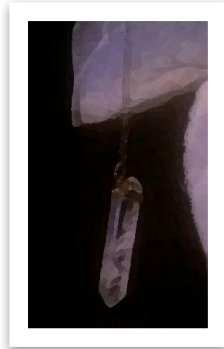


Gifts (S3)

by Mel



“Hey Dad, could I give this to Mom for her birthday?” five-year-old, Jacob asked. “Diana, going to love it.” He held out a crystal strung on a chain.

“Where did you get this, Jacob?” Vincent asked.

“I... I found it.”

“Jacob, what did I tell you about snooping around.”

Jacob’s lip trembled with fresh tears.

“I’m not angry, Jacob.” Vincent knelt beside his son. “We can find something else for Diana. This necklace belonged to your birth mother, Catherine.”

“Will you tell me about her?”

Vincent smiled, sat on the bed, and began to tell the story of the first anniversary.