

## Special Chinese Tea

Lee-Yin loved his Grandma Jones more than anything in the world. Whenever they could, Lee-Yin and his grandmother would read, make up stories based on the characters they read about, play chess, and bake pies. Sometimes, Grandma would even throw a baseball around with Lee-Yin.

Lee-Yin went to Grandma Jones' house every day after school because there was nobody at his own house during the day. His dad worked at the city university until dinnertime, when he would come home to make Lee-Yin and his grandma some dinner. Fortunately, Grandma Jones only lived two buildings down from Lee-Yin and his dad. Grandma Jones would always help Lee-Yin with his homework first thing, and then they would have fun until his dad got home. Lee-Yin absolutely loved his time with Grandma Jones.

One day, just before school, Lee-Yin's best friend Tori ran up to him on the playground. "Lee-Yin," he shouted, "my momma said your grandma's sick!"

"I don't believe it; I'm sure she's fine," said Lee-Yin. He could not imagine how his grandma could be so sick without his knowing. Just yesterday they had baked a delicious blackberry pie, and she had thrown him fly balls until dark. How could she possibly be terribly sick already this morning?

But as Lee-Yin sat in class listening to the teacher, Mrs. Callahan, his mind started to wander, and he got worried. "What if she really is sick?" he wondered. "What if it really is bad?" He thought about poor Grandma Jones lying in bed, coughing and sneezing and even burning up with a fever - alone in the house without him to take care of her. "How terrible!" he thought. As soon as the recess bell rang, Lee-Yin jumped out of his seat and hurried to Mrs. Callahan with his hand up. The words tumbled out in a chaotic stream. "Mrs. Callahan! Mrs. Callahan! My grandma's sick and in bed, and I need to help her, and she's sneezing all alone. I need to call her! I need to go home right now!"

"Slow down, Lee-Yin. Hold on one minute," Mrs. Callahan gasped as all the kids went out to the playground and the room finally fell quiet. "Take a deep breath for me, Lee-Yin. Now why don't we sit down, and you can tell me all about it."

"OK," said Lee-Yin. When they sat down in the front desks, he managed to tell Mrs. Callahan what he was so worried about.

"Grandma Jones?" asked Mrs. Callahan, with her eyes open wide and a big smile on her face. She paused as though unsure of what to say. She looked as though she were about to smile. Lee-Yin thought he even saw her giggle a little bit. "Now, I know your grandma, and

Leona Jones is NOT someone whose health I worry about. I think that if there were an emergency, they would have told us by now, don't you?"

"Well, I guess," said Lee-Yin, but he still wasn't so sure.

"And do you remember the rule about using the telephone at school or going home early?" asked Mrs. Callahan.

"We're only allowed to use the telephone or leave school early if our parents call in and say it's OK," replied Lee-Yin.

"That's right. Now if it was so urgent that you go see your grandma, wouldn't your mother or your father have called you by now?"

"Well, I guess," said Lee-Yin, but he still wasn't so sure.

"Why don't you go on out to recess and forget about it for a while until after school. If anyone calls, I'll let you know right away, understood?"

"Well, I guess," muttered Lee-Yin, but he still wasn't so sure. He did go out to play, though, with Tori and Alexander and Benjamin, who were playing wall ball on the blacktop. And he did seem to forget about it, during social studies class and story time and lunchtime and second recess, and even in writing and handwriting. Before he knew it, the very last bell had rung and it was time to go home.

But part of Lee-Yin's mind hadn't forgotten at all. Thinking about his poor, lonely, sick grandma stuck at home and suffering, Lee-Yin remembered all the stories he had read with his grandma about people getting sick. In those stories people got so sick they could even die if they weren't helped. But it seemed like in every one of those stories there was always a special drink, a tea, or a plant that was the only thing that could save the sick person. Lee-Yin was unfamiliar with special drinks, teas, or plants. The only special drink he had ever tasted was hot cocoa with Grandma. The only tea he ever consumed was at the Chinese restaurant down the street where they sometimes went when his dad had to work late. The Chinese restaurant with the Asian Market next to it... with all those jars of what Grandma said were herbs... Wait, herbs were sort of like special plants!

Lee-Yin wasted no time getting to Grandma Jones' house as fast as he could. He grabbed his coat and jacket and disappeared out the doorway just as Mrs. Callahan was saying, "Great job today, Lee-Yin, I know it wasn't easy..." Mrs. Callahan just smiled as she watched him go, amused and touched by Lee-Yin's concern for his grandma.

