

Friendships with a pinch of salt



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

I am one to take friendships with a pinch of salt. It is not that I automatically believe that friendships are false. It is just that experience has taught me never to trust one person too much. We are after all human, and at the end of the day, everyone puts themselves first. Tobias had been my best friend since fourth grade. He was a bright eyed, blond haired new student who strode into the classroom as if he owned the place. While I tend to be withdrawn, he was confident, sure of himself and would always stand up for what he wanted. Up until now, I had always considered this to be a good trait, today I wasn't so sure. "Come on, we're running late." He had pulled me into a half-jog; half-sprint and now turned so he was running backwards and grinned at me. The hot pavement was harsh on my bare feet and I grimaced, trying to keep up with him. I was not good at running at the best of times. My breath came in short gasps and I had to brush at my forehead to prevent the sweat from dripping down into my eyes. "Run faster." He egged me on. Finally, we stopped and I stood breathing heavily holding the wall up, or perhaps it was holding me. The world swam in front of my eyes and I could vaguely see Tobias standing in front of me looking slightly concerned. "Hey. Are you alright?" He put his hand on my shoulder and looked at me. I tried to answer him, but it was hard to talk. The words caught in my mouth and it was becoming difficult to breathe, each breath was harder than the one before. I fumbled in my pockets, looking for my inhaler. There were far too many pockets on this pair of shorts, two on each leg, two on the back and another couple of hidden pockets inside other ones. It seemed like it was insanely difficult to find anything, even though most of the pockets were empty. Finally, my fingers grasped the inhaler and I pulled it out. As I gulped at it greedily, the world began to clear and things moved

back into focus. I could see Tobias better now, he was shifting from foot to foot, rubbing his hands together anxious to get moving. “ Come on, the movie starts in five minutes, we’ll be lucky if the girls are still waiting for us.” I tried to take a step, but almost immediately I felt like I would fall and grasped at the wall to steady myself. “ I need a few minutes.” “ We don’t have a few minutes!” He exclaimed. “ Come on.” I pulled out my wallet and passed him the money for the tickets. “ Go on.” I said. “ Get the snacks and tickets; I should be caught up to you by then.” He nodded, grabbed the bills and tore off into the theater. It took longer than I had hoped, but it was okay. Tobias was my closest friend, we had been planning this date for weeks, he would convince the girls to wait, we would miss the first few minutes of previews, and that would be all. The lobby was deserted when I walked in. To my left a young man was closing up the snack counter, placing a back in 15 minutes sign. I headed towards the theaters themselves, but a young woman stopped me asking for my ticket. Tobias must have forgotten to get me one. I pulled out my wallet, and realized with a sinking feeling that I had already given all of my money to him. “ My friend has my money.” I explained. “ He went in with two young women, about five minutes ago.” “ Sorry sir.” She replied. “ No ticket, no entry.” I waited outside the theater for more than an hour before finally giving up. I met up with Tobias again the next day, and he told me what a pity it was that I missed the movie, but he had not wanted to make the girls wait. He never did apologize, nor did he seem to think that he had done anything wrong. We are still friends and we often spend time together. I have long since forgiven him for that day, however, there is still a part of me that will never fully trust him, or any other friend. Friends it seems

are only loyal when it does not cost them too much, if the cost is too high, then they bow out and follow their own designs.