

A TRUE STORY

I was on my lunch break, sitting on a bench in the park, when a cute little doggy came up to me and said, “Excuse me, sir, I’m sorry to disturb you like this, but would you permit me to have a bite of your sandwich? I am not a beggar by inclination, but circumstances beyond my control have withered my pride. I am lost and confused. My owner seems to have abandoned me, and I have had nothing to eat for six days.”

“Dear friend,” I said, “please take what is left of this sandwich. I must return to work, but if you would meet me here at five o’clock, I would happily take you with me to my home. And, with your approval, I would gladly keep you and feed you every day. I think you would be happy there, and I’m sure you would bring me much joy.”

The dog agreed to meet him at the bench, but when the man returned there was a note on the bench.

Written in perfect schoolboy script, it read:

“Sir, it is with a sense of shame that I must decline your generous offer. For the past six days I have perpetrated the same scam on you, and you have generously given me your lunch, for which I am grateful. However, your lack of memory worries me and how it would affect my existence in your household. With all due respect, sir, living by one’s wits in the park suits me just fine.”

“A True Story” is a true story. In the big world and the personal one of scammers and poor memory and shame there coexists generosity and kindness and honesty and joy and friends and “perfect schoolboy script.” Such coexistences!