



TOUCHED BY ENVY---MAYBE, MORBIDLY

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They say that the root of all evil is money. But a wise writer somewhere chose to correct that wrong notion by declaring that it is the greed for money that ultimately makes it evil. I find that as the most definitive justification for the real value of money. Yes, we need money to buy us earthly goods, and in these difficult times, earthly necessities. But it is the extreme thirst for money that can not be easily slaked. That definitely needs supreme transcendence and a tremendous amount of self-control. Even angels among us can sometimes fall victim to the temptation of getting more money.

Money endows us with the purchasing power we need to get what we need, not what we want. Have you ever wondered why a Greater Power always seems to know just how much we really need and always provides it in the most opportune moments? There have been numerous times in my personal life when I have experienced money problems and concerns. Yet, miraculously, there's always an opportunity that comes along, like a new assignment or an unexpected windfall that would come just in the nick of time. Those moments often leave me breathless for their sheer miracle of grace. It is then that I remember the biblical verse: Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? That's from Matthew 6:26, English Standard Version 2001. Those very words have comforted me through endless nights of worry and hopelessness. Yes, there is Someone who takes care of our needs, knows them completely even before we come to Him.

Therein, I also see much hope for all the homeless, hopeless ones out there who seem to see nothing but darkness and more darkness. Seek and you shall find; knock and the door will be opened unto you. When we persevere long enough and find ways to ease our burdens, we will prevail. No amount of worldly concern should ever pull us down. We must never give up, even when others have already thrown in the towel. Whatever great things the more fortunate ones possess, when we die, we all become equal. Maybe the more affluent ones will have mausoleums built for them, complete with air conditioning and WiFi and piped-in music, but we would all still be buried six feet under.

No amount of personal wealth and not even the latest gadgets can save us from death, the great equalizer. For in the end, only two things are certain: death and taxes.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Do you think the writer is being morbid for bringing up the issue of materialism and death together? Why or why not?
2. Do you think the writer is justifying envy by using death? Why or why not?
3. If you knew when your death will happen, what would you have in your *bucket list?
4. How important is money to you? Elaborate on your answer/s.
5. Is materialism inherently wrong? Why or why not?

*bucket list-a list of things to do before you die.
(<http://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=bucket%20list>)