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# TEN-FOH

ETHEL J. ELDRIDGE



KURT WIESE





Class PZ 8

Book 1

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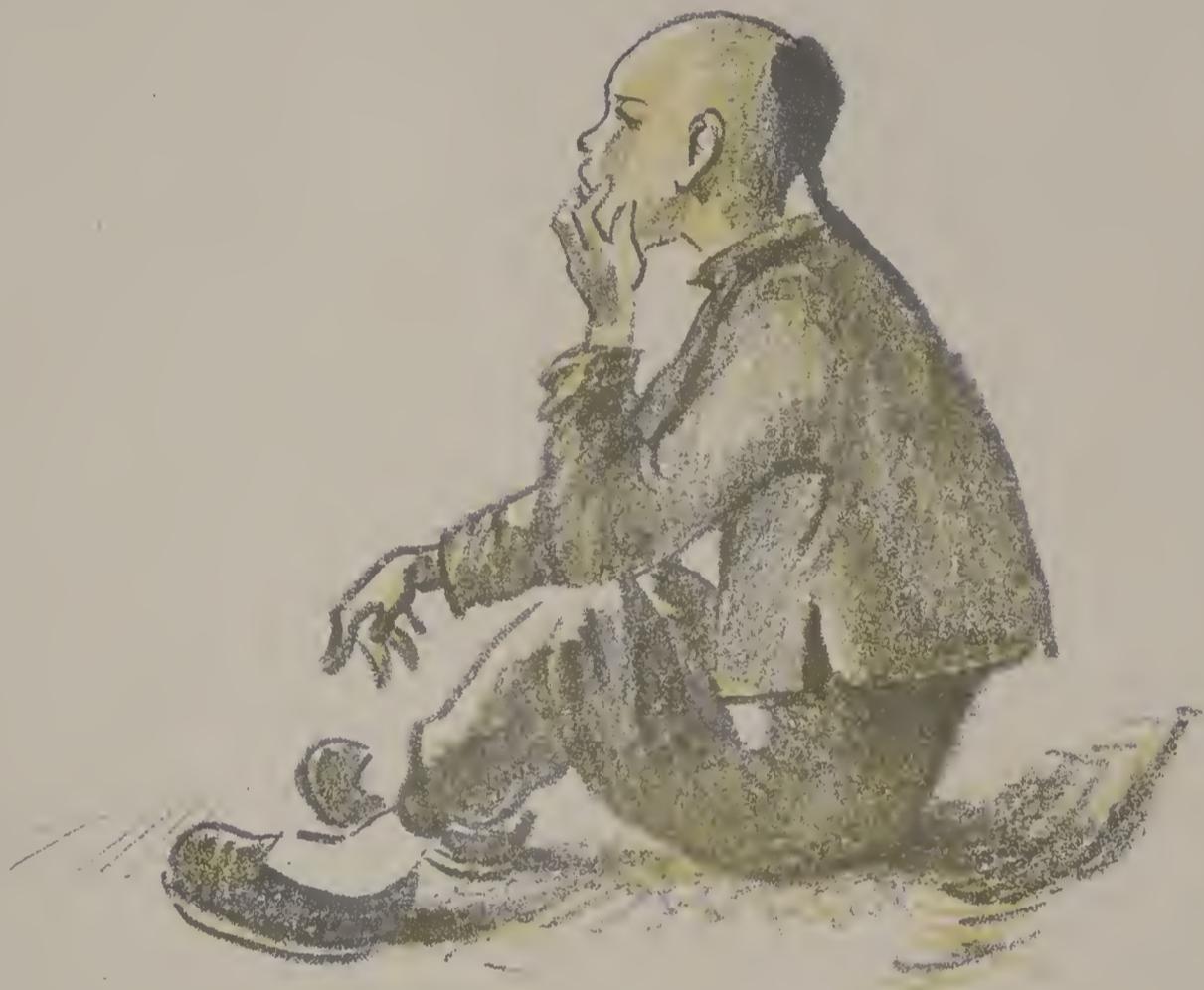
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# YEN-FOH





# YEN-FOH

A CHINESE BOY



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

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### Yen-foh Thinks Quickly

**Y**EN-FOH and his playmates were having a jolly time romping about the grounds of Yen-foh's home in faraway Peiping, the capital of China.

The little Chinese boys, with their strange queues and narrow dark eyes, wore jackets with trousers that reached to their ankles. The small girls had smooth, straight black hair, and were dressed in plain-colored trousers and jackets with small designs of flowers.

The group of children dashed here and there under the trees and out into the flashes of sunshine. They played all manner of games. One was like hide-and-seek, hiding behind bushes and trying very hard to keep quiet so that the one left to seek could not find them.

