

POCKETWATCH

By Marla Crowe

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CAST: one female

(This is a dramatic monologue that is meant to connect ones past to their present time. It is meant to be both reflective and introspective. It is historically correct in its description and in the fact that Russian military soldiers were indeed issued this type of pocket-watch. They were known to place pictures inside the left inner circle. However, the story itself is fiction. But it could have happened. Stranger things in life have.)

I had no idea what I was doing as I raised my card identifying that I was number 8. It was my first auction. An estate auction to be exact. I went to learn, not really to buy anything. However, when I saw the Russian military issue pocket-watch I knew I had to have it. I didn't know why. I wasn't a collector of watches at all. I did favor antiques and my mom was a Primitive Collector. Yet, I would never have set out to buy a pocket-watch. And still, here I am raising my card to bid on the watch. Before I really stopped to think about it, the gavel went down declaring me "the winner."

(Reacts facially to being the winner as if she is unsure what that means.)

Afterwards, as I paid for my watch and held it in my hand I was able to closely examine its intricate markings. It was issued during WWII and was dated 1941. It had Russian writing along the outer circle on the back. When I opened it, the inside had numbers like a standard pocket-watch with an inner circle to keep track of

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seconds. The left side of the watch had an intricate symbol that I didn't recognize. The ticking began immediately upon being opened. It worked! The sound was strong, yet, made me feel calm, almost serene. I decided that it might have been a good investment after-all.

I began to drive home thinking about the watch. I wandered who it belonged to? Did he survive the war? Was he a senior citizen now relaxing on a beach somewhere? I wished it had come with a detailed history. My mind switched gears to think of my mother. She had spoken of her father many times, though I had never met my grandfather. I knew he had fought in WWII for the Russian Army. Perhaps that was what had attracted me to the watch in the first place. My mom never saw her father again after the war. I assumed he died, though I couldn't recall specific details. I couldn't wait to get home and show her and get information to refresh my memory of my grandfather.

Before I knew it, I was parking my car in the driveway and walking through the front door. My mom gave me the usual "Hi" and "How are you" greetings...I quickly changed the subject to the watch. I told her about the auction and showed her the pocket-watch. I watched her face as she held it in her hand. It is hard to describe the look she had and the emotion she felt.

(As you describe her face and emotion, demonstrate it visually as well.)

Her face first lit up with an almost angel-like lighting. Her eyes had the essence of wonder with her mouth kind of twitched with an uncertainty as she stared at the watch, barely moving.

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Then she gasped in a great gulp of air and her expression changed. Her eyes darkened as her brow contorted and the mouth completely quivered now, as tears began to form and fall from the corners of her eyes. At first I couldn't speak, then I found my tongue and began to speak quickly. "Mom, what is it? I'm sorry. I didn't mean to upset you....." She raised her hand to stop me and simply said... "No." She sat in a chair and held the watch lovingly in her hand. She said that it brought back so many memories of her papa (*slight accent*). He had fought in WWII with the Russian military. Her mom had left the country after the war with her. She had been told that her father had fought bravely but didn't make it home. Her mom had wanted to start fresh and came to America with only a few belongings. She brought with her a couple of letters from her husband, a few pictures, and a small bag of clothes. My mother had inherited the letters and pictures when my grandmother passed away 6 months ago. My grandmother had survived by working at a local cleaners washing and ironing day after day.

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