

Marlboro, Pueblo or American Spirit. Vaping or never having touched a cigarette in your life. Coca Cola or Club Mate. Tap water, filtered spring water or BPA-softened PET-Evian. Two dirt-stained people laughing on my Volvic Sport bottle are crawling out of large tubes. It advertises a kind of urban gladiator training, and recalls the Flint water crisis in such an absurd way it hurts.

The pioneering spirit still exists – together with the lukewarm, sweet smell of Flat White and zucchini-chia seed cake oozes it out of the new Swedish café on the corner. It grinds itself with snippets of conversation about precarity, short term rental agreements, and the reclaim of the city. Mixing with the aluminum salts of deodorants, it coalesces into a strange, explosive union. A newly awakened, maddening patriotic impulse arises everywhere. ‘The patriotic Impulse is deadly.’ Or ‘Do you think you’re not a dick just ‘cause your head is on top of it?!’

(Lucie Stahl)

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