

TRAVELLING WITH TARGET:

TARGET GETS STUPID !

In youth, one becomes involved in all kinds of crazy things because, inter alia, youth does not know fear and, therefore, cannot appreciate it.

Youth, also, cannot even understand the meaning of the word, and, in many cases, youth cannot even spell the word.

But, as one matures, one is supposed to know and appreciate fear ... and should be able to spell the world.

Thus, when this medium's trio of three mature reporters took the train from Berlin, Germany, to Rome, Italy, with a two-hour stopover in Munich, Germany, a train journey that took the best part of 24 hours, in retrospect, it was, without question, the height of madness.

TARGET () would never undertake, duplicating this madness again: Once, being once too many times.

The madness of **TARGET** was for three mature people to elect, voluntarily, to suffer the vagaries of the Germany train service – without a second thought.

TARGET's only plausible excuse for willingly, and without sufficient (or any) forethought, to undertake such a lengthy and boring journey, making use of the outrageous Germany train service across the length of Germany and Italy was that this medium had been struck by a virulent virus of unknown origin.

Subsequent blood tests did not detect any abnormalities in the blood work of this medium's reporters and, thus, it appears that the virus was of the airborne Type Md1XXX Species.

The Journey

Having gladly checked out of Kempinski Hotel Bristol, a €17 taxi trip took **TARGET**'s intrepid trio to the Central Train Station (Hauptbahnhof), in Berlin, and there boarded the train, bound for Munich.

The first-class compartment comprised almost rock-hard, cloth-covered seats, necessitating this medium of fool-hardy reporters to walk up and down the compartment every hour or so for fear that one's gluteus maximus might start to atrophy due to a distinct lack of a sufficient blood supply in that part of one's anatomy.

With the German countryside, whizzing by at between 155 kilometres and 228 kilometres per hour, there was little to see except, perhaps, to count the number of Lombardy poplar trees that dotted a number of open spaces between one hamlet and another.

The discovery of the dining car permitted the ingestion of some hot food, but the small meal only killed one hour of the six-and-a-half hour trip from north to south Germany.

Arriving in Munich at about 6:41 p.m. was a welcome relief from the monotonous journey from Berlin, but,

at this point in time, one, first, had to locate the platform from where the Rome train was scheduled to leave the station.

After about 30 minutes, a €1.00 payment to use the public toilet – that was spotless, by the way – track Number 12 was confirmed as the correct place to board the Rome train.

But then, there was a 90-minute wait before the train was due to leave the station!

And, in the Munich Central Train Station, there is a very limited number of things that one may do, with eating, high of the list.

Devouring half of a roast chicken, imbibing glasses of Pilsner beer, and wolfing down a frying pan, full of Kaiserschmarrn, life for **TARGET**'s three reporters was feeling somewhat better in the six-degree (Celsius) temperature of Munich.

For yours truly, the very idea of enjoying a bed in the sleeping car in the Rome train was mentally very inviting since, by this time, this medium had been suffering about nine hours, with another 12 hours and 40 minutes still before one.

But, the thought of being lulled to sleep by the gentle movements of a modern, German train, lying on a soft bed in the sleeping car was about to be shattered.

The Sleeping Car Squeeze

Wagon Number 257, berths 32, 34, and 36 of the Rome train were discovered without any real problem.

TARGET's trio struggled, however, to navigate the 30-inch passageway of the sleeping car, wheeling one large suitcase, two laptop computers and two, fully packed hand carry bags.

When the correct, reserved '*human filing cabinet*' was discovered, it was required that one had to enter the extremely cramped area, along with the baggage – sideways!

Studying the sleeping cubicle of this wagon, comprising three bunk berths, one atop another, the top bunk, being, in fact, the underside of the roof, meant that the placement of a ladder, located in the corner of the cubicle, in order to climb up and down the bunk beds, was an absolute must.

There was a semi-circular door at the floor area that, when opened very carefully in order to avoid being squashed between the door and the metal frame of the bottom bunk, one discovered that behind this door was a shower stall, measuring about 10 square feet, and a commode, wedged on the opposite side of the shower stall, where one could, carefully, do one's '*business*' when the spirit moved one.

Having taken up about 50 percent of all available floor area of the cubicle with the luggage and, having been informed by the train's loud speaker system that there was no dining car on the train and that all doors should be double-locked in order to keep out thieves that were said to be roaming through the train, looking for likely '*soft*' victims, it was time to try out the bunk beds.

One could not call it a mattress on which one slept in the cubicle of this wagon, but when one is desperate to lie down in the hope of experiencing unconsciousness, one can be forgiven for thinking that one was lying on a bed.

Exhausted and despondent, one's thoughts in the darkness of the cubicle was:

'Why me? What have I done to deserve this fate?'

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