

The Chestnut Seller in the Little Square

For days the wind had been blowing hard, and the leaves in the park danced on the ground as if playing a game of chase.
At the village school, the teacher said with a smile:
“Children, this week we’re celebrating Castanyada! We’ll make panellets, and the chestnut seller will come!”

Everyone applauded, except for Llorenç, who wrinkled his nose.
“Panellets? Chestnuts? I prefer the sweets from the supermarket.”

His friend Júlia laughed.
“You’ll see how much you like it, Llorenç. We make the panellets ourselves!”

The next day, in class, all the children wore aprons. They mashed potatoes, added sugar and almonds, and made round balls like little snowballs.
Llorenç got his face all messy, but he started to have fun.
“It looks like sweet mud!” he said, laughing.

When they put the panellets in the oven, the whole school smelled festive.

In the afternoon, in the small square, there was a stall full of steaming chestnuts. Behind it was a woman with a headscarf and a checkered apron: the Chestnut Seller.
“Who wants some warm chestnuts?” she called out cheerfully.

The children lined up. When it was Llorenç’s turn, the Chestnut Seller gave him a paper cone and said:
“Each chestnut has a story, child. We harvest them patiently and roast them with love. When you eat one, it’s like eating a little piece of autumn.”

Llorenç blew on the chestnut, burned his fingers a little… and laughed.
“It’s true! It tastes like autumn!”

Afterwards, he and Júlia ate panellets and watched the smoke from the stall rise to the sky like a sweet cloud.

That night, before going to bed, Llorenç told his parents:
“Next year I want to help the Chestnut Seller. And make pine nut and coconut panellets!”

His parents smiled. Autumn had left its gift: a new tradition in Llorenç’s heart.