

## **Caffeinated**

“Now then Mr Venti. In your own words. Tell us about the day in question.”

“Just to be clear, Sergeant. For the record. You can’t try me for the same crime I was acquitted for six years ago, can you?”

Sergeant Flint paused. “That is correct, Mr Venti. Please. Continue.”

Victor Venti smiled. “Well. You see. A Week before the day in question, my wife and I were on holiday at the beach. I’d been trying to get into a book. Vera asked me if I wanted a latte. I said ‘No’ and continued to the next paragraph. A minute later, she asked me again. ‘Would I like a latte?’ Of course, nothing had changed, so my reply remained the same. ‘No.’ I tried to refocus on my book. Moments later, she asked again if I would like a latte. I looked her right in the eyes and resolutely repeated my answer. ‘No.’

When the waiter came along gathering drinks orders. She asked him if they did lattes. He had said ‘yes, of course.’ At which time she had turned to me a fourth time and asked if I wanted a latte. For the sake of peace and quiet, I said, ‘Yes.’ Victor took a sip from his cappuccino as he re-scanned the small, stark interview room.

“Please continue Mr Venti.”

“I decided there, and then, if I wanted any peace, I would have to do something about it.” He smiled and looked directly into the Sergeant’s eyes. “At the time, I was working on the gardens at the new housing estate off Park road. I’d suggest, if you’re looking for closure, Sergeant. You go and look at the unparalleled rhododendrons growing there. They were planted with a unique coffee ground mulch. Victor raised his mug of cappuccino and nodded his thanks to the Sergeant. “To this day, Sergeant, I haven’t been able to drink another latte,” a wide grin spreading across his face.

The Sergeant stared at Mr Venti for a moment before pressing ‘Stop’ and saying, “Recording end at 7.51pm.”

344 Words (Excluding Title)

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