

My alarm was going off. The local PBS station was running one of their patented 'give us money or the airwaves could go silent' pitches. Silence this early in the morning would be great. My head was pounding, and my knee, my knee was sore. I thought to myself, 'slept wrong again, gotta get a better pillow, or at least go to the doctor to see what the headaches were all about'. I sat up, I was completely naked, as this was my standard uniform when sleeping. Well unless of course I had had someone over the night before. Oddly enough after sexual activities I liked to put on boxers. Not sure why.

I sat up, with my feet slowly making their way to the floor. The carpet was a thick purple plush that was warm and inviting. It was December, and the heat in the apartment was always up against the cold air of the outside. Factor in the drafty windows and I was not looking forward to getting up at all. I had to get up though, I was out of sick days at work, and unless I was dying or dead there was no way I could miss work.

Not that work was all that busy. Sure there were the standby clients that we would never lose but even that these days was pretty much on auto-pilot. The economy was in the shitter and only getting worse. I was not paid well, but I was paid more than most at the firm, and if I started to rack up reasons to shit can my ass, I would be shit canned. Simple as that.

I stood up, my head woozy from aching all night. My knee popped, a tiny pop, but a painful one at that. I limped into the bathroom, turning on the light and the turning it back off as the brightness blinded me and sent a wave of pain through my body. Yeah, a doctor's appointment was in order. I stood in front of the commode and relaxed my thigh muscles. Deep almost orange colored urine sprayed out in three distinct streams. It reminded me of how I pissed after having a night of rough sex. None of that in the last, four or five years, my career had taken me a lot of places lately but to the bedroom of a hot blond career oriented sex kitten was not one of them.

I pissed for what seemed like fifteen minutes, walked to the tub and turned on the water. The hot water in this dump was as bad as the heat, and it took forever to get to the right temperature. Being on the fifth floor didn't help with things.

As the water flowed out of the tubs spigot, I sat down on the cold toilet seat, thinking about what needed to be done today at work. Not much popped into my head aside from the dull ache of the headache. I yawned and my jaw cracked. I could see steam rising out from the tub, make a final effort, wiped my ass three times, and climbed into the shower. The water was barely above lukewarm. it would be scalding hot in about seven minutes, I had been bored one week and kept track. I hastily lathered up and washed all the important bits. I took a deep breath, remembered that it was Thursday, which meant that no one important would be in the office and skipped washing my hair. They say that washing the hair too often leads to greasy locks. And well if there was one thing I hated was a greasy head.

I shut off the water, before it became too damn hot, stepped out of the shower and onto the cold and wet floor. The shower leaked, that was a given, but so did the toilet tank. I made a mental note to call the landlord when I got into work, to have him at least look at the situation. I was positive he'd claim he was old and poor himself and that while he would love to fix it, it was not really in his budget. He would, if I agreed to an increase in rent do some repairs, not because he wanted to make money but because he was poor and old and blah blah blah. So I let the leaking continue, one day I would move out, that was a given, and the water damage would prevent the place from being rented until it was fixed.

I wiped the mirror of the steam that had condense from my quickie shower. I looked terrible, I was able to admit that much. I had, I thought slept decently, I even had had a dream.

And then it hit me. I want to say it hit me like a freight train but it was not really all that profound. At least that was what I thought at 5:45 on a Thursday morning on December. I had a dream, last night, I had been chased by a dragon, I think it was and just as I was getting away I was shot in the knee. There had been more before and after that but if there was one thing I was really awful at, and I was sure there were others, but one thing I fully and completely admitted to, that was remembering dreams.

Well that and forming concise and yet informative sentences. I was verbose, because it made me sound and look intelligent. At least that was what I told every one who read my work. In a long ago time I had been a technical writer for a major electronics firm. I was quite good at it too, and in my spare time, trust me there was a lot of that at certain times of the year I would take the concise work I had slaved over and make it very long and drawn out and then hand that into my boss. The first few times he was ready to fire me. I led and still do lead a sorry existence of a life.

