release. But beyond ourselves the situation changes dramatically. If my wife or your husband were to hear about our indiscretion I imagine they would be angry, they would punish us, would feel embarrassed at what others would say. It would be irritating, inconvenient. But they won't find out, how could they? We were alone and neither of us plan to let this go further, do we? If our colleagues had witnessed the brief act, they would have been amused, titillated, perhaps disgusted (we are neither of us young any more, nor trim). But happily they did not. Although they are all fools it would be tiresome to endure their smirking grimaces. To be fair on the poor chumps, we are all fools, we fool ourselves as we primp up and down our carpeted, concrete perches, performing our pointless tasks and constantly reassuring each other as to our great importance. The blood and guts and shit and piss are millimetres away from every part of our lives, but we deny them absolutely. Next time you are in a busy lift, imagine, as I do every morning, all of the inner workings, the innards, of every passenger, mixed, free, in a thigh-high porridge of slippery, gurgling, viscosity. That's the reality of our existence, that's what our kiss revealed. That's what lies behind our kiss Miss Bradshaw, but, as I'm sure you'll now agree, nothing lies ahead of it.

I do apologise for spending more time on this call than I had intended. I'm sorry to have kept you so long, we both have our tasks to perform. Good day.

Pardon?

Oh. I see. Hello Brian. Would you be so kind as to transfer me to her. Thank you.