

THE LITTLE LIGHT IN THE WINDOW

by

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"Here honey," Alicia said.

Kira looked up with tears in her eyes and asked? "What is it Mommy?"

"It's a light," Her mother answered, "we can put it in the window. Maybe Toby will see it and come home."

Toby, is a two year old Cocker spaniel and the best friend eight year old Kira Martin ever had. Toby had chased something into the snowy woods a few days earlier and hadn't come back. He was given to Kira by her father, Adam Martin. A Captain in the United States Army, who at the moment was stationed in Iraq.

"Mommy, we have to keep looking for him. . .please!" Kira said urgently.

"I know sweetheart," Alicia said, "we will, first thing Tomorrow, but it's too dark and cold out tonight."

"That's what I'm worried about." Kira sobbed.

"Listen sweetheart," Alicia said softly. "I promise, we'll go out first thing in the morning, without fail."

Alicia put the tiny candle shaped light on kira's window sill and plugged it in. A little spark of electricity and the light flickered to life. It shined bright for such a small light. A warm orange glow filled the window and shined out into the cold snowy night.

Kira sat in her little rocking chair, facing the window. This would become a common sight around the Martin household. For the next few weeks. Everyday, Kira and her mother would go out searching for Toby. They would search the woods and all around the neighborhood. At night Kira would sit in her rocking chair, looking out into the night as the tiny, candle shaped light reached as far as it could into the darkness.

Kira began having nightmares, she would wake up in the middle of the night crying for Toby. One night Kira began calling for her mother who was sitting in the living room watching TV.

Alicia ran to Kira's bedroom, 'Another nightmare', she thought to herself.

When she opened the bedroom door she saw Kira leaning out the window.

"Kira!" Alicia screamed, then ran to the window.

Alicia managed to grab Kira around the waist and pull her back in the room. As she pulled her in, she stepped on one of Kira's shoes and fell backward onto the bed and rolled onto the floor. Kira rolled onto the floor on the other side of the bed. Alicia ran around to that side of the bed and saw the most remarkably wonderful sight. Kira was laying on the floor with Toby standing on top of her, licking her face and neck. Kira was laughing and crying at the same time.

"You came home." she cried. "Mommy, Toby came home!"

"Yes, he did honey," Alicia said, then she prayed a little prayer of thanks.

Suddenly the doorbell rang.

"Goodness," Alicia said, "who could that be at this hour?"

She went running to the door, still smiling as she listened to Kira and Toby playing on the floor in their bedroom. She looked through the peephole in the door and saw two military officers standing on the steps. Wrapping her robe tight around her, she opened the door.

"Yes," she said nervously. "Can I help you?"

"Mrs. Martin?" the older officer asked.

"Yes, I'm Alicia Martin." she said hesitantly, "Wh...what can I do for you?"

"Ma'am, may we come in for a moment?" He asked.

"Y...yes, please forgive me," Alicia said. "I know you must be cold."

"Thank you ma'am," he said as they stepped into the house, "Mrs. Martin, ma'am."

"What is it?" Alicia asked. "Please tell me."

Alicia was starting to shake, there could only be one reason these men would be here so late.

"Ma'am, we regret to inform you..."

Alicia took a deep breath as the officer spoke, her eyes began to fill with tears and her face tightened as she listened.

"... your husband, Captain Martin has been..."

Alicia started whimpering, trying hard to stay calm. She felt like all the energy was being draining from her.

"...listed as missing in action, ma'am."

Alicia felt her knees buckle. The officers grabbed hold of her and helped her to the sofa.

"Ma'am, we're going to sit you down on the sofa."

After sitting Alicia down, the younger officer said, "Mrs. Martin, we are truly sorry to have to tell you your husband is missing."

Another gasp was heard, this time it was Kira. She had come into the living room where her mother and the two officers were. The officers turned to see the little girl looking at them in horror.

"No!" Kira cried, "no! Not my daddy, no!"