It seemed that Yen-foh was never caught. But sometimes he

offered to be the hunter, and the other children were glad to give him a chance. Then he never failed to catch the rest. That was because Yen-foh was very observing.

Yen-foh's eyes were quick and bright and he saw everything that went on around him. He always used his mind. In China it is considered very important to use the mind.

There were many huge jars with wide mouths, placed on the lawns near Yen-foh's house. They were there to catch the precious rain water, and some of them were full almost to the top.

The jars were quite big, larger than a child, and they made splendid places for the Chinese boys and girls to hide behind. Also the posts of the pergolas, which are in almost every Chinese garden, made fine shelters for hiding.

Yen-foh had noticed that one of the smallest boys, named Kwang, always hid behind the jars. Twice Kwang had tried to peep into the top of one of the tall gray water jars. Yen-foh, being wise and using his mind, told Kwang he must not do this





He stepped up to look over the top

because he might pull over the jar of water on himself; then he would get wet, and perhaps be hurt.

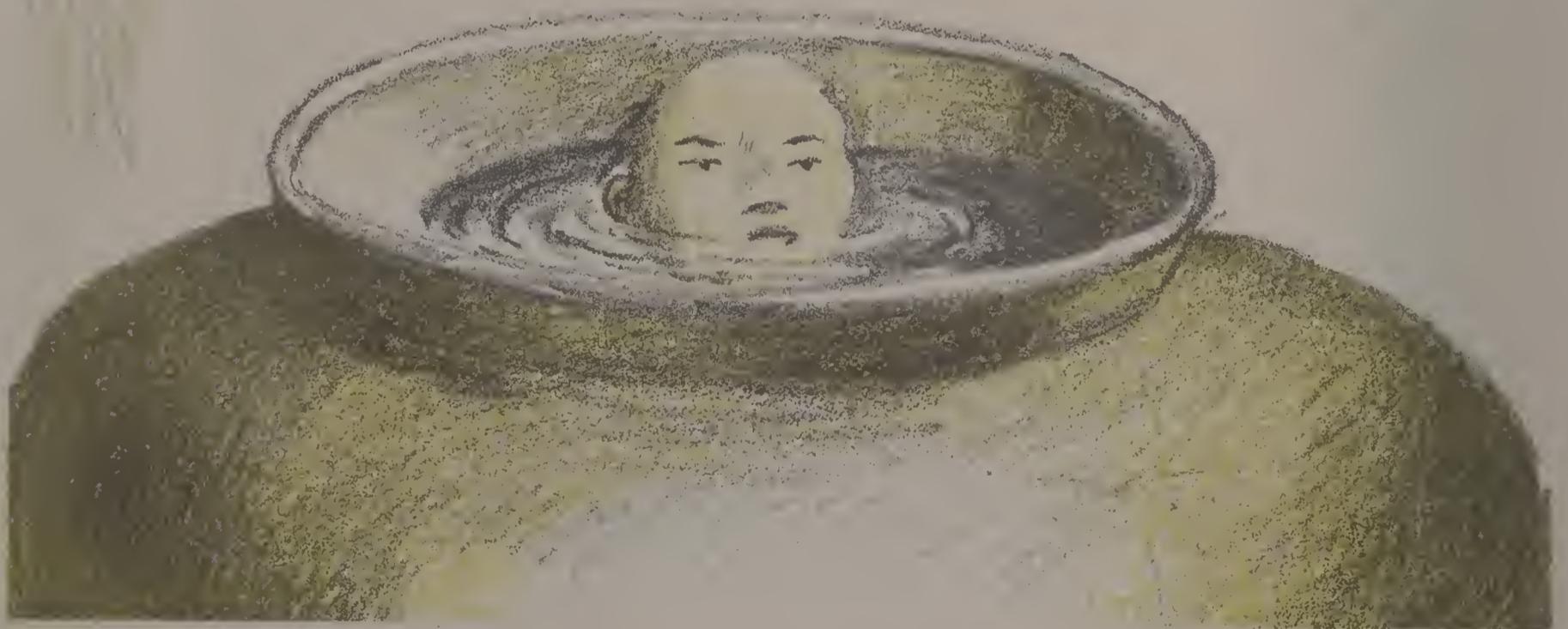
But Kwang was very venturesome, and would not listen to good advice. He had already found out that the jar was too heavy for him to move even a tiny bit. He searched about and discovered a thick piece of board. Then once, when it was his turn to hunt and the other children were hiding, Kwang used his board. He slanted it against the side of a jar and stepped up to look over the top.

