

The Young Broken Heart

When I was eight years old, I found out that Santa Claus no longer existed at all. He left me alone at the age that I really needed him. I was born in a poor family, and I lived with my parents and six brothers and sisters in a very small house. My parents worked very hard to support us. Food was the most important part of our family's needs. The rest, like toys and entertainment, were secondary. At that time, influenced by the fairy tales, I was a little girl who always waited for miracles. I believed that fairies were in our world.

Every day, I played with stones, leaves, used cans, and longan seeds since I did not have many toys. However, with those materials, I created my own world that was interesting enough to enjoy. One day, I saw Kim, my neighbor, holding a big doll with long blond hair, a cute face, and a beautiful dress. I began to dream of it day and night. It was the first time I thought that stones, leaves, used cans, and longan seeds were ugly toys. I wished I could have a doll. I dared not ask my parents for a doll; it would be an extreme request. However, I could not help wishing.

Kim told me how she got the doll. "Papa Noel (we called Santa Claus by that name in my country) gave it to me last Christmas for my good behavior," she said. "Be a good girl, and when Christmas comes, write a letter to him, telling him what present you want. On Christmas Eve, he will come and give it to you."

I trusted her because what she said was similar to what others said. Papa Noel loved children, and he would come. I believed in him, for he was the one who could make my dream come true in

my poor childhood. The reasons that I had not gotten gifts from him for the other Christmas were that maybe that I had not been really a good girl, and that I had not written him letters. From that day, I tried my best to be a good girl. In the morning, I woke up early, never waiting for my mom to call me anymore. I never complained about my meager breakfast or my, meatless lunch. At school, I always obeyed my teacher and tried to be quiet in classroom. At home, I did my homework voluntarily, went to bed early, and took care of my little sisters. I promised myself I would share the doll with them if Papa Noel gave it to me. I believe that in the ceiling of my house, Papa Noel's invisible eyes were looking at me, following my behavior.



The person to whom I wanted to talk about this secret was my closest brother. He was just one year older than I, but he was very smart, and he knew everything. After listening to me, he laughed, and said, "Ha, stupid girl." I did

not mind his words, for he always said something negative like that. I thought Papa Noel was smiling at me, and understanding me.

Finally, Christmas came. How excited I was on Christmas Eve! I had written a letter to Papa Noel three weeks before. Since I did not know where to mail it, I put it in the window in our room. The winter wind blew it away, but I thought he did receive it. That night, I went to bed on time without forgetting to put my sock near the window (we had neither a Christmas tree nor a fireplace). Holding my pillow, I thought of the doll that I would have the next day. Of course, I did not forget to thank Papa Noel before falling to sleep.

In the morning, as you can guess, there was no doll in my sock. All my brothers and sisters were sharing a small candy box. I could not believe it! Where was my doll? Didn't Papa Noel receive my letter? Did someone steal it? I stood near the window and cried, hoping that a brother or a sister who had hidden my doll before I woke up would feel guilty and would give it back to me, and I cried louder and louder. Finally, someone came to me. It was my brother. He looked at me and said slowly:

“Stupid girl, always stupid girl. There is no Papa Noel as you thought. All of the gifts on Christmas Eve are given by parents. Our parents are poor, so they don't have enough money to buy gift for each of us. We are poor, remember that? Candy is better than nothing. Stop crying!”

“No, you lie, Papa Noel gave Kim ...”

My brother interrupted me. “Her parents did that. Her parents were Papa Noel. They have money, but ours don't. Papa Noel? Liar! All who talk about Papa Noel are liars!”

Later, I stopped crying, and understood that he was right. I had waited for a gift that was never going to come. My heart was absolutely broken on that day. A long time after that, I went to work. Taking a part of my first salary, I bought myself a doll, which was similar to the one I had wished to have when I was eight years old. I was old, over the age to play with dolls, but I wanted to make part of my dreams come true. I learned that if I

wanted something, I had to get it by myself. Miracles were completely absent in my life.

From that time on, I no longer waited for any invisible help or gift from the “sky” where I used to think the generous Gods lived. I understood that I had to believe in myself, and that life was very different from fairy tales. Even though this concept helped me to improve myself and to gain more confidence in my life, sometimes I felt lonely. I had to mainly rely on myself to learn, to work, and to live. Facing the obstacles around me, I wished I could refuge in some type of religions. Unfortunately, on that Christmas night, the legend of Santa Claus was broken, destroying all my beliefs. This loss was so big that I could never feel strong to console the others or myself.

Later in my life, I had an opportunity to work with children in school. At Christmas time, boys and girls gave me the letters that they had written to Santa Claus. They believed, as I used to, that their dreamed about presents would be sent if these letters were mailed to him. Holding their letters in my hands, I did not have the heart to tell them that I really did not know where I could send these letters. To me, what did I know was that Santa Claus had already left all of us since I was eight years old.

Phụ huynh Thu Nga



Hmm... Hổng biết Tr. Đoàn đang nói gì mà Tr. Khiêm phải rờ đầu - Ý quên rờ râu.

Tr. Liêm nhìn Tr. Phương Anh thần nhiên đọc báo mà ham.

Tr. Hoà chăm chú nghe Tr. Đoàn nói để lát nữa giải thích cho Tr. Liêm.

Tr. Phong Nhã: “anh Đoàn chỉ lại, chỗ kia mới đúng!!!”