

THE MOONLIT PAGE

The Chair That Learned to Listen



Elsie volunteered at the repair café on Saturday mornings. People arrived with lamps that flickered, clocks that stopped, and once a toaster that worked only when complimented.

This week a neighbour named Tomas carried in an old dining chair. It squeaked every time he sat down. He also brought his cockatiel, Pip, in its covered travel cage; the bird was on its way to a routine appointment afterward.

As Tomas tested the chair, Pip answered each squeak with a clear two-note whistle. The room fell silent. Tomas sat again: squeak, whistle.

Elsie checked the joints. None was loose. The sound came from a screw rubbing against the metal bracket beneath the seat. She tightened it and added a small felt washer.

Tomas tried again. The chair was quiet. Pip waited, head tilted toward the place the noise used to come from.

“Perhaps he's disappointed,” Tomas said.

Elsie gave the bird a soft two-note whistle of her own. Pip returned it immediately. Even the people working on lamps smiled.

Tomas took his chair home without a squeak, and Pip left with a new duet.

To remember

1. Tomas brings a squeaky chair and cockatiel to repair café
2. Bird whistles whenever chair squeaks
3. Elsie fixes rubbing bracket with felt washer
4. Chair is quiet, but Pip gains a human duet.