

Stay Tuned

Per Jespersen

David was a shoe shine boy in the big city. He had found himself a customer, whose shoes he liked to polish, and a friend, too. So when the sun had set he took his box with his brushes and shoe polish and went down the main street towards the restaurant, where he had met the elderly man. Cars drove up and down the street as if everybody was so busy, that they had no time for anything. And the taxis blew their horns all the time to get through the heavy traffic.

David was used to this, but some new thoughts had popped up in his mind: Why are adults always so busy? And why did they have no time for talking with kids? When he was polishing somebody's shoes, they did not share a word, until they paid him the few cents, they wanted to give him. Today David was in the mood for talking, but his mom had sent him out in the night to make some money, as the family was very poor. He simply had to make some money.

As he came closer to the restaurant, he grew more and more disappointed. There was no people there, and the servants tried to show him away.

«But I have a meeting with a gentleman, sir», David tried.

But he was pushed away and had to sit down at the pavement at the other side of the street. Here his thoughts began rolling again. Why were some people rich and other people very poor? Why did God allow that?

Oh, he took his hands to his mouth to stop thinking those things. He could hear his mom say: «That's the way it is. If there's no difference between people, there'll be no life.»

David could not understand this. Not that he wanted to be rich, but because he wanted some kind of justice in life. Justice was a new word for him. He heard it yesterday in school, and he had been thinking and thinking ever since.

In the middle of the busy city a shoe shine boy sitting on the pavement, wondering about justice.

You could not see it on him. You could not see his thoughts, but you could see him frowning, and see that his beautiful smile had lost its glow. He could not cope with these big thoughts about justice alone. He did need somebody to talk to, and his grandpa would not be around until five days later.

Then suddenly he felt that somebody was looking at him. A strange feeling. Who was looking at him now? And from where?

He was confused.

Until he saw the elderly man from yesterday. He stood right in front of him, saying, «What's wrong with you today, David?»

He got up in a hurry. «Nothing, sir. Nothing. What can I do for you?»

«Don't you lie to me, David. I can see it on your face. You are pondering.»

«Aren't you sometimes, sir?» «Of course I am.»

«Do you want me to polish your shoes, sir?» «Oh yes sure. That's why I'm here. Come on, I'm going to have a cappuchino over there. Come on, join me!»

«Sir, I can't sit down with you there.» «Oh no, that's not what I want. You know very well, what I would like you to do.» «And I'd love to do it.»

The man took David's hand, and they went to the restaurant. The man ordered his cappuchino, and David started his work. But he could not help looking at the man's hand to see, if he wore the ring. And thank God, he did! David worked really hard. He wanted the man's shoes to shine more than any shoe had ever shone before.

«What are you pondering so hard about,» the man asked.

«Oh, that's nothing, sir. Kids are so stupid. You know everything, as you are an adult and rich.»

The man leaned close to David. «Listen David, the richer people are, the more stupid they get. Touch my ring, David. That's what you want, isn't it!»

«I can't possibly do that, sir!» «You did yesterday.»

«That was a mistake. I'm terribly sorry. It'll never happen again.»

«Yes, it will. Come on!» The man put his fingers with the ring close to David. «Touch it, David!»

With his heart beating like a machine David touched the ring. Just a short touch, because it was not a suitable thing to do for a shoe shine boy.

And then:

David found himself in a big hall, bigger than anything he had ever seen before. All colours twinkled and beamed around him. For a while he stood very quietly, not daring to move. He thought, that if he moved just one step, everything would disappear and he would be at the restaurant again, polishing shoes. Everything was so beautiful here - as if all beauty of the world was gathered here. He felt so free and happy and timeless. It felt even better than the best of his dreams. He was everywhere and nowhere simultaneously. Sometimes the colours flew together and shaped into a pattern of a butterfly, then as a bird from the rainforest, then as a tree close to the blue sea, then to a child's eye smiling and weeping at the same time. How could anything be so beautiful? He felt the colours and all the shapes, they formed, creep lovingly into his own thoughts, and he felt that he suddenly understood everything.

Total happiness.

And he dared not move.

And then a voice came to him. «Godday David!»

«Yes sir,» he said nervously. He could see no persons anywhere, until his eyes caught the sight of a throne at the end of the hall.

«Come closer, David.»

Was there somebody sitting in the throne? Yes there was. A sort of a human shape, and yet not totally human. It was transparent, and yet nontransparent. There were hands there - with the ring, he knew so well.

«Come closer!»

«I can't do that. I'm only a shoe shine boy. And besides, I have a fear that everything will disappear, if I move.»

«It will not disappear, because what you see here is, what is inside your mind.»

«What, sir?»

«You heard. What you see here is your own soul. The soul of everybody - every human being.»

«Do we all have the same soul?»

«In a way yes. But you don't seem to realise.»

«I believe you. But - but that means, that my soul is something very very beautiful. How come, when I'm only a shoe shine boy?»

«Makes no difference. Don't The same soul dwells in every human being, be a rich director or a poor farmer. There's no difference.»

i «I can't possibly believe that. Nobody t - not even in school. Who are you? God? you are God.»

«I could very well be. Don't you know, that his son took care of the poor? But David, God is only a name - the deepest things have no names, so if you go behind God and your earthly way of living you'll find the soulish truth. It's in yourself - it's in everybody - it's everywhere.»

«I believe. But nobody will believe me, when I come back.»

«Sure - you can't put it into words, but you can live it.»

«You are God! I'm sure!»

«So you say. But remember - you are in your own self. See, how beautiful it is. There's no difference between rich and poor - no difference between good and evil. It's all the same.»

«Sir - God - I don't know what to say. I have a question: How can I keep this in me?» «It is in you - all the time.»

But how can I stay connected to you and this beauty forever?»

«Is that what your heart wants?»

«Yes.»

«By living the life you live and be satisfied with it. Don't feel suppressed, don't feel envious - don't feel disturbance. Feel soulish!»

«And free?»

«Of course. Do whatever you can for other people and stay tuned to your own L»

David wept as King David did when Saul threw his sword towards him.

«I will stay tuned forever.»

Everything disappeared, and David was polishing the elderly man's shoes. «Thank you so much,» he said.

«I am the one to thank,» the man said.

David looked up, only to find out, that the man was not there anymore.

«But sir?» He was gone. But in David's hand there were two dollars.

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