Alicia ran to Kira and wrapped her arms around her.

The younger officers knelt down beside Kira and her mother and said, "I know this looks bad right now, but. . .he is only listed as missing. We will find him."

Alicia and Kira held onto each other. Still kneeling on the floor Alicia said, "Thank you, I know this must be a terribly hard job for you to do."

"Yes ma'am," He said.

The older officer cleared his throat then asked, "Ma'am, would you like us to stay for a moment?"

"No," she answered softly, "thank you for the offer, but I need to talk to my daughter now."

"Yes ma'am, we'll let ourselves out. Again, we are truly sorry."

As the officers let themselves out, Alicia carried Kira back to her bedroom then held her as she cried herself to sleep. Toby jumped up on the bed and laid next to Kira.

Alicia stood looking at her sleeping daughter. As tears

flowed from her eyes she thought about her husband missing in action in a country so far from home, she felt so helpless and alone. Alicia knelt down beside Kira's bed and began to pray, she fell asleep as she cried and prayed for guidance.

The next few days went by so slowly, and even though Toby had come home Kira's happiness was put on hold. Neighbors and friends consoled them the best they could and the pastor of the church prayed with them and for them daily. But Alicia and Kira were still in a state of shock, a numbness no one could understand unless they had gone through it themselves.

One night, Kira heard her mother crying. She got out of bed and with Toby following close behind went to her mother's bedroom. Kira peeked through the slightly opened door and saw her mother sitting on the edge of her bed. She slowly pushed the door open. Alicia looked up and wiped the tears from her eyes.

"Come in sweetheart." Alicia said.

Kira and Toby entered her mother's room.

"Mommy." Kira said.

"Yes, dear." Alicia answered.

"I wanted to give you this."

Kira took her hand out from behind her and handed her mother the tiny light she had given to Kira when Toby was lost.

"Maybe we can put it in your window, so daddy will find his

way home."

Alicia had to breath deep to keep from crying, then said,

"I think that would be a great idea sweetheart."

They took the little candle shaped light and placed it on the window sill then plugged it in and again with a spark of electricity the light flickered to life. Alicia sat down in the rocking chair next to the window, Kira picked up Toby then climbed up onto her mother's lap. They quietly stared out the window, the tiny light shined out into the dark night. Its warm orange glow giving all the comfort it could to them.

"Mommy," Kira said as she stroked Toby's fur. "Can we say a prayer?"

"Of course sweetheart," Alicia said.

Kira closed her eyes and began to pray, "Dear Jesus, I know you love us and I know you are watching over my Daddy wherever he is tonight. I believe with all my heart he is coming home to us. You brought Toby home safe and sound and I know you will do the same for my Daddy. . ."

Alicia began to cry so hard that it shook all three of them there in the rocking chair.

"It's Ok Mommy," Kira said, then continued to pray. "Jesus, I love you and I will never stop loving you, even if my Daddy is hurt. But I know deep down in the pit of my stomach, I know he is

safe in your hands and I thank you Jesus, oh, so much for watching over him for us. With love from kira, Toby and Mommy. Amen."

Alicia held Kira tight in her arms as she whispered, "Amen, Amen, Amen."

The phone beside the bed rang, Alicia answered it.

"Hello," she said, "Adam! Adam, is that really you?"

As Alicia spoke to her husband the television could be heard in the background.

"ladies and gentlemen" the reporter said, "As I speak to you, the United States has pulled off a daring rescue mission. Some ten soldiers who had been captured earlier, have been rescued. . ."

"Is that Daddy?" Kira shouted.

"Yes, honey. "Alicia said through tears of relief, "it's your Daddy and he's coming home."

Kira shouted with joy into the phone, "I love you Daddy!" then looking up with her arms outstretched she shouted, "Thank you Jesus!"

They continued talking and laughing in-between the short but emotional bursts of tears. They continued thanking the Lord as well. As they sat in the warm, orange glow of the tiny, candle shaped light in the window.

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