

Whistling Harmony

Saturday afternoon, strolling through town centre.

Zack was making his way through the pharmacy store on his way to his next target. He went into town to grab a couple of things in the shops. Normally he would order these things online and would be happy to wait a few days. After all it would save him money and the things that he would buy are nothing important. But today he wanted these things now and he knew that a trip to the town centre was in order.

The air was crisp and cold, which was unusual for the predicted weather for the week. Zack had on his favourite coat and gloves to keep himself warm, but it was unnecessary to do so in the incubation-like environment of the pharmacy. He filtered through the crowds of people that were blocking his path. For some people this kind of environment would drive them insane with rage or claustrophobia. But Zack was good at blocking out all the excess noise and stimuli of a busy store and was happy within his bubble of existence.

He would be happier if his mp3 player was working. But the power ran out for the device about 10 minutes ago so he was stuck without music. It didn't bother him too much, his mind was his music player. At any moment in time a song would pop into his head and he would listen to the sounds. However the music was always strangely incomplete in his mind; the track would either skip or be stuck in a loop that required focus to bring the song back into order. But Zack was content to letting the music play out however it wanted to in his head until another train of thought came passing by.

All that Zack needed now was some music to get start. He wondered what his mind was going to play next in his mind. What awesome track did it have-

Oh... Great... *That* track.

That rubbish mainstream chart song that has been making its rounds in the media recently. Zack heard it on the radio whilst driving to work one day. It is technically quite a poor song, something that the music industry churned out with the minimal amount of music effort to get the maximum amount of cash from the mainstream audience. But it did have a catchy tune. And the entire song was lodged in his brain from start to finish.

It wasn't going anywhere. Zack could feel the song taking over his body, its influence growing stronger with every passing moment. He could see the exit doors of the pharmacy store and he thought that passing through the doors would help get the chart tune out of his head and onto to something more meaningful. So he made his way to the doors passing through the aisles.

He had to admit, the song was making him feel happy and more upbeat. The song was starting again from the beginning and Zack wanted to join in this time. So he began to whistle the first couple lines of the song out loud. A smile grow on Zack's face as he was feeling pleased with himself.

Then he heard the next couple line of the song being whistled.

Zack stopped dead on his tracks. That sound didn't come from the space between his ears. That sound came from the space outside of his head. Who was whistling that tune?

Some seconds had passed as Zack looked around the store with suspicion. After a moments hesitation he whistled the next part of the song. Then waited.

The next parts of the song was whistled back to him.

Who was whistling that tune?

Zack started stalking up and down the aisles searching for the source of the whistling. Like a bizarre sonar system, Zack would whistle one part of the song and the next part would be echoed back. But he couldn't see who was whistling with him. The tempo of the sounds began to increase and it started to feeling like a game of cat and mouse. Who would find who first? Zack was struggling to keep his mouth in the correct whistling shape because he was trying not to smile. This is fun, he though to himself. Is this guy messing with me?

It was reaching the climax of the song and now both parties were whistling in unison. Zack's thoughts were becoming louder and more excitable. We're getting to the end. Where is that sound coming from? I can hear it now, it's coming from the left! Zack ran towards the end of the aisle, the whistling getting louder still. Nearly there. Just around this corner. The song is nearly over! Just around the-

Zack stopped suddenly in his tracks as he almost collides with someone. He was so focused on where the rogue whistles were coming from that he wasn't looking at where he was going.

"Oop, sorry" Zack said instinctively.

"Sorry" a soft voice replied.

Zack looked up to see who he nearly bumped into and was caught by surprize. He saw a woman looking back at him. A woman of reasonable portions. One could tell despite being covered in a coat and gloves and scarves and a hat. Her heart shaped head was home to brown hair that flowed to her shoulders, smooth skin that had the natural look, and her eyes were perfect. She gave a polite smile to Zack and her face lit up in front of him, her eyes lightly squinted to show that she was truly a happy person. Zack smiled back at her.

What should have happened next was that both people would part ways and carry on with their lives, not giving this incident another thought. But that didn't happen. Nothing happened.

Neither Zack nor the woman moved a muscle for moments. These moments dragged on and

on. Neither of them knew what to do next, as if neither of them read this chapter in the user manual of life instructing them on how to handle this situation. They couldn't take their eyes off each other.

Zack noticed that the whistling that he was hunting for had stopped. Did she make those whistling sounds? How did that song go again?

He whistled the first couple of verses from that chart song.

Her eyes flared up with recognition. She whistled the next couple of lines from that chart song.

A moment of silence passed and they both smiled at each other. "There you are" Zack's mind whispered.

He whistled the next part of the song and waited for her response. She replied with the next part. A grin appeared upon his face. With excitement he carried on whistling the song, to which she interrupted and countered with the next part of the song. A musical volley session had begun between the two of them. Each part of the song was gracefully being handled. Each whistler was adding their own flare and style to the song, the sounds were blending together to create such sweet harmonies. Zack was feeling a buzz from the whole experience, never had he felt this connection with another person. The timings, the sound, the sensation, everything worked beautifully. All because of a rubbish chart song that was churned out to make money.

After what felt like the longest three minutes or so in the longest while, the song was completed from beginning to end. Then the duet remembered where they were and noticed some spectators watching from across the store, wondering, admiring, grimacing at the sounds that the pair were making.

They remembered where they were, and giggled with embarrassment. Something had to be done to break this awkward moment. But what?

"That um..." he struggled to say "... that was really quite... amazing. You sounded really good back there".

"Thanks" she replied with a sheepish smile.

"No seriously" He continued "that was great. We sounded really good."

"Yeah. Too bad the song itself is terrible."

"True... But you gotta admit it's catchy. That's how they get you!"

She nodded in agreement. Then the silence returned to fill the room. The atmosphere was thick and tangible. Something was there, Zack could feel it! This moment, this moment of connection,

doesn't happen every day. This was a 'use it or lose it' moment right in front of his face. What is one suppose to do now?

He sense a shift in the atmosphere, he could sense that she was shifting balance. "Well I had bet-"

"Would you..." he bleated out loud. They both jumped at the same time, startled at the noise that Zack made. They both responded with smiles and giggles.

".. Um... would you like to have some coffee?"

Yes, Zack's mind said in his head. It was aproving of his actions. "Like, right now perhaps?" his mouth continued.

"No what are you doing??" his mind queried with panic in its voice. "That sounds too desperate and stalker-like. She'll never agree to-"

"If you don't mind that is" his mouth fumbled a little more.

"What in the mother loving blue hell!?!?" The mind screamed. "Why are you still talking?!?!? Shut. You. Fat. Pie. Hole! You stupid piece of sh-"

"That's nice of you to ask." She replied with a smile that lit up her eyes. "But I don't know... I need to be elsewhere right now and-"

What did he have to lose?

"It'll only take half an hour of your time, my treat. I know this cafe down the street that makes the best coffees in town. Maybe we could work on our harmonies some more. Maybe find a song that we both like?"

Big grin, smile with your eyes. It's going to work.

She turned away and paused for a moment. Then turned back with a smile. "Actually, that sounds like a good idea. Sure, let go for a drink. Your treat."

It worked?! I mean... Of course it worked!

They gathered their possessions and their thoughts and made their way to the exit of the pharmacy store. Zack had no idea what to do next, this wasn't part of his plan for the day. And yet he had a sense that he knew what to do next. He sensed that something good was going to come from this little detour in his day. Plus it gave his mind a chance to think about something other than that God awful chart song.