Where was I? Oh yeah, I was standing in front of a half wiped off mirror, trying to remember the first and last half of the dream I had the night before. The mind is a really weird thing at times. At least for me when I was in the middle of a

dream, I had the feeling that I could and would remember every little detail. When I would awake, most times I could remember most of the last part of the dream, and as the waking process progressed I lost more and more of the detail until I was at the point I was at now. The middle part of the dream. In this one I had just gotten ahead of a dragon with razor sharp teeth when.

And this was the part that I had lost in my memory banks. The next part of the dream, and I knew logically it had to be another dream, was my knee getting shot. Now you might be thinking "I bet its the knee that popped and was sore at the start of this little tale!" Well, it was not. In fact, in the dream I had been shot from the side, but the part of my my knee that hurt this morning was really more of the shin, in the front of the knee.

I grabbed a toothbrush, I had several in a holder, one of my issues in life was making sure I had plenty of essential items on hand. Under the sink in the counter area, I had 18 rolls of toilet paper in case I happened to get the runs AND a blizzard hit. My therapist described it as a sort of Depression era hoarding thing, but I was born in 1970.

I laughed too. My parents were born after the depression,so maybe the gene for hoarding skipped a generation? Anyway, I've gone off on a tangent again. It all ties in together, at least I think it does. We're all complex and complicated individuals and while I don't believe mundane every day things mold what we are. Well okay maybe I do think as much. In fact when I was in college, I had a semester where I was convinced that every interaction whether with people, places, or whatever was going to determine if I was going to be a homeless dude in some cardboard box in Ho Chi Minh City.

That bit of my life had started out as a harmless conversation with a group of friends over beer and some pot and at least for me, turned into an obsession that nearly cost me my education. I was lucky that the college I attended had an on site psycho department.

Anyway, yes, yes, unfocused I have become. As a wise Jedi once said, and I paraphrase, "Fuck Trying, just do it already!"

Ok, so I'm in front of the mirror, and I can't remember my dream, and I really really want to remember it, because deep down it feels like it was the best dream ever, and even though my life is pretty decent, it could never be as good as this or other dreams I've had.

This is where the whole obsession du jour gets really odd. I start to fill in gaps of the dream, that I know are not the actual thing, but for some reason they make sense. And more importantly they make me feel calm. I close my eyes and I see that dragon, but the dream is near the beginning of it's arc, and the dragon has not yet spotted me. I am.

I am on a hill, under some brush. There is someone beside me. I think it is a guy, a best friend perhaps. We're waiting for the deer to move a bit down wind so one of us can take aim and shoot it.

I open my eyes. Mirror still in front of me. I rub my face, I could go for a shave, but I didn't wash my hair, so why bother with the face. I grab a towel from the rack, but realize that I've been standing around long enough to air dry. I pat my face dry anyway and walk back to my bedroom. The heat seems to have kicked in again and I toasty warm. I close my eyes, almost as if I had to. I'm back in my dream from last night, or this morning, it feels like I had just woke up from this dream of hunting a deer.

The deer moves, and then lays down. I nod to my friend, who now has become a red head with large tits. In dream this makes sense and in fact it feels correct now. My partner was always a woman, had to be. I lift my gun, some sort of rifle. even in the dream I can't remember what it is exactly. My partner, still a red head with big tits nods at me again. She smiles. I take a deep breath and hold it.

Sitting on my bed now. Not sure how I got there, last thing I remember doing was closing my eyes trying to remember that fucking dream from last night. I don't close my eyes again, I just concentrate, going through the steps my therapist had given me when I felt like I was starting to obsess over something. Usually step two or three pulls me out of the funk. Today step one is enough, "Your job is what keeps you the most stable. Keep your job, and you'll keep your sanity."

