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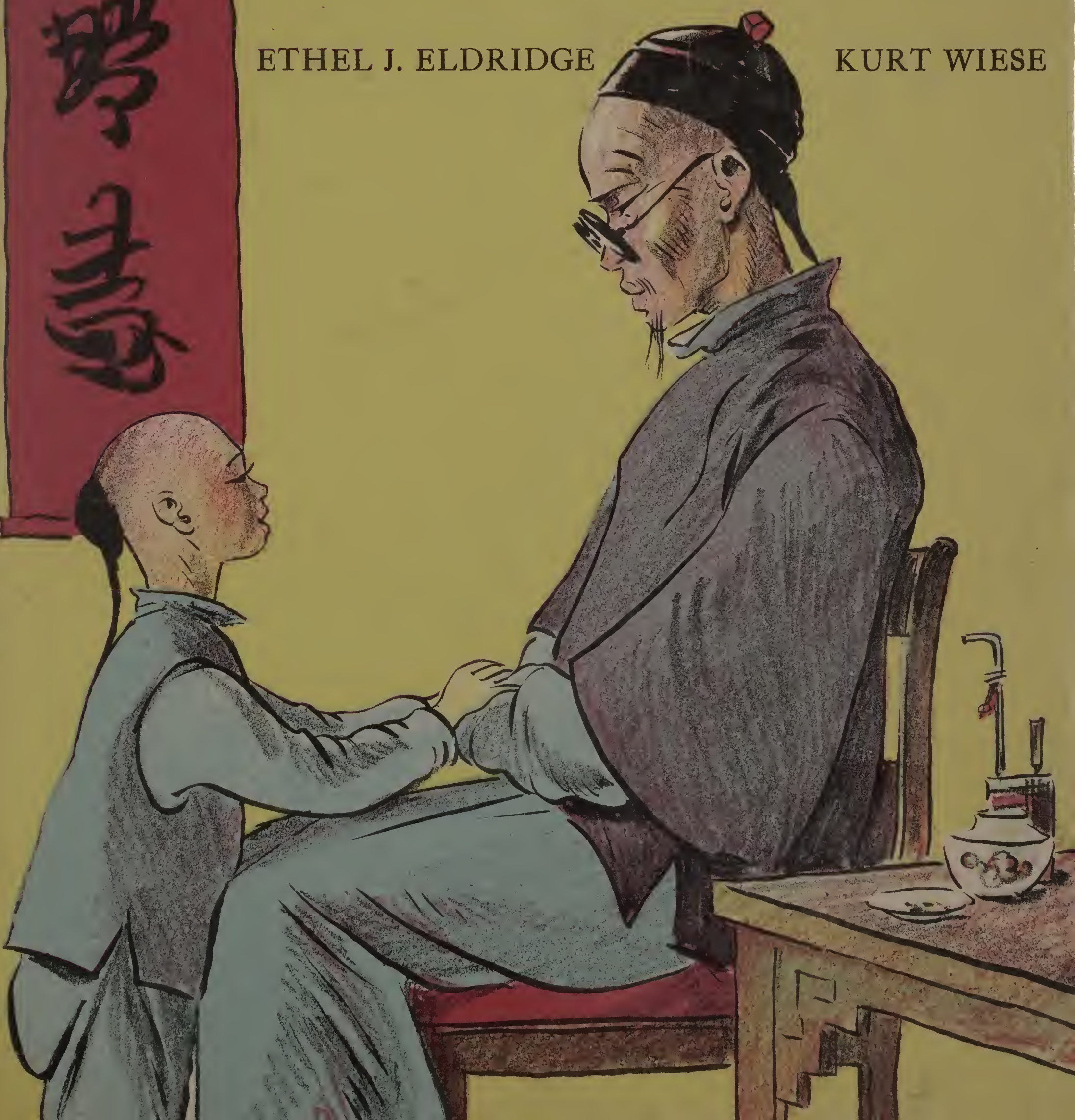
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LING

GRANDSON OF YEN-FOH

ETHEL J. ELDRIDGE

KURT WIESE





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LING

GRANDSON OF YEN-FOH





LING

GRANDSON OF YEN-FOH



ADAPTED FROM THE CHINESE BY ETHEL J.
ELDRIDGE ∞ ILLUSTRATED BY KURT WIESE

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Ling's Kind Advice

THERE once lived in Peiping, the capital of China, a young Chinese boy named Ling.

Ling dwelt in the home of his ancestors with Honorable Father, Beautiful Mother, Little Sweet Sister, and most important of all, Illustrious Grandfather, Yen-foh.

It was winter in China when this story begins. Very early one morning, before the yellow sun had lifted his shining face over the edge of the world, Ling was awake. He was so excited he could not sleep. He lay listening for a call which he knew would not come until after the dawn.

Just as the first pink rays shone into Ling's room, the call sounded.

"Ooo! Ooo!" it came clear and shrill from very near his home.

Ling sprang quickly from his bed and looked through his window.

