

Twitter Thread by foone



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Everyone likes to forget this episode just because it's terrible, but we were really sleeping on inherent comedy in a unfreezing an investor 300 years in the future and having them discover we've transitioned to a moneyless post-scarcity utopia.

pic.twitter.com/cV5arp2TQR

— Star Trek Minus Context (@NoContextTrek) January 28, 2021

it's like a classic twilight zone episode.

in fact, it IS a twilight zone episode.

The Rip Van Winkle Caper, Season 2, episode 24.

Four criminals steal a million dollars of gold bars, then put themselves in suspended animation for a hundred years to hide from the law.

they wake up, then start killing each other from mistrust, then the last one dies in the desert, as he offers a gold bar to the driver of a passing car, asking for water and a ride into town

the confused driver walks back to his car with the bar, and his wife asks what the gold bar is.

he says something like "It's gold... they used to use this for money, before we figured out a way to manufacture it."

He tosses it away, and drives off.

TNG's The Neutral Zone is that, but with the entire concept of money itself.

Future humans: *unfreezes investor*

Investor: MWAHAHAH! I LIVE! I must be rich now.

Future humans: Well, you were dead, so your will probably distributed all your money, so... no

Investor: Noooo!!!!

Future humans: But don't worry: We don't have money anymore

Investor: NOOOOOOOOOO

Inventor: But how can I be rich now!?

Future humans: What is this thing you call "rich"? Like a good chocolate? You want some chocolate? This machine can

make it. HEY COMPUTER, GIVE ME CHOCOLATE

Replicator: *Buzzes, Chocolate appears*

Investor: No, "rich" is when you have a bunch of things!

Future human: Oh, I see. Good news then: You're rich.

Investor: Yes!!!

Future human: We're all rich. We can have as many things as we want. This machine can make them.

Investor: Noooooo!

Future humans: What's wrong? You're "rich", isn't that what you wanted?

Investor: It's not fun being rich unless there are people who aren't rich to compare yourself to!

Future humans: Ahhh, so what you really wanted was to be better than other people?

Investor: YES!

Future humans: well that's ok then, we still have that.

Investor: Oh?

Future humans: Yeah, you can just, you know, work harder, discover new things, write the best stories, create new theories, design better starships, create the best music.

Investor: oh...

Future humans: Yeah, isn't that what you were telling everyone back in your time? You can be better, you just have to pull yourself up by your bootstraps, devote yourself, work harder, get up early, skip the coffees?

Investor: Uhh... kinda?

Future humans: Well, good news, you can still do that, just without the cheating complexities of "money" to get in the way!

Investor: *softly* but that's what I was good at...

Future humans: And it can work better now. Because back in your time, you'd have complications like people inheriting money, or getting money because of systems that privileged them over others. Now it's an even playing field!

Future humans: It's a much purer form of that meritocracy you were talking about. "From each according to their ability, to each according to their needs" and all that. And that's not even the best part!

Investor: Is there a best part?

Future human: "Mocha Frappuccino, extra mocha."

Replicator: *bzzzzzzz*

Future human: You don't even have to skip the coffee this time.

I'm just saying that there's a lot of inherent comedy in the idea taking someone devoted specifically to making money, and bringing them into a future where WHOOPS while they were gone, we got rid of money and made the world a paradise.

GOOD NEWS, you know that one thing you devoted your life to? We don't need that anymore, it doesn't matter. But now you can devote your life to creating and exploring and self-improvement! Isn't that great? ISN'T IT?