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# The Wondrous Journey of Mark's Birthday Ball





The ball flew into the air, it flew to a distance Mark himself couldn't even imagine. Mark had challenged John before. He told him he couldn't kick the ball as well as he did, but it was really a great kick.

The ball flew from over the school fence, but neither Mark or John managed to figure out where the ball went exactly. Mark tried to go and search for the ball, but the gate man prevented him from going out of the school yard. So, he had to wait until the end of the school day to search for his ball. Mark usually sneaked his ball into school without his parents knowing so that he could play with it during breaks. He was certain that he wouldn't find the ball after school. It won't wait for him outside that long. Someone will sure take it.

Sometimes, when the ball would fly over the school fence, usually someone would kick it back. But you don't always find someone good enough to do so.



This ball was so special to Mark. It was his birthday present. His father got him the ball and as soon as he saw it, he said, "What a lovely ball!" It was, it was really a very beautiful ball. His father also wrote a dedication on the ball with a permanent marker and wrote Mark's full name and phone number on it. He did this so it could be easily returned if it was lost when Mark played. Mark was so happy that night as he cuddled the ball to sleep.

After the school day was over, Mark and John left school and searched for the ball on the other side of the fence. They didn't find it there, so they decided to search the entire neighbourhood until Mark said, "it seems like someone silly took the ball this time."

This was not exactly what happened. When Mark kicked the ball, that great kick that took the ball out of school, the ball ended up on the roof of one of the nearby buildings.



The ball rested there until evening. Only then, the porter saw it and gave to it his three-year old son. The boy was so happy and started kicking it here and there until he grew tired with it and threw it from the roof where it fell in a dustbin.

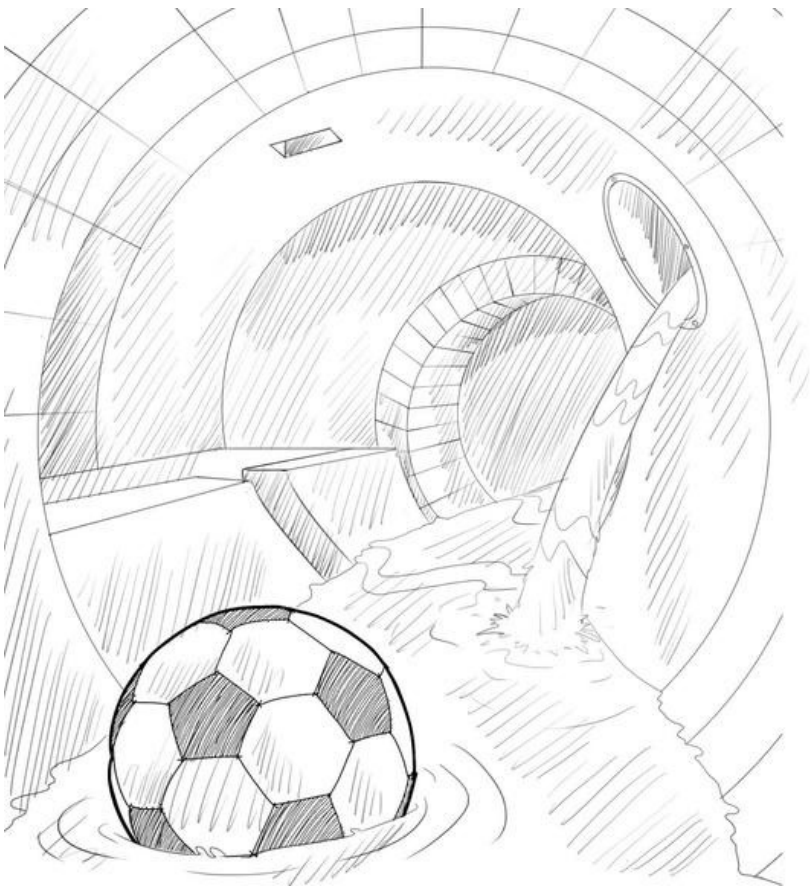
The ball stayed in the dirt until twelve in the morning when the cleaning company came to take the boxes. Soothe ball moved to the recycling centre outside the city where the truck dumped it.



