



THE STORY OF THE POOR DOG AND THE RICH DOG

João José da Costa

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THE STORY OF A POOR CHILD AND HIS STREET
DOG AND A RICH CHILD AND HIS DOG OF
BREED.

João José da Costa

Children's story that integrates with the natural fantasy and creativity of children and young people, entertaining, educating and adding to the development of character, moral values, citizenship, ecological awareness, family values, culture, knowledge, spirituality, respect for educators, encouragement to study, order and discipline. Book for children and young people who enjoy intelligent, sensitive, cultural, educational readings and themes of social reality. Book with largest literary content, a better reading exercise.

Synopsis:

The book tells the story of a poor boy and his stray dog and a rich boy and his pedigree dog. It narrates the way of life of these four characters and how they are happy in the world in which they were born and met. Fate made them meet one day in a square and a great friendship was born between them. They started playing together, strengthening their friendship even more. The book draws a parallel of values between poverty and wealth. However, when families discover the children's social status, they are ordered to separate. Without understanding the reasons, children learn humiliation and discrimination on the one hand. However, the book reserves a pleasant surprise at the end, when, many years later, the two young people meet again.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to all those who reserve part of their lives to educate children in some way, as a mission and a belief that in them is the hope of a better world.

In special to parents, teachers and grandparents, the basic triangle of early childhood education.

I thank God for the child that He still allows to exist in me.

João José da Costa

It was a cold dawn in the poor neighborhood.

In the distance, the first crows of the roosters were heard:

“cock-a-doodle-doo!”

“cock-a-doodle-doo!”

The roosters always crowed around three in the morning. And one rooster crowed after another in a symphony that lasted several minutes.

In the shanty town, the narrow dirt streets were empty. And few shacks had their lights on. Among them, the hut of Maria.

Outside, Skinny walked from corner to corner, moaning and anguished. She was looking for a quiet and warm place to settle down. She soon found refuge in a bananas trees clump, at the back of Maria's house.

Skinny knew it was time for her cubs to be born.

Maria used to get up early to prepare coffee for Benedict, her only son, but she used to call him by the nickname Benny. She got up early because she had to take three buses to the place where she worked.

Maria heard Skinny's moans and went to see what was going on. And she soon realized that Skinny would give birth to the cubs she was carrying. She took a burlap bag and gave it to Skinny to lie down on.

Benny slept soundly. But Maria had to wake him up:

“Benny, Skinny is giving birth. Watch her so she does not step on or stay on top of any pup. Wake up boy!”.

Maria went to work, and Benny opened his eyes and said:

“Go, mother! I'm getting up!”.

But he covered himself again, turned to the side, and continued to sleep soundly.

In his dream, he saw Skinny give birth to many cubs, happy and joyful.

Benny loved to live in the shanty town and was happy with his mother.

There were many other shacks in the shanty town, but none were as well-maintained and clean as Benny's. This, thanks to the extreme care of her mother Maria.

The shack had only one room, where Maria had a bed, a small table with a broken foot, and two boxes that served as chairs. On the earthen floor, she improvised a wood stove with bricks where she supported the cans he used to cook.

Outside, Maria built a small bathroom surrounded by planks. Inside was a hole in the floor that served as a bathroom. There was no running water, sewage, or electricity in Benny's house.

Maria washed her cans, dishes and clothes on a table installed outside. She took water from a school tap near her shack, which she carried in a can on her head.

Benny's mother worked cleaning other houses. And she was happy because she had services for every day, including Saturdays. That way, she could earn extra money.

This could be felt in the improvements that Maria made in the shack. She managed to buy a small two-burner gas stove. She even bought a toilet to replace the hole made in the bathroom floor. Then she bought a small cellular radio that was a joy for her and Benny every night. They loved listening to country music before going to sleep.

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Dona Maria now dreamed of being able to have a tank for washing clothes and water in the bathroom and in the kitchen. And maybe even in the future get the light connection in order to have a used television. If it depended on your daily effort, this would be possible one day.

Benny stayed in the shack and tried to make up for his mother's absence by tidying up the house, sweeping the floor and washing his clothes, all in his own way. And he did what he liked best - playing football with his friends.

Severina, a neighbor, looked at Benny from time to time, at the request of her mother.

