

Lies

On his eighteenth birthday, Ben woke up with a strange power. Above every person's head was a glowing number.

At first, he thought it showed their age. But when a classmate lied about finishing his homework, the number above his head went up by one.

That was when Ben realized the truth.

The number showed how many lies a person had told in their life.

As the days passed, Ben couldn't stop looking at the numbers.

His teacher said, "This quiz will be easy."

The number went up.

A customer told a cashier, "I'll come back tomorrow and pay."

The number went up.

Everywhere Ben looked, people were lying.

Some had hundreds of lies.

Others had thousands.

The more numbers he saw, the more he hated people.

Soon, Ben finally returned home after a long day.

His family's apartment was small and old. The furniture didn't match, and some of them are broken. They didn't have much money, but the house was always filled with warmth.

His mother smiled when he walked in.

"You're finally home," she said.

She placed a bowl of hot noodles on the table.

Ben looked up.

Above her head was one of the biggest numbers he had ever seen.

5000.

He stared in disbelief.

His mother? She was kind, hardworking, and always cared about him. How could she have told so many lies?

After sitting quietly for a moment, Ethan asked, "Mom, do you want to eat some with me?"

She smiled and gently pushed the bowl toward him.

"No, I'm not hungry. You eat."

The number above her head changed.

5000

Ben looked at the table.

There was only a bowl of noodles.

His mother quietly poured herself a glass of water and watched him eat with a smile.

Then he understood.

She wasn't telling a selfish lie.

She was hungry.

She just wanted him to have enough food.

Suddenly, Ben remembered all the little things she had said over the years.

"I'm fine."

"I already ate."

"I don't need a new coat."

"Save your money."

Each one had been another lie.

Not to hurt him.

Not to trick him.

But to protect him.

Ben lowered his head as tears filled his eyes.

That night, he learned something.

Not all lies are bad, some are told with love.