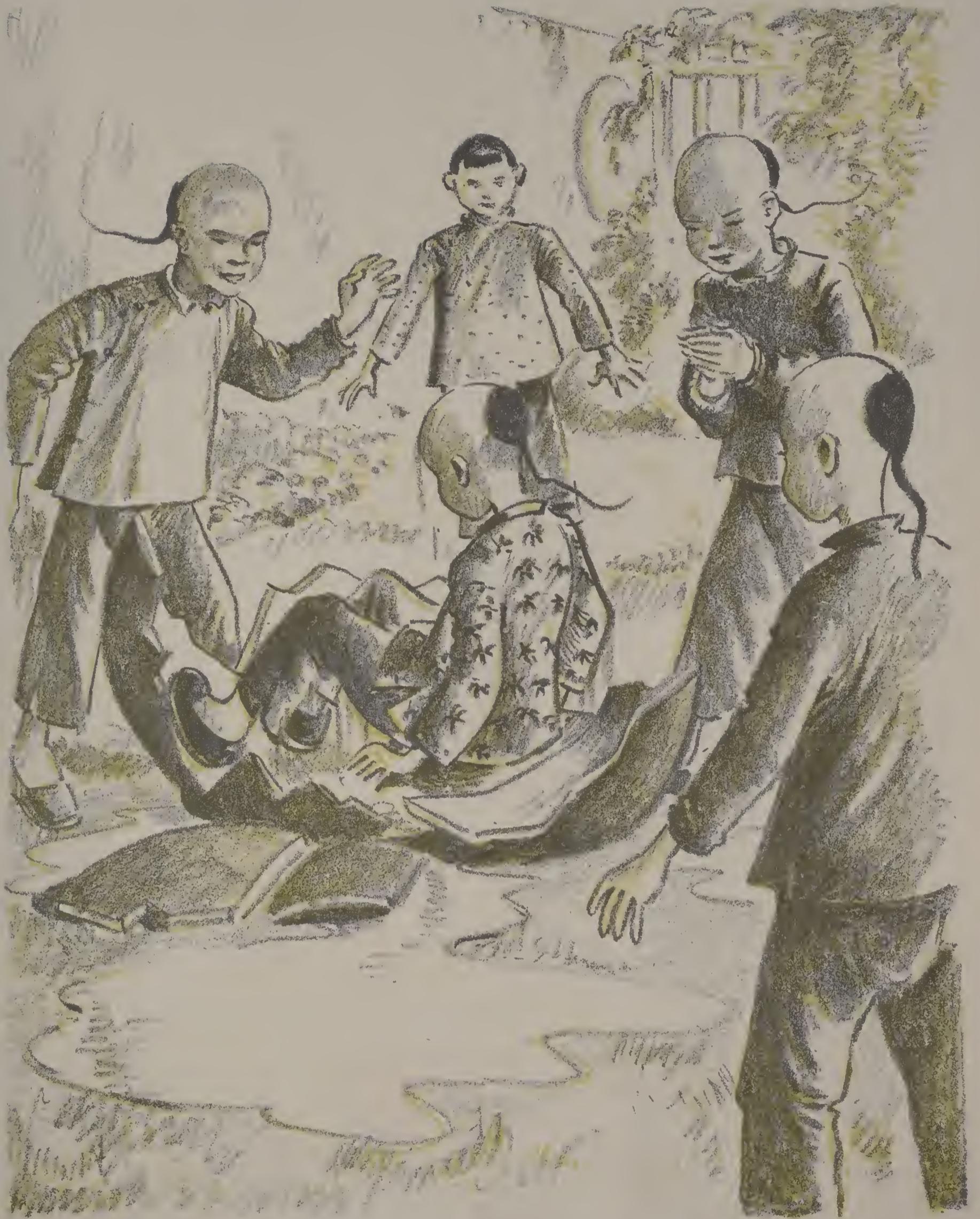
There was a splash! A scream!

All the children came rushing to the spot. They found Kwang a prisoner in the water jar. He had fallen in with just enough room so that, by stretching his neck as far as he could, he managed to get his mouth and nose above the water to breathe.

Kwang begged to be taken out, but there was no way. The opening of the jar was smaller than the lower part where Kwang now sat doubled up. It was a great deal easier to slip into the jar than it was to get out, Kwang thought, as he tried to straighten out his legs.

He believed he was surely going to drown, and so did the other excited children. They gathered close to the jar, all talking at once.





Kwang crawled from the wreck

Kwang began to cry and choke. Something must be done immediately.

Yen-foh told the children to be quiet. He explained that he knew a way to release Kwang from his dangerous quarters. Yen-foh directed two of the boys to do just as he said. The two boys helped Yen-foh carry a large rock near the water jar.

Yen-foh then explained to them that they must help him throw the stone. The three lifted and threw the heavy rock straight against the water jar. With a loud crash it broke into many pieces and the water ran out.

