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The Coin

"Wednesday, 13th of June and temperatures are at their record high," echoed a manly voice from an old TV behind a dusty window display of an old grocery store. The bench Gary was sitting on offered no shade against the sun. He leaned back and in an exaggerated gesture took a long drag from his last cigarette. He exhaled slowly, shading his eyes from the blazing sun. He watched the smoke twist and turn in the air, making all kinds of unimaginable shapes, until nothing ^{more} ~~much~~ than a faint haze remained. In his other hand he held a coin. From time to time he rolled it ^{? between} ~~on~~ his knuckles. A cool trick that made him a lot of friends in middle school.

"This is the hottest day the country has experienced in fifty years. How should we protect ourselves from the scorching sun? Julie is here to tell us more." As he took another drag a bit of ash fell on his white shirt, now drenched in sticky sweat. He leapt up and tried to dust it off, but the damage has already been done. "Damn," he cursed, and run his hand through his slick blond hair, "now I'm without good shirts". He tossed the coin and caught it in mid-air.

"Yes Henry," replied a young woman's voice. "It is very important that everybody remembers to drink a lot of water. What I like to do at home, is to make a big jug of lemonade from our home-grown lemons. It's delicious and keeps you hydrated." A car passed by. One eye closed, Gary looked lazily at the other side of the road. A part of it near the edge got so hot that the asphalt started melting. A scrawny, dark-haired boy joyously poked at the bubbles that emerged from the heated blackness. Gary studied the boy as he went to the vending machine nearby to buy a can of soda. After his little mouth gulped it lustily, he kicked the can onto the oncoming traffic, which seemed to have caused him a fair bit of joy. Savoring the last drag from his cigarette, he threw the stub on the sidewalk and made his way to the other side of the road.

Gary studied the contents of the buzzing, red vending machine. He scanned the mostly empty shelves until he finally found what he was looking for. In the ~~in the~~ very last row there was a

Excellent, well-told story!!!
Rich vocab!... got idiomatic usage —
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can of his favorite raspberry soda . With audible beeps he typed in the combination 'D7' and inserted the coin. The machine refused it. Gary took it and tried again. And then one more time. The boy now eyed him suspiciously. Gary grunted and angrily tried scratching the coin against the metal frame of the vending machine. However, it slipped from his sweaty hands, fell on the sidewalk and rolled away. Gary grunted and quickly started looking for it. He found it in the hands of the dark-haired boy.

"Hey! Give it back. It's mine." said Gary angrily. The boy looked up to him and and replied with a viscus smile.

"If that's so, why do I have it?" he replied and waved it triumphantly above his head. He went to admire his prize, but then he narrowed his eyes and with a confused look said, "What kind of coin ~~even~~ is this?"

"The none-of-your business kind. Now, give it back!" answered Gary, now with visible annoyance and started towards the boy. The boy, however, wasn't willing to give up his new possession and without hesitation kicked Gary right in the shin and started running away. Gary cursed loudly and stumbled from the sidewalk. As he tried to run after the boy his foot slipped from his shoe, which now lied stuck in the molten asphalt. There was no time to recover his shoe, so he cursed again and ran after the little thief.

Half-running, half-limping he chased the kid into the nearby park. In the center of the park resided a small lake surrounded with groups of people. They looked after them as they ran past. In an unlucky instant as the boy looked behind to check up on his pursuer, he tripped on his untied shoelace and fell down on the grass near the water. Gary was finally able catch up and quickly tried to pry open the boys clenched fist to get his coin back.

"Help! Help! I'm being molested!" the boy yelled and started trashing around, which seemed to attract a lot of attention.

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no sure about this:

I offer a suggestion

"Don't move and give back the coin, or else ..." threatened now incensed Gary. Finally, the boy loosened his grip and Gary reclaimed his property. He straightened and wanted dust himself off when a middle aged woman rushed towards them. She wore a cherry-red summer dress and the cloying smell of her flowery perfume immediately hit Gary's nose.

"For the love of God, what is going on?" she asked incredulously, her stern eyes inspecting Gary and his disheveled state.

"I was just walking down the street and this man jumped from around the corner and started chasing me." blurted out the boy. "He threatened me with all kinds of nasty things he would do to me. Madam, I'm very scared." wailed the boy with the most disgusting fake cry Gary has ever seen.

"Is that true?" shouted the women, eyes now wide. "Someone call the police!"

"That won't be necessary. I was just ..." Gary tried to defend himself but before he realized the woman took out a pepper spray from her purse and sprayed him right in the face. He stumbled back and fell right into the muddy, lukewarm water of the lake. Panicking, he quickly stood up and the last thing the people in the park saw was a limping man running through the park hedge.

* * *

Later that night a man was walking down the street. In the darkness you could recognize only some of his features. His hair a muddy mess and his shirt a wrinkled, saggy, rag. There was only one shoe on his feet. He walked across the street from a closed grocery store. He stopped briefly on the sidewalk and bent down. He struggled to pick up a shoe from the road, but it was stuck in the now cold asphalt. After a while he gave up and turned to the nearby vending machine. He looked at the last shelf and searched for the label 'D7'. It was empty.