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A Valentine's Gift for the Princess

Unknown writer

Once upon a time, there was a young prince who wanted to give a Valentine's Day gift to the little princess from the neighboring kingdom. She was a very beautiful princess with a smile as bright as her golden hair and a love as deep as her blue eyes.



"What should I give the princess for Valentine's Day?" asked the prince. "A heart, Your Highness, nothing but a heart will do!" answered a wise man at the court. "A loving heart, Your Highness, nothing but a loving heart will do," said the ladies at the court. "An invaluable heart, Your Highness, nothing but an invaluable heart will do," said the court counselor.

So, the prince went in search of a beautiful and invaluable heart to give to the little princess for Valentine's Day. He just didn't know where to find it. Not long after, he came across a jeweler's shop full of precious and beautiful jewelry. There were earrings, necklaces, and bracelets made of silver and gold, a set of rubies, sapphires, emeralds, and diamonds.



"This is the right place to find a Valentine's gift for the little princess," thought the prince, and he chose a diamond heart and hung it on a gold chain so that the princess could wear it around her neck.

The prince gave the jeweler a bag of gold and walked out of the shop with the diamond heart in his hand. But at the door, he stopped and looked at the heart. The diamond no longer shone but had become dull. He wondered what was wrong. Then he remembered what the counselor had said. It was not the right gift for the princess because it was not invaluable. He had bought it with a bag of gold. So, the prince returned the gift to the jeweler and continued on his way.

After a while, the prince came across a bakery. The display cases were filled with delicious treats, cakes with jam, strawberry cakes, ice cream cakes, and muffins. In the store window, he saw a giant heart-shaped cake. The cake was richly decorated and looked beautiful.



"This is the right place to find a Valentine's gift for the little princess!" thought the prince, and he pointed to the large heart-shaped cake in the window. "How much does that cake cost?" he asked the baker. "Ah, that cake is not for sale!" the baker replied. "I made it as a decoration for Valentine's Day, but I would be happy to give it to you, Your Highness."

The prince was delighted, thanked the baker, and walked out of the shop with the cake. "This must be the right gift because I couldn't buy it," he thought to himself. Then the prince almost dropped the cake. The cake had become so heavy that he could no longer lift it. He wondered what was wrong. Then he remembered that this could not be the right gift for the princess because a heart that you can eat is not loving. So, the prince returned the cake to the baker and continued on his way.

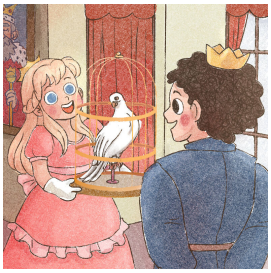


He walked for miles and miles before he came across a bird seller by the roadside. The man had small, golden, brightly colored birds in green cages. They all sang loudly, but one bird sang so pure and tenderly that it enchanted the prince. It turned out to be a small dove that was timidly sitting in the corner of its cage. The prince found it to be the most beautiful dove he had ever seen, white as snow with red-pink feet. "How is it that that little bird sings so much more beautifully than the others?" asked the prince, pointing to the small, white dove.

The bird seller smiled. "That's because of her heart," he said. "All the other birds sing in the sunshine, but look," and the bird seller held up the dove's cage, "she is blind. She sings in the dark with her loving heart."

"May I buy her from you?" asked the prince. "I would like to give her as a Valentine's gift to the little princess." "Oh, I will give her to you," said the bird seller. "There are few people who want to care for a blind bird."

But the little princess did that with love. She found the small, white dove to be the best Valentine's gift. She hung the cage in the most beautiful spot in the garden and often invited the prince to listen to the dove's song with her.



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