One thing that Maria did well was cook and she always had a plate of rice, beans and flour waiting for Benny. Sometimes, depending on the money she got, even a fried egg or a piece of chicken or meat.

When this happened, it was Benny's greatest happiness that widened his eyes and ate until he was paunchy.

Benny loved his home. At night, he could see the stars and the moon through the holes in the tin roof.

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His mother said he needed to fix the roof and would do so when he found new zinc pieces among abandoned construction materials.

But Benny hoped she could not find the zinc pieces. He preferred to sleep counting the stars and admiring the brightness of the moon.

The only problem was when it rained. The rain wet inside the house. The rain made mud on the floor of the room and wet the mattress where Benny slept.

When this happened, he would find the driest corner of the mattress and fall asleep. The next day, the sun dried the corn straw on Benny's mattress, and everything returned to normal.

After all, this did not happen every day. Benny found amused the dry clay that was caught between his bare fingers.

Benny was a happy and joyful boy. He adored his mother and one was a companion to the other.

Benny liked to sit on a stool made of loose bricks near the small stove, while his mother made dinner. They talked, they made plans, he told what he had done during the day.

And in the streets of the shanty town also lived Skinny and Spotty, two stray dogs. They were great friends and were never separated from each other.

Skinny and Spotty were very fond of living in the shanty town and were happy. There they found many children to play with, they could roll on the ground and live in freedom. They found what they needed to eat in the trash scattered everywhere.

Skinny and Spotty's friendship turned into a relationship and they got married, or rather mated.

Skinny was now giving birth to five cubs. They were all stray dogs. They were exceedingly small and skinny. Skinny did not have enough milk on her tits for all of them. She ate truly little during pregnancy because the garbage on the street was poor in leftover food. She had no one to take care of her.

Skinny took care of the little stray dogs on the bananas trees clump at the bottom of Benny's shack. When it rained, the puppies got wet.

She licked them to dry and was incredibly happy with her puppies.

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The little stray dogs began to walk, spreading out over the earthen patio of Benny's shack. And they liked to jump into the mud when it rained. They were always dirty with mud.

Skinny had to abandon her puppies in the bananas trees clump to look for food remains in the slums of the shanty town. Some days she found food, others she did not.

The cubs grew up and began to walk and rummage through everything they found. Maria was bothered to see Skinny with her cubs walking from one side to the other in the shack. It was an exceedingly small place. Benny and Maria were already packed there.

And one day she ordered Benny:

“Benny, we can no longer be with this dog and her puppies here in our shack. Try to find someone who wants to be with them! It will be good for everyone!”.

Benny was sad, but he asked her mother:

“Mom, but I want to be with one of the puppies, this one. Look how cute!”.

And Maria replied:

“Ah! Benny. You really do not give up, do you? Well you can have one. But I do not want this bitch around here. They are biting everything and the space in the house is already exceedingly small! I already said! Find someone who loves the other cubs”.

Benny, resigned and reassured her mother:

“Okay mom. I have friends who would love to have the other puppies.”

Skinny lost all her cubs and disappeared from the shanty town. Some residents said that she followed a recyclable garbage collector along with her cart and went out into the world.

Benny gave the name of Bold to his stray puppy. Bold was simply born without a pedigree.

(Pedigree? Wow! What does this mean? Pedigree is a record that proves the lineage of a dog. In other words, it is a document that proves that it is purebred, has a reliable origin. Anyway, it is proof for the dog buyer make sure you bought a purebred dog).

Bold grew up in the backyard of the shack, bathed in the stream that cut the shanty town. When he was older, he dared to walk the streets near Benny's shack.

He always walked with his tongue hanging out and seemed cheerful as if he were smiling.

Bold went in and out of the shack when he felt like it, ate the remains of Benny's food on his own plate. He licked everything that looked like the plate was clean. He basked in the sun, played in the rain and, despite being thin, he was an incredibly happy dog. Bold, at times, appeared with a bone found in the garbage and opened holes in the ground for fun.

Benny was amused by Bold's games. But his mother was desperate when he made holes in the shack's earthen floor. Other times, he would pop the bag of rice or beans on a shelf close to the floor.

