The Blue Bookmark

1. The discovery

Maya stopped at the library return table after a rainy walk. She was an adult traveler with a short auburn bob, a teal raincoat, a mustard scarf, dark jeans, brown boots, and a small olive backpack.

A tan book lay on the table. When Maya opened it, she found a blue rectangular bookmark tucked between the pages. A single yellow five-point star had been painted near its top. Nothing else was written on it.

Maya left the book on the table and took the bookmark to the green front desk. She wanted to find its owner before leaving the library.

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2. The direction

Lin, the adult library attendant, wore a navy vest and had a long black braid. Maya held up the blue bookmark with its one yellow star.

"Did someone lose this?" Maya asked. Lin recognized it. "The reader in the plum shawl was looking for that," Lin said.

Lin pointed toward the reading-room doorway. An older adult woman with short silver hair and a plum shawl stood there, looking toward the desk. Maya followed Lin's gesture. She kept the bookmark in her hand and walked to the doorway.

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3. The return

Maya offered the blue bookmark to the woman in the plum shawl. The woman smiled when she saw the single yellow star.

"My daughter painted that star," the woman said. "Thank you for finding it." She took the bookmark from Maya.

Maya smiled back. The bookmark had reached its owner. The tan book remained at the return table; no money changed hands, and nobody left the library in this scene.

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