

Locket of Love

It was a quiet morning when Mary received the package. The air in the small village was still, and the only sound was the gentle rustling of leaves in the cool autumn breeze. Mary had just finished her morning routine - a simple breakfast of toast and cheese, a brief prayer for her husband Johnathan who was away at war, and then sweeping the small porch in front of their modest home. The local postman, an elderly man with a tired face, approached.

“Good morning, Mrs. Fairchild,” he said, tipping his hat. “A package for you today”.

Mary was surprised. She rarely received anything in the mail, especially not a package. Her heart skipped a beat as she took the small, brown - wrapped parcel from the postman’s hands. There was no return address, just her name written in a neat, familiar script.

Mary stood there for a moment, staring at the package in her hands. It was light, almost weightless, but something about it felt heavy. She took a deep breath, trying to calm herself. It was probably nothing, she told herself. Maybe Johnathan had sent her something from the front lines, a token of his love to remind her that he was thinking of her.

But deep down, Mary knew that wasn’t true. Johnathan was not the type to send gifts. The last letter she had received from him was months ago, a short note telling her that he was alive and well, and that he missed her dearly. Since then, there had been nothing - only silence.

With trembling hands, Mary began to unwrap the package. The brown paper fell away to reveal a small, wooden box, polished to a smooth sheen. Her breath caught in her throat. She knew this box. Johnathan had made it for her when they were first married, carving it from a piece of oak wood he had found, It had been a gift for their first anniversary, a symbol of their love.

Mary’s heart pounded in her chest as she opened the box. Inside, nestled in a bed of soft, white cloth, was a letter. She recognized Johnathan’s handwriting immediately. Her hands shook as she unfolded the paper, her eyes scanning the familiar script.

“My Dearest Mary,”

“If you are reading this, then I am no longer in this world. I have fought bravely. Please know that my last thoughts were of you, and that I loved you more than words can ever express.”

Mary’s breath caught as she read the words. Tears welled up in her eyes, blurring the ink on the page.

“I am sorry that I could not keep my promise to you. But please, do not grieve for me, my love. I want you to remember the happy times we shared, the laughter, the love, and the joy. I have left you something in this box, something to remember me by. It is not much, but I hope it brings you comfort in the days to come. Take care of yourself, Mary. Live your life to the fullest, and know that I am always with you, watching over you from above.”

“Yours forever,”

“Johnathan”

By the time Mary finished reading the letter, tears were streaming down her face. She clutched the paper to her chest, her body shaking with grief. She had

known, deep down, that this day might come. She had known the risks when Johnathan had left to fight in the war. The reality of it was like a knife to her heart, sharp and unyielding.

For what felt like hours, Mary sat there, cradling the letter as if it were Johnathan himself. Memories flooded her mind - memories of their life together, their love, their dreams for the future. She thought of the nights they had spent lying in each other's arms, whispering about their hopes and dreams for the future.

Eventually, Mary's tears slowed, and she remembered the rest of the package. With trembling hands, she reached into the wooden box and pulled out the cloth. Inside was a small locket, made of silver and engraved with the initials M & J. Mary gasped. It was the locket Johnathan had promised to give her when they had first married, but he had never been able to afford it. She had told him it didn't matter, that she didn't need a locket to know that he loved her. But he had insisted, saying that one day he would give her a locket with their initials engraved on it, so she could always carry a piece of him with her. And now, here it was. Johnathan had kept his promise, even in death. Mary held the locket to her lips, her tears starting anew. She felt a deep, aching pain in her chest, a pain that she knew would never fully go away.

