**Story Telling**

**Prompt – “He wanted to tell him how much he loved him but”**

He wanted to tell him how much he loved him but now he knew, it was too late. It was a cold winter morning and the season’s first fall of snow was on its way when Jack drifted through the village in his top-notch suit and shoes. He had a perfect life with a mansion in the city, servants helping around his estate, an extravagant display of cars and all the wealth in the world. He had the life that many people around him could only but dream off. But yet as he walked along he felt a pang in his heart as he noticed the joy in the little children playing on the streets, the happiness on their parents faces in watching their tiny tots having fun and the peaceful faces of the older generation as they sat in circles reminiscing the days gone by. Jack felt he had everything but yet had nothing. He was devoid of the one thing he never felt the necessity for a long time now, until now – Love. He was old and alone.

Jack wasn’t always like this. No. He was once a happy young lad with a job as a painter in the local museum and wedded to his childhood sweetheart, Emily. They lived in a rented room downtown in a small one bedroom apartment with their son Mason. Jack loved his family very dearly and worked long hours to give them a good and comfortable life. He was a talented artist and would sell his artwork at a small gallery. His village however, was small and not many people could afford all three meals a day, let alone buying paintings. So, Jack made just about money each month to live a slim life. Nonetheless, he always knew that one day his ambition and skill would take him to great heights. And one fine day it did! Mr Williams, a world-renowned entrepreneur was passing by the village when he stopped by at the gallery. It was here he saw Jacks painting and was mesmerized by the amount of detail and intricacies behind it. He immediately called for Jack and gave him a job at his art Gallery in the upper west side. Within a week, Jack’s life saw a whirlwind of changes. He now had a desk to himself with a name plate on it and people waiting in line to buy his paintings for huge lumps of money. He grew in money, fame and stature and was always surrounded by an entourage. To make room for his new life changes, his family took a back seat. Frequent calls to Emily and gifts for Mason, soon reduced to dwindling number of phone calls and nothing but a node at Mason. It wasn’t long before Emily walked out on Jack with Mason by his side.

22 years had passed since that terrible winter morning when Jack came back to an empty house!

Mason never really had a normal childhood. He and his mom moved from place to place for the first 3 years since they left dad. Mom always told him that dad loved him but his office required him to stay away. She was his only family for now she said. He chose to listen to her even though he clung on dearly to every memory of Jack’s. Mason was a quiet an obedient boy and worked hard at school. He grew up to be intelligent and smart and soon started his career as a doctor in New York. Just when everything seemed to be going good, he lost his mother and was diagnosed with cancer. Everything they had worked together for was crashing down around him! With nothing to lose now, Jack James, he wrote down under emergency contacts, my father.

2 weeks ago, Jack had received a call from St Marthas Hospital stating his son was circling the perils of death at their intensive care unit. The struggles that came with being a single mom had exhausted Emily until she died of Pneumonia a few years ago. Jack had yearned to see Mason all these years but never reached out to him for fear of disrupting his life after all that he had already put him through. Seeing a frail Mason in the hospital reminded Jack of all the times he had lost in chasing behind materialistic things and ignoring his dear son. Mason was diagnosed with stage 3 liver cancer and there was nothing more the doctors could do. Jack had spent the last two weeks caring for him and trying to catch up on lost time. Mason was a lovable boy with his mothers kindness in his eyes. He had awaited his father’s return for years together. Missing birthdays, graduations, family gatherings had left a huge vacuum in his life. He talked for hours together trying to narrate his life out to his father who knew nothing about him. He spoke about his school, his bullies, his first love, his university and all the way up until he lost his mother. He had saved pictures of each of the memorable events in his life to show his father when he returned someday. His memories of Jack had faded away but the immense love he had for his father never changed. He never understood why Jack left them he said, but he always chose to believe that wherever Jack might have been, he would always carry him along with him in a small part of his heart. Talking to his father after all this while, he felt a huge burden off of his chest- like now he could die freely ! Mason loved Jack with all his heart and wanted to tell him that, but as he breathed his last he knew he could never forgive him. So there Jack sat with his dead son in his arms with unspoken words of love.