The Story of Valentine's Day

THE REAL STORY BEHIND VALENTINE'S DAY

Long before Valentine's Day became a symbol of romance, it was tied to a much darker and more complex story. The origins of the holiday are not entirely clear, but most versions lead back to ancient Rome and a figure known as Saint Valentine.

According to one of the most well-known legends, Valentine was a priest living in the third century. At that time, Emperor Claudius II believed that single men made better soldiers, so he banned marriages for young men. Valentine disagreed. He continued to perform weddings in secret, believing that love and



commitment were more important than the law. When his actions were discovered, he was arrested.

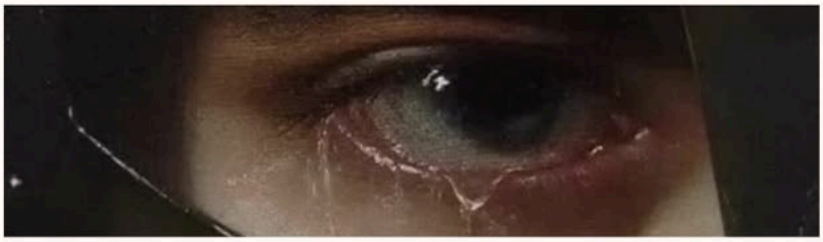
While imprisoned, Valentine is said to have formed a bond with the jailer's daughter. Some stories claim he helped restore her sight; others simply say they grew close.



Before his execution, Valentine allegedly wrote her a note signed "from your Valentine" — a phrase that would later become part of the holiday's tradition.

Valentine was executed on February 14, and over time his story blended with myth, faith, and imagination. Centuries later, medieval poets began to associate his name with romance, turning him into a symbol of devoted love rather than martyrdom. What started as a tragic story slowly transformed into a cultural idea.

The holiday continued to evolve. Handwritten letters, poems, and small tokens replaced the original legend, and eventually Valentine's Day became what we recognize today. Yet behind the cards and flowers remains a story of defiance, belief, and love chosen despite consequences.



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READ • THINK • EXPLORE



Task 1. Lexical Hunt

Find words in the article that match the definitions.

1. Connected or linked to something
   t _ _ _
2. Bold resistance or refusal to obey
   d _ _ _ _ _ _ _
3. Put into prison
   i _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
4. Suffering or death for one's beliefs
   m _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
5. Small objects representing feelings or affection
   t _ _ _ _ _

Task 2. Questions & Text Analysis

Answer the questions using details directly from the article.

1. Why did Emperor Claudius II ban marriages for young men?

   _____

   _____

2. Why was Valentine arrested and imprisoned?

   _____

   _____

3. Who did Valentine allegedly write a note to before his execution, and how did he sign it?

   _____

   _____

4. How did medieval poets change the way Valentine was remembered centuries later?

   _____

   _____

Task 3. Complete the Summary

Fill in the gaps using words from the box.
There is one word you do not need to use.

weddings	soldiers	martyrdom
arrested	poets	holiday

According to legend, Emperor Claudius II banned marriages because he believed single men made better (1) _____. A priest named Valentine secretly continued to perform (2) _____, but his actions were discovered and he was (3) _____. Before his death, he allegedly wrote a note signed "from your Valentine". Centuries later, medieval (4) _____ began turning him into a symbol of devoted love rather than (5) _____.

Task 4. Critical Interpretation

In the final paragraph, the author writes:

> *"Yet behind the cards and flowers remains a story of defiance, belief, and love chosen despite consequences."*

In 2–3 sentences, explain the contrast between the modern celebration of Valentine's Day and the ancient narrative described in the article.

_____

_____

_____