



Photograph from Sam Song, Japan, Jan., 2017

The First Snow

Roria HUANG

2008, Seoul, South Korea.
That was my first trip abroad,
just my mother and me.

I boarded the plane to Seoul. Although I didn't know why my mother took me to travel suddenly, I was especially thrilled and had no mind to find out the "because" since it was my first time abroad. I stood on tiptoe and stretched my neck for fear that I might miss any view overlooked by the aircraft window. It was difficult for a nine-year-old girl to hide the excitement and expectation in her little heart.

"Mummy, will I see the snow?" I looked back at my mother expectantly. My mother seemed to be stumped by my sudden questioning. She stared at me for a second, then smiled softly at me. "I know you've been looking forward to seeing snow for a long time. Mummy would like to satisfy your wishes. This is a tailor-make trip for my girl!" She patted my head and said softly. Although she quickly turned her face

back to kindness when I looked back, my sharp eyes caught her frowning and swallowing. Some doubts arose from my heart, but I still didn't take it seriously.

"The weather forecast shows it may snow these days, depending on your luck!" The tour guide told me after we got off the plane and got on the tour bus. As a child who lives in southern China and had never seen snow, I spent five days waiting for the snow devoutly with the deepest hope. Unfortunately, it didn't snow for these five days. I looked at my mother helplessly. "It's okay, we can't see snow this year, but we can come again next year." My mother touched my head and smiled to me. When I saw the smile imposed by my mother, I felt even more uncomfortable.

At noon the day before we left Korea, we had lunch in a restaurant as usual. People

who came here to enjoy their lunch were not in a hurry because the restaurant was deep in a mountain path. The shopkeeper served us with a hotpot which was curled by the snow-white smoke. The sizzling of the hotpot mingled with the chuffed laughter of people who were drinking Korean Soju. The restaurant had been surrounded by this cozy atmosphere all through the meal, which made the winter day seemed warmer. I looked out of the window, only the trees swayed by the cold wind. I looked at the delicious food in front of me, but I couldn't feel happy. My mother beside me looked at my lost eyes and felt sad for a while.

Suddenly, the restaurant poured out the screams and was full of laughter and shouts. Although we could not understand Korean, we could still feel the excitement. "Snowing! Snowing!" An uncle spoke to us in English with



Korean accent. We rushed out of the restaurant immediately and watched the snow drifting in the sky. Happiness and excitement hang on our faces. I stretched out my hands and waited for the white snow to fall down on my black gloves. "See! Snowflakes are really flower-shaped!" My mother cried out excitedly, pointing to the snowflakes on my gloves. We laughed delightedly in the snow. This was the first time I learned that winter could be touched and joy could be seen.

My mum saw my sheer joy and cried out of blue. I stopped playing with the snowflakes on my hands and looked at her doubtfully. "Mummy, what happened?" "Do you know, my girl? You have told me several times that you want to see the snow. Now I am so gratified that I made your dream come true," my mother was sobbing, then she took a deep breath to adjust her mood. "Actually... Before I came to Korea, I was diagnosed with cancer and I had to finish an operation right after I get home. I don't know



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what will happen after the operation and I don't know if I can be with you to see your favorite snow. Now I have achieved your dream, I am really happy." I couldn't stop crying after I heard what my mother said. Her tears just stopped and I stirred them up again. We hugged and wept in the snow. A few drops of water fell on my mother's pale blue coat. I could not tell whether it was my tear, or the snow melted by my mother's love.

Now my mother has recovered for a long time after the operation, but my memory of my very first snow will never fade away as the illness of my mum. I will never forget the warmest snowy day throughout my life. Because of this sudden snow, my mother and I went closer. A snow not only brought us a good memory, but also made us understand each other's intentions.