Bold slept in the bed protected by Benny's embrace. Meanwhile, Benny tried to count all the stars he saw in the sky through the holes in the tin roof of the shack, while the dream did not come. He even counted over 100 stars in one night!

Bold looked at those bright lights without understanding anything. He only raised his ears and paid attention when he saw a shooting star in the sky like a chalk of light. And then they both slept soundly.

Benny was happy and content with his friend Bold.

Across the city, far from the shanty town, Dr. Marcelo took care over Lana. She was a Dalmatian bitch. She also moaned and stirred in the kennel.

Lana lived in the kennel with Chunk, a dog of the same Dalmatian breed. Puppies of various breeds of dog were produced in this kennel. But the Dalmatian puppies were the most striking.

Lana and Chunk really liked living in the kennel and they were happy. There they found a lot of comfort, food at will and they rested all the time. They were happy when they saw the visitors through the kennel bars.

Lana mated with Chunk and was now about to give birth to her puppies.

Dr. Marcelo, a vet, had been taking care of Lana for hours. He was hired by the doghouse owner who wanted everything to go smoothly with Lana.

Thus, Lana gave birth to eight Dalmatian puppies, all beautiful and healthy. The milk from her tits was so much that she sneezed. Lana ate the best dog food and took vitamins during her pregnancy. He had a person in the kennel to take care of her.

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Lana had the puppies Dalmatians in a small house lined and protected. It did not rain on the puppies and there was a person who cleaned them all the time. She was happy with her puppies.

The puppies Dalmatians lived in a fenced kennel and watched the rain fall through the fence. They wanted to jump into the mud but could not. They always needed to be white and clean.

The eight puppies Dalmatians grew up strong and healthy. After a few weeks, they went on sale. Lana lost all her puppies, sold at the pet store in a fancy mall.

But she was already used to it. After all, this was the fourth time that Lana had given birth in her life as a creator.

In another neighborhood of the city, not far from the shanty town, Lucas lived. Lucas was a wealthy boy who lived in a full-story apartment known as a floating mansion. Lady Isabel was Lucas's mother.

In the neighborhood where Lucas lived, there were many other apartments and condo buildings with big, beautiful houses.

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The streets were paved, they had squares and gardens, and everything was illuminated at night. Residents liked to walk and run in the large parks, with many trees and clean water lakes.

The building where Lucas lived had two large pools and sports courts. The apartment had four bedrooms, several bathrooms, an exclusive pool, and several rooms. And all this with exceptionally beautiful and modern furniture.

Lucas loved living in his entire apartment and was happy with his mother and father.

And that's how Lucas, walking through the mall, saw the puppies Dalmatians and asked his mother:

“Mom, I want this puppy that is in the window. Buy it for me! See! He is all white with black spots. It looks like the dog from the movie 101 Dalmatians”.

Lady Isabel liked to satisfy Lucas's wishes, but she warned:

“Lucas, but you will have to take care of him. Mom does not have time for this. Also, she will have to stay inside the apartment”.

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And Lucas agreed:

“Okay mom! How good! I will have a new friend”.

And his mother tried to value the gift:

“Look, this is an expensive gift! I paid a thousand dollars for this puppy!”.

And Lucas promised:

“I will take care of it with love, mother!”.

Lucas called his Dalmatian dog the name of Lola. Lola officially registered with the Dalmatian Breeders Association and got her pedigree.

Lola lived in the apartment where she lived in a beautiful little house, all lined, bought in the pet store.

From the balcony of the apartment on the fourth floor, she could see the street and observe the sun, the rain and some stray dogs that were circulating around the place. Despite being chubby, she was an incredibly happy bitch.

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Lola sometimes bites off pieces of shoes or chair feet for fun. She always walked slowly through the apartment and was happy.

Lola slept alone in her beautiful and luxurious little house. The night was total darkness in the apartment. She could not make noise so as not to disturb the neighbors.

Lucas had fun with Lola and her games. But Lady Isabel was upset when she made holes in the upholstery of the chairs or in the sofas in the apartment.

Lucas was happy with his friend Lola.

And it is in this scenario that the story of the two dogs and two children who met by chance and developed a great friendship happens.

Benny and Lucas grew up, each in his own world, watching the growth of Bold and Lola.

Benny was seven years old. Benny day has come to school. He took a new notebook, pen, and pencil that Maria managed to buy and was happy for his first day of school at a shanty town school.

