

Deli Run

I shut the door behind me and trotted down the stairs. It was cold enough that I felt the need to don my coat and scarf. Even though I was only going to be out for a couple minutes to get some coffee, I didn't want to freeze to death. I live on the second floor of the high-rise, hence the stairs. It's great, never have to deal with full elevators. Sometimes the noise gets a little much given that my window faces the street but hey you can't have it all.

Winter was on its way and the air outside was crisp to the point of biting. I thanked myself for grabbing my warm wear, otherwise I would not have been very happy. The deli was just around the corner, my favorite spot. Best damn chopped cheese in the city and not too bad on the prices either. For now though, just a coffee.

The familiar jingle of the bell rang out to greet me as I nonchalantly shuffled through the door. The cashier and I shared a knowing glance, acknowledging each other's existence and recognizing the fact that we had seen each other before. This was the guy that once commented on my smoking habit. I awkwardly chuckled and replied that I was trying to quit even though I had zero intention of doing so. Each time I went in to buy a pack I would hope that it wasn't him manning the register.

Either way, not here to buy smokes. Still got half a pack. I made my way to the coffee pots. French roast, morning blend, decaf French roast—gross—French vanilla. A lot of French. I grabbed the large cup and filled it up with the normal French roast, all the coffee here tasted the same but the French roast was the go to it seemed so it was always the freshest. Then again, usually around this time no one will have bought coffee for a couple hours, so I was gonna get stale ass coffee either way.

I waffled around in my head if I wanted a snack. I decided that I did. Perusing the snack aisle I saw the same old shit that I never bought because I didn't like it. I wanted to mix things up with my snack of choice but I'm also too picky to get anything other than the frosted Danish. It wasn't even that good, but it was simple and not too many calories. At least I think, I never bothered to look because I know that if I see a number I don't like I'll never want to buy it again. But it was pretty small so.

I bet the guy was gonna comment on something. I hated it when people commented on the shit I was buying. I don't want your opinion. I slid the two things on the counter and he eyed each of them, punching numbers into the mysterious display only he could see.

"Five thirty-nine." He said matter-of-factly. I pulled out my card and handed it to him. He slid the chip side forcefully into the credit card reader on his counter and eyed me. I couldn't decipher what he was trying to convey. I mostly tried to avoid his look. He drummed his fingers on the countertop as the reader displayed a bunch of dots. I stared down and traced the pattern of the fake marble. All I wanted was to get out of here, drink my coffee, and finish my work. I didn't want to talk, or fake a laugh, or any of that crap. I should have brought my earbuds. I could be listening to music. Oh but I would take one out as I went up to speak to him. When is this thing gonna finish?

"No smokes today?" I chuckled.

"No, I have a pack already." He nodded and pulled my card out, handing it back to me.

"Have a good night!" He said.

"You too." And I went home.