It wasn't the exact words, but it was the gist of what my therapist has told me. It worked this morning and that was what was important. Well to clarify it worked at this moment when I needed to be sane enough for work. I'd spend the rest of the day trying to remember the real dream. So yeah perhaps it wasn't a complete cure but one that got me through life.

I got up and started to get dressed. Going with the quick shower was the key this morning. I was running late, but not so

late anyone would notice at work. And besides it was Thursday and no one important was there.

Traffic into work was what one could term as light. I was about to say it was because it was Thursday and no one important was going to be at work today, but that would be making an assumption that every other company in this town also had management in-service on Thursdays. Sure our company was large and a lot of the traffic on the roads could be blamed on them, but what I was experiencing was really bad. I shrugged it off, it was winter and people did get sick, and there had been snow the last three days so perhaps the ski resorts in the area had pulled a few people in.

I hit my turn signal, although there was no one to really notice that I was exiting the highway, and eased onto the deceleration ramp. As I merged into a single lane, the second lane was traffic coming from the opposite travel lanes of the highway, I saw that there were three or four cars at the stop light at the end of the ramp. Well, at least there were some people in town this morning.

The light went to green as I was coming to a stop. I accelerated up the hill that lead into the downtown part of the town. The bulk of the town had been built up against a meandering river that until the dam up stream had been completed flooded every spring. Downtown was an oddball part of the town, it had one main street with stair stepping side streets, about 900 feet higher than the surrounding area. If one ventured off to the far sides of town into the dirt alleyways, one could fall into the river below and never be found. My office was of course built on land that was right up against one of these sharp drop off. Parking was always at a premium, but today it looked like I would be able to park close to the building and get inside without having to worry if the parking loft, as that was all it really was, was going to collapse and send me into the fucking river. I went through one more stop light, made a left turn and then a quick right turn and pulled into the side lot. It was but for one other car, empty. This was odd, even on a day when no one important was going to be in the office. I shut off the engine, went to grab my lunch bag, and was greeted with a sharp pain in my my left side. I dropped my keys, and leaned back into my seat.

As if a switch in my head was moved to on to off, or perhaps from off to on, the pain subsided and then was gone. My thoughts had turned from the intense pain to the dream I had had last night. The dream I had started to obsess over to find out what it was all about. This was not a good thing, at this time of day regardless of who was in the office or not. I could not start thinking about anything, dream or not that would trigger an obsession event. At my apartment even with no sick time left I'd take, but in public. No, I had had a few episodes years before and the stigma and the issues that came about after were just too damaging to my career and life. Even in this day and age of mental health awareness, if one had an episode that freaked people out, not even caused them harm but just made them uncomfortable, one was pretty much done.

I closed my eyes and started to meditate. What I needed to do was medicate, but that came with its own risks as well. Primarily drowsiness, which if it came down to it, wouldn't be too hard to work around, as it was, well you know, Thursday and no one important was here.

I could see the dragon, and the dragon had seen us. My partner, back to being a guy again, panicked and bolted back towards what I assume was a base camp. The dragon made a noise. I fumbled for my gun.

"Allen? Hey Allen, are you okay?" Someone was tapping on the window of my car.

I opened my eyes and the tale tell aura was not blocking my vision, so I was not in the middle of an episode. Closing my eyes had helped. I turned the key in the ignition and pressed the button that opened my window.

"Yeah, yeah, just was nodding off there I guess."

"I was wondering if perhaps you were having a seizure, you were rocking back and forth." The guy talking to me was Jack, or Joe, or something with a J, I could never remember the names of the people who worked on the upper floors, I was a basement office drone.

"No, no no seizure, just was getting in a power nap." I laughed. Jack or Jill or whatever the fuck his name was paused and then erupted into a snorting abomination of a laugh that surely would have awakened the dead, if there had been any dead around.