Now the ball rested in a huge container for sorting and treating trash. A group of workers sort the trash items into, paper, plastic and glass to be recycled, while the rest are shredded and thrown in the desert.

While one worker was sorting the contents of the container, he noticed that this beautiful ball was placed among the trash. He said, "I'll give it to my son to play with." At the end of the day, the employee took the ball with him as he took the bus back home. The ball was dirty because it had been covered in trash, so he took a handkerchief from his pocket and started cleaning the ball.

While he was cleaning the ball, the driver stopped suddenly to avoid an accident with another car. All the people on the bus bumped into one another as the bus stopped suddenly.



Unfortunately, the ball fell out of the workers arms, out the window, and fell down into an open cesspool! He stood up after the bus stopped and searched for the ball through the window, but it disappeared in the cesspool. The ball remained there for two days. Meanwhile, the people living on the street complained about the open cesspool. They complained that anyone could fall in it if it remains open. A worker from the sanitation department came to cover the cesspool but before he did so, he placed a stick in it to make sure it's not plugged. As soon as he did so, the ball slid and floated through the pipes under the city buildings. The ball floated for ten days until it reached the water treatment station outside the city. It got stuck in one of the filters that prevents solids from getting into the machines. When one of the workers came to see what happened to the filter, he found the ball and took it using a long stick he had.

The ball was extremely dirty, but the worker was used to work with all this amount of dirt.

He said, “what a beautiful ball!” I’ll clean it and take it to play with my friends next Friday. At the end of the day, he left with a clean ball. He went back home and left the ball on the table and slept as he thought of the surprise he’d prepared for his friends.

The week passed and Friday was finally here. He took the bus and went to the desert area where they usually play. There he surprised them with the beautiful ball he got with him. They said, “finally we got rid of our worn-out ball, and we’ll play with a beautiful ball.” They put their old ball aside and prepared the goals using rocks.

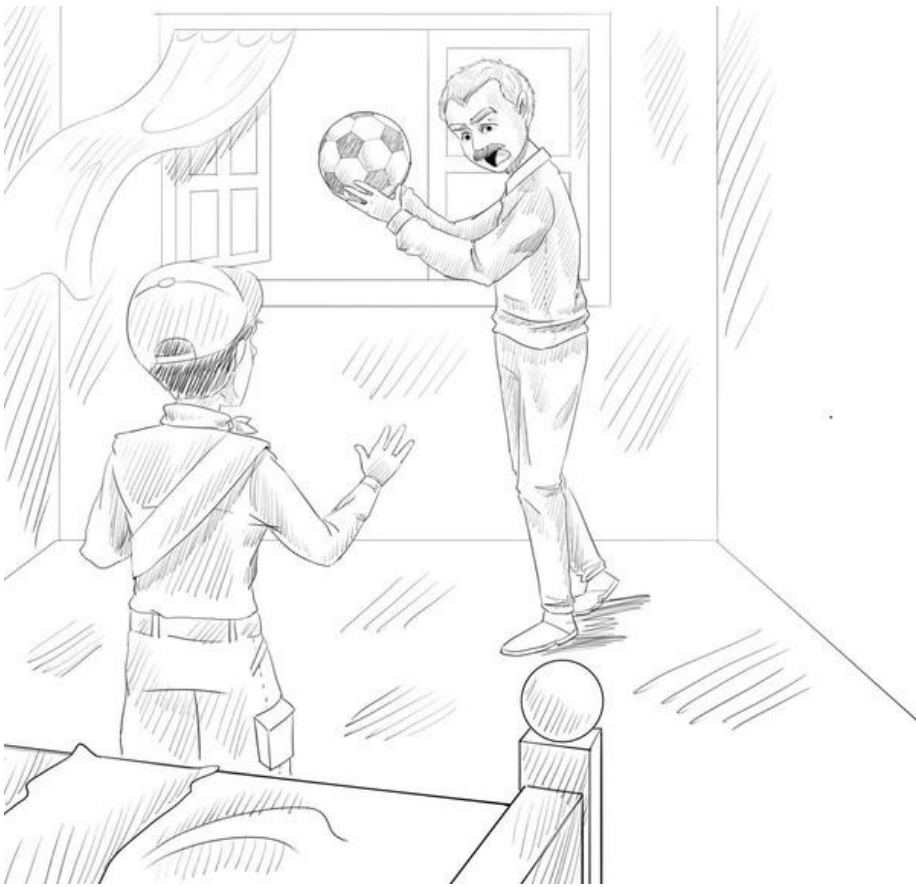
They started the game and the worker who found the ball was the first to shoot. He was used to playing with the worn-out ball which he had to kick so hard to make it move. When he kicked the new ball with a similar kick it flew away towards the main road. One of them followed the ball, but a car was there before them. The car struck the ball so quickly that it flew like a bullet and no one could tell where it went. The team returned to their old ball and that was it for them. The ball was lost in the desert once more.

