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석사학위논문

# Seulgi's Jeju Adventure

(슬기가 다시 만난 제주도 · 번역논문)

제주대학교 통역번역대학원

한영과

김재경

2018년 8월

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Seulgi's Jeju Adventure  
슬기가 다시 만난 제주도

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## Chapter 1. Strange Caves

“Seulgi, do you want to go to Moseulpo?”

Seulgi’s mom asked Seulgi, stopping her conversation on the phone when she saw him coming home from school.

“Moseulpo? Of course! I’m so excited.”

Answered Seulgi without any hesitation. For Seulgi, it’s always fun visiting his grandpa, who adores him.

“Well, then get ready. I will take you to the bus terminal.”

Said Mom, noticing Seulgi’s eyes shine in joy.

“Mom, do you still think I’m a little boy who doesn’t know how to take the bus?”

Seulgi replied abruptly. Seulgi was now in the fifth grade, and could not believe that Mom was suggesting to take him to the terminal like a kindergartner.

“Alright. Alright. I guess you’re all grown-up now.”

Said Mom. The thought that her little boy was now all grown up made her proud. However, she had the habit of reminding Seulgi again, “Don’t be fooling around, and get off at the last stop.”

“I know, I know mom. Please, have some faith in your son.”

Said Seulgi as he got onto the city bus.

On the bus, Seulgi noticed an empty seat, so he shoved his body into the seat, leaned on the window, and looked outside. Under the early summer weather, there were many people briskly walking on the side of the road .

However, Seulgi suddenly got a feeling that he had forgotten something, but he could not figure out what it was.

‘Am I forgetting something?’

Although he left home excited to visit his grandparents, there was a

feeling that he had forgotten something very important. No matter how hard he tried to remember, it just did not ring a bell.

As Seulgi walked into the bus terminal, he realized, since it was Saturday, there were many people.

“A ticket to Moseulpo, please.”

Seulgi paid to receive his ticket.

“All aboard! For Moseulpo.”

Shouted the man by the gate.

‘The bus soon started its trip onto the Western Industrial Road.

The trees along the road looked like they were having a party with their green clothes.

The green leaves hanging on the edge of the branches all danced’

‘Oh that’s right, birthday party!’

Seulgi, who was looking at the field wavering by the wind, suddenly smacked his forehead with his palm. While he was hurrying to get to his grandpa’s house, he had forgotten all about being invited to his friend Eunjeong’s birthday party.

‘Oh, you stupid.’

Seulgi knuckled himself on the head. However, what’s done is done. By now, the birthday party would have been going on at Eunjeong’s house. Eunjeong’s mom, who does not spare, is known for preparing plenty to eat for her guest. On the table, there are probably, well riped watermelons and fried chickens. The image of goldenly well-fried chicken appeared in front of Seulgi’s eyes and flew away, leaving his mouth to water.

As the bus arrived at the last stop, Grandpa had been waiting for him at the bus stop.

“Hey, my favorite grandson is here. I was worried that you might have taken the wrong bus.”

Said Grandpa with a big grin on his face.

“Come on, grandpa, who do you think I am?”

“Of course I know, you're my grandson.”

“Did you really think that your grandson would ride the wrong bus?”

“No. Of course not. You're my grandson.”

Seulgi got onto the car that Grandpa had brought, and they headed home. Grandpa was over seventy years old, but he was still a great driver.

When Seulgi waked in through the front gate, Grandma came out and hugged him, saying.

“My grandson is here. Come on in. I bet you're hungry?”

When he heard Grandma's warm words, it made him realize that he was hungry. It was obvious that he should be, since he did not even have lunch before riding the bus. Also, by now, the birthday party was probably going on at Eunjeong's house.

“I made your favorite, Cold Raw Damsel fish Soup”

Said Grandma, as she brought a big bowl of soup.

Seulgi took a big spoon full of the Cold Raw Damsel fish Soup (made from Jeju's special product, damselfish) and put it in his mouth. The soup was delicious, you could taste the refreshing soup along with the taste of the vinegar.

