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Subject: FW: A Touching Story

Hi! This is one of the most beautiful things I have ever read (yes I actually cried!!) know it's long but give it a read when you have a moment.> Jean Thompson stood in front of her fifth-grade class on the very> first day of school in the fall and told the children a lie.>> Like most teachers, she looked at her pupils and said that she> loved them all the same, that she would treat them all alike.> And that was impossible because there in front of her, slumped in> his seat on the third row, was a little boy named Teddy Stoddard.>> Mrs. Thompson had watched Teddy the year before and noticed he> didn't play well with the other children, that his clothes were> unkempt and that he constantly needed a bath. And Teddy was> unpleasant.>> It got to the point during the first few months that she would> actually take delight in marking his papers with a broad red pen,> making bold X's and then marking the F at the top of the paper> biggest of all.>> Because Teddy was a sullen little boy, no one else seemed to> enjoy him, either.>> At the school where Mrs. Thompson taught, she was required to> review each child's records and put Teddy's off until last.>> When she opened his file, she was in for a surprise. His> first-grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is a bright, inquisitive child> with a ready laugh. He does his work neatly and has good> manners...he is a joy to be around.">> His second-grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is an excellent student> well-liked by his classmates, but he is troubled because his> mother has a terminal illness and life at home must be a struggle.">> His third-grade teacher wrote, "Teddy continues to work hard> but his mother's death has been hard on him. He tries to do his best> but his father doesn't show much interest and his home life will> soon affect him if some steps aren't taken.">> Teddy's fourth-grade teacher wrote, "Teddy is withdrawn and doesn't> show much interest in school. He doesn't have many friends> and sometimes sleeps in class. He is tardy and could become a> problem.">> By now Mrs. Thompson realized the problem but Christmas was> coming fast. It was all she could do, with the school play and all,> until the day before the holidays began and she was suddenly> forced to focus on Teddy Stoddard.>> Her children brought her presents, all in beautiful ribbon and> bright paper, except for Teddy's, which was clumsily wrapped in> the heavy, brown paper of a scissored grocery bag. Mrs. Thompson> took pains to open it in the middle of the other presents.>> Some of the children started to laugh when she found a> rhinestone bracelet with some of the stones missing, and a bottle that> was> one-quarter full of cologne.>> She stifled the children's laughter when she exclaimed how> pretty the bracelet was, putting it on, and dabbing some of the perfume> behind the other wrist. Teddy Stoddard stayed behind just long> enough to say, "Mrs. Thompson, today you smelled just like my> mom used to.">> After the children left, she cried for at least an hour.>> On that very day, she quit teaching reading, and writing, and> speaking. Instead, she began to teach children. Jean Thompson> paid

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