“Pockets” (250 Words)

Sam Gilroy

“That’ll be two dollars and thirty-seven cents, please,” said the clerk politely.

His left hand dove deep into his pocket. It rummaged around in search of the necessary funds. Out came an old ticket stub. It was for a movie he had seen a week prior. A comedy. He had taken his girlfriend, and despite her lack of amusement he refused to stop quoting it.

“That’s two dollars and thirty-seven cents, sir,” said the clerk with a hint of impatience.

He chewed his lip. This time, his right hand took the dive. It clamped down on a piece of paper. He pulled it out and inspected it. *Damn it*. An old receipt, not the bill he had hoped for. It was from a fast-food restaurant, where he and his brother had sat in a booth and bickered over who was the best “Batman.”

“Two dollars and thirty-seven cents,” barked the clerk.

The line of irritated faces behind him grew. He felt them scrutinize the mound of litter he was creating. Sweating, he dispatched both hands to his back pockets.

One seemed to be cluttered with everything *but* money. A candy bar wrapper, remnants from when he had forgotten to pack a lunch for work. A bus pass, his only way to get around. Dryer lint, pilfered from the Laundromat. No change.

His other seemed bottomless.

That’s when it dawned on him that his hand had been spat out through the mouth of a gaping hole. There wouldn’t be any change.