

The Greatest Birthday Ever

Have you ever gotten a present that made your heart skip a beat? Well, that is what happened to *George Wilson*. This gift would do that and more; it would be passed down forever.

The weekend came, and it was *Georges'* birthday. He was turning thirteen. Every birthday, he went to his *Grandpas'* house. *Grandpa* always gave the best presents. On his tenth birthday, *George* got a cherry red guitar. On his eleventh birthday, the gift was a cell phone. This year was a little different; *George* was getting a gift that is priceless.

"Hey *Grandpa!*" *George* said.

"Happy birthday!" *Grandpa* said

"What did you get me?" *George* asked.

"A surprise," *Grandpa* said.

They all sat down for cake and ice cream. Then the whole family sang an awkward version of, *Happy Birthday*. Then it was time for presents, *Georges'* favorite part. *Grandma* gave *George* a computer. His parents gave him a book of jokes. Then it was time for *Grandpa's* gift.

"Open it up," *Grandpa* said.

George was so excited when he was tearing open the wrapping paper. His heart racing and then,

"Wow! A deck of cards," George said with disappointment in his voice.

"This is no ordinary deck of baseball cards. This deck from the 1920's. This deck was in mint condition. This deck had the 1927 Yankees with Babe Ruth, Joe DiMaggio and the alarming Murders Row," Grandpa exclaimed, as he was about to run out of breath.

"But why would you give it to me?" George asked.

"Because, I knew if I gave it to anybody else they would sell it," Grandpa said.

"This has to be worth about a zillion dollars," George said with a frog in his throat.

"This is a family heirloom, and a family secret, and it is only about a million," Grandpa said.

"Why is it a family secret?" George asked.

"If everybody knew they would be asking us for the cards."

"Oh."

"So, mum is the word," Grandpa said.

"Gotch' ya," George said.

"It has been given by my dad, to me, and now I am giving them to you," Grandpa said.

"Well, how did you get them?" George asked.

"A long time ago when dinosaurs roamed the earth. It was my-"

"Grandpa you aren't that old, I mean your old but not that old."

"Thanks, I appreciate that. I like to say I age with grace. It was my-"

"Whatever you say grandpa, it's your story."

"Now back on the farm, it was my-"

"Farm I thought you grew up in New York?"

"It is a figure of speech. Now sit down, shut up you are asking to many questions."

"Shutting up." George said quickly.

"It was my very first baseball game. As you know, I grew up in New York. My dad, your great granddad, Grandpa Wilson, took me to Yankee stadium. The Yanks were playing the Brooklyn Dodgers, and I was ecstatic. I was about your age when I went. I walked down that tunnel to our seats it was like Christmas morning. I was asking questions about everything like, how long is it? Will I see the Great Bambino? That's Babe Ruth-"

"I know who the *Great Bambino* is Grandpa. I love baseball just as much as you do."

"Well, you have never seen him play. Every time it was his turn to bat the pitcher would get this pale look on his face, snow white effect. The infield would back up to the edge of the lush, green grass. The outfielders would yell to each other, 'Back up!' Everybody but one person, the first-basemen, Iron Arm Ike."

"Why did they call him Iron Arm?" George asked.

"He was up to bat and he got hit right in the arm at one-hundred miles an hour, and didn't move. The Babe saw him; his eyes were like a flame had sparked. The Babe gave him a little nod to say, 'I see you, back up or else.' Ike didn't move. The Babe nodded again. He dug into the batters box, winked at the pitcher, and waited for the pitch. The pitcher didn't have a chance. This at bat the Babe was not looking to add to his home-run lead, he was looking to get even with Iron Arm. The pitcher gave the Babe a big fat pitch to hit a home run on. Babe Ruth smacked it so hard know one knew where he had hit. No one but one."

"Who?" George asked.

"Ike. He was on the ground, crying! That ball was a bullet. The trainers had to come on the field and carry him off the field. Babe Ruth just stood in the batters box smiling and nodding his head. That was the last game of baseball Ike ever played."

"Was he hurt that badly?" *George* asked.

"It broke a muscle in his arm, that was it. But it was mostly his dignity that was broken. After the game my dad and me went to the souvenir shop and I got this deck of cards. I have had them ever since. They cost a dollar and that was a lot of money back then." *Grandpa* said with a chuckle.

"So, what do you want me to do with these cards?" *George* asked.

"Save them, keep them. Hold on to them and give them to your son when he turns thirteen," *Grandpa* said calmly.

"Why didn't you give these to Dad?" *George* asked.

"Your dad was never really into baseball. He was more interested in hockey than anything," *Grandpa* said.

"Yeah, I guess you're right," *George* said.

"So, happy birthday, *George*," *Grandpa* said.

"Thanks, *Grandpa*. I won't let you down," *George* said proudly.

"I know, I have faith in you. Ever since you were a baby boy, when your first word was, 'baseball' I have been waiting for this moment." Grandpa said.

"But Grandpa, I thought my first words were, ' bodcgvall?'"

"Well sure, but I knew what you were trying to say." Grandpa said with a smile as they wrapped each other in a huge bear hug.

This was by far, the greatest birthday of all.