

Nuggets of Fun and Nostalgia for Treasure Valley Golden-Agers

The Letter in the Wallet



As I walked home one freezing day, I stumbled on a wallet someone had lost in the street. I picked it up and looked inside to find some identification so I could call the owner. But the wallet contained only three dollars and a crumpled letter that looked as if it had been in there for years.

The envelope was worn and the only thing that was legible on it was the return address. I started to open the letter, hoping to find some clue. Then I saw the dateline--1924. The letter had been written almost sixty years ago.

It was written in a beautiful feminine handwriting on powder blue stationery with a little flower in the left-hand corner. It was a "Dear John" letter that told the recipient, whose name appeared to be Michael, that the writer could not see him anymore because her mother forbade it. Even so, she wrote that she would always love him. It was signed, Hannah.

It was a beautiful letter, but there was no way except for the name Michael that the owner could be identified. Maybe if I called information, the operator could find a phone listing for the address on the envelope.

"Operator," I began, "this is an unusual request. I'm trying to find the owner of a wallet that I found. Is there any way you can tell me if there is a phone number for an address that was on an envelope in the wallet?"

She hesitated for a moment then said, "Well, there is a phone listing at that address, but I can't give you the number." She said, as a courtesy, she would call that number, explain my story and would ask them if they wanted her to connect me. I waited a few minutes and then she was back on the line. "I have a party who will speak with you."

I asked the woman on the other end of the line if she knew anyone by the name of Hannah. She gasped, "Oh! We bought this house from a family who had a daughter named Hannah. But that was 30 years ago!"

"Would you know where that family could be located now?" I asked.

"I remember that Hannah had to place her mother in a nursing home some years ago," the woman said. "Maybe if you got in touch with them they might be able to track down the daughter."

She gave me the name of the nursing home and I called the number. They told me the old lady had passed away some years ago, but they did have a phone number for where they thought the daughter might be living. I thanked them and phoned. The woman who answered explained that Hannah herself was now living in a retirement home just a few blocks from my home.

This whole thing was stupid, I thought to myself. Why was I making such a big deal over

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Timeless Valentine



As time goes by from year to year,
One thing is surely true, my dear;
Though decades come
and decades go,
Just seeing you sets me aglow.

Time shifts my body; I start to sag,
When I pass a mirror,
it can make me gag.
My joints all ache; I can hardly move;
Still a smile from you,
and I'm in the groove.

Getting older can be a pain,
But with you along, I can't complain.
Despite the things that we go through,
I know I'll never stop loving you.

Your loving heart turns life to play,
As we laugh at time from day to day.
So I write this poem,
and I'll hang my sign,
Saying, "Always Be My Valentine."

By Karl and Joanna Fuchs



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Mistake Free?

Albert Einstein once wrote on a chalkboard:

- 9 x 1 = 9
- 9 x 2 = 18
- 9 x 3 = 27
- 9 x 4 = 36
- 9 x 5 = 45
- 9 x 6 = 54
- 9 x 7 = 63
- 9 x 8 = 72
- 9 x 9 = 81
- 9 x 10 = 91



Suddenly chaos erupted in the classroom because Einstein made a mistake. Obviously, the correct answer to 9×10 isn't 91. And all his students ridiculed him.

Einstein waited for everyone to be silent and said: "Despite the fact that I analyzed nine problems correctly, no one congratulated me. But when I made one mistake, everyone started laughing.

"This means that even if a person is successful, society will notice his slightest mistake. And they'll like that.

"So don't let criticism destroy your dreams. The only person who never makes a mistake is someone who does nothing."

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finding the owner of a wallet that had only three dollars and a letter that was almost 60 years old?

Nevertheless, I called the retirement home in which Hannah was supposed to be living and the man who answered the phone told me, "Yes, Hannah is staying with us."

Even though it was already 10 p.m., I asked if I could come by to see her.

"Well," he said hesitatingly, "if you want to take a chance, she might be in the day room watching television."

I thanked him and drove over to the retirement home, a large but older brick building. The night nurse and a guard greeted me at the door. We went up to the third floor of the large building. In the activity room, the nurse introduced me to Hannah, who was indeed up watching television.

She was a sweet, silver-haired lady with a warm smile and a twinkle in her eye. I told her about finding the wallet and showed her the letter. The second she saw the powder blue envelope with that little flower on the left, she took a deep breath and said, "Young man, this letter was the last contact I ever had with Michael."

She looked away for a moment deep in thought and then said softly, "I loved him very much. But I was only 16 at the time and my mother felt I was too young. Oh, he was so handsome. He looked like Sean Connery, the actor."

"Yes," she continued. "Michael Goldstein was a wonderful person. If you should find him, tell him I think of him often. And," she hesitated for a moment, almost biting her lip, "tell him I still love him. You know," she said smiling as tears began to well up in her eyes, "I never did marry. I guess no one ever matched up to Michael..."

I thanked Hannah and said goodbye. I took the elevator to the first floor and as I stood by the door, the guard there asked, "Was the Miss Hannah able to help you?"

I told him she had given me a lead. "At least I have a last name. But I think I'll let it go for a while. I spent almost the whole day trying to find the owner of this wallet."

I had taken out the wallet, which was a simple brown leather case with red lacing on the side. When the guard saw it, he said, "Hey, wait a minute! That's Mr. Goldstein's wallet. I'd know it anywhere with that bright red lacing. He's always losing that wallet. I must have found it in the halls at least three times."

"Who's Mr. Goldstein?" I asked as my hand began to shake.

"He's one of the old timers on the 8th floor. That's Mike Goldstein's wallet for sure. He must have lost it on one of his walks."

