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Creative Writing

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**A Birthday Surprise**

“I had the weirdest dream last night.” Says Adeline Clark

……while walking into the kitchen of the old Victorian house that she has lived in since she was a little girl.

 “Well Happy 16th Birthday!” exclaims Adeline’s mother Mary. She glides through the door way to give her mom a hug.

“Thanks mom.” She sighs with a smile.

“So what was your weird dream about? It’s weird enough you can remember it. I can never remember mine for more than 5 minutes.” Laura chuckles as she carries the dirty empty dishes to the sink, and starts to rinse them off, before putting them into the dish washer.

“It was the weirdest dream that I have ever had. And very vivid like I was really there, that why I can remember it so well. I was lying on my back on the ocean bed, and there was all kind of fish, and turtles swimming around me like they didn’t even notice I was there. I was just lying there watching the little bubbles of air rise to the surface with grace. I felt so peaceful. So at home, like I belonged there. I can’t explain it. It’s was almost magical. But when I turned to swim away, I didn’t have legs, I had a tail. A long tail, with blue and green scales. It was beautiful. But, instead of being freaked out like a normal person, I was completely calm. Like it was normal to have a mermaid tail. It’s hard to explain. The way I felt is what’s hard to explain… It was like I was never supposed to have legs. Then I just swam around and played with the wildlife.” Ending her rant, she realizes how fast she had been talking and how few breathes she had taken in the past minute and a half. Laura had stopped what she was doing completely and what staring at Addi with wide eyes. Her face ghostly.

“Well that is weird. So you were a mermaid? With the coconut bra and everything? Did you have red hair too?” She said jokingly, as if snapping out of a trance. Adeline could tell that she was nervously making jokes, but she did not know why. Laura continued loading the dishwasher without making eye contact with Adeline.

“Excuse me.” Putting the forks and spoons on the counter and hurried to the den, closing the French doors behind her. Returning minutes later with her phone.

“No! Just my normal brown curly hair. But, instead of a coconut bra I had a kind kelp or seaweed intertwined with some sort of rope or netting. Maybe a boats net.” Adeline glides over to the fridge, grabbing a 1L bottle of water to take to school. She breaks the seal and take a sip. Immediately, the craving for water became so intense she let out a low, short groan. Immediately raising the water back to her mouth gulps down every last drop until it was empty.

“A little thirsty this morning are we?” asks Laura setting her phone on the counter and returning to the dishes. She places the forks, spoons, and a green glass bowl into the lower rack of the dishwasher

“Yeah, I need to fill this up.” She drank all of that one to.

“You’re a strange child. All of your presents are in the living room on the coffee table if you want to go take a look. Want to open them before we go?” Adeline strides through the arched doorway between the kitchen and the living room, ahead she sees a small pile of perfectly wrapped present. Varies bows and ribbon, placed securely atop white and pink polka doted paper. Picking up the smallest present, and the one closest to her hand. The label read,

TO: My special Adeline

FROM: Grandma Myra

Hope you’re day is full of wonderful surprises!

“I’m just going to open Grandmas.” She hollers toward the kitchen without taking her eyes off the small box lying motionless on her palm. While standing there holding the square, she felt an overwhelming desire to have whatever was in that box. She tore the bow off, then the ribbon, and finally the paper. Inside the box was a felt jewelry box, containing a necklace. The pendant was a blue stone that she did not recognize. She let out a long sigh and dropped to her knees. She did not understand what was happening to her. Suddenly feeling as though something had been missing her entire life, like there was a while in the middle of her torso and this necklace had filled instantaneously upon placement around her neck.

Although she was extremely weirded out about whatever just happened, she said nothing more than ‘I really like this necklace’.

“That’s great, Grandma will be pleased. Could you please go wake Carly so we can go to breakfast it’s almost 10:00 A.M. Even though its summer, she doesn’t need to sleep the day away.” Adeline continues to drink the water as she walks up the mahogany spiral stair case. The hallway at the top of the stairs has 4 doors. The first door on the left is Adeline’s room, and right across the hall is Mary’s. Walking further down the hall and to the right is Carly’s room. Knock knock knock. Proceeding through the threshold, knowing that there would be no answer, she approaches the twin bed in the corner of the room covered with pink and purple fabric. There lies Carly. Small for her being 7, her feet are nowhere near reaching the end on the bed. Her wavy blonde locks frame her face perfectly. Laying there motionless, you wouldn’t know if she was alive, except for the incessant snoring.

