

A Note

Waves crashed into the white sand of the deserted beach, each grain glistening like diamonds under the warm sun. So beautiful, yet Damon barely noticed. In his trembling hand, he held a small turquoise glass bottle, with a piece of paper inside. Everything in him, in his very being needed to see what the message in the bottle was about. After all, he lost everything the day he lost her. Ages ago.

It was high school, and since the moment they met, she had been the love of his life. A girl of fourteen, ordinary, his parents said. No great beauty. No wealthy family, or social skill. But at the time, everything he had ever... would ever want. What made her extraordinary was something less tangible, a shared inexplicable bond of destiny. They both felt it, the extraordinary pull of life they needed to hang on to. Special people didn't come around often. But she did. Things were crazy back in high school, the world between childhood and adulthood. And, standing there on the beach, the bottle and its contents in his hand, all of it came flooding back to him. The closeness, the oneness, and the pain of her leaving.

For a while, lost in thought, he let the constant waves lap his feet. He needed to open this bottle. Pulling on the cork as hard as he could wasn't getting him anywhere. As a last resort he smashed the bottle against a rock, sending shards of turquoise glass everywhere. Not smart when having bare feet on the sand, but he had to get the piece of paper out and read this message no matter what. Besides, his shoes were not that far away. Only with the mystery solved would he put his shoes on and get ready to leave. This had to be worth it.

Being careful to not cut himself he grabbed the piece of paper and unfolded it slowly, revealing a very personal message. The more he read the wider his eyes got.

This is Juliana Smith, only fourteen years old. Don't know how old I will be when this is found. Met so many people in this high school that I go to. One stood above the rest, a Damon Lee. Probably hates me yet hardly knows that I exist. Maybe someday he will know that I actually did like him the whole time. He will never know the reason that I had to leave school. Thought that I would at least write the truth down, for what it is worth. If anyone really cares, I can be reached at 12345 Parkview Lane Orlando, Florida 12345 or at (101) 123-4567. I know this is stupid, but have to do it anyway.

Dropping the piece of paper from his hand, Damon stood there in silence. How in the world could this message find him, after all these years, from the girl he loved? He could hardly believe that it was real. But here it was. Coming to, he ran to his car, stumbling over rocks as he went. Putting the key in the ignition and reading the address one more time, he headed off towards his girl's house. Hoping against hope that not too many years had passed. Barely able to breathe.

A modest pink house, all done in stucco, met his eye as he pulled up onto the paved driveway. He lost his stomach the minute his shoes hit pavement. But he forced himself to walk up the sidewalk and ring the doorbell. An older looking woman answered the door, and for what seemed like an eternity his mouth would not work. As his heart beat almost out of his chest, he explained who he was, who he was looking for, and showing this lady the old note from the bottle. Perhaps this was her mother, but the longer the conversation took, the more he began to lose hope again that she was actually there.

Finally the older lady called for Juliana and half smiled at his impatience after all these years. She knew her daughter well. When they left for personal reasons, and being so upset, her

daughter was always the drama queen. With red hair flying behind her, Juliana, bounded down the stairs, right into his waiting arms, without hesitation. When hope is all you have, sometimes desperate acts, like a message in a bottle, work. Love does conquer all. Even time.