Kwang, drenched and trembling, crawled from the wreck. Yen-foh wiped the younger boy's face dry and hushed his sobs.

Yen-foh ran with Kwang to the house. Yen-foh's mother put some dry clothing on the little Chinese boy.

Kwang's parents were so happy when they had their child safe at home that they could not thank Yen-foh enough for saving their son from drowning. They said they felt safe when Kwang had a playmate who could use his mind, and knew what to do when quick thought was needed.

They were quite sure that Kwang would never let his curiosity get the best of him again. Kwang and Yen-foh were sure of it too.





## Yen-foh Helps Yang-su

Early one morning Yen-foh lay in his bed thinking. He had not slept very soundly during the night because he had a problem on his mind. He wished very much that it was time to get up and put on his trousers and gay embroidered jacket which hung on the chair.

But Yen-foh knew perfectly well that he was to lie in bed and rest until the great round yellow sun touched his window and sent a ray of brightness straight across his eyes.

So on this particular morning, he sighed and turned his face to the window to watch for his special sunbeams.

Yen-foh was a good student and worked hard. He always stood at the head of his class in the Chinese school, and generally won the prize.

However, Yen-foh was not satisfied with doing well in school himself. He wanted Yang-su, his little friend, to have good marks too. This was what Yen-foh was puzzling about.

The day before, Yang-su had failed badly, and had not done what Yen-foh felt the younger boy was able to do. While waiting for the sun to rise, Yen-foh wondered what the trouble was, and decided that he would talk to Yang-su that day before school opened.

Presently the sun sent its yellow signal across Yen-foh's face, telling the Chinese boy he could now get up. Yen-foh sprang from the bed and into his clothes more quickly than he had ever done before, which is saying a great deal, for he always moved rapidly.

Yen-foh used his chopsticks and ate his breakfast of rice as fast as possible, then rushed to school to find Yang-su.

What was his surprise to learn that Yang-su had not come to school that day! His place remained vacant while Yen-foh, with questioning eyes, watched for him as the hours passed.

It seemed a very long day to Yen-foh as he worried over Yang-su and the reason for his absence. He thought so much about it that Yen-foh did not recite his own lessons as well as



usual. When the teacher dismissed them after classes were over, he walked home with lagging footsteps and a heavy heart.

Yen-foh got permission from his mother to go to the home of Yang-su and find out whether or not he was sick. As soon as Yen-foh reached the house, Yang-su's mother met him at the door and invited him in.

She was fond of this young Chinese boy because he was thoughtful and used his mind.

Yen-foh, with a low bow, asked to see Yang-su, and wanted to know why his friend's lessons had been bad, and why Yang-su had been absent from school.

Yang-su's mother explained that they were so very poor that they could not buy Yang-su paper and brushes with which to do his problems and other school studies.

Yen-foh asked where he could find Yang-su. He thought he might persuade him to come to school again.

Yang-su's mother pointed to the sea and showed Yen-foh where to look for her son down on the sandy beach.

Yen-foh walked in that direction, his small feet making no sound. Long before he reached Yang-su, Yen-foh saw the younger



boy seated on the ground doing something strange. Yen-foh stopped in astonishment. From a distance he could see that Yang-su held a stick in his hand. What could be going on?

Yen-foh then ran across the beach to find out what Yang-su was doing. He looked over the busy boy's shoulder and saw that his friend was making marks in the sand and that his school book was spread open before him.

Yen-foh gave a loud exclamation of surprise. This startled Yang-su and he looked up with a bright smile. Yen-foh discovered that Yang-su was marking his problems in the sand with the aid of a sharp stick.

Yen-foh felt sorry that Yang-su had to use a stick and sand instead of brush and paper, so he took the younger boy home with him. Yen-foh's parents were wealthy and it was easy for Yen-foh to give Yang-su enough paper and brushes to last the entire school term.

Yen-foh was happy once more when Yang-su never again had bad lessons, and was never absent after that time.





Kwang was making marks in the sand

## Yen-foh and the Deer

Yen-foh, the Chinese boy, sat on the floor in the great hall of his home and looked long and earnestly at the deerskin hanging on the wall. It was a handsome pelt and one that his grandfather had taken many, many years ago from a fawn, as a young deer is called.

Yen-foh had been taught that it was cruel to kill the beautiful deer which loved so well to live. Whenever Yen-foh saw the deerskin on the wall he felt that his grandfather had done a wrong thing. It always made him feel sad.

However, that had happened very long ago. The skin was such a lovely smooth silky one, of a golden brown color, that now Yen-foh sat on the floor and dreamed stories of deer roaming the forests and coming to the pools to drink. Yen-foh himself had often seen them, but not for the world would he have harmed one.

