

So hoarding ran in the family, kind of. Not something you'd readily admit to, because it was a virtue to chuck things out, preferably after a single use. Such was the drive for welfare, that to buy, expend, dispose, were touted on the socials as being really modern traits, like tranga, swa. Except Dora was a typical cognitariat wahra, and chucking out stuff like broken cables, or plugs used in the British Commonwealth, or tape, old screws, perfboards, LEDs, half-sued notebooks... And now she would be vindicated. because this junk, stored in plastic containers neatly Dynolabeled "junk" would mastermind her into the Houtrakkers.

She just hoped her previous girlfriend had not carried out the threat of clearing out "those damn antique boxes of crap" because the one thing she could promise the HRs, was two bakelite telephone sets, pulse dialing/rotary phones, which when properly connected to a switchbox, there would be totally untraceable and un-sniffable communication possible.

She wolfed down the still hot jollof, and her eyes smarted at the mme jeannette heat. She visualised her basement storage of 9m<sup>2</sup> going through the contents in her mind's eye. Books, photos, camping gear, and old tent, early 20th century hand tools, curtains, too ugly to put up, but who knows, maybe to someone's taste...

She'd have to lean over the bicycle parts, but probably balancing on an old wooden snow sled in the rear left, would be the Dynalabeled curver boxes.

Glad she hadn't run into one of the nosey neighbours, she timed her visit to the basement at 20hrs sharp, when the obligatory news was broadcasted in a blaring tooting fashion. She turned on her set, sat her cardboard effigy in front of it and putting her hood over her head, snuck out the door and down the hallway to the far end of the fire escape stairwell...

She remembered to fill the petrol cranked fridge-

The cheap lights turned on with the motion-sensor. Once installed, much cheaper, the returns were not redistributed/resulting in a lower rent. Turning the corner to get to her storeroom, she heard the sound of wood crushing. She took a peek around the corner, still conscious of her deceased state, a total wild card when meeting people. She saw Raymond, her elderly next-door neighbour, attempting to force entry into her storage space with a makeshift crowbar. No time for niceties "Ahem," she said loudly, and strode toward the culprit. "What's the meaning of all this then?" she hoped her forceful and loud tone would dampen the boomer's mulish tendency to contradict anyone's opinion or purported fact under fifty years of age, as well as distract him from the glaringly obvious fact that she was very much alive.

"My god, Dora!" he exclaimed, and looked like he had seen a ghost (which to his mind he had), and dropped the piece of metal masquerading for a crowbar, with a giant echoing clunk. "You're supposed to be dead and I thought I'd clean up your store"

"Well, the train crash... I was in it... and I escaped. And got rescued, by some partisaners,..." Dora glanced over to Erwin, to check whether he thought she was totally bonkers or off her rocker. He looked at her calmly, waiting for the rest of her story. As a sci-fi buff, he was used to suspending his disbelief.

Dora narrated the story, skipping over the coven in the copse, because it probably wasn't wise to be totally trusting. Even good old Erwin, who as someone in the ASS spectrum, couldn't lie or understand deception.

They were passing the Liebrug fort. "So Erwin, any thoughts on why you were not stopped by any patrols? Or why I wasn't followed?"

"I think that we found a glitch in the Matrix. There is one weakness in the Machines, at least an obvious one, and that is that they require electricity to function. The second, is that they depend on humans to be predictable. Now our governments have — and the capitalist billionaire cronies, the plutocracy — or kleptocracy if you will — have reduced our language to that of economics only.

Also econimocis is now elevated to a science — therefore beyond scrutiny or reproach. Yet it is neither — it is a political system. Does material value not dictate our every breath? It's just such a bummer Marxism is reduced to the drive of tottering fools; of dictators also. One of the great scams of the 20th century, framing communism as or socialism as the devil incarnate. There simply isn't any other political system that actively defies capitalism or economic wealth as a immoral value system and degrades people to nothing more than duracell batteries.