"Well, hey we all need to do what we need to do to get through the day here, eh?" My brain said the sentence again to itself but it didn't make sense the second go round either. I was talking to Jack Simpson, the laugh and the silly aphorisms were his trademarks. If I didn't play this right, he'd be downstairs every free second he had, bonding with me, even though we

just so happened to be in the parking lot together at the same time. In his mind he had saved me from some sort of undocumented seizure disorder and as the Chinese say, he was responsible for my life now. Well at least until he ran into someone else to bother.

I had run into a lucky streak it seemed, as just as he had started to open his mouth to start a conversation I had no interest in hearing, another vehicle pulled into the spot to the left of Jack. A female driver, one of the secretaries it looked like was driving, there was another female in the passenger side of the four door blue Chevy something or other. I crossed my fingers. As if the mere act of crossing my fingers had some sort of worldly power one of the women greeted Jack with a friendly 'hello'. If she really wanted to chat with him, or not I didn't care. I smiled as he backed away from me, halfheartedly waving me off as if I was the lech who had attached to his side was going to suck him dry all fucking day.

I grabbed my lunch bag, opened the door and stepped out into the fresh air. My car had some sort of lingering stale odor to it. I didn't smoke, nor eat nor drink inside the vehicle, so I had no clue what it was. In the back of my mind I made a note to get a bottle of Febreze after work. Also in the back of my mind the fucking dream I had the night before. I knew that if I didn't write down what I could remember here soon, I'd be into an obsession episode all damn day. Sometimes, most times once I wrote the dream down, all desire to learn all about the dream and fill in the blanks would go away. I was hopeful that this trend would continue. Today was an ideal day for starting some mundane tasks and then doing something like writing down a dream. To the onlooker it appeared as if I was 100% working. I hate the office, the job, the team, the boss, the coworkers but for some odd reason I loved to look as though I was 100% absorbed into the task at hand.

I was a programmer, level four promotion just last month, and with that came a bit more analyzing. And that could mean writing and sketching and all of that. Perfect cover for when I needed to work through a fucking obsession event.

I was in the building and on the elevator when I realized that even though it was Thursday, there was some work that had to be done today, mostly housekeeping items, that were best done first thing in the morning. It wasn't that I was worried about not doing them and some alarm going off somewhere with management getting reports and the like, no, if I ran the housekeeping scripts first thing in the morning, before any of the data people started their tasks, it made things easier and faster the next morning. And if there was one thing I liked, no fucking loved, it was things as mundane as cleaning a temp folder, getting done as easily and quickly as fucking possibly.

Sure, I had said I was a programmer, and I was. I loved programming, although I loved it more as a hobby than a job, I was also a systems guy. It was not something I actively applied for when I interviewed for the job six years ago, it was just something I fell into. It was a decent extra part of the job. It got me a pager once a month and a pager bonus check that was in all seriousness way too much for the little I had to do when beeped.

Digressed there for a bit, I do that a lot. I am pretty sure it's because I'm a perfectionist and I feel the need to describe every little thing I do and or say. And, to make it worse I have to find the perfect way to say it. Let's just say that the semester I was a English major in college was painful.

I made my way down to the elevator, got on and pushed the B2 button. My office area was located underground, not for any sort of real good reason. The doors slid closed and The car jerked alive and I was down to the second level basement in less than 30 seconds. The hallway was dark, a few light bulbs had burned out and no one had thought to tell the building crew. It added a sort of ambiance that at least in my eyes made the place seem less crappy than it actually was. I rounded the corner, and was reminded by the bright lights here that was not actually the case. This place sucked, and the bright lights only make it seem worse. I swiped my ID badge past the card reader, and waited for the beep. Instead it buzzed. Another failure in the system it seemed. I swiped again, I heard the beep. The door made an audible click, and I pushed it open, to walk into yet another dimly lit hallway.

