

# Resolver 16:

## Turtle Pool at Young and Steels

### Part 1

*The most popular street in the largest city in the country is Young St. It begins at a lakefront harbor and runs north, until far outside the city, where it ends at another lake.*

*North of the actual city, where the concrete and glass begin relinquishing their grip to allow the occasional field, is the intersection of Young and Steels, where our story occurs.*

An elderly man walked along the Young St sidewalk, near the Steels intersection. Of slightly less than average height, he moved methodically, with purpose.

Behind him he pulled a little wire cart with little white rubber wheels. When he saw a piece of wood, paper, a bottle or a can he'd stop, slowly bend to grasp it and place it in the cart.

He was a regular sight in summer. On hot days he'd put out a small plastic wading pool, shaped like a turtle, for children to cool off in. Few did. Mostly hot and thirsty dogs drank out of it when passing by.

In winter anyone glancing at the little single-story house on the corner of Young and Steels would see him chipping ice and shoveling snow from the sidewalks in front of and to the side of the house.

As time passed, office towers, store fronts and more began following Young St north out of the city. When subway stops were added they brought expensive condominiums and townhouses.

Still the little house on the corner stood amongst the modern buildings sprouting around it, figuratively alternating between shaking its fist and then extending its middle finger at the tide of urbanization flowing north into former farmland.

All the while, the old man walked and gathered or, depending on the season, chipped and shoveled.

Shortly after Sara's family moved to Young and Steels, she saw the old man for the first time. She wondered. What was his name? Why didn't she ever see family? Or even a pet? Was he lonely?

One day when she was about 10, walking with her father, she saw the old man again, and asked her father about him.

"That's the can man," her father said. "Nobody knows his name. He makes his money picking up bottles and returning them for deposit. I think he burns the wood and paper scraps in his wood stove during winter to keep warm. Maybe he sells the cans for aluminum, although I don't know who buys them or if they're even worth anything, aluminum being so cheap."

"People say he's rich."

"Well, it's not polite to gossip. Obviously, he's rich enough to keep living on the corner of Young and Steels. No idea how he pays his property taxes. I'm sure developers are trying to buy his place, but as far as I know, he doesn't sell."

"I'll ask him how he got rich."

"Honey, it's not polite to ask about money. It's none of your business."

"Then you ask him."

"It's not my business any more than it's yours. It's his business. Leave the guy alone. He's obviously happy wandering round gathering garbage, or he'd be doing something else."

“But if he’s rich, maybe he could tell me a secret we could use to get rich.”

“First, if you want something from someone, don’t just go ask them for it. How do you feel when people come up and ask you for something, without first offering you something in exchange?”

While Sara silently agreed she didn’t like when people did that, her father continued.

“Second, if you help enough people, what you want will find you. So find someone you can help.

“Third, we’re doing fine honey. But thank you for wanting to help.”

Having heard a few of her parent’s discussions about money, Sara didn’t fully believe her Dad’s attempt at soothing her financial fears, even though she desperately wanted to believe him.

Perhaps 10 wasn’t yet old enough. Sara resolved that as soon as she turned 11, she’d ask.

Eventually, she turned 11. That summer she found a box and hid it behind the recycling containers, outside the garage.

The old man didn’t seem to follow any schedule. She’d have to go near his place on the corner and watch for him. When she saw him heading her way, then she’d run back to get her box.

*Continued in Part 2.* [please make this a link]

# Resolver 17:

## Turtle Pool at Young and Steels

### Part 2

Read Part 1 [[link](#)]

On a sunny summer day when she was 11, Sara saw the can man walking in her direction. Finally!

She raced back to her house, checking to see if her mother happened to be near any window with a view towards Sara's path. Nope, all good.

Reaching behind the recycling containers, she snatched up the box and took off running back the way she'd just come.

She was still running when she arrived within 20 feet of him and stopped.

*What was she doing? Why had she been so sure about this? What if he was mean? What if he was crazy?*

Remembering her parent's most recent money discussion, she gathered her courage, raised her gaze to the back of his head, and spoke.

"Excuse me, Mister Can Man, I brought you some stuff I picked up."