Twice every year the pelt was taken down from the wall and Yen-foh's mother arranged that the highly prized relic was brushed and cleaned in the sun. When this happened, Yen-foh liked to run his hands lovingly over the glossy hair. Sometimes





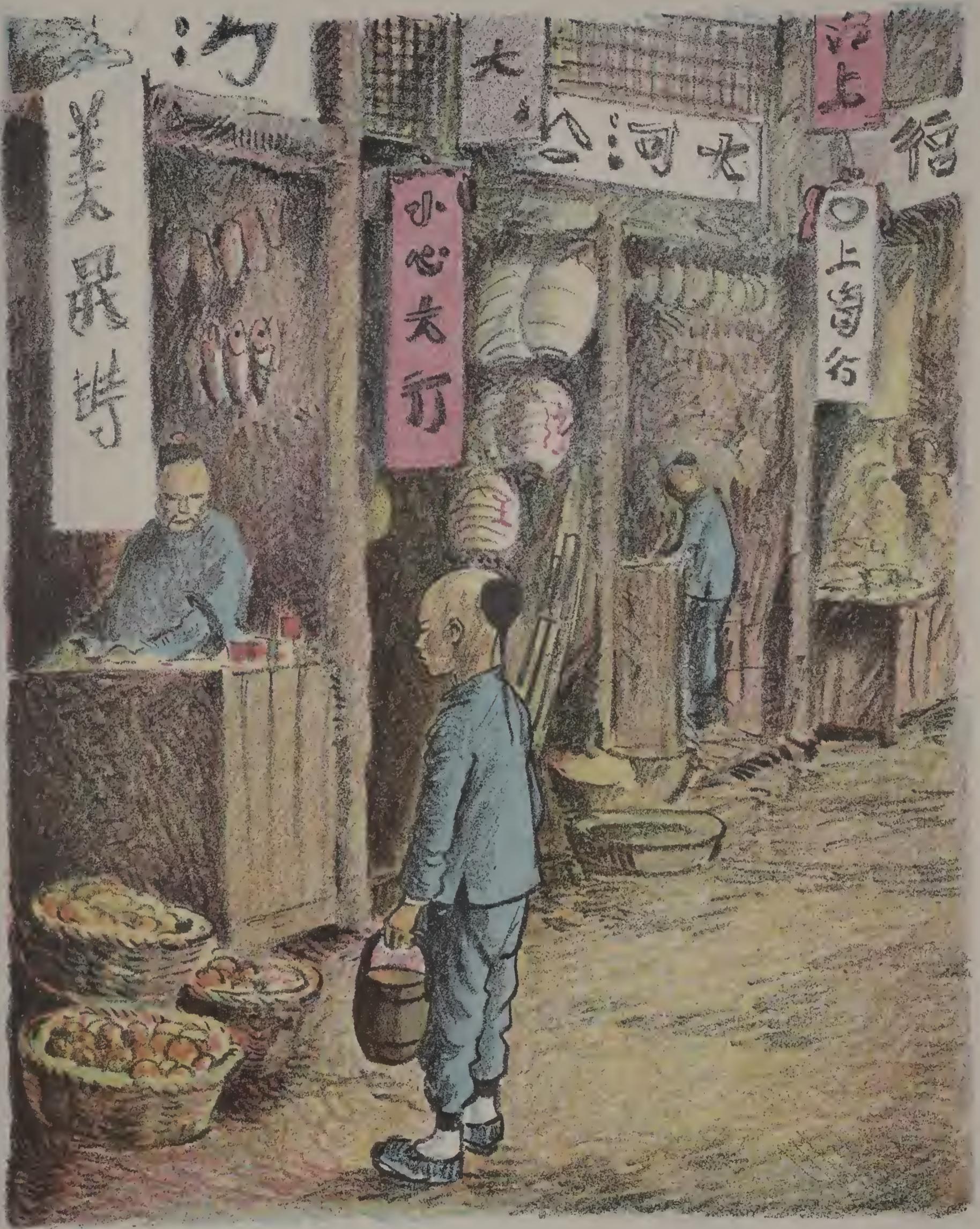
Twice every year the pelt was taken down and brushed

he would pull it close about him and walk on his hands and feet, making a game of pretending to be a young deer himself.

This special day when Yen-foh sat on the floor admiring the fawn skin, he had very serious thoughts. He almost wished he could really be a deer in order to help his father and mother. He longed for a way in which he could show his love for them. Yen-foh's parents were dreadfully ill, and their eyes were getting so dim that it was feared they would both go blind.

The doctor had said that only one thing could make them well and save their eyesight. They must have deer's milk to drink to





Yen-foh had searched in all the markets



Yen-foh took a small bucket and slipped from the house

make them strong and in which to bathe their eyes, so as to clear away the blindness. Of course it must be fresh every day.

