



Some years ago, I had moved to southern Maine to start a new job. During this tumultuous transition, I lived in a hotel. Next to the hotel was a bakery.

One morning, on my way to work, I decided to stop over at the bakery to buy some bread for breakfast. This quaint store was one of the small comforts that relieved the austerity of living in a hotel. However, the door to the store was locked, and I noticed it was not scheduled to open until later.

“We open at 8,” a lady yelled from inside the store.

A man, dressed like a delivery man, was on his way out of the bakery. He saw me pulling at the locked door. As he finished loading fresh bread into a van, he said,

“Can I help you?”

“I just wanted to buy a couple of breakfast rolls,” I replied.

He signaled for me to wait a minute, and he went back into the bakery. Thirty seconds later, he came out with a paper bag and handed it to me. I felt the bag, and it was filled with a still-warm baguette and half-a-dozen rolls. The bread smelled heavenly. The man climbed into the van, started it, and was about to drive off.

“Wait, how much do I owe you?” I asked.

“Nothing. Enjoy them! Come back to see us again.”

I devoured a yeasty, crusty roll in the car while driving to work. Then I shared the fresh bread and the story with my friends. This memorable event took place over a decade ago, and I have been a regular customer of this bakery ever since.

During the year 2020, it has been easy to feel depressed. The generosity and kindness of the delivery man has stayed with me all these years. We need more people like him to remind us there is still goodness in this world. It is up to us to spread this kindness, especially in these difficult and unsettling times.

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