“Rise and shine!” she yells while putting her palms flat on the bed and pushing up and down, making the entire bed shake.

“Stop it Adeline!! I’m up. I’m up. I’m up!” The shaking ceases and Carly stands up on her bed.

“Happy Birthday!!!” she screeches, leaping from the bed and tacking Adeline to the ground, with a thud. They both climb to their feet and start to walk down stairs.

“Thanks Carls, Mom didn’t make any breakfast this morning…” She says rustling Carly’s hair, even though it doesn’t change much. It’s about as dirty as it can get.

“What!? How could she! How am I supposed to grow strong with no breakfast!” she interrupts, throwing her hands in the air.

“Whoa there tiger. Simmer down, you didn’t let me finish. She didn’t cook any breakfast because were going out to Grandmas Myra’s diner for my birthday.”

“Oh... Alright! That sounds more like it.” Entering the kitchen, Carly runs and gives Mary a hug.

“Good morning sweetie.” She says embracing the most rambunctious and outgoing child. EVER!

“Morning mom.” She says with a bright smile.

“You guys better go get ready for breakfast. Make sure you brush your teeth Carly.” Before Mary could finish her sentence the girl are already half way up the stairs. Carly disappears into her room and doesn’t come out for 20 minutes. She has chosen a knee-length, short sleeve floral dress and tan sandals. A good choice indeed, because of the 83 degrees in Long Beach, anything else would be miserable.

In her room Adeline grabs a pair high waisted distressed denim shorts, black undergarments, and a plain white crop top. Exiting her room, she heads to the bathroom to quickly shower. The door clicks securely in place and she locks it. Examining her slender body as she undresses, she notices a peculiar rash on her hands and arms. Looking closer it looks like just a case of dry skin. Adeline rubs her skin and realizes that it’s starting to itch. She still has her water bottle attached to her hip and filling it frequently.

“Definitely dry skin.” She says to herself. She brushes it off as nothing. Once the presents of soap is gone for her body, she step out onto the plush memory foam bath mat. While drying off she notices the rash is gone. In fact, her skin is softer and more hydrated that ever. She quickly dresses and exits to the hallway.

“Are you ready Carl?” Adeline pushes the door open and pokes her head through the small space between the door and the frame. She burst into an uncontrollable laughter at what she finds. Carly has gotten a hair brush stuck in her hair and is just hanging in her hair like some kind of weird hair accessory.

“Stop laughing just help me!” She says with a huff, exasperated beyond belief.

“Alright, alright, calm down.” Carefully separating each blonde strand from the paddle brush, she realizes that the rash is back. 20 minutes had gone by and it had returned. After securing the hair tie around the end of Carly’s French-braid, the sisters entered the living room, all ready to go.

“We’re all ready. You ready mom?” Carls asked.

“Yup. We should probably get going if we want to catch the breakfast menu before they switch over to lunch.”

“Okay then! Let’s get a move on, I’m withering away over here.” Exiting the two story home, they step out into the brilliant California sun and head to breakfast.

Sliding the shifter into park they arrive at Myra’s diner. Founded by Adeline’s great-grandfather, Lenard Foster, in 1931. Since his passing 12 years ago it has been pasted down to his only daughter, Myra. Myra is Laura’s mom and hence Adeline and Carly’s grandma. Outside the old fashion red and white candy cane striped doors of the diner Myra stands holding a sign that reads: ‘Addi you’re 16! HAPPY BIRTHDAY! Want to work for me?’

“Of course!” Adeline yelled out of the open window. They approach Myra and one by one give her a quick squeeze.

“So what did you open this morning?” Myra questioned.

“She decided to wait to open most of her presents till tonight. She only opened one. Yours. She’s wearing it right now.” Laura said flatly, holding an intense eye contact with Myra.

“Oh, how wonderful… Did you like it?” She asked rubbing Adeline’s arm. They all take a seat at the large circle booth in the corner.

“I love it Grandma. It’s beautiful.” Fingering the sparkling blue pendant hanging around her neck.