

The Little Riddle Keeper



Yavuz DEMİRKIRAN

The Little Riddle Keeper

Yavuz DEMİRKİRAN



In a cozy town with winding streets, Maya kept a very special book. It was not an ordinary book; it had a deep indigo cover with gold clasps and a brass lock shaped like a question mark. The book had two sleepy oval eyes that blinked slowly, and its pages fluttered like wings when it was excited. Maya, with her curly black hair in two puffy buns, was its proud keeper.



Every morning, Maya opened the riddle book and read its ancient riddles aloud. The book would hum softly, its red ribbon bookmark trailing like a scarf. Maya loved solving each riddle; it made her feel clever and patient. Her tiny gap-toothed smile grew wide whenever she found an answer. The book was her best friend, full of mystery and wonder.



One day, the book's pages fluttered wildly. 'Oh no!' it cried. 'My last page is gone!' Maya gasped. The final page, which held the book's greatest riddle, had vanished. The book's eyes blinked sadly. 'To find it, you must solve the earlier riddles one by one,' it said. 'Each answer will teach you something and bring you closer.' Maya nodded, determined.



Maya called her friend Pip, a small grey sparrow with a black cap and a grass band on his leg. Pip chirped cheerfully. 'We'll solve every riddle!' he said. The first riddle appeared on the page: 'I have keys but open no locks. I have space but no room. What am I?' Maya thought hard, her amber eyes sparkling. Pip tilted his round head. 'A keyboard?' he guessed.



Maya shook her head. 'Not quite,' she said. She read the riddle again. 'Keys but no locks... space but no room...' Then she smiled. 'A map! A map has keys and space!' The book's pages fluttered with joy. 'Correct!' it chimed. 'You have learned to see things differently.' A tiny golden star appeared on the page, marking her progress.



The next riddle was trickier: 'The more you take, the more you leave behind. What are they?' Maya tapped her chin. Pip hopped around. 'Footsteps!' he chirped. Maya laughed. 'Yes! Footsteps!' The book's eyes twinkled. 'Well done! You have learned to observe the world around you.' A second star appeared, and a warm breeze ruffled the pages.



Maya and Pip hurried to the town square, where Granny Oda sat on a bench. Granny Oda, with her silver braid and round spectacles, was the previous keeper. 'Solving riddles, are we?' she asked, her dark eyes kind. Maya explained about the missing page. Granny Oda nodded. 'Remember, careful thinking matters more than quick answers,' she said, her plum cardigan warm in the sun.



The third riddle was: 'What has a heart that doesn't beat?' Maya furrowed her brow. Pip flew up to a tree and back. 'A artichoke?' he offered. Maya giggled. 'No, Pip.' She closed her eyes and thought. 'A deck of cards!' she exclaimed. The book's ribbon bookmark danced. 'You have learned to use your imagination,' it said, and a third star appeared.



Maya felt a thrill. Each solved riddle made the mystery clearer. The book gave her a hint: 'The page you seek is where stories are kept but never read aloud.' Maya thought of the library. She and Pip raced there, her red canvas shoes tapping on the pavement. The library was quiet, filled with shelves of books. 'Where stories are kept...' Maya whispered.



In the library, Maya spotted a shelf of old books. Pip fluttered to a high shelf. 'Here!' he chirped. But the book on the shelf was locked. A riddle was written on its cover: 'I speak without a mouth and hear without ears. What am I?' Maya smiled. 'An echo!' she said. The lock clicked open, and inside was a note: 'Look under the old oak tree.'



Maya and Pip dashed to the old oak tree in the park. Under its roots, they found a small wooden box. But it was locked with a question-mark shaped lock, just like the riddle book's. 'We need a key,' Maya said. The book's brass key charm on her satchel jingled. She tried it, and the box opened. Inside was the missing last page!



The page glowed softly. It read: 'The greatest riddle is the one you solve with friends.' Maya hugged the page and the book. The book's eyes blinked happily. 'You have learned the most important lesson: thinking carefully and never giving up can solve any mystery.' Pip chirped and danced on a branch. Maya felt proud and warm inside.



Back at home, Maya placed the last page back into the book. The book's pages fluttered with joy, and all the stars on the pages shone brightly. Granny Oda visited and smiled. 'You did it, Maya. You solved the mystery with patience and cleverness.' Maya beamed, her freckles crinkling. 'And with help from my friends,' she said.



That evening, Maya sat with the riddle book on her lap. The book hummed a soft tune. 'You are a wonderful keeper,' it said. Maya stroked its indigo cover. 'And you are a wonderful book,' she replied. Pip nestled in her hair, and the three friends watched the stars appear. Maya knew that every riddle was a new adventure waiting to be solved.



From that day on, Maya solved riddles every day. She learned that each answer taught her something new: to observe, to imagine, to think carefully. The book's last page remained safe, but the mystery had changed her. She was more curious, more patient, and more determined than ever. And she knew that with a good friend and a clever mind, anything was possible.



And so, the little riddle keeper continued her journey, one riddle at a time. The book's pages fluttered like wings, always ready for the next mystery. Maya, with her two curly buns and brass key charm, knew that the joy of learning would never end. For in every riddle, there is a lesson, and in every lesson, a new adventure.