Very few people ever talked to him, let alone children. Many preferred the opposite side of whatever street he was walking when they saw him. And can man? Well, he had been called worse. And it rhymed with his real name, which was Dan. Dan the Can Man. Can Man Dan. Whatever.

He turned around and saw a young girl on the sidewalk behind him, carrying a box. "Hello young lady. How can I help?"

"I gathered the same things you do. Here, they're in this box," she said, holding the box out to him.

“Well, thank you very much. That’s very kind of you. Tell me, why do you want to help me?”

“Daddy says if I help enough people get what they want, what I want will find me. You want wood and paper and cans and bottles. I got you some.”

“Your father sounds like a wise man.

“He is, although he doesn’t know everything.”

“Only politicians and bureaucrats are so arrogant they think they know everything.”

Sara had heard her parents mention politicians, and never in a nice way. She didn’t know what the bureau things were.

“Do they know everything?”

“They only think they do. In reality, they don’t know as much as you know.”

Sara was perplexed. “What do you mean?”

“You know enough to help others get what they want, to eventually get what you want. You saw me and decided to help me. Politicians only help others when they can get something from those others. Usually it’s votes or money; sometimes both.”

Looking down at the sidewalk, Sara said, “Then I guess I’m a politician.”

It was his turn to sport a perplexed expression on his face. “What do you mean?”

Sara raised her head to look him in the eye. “I wanted to ask you how to get rich. Daddy said not to bother you. I thought if I collected the same stuff you like and gave it to you, maybe you’d tell me.”

Hmm... a very young person interested in what it takes to become rich. Not a story he heard every day.

“Your Dad doesn’t know you’re here?”

“No. Mom doesn’t either.”

“You’d better tell them.”

“They’ll be mad.”

“Probably. You disobeyed them.”

For a moment they stood there on the sidewalk, looking at each other. Then he spoke.

“What’s your name?”

“Sara.”

“You’re right about one thing, Sara. I have enough money that I tell every developer who knocks on my door to wait until I’m dead, when I won’t care what happens to this place. Until then, I pick up the neighborhood and put out a wading pool and dog bowl on hot days.”

She stood, silent.

“Tell you what. I’ll teach you one of the ways I earned enough money to keep my house and do what I want. I’ll teach you the best way I know. You have to do a few things for me first.”

Hope lit up Sara’s face.

“You have to tell your parents. They have to approve. They can sit in on the lessons if they want. But nothing happens without their approval.”

“OK.”

“Next, this is an exchange. You’re exchanging payment you have, for information I have. For each lesson you’ll have to pay one found bottle, can or piece of wood. Paper’s too easy to find. If you don’t work or pay for the knowledge, you won’t appreciate it.”

He was agreeing to teach her how to be rich! Sara could barely believe it.

“When do we start collecting cans and bottles?”

“Oh, that’s not how we make money. For that we use notes.”

“Notes like in music class – doe ray me?”

He chuckled. “Not that kind of notes. Loan notes. We buy them from people who don’t want them, and we renegotiate the terms so borrowers can keep their homes while we make money for helping them.”

She’d be able to help her parents! Now she was impatient to get them to agree...

Sara’s parents said yes.

All the rest of that summer, people passing by a tiny house at the corner of Young and Steels would have noticed an older man and a young girl sitting on the front lawn.

The girl dangled her feet in the turtle-shaped wading pool, and the man spoke, sometimes moving items he’d placed on a small table to demonstrate the lessons.

During one lesson she asked, “Why doesn’t everybody use notes to get rich?”

“They don’t know about them,” Dan replied. “Notes isn’t for everybody. It’s something upon which I stumbled, while I was losing money in supposedly safe investments. Notes is how I acquired enough to have the lifestyle to which I wanted to become accustomed. Thanks to notes, I have that now.”

“Why don’t you teach everybody, so everybody can get rich?”

“Why do you think everybody ought to be rich? Few people are willing to expend the necessary effort. Fewer have what it takes to keep the money they’ve made. I’ve been living here for decades, walking up and down these two streets. In all that time, you’re the only person to take initiative and approach me. It’s easy to wish and dream about having money. Most people who want things aren’t willing to do what’s necessary to get them.”

