The Unseen Bloom

Evelyn adored flowers. Every Monday morning, without fail, a beautiful bouquet would appear on her doorstep. They always arrived with a small, unsigned note that simply read, "For you."

For months, Evelyn wondered who her mysterious admirer could be. Her mind danced between possible suspects, but one name kept surfacing: Alex. He was the charming new barista at her favorite café. They exchanged pleasantries every day, and his bright smile seemed to hold unspoken secrets. So, she decided to take a chance.

"Thank you for the flowers, Alex," she said one morning, her voice shy but hopeful.

Alex blinked in surprise but quickly recovered with a warm, albeit confused, smile. "You're welcome, Evelyn," he replied, playing along, though it was clear he had no idea what she was talking about.

Their friendship blossomed into a romance. Alex was kind and thoughtful, and for a while, Evelyn was happy. Yet, despite their growing closeness, the flowers continued to arrive every Monday, always without a signature. She asked Alex about them once more, but he simply shook his head with a soft chuckle, "It wasn't me, Evie."

Puzzled but content, Evelyn chose to let it go. Life carried on, filled with the vibrant hues of love and mystery.

Then came a day when the flowers stopped.

At first, Evelyn thought it was a simple mistake. Weeks passed, and there were no more bouquets. A hollow feeling settled in her chest, growing with each flowerless Monday. She started to miss them, the beautiful reminder of someone's unseen affection.

One evening, she ran into Oliver, her childhood friend. He looked frail, with an exhausted pallor that hadn't been there before. She hugged him tightly, feeling a sense of nostalgia and concern.

"Hey, Liv, how have you been?" she asked, hoping to mask the worry in her voice.

Oliver smiled weakly, "Oh, you know, just taking it one day at a time."

A few weeks later, Oliver passed away. It was a quiet, solemn affair, filled with those who loved him and knew his gentle soul. In the midst of her grief, Evelyn stumbled upon Oliver's journal, tucked away in a corner of his cluttered apartment. Her hands trembled as she opened it, revealing pages upon pages of beautiful words and thoughts.

One entry caught her eye:

"Every Monday, I send Evelyn flowers. She deserves to be reminded of how special she is, even if I can't tell her myself. I hope they bring her as much joy as she brings me."

Tears streamed down Evelyn's face as the truth sank in. Oliver had been the one sending her flowers all along, quietly loving her from the sidelines, even as she pursued someone else.

The pain of losing him felt sharper now, the loss of a love she hadn't fully recognized until it was too late. Each Monday felt colder, emptier without the bouquets that once brightened her life.

Standing at his grave, Evelyn placed a single flower on the headstone. Her voice broke as she whispered, "You were the flowers in my life, Oliver. I just wish I'd known sooner."