Smart Phones for Dummies

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According to the umpteen number of ads on TV your life is not worth living if you haven't acquired the latest version of some smart phone or the other. The most fashionable acquisition for the upwardly mobile these days is not a Giorgio Armani suit or D&G clutch but a sleek, stylish phone that has innumerable 'apps' (applications dummy) that will bring the entire world to you and your fingertips as they say. As the ads will remind you, these devices are meant for young, good looking people who have all the time in the world to use these fancy apps to chat incessantly about all sorts of world-changing things (Did Ananta Jalil and Barsha really break up), send pictures of their freshly painted toes to like-minded counterparts, play the latest 'make your own hamburger' game, find the exact location of some new cafe and even distort pictures of other good looking people to make them ugly – just for the fun of it. There is a lot more to tell about the wonders of what these smart phones can do and it would be rude to say that they are just toys for people who just want to while away their time in virtual bliss. But listing all those amazing functions would be too tedious and space consuming so let's just stick to the psychological effects that these gadgets bring with them.

Say if you do not belong to the young and good-looking group but more to the not-so-young category, being the owner of such a futuristic machine can be quite scary. For people who once painstakingly dialed numbers on those rusty, squeaky analogue phones, one number at a time – having a phone that calls up people when you just say their names, is a little disconcerting. This is because these phones no matter how smart they claim to be can recognise mainly western names and accents. So when you say 'Call Ishtiaque' they may try to call 'Ashfaque' who may be your boss and you know this only after he has answered the phone and is waiting to see what you have to say at 4 in the morning. A text you dictated as "Are you awake?" may go as "Are you a fake?" and so on...

Speaking phones can also throw you off balance and make you think they have a life of their own. Take this conversation with a sultry voiced being trapped inside such a phone:

Silly Smart Phone User (SSPU): "Are you stupid?"

Smart Phone (SP): "I certainly hope not."

SSPU: Am I boring?

SP: Not at all. I like talking to you.

SSPU: Do you think I'm young?

SP: I am not sure, I can search the internet for the answer. *(good and evasive)*

SSPU: Do you think I'm attractive?

SP: I find you positively magnetic.

Such exchanges may either convince the Silly Smart Phone User that he/she has finally found the ultimate soulmate – or – think the phone is haunted by the ghost of a beautiful *femme fatale* and flee from the device as far as possible.

Smart phones no doubt are both fascinating and frightening. They allow you to do just about everything you need to – write a novel, read, chat, know the weather, watch a movie, listen to any song you want and take pictures of anything you want, like your toes. The frightening part is that you are completely useless if you don't have it with you 24-7. It is like a control freak of a companion that makes you so needy that you cannot even remember your partner's favourite colour without looking at the 'notes about him/her' in that secret folder of one of those 'apps'.

Naturally such incredibly clever machines have to be handled with care and those who have been stupid enough not to invest in an expensive cover for that slim piece of metallic intelligence will have to learn the hard way. The slightest bit of inattentiveness may cause that delicate companion to fall and touch the hard floor and soon some hideous poison will invade the entire screen, making that beautiful face go totally blank. The heart will skip a beat and a sick feeling will overwhelm the body at the thought of the enormous amount of cash required to bring that sexy thing back to life, if at all.