



How the Potato Face Blind Man Enjoyed Himself on a Fine Spring Morning

Carl Sandburg
North American

Intermediate
4 min read

On a Friday morning when the flummywisters were yodeling yisters high in the elm trees, the Potato Face Blind Man came down to his work sitting at the corner nearest the postoffice in the Village of Liver-and-Onions and playing his gold-that-used-to-be accordion for the pleasure of the ears of the people going into the postoffice to see if they got any letters for themselves or their families.

“It is a good day, a lucky day,” said the Potato Face Blind Man, “because for a beginning I have heard high in the elm trees the flummywisters yodeling their yisters in the long branches of the lingering leaves. So so I am going to listen to myself playing on my accordion the same yisters, the same yodels, drawing them like long glad breathings out of my glad accordion, long breathings of the branches of the lingering leaves.”

And he sat down in his chair. On the sleeve of his coat he tied a sign, “I Am Blind Too.”

On the top button of his coat he hung a little thimble. On the bottom button of his coat he hung a tin copper cup. On the middle button he hung a wooden mug. By the side of him on the left side on the sidewalk he put a

galvanized iron washtub, and on the right side an aluminum dishpan.

“It is a good day, a lucky day, and I am sure many people will stop and remember the Potato Face Blind Man,” he sang to himself like a little song as he began running his fingers up and down the keys of the accordion. “I am sure many people will stop and remember the yisters of the lingering leaves in the elm trees.”

Then came Pick Ups. Always it happened Pick Ups asked questions and wished to know. And so this is how the questions and answers ran when the Potato Face filled the ears of Pick Ups with explanations.

“What is the piece you are playing on the keys of your accordion so fast sometimes, so slow sometimes, so sad some of the moments, so glad some of the moments?”

“It is the song the mama flummywisters sing when they button loose the winter underwear of the baby flummywisters and sing: “Fly, you little flummies, Sing, you little wisters.”

“And why do you have a little thimble on the top button of your coat?”

“That is for the dimes to be put in. Some people see it and say, ” ‘Oh, I must put in a whole thimbleful of dimes.’ ”

“And the tin copper cup?”

“That is for the base ball players to stand off ten feet and throw in nickels and pennies. The one who throws the most into the cup will be the most lucky.”

“And the wooden mug?”

“There is a hole in the bottom of it. The hole is as big as the bottom. The nickel goes in and comes out again. It is for the very poor people who wish to give me a nickel and yet get the nickel back.” “The aluminum dishpan and the galvanized iron washtub what are they doing by the side of you on both sides on the sidewalk?”

“Sometime maybe it will happen everybody who goes into the postoffice and comes out will stop and pour out all their money, because they might get afraid their money is no good any more. If such a happening ever happens then it will be nice for the people to have some place to pour their money. Such is the explanation why you see the aluminum dishpan and galvanized iron tub.”

“Explain your sign why is it, ‘I Am Blind Too.’”

“Oh, I am sorry to explain to you, Pick Ups, why this is so which. Some of the people who pass by here going into the postoffice and coming out, they have eyes but they see nothing with their eyes. They look where they are going and they get where they wish to get, but they forget why they came and they do not know how to come away. They are my blind brothers. It is for them I have the sign that reads, ‘I Am Blind Too.’”

“I have my ears full of explanations and I thank you,” said Pick Ups.

“Goodbye,” said the Potato Face Blind Man as he began drawing long breathings like lingering leaves out of the accordion along with the song the mama flummywisters sing when they button loose the winter underwear of the baby flummywisters.

Read more fairy tales on Fairytalez.com