

World Cup Tapes monologue.
by Johnny Vegas

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I walk in the pub, and a crowd of polyester bry-nylon clad bloke's freeze, pint in hand, temporarily struck by terror. It's immediately obvious I'm not management material, and they relax, slowly putting down their name badges. I'm a minimum wage fugitive, just like the rest of them. Playing hooky, pulling a sickie, wagging off work to catch the match. Outside, the entire retail infrastructure is brought to a standstill. As we come together united in greater cause: that of World Cup glory.

Like them I too was stupid enough to request time off through the 'proper channels'. I too was denied. I tried to swap shifts with that moody mare of customer services, knowing full well she'd enjoy her moment of power, watching me beg "but it's quarter finals love...England v Argentina" before informing me, with glee, that she can't 'cause she's booked in to have her roots done. I, too, came to the realisation that I could not, hand on heart, provide full customer satisfaction to that bloke with killer halitosis who can't comprehend what "batteries not included" means. Whilst muffled cheers and 'oooh's and 'aaah's' seep out of crowded boozers and onto the shop floor.

I mean *who*, who in God's name shops for a nest of tables on that day of all days?! "Excuse me do you know I've been waiting over 20 minutes?" "Does this 1600 watt come with a diffuser?" "What's your returns policy with regards to a lettuce?"

No, not today. Today at 8.42am, my manager's answer-phone will include my own lame false cough and list of symptoms excusing me from work today. I know...we've really left him in the lurch. And am I worried? Not a bit. "But Johnny, what about consumer confidence?" Well, what about it?! I'll tell you what you do. Slaughter your own lambs, knead your own dough, dip your own wicks....because we're all here! The butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker, the shelf-stackers, street cleaners, bag packers, *Kwik-Fit* fitters

Even the man with the 'golf sale now on' sign has abandoned his post and rallied to the call of his country, knowing full well there may not be a job to return to after this campaign. But sod it: the smell of ale and victory proves too strong.

And those who stay in work, they will hold their manhood's cheap, and think themselves accursed that they weren't here with us on thisSaint Gazzas Day!
COME ON ENGLAND!

