

TEN WORD TALES No. 5

The Little Things that Matter

by The Story Spinner

CHAPTER 5 – a bumper final chapter!



“They’re coming back later,” said the girl. “They don’t know I’ve got myself free and they don’t expect you to wake up for ages.”

“I saw you pick up your needle and thread and I’ve some pins,” said Mercurio. “My mum always says, little things matter. Can we do

anything?” His eyes darted eagerly around. There were rolls of fabric everywhere. Was escape impossible? “I’ve an idea,” said the girl.

Together they came up with a plan. They made some quick preparations, sewing and pinning as if their lives depended on it, as maybe they did. Then they heard the distant sound of voices.

“Here they come,” said the girl. They put the bags over their heads, slipped their hands into the loosened ropes and lay still.

The voices were arguing.

“Let’s ask for millions in ransom.”

“Let’s keep him a prisoner.”

“If Mercurio is freed he’ll make beautiful clothes again and we’ll be ruined.”

Someone muttered about murder.

Mercurio recognised the voices: they were all designers he knew. One was someone he thought was a friend. He felt a chill to know that they hated him so much.

He heard the arranged signal: a fragment of music, a little tune, hummed in a quavering voice by the little embroiderer. It was such

an unexpected sound in the middle of the warehouse filled with arguing voices that there was a surprised silence.

Mercurio called out “Now!” and Mercurio and the girl leapt up, taking the cloth bags off their heads and pulling towards themselves wide red ribbons of material, carefully positioned on the floor. In an instant a great roll of cloth gathered up under the kidnappers’ feet, like a giant bag. All three were trapped.

“Run!” called Mercurio, grabbing the girl by the hand. They ran out of the warehouse and into the sudden sunshine of a spring day. Several police cars were speeding towards them. One slowed up.

“Clever idea to leave the phone on when you dropped it,” said the police inspector, leaning from the car-window. “We heard everything and our experts identified the voices. How did you escape?”

Mercurio explained as the other policemen ran into the warehouse and found the three designers still trapped in the giant sack.

“It’s all sewn up,” said the inspector, grinning at his own joke.

Everything happened in a whirl after this. Mercurio answered what felt like a thousand questions. He saw the girl only in the distance.

His mum was at the police station briefly but then she disappeared. And where was the girl? And what was her name?? And where had she gone? No one seemed to know. Wearily he went home. He thought his mum would be there.

She was. On the table was a giant pie and fresh vegetables. There too was the girl. “How did she get here?” he asked his mum.

“I asked her. As I always say,” said his mum. “Little things matter and she is pretty little ... and rather cute.”

He felt suddenly utterly joyful.

“What on earth *is* your name?” he asked.

“It’s a bit strange.” The girl looked apologetic.

“No need to apologise to me. Mercurio is strange.” His mother smiled.

“It’s Minima, it means small in Latin, but my friends call me Minim.”

He smiled again. The perfect name.

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