



# The Lost Rabbit

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Photograph from Jingcheng Yan, Gongzhou, Oct., 2018

“It is grandpa! Grandpa is coming!”  
Hearing the very slow sound of footsteps and walking stick, I was yelling.

Although there was a long distance between our apartment, grandfather always came to see me. Every time when he came, I got something new and interesting from him without exception. On the day that after my six-year-old Birthday, the familiar footsteps and the sound of walking stick came again. It was getting closer and becoming clearer. Therefore, I pressed my ears tightly against the door, stomping excitedly and thinking what grandfather would bring to-day. At that time, I did not know that it would be a turning point in my life.

It was 3 p.m. I had arrived home from kindergarten already. The sun shone through the glass into my eyes and also gave a big hug to my grandfather when he walked in. My eyes shifted from grandfather to the box that held in his left hand. Vaguely, grandfather was saying something at that time but the box was so attractive that I could not hear and remember what it was.

There was an ordinary cardboard box with some little holes on its surface. Suddenly, the box moved and made a rustle sound. I was trembling all over with fear and stepping back without thinking. In a hurry and panic, I broke a piece of glass by accident, which attracted my grandfather’s attention. He was old at that time with pale hairs. Looking at a skinny hunchback man holding a crutch in right left hand and doing his best to come as fast as he can to protect me from danger, I felt safe and tried to kick that strange box gamely.

“Oh, do not kick that,” he said gently.  
“There is a rabbit inside.”

My grandfather bent down slowly with the help of the crutch and smiled with wrinkles on his face. He was such a deeply caring person,



Photograph from Mingsong Yang, Eastern Europe, Jul., 2019

a darling old man. Grandfather opened that box and carried the rabbit out gently.

“It must be scared just now.” He stroked the rabbit which was trembling with fear, still gently.

“A rabbit! I have a rabbit now!” With a perfect shriek of delight, I stood on the sofa and jumped up vigorously.

“This is your birthday gift. Do you know why I bring a rabbit for you?”

“Nope”, was my unconcerned answer, all my focus was on this little white furry guy.

“Because we were both born in the year of rabbit... I hope you can take good care of her...” Grandfather’s voice was becoming smaller and smaller...

The sun had put back its dazzling light. The soft light at 4 p.m. was warm and comfortable. “Can I go outside and play with the rabbit?” I begged. “Sure. But not too late...” His voice was not loud at all so I had to get closer to him, moving from the living room to the kitchen. Before he had finished speaking, I held the rabbit and rushed down the stairs like a rocket.

Sometimes I chased the rabbit on the lawn and suddenly ran to it, excitedly rubbed its fur with my hands. And sometimes I grabbed it when it was ready to run and laughed at how it was huddled like a snow ball. I even disturbed the rabbit while it was eating grass. How rude I was! However, I did not know at that time. I was lying on the lawn with sweat that broke out all over the body, watching the sun setting down. The sun was orange, like a big salted egg yolk. Unconsciously, I closed my eyes.

In the haze of my consciousness, it seems like I had forgotten something. "Where is the rabbit?" I woke up in an instant and shouted. It was almost dark evening and the sun had gone down already. A chill wind blew across my cheek and dried my clothes. I looked around confusedly, and tears filled my eyes. There were only few minutes until supper. Nonetheless, who cared about the supper? I stamped my foot anxiously because of my irresponsible and lack of care. "Have you ever seen a white rabbit..." "Excuse me, have you..." After running all over the place and asking many strangers, I was disappointed when they shook their head every time. The cold wind of the night stabbed me like many needles. Tasting salt in my mouth, I could not tell whether it was my sweat or my tears. With fear and regret, I huddled up and sat in a corner, scratching my hand with my nails. I dared not to go home.

The rabbit was lost.

At the end of the day, I saw a huge strong shadow walking towards me. A power lifted me up and held me in arms, gently like my grandfather but much stronger than him. I curled up in a warm embrace, then all things in front of me became black.

My cute little rabbit stayed by my side when I woke up the next day, with a note:

***"Take good care of the little rabbit and don't lose it again. Love you forever, grandpa."***

The sun shone through the chink of the curtain and gave me a gentle hug instead of my grandfather.

It was 8 a.m. in the morning. Everything inside my mind told me to apologize and tell the good news to my grandfather. Unexpectedly, the bad news of grandfather's death came first. I even had not been able to express how delighted I was when I saw the

rabbit again. Tears ran down my cheeks. I held my rabbit tightly but gently with silence.

My grandfather had gone...

Smelling the pungent and strange disinfectant, I was taken to a ward. White, is all over the room. White walls, white cases, white sheets, white furry rabbit, and grandfather's pale hair... Despite the fact there is sunshine outside the window, silence made the room ice cold. I crawled to the side of the bed with the rabbit in my arms.

"I've learned how to be gentle now and I will take good care of her..." I whispered.

It was 12 o'clock. The sun made every effort to restore the warmth of the room as well as my heart. I felt warm again as if I was in grandfather's embrace. I held the rabbit gently and left the ward.

The trace of tears on the bedspread was gradually wiped away by the sunshine.