

The Chronicle of Social Misdemeanors

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Store Clerk, 36, Robbed of Morning Greeting

Waltham, MA—Early yesterday morning, Sanjay Nastra, 36, a Store 24 clerk and father of three, suffered serious wounds to his ego following an awkward social exchange with Jim Stoneham, a 42-year-old sales manager and semi-pro golfer.

"This fellow comes in every morning for two months. Always very pleasant and nicey nice, asks about my kids," said a dazed and weak Nastra as he sat slumped on a tall stool, sipping a blue Slurpee and restocking adult magazines, "This week, nothing. Not a word. Does not look at me. Does not mention Red Sox. Does not mention weather. Three days in a row, I continue to ask if he would prefer a small bag. He does not thank!"

Eyewitness Trudy Zagon, who preferred not to give her age or occupation, confirmed that an icy silence broke out between the two men at approximately 7:00 a.m., closely followed by Stoneham's hasty departure.

"What, the guy who was here ahead of me?" said Zagon, "I dunno. What did he do? I was working on my scratch ticket. Hey! You got a smoke, cookie?"

This morning, Stoneham was observed entering the Lil' Peach convenience store adjacent to Nastra's establishment. When approached in the Lil' Peach parking lot and asked about the Nastra incident, Stoneham replied "No comment," and slid behind the wheel of his red 2003 Subaru Outback, slamming the door.

In response to the reporter's persistent rapping on the driver's side window, Stoneham rolled the window down a crack and stated, "Look, I was in a lousy mood and couldn't think of anything to say. After that, it just got too hard to start chatting again." When asked if he plans to continue his reign of rudeness at the Lil' Peach, Stoneham said, "Oh, Jesus," and drove off quickly. ■

"What did he do? I was working on my scratch ticket. Hey! You got a smoke, cookie?" Trudy Zagon, Eyewitness

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that most newspapers use short "filler pieces" to pad out the awkward blank spaces that remain when articles are shorter than expected? As Jay Thorwaldson notes in his article, *When Hot Type Went Cold at the Palo-Alto Times*, "These items were also called 'crap,' clearly a double-meaning word that came to be synonymous with 'filler.' Thus, when a printer said someone's head was 'full of crap' it could be a compliment of sorts, meaning the person knew a lot of miscellaneous facts."

In our next issue: *Gang Activity Feared in Wave of Random Mulletings*

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