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The advertisement is a Volkswagen ad designed by DDB Tribal Berlin, Germany. There are three bags of goldfish lined up in a diagonal line, with a hedgehog with sharp quills in between two of them. The colors of the image are very muted and neutral, with only the goldfish with bright color. The image is quite minimal, with the only objects being the goldfish and hedgehog. In the bottom right, there are the words “Precision Parking”, and underneath that, “Park Assist by Volkswagen.” To the right of that is the Volkswagen logo. At the top right corner, the website is shown to the German Volkswagen website. Overall, it’s in line with typical Volkswagen minimalist ads with a bit of cleverness.

The linguistic message is that this is an advertisement for parking assist for a car company. The denoted message is the copy at the bottom – “Precision Parking, Park Assist by Volkswagen”. This literally is talking about a parking feature by Volkswagen. The connoted message is telling us that this parking assist feature is from a company with a very nice logo, so it can be assumed that this feature is good. The use of anchorage is very helpful in the advertisement. Without the linguistic message, the image itself is a bit confusing – why is there a hedgehog next to two bags full of water? Wouldn’t that be a bad idea? But with the copy, they show how that’s the entire point of the image. Their precision parking is so good that they compare their Volkswagen to a hedgehog with sharp quills and other cars to the bags full of water and goldfish – there can be a bit of destruction if there’s even a slight misstep. So, with their parking, there won’t be a misstep. The language is very clear and simple. It’s short copy that can bring the viewer to make an assumption to understand what’s going on in the image. So, the use of anchor shows that it does help direct the viewer away from a different meaning of the

advertisement, like the literal image, and instead directs towards the intended message of the overall image.

The non-coded iconic message of the image shows that the three bags of goldfish represent the three bags of goldfish and the hedgehog represents a hedgehog. When trying to find the denoted message, we can't really find a true denoted message as we always bring what we already know to the image. "Even if a total 'naïve' image were to be achieved, it would immediately join the sign of naivety and be complete by a third - symbolic - message. Thus the characteristics of the literal message cannot be substantial but only relational." We know that it's three bags filled with water and a goldfish, and we know that there's one hedgehog with sharp quills. But to break it down even further, there are three rounder shapes with a flat bottom and a pulled together top. Inside of those are floating gold colors with black circles. There are three in a line, but between the second and third, there is a spiky object that is brown in color. But while we can break it down like that, it is not the true denoted message. The denoted message is there to support the connoted message, and to show that it is literally just three bags of water with goldfish and a hedgehog.

I identified four signs within the connoted image for the coded iconic message. First, there are three bags with goldfish, like you get from a pet store. This signifies fragility. Second, there is one hedgehog with sharp quills right next to two of the bags, which signifies that the quills could puncture the bags if the hedgehog were a bit clumsier. All of the objects and animals put together represents a perfect scenario – if the hedgehog or bag was closer to one another, there would be some destruction. And last, the objects and animals were not put together randomly or would be found like this in nature – this signifies a set up photoshoot (or photoshop).

I identify the connotations to a particular lexicon. I understand that the bags that the goldfish are housed in are from a pet store, and that's how you purchase your pet fish. I understand that the quills on a hedgehog are quite sharp. Does everyone share the lexicon I do? Not necessarily, but it's not needed for this particular image. The rhetoric of the image is tangible for everyone, but it does take a few minutes of understanding how the simple linguistic messaging relates to the connoted and denoted images.



Precision Parking.
Park Assist by Volkswagen.