But there was no deer's milk to be had. Yen-foh had searched in all the markets, and asked at every possible place, but none could be found.

As the troubled, puzzled young boy sat on the floor and stared hard at the pelt he became drowsy and fell sound asleep. Yen-foh





had a dream that seemed so true he awakened with a start. He had to rub his eyes several times, trying to realize where he was and that he had been only sleeping.

Then Yen-foh sprang to his feet and looked out of the window. The blazing sun had drifted low in the sky and shot purple and gold sunset flame into the room. It was nearing dusk.

Yen-foh suddenly knew what he would do, and understood why the dream had been sent to him. In a great hurry he pulled the deerskin down from the wall and rolled it up as small as he could so that he might carry it easily. Watching to see that no one noticed him, he took a small bucket and slipped quietly from the house.

Yen-foh ran as fast as his legs could carry him to the edge of the forest not far from his home. He had never gone into the forest alone before and darkness was near, but he was not frightened. Yen-foh knew that he must not be, because he had something important to do that would take all his courage and skill.



Yen-foh slowly and carefully made his way on feet and hands

He stood motionless near a pond behind a bush. Presently he heard a scampering in the underbrush, a snapping of twigs, and the soft fall of small feet. Very soon a herd of deer ran down to the pool to drink.

Hastily pulling his deerskin over his body and head, Yen-foh slowly and carefully made his way on feet and hands, among them. He carried the little bucket in his mouth.

Yen-foh had no trouble filling his bucket with milk from the mother deer who stood patiently.

When his bucket would hold no more Yen-foh crept back behind the bush. He again rolled up the skin and, carrying the bucket cautiously to be sure that no precious drop would be spilled, he hastened home, a very happy Chinese lad.

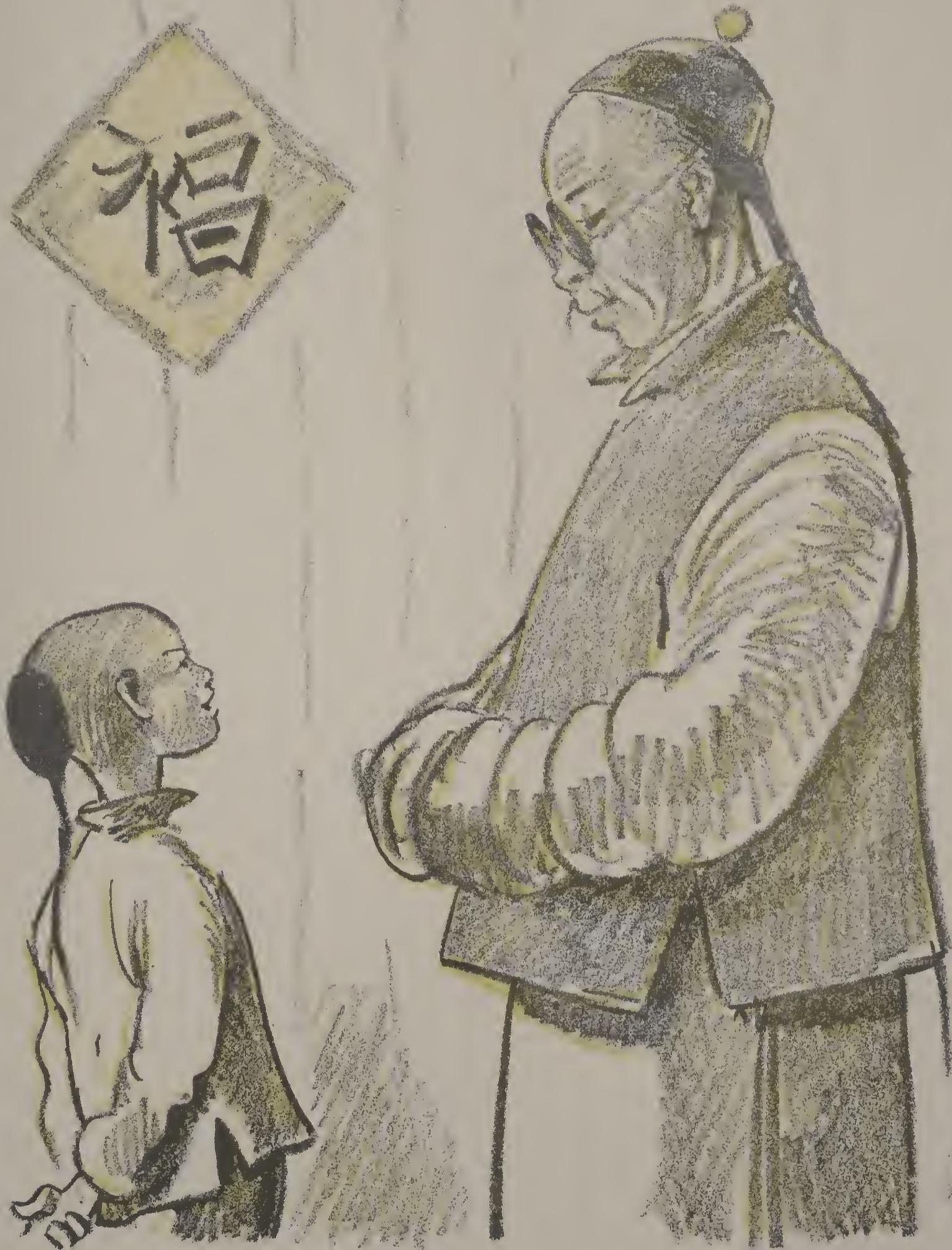
Yen-foh went at once to get a cup and hurried to the room where his parents lay sick. His heart was beating fast with joy and his eyes shining with pleasure when he told his father and mother what he had done. They praised him, and explained how proud they were to have a son who would do such a brave, thoughtful deed.

