



The Bench By Jeffrey E. Meinz

(a person [man or woman] is sitting on a bench, reading the newspaper)

#1: (jogging by, stopping, approaches bench) I'm sorry. I know I'm interrupting, but...

#2: (sitting) That's fine. How can I help you?

#1: I jog past here every day and notice you here, always reading the paper.

#2: Every morning.

#1: Well, I spend the rest of my run wondering who you are. Where do you live? What do you do for a living? I wonder whether you're reading the comics or the business section.

#2: Sports...usually the sports page. (Extending hand) I'm ____ (insert full name here) ____.

#1: Glad to meet you. My name is ____ (insert name here) ____.

#2: Likewise. So, why me? Why today? I mean, I'm sure you see a lot of people every day while your jogging. Why did you stop and talk to me?

#1: (uneasy) Umm, you might not understand...

#2: Give me a try. I'm a pretty understanding person.

#1: (still uneasy) Well, as I'm running...you know...jogging on the sidewalk...I occupy my mind...a lot...by talking.

#2: OK...I've never heard you before.

#1: I talk silently...to God. I'm praying to God. (Gaining more confidence) I'm a Christian.

#2: (taking a deep breath) I see.

#1: So I ask God about you...I wonder whether or not you believe in Him, if you don't should I tell you about Him. I pray for courage to talk to you...and I guess today He gave me enough to actually stop.

#2: I see.

#1: I guess, since the cat is out of the bag, do you know who Jesus is?

#2: (politely) I've heard of him. I know who he is, or at least who Christians say that he is. I don't go to church, never have. And I'm sorry, but I am not interested.

#1: I understand. (Awkward silence) If you ever change your mind, promise you'll flag me down as I jog by, OK?

#2: OK...I don't think I will...but, OK.

#1: All right, I'll let you get back to your sports page. Have a super day.

#2: Thank you...I hope I didn't disappoint you.

#1: Oh, you didn't. And I hope you don't mind if I keep praying for you ____ (inserts #2's full name here) _____. (Jogs off)

(A sign is held up from an additional individual that reads "THE NEXT DAY" while a third individual enters and sits on the bench behind a newspaper. The audience should not be allowed to see that this is a different person. The assumption is that this is still #2)

#1: Good morning, ____ (insert's #2's name here) ____!

#3: (no response)

#1: Good morning, ____ (insert's #2's name here) ____.

#3: (lowering paper) Excuse me?

#1: (startled) Oh, I'm sorry. I thought you were somebody else.

#3: (a little sad) Did you know ____ (insert's #2's name here) ____?

#1: I met him yesterday. Do you know him?

#3: (a deep breath) I did. He and I worked together. I guess he use to sit here every morning a read the paper.

#1: Yeah, the sports page. Did something happen to him?

#3: He died last night, just after work.

#1: What?!?!

#3: Yeah, here's his obituary. He always told me about how he stopped before work at a bench on 9th and Ashland to read the paper. One of his favorite times of the day, I guess.

#1: (softly, devastated) I spoke up too late.

#3: I thought I'd just sit here for a while and remember him. He was a great guy.

#1: (crying) I spoke up too late.

#3: Too late for what? Hey, are you OK?

#1: Oh, you wouldn't understand.

#3: Give me a chance. You seem pretty shaken up.

#1: I'm a Christian and I tried to tell him about Jesus yesterday...

#3: (excited) You're the one?!?!

#1: I'm the one what?

#3: I've been trying to tell ____ (insert #2's name here) ____ about Jesus for a few months now. He was never interested in it before yesterday. He said he met someone else who tried to tell him about Jesus. He figured since both of us were trying that maybe God was trying to get his attention.

#1: So, what happened?

#3: I told ____ (insert #2's name) ____ about God's plan of salvation during lunch. He had a bunch of questions but he really seemed to get it. He borrowed my Bible last night and said he'd bring it back to work today. Of course, we were going to talk more about it again during lunch.

#1: (shocked, in disbelief) That's amazing. I never would have imagined.

#3: You were not too late...you were just in time, thank God.

#1: Thank God is right.

THE END

