

## Pieces

*Ding!*

"I'll get it!" I called to my mom as I started toward the door. I had been expecting a new piece of clothing from my favorite store downtown. As I hopped over my little brother playing with his trains in the living room, I crossed my fingers just to be sure it wasn't another wallpaper sample for my mom's current client. I opened the door and looked straight down hoping I'd see a package. Nothing.

"What?" I said under my breath. "Not even a wallpaper sample." Angrily, I slammed the door and headed to the kitchen where my mom was making dinner. "It didn't come!" I wailed.

"Well honey, there's always tomorrow." She said.

That night I couldn't sleep. Maybe it was just the annoying kids from next door playing around and they decided to ding-dong-ditch me. "Well, I'll find out tomorrow," I thought to myself.

The next morning I jumped out of bed and ran to the door to see if my package had arrived. This was my daily routine. Nothing was there yet so I went to the kitchen for breakfast. Right as I sat down the doorbell rang. I sprinted to the door and quickly opened it. A small brown package sat there with my name printed and taped to the front. There was no return address. The wrapping was unusual and a bit scrappy looking as if someone had just thrown something into a small paper bag. I looked

around, but no one was in sight. I casually shrugged and walked back inside with my eyes glued to the package. I turned it over and ripped it open not knowing what to expect.

Inside was a delicate puzzle piece. My mind raced. What kind of message was this?

“What is that?” My mom asked as she flipped a pancake.

“Um, Just some advertisement for Whole Foods Market.” I said throwing the box away and shoving the puzzle piece into my pocket.

“Oh ok,” She said losing interest.

I ran up the stairs to my room to take a closer look at the puzzle piece. It was light green with a light brown line crossing through it. The line was labeled with “follow here.”

“It must be a path,” I said under my breath. “But to what.” I threw myself onto my bed and stared up at my boring colored ceiling.

I heard my mom call for me. I ran down the stairs and into the kitchen where she placed a plate on the counter with pancakes on it.

“Thanks.” I said. I didn’t have any appetite and my mind wasn’t thinking about food. I took my fork and slowly squished down the fluffy pancake until syrup oozed out of it.

“Honey?”

I quickly sat up with a jolt and something dripped from my face.

"Oh dear," my mother said rushing to get a paper towel, "did you get much sleep last night? You seem awfully tired."

She wiped the syrup off my face.

"What happened?" I asked.

"You fell asleep. And of course your head fell right on to your pancakes. The pancakes that were hardly eaten I might add."

"Oh sorry," I said getting up and trudging back to my room.

My mind couldn't think straight, but I just went on with my day. At around 5:00 o'clock. My doorbell rang again. Yet again, I ran to the door and anxiously opened it. Another package sat there with the same print.

I went upstairs to my bedroom and ripped it opened. I found another puzzle piece that fit right into the other one. All this piece did was extend the light brown line even farther.

This rotation went on for the text two weeks. Each day, I came up with another excuse for my parents like "a sweet birthday invitation but I can't go." By the time it was the 15th day, I only needed one more piece to complete the mysterious puzzle. So far, it was just my house starting at one corner of the puzzle, than a brown path leading me to the opposite corner. The destination was yet to come. It had to come today.

Around 9:00, my parents left to take my little brother to his junior soccer game and then to a team lunch after. Once they were gone, I carefully went to the door just in case the person forgot to ring the doorbell and just left the last package. I opened the



door and a cool breeze pushed back my hair. I looked down and saw nothing.

Frustrated, I shut the door and went back inside. I soon found myself sitting on the carpet staring at the door. Waiting for the package to come. The clock ticked on and the house was silent.

*Ding!* It was twelve o'clock and the sound of my doorbell startled me awake. I had fallen asleep! I jumped up and lunged for the doorknob, yanking it open. I instantly looked down to find the small brown box with my name on it. I slammed the door and raced up to my room like a cheetah catching its prey.

I stared at the package for a moment wondering if this was all a prank. I couldn't help myself, I tore it open and found a small puzzle piece. It slipped into the other pieces perfectly. The new puzzle piece had a small red dot that marked a hidden road. The mystery tugged at me. I had to go.

I threw on my sweatshirt and sprinted out the front door with a picture of the puzzle with me. I followed the brown line to a corner where I stopped.

"Right around this corner," I said under my breath. I took a deep breath and turned the corner. I took a sudden stop and my heart skipped a beat.

"Oh my gosh."