



Freddie Corke

RWS500 – Winner 2022

In a suburban borough of New York lived a young man called Happy. His skin was silky smooth and light hair settled on his head, with a brown tuft covering his chin. He was loved by his community, due to his good deeds.

Happy lived on the second storey of a thin yet tall terraced apartment. The outside of his home was light, fresh brown and despite the building's age, it looked as if it was brand new. Placed along the walls, flowerpots grew vibrant vines and flourishing flowers. Strays looked like well taken care of pets, and the roads had not a piece of plastic in sight.

Happy was not home one day. His neighbours grew worried. The cats grew hungry, and the vines shrivelled. Nobody knew where Happy was. He did not work away from home. He had never been on holiday. By the door his neighbours stood rubbing their eyes in disbelief. As the blanketing layer of dark cloud rolled in, the neighbours retreated to the warmth of their own homes without warmth in their hearts.

Next morning there was no sun in sight, not a patch of blue in the sky. Some might have said there was an unusual smell in the air...like burning, not of wood, of something else.

Nobody knew what to do. Happy was gone, so there was nothing remotely 'happy' about his once happy neighbourhood.

As they stood in discussion, their minds dwelt upon an idea. If Happy was not there to pet the strays, clean up the rubbish and water the vines, they felt the responsibility lay upon themselves. One by one they assigned jobs, and found that in carrying out the tasks at hand they grew a satisfaction, some may dare to call it happiness.

They seemed to believe that they had found Happy. But not on the road sweeping up, not at home filling food bowls for cats, or even watering the beloved plants. They found Happy in their hearts, where happiness truly belonged.

Seconds, minutes, hours, days. Nobody saw Happy. Even though Happy visited often, passing by on his moral journeys, he did not stop to enjoy a moment of victory.

There were many times people misplaced Happy, via losses, heartbreaks, bumps in the road. But he was always there lurking warmly in the shadows of their misfortunes ready to catch them when it seemed as they were failing.

Eventually, Happy's visits began to become fewer...further apart. Not because he had forgotten or because he couldn't visit. But because people, with the power of Happiness, became more resilient. They fed the cats, they watered the plants, they cleaned the streets. Before they knew it Happy had passed on to bless others.

In a Texas mining town lived a young man called Happy. His skin was silky smooth and light air settled on his head with a brown tuft covering his chin. He was loved by his community, due to his good deeds.

And he still circulates today.