

## Cookie Jar

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# Cookie Jar

by [pairatime](#)

## Summary

Zach and Shaun are packing and they start talking about Zach's mother.

## Notes

For smallfandomfest round 21, summer of 2017

Shelter, Zach, While cleaning out the house in preparation for the big move to LA, Zach finds a letter his mom wrote before she died.

“Dude where did you want these bags?” Billy asked, standing over the pile of plastic shopping bags stuffed full of clothing, mostly left behind by Jeanne.

“Those go to, ah, with the rest of the Goodwill stuff, ah... Tori’s car,” Zach said as he looked up from the boxed of kitchen supplies he was packing.

“I’m not sure how much more I can fit Zach. We might need to do a run and empty it so we can get the rest of it in. Because I know there’s more,” Tori said as she reentered the house to look at the large mount of bags.

“You’re probably right. Can you and Billy make a trip to Goodwill while Shaun and I get this stuff ready for when Gabe and Cody gets back with the truck?” Zach asked as he looked around at all the stuff he still had left to pack.

“Yeah sure. We can do that,” Tori answered as she ran her hands through her hair while scanning the half empty home.

“Hey, while you’re out can you pick up some pizzas for us? I have a feeling it’s still going to be a long night,” Shaun requested as he handed a few bills to Billy.

“Sure dude,” Billy agreed as he and Tori departed carrying a few more bags to try and cram into her car before heading off.

“I can’t believe how much kitchen stuff you have; I think you have more than mom and Larry. And their kitchen is twice the size,” Shaun commented as he went back to work wrapping and taping dish towels around knives.

“My mom loved to cook. Now matter how tired she was she always made dinner. It wasn’t always much but it was almost always homemade,” Zach said as he looked down the jar he’d been about to start packing. Slowly he used his thumb to trace the big red mom that wrapped it’s away around the ceramic container.

“Yeah. Its one way moms show their love,” Shaun said stopping his own packing to pull Zach into a hug; tucking the younger man under his chin.

“Yeah,” Zach echoed as he rested into Shaun before smiling, “It’s also a way to make the grocery budget stretch, mom was so good at making it feel like we always had lots of food but money had to be so tight. I don’t know how she did it,” he added.

“I don’t remember much about her but I do remember her ability to make everything seem better. Even that party that got rained out in the park. What was that...was it Gabe’s birthday?” Shaun asked as he frowned in concentration.

“Your mom had invited everyone from school for it and then it started raining in the middle of the magic show and your dad couldn’t keep the BBQ lit,” Zach laughed at the memory.

“He was so flustered; I thought he was going to have a stroke or something. But then your mother comes along and the fire is going again and food is cooking. Better and faster than it

had for him. She saved the day,” Shaun remembered.

Picking up the jar again Zach smiled, “Yeah she did. She always did,” he said picked up the jar, tracing it one last time before grabbing some newspaper to wrap it. Pausing when he pulled off the top to see something inside. “What’s this?” He asked, sitting the jar down and looking inside to see a handful of bent and crinkled papers and envelopes.

“You store stuff in your cookie jar, cool?” Shaun said grinning.

“No. Mom kept it on the high shelf and we never messed with it. Even after she...I never knew she had stuff...” Zach trailed off as he started pulling the papers out.

The few receipts, a handful of list, a small roll of money and a pair of envelopes. Most of them worn and clearly a few years old.

“Hu, It must have been her place to store papers so she wouldn’t lose them,” Shaun suggested as he picked up the receipts and tried to read them, stepping over to the light to better see the faded ink.

“What are they for?” Zach asked in interest as he tried to pull the dried out rubber band from around the roll of money only for it to snap and break forcing him to pull it off bit by bit.

“One’s for a bed frame and mattress, other is for...I think it’s for a grill, this one is a...” Shaun kept turning it to try and make out the letters but let out a sigh when he couldn’t, “I have no idea, it’s just too faded and this one is basically blank, I’m not even going try and figure it out,” he said holding up a receipt that only had a few strips of ink left.