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Benny had no difficulty finding his classroom and teacher. The tin-made school had only one classroom and only one teacher.

Benny could not wait to grab a snack and eat the two chocolate chip cookies as a snack. Maria bought a package of cookies that was supposed to last all week.

Benny was happy. He liked his teacher and his school. When it rained, the noise of the rain on the zinc tiles did not allow the students to hear what the teacher said. But the rain soon passed, and the class was back to normal.

Benny became intelligent. I could learn to read and do math.

Benny, after homework, had nothing to do and could play with his friends in the shanty town. He liked to play soccer and played very well.

Lucas turned six years old. The day came that Lucas went to school. He put a backpack on his back with several notebooks, sets of pens, pencils, and books that Lady Isabel ordered in the stationery shop.

And there he went happily for his first day of school at a traditional neighborhood school.

The school was large and beautiful, with several classrooms and gardens with many trees, flowers, and grass.

Lucas had difficulty finding his classroom and teacher. But he was soon guided by monitors who accompanied him to his class and handed him over to the teacher. There were many classrooms and many teachers.

Lucas did not even remember lunchtime. He had had a good breakfast. But Lady Isabel, always as a zealous mother, also prepared a snack and his lunch box was full of delicious things. It had cake, yogurt, chocolate, cereal bar, and bread with salami and orange juice.

Lucas was happy. He liked his teacher and his school. Lucas could not see if it were sunny or raining. Windows were tall and all classrooms were air conditioned.

Lucas was also growing smart. He learned to read and do math, in addition to learning the English language.

Lucas had a lot of homework to do and did not have much time to play with his friends. But he had fun when he went to English, tennis, judo, swimming, and piano classes.

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One day, Benny warned Maria:

“Mom, I'm going to take Bold for a walk around the square. I tied this rope around his neck, and he is learning to obey me. I'll be right back”.

And the same day, Lucas warned Lady Isabel:

“Mom, I'm going to take Lola for a walk around the square. The coach taught her very well to obey my order! A sign I make in the guide and she soon understands. I have already put the Italian-made guide around her neck. I'll be right back!”.

And that's how Lucas met Benny and Lola met Bold in the square that was between the wealthy neighborhood and the shanty town.

When they met, Lucas asked:

“Hello what's your name?”.

Benny, a little embarrassed, replied:

“Benny!”.

Lucas continued asking:

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“And the name of your dog?”.

Benny all excited replied:

“Bold. And yours?”.

Lucas replied:

“My name is Lucas! And this is my dalmatian Lola”.

Benny was delighted with the little dalmatian:

“Wow, how beautiful Lola is. All white with black spots. It even looks like a movie dog!”.

And Lucas was kind to him:

“Your dog is also extremely cute. I like all black dogs”.

Then Lucas observed:

“See! They both smell each other”.

And Benny was curious:

“Why do dogs smell each other's buttocks?”.

And Lucas suggested:

“I don't know, but should we ask our teachers?”.

With Benny's immediate agreement:

“Let's go!”.

The meeting of the four in the square was repeated several times.

At home, Lucas spoke to his mother, all excited about his meeting with Benny:

“Mom, I met a good friend in the square. He has a completely black dog and his name is Benny. We play, one game after the other. He taught me how to make a ball out of paper and rope and we played soccer. Lola is playing with Bold. They pretend to be fighting, biting each other, throwing themselves on the grass. Lola was incredibly happy with her friend Bold and I was happy with my friend Benny”.

And Lucas heard from his mother:

“Lucas, these games are good, but do not forget that you have a lot of homework. Also, you have English, tennis, judo, swimming, and piano classes”.

Respecting his mother, Lucas replied:

“I know mom. But I'm going to do all of this and take Lola for a walk around the square from time to time”.

And Benny spoke with the same enthusiasm to Maria about his new friend:

“Mom, I met a good friend in the square. He has a white dog with black spots. She looks like that dog from the TV movie, remember? We play, one game after the other. He thought the paper ball was great. But he does not know how to play soccer. He never played soccer before. But he says he plays tennis very well and knows how to swim in the pool. He even hit me with judo and knocked me to the ground. But, all for fun. Bold was incredibly happy with his friend Lola and I was happy with my friend Lucas”.