The day passed and evening came. A lonely evening wolf passed by the ball. He smelled it several times until he was sure it was not food. He tried to hold it in his mouth, but he couldn’t, and he got frustrated, so he decided to kick it using his front leg. When he was tired of this, he left the ball again and he continued to look for food.



There the ball remained amidst the desert, for two long days. It was pushed around by the wind from place to place until it reached a rocky landing and got stuck between a few rocks and some spiders came to make it their shelter. Another day passed and the beautiful ball was stuck in the rocky landing. Shortly, a scout team found it, and were so happy to find it. This is exactly what they were looking for. They played with it all day long during camp. Then Len, who first saw it, took it with him. At home he told his father, "Look at this beautiful ball I came back with it from the scout camp?" Len's father was too busy reading the newspaper, he didn't reply. Len entered the room and bounced the ball against the wall. The noise bothered his father and so he went to ask Len to stop. When he opened the door he found that the dirty ball had made large, dirty spots all over his newly painted white walls!



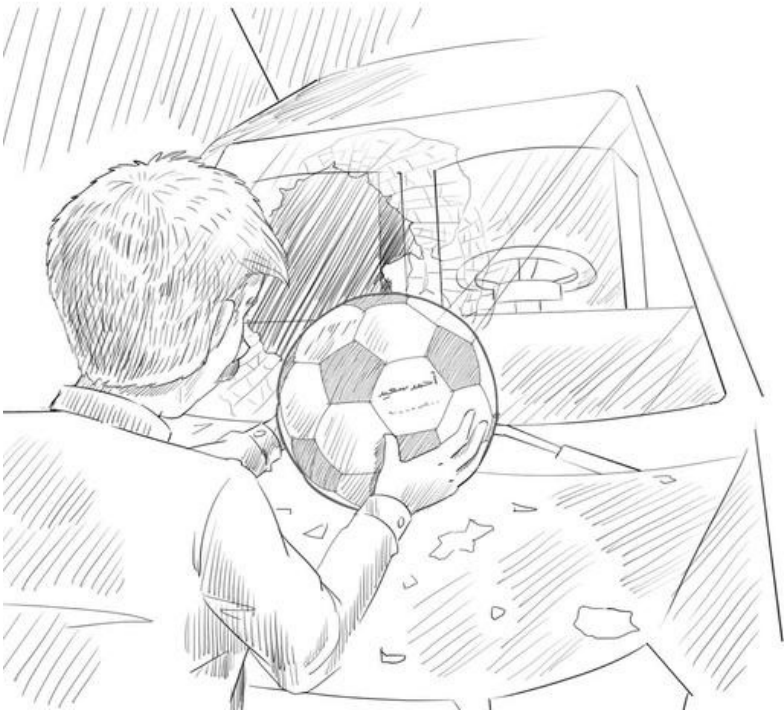


He was so angry at what his son did that he screamed at him asking him to stop and where he got this dirty ball from. But before Len had a chance to reply, his father opened the window and threw the ball out.

