

## Secret Admirers

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*My mind is whizzing ... What if the person you thought was your soul mate really wasn't? What if the person who you thought wasn't your soul mate really was? What if the person who meant the world to you went away? ... These questions are thought provoking and frequently plague my mind; however, this story is about something else. This story is about two best friends who fell in love, and they gave each other something that no one else could - the love of a soul mate.*

*Kordelia*

I hear my mom holler from the foyer, "Annie, Oliver is here!" "I'm coming mom," I yell as I race to get ready for the day. Oliver is my best friend. We are both 16 years old, but he is a couple of months older than me. Every morning we walk to school together. This morning is no different. I rush down the stairs, grab breakfast and head out the door. "Do you know how hard it is to wait for you? You take forever!" Oliver says as my eyes catch his gaze. "Oh, ha-ha," I reply with a not-so-subtle sense of mockery.

By the time we get to school, we have around 20 minutes until the first bell rings. We both head to our lockers before we split up into different classes. Once I walk into first period, I instantly spot my little sister Lily and rush to stand next to her. Lily is in my class because she skipped a grade before we started high school. Since then, we have been in the same grade together. "So how was your flirting session with Oliver?" Lily asks. Answering in a sarcastic tone, I say, "Just fine, thank you very much." "Just wait, you have a secret admirer sis," Lily says with a mischievous

grin across her face. I roll my eyes and decide to ignore the comment knowing she is just trying to get under my skin. The rest of the day goes by in the blink of an eye. I'm outside waiting for Lily so we can walk home. I try to hurry home so I can start my homework and devote the rest of my evening to reading.

When we get home there is a basket for Lily on the counter. It takes me a moment to realize it is there, but even then, I have no interest in it. I know it is from my grandparents and consists mainly of candy. I head upstairs to my room, and upon entry, I notice a remarkable box waiting for me as well; however, this one is not from my grandparents like Lily's. This gift has my name in pink glitter stickers on the outside with a bright red bow on top. I realize within moments that it must be from my secret admirer that Lily mentioned earlier in the day.

This gift is the first of many things that I will be pleasantly surprised with from my secret admirer. I wake up each day for the next three days to find another tiny box on my doorstep with a bright red bow atop a Starbucks gift card. My favorite! On Friday I am surprised to find a box of chocolate caramels on my first period desk waiting for me. This coming Monday is Valentine's Day and my curiosity and anxiousness to discover my secret admirer begin to monopolize my thoughts. After school on Friday, I facetime my good friend Angel to see if she knows anything about who it may be. She advises me to be patient and wait until Monday. I heed her advice and try to relax all weekend with my family.

I awake Monday morning with butterflies in my stomach and anxiously get ready for the day ahead. I rush downstairs to find Valentine's Day themed donuts and chocolate milk from my parents and a small red envelope with the words "*from your Secret Admirer*" written on the outside.

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*Annie,*

*Happy Valentine's Day!*

*I know at this moment you don't know who I am, so let me give you some hints:*

- 1. I have known you since we were 6.*
- 2. I have had a crush on you since we were 10.*
- 3. You start every school day for me with a smile.*

*In case you haven't guessed by now, make sure you are outside on time. I can't wait to walk to school with you again today.*

*Your best friend,*

*Oliver*

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I run up the stairs to gather my belongings and grab my lunch as I fly out the door. As I walk down the sidewalk to the street I see Oliver standing by the mailbox with a single red rose in his hands. "Annie, will you be my Valentine?" he asks nervously as his eyes shift to meet mine. In an instant my heart leaps as I reply, "Yes!" We walk the rest of the way to school, hand in hand. We gaze into each other's eyes as we wave goodbye and head to first period. There is no need to say a word. I find comfort in knowing that we both feel it - this is the moment that forever begins. After all, we have been best friends for many years and our love will be an extraordinary story to tell.