There they were!

Six of his friends were waiting to have their snow battle before time for school.

No one in the house was astir when Ling dressed in his warm jacket and trousers and slipped out to join his playmates. They hurried to an unused field nearby and soon had built a big fort of sparkling white snow. Then sides were chosen and the battle raged! The balls were tossed back and forth so rapidly it was almost impossible to watch them.

But Ling had been noticing Chi, a boy on his side, who played carelessly. He was never able to get a ball over the top of the high fort. Chi seemed always thinking of something else, and did not keep his mind on the game.

Ling wondered what was in the thoughts of the other Chinese boy to cause such a puzzled look.





But Ling had been noticing Chi

With merry shouts, when the game was finished, the boys rushed to their homes for breakfast and preparations for school. But before they left Ling planned to see Chi at the game the following morning and talk with him.

Next day before starting to play, the two small Chinese lads laughed and spoke about the frolic on the previous morning. It was a great deal of fun they decided, to get up early and play before school. Their studies had been prepared the evening before, as this was required of every Chinese child.

During their talk the questioning look remained in Chi's eyes. Ling asked his friend why he seemed puzzled, and if he was unhappy about something.

Chi watched Ling's face earnestly as he told his companion that he was wondering about the new wife whom his father had recently brought to live at their home. Chi said he loved her very much, because, since his own mother had died, he had often wished for another.

Ling listened intently to every word and told Chi he was glad to hear of the new mother, and to please tell him more about her.

Chi said that he would like to prove to this wife of his honorable father, how deeply he loved her, and he wanted to make her a present.





Chi said he loved her very much



But she had everything, so what could he do, Chi questioned. Ling wrinkled his brow in deep thought, then asked Chi what the most fortunate lady liked best of all.

Chi hastily explained that she was very fond of fish. However, with everything frozen in the winter, he of course could not go fishing.

Ling looked thoughtful. He then told Chi that he had a plan, if Chi was brave enough and really loved the lady enough to do it.

Chi declared that he loved his new mother enough to do anything for her.

Ling then explained to the eager boy that if he would go to the frozen lake and breathe his warm breath upon one spot on the ice for a long time, it would melt, and he might get a fish for the lady at his house.

Without hesitating a moment, brave young Chi said he would go that very night. He gratefully thanked Ling for so kindly telling him what to do.

At dark Chi went to the lake and lay upon the ice. He chose a spot and breathed his warm breath upon it with all his strength. It was a dark night. Hark! what was that sound? Just his own gasping breath! Would it last? Or would he freeze? Chi wondered. It was bitter cold. Chi shivered.

Although nearly exhausted the brave boy persisted until just before the sun shot his first rays of light, when the hole appeared. Chi reached his hand through the hole into the icy water beneath and drew out a carp. He reached again and drew out another.

Chi rested a moment then with a joyful shout he picked up the two fish. He warmed himself by running all the way home. He arrived in time for the stepmother to have the fish for breakfast.

Then she knew how much Chi, her little stepson, loved her, and she always loved him doubly in return.

After the good breakfast of fish, Chi hurried to Ling's home. His eyes were shining with happiness when he told of his success at the frozen lake. He assured Ling that his most splendid kind advice had been carried out perfectly.

When Grandfather Yen-foh heard of Chi's brave deed, he saw to it that a famous poet wrote a poem about it, so that the courage and faithfulness of this Chinese lad could be known by all people.





Grandfather Yen-foh Tells a Story

Through the freezing winter months Ling tried in every way to please his Grandfather Yen-foh, whom the boy loved dearly. During the cold nights the young Chinese lad would lie upon Grandfather Yen-foh's bed to warm it for The Great Old One.

When there was hot weather in China, Ling did not fail to get his fan and wave it to and fro over the Great Old One's bed to keep him cool and comfortable at night.

All winter Ling never forgot his Grandfather Yen-foh. Ling hoped very much to become like him some day, because The Great Old One had always used his mind and been a fine student.

On late winter afternoons, before time for the evening meal, Grandfather Yen-foh would often tell Little Sweet Sister and Ling an ancient fable.

The one Ling liked best was about The Proud Chicken. Little Sweet Sister liked this fable also, and on this particular winter evening The Great Old One told them their favorite story.

It was about a widow who made a living for her two children and herself by raising many, many chickens. She could not buy food for such a large number, but she let them go to the fields near her home. There the chickens could find bugs, and worms, and some green things.

There was one chicken with so much strength and size that he became the king of all the others. None dared try to take his place, because he was the master of all. He ruled by force, and was never satisfied. One day he tried to persuade the flock to follow him to the far side of a big mountain. He told them they would find more and different things to eat.

But the chickens refused to go. They were frightened when they thought of the eagles and the foxes on the other side of the high mountain.

However, the King's Secretary said that he feared nothing, and that he would go with the King. As they travelled along the Secretary saw a beetle and prepared to eat it. The King flew at him in fierce anger demanding the beetle for himself. They fought furiously together for the possession of the beetle, and during the fight the sly beetle crept away and hid, where neither chicken could get him.

