


SID. *Ruwan* PORCELAIN CHIP REPAIRS

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BATHUBS
SINKS
RANGES
WATERS
DYES

SUNSET YELLOW

I met an old man recently who did a great deal to help me understand how life works. The man was 72. He had come to repair some chipped porcelain on my bathtub - not an earthshaking thing I grant you. I wasn't impressed either, until he opened a box of colors and began laboriously to match the white filler enamel he had with the sunset yellow of my tub.

Picture it if you will: an old man sitting on the edge of a bathtub, spatula in hand, mixing whites, yellows, greens, and browns with a flair and zest that a painter would envy.

He matched the shade of yellow to his satisfaction after about ten minutes work - some days, he said, he has to give up and go home because the color matching is so difficult. The whole job took just over an hour, but in that time, the man told me of his early days in the English coal mines, of his growing family and their prosperity.

I could sense and feel this man's tough(?) pride. He didn't boast; he didn't have to - the patch in the tub was invisible and perfectly blended with the rest of the tub. Yet even while he was working I could stand back and see a man who had lived a whole life; who had been scarred and yet wore his scars proudly, almost like long-service medals.

I could understand when he said he'd never had to advertise. The infinite care and precision with which he worked told this man's story for him. It was as if he laid himself on the line whenever he did any repair work: each job was somehow visible proof of both his skill and integrity.

I suppose each of us has some reminder of the quality of the work we do - perhaps not as tangible as the old man's, but we all have to judge our own work eventually and, in the end, we have to look through the old man's eyes to put a value on our accomplishments.

Often, I suppose, our work doesn't stand out in sunset yellow. However, if we took the same painstaking care that my old friend did, perhaps it would not be necessary for us to advertise either.

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