There was plenty of milk in the bucket for each invalid to have a cupful, and enough left for them both to bathe their eyes.

When the doctor came the next day he said that there was already an improvement in Yen-foh's parents because of the deer's milk.

Every evening just at dusk, when he could not be seen so plainly, the boy went for deer's milk. He kept it up until his parents were strong and healthy again, and their eyes as clear and bright as ever.

Always after that when the deerskin was hung on the wall, Yen-foh sat upon the floor and gazed at its beautiful silky smoothness. He remembered the dream that had told him what he and the deer could do to make his loved ones well and help to restore the eyesight of those finest and most honorable members of his family.



The doctor said that there was already an improvement

## Yen-foh Uses His Mind

The day was bright and the sun was shining its brilliant yellow, while the grass was wearing its greenest dress. The children felt they must play out-of-doors every minute they possibly could when not in school.

Yen-foh and his little Chinese playmates did not waste an hour of spare time from daylight to dark, romping and shouting under the trees and the blue sky.

Yen-foh had a new red rubber ball. It was just large enough to hold in his hand easily and throw long distances. When school was dismissed Yen-foh would run home quickly to study a while before going to play.

He tried to do this every day. Yen-foh knew that if he started playing first it would be very, very hard to stop and go into the





All Chinese children were expected to study hard

house before dark arrived. By that time he would be so tired he could scarcely keep awake to prepare his lessons for the next day.

Another thing Yen-foh knew. It was that the Chinese people — his own race — expected all Chinese children to study hard and learn their lessons so that they might become wise and cultured in many ways. To be a fine student was greatly to be desired.

Yen-foh had always done this. He had liked to use his mind, and often had thought his way out of serious problems without depending upon his elders.