As soon as they finish lunch, Grandpa asked Seulgi.

“Seulgi, what do you want to do? Do you want to go to Marado Island?”

Grandpa's words grabbed Seulgi's attention. Located on the southern end of South Korea, Marado Island, was a place that Seulgi had always wanted to visit.

“Are you serious? Hooray! I'm so lucky, today.”



Seulgi was so happy that it made him want to sing. Marado Island? It would be way better than Eunjeong's birthday party.

Seulgi followed Grandpa onto the car. At full speed, the car ran over the open fields. But as they got closer to the sea, the sound of the waves started to thunder.

"The waves seem very strong. I wonder if a typhoon is coming?"

Said Grandpa with a worried look.

"What do mean by a typhoon? It's a fine, clear day."

"Seulgi, I'm afraid we won't be able to go to Marado Island. But we can go up the Songaksan Mountain to view it, from there."

"Can we try asking the ticket office? You never know."

"Okay then. I guess my grandson really wants to go to Marado Island."

Responding to Seulgi's request, Grandpa stopped his car in front of the ticket office.

"When do you think we can go to Marado Island."

Asked Grandpa, leaning towards the counter. But the pretty lady behind the counter, looking sorry, answered.

"We are not sure. They are saying that a typhoon is coming, so, it may take few days."

As Seulgi received the news, his spirits fell.

'Nothing's going right. I wasn't even able to go to the birthday party.'

Seulgi started to become cranky.

"It seems like there's nothing we can do. Seulgi, why don't we go view the Marado Island, even though we won't be able to step onto the island."

As there was nothing Seulgi could do, he had to listen to Grandpa and got into the car.

The car moved up the Songaksan Mountain along the shore.

Once they stopped on the seashore cliff of the Songaksan Mountain, they

could see Gapado Island and Marado Island, as if they were close enough to reach. The two islands stood in the middle of the blue ocean in harmony.

“What came to your mind, when you looked at Marado Island?”

Seulgi could not answer right away to Grandpa’s question. He felt that it would not be nice to give an unpleasant response, such as ‘I’m angry that we could not go’ or ‘It’s so tiny.’ So, before replying, Seulgi thought for a moment.

“Even though it’s a small island, I feel like it’s an important part of our country.”

“Wow, I’m so proud of you. I guess that’s why your father named you, Seulgi, which means wisdom. You’re right, it’s a small island, but also very important.”

Giving a pat on Seulgi’s back, Grandpa praised him.

“If I had wings, I would fly over right now.”

“Next time, I promise you to take you there, so don’t be disappointed. Today’s not the only day, right?”

Grandpa, holding his hand over Seulgi’s head to keep the sun away, tried to cheer Seulgi up.

“Really? You have to swear that you will.”

“What? Have you always been fooled?”

Said Grandpa giving a tap on Seulgi’s bottom.

“It’s not that. It’s just that I really want to go there someday.”

“I understand. Grandpa will promise you, do we need to cross our fingers?”

“No, it’s okay. I trust you.”

Seulgi decided to trust Grandpa.

“Seulgi, should we just go home now? Or do you want to look around more?”

Grandpa asked Seulgi as they walked down the seashore of Songaksan Mountain.

“Just leave? When will we get to see such a wonderful view again?”

Seulgi wanted to look around a little more. He wanted to see the beautiful scenery, such as Halla Mountain and Sanbongsan Mountain, Hyeongjeseom Island, beautiful seashores, and more as long as possible.

At that moment, Seulgi discovered caves positioned, side by side, on the cliff of Songaksan Mountain.

“Grandpa, look at those caves!”

Shouted Seulgi, while looking at the caves.

“Oh look! There is another cave here.”

It seemed as Seulgi would not leave, unless he had a look at the caves.

“Grandpa, let’s go look at those caves before he go.”

“If Seulgi wants to look at them, of course, we will.”

Grandpa turned off the engine of the car.

“Grandpa, those caves are sea caves, aren’t they?”

