

Most people have something called purpose. I like to think of it as a thing that pushes them forward, a dream or a goal. I once had a dream as well, I wanted to spread kindness to people. But it disappeared alongside my dearest friend. After that, I no longer believed it could be possible without him around. I did the worst and most irrational thing imaginable; I gave up and decided to live through life instead. Yet one moment made me realise that the possibility still exists. It gave me hope and courage to face my past.

This was a day like any other, or so I thought. I was making my way from my humble apartment to work even though it was Saturday. The street was teeming with overly stressed people rushing somewhere and the noise was overwhelming.

As I was dodging the men and women on the street so as not to bump into any of them, a tiny voice at the back of my head brought up a very unpleasant question. 'What about your promise?' I dug my nails into the palm of my hand and clenched my teeth. Better not think about it. My head will only hurt. I tried to think about something else for the rest of my route. Suddenly, my thought process about what will today's lunch be was interrupted by a high-pitched voice.

"Sir, please! It's just four blocks away!"

Another, now deeper voice replied to him: "If it's just that far away you can go by foot young man."

This situation, why does it feel so nostalgic? After I turned around to look for the source, I heard a loud thud as an old man shut the door of his car in the face of a teenage boy. This raven-haired boy was probably 'the young man' as the older male referred to him. It didn't take long for the boy to move to a different person with the same request. I decided to leave it be and hurry to work instead. Suddenly, I felt a hand grasp the left sleeve of my jacket. This startled me so I quickly glanced to my left only to find the same boy from before.

"Mister, could you please give me a ride? I swear it won't take much of your precious time." Normally, I would refuse and tell him that I'm in a hurry, but then I noticed. He was trembling and breathing heavily as if he was trying to keep himself from crying. I didn't plan to help him but guilt started to build inside of my chest making it hard to breathe.

"Where do you want me to drive you? I'll take you there," I agreed to his request.

The boy's grip tightened. With a shaking voice, he replied: "Thank you, I'm forever in your debt. It's the big apartment building with the number 27 couple of minutes away from here,"

My only response to that was a simple nod as I shook off his hand and we began walking towards my car. After a while, his presence started to make me uncomfortable. I could sense his eyes glued on my back as if he was non-verbally trying to tell me to hurry up. This creeped me out but it didn't stop me from wondering about this strange guy. You won't believe how thankful I was when we reached my vehicle. The thought of finally getting rid of his stare was calming. After opening it, I gestured him to take a seat to which he mumbled a quiet 'Thank you'. The moment the engine started my curiosity was already burning. I was eager to know why he was so in rush to get to that apartment.

The boy seemed to be more impatient than before. Or was he anxious? Maybe both, I couldn't exactly pinpoint anything about him. I wondered what might have been the source of his distress. What possibly could be in that apartment to make him this troubled. In the end, I couldn't help myself but break the silence and ask him.

"Why are you in such a hustle to get there? It must be something important," I glanced at his face only to find a bitter expression. The fact that he doesn't want to speak about it was certain.

"It's an urgent matter," he replied with the same bitterness in his voice as on his face although I was pretty sure that I also heard a slight hint of pain.

That was enough for me to realise that it would be better to keep my nose out of this situation even though I was very curious and slightly worried about the boy. Soon, a crimson apartment building with a large white number 27 emerged before my eyes.

"Is this it?" I once again spoke to the person sitting next to me. As if he was wakened from a trance, my passenger bolted out of his seat and shouted something on the lines of 'Yes' and 'Thank you' as he slammed the door. Before I even realised and got a chance to react, he was gone. The last thing I saw before continuing with my day was how he sprinted towards the building and started aggressively hitting one of the doorbells. He didn't leave my mind ever since.

It was a warm afternoon. The sun was shining through the soft clouds and for some reason, everything felt happier. Sometimes, a sight like this makes you wonder if there's a

chance that everything could be better one day. I was tapping the steering wheel still thinking about my morning encounter. That encounter felt so nostalgic. And the strange boy! I wondered how he was doing now. As I was approaching my usual parking spot, through the window I saw a familiar figure. Talk of the devil, it was the same raven-haired boy I met earlier today. I thought that I will never see him again, yet there he stood. Right next to my parking spot as if he was waiting for someone. Then I thought to myself, what if he was waiting for me? I parked my car and got out of there walking towards him. The moment he noticed me; his eyes lit up and a smile appeared on his face. His attitude was completely different than in the morning as if someone replaced him.

“Sir, thank you for your kindness this morning, thank you so much!”, he shook my hand and started thanking me over and over again.

“It’s okay. But why is it so important to you?”

The boy pondered for a while and then to my surprise, he told me his story. That was the moment I understood the reason behind my nostalgic feeling.

“I think you deserve a proper explanation for this morning. Well, you see, I have a very good friend and we’re really close. Yet he did keep some things from me. Today, when I came back home from visiting my mom in the hospital, my neighbours told me that he stopped by but when he found out that no one was home he put a letter in our mailbox and left. My friend is the type of person who would wait until I would come home and tell the matter himself since he also knows I visit my mom early in the morning. Therefore, I found this behaviour especially suspicious. After reading the letter,” his voice cracked and as he cleared his throat, he continued, “I was horrified because it was no ordinary letter. It was a suicide letter. At that instant, I realised that my friend wanted to see me for the last time before taking his own life. I was devastated and the only thing that came to my mind is to run to his place and pray that I won’t be late. Although part of me thought that I won’t make it. I started asking people on the street to give me a quick ride since that way, there was a bigger chance of getting there on time. But people either brushed me off, refused, ignored me or didn’t believe me. Except for you sir. Thanks to your kindness I was able to get there in time and stop him before it was too late. You saved my friend sir.” he looked me straight in the eye.

I froze on the spot. All I could do at that moment was blankly stare and replay his words over and over in my head. I opened my mouth to try and say something but no voice came out.

“I will be taking my leave now. My friend needs me more than ever. Once again thank you and I wish you the best in your life,” he looked at me once again and began to walk towards the same place I drove him to in the morning.

“Hey kid,” he turned his head towards me, “treasure your friend.” That was the only thing I was capable of saying at that time. His only response was a nod before he turned facing his destination.

Following hours were quite difficult for me. I sat in my humble kitchen, thought about his words and stared at the object placed on the table. It was a crimson red box, full of memories. For the past years, I dared to not open it as if it was the one of Pandora. But there’s no running from the past, not anymore. I opened the box and inside, I found photos from different places and events from my teenage years. Even though they were taken on multiple occasions, every single one of them had one thing in common, a light-haired boy with eyes like an ocean. Will, my dearest friend. As I was looking through the photos, I remembered a countless number of memories. How we were on a beach together, how we used to go to school together and play football like we discussed how we want to spread kindness and promised to help people together and lastly the most unpleasant one. His face, pale and without life on the day of his funeral. I could feel a warm liquid stream down my cheeks.

“I am sorry Will that I was too late that day. I could have saved you, but I was late. Even now, years later I still wish that someone had driven me there. You must be very disappointed by how I lived my life so far and how I broke our promise. But that will change. You know, today I helped one boy do something I wasn’t able to do that day,” I took a deep breath, “Will, I will carry out the promise we made. I swear on your name. Now I know that it is possible after all, I will help people in need and spread kindness. It shall now once again become a solemn purpose of my life.”