The Secretary then deserted the cross King and returned home.

At night the King also came home, but would not accept the highest perch on the roost which the other chickens had kindly saved for him. He kept fighting instead.

Because of his ugly nature the flock left the King and went to live in the garden.

Next evening when the widow watched for her chickens to come home, only the King came. The woman was uneasy and asked the King where to find the rest of her flock. In an angry voice he answered that he cared nothing for the others, and wished they would never return.



The widow told the King that some day he would regret being so proud and unpleasant that the other chickens could not live with him. But the King only crowed, "Cock-a-doodle-doo!"

The Secretary then appeared and explained to the widow where her chickens were living.

She persuaded the chickens to return, but even then the King was haughty and angry and would not make friends with his companions.

When he was crowing a battle song an eagle swooped down and, catching the vicious King in his claws, carried him far away. The other chickens of the flock were never troubled with him again.

The children thanked the Great Old One for the fine story, then ate their evening rice from blue bowls, before Ling prepared his lessons.

Another time, as a special present, Grandfather Yen-foh gave Ling and Little Sweet Sister each a piece of money. This money, the Great Old One told them, was to be spent on the Chinese New Year. Since they did not have Christmas in China, the Chinese New Year was the great celebration day.

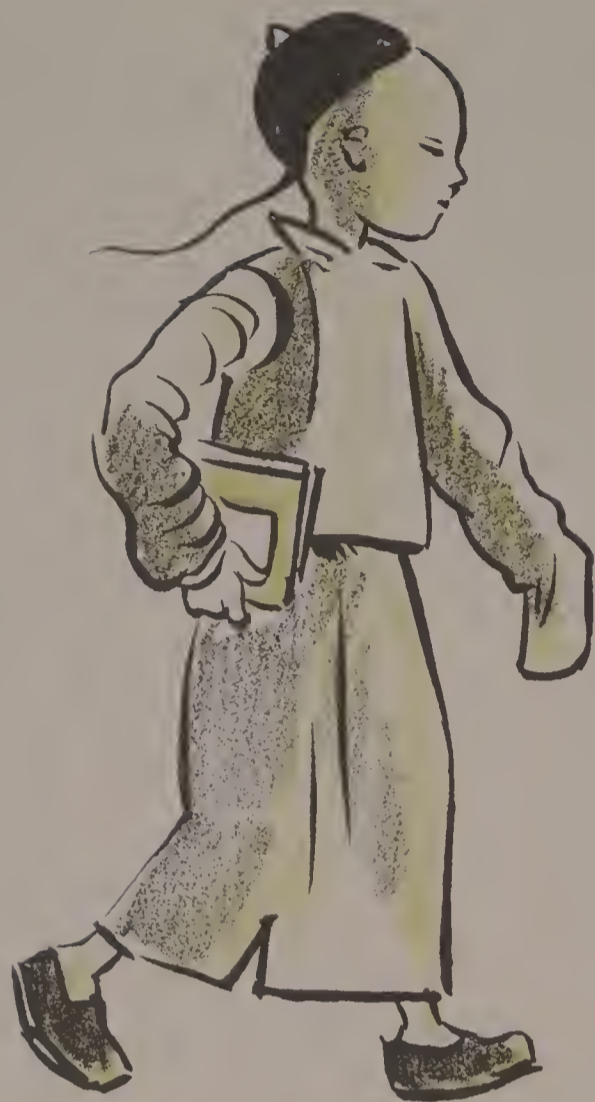
They were queer looking pieces of money, round with square holes in the center.

Ling's narrow dark eyes sparkled with pleasure as he laid his coin carefully away to await the coming of The Chinese New Year. He thought no other boy in all China had such a kind grandparent as his own Grandfather Yen-foh.





But the King only crowed, "Cock-a-doodle-doo!"



The Hole in the Wall

Ling's feet were light and he sang a little tune as he hurried to school. His eyes were bright, and the crisp winter air made his cheeks red like round red apples.

His long queue was neatly braided, his blue jacket and trousers were fresh and clean. Altogether Ling was a very handsome young Chinese boy.

But Ling, of course, did not know this. He was thinking how pleasant it would be if Little Sweet Sister were old enough to come to school and keep him company. But, just wait, she would be allowed to come next year. Ling smiled at the thought.

He turned a corner and joined his friend Kwang Hung who also was on his way to school. Kwang Hung had no smile about his mouth, and his eyes were gloomy.

The boys walked in silence for awhile. Ling was sorry about Kwang Hung's downcast looks, and questioned him as to why he was troubled.



He joined his friend Kwang Hung

Kwang Hung did not seem anxious to tell, but when he looked into Ling's friendly eyes he confessed his problem.