Lee-Yin raced to Grandma Jones' house in record time. At each crosswalk he came to, he jumped and jogged in place, waiting impatiently for the light to change, then taking off from the curb and darting through the people crossing from the other side. Finally, he made it to Grandma Jones' house. He paused for a moment in front of the door, catching his breath.

The door was always unlocked in preparation for Lee-Yin's arrival after school, and he opened it slowly and peeked inside. "Grandma, I'm home!" he called in a gentle voice. It was dark, and the entry way was quiet. Full of worry, Lee-Yin started to tremble.

He opened the door all the way and crept silently inside. Grandma was nowhere to be seen! He checked the kitchen, and the living room. He even looked in the closets. Finally, he began to tiptoe upstairs to Grandma's bedroom. There were no lights on, no Grandma, and not a single sound.

He took a first few tentative steps and paused to listen. He moved a few more steps and hesitated once again. Then, just as he began to move once more, "SSSnnoooooorrrrkkk!" He heard a crackly, hissing, sick-sounding, DYING call coming from the bedroom. It was worse than anything that he had ever imagined in his whole life! He flew up the rest of the stairs and into Grandma's room and discovered her sprawled out on her bed, making a terrible agonizing snoring sound!

"She IS sick," thought Lee-Yin. "So sick she can't even get under the covers! She's so sick she's not moving; she's... she's... dying. "Don't worry, Grandma, I'll go get help!" He ran down the stairs, bolted out the door, and scurried to the Chinese food store.

"Oh, it's little Lee-Yin!" said Mrs. Lin, the storeowner who also owned the restaurant. "What are you doing here all alone?"

"My Grandma!" Lee-Yin gasped. "She's sick, she's lying in her room... I think she's dying! I need medicine! Special medicine! Herbs! Tea! Plants! Quick!"

"What? But your grandma was shopping here just a few hours ago, and she said she just had a little...". Mrs. Lin paused. She smiled a gentle, knowing smile. Lee-Yin even thought he saw her giggle a little bit. She looked at Lee-Yin and said, "Oh, OK. I'm sorry, Lee-Yin. We'll get you what you need right away. No time to waste, eh? Let me see... Yes, I have just the thing." She went to one of the small jars and pulled out a small sack of herbs. She solemnly handed it to Lee-Yin and said, "Get this to your grandma, and she'll feel better in no time. Hurry, before it's too late!"

Lee-Yin rushed back to find Grandma Jones standing right there at the door. "Lee-Yin, what are you doing? Your bag is on the floor, the door is wide open, and I've been worried to death about where you are."

Lee-Yin gasped at the word death. "Grandma, no! You can't be up right now: you're sick; you're dying! But don't worry; I brought you medicine from Mrs. Lin! Here! Here!" he yelled as he handed the small bag to Grandma Jones.

"Why, Lee-Yin, what are you talking about? I mean, I did have a little cold, and I was just taking a quick nap, but..." Grandma paused. She smiled a small smile and then she giggled a little bit. At the same time, she wiped a small tear from her eye. She looked

down at Lee-Yin and said, "Of course, Lee-Yin, this is just what I needed! I don't know what I'd do without you, my little hero! I'll just make my tea, and you read me a story. We have no time to waste!"

Rapidly, Lee-Yin did as he was told. He read her his favorite book about two princes who saved their kingdom from a magic spell. Grandma Jones drank her tea and kept saying she felt better and better already. She thanked Lee-yin several times for saving his old grandma. Lee-Yin smiled, as big as he had ever smiled and kept reading. By the end of the story, he could barely read a word as he drifted off to sleep.

Grandma Jones put her arm around her sleeping grandson, held him close, and whispered, "My little hero!"

- 1. What did Lee-Yin remember from the stories that sick people did to keep from dying?**
  - A. They went to special Chinese doctors to get help.
  - B. They drank special drinks and teas and took herbs.
  - C. They stayed in bed and drank lots of water and juices.
- 2. What surprised Lee-Yin when he got back home with the herbs?**
  - A. Grandma didn't know what he was talking about.
  - B. Grandma became well when he was at the store.
  - C. Grandma was standing up at the front door.
- 3. What will Grandma probably tell Lee-Yin about what had happened when he gets older?**
  - A. Never tell him because it would make him feel stupid.
  - B. Tell him how Mrs. Lin and she had let him be a hero.
  - C. Explain how they tricked him to teach him a lesson.
- 4. What was the main problem in the story?**
  - A. Grandma's friends wanted to fool Lee-Yin.
  - B. Lee-Yin thought he had to save his grandma from dying.
  - C. Lee-Yin was told that his grandma was dying.