I walked by an office, my direct boss's office. The door was closed and the lights were off. He was of course gone to do management things today. I continued walking, the darkness was replaced by a flickering, an annoying flickering at that. Man, this place was falling apart, at least physically. Our product and core competencies were rock solid, but if you looked at the damned building internally, you'd think that we were six months passed expiration.

I pass tow more offices. They were also empty and if the traffic levels coming into work were any kind of gauge, they'd be empty all day. I really would love to be down here all alone for one fucking day, not because I had the fucking dream to deal with, but well, I just wasn't in the mood to deal with people today, at least not with the fucks I worked.

First there was Fred. Fred was what one would call, a jackass. He was a decent programmer, from what code I had seen

from him, but he was also a fucking Republican, who and I am not sure if all Republicans are like this, tell every one at any opportunity how wrong they were and how the current Speaker of the House or the current President were going to take over, and we were all to blame because we allowed them. There for awhile when his party was in control of every thing he quieted down a bit until some news show told him that the only true Republican was a Reagan republican. He was so bad at this point he actually had to be pulled off of client visits, because he'd engage them in this crap. Why he was not fired years ago, is a story for another time.

Then there was Joan. Joan was a shitty programmer. She was a shitty documentation specialist. She was a shitty coffee maker. She was terrible at every thing she did. What she was not bad at was being related to one of the higher ups, and well, at that she excelled. She had been given two major projects when she had first decided to make a living, as she put it. She fucked them up royally. Her current job was to make sure we all stayed in line and completed our work. She liked to say she was Project Manager, but she was barely fit to be Office Manager. She was out of the office a lot lately, not because it was Thursday either, I know what you were thinking. She was training to become a sales rep. I almost cried when we were told that nugget of joy. I actually put my resume out on the market the next day, but alas, the market was and still is crap.

And then there was Andy. Andy was not all that bad to work with. He could code, and all the stuff I had given him was top notch. He could deal with customers, when needed and in such a way the customer was glad Andy was there. No, Andy's problem was that he hated to be on time and he hated the dress code. This didn't really affect me all that much directly, but there were times, that he should have been at work, and he was not, or he was wearing shorts in the middle of winter and I had to get him off site so no one saw him. And that was the crux of the issue, I had to cover for him so many times I was losing track of where and when he really was supposed to be at work. It was a major stress to me, because if I lost his coding skills, I was fucked on at least four projects.

As I made my way to my office, and let me tell you how lucky the people in the department had offices and not fucking cubes. The whole building either had a cube or had an open floor plan. Both sucked, and this department was down here because back in the day the team used to be solid and management had succumbed to our demands. Of course that team was pretty much gone now and I was left with fucking stress of coding and covering and fixing and dealing with the fucking bosses.

Sorry, off the trail again. I get like that a lot. Trust me, I find myself hard to follow. So if I've still got your attention, back to the present. I walked to my office, Andy was actually in his office, the lights were on and I could hear the sub woofer booming. He was playing some sort of game, which meant that he had been here all night again coding. He played games after a long stretch to relax, clear his head and head into a even longer debug session. I poked my head in.

"How many hours?" I asked. I meant playing the games.

"Two, two and a half." He was lying, probably close to four hours. What this meant was he was going to spend until after lunch debugging something or other in the pain in the ass project II. This was not to say he was terrible at coding, or what he had worked on was bad. It meant that the PITA II was a mess of spaghetti code. It meant that he was most likely not going to be in tomorrow either. I made a mental note to check to make sure there was nothing he had to deliver or do tomorrow. He would make up for the off time by being in the office all weekend off and on. Upper management didn't see this as a good thing. But then again they didn't see it much at all, because I had grown an ulcer protecting Andy.

"Okay, but you know don't get so into it you forget to eat." I said, with a laugh. He had had a few episodes of not eating for a few hours, and once we had to take him to the ER. He had never as far as I could tell pissed himself, but I'm sure that he had come close. He zoned out and the boom boom boom from the sub woofer returned.

