

母亲离开的那一天 The Day Mother Left

Winnie Mo

一通突如其来的电话，瞬间打破了阿碧初为人母的幸福与满足。母亲的离去，给她留下了一生无法弥补的遗憾，也让她第一次真切体会到“子欲养而亲不待”的锥心之痛。

孩子出生后，阿碧的生活几乎完全围绕着这个小生命-美华转。

生产后的疲惫还没完全恢复，她又要开始学习做母亲。洗澡、换尿布、冲奶、喂奶、哄睡，每件事都要从头学起。面对柔软脆弱的婴儿，她总是格外小心。有时抱美华的姿势不对，有时奶粉冲得太浓或太淡，有时半夜听见美华哭，急忙起身，却不知道她是饿了还是尿湿了。

初为人母的她，常常显得笨手笨脚。但人在责任面前总会慢慢成长。边做边学，边学边改，日子就在忙碌中一天天过去。

渐渐地，她发现照顾孩子也有许多乐趣。每天认真观察美华的成长变化过程。从最初整天睡觉、毫无表情，到开始用眼睛寻找灯光；听到大人的声音，会转动小脑袋认真地寻找；看到熟悉的人，会露出浅浅的笑容；高兴的时候，还会咿咿呀呀地发出一些谁也听不懂的声音。

几乎每天都有新的发现，每一点成长都让阿碧欣喜不已。看着美华一天天的变化，她觉得所有辛苦都值得。那些睡眠不足的夜晚和忙乱的白天，都化成了无法言喻的幸福。

那段时间，她几乎把全部心思都放在美华身上。外面的世界仿佛离她越来越远，只要美华不吵不闹，她便觉得十分满足。

然而，人生常常在最平静的时候出现意想不到的波澜。

一天，阿碧抱着美华来到一家婴儿用品店，准备给她挑选几件玩具。她正在认真地挑选时，电话突然响了，是大哥打来的。电话接通后，大哥低沉的声音传来：“快回来吧。妈昨晚突然病重，今天早上走了。”

阿碧一下愣住了，怀疑自己是听错了。又重复了一遍，“怎么了，妈走了？”电话里的声音更加微弱：“是的，快回来吧！”短短几句话，却像一道惊雷劈下来，让她的大脑瞬间一片空白。

那个操劳了一辈子，含辛茹苦把七个孩子养大的母亲，就这样离开了？她握着电话，久久说不出话来。低头看着怀里的美华，眼前渐渐模糊。

回家的公交车上十分拥挤。有人聊天，有人闭目养神，也有人望着窗外出神。阿碧却抱着美华坐在角落，一路默默流泪。

车窗外的景物不断后退，她不由想起了从前。母亲生前的点点滴滴，一幕幕涌上心头。

这几个月养育美华的经历，让她理解到母亲当年的艰难。在那个物资匮乏的年代，母亲操持一家人的生活。七个孩子的吃穿教育、衣食冷暖，样样都要操心。为了让孩子们吃饱穿暖，她总是把最好的留给孩子，把艰难留给自己。

小时候，总觉得母亲为我们做的一切都是理所当然的。直到自己做了母亲，阿碧才明白，七个孩子能够健康长大，背后是母亲耗尽半生的心血和操劳。

养儿之后，她终于懂得了父母恩情的分量。可惜明白得太晚了。刚刚理解母亲当年的不易，还没来得及尽一份孝心，母亲便永远离开了。

人生最大的遗憾，莫过于此。怀中的女儿正在开始人生的旅程，而给予自己生命的人，却走到了生命的终点。生命仿佛在这一刻完成了一次无声的交替。

汽车继续向前行驶。阿碧紧紧抱着美华，泪水模糊了视线。她知道，从此以后，母亲只能活在她的记忆里。她第一次明白了那句古话：“子欲养而亲不待”的真正含义。

The Day Mother Left

An unexpected phone call abruptly ended the peaceful happiness of Abi's early days as a mother. The loss of her mother left a regret that would stay with her for the rest of her life, and she finally understood the meaning of the old Chinese saying: "When a child is ready to repay a parent's love, the parent may no longer be there."

After Meihua was born, Abi's life revolved almost entirely around the tiny new life.

Still recovering from childbirth, she had to learn how to be a mother. Bathing the baby, changing diapers, mixing formula, feeding, and putting her to sleep were all skills she had to learn from scratch. Faced with such a fragile little infant, she was always extra careful. Sometimes she held Meihua the wrong way; sometimes the formula was too strong or too weak. In the middle of the night, she would wake to Meihua's cries and rush to her side, unsure whether she was hungry or simply needed a diaper change.

Like many first-time mothers, Abi often felt clumsy and inexperienced. But responsibility has a way of helping people grow. She learned as she went, correcting mistakes and gaining confidence day by day. Life passed in a constant rhythm of busyness and care.

Gradually, she discovered that raising a child brought its own joys.

Every day, she watched Meihua's development with fascination. At first, the baby spent most of her time sleeping and showed little expression. Later, she began

following lights with her eyes. When she heard someone's voice, she would turn her little head to search for the source. She smiled at familiar faces and happily babbled sounds that nobody could understand.

Almost every day brought a new discovery. Each small step in Meihua's growth filled Abi with delight. Watching her daughter change and grow, she felt that every sacrifice was worthwhile. The sleepless nights and hectic days were transformed into a happiness beyond words.

During that time, nearly all of Abi's thoughts were focused on Meihua. The outside world seemed to drift farther away. If her daughter was content and healthy, she felt completely satisfied.

Yet life often changes when everything seems most peaceful.

One day, Abi took Meihua to a baby store to pick out a few toys. As she was carefully browsing the shelves, her phone rang. It was her eldest brother.

When she answered, she heard his low, heavy voice. "Come home as soon as you can. Mom became seriously ill last night. She passed away this morning."

Abi froze for a moment, she thought she had heard wrong. "What? Mom is gone?" she asked. "Yes," her brother replied softly. "Come home."

The few simple words struck her like a thunderbolt. Her mind went blank.

Her mother, who had spent a lifetime working tirelessly and raising seven children through hardship, was gone. Holding the phone, Abi could not speak. She looked down at Meihua in her arms, and her vision slowly blurred with tears.

The bus ride home was crowded. Some passengers chatted, some rested with their eyes closed, and others stared absentmindedly out the window. Abi sat quietly in a corner, holding Meihua and crying in silence.

As the scenery slipped past outside, memories of the past came flooding back. Scene after scene of her mother's life rose in her mind.

The past few months of raising Meihua had given her a new understanding of her mother's struggles. In those years of scarcity, her mother had carried the burden of the entire household. Feeding, clothing, and educating seven children required endless care and sacrifice. She always gave the best to her children and kept the hardships for herself.

As a child, Abi had taken everything her mother did for granted. Only after becoming a mother herself did she realize that the healthy growth of seven children had come at the cost of a lifetime of her mother's devotion and hard work.

Now she finally understood the depth of a parent's love, but the realization had come too late.

She had only just begun to appreciate her mother's sacrifices. Before she had the chance to repay even a small part of that love, her mother was gone forever.

Perhaps there is no greater regret in life. The daughter in her arms was just beginning her journey, while the woman who had given her life had reached the end of hers. In that moment, one generation quietly gave way to the next.

The bus continued down the road. Abi held Meihua tightly as tears blurred her vision. She knew that from then on, her mother would live only in her memories.

For the first time, she truly understood the meaning of the old Chinese saying:

"A child wishes to care for their parents, but the parents are no longer there to be cared for." (子欲养而亲不待)