“Sea caves, what do you mean?”

“You know, caves formed in hundreds of millions of years by waves that hit the weak rocks of the wall. All the caves on the cliff by sea are that.”

Seulgi wanted to show off what he had learned from the encyclopedia to Grandpa. He also hoped to hear a compliment like, ‘My grandson is so smart’.

“Well, I wonder if they are sea caves?”

Grandpa, saving his words, started to walk ahead towards the caves.

The caves were bigger than what Seulgi originally thought. From a distance they looked like small caves, but the inside was much bigger than it looked. Some caves were smoothly drilled, but some caves were connected to each other in a shape of H. However, something was

strange. If the caves were sea caves, the sea water would have to flow in and out, and if the caves were lava tubes, there should be evidence of lava like the Manjanggul Cave, but these caves were nothing like those caves.

“That’s odd. These can’t be sea caves.”

“Seulgi, I hate to tell you this, but these caves were built by men.”

Said Grandpa as he looked up at the ceiling of the cave.

“Men? But why? There are no underground resources, since Jeju Island is a volcanic island. I guess, those people were fools.”

Seulgi could not believe it. He could not believe that someone would drill a cave on the rock wall by the sea. All that would come out from drilling the caves would have been rocks.

“My grandson is quite intelligent.”

Grandpa looked at Seulgi and gave him a smile.

“These caves were made by the Japanese soldiers during the period of the Japanese colonial rule.”

“Really? Why did they make these caves?”

Seulgi was curious. Why did the Japanese soldiers make caves on the cliff by the sea?

“That’s because they were afraid that the US soldiers would land. Let’s go now.”

It seemed like Grandpa did not want to talk about it any further, since he seemed to cut off what he was going to say. As Grandpa closed his mouth, Seulgi also had to close his mouth, as there was nothing more to ask.

## Chapter 2. Donation for the Needy

The summer heat had got strong. The news reported that this year's summer heat would be unyielding.

However, for Seulgi this was good news. The heat meant that the summer was coming and that would mean that Seulgi could enjoy his favorite fruit, watermelon.

“The best part about summer is eating watermelons.”

Seulgi loves watermelons.

But what Seulgi likes more than watermelons is summer vacation. It's not that Seulgi does not like school, but the best things about summer vacation are that he could oversleep and have no homeworks to do. Also, it's just fun, getting away from the scorching hot classroom.

However, few days before the summer vacation, the teacher made an announcement.

“I will not be deciding on the subject for your summer assignment. I want you to think about what you want to learn about, then investigate or research and solve the problem.”

The teacher's announcement pressured Seulgi. When the teacher told the students that there would be no homework, it was like a voice of an angel, but when the teacher announced that they should decide on the research subject on their own, it pressured Seulgi. He could not think of what to research about.

So, Seulgi asked his buddy Yeongjae.

“Hey Yeongjae, what are you going to research?”

“Me? I haven't thought about it yet.”

“I wonder what would be a good choice for me.”

“Just do anything. The teacher did say, you can choose anything.”

But Yeongjae's words did not comfort Seulgi.

When Seulgi got home, he flipped over the pages of the encyclopedia and even the illustrated book of creatures, but eventually he gave up and lied down on his back.

On the ceiling, a fly sat rubbing its face.

After staring at the fly, Seulgi went back to thinking about the research subject.

Then a small film canister on top of Seulgi's desk caught his sight. The film canister was used to collect money to help the 'Little Brothers' Foundation. There was only fifty won in the film canister, which was earned by doing a favor for Mom.

Last Christmas, Seulgi and his friends visited the 'Little Brothers' Foundation. At that time, Seulgi asked Dad for money to donate. However, although Dad did not get angry, he scolded him in a stern voice.

"Seulgi, you have to earn the money on your own. If I give you the money to help the needy, would that be me helping or you helping?"

Seulgi could not say a word. He felt embarrassed after listening to Dad.

"If you want to help the needy, the right way to help is by doing hard work. Next time, make a donation for the needy on your own."

