

MENTOR TEXT – BOOKLET 14

Valentine's Day at school is always exciting because of the "Secret Admirer" fundraiser. You pay a little bit of money, and the teachers help send a small gift, like a chocolate or a flower, to someone you like. It's supposed to be a secret, but everyone tries to guess who their admirer is! This year, I really wanted to do something special for my best friend, Sarah. We've been friends since kindergarten, and she's the kindest, funniest person I know. So, I saved up my allowance and bought her a box of her favourite milk chocolates and a pretty pink rose. I filled out the little card, "To my amazing best friend," and signed it "Your Secret Pal." I was so excited for her to get it!

During the Valentine's Day assembly, they started calling out the names of the students who had received gifts. When Sarah's name was called, her eyes lit up. She got a few little cards, and then the teacher handed her the chocolates and the rose. "Oh, wow! These are so nice!" she said, looking around with a big smile, trying to figure out who sent them. I just grinned secretly to myself. Mission accomplished!

Later that day, during recess, I saw Sarah talking to a girl in our class named Emily. Emily looked really happy, and she was holding... my chocolates and my rose! I walked closer, trying to hear what they were saying. "These are so sweet, Sarah! Thank you so much!" Emily said, holding the rose to her nose. Sarah giggled. "Oh, it wasn't really from me. I already got so many things, and I know you really like roses, so..." My heart kind of sank. She regifted my present? To someone else? I felt a little bit like a balloon that had just lost all its air. I had picked out those chocolates because they were her favourite, and I thought the pink rose was just perfect for her. I didn't say anything right away. I just felt a bit... sad. It wasn't about the money or the gifts themselves, but it felt like she didn't appreciate that I had thought of her.

Later, when we were walking home together, I finally asked her about it. "Sarah," I said, trying to sound casual, "I saw Emily with the rose and chocolates you got." Sarah shrugged. "Yeah, she really liked them, and I had so much stuff already. It's better that someone who really wanted them got them, right?" I didn't really know what to say. I understood what she meant about having a lot of gifts, but it still made me feel a little bit like my thoughtful surprise didn't matter. I just nodded and we walked the rest of the way in silence.

It wasn't the best Valentine's Day ending, and I learned that maybe next year, I'll just give my gift to my best friend directly. Secrets aren't always the best way to show you care.

