



THE LOST NECKLACE

(無く+なったネックレス)

The Lost Necklace

‘Lukey, why aren’t you eating?’ said Maria. She stared at her son as he rested his cheek on one hand with the other hand mixing his almost lukewarm soup with a spoon. Lukey was small with large, brown gazing eyes which gave a certain puppy dog feel to him.

‘Not hungry.’ He replied.

‘Eat what your mum made you please,’ Brenden said. ‘You go on about how much you want to grow... that requires eating.’

The Barton family sat at the neat dinner table; Maria, Brenden, sixteen-year-old son Brody and fourteen-year-old son Lukey.

Brody jumped up abruptly from the table.

‘Alright, I got footy training. Gotta go.’ He was leaner and taller than Lukey with longer and darker hair. He grabbed his jacket and went for his backpack before being interrupted by his Dad.

‘Hold on!’ Brenden said. ‘Dishes in dishwasher.’ Brody did so hurriedly as he put his jacket on.

‘And what do you say to your mum?’

‘Thanks Mum for the lovely dinner,’ said Brody as he leaned down to kiss her. He grabbed his backpack, swung it over himself and opened the front door.

‘Straight home after training!’ Brenden yelled as the door slammed. Lukey continued to not eat his dinner. He was staring at a particular framed picture on the wall. It was of himself at his Bar Mitzvah a year ago. In the picture, he wore his Kippah on his head with a big smile as he held a large and impressive brown and gold necklace in his hands. It was given to him for his Bar Mitzvah from his Grandma. A family heirloom from Israel. His Grandma told him it was very special and important that he looked after it. According to her, it represented a man’s bravery and valour. She gave a similar necklace to Brody when he had his Bar Mitzvah two years before Lukey’s and it still hung on his bedroom wall.

‘Don’t lose it.’ She stressed to both of them. ‘It’ll curse you if you do.’

Their Grandma had always been superstitious. She definitely believed in ghosts. She would tell ghost stories to the boys when they were little which resulted in many sleepless nights. Grandma said if they lost the necklace, it would stunt their growth and affect their ability to find the love of their life. When she told Lukey this, he did not listen. Lukey’s dad raised them to not believe such rubbish.

However, Lukey did lose the necklace a couple days after his Bar Mitzvah. Overwhelmed by all the money and presents he got from relatives and friends, he completely neglected it and for the life of him, could not remember where he had it. He had turned the house upside down looking for it.

‘Stop being such a baby, it’s just a necklace.’ Brody said to him when Lukey cried after a week of searching the house. However, Lukey knew Brody would have reacted exactly the same way if it was him.

Now, Lukey was fourteen and was a head shorter than all his friends at school. Brody had grown two feet above him when he was his age. He knew that everyone hit puberty at different ages. He learnt this in Sex Ed. But he was creeping up on being fifteen and he barely had any pubic hair or armpit hair. His shoulders were not getting broader as promised from his health textbooks and his voice had barely broken yet. Girls at school thought he was ‘cute,’ like he was their little brother or something.

‘Girls don’t want to date someone smaller than them.’ His friend Tom Oswald had said to him when they were walking home from school one day. ‘It’s a known fact.’

He could not get it out of his head, over a year after his Bar Mitzvah, that maybe his Grandma was right. Maybe that darn necklace was the reason people called him midget behind his back, or he thought they did at least.

‘Don’t worry mate, there’s always one in each family.’ Brenden once said. ‘it was uncle Derek for mine, and guess who has the biggest paycheck?’

But he did worry about it. Maria called her mum and tried to get her to explain to Lukey that the necklace was not the reason for his height.

‘I’m not gonna lie to my Grandson.’

‘Mum, he is really worked up about it.’

‘No wonder. He shouldn’t have lost it. I told him this would happen if he lost it. And I was right.’ Maria did not know how to lift Lukey’s mood. She tried to find another identical necklace to buy for him and pretend it was the old one, but she knew Lukey would know. She ended up putting a photo up in the dining room with him wearing the necklace. But it did not make him feel better. It just rubbed salt deep into the wound.

‘Lukey, can you please have three more mouthfuls, please.’ Maria said.

‘It’s Luke.’ He replied.

There was silent confusion at the table.

‘What?’

‘Luke. Not Lukey.’ He had three very small mouthfuls quickly then grabbed his dishes and headed to the dishwasher.

‘I want to be called Luke... Lukey makes me sound like a baby.’ He said as he chucked the dishes in the sink.

‘But no one has ever called you Luke.’ Maria said.

‘Well, it’s time they start.’ he said, trying to hide the mix of anger and gloom building up in him. Before his parents could say anything he started to climb the stairs. ‘Thanks for the lovely dinner Mum.’ Maria smiled slightly and shared a concerned look with her husband as she heard Lukey’s bedroom door shut upstairs.