Although Dad normally does not say much, in situations like these, he gives a long lecture like a teacher.

'Yeah, his right. I'll make a donation with my own money.'

Seulgi quickly got up and sat. But he could not think of a good way to make money. Doing chores for Mom, polishing Dad's shoes, collecting empty bottles, and saving allowances, all seemed like good ideas but nothing that seemed enough to be proud of, to say that he helped the needy.

'Should I deliver newspapers? But if I want to do that, I need a bicycle. Should I ask my parents to buy me a bicycle? That would be more

expensive. Besides I don't even know how to ride a bike, when would I learn and start delivering?'

Seulgi, then, lied on his back again. No matter how hard he tried, no good ideas popped up in his mind. After twisting and turing, while looking up at the ceiling, he got up and reached for the phone.

"Is this Yeongjae? It's me Seulgi."

"What's so important that you had to call?"

Yeongjae answered the phone as if he was surprised to hear from Seulgi.

"Yeongjae, about the research assignment....."

"What? Research assignment? Just go to bed if you have nothing better to do."

Responded Yeongjae, as if Seulgi had nothing important to say.

"I really want to make a donation to the needy. I'm going to gather about one hundred thousand won to donate to the 'Little Brothers' Foundation."

Tired of Yeongjae's nonsense, Seulgi had to quickly bring up the conversation about helping the needy. Seulgi was not sure if helping the needy could be his research assignment, but as he continued to talk about it, he felt the need to do so.

"What a hundred thousand won? How are you going to collect that much. Steal? Oh yeah, I guess you can just beg."

Responded Yeongjae, again, being sarcastic.

Seulgi began to lose his temper. However, he could not get mad at Yeongjae. He knew that he could not collect a hundred thousand won without carefully convincing Yeongjae to help.

"Yeongjae, don't be like that, and share some good ideas if you have some. I mean you are our class leader. So don't you think you should be helping me?"

Seulgi instantly started to flatter Yeongjae. He knew that Yeongjae becomes a whole different person when you call him a leader. Although his term as the class leader is over, once a leader is always a leader.

“Okay, fine. What do you want me to do?”

The calm voice of Yeongjae came through the phone.

Laughing at himself, Seulgi thought ‘I knew a little flattering would work.’

“I really want to donate a hundred thousand won to the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation by this summer vacation. But I have no idea how to earn that much money? So please, can you help me?”

Noticing that Yeongjae’s voice had changed, he made a desperate cry for Yeongjae’s help.

“Well, what can we do to make a hundred thousand won?”

It seemed like Yeongjae had to think also. The two were silent for awhile. Then, Yeongjae’s voice came out the phone.

“Seulgi, you sure can’t live up to your name, can you? I think you should change your name.”

“What’s wrong with the name, all of a sudden? Did you come up with something?”

“Who is the man?”

Yeongjae began to show off.

“I know I know, you are. So did you come up with something? Just say it.”

Said Seulgi, in an irritated tone.

“Seulgi, for us to work and earn that much money is just impossible. We probably won’t make much. Fund-raising is a sure way to make money in a short period of time. I remember I collected more than I expected, the last time I collected donation for the needy.”

“Summer vacation is in a couple of days, how are we going to collect



donation?”

“You stupid, who said we’re going to collect donation at school? I’m talking about central rotary. Don’t you think people walking by would make a donation if they see us holding a donation box? Ten thousand won a day would mean that in ten days it would become a hundred thousand won, and fifty thousand won a day would mean it’ll only take two days.”

Seulgi was tempted. Although it would be a bit embarrassing to hold a donation box, he felt like it was the easiest way to gather the money.

“They were right, you are a genius.”

“I hope you’re not calling me, Mr. Know-it-all.”

“Maybe.”

“What? Seulgi you.....”

“I’m just kidding. So when should we start?”

“What do you mean, we? When did I say I was going to help you raise donation?”

“If you don’t help me, who will? Yeongjae, don’t be like that, let start right away. I’ll make the box. You know it makes my eyes water to see the brothers of the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation.”