And Benny heard from his mother:

“Benny, these games are good, but don't forget that you have to do your homework and help me here at home”.

Respecting his mother, Benny replied:

“I know mom. But I'm going to do this and take Bold to walk around the square from time to time”.

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In class, Benny and Lucas sought to find out from their teachers why dogs smell each other's buttocks.

When they met again, Lucas asked:

“Benny, did you ask your teacher about dogs?”

“Yes. She explained it to me correctly. Dogs smell their buttocks and also urine and feces, as a way to record each other's odor in their memories. It is the way they get to know their friends. So, when they meet, one already knows who the other is. Therefore, they become friends forever”.

Lucas liked the answer and added:

“Mine said the same thing. She also said that dogs do this to learn about other dogs. They use this knowledge for various things, such as: marking their territory, knowing which dog walked in the area, keeping track of other dogs, leaving messages for other dogs. For example, when a dog lifts its paws and pees on the pole or in a tree, it means that this territory is mine or that I passed through here. Therefore, the other dogs, who already know your scent, soon understand the message”.

Benny replied, laughing:

“Ah, ah, ah! How funny! Good thing we don't have to do this!”.

“It is true!”. Lucas replied.

And Lucas looked affectionately at Benny and said:

“Benny, you are my best friend. I like you a lot!”.

“Lucas, you are also my best friend. I like you a lot too!”.

And Lucas wanted to strengthen his friendship with Benny and said:

“Would you like to visit my apartment someday?”.

“Yes, I would! And would you also like to visit my hut in the shanty town someday?”.

Bold and Lola looked at each other as if to say the same thing.

To show his friendship with Benny, Lucas gave his toys that he no longer used. Benny loved his gifts, a little train, a remote-control cart, and a puzzle.

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To demonstrate his friendship with Lucas, Benny gave him two toys that he had as a gift: a wooden cart, which he himself had made with leftover boxes, with wheels made from bottle caps and his best ball of made of socks.

A few days later, Lucas was walking with Lola in the square and decided to see where Benny and Bold lived. Benny and Bold also decided to find out where Lucas and Lola lived.

Lucas was delighted by the world of the shanty town. He thought it was different from the elegant neighborhood where he lived. He found everything very joyful. The houses were made of wood close to each other, the streets were made of earth, the children played everywhere, laughed, and shouted. In the streets he could see dogs, cats, chickens and even ducks. A stream ran through the entire shanty town. A horse-drawn carriage caught his attention. It was the first time he had seen the cart of a recyclable material collector.

And Benny introduced Lucas to his mother:

“Mom, this is Lucas, my best friend. And this is Lola, his female dog. That little dog that I said she looked like a movie star”.

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Maria was surprised. She could not imagine a boy like Lucas and a dog like Lola visiting her hut,

Lucas sat in a wooden box and drank a redcurrant juice served by Maria and he liked it very much. She even offered him one of Benny's chocolate chip cookies, but Lucas was not hungry.

He found the brass barrel where Maria put water to wash dishes amused. When he saw the bathroom outside, he was curious to know how Benny went to the bathroom when it was night.

Lola took the opportunity to take a walk around the shack and even had a quick shower in the dirty water stream. She returned with her mouth open and her tongue sticking out happily.

“How beautiful your house, Benny! How good it is to live in a house and watch people go by, the dogs walk on the streets, the children play all the time, the little river passes by the house and all these pets on the streets”.

After Lucas and Lola left, Maria caught Benny's attention:

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“Benny, I think you better not bring your friend Lucas back to our shack. He is a child of a rich family. His mother will not like it. She may feel bad for you or even come here to get satisfaction. We are not at her social level. Even his dog has a better social level than our Bold. Sooner or later you will suffer from this friendship. Are you understanding?”.

And Benny, surprised and sad, replied:

“No mother. I cannot understand. But I will do what you told me”.

Maria ordered Benny to return the toys to where he had taken them. She was afraid of having problems with Lucas's mother or someone who thought that Benny took these toys without order.

However, as promised, Benny went to visit Lucas and Lola's apartment. Benny was delighted with the elegant neighborhood. He thought it was different from the shanty town where he lived. He thought it was incredibly beautiful. The houses and buildings were huge, with gardens and lots of trees. The streets were paved, the sidewalks cemented and with spaces for flowers.

