

A young boy with dark hair and freckles, wearing a blue t-shirt, is holding a small white kitten. The background is a soft, light blue sky with some green leaves and purple flowers at the bottom left.

Dive Back In Time

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Note : There are two ways to read this article: the first way is to read each of the first five sections as a separate story, and ignore the sixth section; the second way is to read all six parts together as a complete story.

'Sometimes you will never know the true value of a moment until it becomes a memory.'



The boy found a shivering kitten one cold night, and he took it home and fed it carefully. The cat was revitalized very soon.

One day, the boy took his kitten out for a walk and came across an old man who was telling fortunes. He said to the boy mysteriously, "Your cat has lost eight lives, and now there is only one life left, so you should be careful." The boy thought the old man was telling him to take care of his cat, so he didn't think too much.

Shortly afterwards, the boy had a car accident and his life was in danger. Just as the doctors were at their wit's end, he suddenly woke up, crying for his cat.

Meanwhile, a neighbor found the dead body of a cat near the boy's house. The body was intact, as if... it had voluntarily given up its life.

So what should the boy be careful with...



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The teenager knocked on his neighbor's door, handed over a letter, and said in a pleading tone, "Could you help me send this letter to Grandpa? Please."

Unable to refuse his request, the neighbor took the letter, assuring him that he would send it to his grandfather.

The teenager went away excitedly. However, it didn't take long for the neighbor's wife to tell him, "This child's parents are working in other cities all the time, so he has been living with his grandfather. Recently his parents planned to go back to take care of him, so they sent his grandfather back to his home, but they didn't expect that the old man passed away soon after he returned home. The boy probably didn't know about the situation and wrote a letter to his grandfather. Anyways, you shouldn't have taken this letter."

The neighbor became silent for a moment. He then took the letter to the backyard and burned it.



The young man anxiously looked out the window at the severe traffic jam. He was almost breaking down inside.

A few days ago, he got into a really bad fight with his best buddy and made some harsh remarks about breaking off their friendship. Who knew that another friend told him that today his best buddy would leave the city forever by train and would never come back. He regretted it so much and wanted to meet his buddy for one last time. His kind neighbor was willing to drive him to the train station, but unluckily, they ran into a traffic jam.

In his hand, he clutched a timepiece he bought from a street vendor, which showed the present time. Soon the train would be leaving, yet the cars ahead roamed endlessly, and he could do nothing but wait. Finally, unable to hold back any longer, he casually threw the timer on the car, pulled open the door and ran out, making a mad dash for the train station. He was running as fast as he could, yet when he finally reached the station, he looked up to see the time on the big clock only to find that his buddy's train had already left.

The crowd coming around just couldn't understand why a young man would be crying so badly in public.

IV

The middle-aged man stared at his wife in front of him, who was beyond recovery, and tears kept flowing down his face. He could not help blaming himself for being busy with work all day, not realizing that his wife's face, which used to be full of smiles, was becoming increasingly pale. She had been terminally ill for a long time, and had gone for conservative treatment on her own in order to keep him from worrying, but she failed to realize that her condition was deteriorating too quickly, and by the time he figured it out, everything was irreversible.

His wife had been in a coma for many days, and according to the doctors, she was nearing the end of her days and might die at any point. The middle-aged man held her hand helplessly and whimpered, "Please, open your eyes and look at me." However, the imagined scene didn't happen. Just as he was about to collapse, his beautiful wife suddenly opened her eyes and revealed a touching smile. Through the oxygen mask, he struggled to read his wife's lip: she kept repeating something. What could it be?

He suddenly understood it, forcing back his tears and trying hard to smile. A look of relief appeared on his wife's face, and then she closed her eyes and fell asleep forever.

"You told me to laugh, and I did. Why are you still leaving me..."





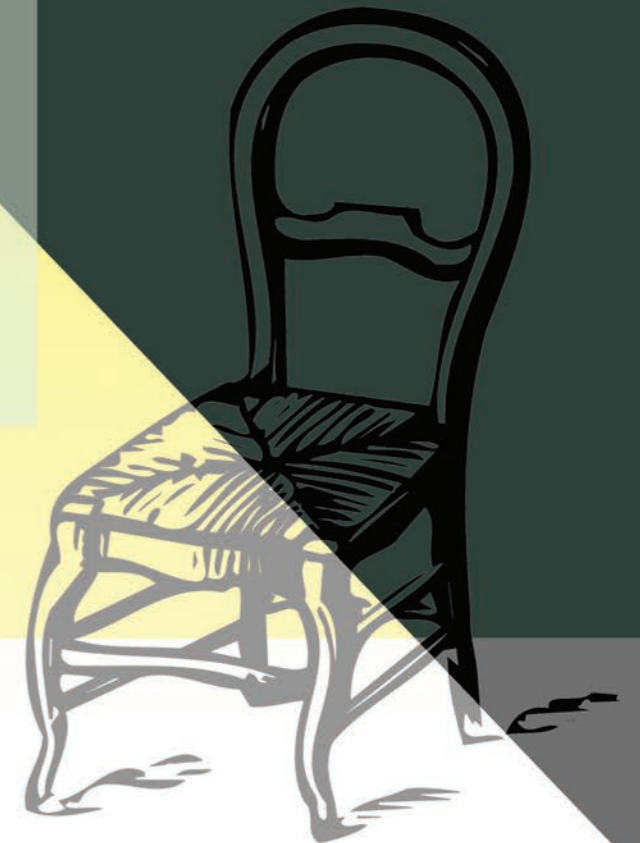
V

The old man sat alone at home with an empty bottle in his hand. He spent all the days in his house, drinking nothing but alcohol, as if that was the only way to drive away his loneliness.

As he got up to get another bottle of wine, he suddenly saw his wife's picture on the counter. For a while, he seemed to remember something and took a bottle of wine and two glasses, and then set the picture of his wife on the table as well.

He placed one glass of wine in front of the photo, filled both of the glasses, and then clinked the other with his own glass.

The wine glasses clinked against each other with a crisp snap, seeming to recount the story of the past.



The sky finally cleared up after days of rain, and I was somehow in a much better mood. I was about to go for a walk when I suddenly heard a knock on the door.

With confusion, I opened the door. How could anyone want to visit me, a lonely old guy? Looking at the smiling young man in front of me, the suspicion in my heart grew even more.

He went straight to his point, "Sir, my father and you have been neighbors for many years. He said that once you forgot this in his car when he sent you to the train station, and he kept forgetting to return it to you. He suddenly remembered this today and hurriedly asked me to return it."

Then he placed a timer in my hand. The minute I saw it, I was stunned.

Memories came flooding back to me, and I subconsciously pressed down the timer button, not realizing that the scene around me was rapidly reversing. When I finally found out what was happening, I was turned into a little boy and the timer in my hand had disappeared.

It was a little cold outside, and I heard a faint sound of meow not far away from here.

Suddenly I understood what I was supposed to do.

Next time when I cross the road, I should be more careful. With that thought in mind, I smiled and walked toward my kitten.

It is the end and also the beginning of the story.