“You mean like help other people until what they want finds them?”

“Exactly. You’re a good student.”

“Is that why you’re always waiting for me when I show up for lessons?”

“I’m always ready for your next lesson, because it’s not polite to keep a young lady waiting.”

Continued in Part 3 [\[link\]](#)

# Resolver 18:

## Turtle Pool at Young and Steels

### Part 3

Read Part 2

Read Part 1

Encompassing the entire main floor of the recently completed modern office tower at Young and Steels were the offices of Canman Holdings.

The largest office, at the back, was that of a real estate magnate extraordinaire and the president of Canman Holdings: Ms. Sara.

Most people who'd reached her height of success chose the top floor of their buildings. Not Sara. She wanted the constant reminder of how she'd gotten here – from the ground up.

Behind the desk in the largest office sat Ms. Sara, a fit, attractive, middle-aged lady. In front of the desk sat a young woman in her early 30s. Both were wearing fashionable business attire. The younger one was speaking.

“Sara, your design is very imaginative and original.”

“Thank you. It's not really mine. I swiped the idea from a building First Nations Persons used to have in the city of Niagara Falls.”

“You saw the potential; you did the work necessary and now you've completed. I'd be very proud if it were me... as I'm proud of the tiny part I had in this project.”

“Your part was not tiny, Susan. This entire block wouldn't look anything like it does without your input.”

“OK, sure. This has been a dream project. And I don't know how I can ever thank you for everything you've done for me.”

“You did the work. All I had to do was show up and teach you.

“You were always on time for our lessons.”

“That's because it's not polite to keep a young lady waiting. Now can we stop kissing each other's butts and head to the open space? I've invited the mayor today. That egomaniac probably suspects we're going to unveil a statue of him. Can't wait to see his face.”

Out in the open space was the new turquoise pool, in the shape of a turtle. Its legs and tail were stairs into the pool; its head a whirlpool.

To the side was a platform stage. Next to that a heavy cloth covered an undiscernible shape. A rope handle extended from under the cloth to the platform stage.

The mayor, always eager to appear anywhere he might gather votes, was at the podium, addressing the crowd.

“Today, here, at this site, now the northern border of our expanded world-class city, we have an original design not seen previously in public or private spaces...

“Huh? thought Sara. “Stupid mayor's never seen a turtle pool? He'll say anything he thinks will get him votes. Oh well, he's a mayor... it's not like he's qualified for a real job.”

“... a design for both residents of, and visitors to, our city. Children today and of future generations will use and enjoy this fine facility. Thank you, Ms. Sara, for building this wonderful turtle pool.”

As the crowd applauded, the mayor moved away from the podium to let Sara approach.

“Thank you for attending today,” she began. “You may be familiar with my story. If you're not, here's the executive summary:

“There used to be a man in this neighborhood, who owned this very ground we’re now standing on. In summer we’d see him walking the sidewalk, pulling his cart, picking up cans, bottles, wood, and paper.

“The summer I was 11 I asked him to teach me the principles of making money. Over several years he taught me his best method for building wealth.

“I used his knowledge to make my way in this city. Eventually, I purchased this land from his estate. Together with an excellent team, we’ve built these amazing, ecologically sustainable buildings you see behind you.

“And this turtle pool, which is here not only for children to enjoy, but also to remind us how all of this came to be.

“There is one more thing,” she said. The mayor, practically shaking with eagerness, handed Sara the rope handle leading to the heavy cloth covering whatever was underneath.

“The man who taught me everything I needed to reach where I am today, which allows me to share this facility with you... was always on time. ALWAYS.”

She glanced at Susan. “And now, since it’s not polite to keep a young lady waiting...”

She pulled the rope handle as hard as she could and turned to witness the mayor’s face while she yelled...

“I give you this statue of the man who made everything you see on this corner property possible – CAN MAN DAN!”

The cloth fell away, exposing the dark statue of the smaller-than-average man, pulling a small cart containing bottles, cans, and pieces of wood. Now his lifelike figure in stone watches over Young and Steels in perpetuity, while in the building behind him his student continues teaching the virtues of making money with notes.