Seulgi did all he could, to prevent Yeongjae from saying he can’t.

“Alright. I’ll help.”

“I knew you would. I knew that you’d help. You’re the best. There is no better friend than you in this world. I will never forget this. Thanks.”

Seulgi made all the compliments that he could to thank Yeongjae.

“But lets start the fund-raising after summer vacation actually begins. We might be scolded if we start before summer vacation. Besides we even have to go to after school academies.”

Seulgi totally agreed with Yeongjae. Seulgi was happy enough with Yeongjae deciding to help.

Seulgi rushed to the supermarket and got him a box used for sodas. The boxes used for sodas are just the thing for a donation box because they are solid. Then using gift wraps that Mom had gathered, he decorated the box. And lastly, he cut the most important hole for the box.

‘Money will flow in through this hole...’

Just the thought made Seulgi hum in joy.

As Seulgi skipped through the entrance pushing the door open, he heard someone get hit by the door.

“OUCH! Who is that?”

It was Dad. He came back home and was hit suddenly by the door that Seulgi had opened.

All of a sudden, Seulgi was scared. Although Dad was a type of person who does not get angry easily, he was lately tense due to the slacking business.

“Dad, it’s me. Seulgi.”

Afraid, Seulgi mixed a cute tone to his voice to please Dad.

“You have to be careful. What if a guest came and got hurt?”

Knowing that it was Seulgi who opened the door, Dad talked in a calm voice. Luckily, it seemed like Dad did not get hurt.

“Where are you going? It’s getting dark.”

“I was getting bored, so I thought I go out.”

“Then lets go in. It’s almost time for dinner.”

“Okay.”

Seulgi followed Dad into the house. He also wanted to tell Dad about his fund-raising plan and that he wants to quickly raise a hundred thousand won and donate to the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation. But he stopped himself doing so. He knew that Dad would only have harsh words for him if he found out.

'You should help others by doing hard work. Does it make sense to help others by taking money out of other's pocket?'

### Chapter 3. The Mean and Nasty Guy with Dark Glasses

Finally, the summer vacation Seulgi had been waiting for had started. When Mom saw his report card, she looked disappointed, so Seulgi started sweet talking to cheer her up.

“Mom, I’ll do much better the next semester.”

“Do you mean that? How can I believe someone who only makes promises and don’t keep them?”

“Mom, you know that if I make up my mind, coming in first is a piece of cake.”

Seulgi was overly chatty as if he had already reserved for the first place. He had already learn that he had to do all the talking before Mom could start lecturing.

“You sure are in first when it comes to talking. It’s up to you. It’s your life anyways.”

After that, Mom said nothing. Whenever Mom had nothing more to say, she had a habit of saying it’s your life. It’s true, Mom can’t live his life for him anyways.

At that moment, the phone rang. Mom picked up the phone then handed to Seulgi.

“Are you really going to collect donation?”

Asked Yeongjae, suddenly.

“Of course, a man has to keep his words. we have to keep our words.”

Seulgi replied as coolly as possible. It was a decision made to spend a meaningful vacation.

“Then, when do you want to start? Tomorrow? The day after tomorrow?”

“Like they say ‘Strike the iron while it is hot’, how about starting tomorrow?”

“Alright. I guess I’ll have to help my friend beg if I’m going along with him.”

“How can you say that? This is fund-raising. This is about collecting a meaningful money.”

“Begging or collecting donation, whatever. I’ve seen donation during Christmas, but during summer vacation? People are going to laugh.”

“Still, we can do it. Don’t you think people would be glad to help if we tell them it’s for the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation?”

“Well... I guess we’ll know once we get out there.”

Answered Yeongjae, with a doubt in his voice. There was no confidence in his voice. However, it was not something they could give up beforehand. It was Seulgi’s attitude to finish what he had started.

“Let’s stop complaining, it’s a choice we’ve already made. If a man made a decision to do, shouldn’t he at least try?”

Seulgi, again, jumped to conclusions.

