**An Unexpected Find**

Peering down at the puddle, Ellie discovered… nothing. Absolutely nothing. Ellie let out a frustrated sigh. All this hard work and effort for nothing? Well that’s what she thought before something very strange happened…

Days before, Ellie had received a package on her doorstep - no name, no address, nothing. At first, she was confused, which she still was, but she was more intrigued than ever. She picked it up instantly to see what it was, to her surprise, in fancy gold writing, “Ellie Smith” was written across the front. She unfolded the package and took off the smooth purple ribbon that was shaped like a bow. She set it on her big coffee table and hesitated before opening it.

She finally convinced herself to open it to discover… a map?

She spread out the map so she could see every detail that was there; she automatically looked straight at the area that had a big red circle around it,her house. She furrowed her eyebrows and her eyes continued to scan all of the information on the page, as she tried to make sense of it. She followed the trail that was marked with her finger to a spot about ten minutes away from her house. Ellie jumped up and put her shoes on and grabbed the map before she then ran out the door shouting a quick “bye” to her mum.

Ellie didn’t really have a best friend, she just had a handful of good friends although her closest friend was probably a boy named Justin Cayley. She didn’t mind having fewer friends because it meant less drama, plus she really enjoyed school and spending time with her family. As a 14-year-old, things in school were getting more serious and this took a lot of time out of her free time.

Ellie knew exactly what she had to do. She was not going to the location given on the map but to Justin’s house which was only a few minutes away. As Ellie was on her way to Justin’s house, she was thinking about everything in her life and what all this mystery map nonsense was. Most importantly why was the map sent to her? Her first thought was maybe it was her school planning something as a class project, but no one had told her any information about it. That lead her to surely believe it was possibly Justin playing a joke on her which he tended to do if they were bored.

She reached Justin’s house and knocked on his big red door. She waited patiently before knocking again as no one had answered which seemed unusual. A few seconds later, a woman with short hazelnut-brown hair opened the door and gave a pearly white smile. Ellie knew this was Justin’s mum, Joanne. She recognised Ellie and simply said, “Justin isn’t in, I’ll let him know you called round though” Ellie suddenly felt disappointed. She was very excited to tell Justin everything about this mystery package but now she didn’t know when she would next see him. Ellie quickly responded “Thanks Mrs Cayley, sorry to bother you.” Ellie didn’t know or care if she responded, she ran off their porch and walked back up the road.

 What should she do now? She didn’t want to go home because she would probably just sit in her room sulking at the wall, wondering what to do with this map. It didn’t seem like such a big deal, but to Ellie this was the only thing keeping her mind’s attention and keeping her entertained. The only thing to do was to explore the map herself. She took it out of her back pocket and unrolled it. Her eager eyes once again becoming familiar with the details. She set off on the trail the map was telling her to follow. Every few seconds Ellie would glance down at the map making sure she was heading the right way; she didn’t understand why she was so interested in following the trail as it was probably the adrenaline rush that she cherished. Whatever it was, it kept her keen and interested to see where the map would lead her.

After a while of walking through a mixture of woodland, fields and admiring the beautiful scenery around her, she stumbled across a piece of land with a waterfall. She gasped at the sight in front of her and stumbled forward, still taking it all in; she ran over to the rather big lake that this outstanding waterfall led into. Suddenly all the walking and mixed emotions were worth it. She felt peace here. The tranquillity of it all amazed her. She didn't hesitate to explore the area. Ellie realised that the map had sent her here, so she took it out and studied it again for answers. She came across a puddle on the map. It was a different kind of puddle. It looked almost magical. Immediately she looked around for it. Seeing a smaller body of water than the lake, she ran towards it and her eyes widened. Peering down at the puddle, Ellie discovered… nothing. Absolutely nothing. Ellie let out a frustrated sigh, all this hard work and effort for nothing?

After a few seconds the puddle started glowing a warm pink colour and bubbles started showing then making popping noises. Shocked, Ellie stood a few steps back and her hand flew to her mouth in surprise. The water suddenly evaporated into a small cloud above Ellie's head and a beautiful silver chain with a ruby red diamond attached to it lay in the hole that was once a puddle. Ellie laid her hands upon this stunning piece of jewellery she had uncovered and placed it round her neck. When she touched it, she felt this energy of happiness run through her body which she couldn't understand, but she continued to admire the necklace. It was perfect. She kept the necklace on and continued her adventure around this amazing setting. She walked around for a little while getting lost in her thoughts. She came back to reality and found herself laid down on a rock listening to the waterfall splashing down beside her. Before Ellie knew it, she was in a relaxing sleep.

A white light flashed, and Ellie heard a repetitive and familiar voice speaking softly yet firmlysaying "Ellie wake up". Ellie jolted up to see her mother sitting on her bed tapping her shoulder. Ellie was more confused than when she found the map. Then she thought to herself what happened? Where is the map? Where is my necklace? Her hand reached to her neck hoping to feel that silver chain but as she thought, it was just a dream- no necklace or waterfall. Just a dream. Ellie then recognised her surroundings and asked her mum, "What's wrong mum?" She replied, "Justin is here to see you."

Ellie got up out of her comfortable bed and quickly made her way down stairs to see her best friend holding a pretty looking box. Justin handed the bag and shouted, " Happy early Birthday Ellie!", taking the wrapping paper off, Ellie saw a small sized box that felt like soft felt material. She slowly opened it to reveal that familiar looking piece of jewellery. The necklace.

The end

By Olivia Campbell