

“Your Name in Gold”

Anne sat at the breakfast table, eating her cornflakes and reading the print on the cereal box in front of her. "Tastee Cornflakes - Great New Offer!" the box read. "See back of box for details."

Anne's older sister, Mary, sat across from her, reading the other side of the cereal box. "Hey, Anne," she said, "look at this awesome prize - 'your name in gold'."

As Mary read on, Anne's interest in the prize grew. "Just send in one dollar with proof-of-purchase seal from this box and spell out your first name on the information blank. We will send you a special pin with your name spelled in gold. (Only one per family, please.)"

Anne grabbed the box and looked on the back, her eyes brightening with excitement. The name "Jennifer" was spelled out in sparkling gold. "That's a neat idea," she said. "A pin with my very own name spelled out in gold. I'm going to send in for it."

"Sorry, Anne, I saw it first," said Mary, "so I get first dibs on it. Besides, you don't have a dollar to send in, and I do."

"But I want a pin like that so badly," said Anne. "Please let me have it!"

"Nope," said her sister.

"You always get your way - just because you're older than me," said Anne, her lower lip trembling as her eyes filled with tears. "Just go ahead and send in for it. See if I care!" She threw down her spoon and ran from the kitchen.

Several weeks passed. One day the mailman brought a small package addressed to Mary. Anne was dying to see the pin, but she wouldn't let Mary know how eager she was. Mary took the package to her room. Anne casually followed her in and sat on the bed.

"Well, I guess they sent you your pin. I sure hope you like it," Anne said in a mean voice. Mary slowly took the paper off the package. She opened a little white box and carefully lifted off the top layer of white cotton.

"Oh, it's beautiful!" Mary said. "Just like the cereal box said, 'your name in gold'. Four beautiful letters. Would you like to see it, Anne?"

"No, I don't care about your dumb old pin."

Mary put the white box on the dresser and went downstairs.

Anne was alone in the bedroom. Soon she couldn't wait any longer, so she walked over to the dresser. As she looked in the small white box, she gasped. Mixed feelings of love for her sister and shame at herself welled up within her, and the pin became a sparkling gold blur through her tears.

There on the pin were four beautiful letters - her name in gold:
A-N-N-E.

By A. F. Bauman