

# CONFESSIONS OF A SOFT DRINK

An Oration

by

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Hello, I am a humble, effervescent liquid. Am I humble? Well--I guess this is debatable. Actually, I am quite proud of myself. Allow me to brag a little.

I fizz, sparkle and bubble my way all over the world every day. I have much power. I can cause masses of humanity to make beelines for snack dispensers in plush, high-rise building. I stir men, women and teenagers to dash into their cars late at night to speed to their nearest 24-hour convenience store. In their rush to have me, sometimes they have serious accidents. I motivate others to root through their purses or pockets for the last vestiges of pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters with which they will gladly part in exchange for me. The best thing about me is: I am addicting!

I am responsible for giving thousands of addicts their daily fixes. This is because most of the time I contain a substance called caffeine which is a stimulant. It stimulates the hearts of the people who drink me. As a matter of fact, it makes their hearts beat very fast and makes their nervous systems work like crazy. They feel as though they could take on the world. I tell you....I have overwhelming personal magnetism.

I am a sneaky double-agent, too. I pretend to give people all the good they need because caffeine gives them a "lift." However, a few hours afterward, they come crashing down, get shaky and need me again...for another pseudo-charge or another "fix." This plays havoc with their hearts and nerves but still, they look to me for relief and assistance. I feel very, very, smug because I call the shots!

To give me an appetizing brown tint, I contain "caramel coloring"....Most of the time I have polyethylene glycol as one of my ingredients. Glycol is used as an antifreeze in automobiles and as an oil solvent. You can well imagine what I do to people's inside.

The bubbles and fizz with which I potentially burn human insides is caused by my phosphoric acid and carbon dioxide....The phosphorus fights with the hydrochloric acid in human stomachs. This promotes indigestion in many individuals...

I offer a selection of three types of sweeteners according to customers' preference. They are: Saccharin or Aspartame in the diet type and white sugar and corn syrup in my regular drinks. These substances enhance my appeal and come disguised as "good for everyone." However, taste can be very deceiving!....

**--- END OF FREE PREVIEW ---**