But there were no children playing everywhere, laughing, and screaming.

He did not see dogs, cats, chickens, or ducks on the streets. Similarly, there was no small river of green water. But he could see many pools with clear and transparent water. And a lot of big car passing by! But Benny could not see who was inside. Everything was dark inside the car.

Upon reaching the building where Lucas lived, the doorman replied:

“What do you want here boy?”.

“I came to visit Lucas and Lola. He invited me”.

“But a street child and the stray dog cannot enter here!”.

“But sir, Lucas invited me!”.

At Benny's insistence, the doorman decided to call Lucas's mother:

“Mrs. Isabel, here in the Ordinance a boy named Benny with a stray dog wants to visit Lucas. Can I send him?”.

Lady Isabel called Lucas:

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Lucas, your friend Benny with a dog is in the Ordinance. Go and see what he wants”.

Lucas was satisfied with the visit of Benny and Bold:

“Hello Benny, hello Bold. I am glad you came. Please, come on!”.

Lady Isabel was surprised. She could not imagine a boy like Benny and a dog like Bold visiting her entire apartment.

Benny sat on a luxurious sofa and drank orange juice, ate a piece of cake, served by Lady Isabel, and he liked it very much.

He found everything incredibly beautiful and modern. He thought it was fun living in a house that was on top of other houses. When he saw the bathroom inside, he thought about how easy it was for Lucas to go to the bathroom at night.

Bold took the opportunity to walk around the apartment and even took a quick shower in the terrace pool, slightly wetting the living room floor. He returned with his mouth open and his tongue sticking out happily.

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And he showed all his enthusiasm and joy to his friend Lucas:

“Cool your apartment, Lucas! How good it is to live in a house at the top and watch the cars passing down there, the dogs strolling in chains, the children get on the school buses. And how beautiful is your pool! It looks like a blue lagoon and the water is so clean that you can even drink it!”.

After Benny and Bold left, Lady Isabel caught Lucas's attention:

“Lucas, I don't want you to play or bring your friend Benny to our apartment. He looks like a street boy. He must live in a shanty town and his mother will soon come asking us for things. They are not of our social level. Even his dog is a stray dog, he lives on the street. Sooner or later you will suffer from this friendship. I am going to ask the doorman not to let this boy in again. Are you understanding?”.

“No mother. I cannot understand. But I will do what you told me”.

As for the toys Lucas had earned from Benny, Lady Isabel's reaction was not much different. She ordered Lucas to return the received toys.

She did not want old things at home. She thought the toys did not match the decor in Lucas's room and house.

Benny did not understand her mother's reasons, but learned what humiliation was.

Lucas did not understand his mother's reasons, but learned what discrimination was.

And the four friends gathered in the square for what could be their last meeting.

And Lucas started the conversation, a little embarrassed, trying to make an excuse:

“Benny, I appreciate your gifts, but keep them behind. The wheels of the car scratch the wooden floor of my room. And in the building, it is not allowed to play with ball made of socks. But I was incredibly happy to have received these gifts”.

And Benny replied, unable to hide his sadness:

“Lucas, I also appreciate your gifts, but I would like you to keep them as well. At home, the floor is dirt, sometimes wet. The little train, the remote-control cart and the puzzle will end up breaking down. But thanks!

No child in the shanty town had ever seen such beautiful toys”.

Lola and Bold sniffed, licked their snouts, as if they felt a separation.

“And when do we see each other again?”. Lucas asked.

“I don’t know. My mother wants me to do something to help with the household expenses. Maybe I will pick up aluminum cans to sell”. Benny replied.

“I also don't know. My mom wants me to stay home more to study”. Lucas completed.

The two little friends broke up. The two dogs were no longer be seen.

Benny and Lucas were two children. They did not know what social level, class differences, what it is like to be rich or poor. They were equal in soul and heart. They were identified by the desire to play together, play on the floor, simulate fights, hide, and seek, play police and criminals, play ball, take their dogs for walks.

In the following weeks, Benny even looked for Lucas in the square. But, unfortunately, he did not see him anymore. Bold sniffed the ground to find a smell of

Lola, but it was in vain. The two sadly returned to the shack in the shanty town.