Len was so sad about losing the ball, but this was not the problem right now.

The ball fell quickly from the twelfth floor and broke the window of one of the cars parked below. The car belonged to Mr. Charles, the maths teacher in Mark's school. He lived in the building next door.

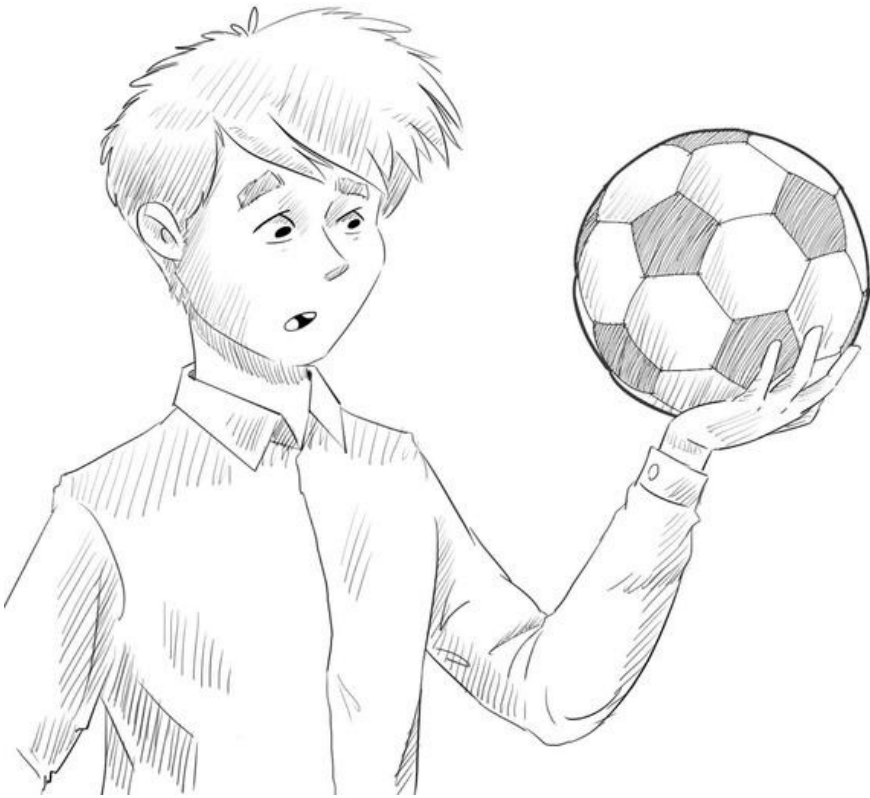
When Mr. Charles saw his car the next morning, he became very angry. He said to himself "One of those silly children, broke my window and whoever it is, he won't get away with it."



Mr. Charles saw a ball in his car and when he held it, he turned it around till he saw the dedication written on it. Mr. Charles knew Mark very well, he's his maths teacher. He doesn't like Mark because he doesn't know how to solve difficult maths equations and gives the others the opportunity to make fun of him.

Mr. Charles thought "now Mark is in real trouble. First, he broke my car window with his ball, and then he runs away without even apologizing. He played with the ball in the street. Why would he go to play with the ball in a place far away from his house? Of course, it's because he doesn't want his parents to know that he spends the day playing with the ball. That's why he lies and says he's going to study with his friend, while he goes to play. Now, he's in real trouble."

He decided to tell Mark's parents about lying about losing the ball, while he played with it secretly all month long. He also promised he'll severely punish him.



Mark couldn't believe his eyes when he saw the ball. This was enough proof that he wasn't a liar. How could anyone blame him for seeing his ball after all this time. He thought he would never see it again. How it disappeared and how did it show up again, no one knows. Mark clarified the issue

with his parents and with Mr. Charles.

He didn't mind if they didn't believe him as long as he was true to himself. Mark held the ball in his hand and thought deeply.

He didn't know the distances it travelled, the places it crossed and the hands that held it since he kicked it that morning. Any way, it doesn't matter as long as the ball is with him now.



THE END