I closed the door and went to my office. I had, and I totally deserved it, the largest office down here, and if the truth be know probably one of the biggest offices in the building. I didn't really care. As long as I had enough space for my monitors and enough space to actually write, I was happy. Oh and music, I needed sound. It helped me focus.

I checked email first. I had on average forty to fifty emails waiting from the previous night. This morning I had thirty-eight. Not bad I thought and then I read the first subject. This was going to be a shitty ass day, which would evolve into a bad fucking weekend. I closed my email client, and fired up a text editor. I just started typing. I am not sure why. After what I thought was five minutes, I took a break and looked around. I was not in my office anymore.

Well, I was still physically in my office, I guess, but mentally I had checked out and I was laying on the beach in Ocean City, Maryland. It was summer, July, I would wager, and I was the only person on the beach. I heard the drone of a biplane coming from my left. That wasn't right, the planes on the beach in Ocean City came from the right. My ass hurt. I shifted my weight and realized why. I was not sitting in a chair, nor laying on a blanket. I was just in the sand. The sand was white. I shifted again, and I could feel myself falling into a void. My heart rate picked up a bit. My brain was as confused as fuck. I was on the beach, sinking into the sand. I should be getting a tan, looking for chicks to score with but I'm in some sort of sand trap.

No. A voice, a small timid voice said, whispered, you're in your office chair, leaned back, mouth open, dreaming. And if you don't snap out of this shit soon, you're going to be caught by someone who....

I heard a knock at my door. My eyes popped open. The text editor on my screen was full of text. Some words, some just letters. What words I could make out didn't make any kind of sense. I minimized that window, and stood up.

I left woozy, but I walked to the door and opened it anyway. One of the secretaries from upstairs was standing in front of me. She was in desperate need of a blouse that didn't show so much cleavage. She was smiling.

"Hi! Just stopped down to let you guys know that there is free food upstairs, floor two kitchette."

"Oh hey thanks."

"Sure, thang." And she was gone, moved on to the next office door. She's find most empty, anyway. I looked at my watch. Holy shit, almost forty five minutes had passed. I shook my head. I needed something to eat. I locked my computer, and headed upstairs.

The lunch room was swarming with people, I didn't think that there would be that many people for free food, it usually consisted of a lot of sandwich rolls and the leftover crappy luncheon meats. But this was too early for lunch. What was on the two tables this time around was basic breakfast fare. It looked almost like someone had robbed a Super 8 continental breakfast.

I grabbed a plate and piled on whatever looked appetizing. Mostly it was muffins and doughnuts. There was some sort of cake looking thing, it had chocolate so I took it as well. I usually just had coffee until lunch, but today I was feeling hungry, and well there was the whole falling asleep for forty-five minutes and not really knowing it. I turned around to leave.

"Hey stranger." It was Leann, an intern for one of the departments, I couldn't remember which one. She, had a crush on me. This was not my ego talking or anything like that. Two separate people had come to me at different times to ask if I was aware of her crush. I had not been, she was a good 10 years younger than I was, and to be honest not at all what I considered attractive.

"Oh hey, um, Lisa?" I knew her name, but well it was better to make her think I didn't know who she was, even though she had been here for two months. I could be quite the fucking jerk, I admit, but I had my reasons. Reasons I may or may not get into later.

"Leann. Nice spread they have here."

"Oh yeah. Well sorry can't chat, got a shitload of work to get to." I turned on my heel, and walked out the door, into the hallway.

"We'll talk later." I almost turned around to tell her that no we would most definitely not talk later but she continued. "Bill has some ideas he wants me to coordinate with you."

I turned to ask her what the hell she was talking about, but alas she had slipped out the side door of the kitchenette. I felt ill. I did not want to work this intern, for one, and another, I did not want to fucking know what kinda bullshit ideas Bill had come up with. He was to put it mildly, a fucking retard. And I use that term so rarely it truly does have a significance you'd not understand. I shoved the chocolate covered cake into my gaping mouth and wished I had brought a six pack to work with me this morning. My head started to pound as I got onto the elevator. I had a full blown headache after the three sales drones starting going on about how they could make the company some real money if they were only allowed to tell the developers to go fuck themselves.

