



# The Reunion

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Holding her morning tea mug, Mei Mei turned on computer and Googled her high school reunion information. Registering for the event to be held in Los Angeles this fall was on top of her 'to do' list this morning. Thirty years went by like a blink of an eye. Mei Mei hadn't seen her high school classmates for a very long time and couldn't wait to see them. In the past thirty years, Mei Mei had experienced all kinds of ups and downs in her life, joyful moments as well as heartbreaking ones.

The death of her dear high school friend had been an unbearable shock for her; Ya-Ling was gone. Mei Mei never had the chance to say good bye to her. Ya-ling and her husband, along with their baby girl, had gone on a tour. The three of them were involved in an accident while riding in the tour bus. Ya-ling died in the accident, but was able to hold and protect the baby safely in her arms during the crash. The picture that came into Mei Mei's mind whenever she missed her dear friend was that of a portrait of sacrificial love and new life.

Her friend Ya-ling was smart and beautiful. Above all, Ya-ling

was very kind to Mei Mei. Ya-ling had graciously invited Mei Mei to join her world and life when Mei Mei had come to Taipei to fulfill her "green shirt" dream. (Mei Mei's Mama could only stay with her for a week when they came to Taipei for the first school year. After that, she was to be on her own in the hustle and bustle of the big city.) Ya-ling and Mei Mei got along very well. They studied and hung out together all the time. Mei Mei was treated like Ya-ling's family member. (Ya-ling had many siblings.) Often times, Mei Mei would stay at Ya-ling's home over the weekend. Ya-ling was the apple of her parents' eye. As her dear friend, Mei Mei got the special treatment too. It was a heart-warming feeling to have sukiyaki or hot pot with Ya-ling's family on a cold winter night. Ya-ling would keep filling Mei Mei's plate with all kinds of delicious food. Mei Mei's mouth was full and her heart was filled with love. Ya-ling was truly one of those rare exceptions: a daughter of rich parents, but not possessing the disposition of a "spoiled rich girl". This made Mei Mei extremely comfortable with Ya-ling even though they were from different family backgrounds.

Ya-ling was like a window for Mei Mei to see another world she had never experienced before. Enjoying an extravagant buffet at a beautiful country club was an eye opener for a young girl from a remote countryside like Mei Mei. Attending a Stevie Wonder or Bon Jovi concert totally blew her away. Mei Mei admired Ya-ling's heart full of loving kindness. Mei Mei thought the word "angel" equaled "Ya-ling". Ya-ling not only acted like an angel but also had a heart like an angel. It was so pure! Mei Mei never noticed any worry or struggle inside of her. It was true that everything about Ya-ling's future looked bright. After graduating from high school, Ya-ling was accepted into the best department at the most prestigious university in Taiwan; the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at National Taiwan University. Ya-ling later received her master's degree from a school in the United

States. She got married and had a beautiful baby girl. Life was so wonderful for her until the tragedy struck. Mei Mei could not understand how tragedy could strike an angel like Ya-ling, and she knew that she was just one of many who would miss Ya-ling forever since her own life and the lives of many others had been impacted so much by Ya-ling, even during the last moment of her life. A mother died while holding and protecting her baby in a car accident!

Deep down in Mei Mei's heart, she wished that Ya-ling could attend the reunion too. There would be something missing without her. Just then, the phone rang. Mei Mei was drawn back from the past to the present. One of her classmates was calling her from the East Coast to give her a warm welcome and tell Mei Mei that she was looking forward to seeing her at the reunion. There were so many stories to share about the past 30 years. It seemed they talked and shared forever over the phone. The instantly-reconnected intimacy was amazing. It brought back all the good old times from the high school years. After hanging up the phone, Mei Mei lifted her head up and smiled. She was thinking that even though Ya-ling could not join the reunion, her story would. A living life story would be passed on and on!