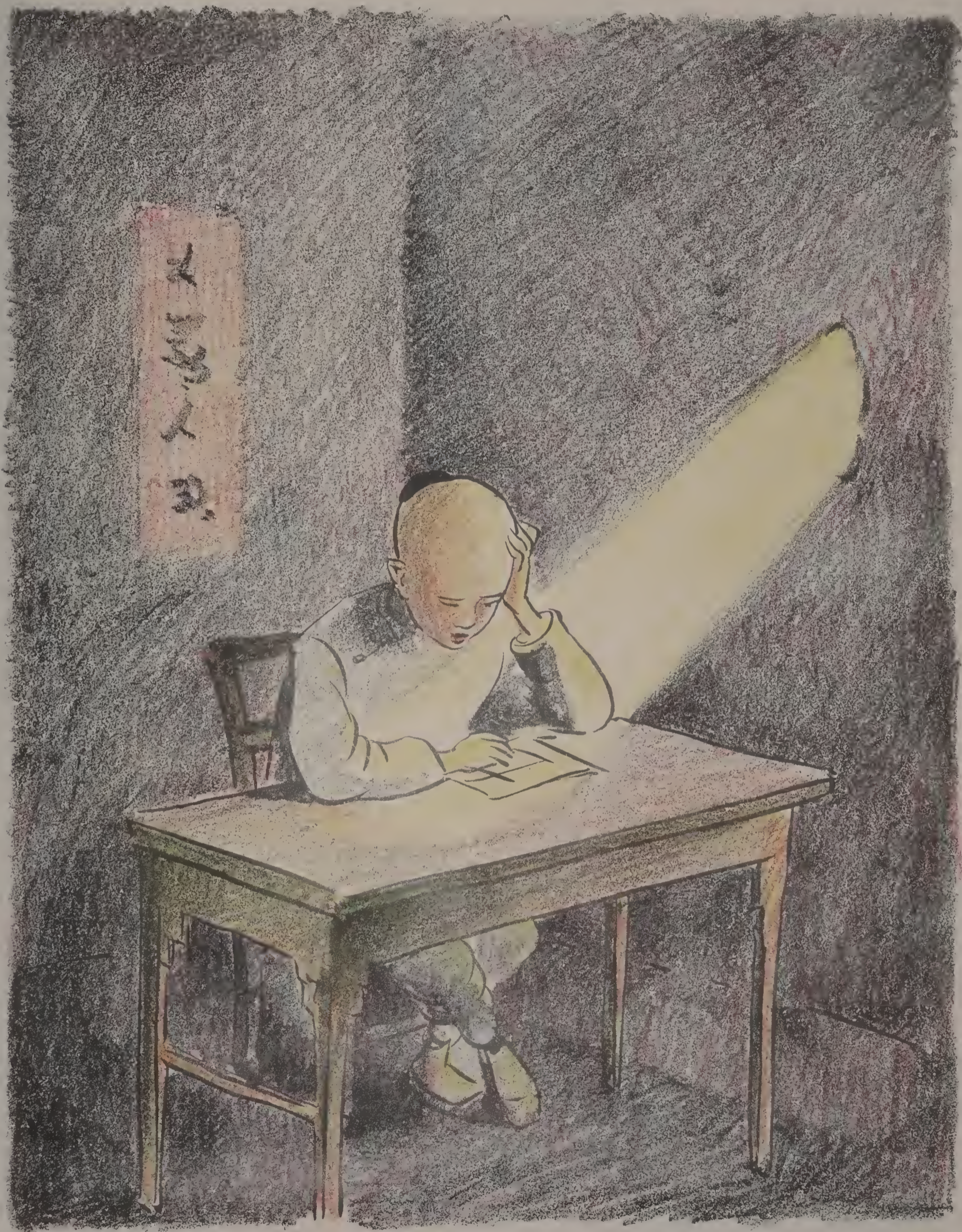
It was about his school work. Kwang Hung said he was not doing well in his studies, and he was getting low marks. Of course he felt badly to have this happen, because he must be a bright scholar and become highly educated.

The trouble was, Kwang Hung continued to explain, that he had no money with which to buy oil for study at night.

