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The Warehouse: Progress Notes 1

One of the first things I noticed while reading the first few pages of *The Warehouse*, is the individual telling of the character’s perspective as they go about their day, and somehow cross each other’s paths as more characters introduced. It reminds me of the book *All The Lights We Cannot See by Anthony Doerr*, as it has a similar storytelling pattern I fancy. A very effective way of introducing different walks of life, different goals, sufferings, and backgrounds, carefully stitched up by their stories. The book’s theme, as I perceived it, is a reflection of the real-life mega-companies that most consumers adore, but cannot be said the same by the companies and employees they work with.

Some of the biggest real-life issues reflected in the first fifty pages of the book, I believe, is that this sort of situation is inevitable in a capitalist society. Big companies get bigger and competitions eventually exit out, as the public consumer keeps being pampered and offered huge discounts, at the costs of the laborers who toil away all day long for an inadequate wage. As portrayed by the book, this issue arises most especially in a decrepit town that doesn’t have much to go around, and the only salvation is to swallow their pride and be someone else’s “monkey”.

Personally, I have been lucky enough to only read or hear about these stories from books and documentations, but some elements of the issue still linger everywhere at a smaller scale. My first job was a back-of-the-house staff at Panda Express restaurant. Great company, motivating work culture, and overwhelming afternoon customers. At the end of each day, most of us, especially us, the cooks and kitchen helpers, are burned out and itching to get home. But we still have to stay late until we prepped up the ingredients for the next day and clean up the rush hour mess. All the skin burns, exhaustion, and fake smiles just for a piece of manipulative “Certificate of Excellence” and a 50 cents raise just to keep our heads off of retaliatory thoughts against the company.

Having to realize all these, I wonder what those proud pictures up against the wall with a title that says “Employee of the Month” are really for?