

Heavenly Aroma

It was so sudden. The man was walking along the street when there was a sudden pain in his chest that was so intense that it literally took his breath away. After a few seconds went by and his senses began to fade he realized that he was dying. Consciousness faded, and when he awoke he was in a totally foreign and unknown environment.

There was a man standing above him, robed in white. "Welcome," he said. "My name is Lazarus and I've come to take you to the bosom of Abraham."

The man stumbled a little as he said, "Is this heaven? Oh, my name is..."

Lazarus interrupted him and said, "This is Paradise, and you don't need to tell me your name. You will be known by your previous life; we can read it here just like a map. Everybody has a distinct topography, but until you learn how to read it you can just call me Lazarus."

So Lazarus began to lead the newcomer along what was more of a corridor than a path through the clouds. As they walked along, the newcomer was suddenly struck by the sensation of a fresh aroma. It was not exactly a smell, but as though the air was greatly freshened. It was like an exhilaration of the soul, a quickening of the spirit.

"What was that?" he asked.

"What was what?" Lazarus replied.

"That sense of uplifting; didn't you feel it?" the man answered.

"Oh, you must be feeling the level of global inspiration from back on the earth. It's a connection we have with the good thoughts and feelings of mankind. You know, when you were inspired by something and your heart fluttered and you got chill-bumps. Perhaps you even choked up a bit."

"That's amazing!" the man said.

"Not when you realize how sensitive God is to even a spark of Good in mankind. There's even a higher level of this when someone generates this inspiration by what they do than when someone just responds to it."

"How about all of the evil that is thought down there?"

"Oh, were immune to that. God puts a protective shield around us. You know, no tears in heaven and all that."

"I'll bet it's really something on Sunday mornings, with so many worshipping God and offering communal prayers and singing! It should be powerful when groups are in synch with each other."

"You are so right! But don't think that God isn't disappointed when that level doesn't carry on through the week as well. And of course you know what the greatest peak of the year is, don't you?"

"Easter? Christmas?" the man ventured.

"Close. It's when they have a re-run of It's a Wonderful Life."

And with that Lazarus turned from the stunned newcomer and led the way on towards the center of the celestial city.