

Down to the Last Ten Dollars

Libby Lindblom

“Bleeding in the brain.” The chilling words of the doctor’s report were like a wrench of panic tightening around my heart. My strong, 50-year-old father had always been the picture of health. A piano technician, he serviced pianos for a living, working all over coastal Georgia to provide for our family of 11. Now he lay helplessly in the emergency room, having just come through the throes of a CT scan. What had happened to him while moving a piano earlier that day? What had caused that razor-sharp explosion of pain inside his head? Was it not food poisoning after all—as we had guessed—that caused his vomiting all the way home from work? It was late that March night when we brought Dad into the local ER, expecting an IV for his dehydration.

They gave him one and prepared to send him home. That’s when a doctor walking down the hall paused outside my dad’s door. He recognized the name of his piano tuner and considered saying hi. But his shift was over, and this wasn’t even the hospital where he worked—he only visited this ER once a month. While he stood there in the hall, this doctor said he felt like “something pushed him through the door.”

“I’m your client,” he greeted my dad. “You tuned my piano recently.” Upon a brief chat, the doctor’s curiosity morphed into concern. “You mean you got the headache about 30 minutes *before* the vomiting started?” Suddenly he ordered a CT scan.

Minutes later, we faced a shattering change of plans—Dad wasn’t going home. Instead he would soon be riding in a speeding, squealing ambulance 45 minutes through the night to a Savannah hospital. The doctor asked, “I take it that you’re a religious guy?” When my dad said he was a Christian, he replied, “I am too. And there’s no question that someone was looking out for us today.”

We didn’t know all the details then. We didn’t know this was only the first of 17 grinding days our dad would spend in the ICU, hanging between life and death from an internal injury none of the medical experts could

acutely put a finger on. The diagnosis was slow in coming: a “spontaneous subarachnoid hemorrhage.” We didn’t know the statistics: that 1/3 of patients with this condition die, 1/3 are left mentally impaired for life, and 1/3 recover. I know it was the Lord’s mercy that we didn’t know the statistics then, for the truth is there are no odds against God! But when your heart is pounding with such numbing fear that you can hardly word a prayer, the less you know, the better. The more you can trust.

Tiring days defined this taxing ordeal for our family. But in the end, Dad’s brain healed itself completely! One trouble remained: after the best and most benevolent generousities of the insurance companies, our big family—which had depended solely on Dad’s piano income for support—was left with \$7000 in medical bills. We placed it all in God’s hands; and miraculously, a client visited our shop just days later and bought an expensive piano for right around \$7000!

When our mom shared the exact amount of the sale with us, though, I couldn’t help thinking, *Just ten dollars short of the exact amount we needed.* A quiet voice nudged me: *Why don’t you ask for it?* In my relief that our burden had basically vanished, however, I stubbornly pushed the voice aside. There was no need to ask God for that last \$10. He had healed my dad and met our needs—I was fine with the story stopping there.

A week later, I saw Mom opening an envelope. A church had sent us part of their offering, and a \$10 bill fell out! Shock, joy, and a touch of shame washed over me. Again that still, small voice of my heavenly Father came back to nudge me: *Why didn’t you ask for it?*

I hadn’t asked because I didn’t have the faith. I thought the Lord had to put so much effort into our big problems that the little ones weren’t worth His attention. But He had *wanted* to add this finishing touch for me; to prove that He would answer prayer—*all* prayer—out of His profound riches and grace.

Even down to the last ten dollars.

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Written about a true incident that happened in March 2018