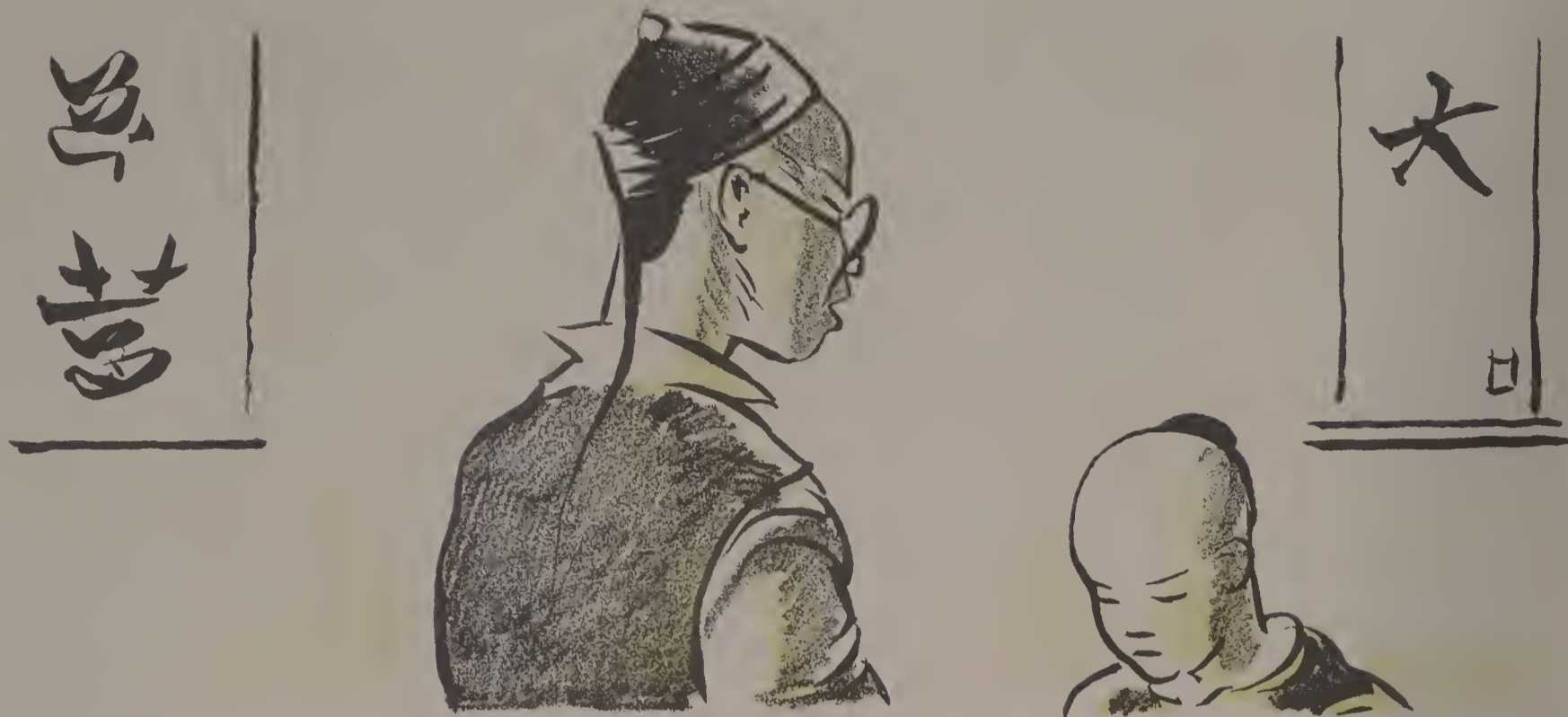
He had kind neighbors and they had allowed him to cut a hole through the wall dividing their homes. Kwang Hung went on to tell Ling that a small gleam of light came through the hole from the neighbor's oil. By sitting very close to the hole on his side, he could manage to see his books and study a little.

However, it was very hard to do, Kwang Hung told Ling, and the effort was hurting his eyes. Beside he could not learn his lessons well in such a strange way.





A small gleam of light came through the hole



By this time the boys had reached the school. They agreed to meet when they were dismissed, and walk home together. ✓

All day Ling noticed that Kwang Hung's lessons were indeed not well prepared, and the teacher spoke crossly several times about it to Kwang Hung.

Ling was sorry for the poor boy who had no way to study his books during the long winter evenings, except through a hole in the wall. He wished there was some way in which he could help his friend. Then Ling had a sudden thought and his eyes grew brighter than ever.

He knew what he would do!

Ling was anxious for school to be over that afternoon, so he could meet Kwang Hung ✓ at the door and carry out his plan. He was waiting when Kwang Hung came from the school house with lagging steps.

The two boys walked by Ling's house first, and stopped at the door. Ling invited Kwang Hung into his home to meet his family, and especially his Grandfather, Yen-foh, whose fame, as a man who used his mind and solved difficult problems, had spread throughout the land of China.

Kwang Hung, the poor boy, had never expected to enter such a home, or know such a man. Kwang Hung's family had no money, and they were far ✓ below people like Ling's family.

But all of Ling's family were friendly to this young Chinese boy who lived in poverty.

Ling excused himself for a moment and left Kwang Hung laughing heartily over Little Sweet Sister's pranks.

When Ling returned to the room he offered Kwang Hung a piece of money. It was the money that Grandfather Yen-foh had given him for New Year's.

The poor boy did not touch it until Ling insisted that it was his very own to do with as he pleased. He wanted, more than anything else, to have Kwang Hung use it to buy oil. Ling said it would make him happy to have Kwang Hung save his eyesight while studying his books at night.

Then, bowing low, Kwang Hung accepted the money with gracious thanks.

Grandfather Yen-foh told the children of a certain time in his boyhood. He too had helped a schoolmate whose name was Yang Su to cultivate his mind, and study for school, by giving him brushes and paper to prepare his lessons.