- 5. What did Lee-Yin remember from his trips to the store with his grandma?**
- A. There were lots of unusual foods to buy.
  - B. There were jars of herbs at the Asian Market.
  - C. They had eaten good lunches at the restaurant.
- 6. What was probably the main reason Lee-Yin started to believe that his grandma might be sick?**
- A. His best friend said that his mother told him about Lee-Yin's grandma.
  - B. His friend looked serious when he said it, and he was his best friend.
  - C. His best friend wouldn't say something like that unless it was true.
- 7. What did Grandma do right after she told Lee-Yin that she was just taking a nap?**
- A. She decided that it was better to let Lee-Yin feel like a hero than to tell the truth.
  - B. She decided that all young boys needed to have some adventure in their lives.
  - C. She decided that she didn't want to go through a long explanation about what happened.
- 8. What reason did Mrs. Callahan give Lee-Yin so he wouldn't worry about his grandma?**
- A. It would be better to wait until he got home to find out if his grandmother was sick.
  - B. Other people would be taking care of his grandmother if she were really sick.
  - C. His father would have called him if it were necessary for him to see his grandmother.
- 9. What made Lee-Yin say at first that his grandma couldn't be sick?**
- A. She baked a pie with him yesterday and played ball until dark.
  - B. He didn't think that someone who always felt good could be sick.
  - C. Lee-Yin thought his friend didn't hear correctly what his mother said.

- 10. Which statement best tells what was going through Lee-Yin's mind when he got home and saw his grandma?**
- A. The terrible sound his grandma was making was a dying sound, so she must be really sick.
  - B. Making terrible snoring sounds, not moving, and lying on top of the covers meant that his grandma was dying.
  - C. Lying on top of the covers was a sure sign that his grandma either had a fever or was too weak to move.
- 11. What did Mrs. Callahan think about the way Lee-Yin was acting?**
- A. She was concerned that Lee-Yin could think that his grandma could be sick when she wasn't.
  - B. She thought he was a very unusual boy because he could think about more than just playing.
  - C. She was amused that he thought his grandma was sick, but his concern touched her heart.
- 12. What was this story mostly about?**
- A. How a young boy showed his love for his grandma.
  - B. How a grandma let her grandson think he saved her life.
  - C. How neighbors helped a boy show that he loved his grandma.
- 13. What did Mrs. Callahan, Mrs. Lin, and Grandma Jones do that Lee-Yin didn't understand?**
- A. They all had funny looks on their faces like they just didn't understand the problem.
  - B. They all giggled a little when he told them that Grandma was sick and probably dying.
  - C. They all said that Grandma couldn't be dying because she was too healthy for that.

- 14. What showed that Lee-Yin wasn't fully convinced by Mrs. Callahan that his grandma was okay?**
- A. He would say that he guessed she was right but then think that he wasn't so sure.
  - B. He remembered what it could be like for his grandmother if she really was sick.
  - C. He refused to go out to play until he heard from his father that everything was okay.
- 15. Why did Mrs. Callahan tell Lee-Yin that he did a great job at school that day and that it wasn't easy?**
- A. She could tell that he was thinking more about recess than about doing his schoolwork.
  - B. He always did well in school, and the work that day was hard, especially social studies.
  - C. She knew that his mind was on Grandma more than on school, but he did well anyway.
- 16. What was Mrs. Lin, the store owner, like?**
- A. She felt that a young boy who had the wrong idea about his grandma being sick needed to learn a lesson.
  - B. She thought going along with what Lee-Yin was thinking about his grandma was a good trick to play on him.
  - C. She thought it was a good idea for a young boy to feel like he was doing something wonderful for his grandma.
- 17. Why didn't Lee-Yin's teacher let him go home?**
- A. She knew his grandma was very healthy and probably wasn't sick.
  - B. She thought he was just making up a story so he could leave school early.
  - C. She felt that Lee-Yin thought too much about his grandma and should go play.

**18. How was Lee-Yin probably feeling about saving his grandma?**

- A. He thought the best thing that happened was that his grandma thought he was a hero.
- B. He was pleased that she was grateful, but mostly he was glad that she was alive.
- C. He was mostly thankful that Grandma was able to read to him and make treats for him.

**19. What did Lee-Yin begin to think about right after school was out?**

- A. He remembered how good the hot chocolate tasted that Grandma made.
- B. All the fun he had with Grandma and how they read stories together.
- C. His sick grandma and the stories they had read about people getting sick.

**20. What made Lee-Yin finally decide his grandma really was sick?**

- A. He remembered that she was getting older and could get sick more easily.
- B. He thought so much about how it might be true that he came to believe it.
- C. He had a feeling in his stomach that there was something very wrong.