

THE LETTER

It was a cold October night in 1912. Tomas who was about fifty one years old, lived with his wife Luisa in the south of City Island. It was a small island opposite the Bronx in New York. The island was connected to the rest of New York by a green metal bridge. It was built in 1901 with a blue sign decorated with a rudder and anchor announcing: “Welcome to City Island, Bronx Port ”. Tomas was a fisherman. He was a tall and strong man and he was visibly punished by the sun. His strong and bony hands showed how hard his work was. As he approached his house he saw through the window the light of a candle. He put the key in the lock, he turned it and opened the door. On entering the house he saw his wife. Luisa was twenty three years old, she was very pretty with an angelic face. Luisa had long coal black hair. She was the daughter of two Italian immigrants from Naples. She was born in Naples but when she was 9 years old she and her family travelled to America as stowaways on a cargo ship. On the way to America her older brother died of yellow fever. The death of her brother was very hard for the whole family. When they landed in New York, they had little savings which her father had earned working as a fisherman in Naples. The early days in America were very hard for Luisa and her parents as they slept in cardboard. They had no where to sleep. They were surviving thanks to the charity of some people. While her father was looking for work, Luisa and her mother were begging on the streets of New York.

Each day Salvatore went to the port to find work. Tomas went out on his boat to fish as usual. Tomas brought his boat into the port where everyday people hoped to find

work. He always went fishing alone, but one day he decided to give work to some of the immigrants awaiting their chance. Salvatore was the first in the queue which surrounded the whole port building. Tomas nodded to the man in the queue, he raised his hand and indicated the number 1. This meant that there was only work for one person. Salvatore went aboard, another boat approached the port willing to give work to someone else. The day working on the sea was very hard. Salvatore did a great job and worked hard. Tomas thanked Salvatore for his great work 'Salvatore, you have done a great job'. 'Each day, you will come with me to work' said Tomas. Salvatore reached the corner filled with cardboard boxes, which had become their home. Antonella was on the floor in the arms of her daughter Luisa.- Mum, don't give up please you will be fine! 'She whispered to her mother' Luisa raised her head and looked at her father, two tears fell down her cheeks 'Antonella, I have one thing to say, you will be so glad that I found work!' Antonella looked at her husband and smiled. The days went by, and Tomas told Salvatore that they could live in his house, because he lived alone.

Twelve years later 'Antonella, our daughter is already grown up. She is old enough to marry. I'm thinking that Luisa should marry Mr. Tomas, in gratitude for the help that he has given us during all these years. Don't you think so? he asked. Antonella couldn't believe what she was hearing. Her husband was crazy, she thought. Antonella had to prevent her daughter from marrying this man, who was old enough to be her father. She had to devise a plan. The next morning, Antonella prepared breakfast for Tomas and Salvatore. Antonella put poison in the coffee. Salvatore and Tomas took their coffee while Antonella took tea. Suddenly, Tomas, Salvatore and

Antonella fell to the ground. Tomas had also put poison in the tea. Luisa was in bed when she heard a loud noise. She was quickly on the scene where the three bodies were lying inert. ‘Oh my God! What’s happened?’ A neighbor heard the screams of Luisa and he went to help her. Antonella died en route to hospital. Salvatore died the day after the death of his wife. Tomas survived. Luisa was alone, she didn’t know where to go, but she had to leave. While she was packing her suitcase, she found a letter in her wardrobe. It was a letter from his father. ‘Luisa, you have to marry Mr. Tomas because he is a good man and thanks to him we have a home’ She did what her father wrote in the letter.

Luisa heard the sound of the key in the door. It was Tomas. Tomas ate quickly ‘Do you want a cup of coffee, dear?’ said Luisa.

Yes, please! said Tomas. He took the coffee, and Luisa was finally free. Tomas died. She got rid of that miserable man called Mr. Tomas. The following week, she escaped with her neighbor Harry, who helped her when her parents were sick and died . Now she was happy.

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