

## ***The Currency of a Blue Balloon***

The day had called off, the sun was ready to wrap its arm around the name of sunset, signaling the world that the day had come to rest. The sky too was ready to embrace itself into the dusky color.

On the bench near the pavement sat a man dressed in a black coat, crisp white shirt, a pair of black trousers and a black bow tie. Although his shoes appeared to have a layer of dust on its shiny surface. He was holding a black hat in his hand, taking out some coins and seldom a note out of it. He was counting them and kept them aside on the bench.

“Again I am short of a few bucks !” the man muttered.

He got up and went straight to a food outlet nearby. The place buzzed with the aroma of freshly prepared food. The space was congested with a ton of people around waiting for their orders.

“Hey, can I get that ? How much does it cost?” the man pointed out.

“Fifty bucks gentleman”, answered the vendor.

“Forty eight bucks..!” The man counted his money again.

“Could you please lend me it for forty eight bucks?” he asked.

“What do you mean ? I am here to do business not charity”, answered the vendor.

“I’ll return you those two bucks tomorrow, for sure”, begged the man.

The heart of the vendor was not entirely made up of the hard stone which does not break into pieces when struck upon with the hammer, here was a man who was just short by two bucks.

The man went to the park to call his day off. He had a pile of newspapers out of which he prepared his soft pillow for resting his head on and used two newspapers as his blanket. The street light near his bench kept flickering all the night until dawn appeared and the sun peeked through the sky embracing the world under its ray of light.

The day started as usual, the man standing on the pavement playing his melodious sound of music through his accordion. The space around him seemed to be vibrating with his joyous music. Though the people passing by did not pay much attention to his craftful music. With mercy few of them threw one or two coins into his hat kept in front of him on the pavement. The people who felt moved with his music dropped a folded note in his cap, a silent way to show their mercy.

A boy dressed up in his school uniform, stopped in front of the man. He carefully glanced towards him, admiration glittering in his eyes. The man stopped for a second and pulled the boy's cheek. The boy gave a warm smile in return. The man started playing the accordion with more effort, producing rhythmic tones.

The boy pulled out his pockets, showing that he had no money. The man simply smiled. The boy lingered for a moment, watching the performance, then began to leave. Before disappearing from view, he turned back, waved, and returned the man's smile.

The boy's smile lightened up the heart of the man. At the end he was short of money again though he went to the food outlet and returned the two bucks to the vendor though he slept without food.

The next day, the man was preparing to start his performance, meanwhile he noticed that the boy had arrived early but this time with his father. The father did not show much interest in his performance. Though the boy enjoyed it thoroughly, he kept smiling, tapping his feet in rhythm with the music produced by the accordion.

When the man finished his performance, the boy's father reached into his pocket and took out a folded note. At the same time, the boy, clutching two blue balloons, extended one of them towards the man. Smiling gently, the man refused the money and accepted the balloon instead.

“Where do you live sir?”, asked the man

“Next to that street”, the man pointed to a street near the bridge.

The boy gave a gentle wave to the man before disappearing.

The next day, when the man had done for the day he muttered, “I have earned well for the day ! I can have my meal tonight” Meanwhile two bulky policemen got off their patrolling vehicle approaching him.

“Why do you play this accordion?” asked one of them.

“It is my bread and butter, gentleman”, the man answered.

“Are you allowed to do this?” another policeman asked.

“Tell me which law does not permit to do so?”, the man defended.

“Don’t argue ! This is not allowed. You cannot disturb the public with your useless music”, said the policeman.

Both of them grabbed the man and pushed him into their patrolling vehicle. He tried to resist, but they took all the money from his hat and threw him out. He fell unconscious on the footpath.

When he woke up, it was already morning. His shirt was torn, and the cold sunlight touched his face. He slowly got to his feet, feeling weak and sore, and looked around the empty street. The city was just waking up, and people were beginning their day

He picked up his accordion, adjusted it carefully, and returned to his usual spot on the pavement. Despite the night's cruelty, he lifted his instrument and began to play.

He noticed that the little gentleman, the boy, had not come today to listen to him.

He went into the street, following the directions the boy's father had given him, and was lucky to spot the boy's father.

The man approached and asked, "Your son did not come today?"

The father replied softly, "He is not well today, you see the weather last night was bitterly cold."

However the boy noticed the man from the gate and came outside wrapped up in a warm blanket.

The man lowered down and asked, "You should have come today!"

His father replied, “He can neither speak nor hear... he is deaf”

The boy pulled out a small accordion made of paper. Stepping forward, he hugged the man tightly, tears running down his cheeks, and the man felt a warmth in his heart that no words could express.