Lucas, from the top of his porch, even looked for Benny, among the children walking on the street. Lola got up from the sofa from time to time and went out to the balcony to look for Bold among the dogs that were walking on the sidewalks, but in vain. The two of them sadly returned to the comfortable sofa in the living room.

Lady Isabel began to notice a change in behavior in Lucas. He lived sadly; he fulfilled his school commitments without enthusiasm. Even Lola seemed to accompany him in this sadness.

And this sadness of Lucas was repeated every day.

Lucas had always been a withdrawn child and had few friends and, perhaps, never had a true friend. With Benny it was different. He felt that Benny liked him for who he really was, with his qualities and flaws. It was an interest less friendship.

And Lady Isabel had always known and realized that Lucas had become another boy since he met Benny. And he was transformed for the better.

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Lady Isabel was a woman with a strong personality, but she was controlled. However, if it were something that Lady Isabel could not bear was to see her beloved and only son become sad. And she concluded:

“He has been like this since the day he separated from his friend Benny. I need to do something!”.

In the shanty town, Maria was also surprised by the sadness that struck Benny. He was always a joyful and happy boy. Now, he was silent, he preferred to be alone. He got out with his wheelbarrow but returned with a few aluminum cans. He stopped playing ball with his friends. He also felt that this change in behavior had something to do with the end of his friendship with Lucas.

Incredibly, even Lola and Bold were different. Bold lay at the door all the time, not even bothering when the pigeons came to drink from the water or ate the rice and beans in his bowl. Lola preferred to stay on the balcony of the apartment all the time, staring off into the street.

One day, a luxury car stopped in the shanty town. A slim and well-dressed woman went down to look for the house of Maria and Benny. When she found her, he applauded and was answered by Maria, saying:

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“Good morning! Are you Mrs. Maria?”.

“Yes ma'am!”. Maria replied, incredibly surprised, and even scared.

“I am Isabel, Lucas's mother and I came to return the gifts that he had given to your son. I think there were some misunderstandings. Also, I came to invite Benny to Lucas's birthday party. Please, I would very much like you to agree. Lucas will be genuinely happy!”.

Maria, with tears in her mother's eyes and understanding the role of the mother that Mrs. Isabel also played, replied:

“Benny will go for sure. He will be incredibly happy!”. And Maria returned Lucas´s gifts that Benny had given to him. It is valid as a birthday gift!

“Thank you very much. Lucas will be incredibly happy!”. Mrs. Isabel replied.

The two mothers hugged each other and did not even bother to hide their tears of emotion.

The meetings in the square between Lucas and Benny, accompanied by Lola and Bold, were repeated for a few more years.

These meetings were interrupted when Lucas traveled on vacation with his parents to Disney and other tourist spots in the United States. He was absent for 30 days.

During this period, Lola stayed at a luxury hotel for dogs. There she would do a lot of exercise and a diet. Lola was very fat; she could have health problems.

If Bold could speak, he would surely say: “I am sad for Lola. If she walked and ran like me and if she did not find her bowl always full of food and she did not eat too much, she would be slimmer and healthier”.

However, upon returning from his vacation, Lucas did not find Benny or Bold in the square anymore. He searched for them in the shanty town and the shack had been sold to other residents.

Lucas still returned to the shanty town for a few more days, but no one gave him reliable information about Benny and his mother. One of the residents even said he had only seen a pickup truck pull up to the front door of the house and carry the few pieces of furniture from the shack.

Lucas even looked for Aunt Severina, but she had returned to the northeast to live with one of her daughters.

Lucas was concerned and intrigued by Benny's sudden disappearance. He was even hurt by Benny for moving without saying anything and not saying goodbye.

What Lucas did not know is that Benny had written him a note and had left it in the Ordinance of the building where Lucas lived. But this note was never delivered to him. The Ordinance operator made a deliberate mistake...

In this note, Benny said:

“My greatest friend Lucas. I received a proposal for a great professional opportunity outside of our city and I am moving with my mother and Bold. I will miss you so much. But as soon as I can, I will give you more news. Sorry, I did not say goodbye in person. But I had to travel in a hurry due to the sports calendar. From your friends Benny and Bold”.

It has been passed many years. Lucas and Benny were now two young men. The two friends had no longer seen or spoken to each other.