The Great Old One was pleased that his grandson had been kind and had followed in his grandfather's steps by helping Kwang Hung in this way.





Ling's Birthday

The cold winter had passed and spring had come to China land. Also it was Ling's birthday!

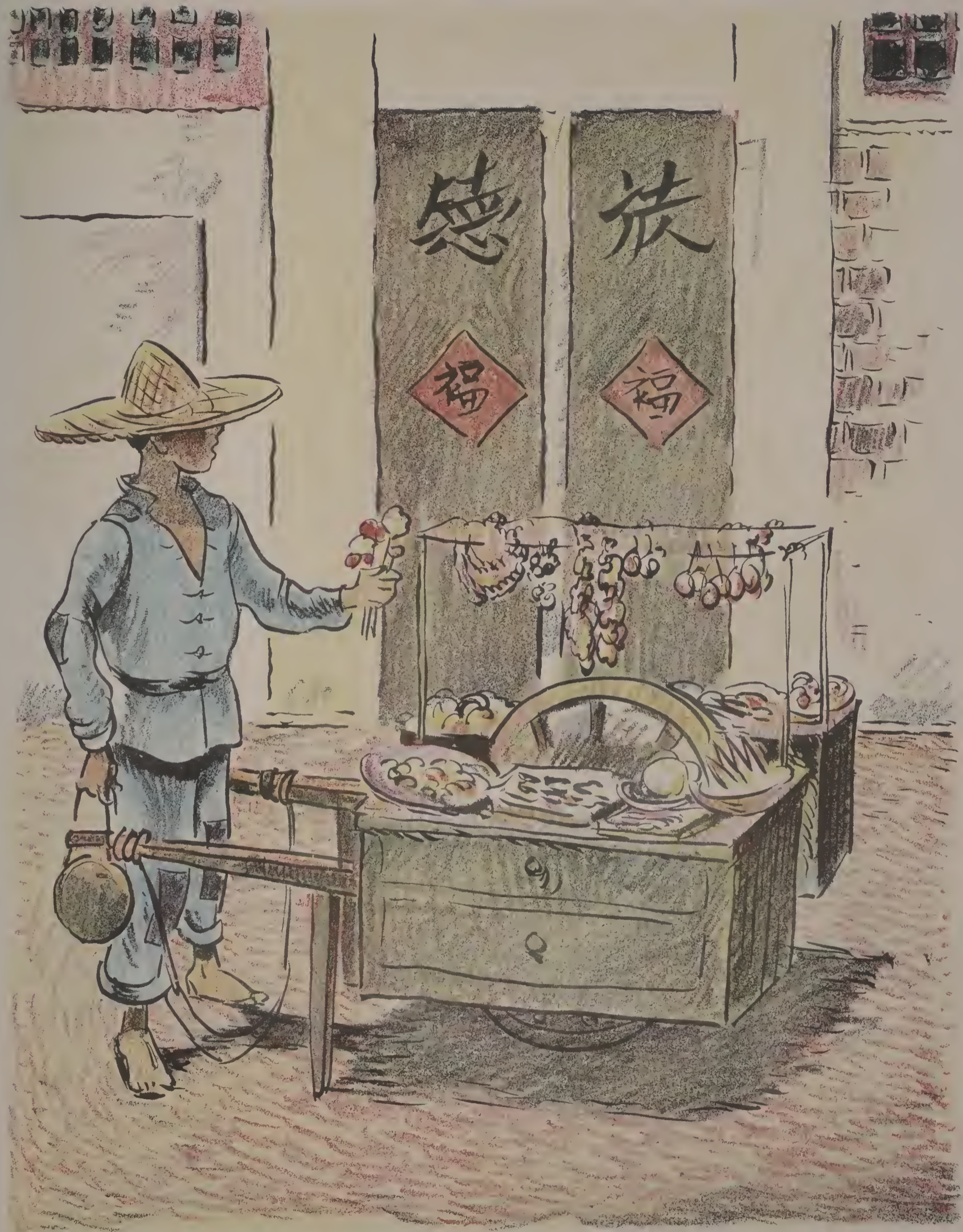
The garden was green and blooming. Everything smiled with the joy of life after the long frozen time.

There was no telling what might happen on such a day as this. Ling spent much time wondering about it, he thought the warm sun felt good.

Ling was mending his kite under a pergola with Little Sweet Sister nearby, when the children heard a peculiar sound. They sat perfectly still and listened.

It came again. Cr-e-a-k, cr-e-a-k.

Then Ling and Little Sweet Sister knew what was coming! The noise was the sound made by the wheels on the candy man's cart when they went round and round. Beautiful Mother heard it too, and she tossed a coin from the window telling Ling to buy candy for himself and Little Sweet Sister.



The noise was made by the candy man's cart

A crowd of children surrounded the cart. They exclaimed over the many queer looking pieces of candy the smiling candy man showed them.

