The Gift of the Magi Story ~ A Christmas Story for Kids

*This is the story of The Gift of the Magi, A Christmas Story. It was written by O'Henry and has been adapted here by Stories to Grow by. It presents the Theme of Selflessness which makes it a perfect holiday story.*

 Della and Jim were married just a year.  They had very little money and their place was poor.  But what they lacked in fancy things, they made up for with love.

The very next day was Christmas.  All the money Della had to buy a gift for her dear husband was $1.87.  “What on earth can I buy with that?” she asked.

Turning around, she saw her reflection in the mirror.  Stepping up to the mirror, she stared at her reflection.  “At least Jim loves my long beautiful hair,” she said, taking a spin.  “He calls me his queen!”  Then she stopped cold.  “Some queen I am!” she said, “with just $1.87 to spend on a gift for my husband.”

 Then all at once, Della knew what she must do.  Very fast, she put on her cloak and rushed out of  the apartment.  She ran down the street to a shop where wigs were made.  A sign read: “We buy hair.”

“Tell me,” Della asked the shop woman.  “How much will you pay me for my hair?”

“Come step inside,” said the shop woman, “and let me see it.”

Della stepped in the shop and took off her cloak.  Down fell her long, thick hair.

“My, my!” said the shop woman, “I will pay you twenty dollars for your lovely, long hair.”

At last, with twenty dollars in her pocket and the $1.87 from before, Della could go shopping.  But what should she get her husband?  The one thing Jim loved best in all the world was his golden pocket watch.  It had come from his father, and from his father’s father before that.  Sometimes, when Jim did not think anyone could see, he took out that golden watch, turned it over, and rubbed it with care.  Della knew this because she saw him do it. Then Della saw the perfect gift- a gold chain for his pocket watch!

 For $21 she bought the gold watch chain.  With that chain hooked up to Jim’s pocket watch, the watch could not fall out of his pocket.   And wouldn’t Jim look grand when he took out that golden pocket watch and everyone could see the shiny gold chain, too!

That night when Jim came home, Della rushed up to give him the gift she had bought.  Yet when he saw his wife’s short hair on her face, a frown appeared where he had smiled.  “Oh, do not worry, husband!” she cried.  “My hair grows back quickly.”

Then, before she could give Jim her gift, he handed his wife a small box.  Della untied the ribbon and opened it.  Inside were two beautiful hair combs!  They were the very same ones she had mooned over many times in the store windows, but they cost far too much money.

Now they were the gift her dear husband had given her. Then, Della handed Jim her box.  “Now your turn,” she said.

When Jim opened it and saw the gold watch chain, he had to sit down.  “Don’t you like it?” said his wife.  “Of course, I do!” said Jim.  “But you see, I sold my watch so I could buy you the two hair combs.”

“And I sold my hair to buy you the watch chain!” said Della.

Jim and Della had both given up the one thing they held most dear for the sake of the other.  And now they had nothing to show for it.

Or did they?

“My queen,” said Jim, taking his wife’s hands into his own and looking into her eyes.

“My dear husband,” said Della, with love.

Point of the story:

Love is all about giving, not taking. True love is about sacrificing for each other. This couple sacrificed the thing they loved the most in this world for the person they loved the most. Things also should never come before our love for people. Love is defined as “willing the good of the other over your own.” Or sacrificing yourself for the best of the other person’s soul.