One day Lucas went to his team's heart football stadium. It was a classic, but there would be an opening match between the youth teams of both teams.

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On the youth team in his heart, Lucas saw a face that was familiar to him. When the player approached, he had no doubts and shouted:

“Benny! Benny! It's me, Lucas!”.

Benny stopped the movement, froze, and looked at the fence. With slow, automatic steps, he headed toward the boy, shouting his name. He did not even hear the referee whistle, showing the red card and kicking him out of the game.

“Lucas! Lucas, what a surprise my friend! You here? How big and strong you are!”. Benny said with great joy in his eyes.

“Fat, you mean! You too my friend. You are big and, from what I see, you became a soccer player!”. Lucas replied.

“It is true. I am on the youth team, but soon I will be on the professional team. And what about you?”. Benny asked.

“I am studying medicine. I will graduate and be a doctor next year”. Lucas explained.

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“Wow, how nice! You have always studied too much! Time has passed, hasn't it?”. Benny said looking at his old friend with all affection.

“Yes, but you know what? Even today I remember our walks around the square, with Bold and Lola”. Lucas replied without hiding his emotion.

“Wow! Me too! I often thought of you and wondered what Lola was doing and what Lola would be like”. Benny said.

“But what happened that you suddenly disappeared?”. Lucas asked.

“Didn't you get my note?”. Benny replied.

“Note? What note? I did not receive a note or message from you”. Lucas exclaimed.

“Oh my God! I was sure they gave you the note. I left it in the Ordinance. Well, I always knew the Ordinance Operator didn't like me”. Benny said rebelling.

“But what happened?”. Lucas insisted.

“I received a proposal from a soccer team in the interior to compose the youth team. They liked the way I play

soccer. They said I play soccer very well. So here I am! And speaking of Lola, how is she? She must be old!”. Benny asked.

“It is true. Lola is old and fat. She has heart problems. The vet said it was a dog that used to live in open country locations and not in an apartment. And Bold? Is he still alive?”. Lucas wanted to know.

“Yes, but he is also old. It is full of gray hair, mainly in the muzzle. He spends all his time lying on my doorstep. He once got ran over by a car when I lived in the shanty town and he broke his leg”. Benny replied.

“Stray dogs that roam the streets are like that. Almost all get run over in big cities sooner or later. And where are you living now? And how is Lady Maria?”. Lucas asked.

“I bought a house for my mom. Now she no longer needs to do cleaning services in other houses, she has become a home manager. My mom is good. But, from time to time, she misses her friends from the shanty town. She says that people in the city live very isolated and people hardly speak to each other. She thinks that life in the shanty town was livelier and the people friendlier. And Bold is full of advantages. Now he even has dog food and he no longer needs to search for food

on the street”. Benny said smiling and feeling accomplished.

Benny, as a soccer player, started making good money. In time, he could even buy a bigger house or a luxury apartment.

But this was not his thought. At the first opportunity, he wanted to buy a forest area for the preservation of fauna and flora. He always missed the birds he saw in the shanty town and the animals that animated the yards there.

That afternoon, the two friends got together to celebrate the meeting. They hugged each other, laughed at everything.

Occasionally, they pretended to hit each other, as they did in the days of children. They took the opportunity to talk about their girlfriends, about their plans for the future, to remember the old time with Lola and Bold.

The two promised to see each other from time to time to kill their nostalgia and maintain their friendship.

They also agreed to take Bold and Lola to the next meeting to see if they still remembered each other.

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Lucas and Benny just did not remember why they had left each other's lives when they were children...

Benny had forgotten what humiliation was.

Lucas had forgotten what discrimination was.

And one day Lola and Bold met. The two friendly dogs were old. They already had difficulty walking, they could see with disabilities and their hearing was weak.

However, this did not prevent the two of them from feeling incredibly happy when they saw each other. They tried to jump at each other, like in the old days. They licked, smelled, wagged their tails showing great enthusiasm and joy.

Bold did not even realize that Lola was blind in one eye

Lola did not even care that Bold was lame on one leg...

After all, the two dogs have always been true friends!

True friends are like that. They do not care about these things! Lucas and Benny, Lola and Bold became friends forever. And nothing else separated them...

The end