Normally I would have opened up a can of whoop ass, right there but I was not feeling well at all. The chocolate cake like thing was not sitting in my stomach quite right. I felt the urge to burp, and I did as discretely as I could. Then there was a rumbling in my gut, and I had this pressing need to go move my bowels. The elevator dinged, and I got off. I was on the first floor, which was actually a good thing, the situation being what it was. My ass ready to open up, and the food in my stomach also ready to make an exit. I rounded the corner and saw that the middle door was ajar. The first floor was an odd one when it came to restrooms. The rest of the building had large bathrooms with stalls in them as needed. But on the first floor, there were three unisex restrooms, the single use potties we called them. I pushed the door open and the motion sensor controlled lights came on.

I flipped the seat up on the toilet and puked into the bowl. I reached behind the seat and pushed the button to flush. The whole fucking building had gone green, and had installed low flow high pressure toilets a few years back. The vomit was gone in a whoosh, and I puked again. Flushed again, and in one smooth move dropped my pants and underwear, sat down and let loose. I dry heaved twice.

I was in a car. I was on a bicycle. I was in a field. I was in the woods. I was surrounded by people, by soldiers. I was alone. I didn't know where I was. There was a bright light. Then it was dark. I was back on the toilet. The air smelled like shit. It smelled like rancid bile. I looked down at the floor. There was a small puddle of piss. I blinked. It went away. I blinked, and it was now a pile of turds about three feet high. My back hurt. My kidneys ached. I moaned. I sat up straight. I paid attention. I paid attention. I focused my eyes. First on the tile on the floor. The floor became blurry. And then slowly it came into focus. I moved my head back. The pain in my back went away. I lifted my head so that my eyes were looking straight ahead. I started to lose focus. I must not lose focus, I told myself. Losing focus now would be bad. I didn't know how bad, but a feeling of doom, and danger was over me like a dark and rain heavy cloud in the desert.

I pinched my leg. The bathroom became bright, very bright, and then dark. I waved my arm. The lights had shut off because the motion sensor had not detected any movement. My guess was it was set to fifteen minutes, but that was just a guess. I would need to find out, because, I needed to find out how long I had been blacked out. Been somewhere else. I, I felt like I was going crazy. The lights snapped back on. I stood up. I looked behind me. Not a thing in the water. That didn't seem logical. Perhaps I thought, I had flushed? Or the automatic toilet had flushed, conspiring to make me think I was going crazy. Now that was crazy, toilets had no ability to conspire, and even if they did, why would this one be conspiring against me?

I shook my head. Time to get back to reality for sure, I said to myself. I rolled some paper off the roll, crumpled it up and wiped my ass. I dumped the crumpled up piece of paper into the toilet water. I glanced back. Perfectly clean. An illusion I thought. I wiped again. The roughness of the paper, it was the cheapest you could buy without calling it sandpaper, was quite evident this time. I looked at the used clump of paper, before tossing. Not so much as a speck of shit. I shrugged. Just the so called phantom wipe. I went one more time for good measure and the same result. I pulled up my pants and walked to the sink. It came on. I laughed.

All this money to save water, and the damn machines were not even calibrated correctly. I put my hands under the soap dispenser and got two short squirts of pink colored soap. Rubbed my hands together and put them under the spigot. The water shut off. I laughed again, this time louder. I moved my hands to trip the sensor. Nothing. At. All. I touched the top of the spigot. The water came out. For fuck's sake, the no touch reasoning behind this shit was totally a fucking farce.

I washed my hands and rinsed them, having to touch the top of the spigot three times. As I rubbed my hands under the hand dryer, the water came on again, and stayed on. What a crock of shit.