With his money Ling bought Little Sweet Sister a red candy cat, and for himself he bought a green candy frog. The brother and sister ate their nice sweet candy as they hurried home.

A coolie with his 'ricksha was waiting in front of their door. This meant that Beautiful Mother had finished dressing in her celebration garments, and would soon come to take her seat in the 'ricksha.

As one of Ling's birthday pleasures Beautiful Mother was to take her two children for a long ride. Almost at once she appeared, and the three sat close together on the wide seat of the 'ricksha. Beautiful Mother carried a small parasol. She held it in the best position to protect their faces from the sun.

They rode past the market place to see the strange things brought on the big boats as they crossed the wide deep ocean from foreign lands, where other children lived.

Then the 'ricksha coolie took them to a famous tea house. There they found Honorable Father awaiting them. Ling and Little Sweet Sister were allowed to sit at the table with their parents, like grownups, and drink the delicious Chinese tea. Little Sweet Sister thought this was the finest thing of all.





The 'ricksha coolie took them to a famous tea house

When they had finished their tea, Honorable Father said he would leave his business for the day and go home with them, because it was Ling's birthday.

Two 'rickshas were needed to take them. Beautiful Mother and Little Sweet Sister rode in one, while Honorable Father and Ling occupied the other. The children laughed at the birthday procession as they travelled through the streets.

Upon reaching home Beautiful Mother and Honorable Father explained to Ling and Little Sweet Sister that they must tie their handkerchiefs around their eyes. Their parents did not want them to see something pleasant that was coming.

What could it be?

The children could not imagine, and begged to be told.

But Beautiful Mother said it was a secret which they would soon know.





Ling and Little Sweet Sister drank the Chinese tea

Honorable Father took Ling's hand and led his happy young son, while Beautiful Mother brought Little Sweet Sister to the garden back of the house. All was quiet. Ling had a strange feeling inside of him.

What was happening?

Then they stood while Beautiful Mother and Honorable Father removed the bandages from their eyes.

Ling and Little Sweet Sister opened their eyes.

There among the flowers and trees Grandfather Yen-foh was seated in a large carved chair. He was dressed in his ceremonial robes. Standing in a circle very near him were ten young Chinese boys, Ling's friends. It was a birthday party!

Ling cried out with joy and surprise. The ten small boys quickly gathered about him laughing and wishing him a happy birthday.

Beautiful Mother had arranged a fine time for the party.

First, Little Sweet Sister danced on the soft grass. Her tiny feet carried her swiftly in and out of the shade and sunlight under the pomegranate trees.

Next were games played by the boys. There was a shout of pleasure over this. The children directed Ling to lead them since he knew more Chinese games than any one else.

Because Little Sweet Sister could not play in the boy's games, The Great Old One held her upon his knee.





The small Chinese girl clapped her hands with pleasure while watching the sports.

The Great Old One smiled kindly upon them all.

Ling accepted the honor of master of the games because his friends wished him to do so.

He suggested the first game should be the one called "Queue." The boys liked that one.

In this game each Chinese boy threw his queue over his shoulder and stepped away from his companions. But as he went farther from one he drew nearer another. Under no circumstances must he let his queue fall back from his shoulder. If he did so, and was caught, the penalty was a dozen slaps from the other boys, all of whom were watching for a chance.

The boys' names were called suddenly and many other things were done to make them turn their heads so that the queues would fall down their backs as they played.

When one did so and the victim did not escape, a shout of laughter went up while with much smiling and squealing the slaps were given.

Ling purposely tossed his queue over his shoulder so that it fell straight down his back. Then he ran. Of course the other boys must catch him and give him his slaps while his queue was in the wrong place.

How they raced!



This one would be "Cat Catching Mice"

Ling was fleet of foot and always kept a little ahead. Once Chi reached out a hand to catch him, but Ling was gone.

No one could catch Ling.