I thanked the guard and quickly ran back to the nurse's office. I told her what the guard had said. We went back to the elevator and got on. I prayed that Mr. Goldstein would be up. On the eighth floor, the floor nurse said, "I think he's still in the library. He likes to read at night. He's a darling old man."

We went to the only room that had any lights on and there was a man reading a book. The nurse went over to him and asked if he had lost his wallet. Mr. Goldstein looked up with surprise, put his hand in his back pocket and said, "Oh, it is missing!"

"This kind gentleman found a wallet and we wondered if it could be yours?"

(Continued on page 3)

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PLUMBER: "Why haven't you paid me for the work I did for you last Friday?"

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PLUMBER: "But I didn't give you a quote!"

HOMER: "Yes, you did. When I asked you what day you could come, you said you were free on Friday!"



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I finally got eight hours of sleep. It took me three days, but whatever.



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The Letter in the Wallet *Continued from Page 2*

I handed Mr. Goldstein the wallet and the second he saw it, he smiled with relief and said, "Yes, that's it! It must have dropped out of my pocket this afternoon. I want to give you a reward."

"No, thank you," I said. "But I have to tell you something. I read the letter in the hope of finding out who owned the wallet."

The smile on his face suddenly disappeared. "You read that letter?"

"Not only did I read it, I think I know where Hannah is."

He suddenly grew pale. "Hannah? You know where she is? How is she? Is she still as pretty as she was? Please, please tell me," he begged.

"She's fine...just as pretty as when you knew her." I said softly.

The old man smiled with anticipation and asked, "Could you tell me where she is? I want to call her tomorrow." He grabbed my hand and said, "You know something, mister, I was so in love with that girl that when that letter came, my life literally ended. I never married. I guess I've always loved her."

"Mr. Goldstein," I said, "Come with me."

We took the elevator down to the third floor. The hallways were darkened and only one or two little night-lights lit our way to room where Hannah was sitting alone watching the television. The nurse walked over to her.

"Hannah," she said softly, pointing to Michael, who was waiting with me in the doorway. "Do you know this man?"

She adjusted her glasses, looked for a moment, but didn't say a word.

Michael said softly, almost in a whisper, "Hannah, it's Michael. Do you remember me?"

She gasped, "Michael! I don't believe it! Michael! It's you! My Michael!"

He walked slowly towards her and they embraced. The nurse and I left with tears streaming down our faces.

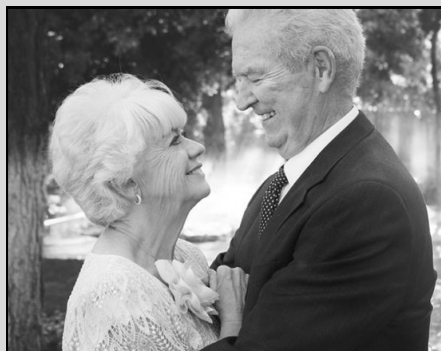
"See," I said. "See how the Good Lord works! If it's meant to be, it will be."

About three weeks later I got a call at my office from the nursing home. "Can you break away on Sunday to attend a wedding? Michael and Hannah are going to tie the knot!"

It was a beautiful wedding with all the people at the nursing home dressed up to join in the celebration. Hannah wore a light beige dress and looked beautiful. Michael wore a dark blue suit and stood tall.

They made me their best man. The hospital gave them their own room and if you ever wanted to see a 76-year-old bride and a 79-year-old groom acting like two teenagers, you had to see this couple.

A perfect ending for a love affair that had lasted nearly 60 years.



A LITTLE

BABY-BOOMER HUMOR:

Now that I'm older here's what I've also discovered:

- I started out with nothing, and I still have most of it.
- My wild oats have turned into prunes and all-bran.
- I finally got my head together, and now my body is falling apart.
- Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.
- If all is not lost, where is it?
- It is easier to get older than it is to get wiser.
- Some days, you're the dog; some days you're the hydrant.
- I wish the buck stopped here; I sure could use a few.
- Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.
- It's hard to make a comeback when you haven't been anywhere.
- If God wanted me to touch my toes, he'd have put them on my knees.
- It's not hard to meet expenses . . . they're everywhere.
- These days, I spend a lot of time thinking about the hereafter. I go somewhere to get something, and then wonder what I'm hereafter.
- Funny, I don't remember being absent-minded.

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Anonymous Miracles



Patrick was driving down the street in a sweat because he had an important meeting and couldn't find a parking place.

Looking up to heaven he said, "Lord, take pity on me. If you find me a parking place, I will go to Mass every Sunday for the rest of my life and give up drinking!"

Miraculously, a parking place suddenly appeared.

Patrick looked up again and said, "Never mind, I found one."

This made me think that many times little (or big) fortunate things have happened in my life that I didn't recognize for what they really were: miracles of God.

Many years ago, my mother told me something that I wrote at the top of the whiteboard in my office, that stayed there for years: "A coincidence is God's way of remaining anonymous." I have had so many of these "coincidences" happen in my lifetime. Have you?

Milestones



Wayne Adams
Feb 13, 1937—85 years
Payette

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Nancy Stahl
Feb 7, 1947—75 years
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A Flowery Proposal

The friars were behind on their belfry payments, so they opened up a florist shop to raise funds.

Since everyone liked to buy flowers from the men of God, a rival florist

across town thought the competition was unfair. He asked the good fathers to close down, but they would not.

So next he went back and begged the friars to close, even offering them a generous donation to the parish. They rejected his offer.

So, the rival florist hired Hugh MacTaggart, the roughest and most vicious thug in town to "persuade" them to close. Hugh went and trashed their store, saying he'd be back to beat them up if they didn't close up shop.

This time they were terrified, knowing he meant business, so they decided it would be in their best interest to close up shop, thereby proving that: Hugh, and only Hugh, can prevent florist friars.



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