

The Last Dream

I'm not really sure when the gift arrived. Daniel and I had been holed up in our house for weeks just trying to process losing our daughter to cancer. I don't think either one of us would have registered the doorbell ringing when the gift arrived. It just sat there waiting for one of us to discover it.

I must have felt a rare sense of normalcy because I had wandered outside to check the mail and I tripped over the gift. It was a purple rose made of glass and encased in a glass vase. I'm amazed that it stood its ground when I collided with it. There was a note attached to it.

Dear Samantha and Daniel,

This glass rose contains Mariah's last dream. Simply touch the glass vase to play the dream. Be careful not to watch her dream more than three times a day.

Sincerely,

A Friend

I ran into the house to show Daniel. We could both hardly believe that we had received this blessing, but we had to see what it could do. Just to see our little girl once more was worth so much to us that we would do anything. We went to the living room, pointed the rose at the blank wall, and placed our hands on the glass vase. The rose lit up the wall as if it were a movie projector.

There she was climbing the stairs of the Great Wall of China one moment, the next she was at the top of the Eiffel Tower, and then sailing across the Caribbean. I had never seen her smile so brightly. Her dream was over too soon, leaving Daniel and I unable to control the pain of our loss as we held each other.

Soon Daniel and I settled into a routine, watching Mariah's dream morning, noon, and night. We just couldn't help ourselves. Her dream showed us what she should've been. That dream was the last good memory that we had of her before she passed. We could've never seen it had it not been for the rose.

As the months rolled by, the pain of her loss began to chip away for me. But I can see that Daniels isn't ready just yet. I began grief counseling alone with the belief that he would come when he was ready. I didn't know that I was in denial about his condition until later. Eventually, I went back to work too while Daniel stayed at home.

I didn't know that Daniel would watch Mariah's dream all throughout the night after I went to bed and all day while I was at work. One morning I caught him and begged him to listen to what the note said. That there had to be a reason why we were warned to only watch the dream three times a day. But he refused. I tried hiding the rose, hoping that he would be able to slow down. But he would tear the house apart until he found it once more.

I noticed that he was fading away just like Mariah did. But I convinced myself that he would wake up and we could heal together. I didn't realize how far gone he already was. I begged him not to leave me. That I needed him to stay with me. I couldn't lose him like we lost our daughter.

Nothing I said could reach him. I should've fought harder to pull him out of his sorrow. I should've done so many things differently. I found him one day after I returned from work. I called for the ambulance still hoping that he would make it. He did not.

Two funerals. I had to attend two funerals about a year apart from each other. I didn't think that I could ever get over this pain because now there were two people that I loved with all my heart that I had to grow used to not seeing every day.

Why? Was it because of the rose? Even though I knew it would not break, I threw it with all my might against the wall. It put a hole in the wall but it did not break. I took the rose outside and buried it in the yard. It's not a blessing. How could it take Daniel away from me? I didn't want to live without them but I knew that I had to.

I stayed inside the house again the next few weeks of Daniel's passing. I couldn't do it. I couldn't bear to check the front porch for another rose. When I couldn't stand being inside any longer, I went out the back yard thinking that I could avoid the next rose. It was waiting for me anyways at the other side of the gate. But this time, it wasn't a rose. It was a blue hydrangea with the same note, but this time it was addressed only to me.

I buried it in the back yard too. I didn't want to see Daniel's last dream. I thought his dream would be watching Mariah's dream. No, I would leave the flowers in the yard until the end of time I promised myself. They are a curse not a blessing.

And they remained that way for five years. After that, curiosity took over me. I wanted to see what Daniel's last dream was even though I had a good guess of what it was. As it was, the temptation was too great. I watched Daniel's last dream.

It was of all three of us. All three of us were exploring the world just the way we had always wanted to. Once again, I mourned what could've been for our family. But I could get through it. I had to get through it. I couldn't help but wonder who this friend who gave me the flowers was and if I would ever meet them. I may never know who they are.

Thank you.