

Miracle in a cup of joe
By Jerry Peterson
jerrypetersonbooks.com

Miranda Fernandez, a regular at The Daily Grind – the coffee shop in Sindell – studied the sludge in the bottom of my cup. “Imagine,” she said, her fingers doing an air dance, “a ruin so strange it must have never happened.”

“Ruin, spruin,” I said, “Mir, you got the gift. Everyone says so. All I wanna know is whether I should put a C-note on Last Chance in the fifth at Pimlico, pays ten to one. Can you see Last Chance in there?”

Her gaze at the sludge took on a new intensity, and her eyes brightened. “A bay with three white socks and a blaze on her forehead?”

“That’s the one.”

She shrugged.

“What do you mean,” I asked, “with this scrunching of the shoulders?”

“I mean you’ll be a grandfather before your horse crosses the finish line. See there – ” she turned the cup to me, pointing at the black stuff – “mud. She does not do well in mud. She’ll wreck coming out of the final turn, take three other horses down with her.”

“So I shouldn’t bet?”

“I didn’t say that. Buy me another espresso and, in the bottom of that cup, your horse might get up, might keep running, providing there’s something in it for me.”

I grubbed my wallet from my back pocket. “You take Visa?”