

# Money Talks

I shone in the bag with others to begin and then a till-draw and then a pocket. The old man took me in place of a piece of paper; and a tin of beans. The world seemed so busy and business-like and I meant everything to it.



A present for some sweets, some treats, some excited and supremely urgent needs. A granddaughter's little gift on the walk home from school. Gleaming and fresh, the child held me up and admired me with shining eyes and fresh complexion. I warmed me in her young grasp then back again towards a till in exchange for jelly.

Like quicksilver he slipped me from his hand not to the draw but to a special hidden place with others in dishonesty. A thief! I railed. I felt the unease and fear as he spirited me away from where in justice I belonged. Against everything I was made for; fair dealing and exchange, honest counting and accounting was my purpose. How he gripped me, who took me from those who paid him to be honest.

In this pathetic, petty hand, I wondered what further darkness for my path. Out I came and into a machine; to be wasted on a wager, I thought. But mechanical click and zip of a printer made a ticket that told of limited time and return. I sensed anxiety as he walked off past cars and ambulance and automatic doors.

In a bag again with others and the rustle of paper back to a bank and recycled to the store. A mother's purse; first time in such a careful place of care and count. The snapping open and shut to check that I was still there. Calculation and careful thinking made the speed of spend slow for I had to count and to stretch.

A thousand rounds of in and out; from till to safe, from pocket to purse. How many simple needs and so many small gifts that I supplied. Dishonest and true both held me tight. Some piled me high while others threw me in a bowl like shrapnel, the wage of war for happiness.



Happiness was not my gift but a constant companion; I was wanted. Some hoped for a quick fix, a moment of oblivion but all things pass and everything moves on; to that I am witness. My shine grew dim and dents slowly obscured the crisp lines but not my worth.



The old lady dropped me; I clattered on the board and loudly rolled; but she heard nothing. She'll look for me but will not see the hole and in the space below. Here I lie waiting as the decades pass.

Some day a tearing up and knocking down may find a reckoning and traded transfer. Maybe I shall fall in soft earth to be puckered by its damp chemistry. Perhaps a hundred thousand suns will light my way to another value in a case.

Once I lay in basket as songs were sung and light shone from coloured glass. They pretended to dismiss me though I fixed their roof.

Of me they clearly spoke, 'Give back to Caesar what is his'.

Whose were they?

