

THE MOONLIT PAGE

The Gull and the Yellow Ticket



At the ferry kiosk, Peter sold yellow tickets from a machine older than his youngest niece. Every morning a gull waited on the rail for the first boat, staring toward the ticket window as though it had a reservation.

Peter had one rule for gulls: never feed them. They were capable of running their own restaurant if encouraged.

One morning, the ticket machine spat out a single blank yellow ticket. The gull hopped down and planted a foot beside it. Peter reached for the paper. The gull stepped in front of his hand.

“Excuse me,” Peter said. “Are you buying or just browsing?”

The gull caught the corner of the ticket in its beak and hopped toward the far end of the pier, stopping every few boards to look back. Peter followed, determined to retrieve the paper before it blew into the water.

Around the corner, a new bench stood facing the quiet side of the harbour. The first ferry's horn sounded, and the gull made exactly the same two notes a heartbeat earlier.

Peter sat for one minute. He had worked at the pier for twelve years and had never watched the sun reach that side of the water.

When he returned, the gull was back at the kiosk.
The yellow ticket sat safely beneath its foot.

“Window seat,” Peter told it. “Same time
tomorrow.”

To remember

1. Gull guards a blank yellow ticket
2. Peter follows it around the pier
3. A new bench, sunlight, and a gull's uncanny two-note horn
4. Ticket returned; gull gets an imaginary reservation.