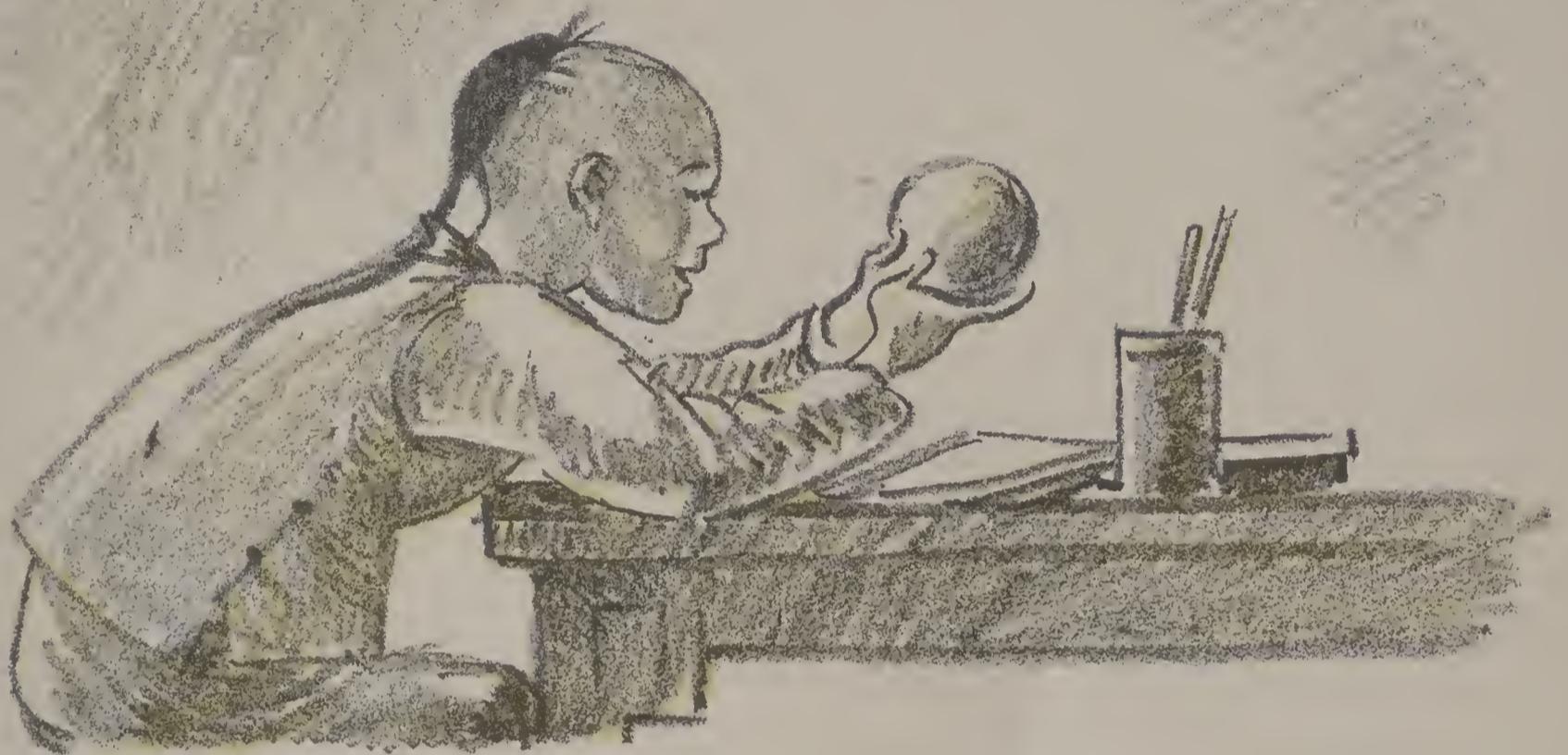
However, since Yen-foh's uncle had given him the grand red ball, it was almost impossible to sit still and work.

He would hear the other children racing and calling. Even if he put the ball behind his back, he seemed to see it beckoning and coaxing to be taken out and tossed around.

Late on a certain afternoon, Yen-foh had thrown his ball to Mencius who was playing a game with him. But the red rubber ball did not reach Mencius. Instead it dropped down into a hollow post which stood near by. It was not a tall post, but it was open inside all the way down. Yen-foh's ball had dropped down the hole to the very bottom.

Yen-foh and Mencius did not know what to do. The ball was gone where they could not reach it. The post was strongly planted and they could not push it over or pull it up. What to do and how to get the ball was the question.





The little boy began to think hard. Whenever he did this usually something happened. It did this time.

Yen-foh gave a sudden shout of joy and rushed to the house, for he knew now what to do. He came hurrying back carrying a bucket of water in one hand, and a gourd dipper in the other. Mencius watched Yen-foh closely, wondering what this smart boy was planning now. He was soon to find out.

Yen-foh brought a box and stood on it so that he could easily reach the top of the post where his precious ball lay hidden. Using the dipper he filled the hollow post with water from the bucket. He poured and poured until the post was full and it brought the ball floating to the top.

Yen-foh tossed it, all wet and shining, to Mencius who laughed with glee and threw it back again. Mencius told Yen-foh that it was a fine thing to think of a way to save the new toy. Then Yen-foh explained to his friend that if the ball had not been made



Yen-foh's ball had dropped down to the very bottom

of rubber, it would never have floated to the top where he could reach it.

Yen-foh took his red ball back into the house with him and put it out of sight, in order to keep his thoughts on his lessons. However, each day it was a temptation to him, and it seemed that he simply must play outside with it as long as there was light enough to see.

This made it more and more of an effort to keep awake in the evening when his lessons were to be prepared. Yen-foh's head would nod and nod over his books. His chin would drop lower and lower, and his eyes would close despite all he could do.



The sleepy boy found he must either give up part of his play with his ball or manage in some way not to go to sleep over the highly important matter of his school work. Here was another puzzle to be met and conquered. As usual Yen-foh found an answer.

Finding a long cord, Yen-foh tied one end to a beam in the ceiling directly over the chair where he sat to do his studying. The other end of the cord he tied to his queue. In this way when Yen-foh's head would nod and his chin drop toward his chest, the cord would give a gentle pull. Up would come the drooping head, the drooping eyelids would fly open, and Yen-foh would be wide awake.

Yen-foh felt the string had been a great help toward his education in those days when he owned the rubber ball.

When Yen-foh grew older his fame went abroad as being kind of heart, a great student, and a man who used his mind in solving hard problems. People came from far and near to consult with him, and he became a power in the land of China.









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