

## **The Wish** by Grace L.

I'm Jessie, a 13-year old girl. I live in Albuquerque, New Mexico. My mom is stationed overseas in Afghanistan. She's been gone for over five years now. She had to leave on Christmas Day. Her name is Katrina. The one thing I've hoped for since my mom left is for her to come back home. I wish for it every night. Tomorrow, I am going to the end of school dance! My mom won't be here, but people here in Albuquerque tell me that wishing when you see a shooting star brings you luck. We have a lot of shooting stars here, I am told, but I have never seen one.

It's the next day and I found this note on the kitchen counter. "Dear Jess, I love you a lot. My boss called, and told me I need to fly to Afghanistan ASAP. I didn't want to go but it is my job. Your aunt and uncle are on their way to watch you until I get back. Love you and see you soon, Dad."

I decided to skip school today to wait for my aunt and uncle to arrive. I haven't seen them in like forever. I probably won't go to the dance unless my crush Matt asks me to go. Matt has been my crush since the second grade. I really want to go to the dance with him.

The doorbell rings. I race to the door hoping it is my aunt and uncle, but instead, it's Matt – holding a rose.

"Will you go to the dance with me tonight?" he asks.

"I would love to, but..."

"I get it," says Matt. "You already have a date to the dance. I was too nervous to ask you sooner. I'm sure you will have a great time."

"No, wait!" I tell Matt. "You don't understand. I would love to go with you!"

"You would?"

"Of course!"

I did not want that moment to end. I wish he hadn't left. It looks like I have to find something to wear. I go upstairs and realize that I don't have any dresses

to wear at all. I check my mom's room and – I see her! I run to her in excitement and then I find myself running into a wall. I guess I was just seeing things. I hope that does not happen again.

In my mom's closet, I found this cool looking dress that I am going to wear. It's blue on the main dress and one sleeve is black and blue, and the bottom is black.

I don't know where my aunt and uncle are. I don't have a cell phone yet so I can't contact them. My mom was going to give me hers on my birthday but she's not here to do that. I hope they both are all right. They only live two hours away, and they supposedly left at 8 in the morning. Being that it's 4:30, they should have arrived by now. I decided to watch the news on TV while I waited.

The doorbell rings again. I look at the clock – it's 6:00. I must have fallen asleep. I dash upstairs, put on the dress, and run back downstairs to open the door, and it's my...

Dad! "Wow, you look pretty!" he says.

"Oh, thanks! I have a date to the end of the school year dance. It's this boy, Matt. I thought it was him so I ran to get my dress on. Why are you here? Where is Auntie and Uncle Ray?"

"They were about to leave when I found out my trip was cancelled," said my dad.

"Hello!" It's my Auntie! "Your uncle and I decided that we'd make the trip anyway. It's been so long!"

Could this day get any better? My dad is here, my uncle and aunt are here. My dad and uncle are exchanging some weird looks. They always seem to do that, so I didn't think it meant anything.

Minutes later, Matt shows up at the door. We take a lot of pictures and then finally my dad drives us to the dance. As we arrive, I notice a lot of people have already gotten there. I hear a fast song playing, and half the people are jumping up and down.

"I'm going to get us some punch," said Matt.

“Ok, I’ll stay right here” I tell him.

He comes back with a ton of his friends and then, right then, I know. My mom is home! They make a big pathway. There she is. I run down the path toward her. She’s changed so much.

“Hi, pretty girl,” Katrina says, trying not to cry.

“Mom, it’s been so long since I’ve seen you!”

“I’ve missed you a lot,” she says.

I run to Matt, thanking him for setting this whole thing up.

“No problem!” he says. Then, the moment I’ve been waiting for. He kisses me.

At the end of the night, my mom, dad and I go outside on the deck of our house. We stare at the stars. Suddenly, I see it. A shooting star. I don’t keep my wish to myself. “I wish for us to stay together forever.”