

An Enlightening Tale

This was a very honest beggar.

One day he knocked at the door of a luxurious mansion. The butler came out and said, "Yes, sir. What do you wish, my good man?" The beggar answered, "Just a bit of charity, for the love of God." "I shall have to take this up with the lady of the house."

The butler consulted with the lady of the house and she, who was very miserly, answered. "Jeremiah, give that good man a loaf of bread. One only. And, if possible, one from yesterday." Jeremiah, who was secretly in love with his employer, in order to please her sought out a stale loaf of bread, hard as a rock, and handed it to the beggar.

"Here you are, my good man," he said, no longer calling him sir. "God bless you," the beggar answered.

Jeremiah closed the massive oaken door, and the beggar went off with the loaf of bread under his arm. He came to the vacant lot where he spent his days and nights. He sat down in the shade of a tree, and began to eat the bread suddenly he bit into a hard object and felt one of his molars crumble to pieces. Great was his surprise when he picked up, together with the fragments of his molar, a fine ring of gold, pearls and diamonds.

"What luck," he said to himself. "I'll sell it and I'll have money for a long time." But his honesty immediately prevailed: "No," he added. "I'll seek out its owner and return it." Inside the ring were engraved the initials J. X. Neither unintelligent nor lazy, the beggar went to a store and asked for the telephone book. He found that in the entire town there existed only one family whose surname began with X: the Xofaina family.

Filled with joy for being able to put his honesty into practice, he set out for the home of the Xofaina family. Great was his amazement when he saw it was the very house at which he had been given the loaf of bread containing the ring. He knocked at the door. Jeremiah emerged and asked him, "What do you wish, my good man?"

The beggar answered, "I've found this ring inside the loaf of bread you were good enough to give me a while ago."

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Jeremiah took the ring and said, "I shall have to take this up with the lady of the house." He consulted with the lady of the house, and she, happy and fairly singing, exclaimed, "Lucky me! Here we are with the ring I had lost last week, while I was kneading the dough for the bread! These are my initials, J.X., which stand for my name: Josermina Xofaina.

After a moment of reflection, she added, "Jeremiah, go and give that good man whatever he wants as a reward. As long as it's not very expensive." Jeremiah returned to the door and said to the beggar, "My good man, tell me what you would like as a reward for your kind act." The beggar answered, "Just a loaf of bread to satisfy my hunger."

Jeremiah, who was still in love with his employer, in order to please her sought out an old loaf of bread, hard as a rock, and handed it to the beggar. "Here you are, my good man." "God bless you. "

Jeremiah shut the massive oaken door, and the beggar went off with the loaf of bread under his arm. He came to the vacant lot in which he spent his days and nights. He sat down in the shade of a tree and began to eat the bread. Suddenly he bit into a hard object and felt another of his molars crumble to pieces. Great was his surprise when he picked up, along with the fragments of this his second broken molar, another fine ring of gold, pearls and diamonds.

Once more he noticed the initials J.X. Once more he returned the ring to Josermina Xofaina and as a reward received a third loaf of hard bread, in which he found a third ring that he again returned and for which he obtained, as a reward, a fourth loaf of hard bread, in which ...

From that fortunate day until the unlucky day of his death, the beggar lived happily and without financial problems. He only had to return the ring he found inside the bread every day.