The cognitivia that is so lauded is just a freakish exception, designed to pull the wool over our eyes.

It started with the concept that the one great good we had, was not our soul, but our attention. Because everything comes from / emanates from attention, is it not? Intelligence, labour, knowledge, leisure, thought..."

"Jeez, Erwin, are you high?" joked Dora, still warming her hands on the heater. They passed the bridge over the Spaarne and Erwin took over the wheel from the autopilot to navigate the 20th century ghetto that was Schoten. A thick fog was oozing in the tight turns of the old Afrikaner slums from the Spaarne. The Nissan's headlights made out a scavenging dog, wet leaves, old cardboard boxes discarded. "So much for all the wealth," muttered Erwin. "George Orwell would turn in his grave."

"You can drop me off at the next corner, I need to get some jollof," said Dora, putting on her mittens. Erwin nodded and reduced pressure on the electromotor.

"Oh Dora," he said, once the car came to a standstill, "You were invited to your funeral; it's tomorrow, will you also come?"

"Well since I'm dead, I don't have anything better to do," she joked, her hand on the latch to open the car door. "You can't be serious though? What does that mean and how on earth am I to get my stuff back?"

"Actually, there might be a loophole," mused Erwin, an administrative one, obviously," and Dora got out of the car, exasperated at his mumbo-jumbo. Jet at work he knew the entire Lawbook of Taxation, Life & Death & Everything in between like no other. "I'm too hungry for this Erwin, let's see each other on the LoRa when you've thought it through and I've had something to eat," and she got out of the car and closed the door with an exasperated slam the Nissan didn't appreciate.

"Nothing of the sort, Raymond. you we're trying to steal from a cognitariat wharu, a serious felony!" and Dora stooped to quickly pickup the crowbar. "Never mind I'm not dead, I survied the train wrack, and obviously the authorities will have everything sorted in no time, you know how they cannot abide mistakes."

"Anyway, you can certainly help me now," and she put the key in the lock, which was thankfully undamaged thanks to the weekend musculature of Raymond, boomer extraordinaire. "You can help me fill my fridge with petrol, since you get more rations than I do as a senior citizen, then maybe I'll not tell/report you to the Pôlice" so off you go then!" not wanting him to see the contents of her storeroom, nor what she was going to extricate from it. Raymond skulked off, shaking his head like a confused labradoodle. She'd check in with him later, the fridge still had some days juice left. She opened the door, and switched on the light. She noted that the frame had suffered from the crowbar, she'd grab some woodfiller to camouflage the damage. Now where were those boxes? Right where she visualised them, luckily the ex gf had not carriedthrough her threats of declutterization.

She'd have to find a way to keep Raymond silent. Perhaps she could invite him to her funeral; as a boomer he was a sucker for freebies. That would bind him closer, and she could share some of her painkillers with him to tackle his gout. Though she had a nagging/niggling feeling that underneath Raymond's feeble and contrarian boomer demeanour lay a bugget as hard as a walnut, something not even the authorities had yet managed to crack. No, it was hidden. and cherished - like a squirrel hides its stash/cairn and sleeps curled in its furry red tail, counting the little hazelnuts, stashed safely away. And squirrles could bite when cornered, perhaps they even carried rqbies?

Dora lugged the plastic containers through the concrete bare stairwell three flights up, noticing how her body ached as remants of the catastrophe. Her head boomed.

Before she arrived at her landing she pushed open the fire door a crack and peered into the empty hallway. No one in sight, the news broadcast hadn't yet finished. the weather report now took about 90 minutes because they didnt want to boradcast much real news. Besides, the publich networks had been decimated by a few decades of right-wing yonks, preferring the drable of commercialised influcener gossip-level trabble.

"Tomorrow's weather... is statsisticlly likely... to be exactly the same as today..."

Though who was interested in statistic and fact today? she wondered cynically, and desperately.