

The City Awakens For Another Day

The first bird starts chirping around five, at the same time garbage collectors and milkmen head out on their daily runs. By the time the early workers limp back hours later, the birds have quieted down and are nowhere to be found.

It would seem in today's world that the earlier risers, the bus drivers and mill workers, the waitresses and janitors, all receive less compensation for the work they do than those who can afford to sleep in a tad and not rise before, say, eight.

But no matter the status of one's economic upheaval, every living human goes through a ritual of some sort during the morning hours. Some desire cold breakfast cereal with Willard and Jane and Bryant on the screen, glued to their brains. Others opt for a brisk jog and then a big slab of bacon.

The biggest problem facing these rituals is what begins them: waking up. Like they have for ages, people rise fast-asleep, dress fast-asleep, go out in the morning sun or rain fast-asleep, and eat their stale donuts fast-asleep.

For many people what keeps them awake and reminds them that it is, indeed, morning, are the sounds of an awakening city. The rumbling traffic, a pleading horn, and a dying train serve notice that the dark side of living is over.

People also fall in and out of dreams before and after the long slumber. Often this occurs with the radio alarm clock news, under the guidance of D.J. No. 84, drifting in and out of the mind. Once awake the difference between the real and unreal is faded.

If the paper boy strolled by on time and his aim was on target and all is forgotten about the bad family dog, then the real news does hit home; that is, if one of the neighbor families didn't steal the rag so they could read the score of an already forgotten game.

It is only after the waking up process is completed that people propel themselves into first gear in the so-called real world. For its then that the real bustle of the American morning begins and the rat race is at the go and everything is pretty and sweet and fast.

Close the car door and watch the sun rise.

Story and Photos by
Stephen Maher

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