“I think that’s a Sears’s receipt,” Zach suggested as he looked at the receipts in Shaun’s hand. “Why would she keep- the washer. And my bed, the propane grill. Mom got them the year she...but I have no idea what that last one could be. I can’t believe they were here and I never...and this,” Zach said as he looked back at the money in his hands.

“How much is it?” Shaun asked as he picked up the worn lists and started reading them.

“About three hundred. Mostly in fives and tens. But mom told me about her emergence cash. She didn’t keep it in this jar so what was it for?” Zach said confused as he looked from the cash to Shaun.

“Gifts. I think it was the money she used for gifts. Check out this list,” Shaun said as he held one of the lists out for Zach to read.

“Color charcoal, blank art book. How do draw movement-that’s my hand writing. That was my wish list. She...” Zach looked from the list to the cash, “she saved up. Little bit from each paycheck. That’s why it’s fives and tens. It’s whatever she could put aside,” Zach finished his voice dropping to a whisper.

Wrapping his arms around Zach Shaun smiled, “she wanted to make sure she could always get you something no matter what was happening around your birthdays or Christmas.”

“She is so much better at this stuff than I am. I never thought of doing that with Cody. I always just got what I could from that paycheck,” Zach said leaning into Shaun as he looked at the different lists, his Jeanne’s, is dad’s.

“Hey, don’t go there. You are a great uncle, great parent. You are doing the best you can for him and you’re learning. Now you have another idea of how to make sure Cody has the best gifts. After we figure out just what it is he wants,” Shaun reassured Zach and then slowly leaned in for a kiss.

Smiling back at Shaun Zach took a deep breathe and relaxed into Shaun as he let it out, letting the older man support him. “I could get used to this. Not having to do it all alone,” Zach said softly.

“You aren’t alone anymore Zach. I’m here,” Shaun answered as he held Zach tight for a few minutes until Zach started to stand on his own again.

“I’m learning that too,” Zach said back with a smile, “but lets see what these envelopes hold and get back to packing or we won’t get done this weekend,” he added as he picked up the two envelopes, surprised when he saw his and Jeanne’s name on them.

“Are they sealed? I wonder what’s inside,” Shaun questioned as he picked up Jeanne’s letter and turned it over to see that it was in fact sealed but was the glue had started to dry out and come off.

Zach carefully peeled open his letter and slowly extracted a folded sheet of lined paper, “That’s my mom’s hand writing,” he added as he unfolded the paper.

“She wrote you both,” Shaun came up behind Zach and pulled him into a firm hug, resting his chin on Zach’s shoulder, “Do you want me to read it?” he asked when he spotted the tear drops on the paper.

“No-I...She knew Shaun. She never said anything but she knew. I didn’t even but she,” Zach stopped as his voice broke as he let Shaun take the paper from his hands.

“Where does she say,” Shaun started to asked as he scanned the page, his eyes focused on a few lines near the middle,

*“I am sorry I will not be there when you experience your first love so I will give you this advance now. You have always thought of others before yourself, put aside your own heart for others. Don’t let that happen when you find him. Let yourself be happy and know that I have always loved you for who you are; Nothing can change that.”*

“Well I’ll be damned. She...she did know. Your mother was fucking psychic,” Shaun said bemused as he read the lines again, “and I hope I do make you happy,” he added as he turned his head to look at Zach, still focused on the letter.

“She knew I was gay. She knew and was happy for me. She still loved me,” Zach said softly, his gaze, become blurry from tears, never leaving the paper. “She still loves me.”

“You’re a wonderful artist, great father and a good man,” Shaun stated simply as he turned Zach toward him and hold him in a loving embrace. “How could she not love you?” Shaun asked as he felt Zach grab onto him, returning the hug.

\*\*\*The End\*\*\*

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