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The Adopted Son

by Chris Robinson

“Rob, Rob come quickly it’s started.” Rob rushed into the room, bottle of beer in his hand and plonked down heavily next to his wife on the sofa.

“He’s up next,” Louise said excitedly and held onto Rob’s hand a little more tightly than was necessary.

Two pretty young things walked onto the stage, one of them clutching a Brit Award. They made a few inane comments received with polite laughter by the audience before announcing the nominations for the Best British Newcomer. Three names were announced with footage of each band on the big screen and then came the name they had been waiting for – The Poisoned Rats. The crowd went wild and screamed even more when the face of their lead singer appeared on the screen. Felix Montague was a star.

Rob and Louise waited for what seemed like an eternity and finally the winner was announced. He’d done it. Felix and his band had won. Louise jumped up spilling her wine everywhere whilst Rob punched the air shouting yes, yes, yes over and over again. Their adopted boy had done it.

They hadn’t really adopted Felix. It was just an affectionate term they used ever since he had become best friends with their biological son some 20 years earlier. Tom and Felix had met at nursery and quickly formed a bond most people found remarkable.

They adored each other, never falling out but just content and happy in each other's company. Tom was signed up for the local prep school but Felix was not.

Felix became increasingly agitated at the thought of their separation so his parents decided to try and find a way to finance private education for him but it meant sacrifices would have to be made, the biggest one being the amount of hours they would have to work to afford it. Louise was aware of their dilemma and decided to approach Felix's parents with the promise to help out should they need it. Well need it they did and over the years Felix practically lived with Louise and Rob hence nicknaming him their adopted son.

Rob resented the intrusion initially feeling that Felix's parents were taking advantage of them. Being late to pick him up gradually turned into regular sleepovers but as Felix grew and developed into a wonderful little man in front of their eyes, Rob realised he had been privileged to play a part in his life.

Felix was not a conventional child like Tom. He preferred to push the boundaries at every opportunity. He found the academic side of school challenging but excelled in the arts. He became a brilliant musician but could also act thus making him popular with the girls and his peers. Tom followed the more conventional route of GCSE's, 'A' levels and Uni but their friendship remained steadfast throughout.

The noise of the iPad vibrating cut through Rob and Louise's celebrations. It was a FaceTime call from Felix. They screamed excitedly at him as he waived his Brit at them. No one really heard what the other was saying but it didn't matter because he was there, in front of their eyes sharing his moment with them. He had his arm round someone's shoulder and yanking the person into view they realised it was Tom. Louise was beside herself with happiness looking at her two grown up boys smiling back at her. "Hi Mum, Hi Dad," said Tom, "isn't it great? We're off to celebrate now so we'll call you tomorrow. Love you."

The call ended and Rob turned Louise and said, "Felix Montague eh. I always said with a name like that he'll go far."

"No you didn't," Louise laughed, "if I remember rightly you said what kind of name is that to inflict on a kid and I said it's the kind of name that you'll never forget and I was right wasn't I?"