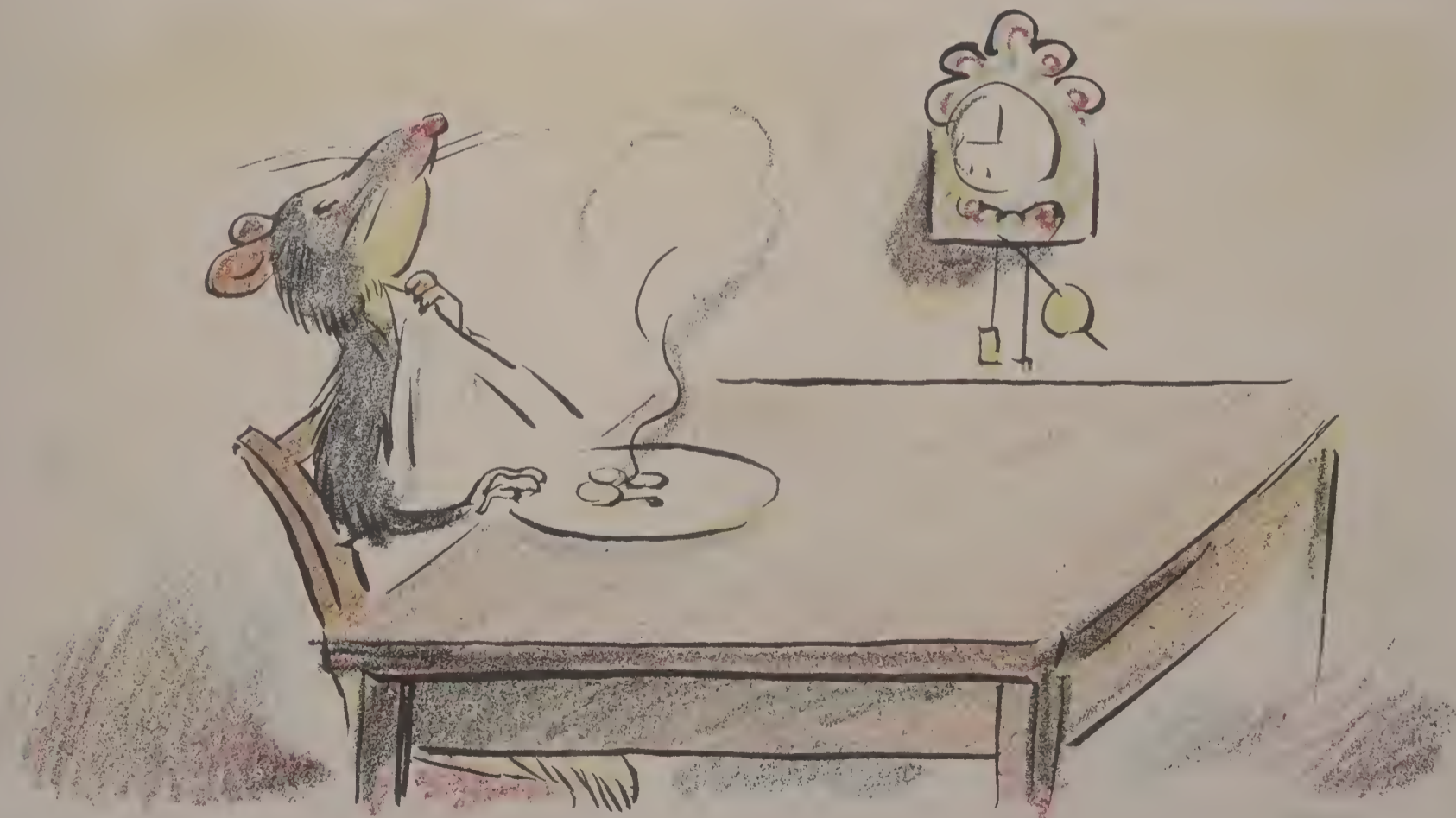
When all were tired Ling pulled his queue back over his shoulder and joined the other boys, laughing because he had escaped the slaps. It had been a great deal of fun, and Ling's playmates begged for another game.

Ling, the leader, decided this one would be the game "Cat Catching Mice." This one also was a favorite with the boys.

They quickly chose Ling for the cat and Chi for the mouse. The remaining children formed a circle with the mouse in the center. The ring hopped round and round protecting the mouse from the cat who was outside the ring, and eagerly watching for an opening to enter the circle and pounce upon the mouse.

As the boys were swinging round and round in a ring, they sang this verse:

"What o'clock is it?
Just struck nine.
Is the mouse at home?
He's about to dine."



While the boys' voices chimed in the song the mouse, who was Chi tried to avoid the cat.

Would the cat catch the mouse? That was the big question! The boys could scarcely wait to find out.

Suddenly the circle of boys stood still. The poor mouse darted out with the cat after him. Ling, being the cat, and such a good runner, soon caught the mouse. The mouse was then supposed to be eaten by the cat. There were cries of glee, and the boys danced up and down in merriment as they watched the funny way Ling pretended to devour Chi.

Grandfather Yen-foh and Little Sweet Sister stood by to watch the hilarious performance.

They played more games until the golden sun, hiding his face behind the treetops, poured purple and red light across the garden.

Then the servants of the house appeared with sweet rice cakes, which delighted everyone.

Ling's young friends said good-bye with best wishes and smiles for Ling on his birthday.

Many birthdays passed. Ling and Little Sweet Sister grew to manhood and womanhood. They never parted. Little Sweet Sister always lived in the home of their ancestors with her brother.

Ling—grandson of Yen-foh, advanced in the respect of the people of China. They loved him because he was kind and unselfish in helping others, and was a leader as he had always been, even when a little boy.

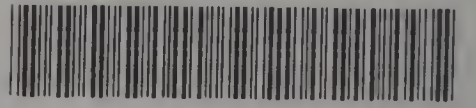
Ling felt that he owed the friendship of the people to the teachings and example of his illustrious grandfather, Yen-foh.







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