“Okay, then lets meet tomorrow at five-thirty pm.”

Yeongjae gave in and answered.

In the afternoon next day, Seulgi went out the house with a donation box. Since Mom and his little sister Bora went out to the market, there was nobody home to provoke Seulgi about leaving home with a donation box. Seulgi with hurrying steps went to Yeongjae’s house.

“Yeongjae!”

Pushing the bell, Seulgi called out Yeongjae. As if he was waiting in front on the gate, Yeongjae came out the door.

It was exactly six o’clock pm when Seulgi and Yeongjae made it out to the central rotary. Since it was summer, the day was still bright. It had to be about eight o’clock pm for the dusk to come down.

‘I hope there are many people so we can quickly collect...’

Seulgi along with Yeongjae walked over to the traffic light, and stood

there with the donation box. Although their faces started to blush in embarrassment, they could not hesitate. People glanced at them while passing by, but no one had donated. Continuously, people passed by, but no one had donated any money.

“Hey, at least make a poor expression, what are you doing there just staying like an idiot?”

Yeongjae grumbled at Seulgi.

“Okay.”

‘If I knew this would have happened, I would have practiced making expression in front of the mirror.’

Seulgi, thinking that people would donate money if they saw his expression, made a very desolate expression. However, Seulgi’s face did not look like he was desolate, but more like he was frowning. He looked as if he would say something, if they did not donate money.

“Hey, people are going to run away if they see your face like that.”

Yeongjae scolded Seulgi in a small voice.

“Okay.”

Seulgi and Yeongjae walked over to the traffic light.

They stood there with their donation box.

As Seulgi was displeased by Yeongjae’s irritation, he wanted to fight back but he knew that there would be nothing good about hurting Yeongjae’s feelings. So he made a expression like a very poor child. It looked like, ‘Please give me money because I’m a poor child’, was written on his face.

However, people just looked at them like, ‘What are those strange kids doing?’, and did not donate any money. Instead, there was one lady who scolded them, ‘Just go home and study.’

After being scolded, Yeongjae with a sad face said something, as if it just came to his mind.

“Seulgi, since we came out to ask to help the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation, why don’t we say something, like let’s say ‘Let’s help the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation.’”

“That’s right, your right. We have to shout.”

Seulgi also thought that they needed to shout.

“Who would donate if we stand here like scarecrows? Let’s shout as loud as possible.”

“Let’s do it together. I can’t do it alone.”

Seulgi asked Yeongjae, trying not to make him feel uncomfortable. But Seulgi could not find the courage to do it alone.

“Okay, lets do it together. One, two, three! Lets help the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation! Let’s help those angles in the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation!”

Even so, the words would not come out of Seulgi’s mouth. Seulgi was so embarrassed that he could not shout it out loud. People passing by frowned, as if what they were hearing was bunch of nonsense.

“This isn’t going to help. Lets try shouting even louder.”

Seulgi decided to be brave. And with all their strength shouted, ““Lets help the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation.” Although their throats began to hurt, they just could not walk away.

“Lets help our brothers in the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation!”

“Lets help the angles in the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation!”

Seulgi and Yeongjae’s voices filled the central rotary. However, still there was no one willing to donate.

After standing in front of the traffic light for thirty minutes, a kid, finally, donated three hundred won into the box.

“Thank you.”

Instantly, the words came out of Seulgi’s mouth. Although the kid seemed like a kindergartener or even younger, Seulgi was so thankful, that he showed the kid respect.

“Look at you, for money...”

Yeongjae could not help, but to giggle.

“What about money? Like this, we won’t even be able to collect a thousand won.”

Shouted Seulgi, as if it was Yeongjae’s fault that people were not donating their money into the box.

“Well, you shouldn’t have rushed into helping the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation. Getting innocent me involved in all this.”

Yeongjae was being sarcastic again.

However, the kindergartener was their lucky charm. Or more like a magnet. Money started to fall into their donation box. A lady put a thousand won bill in, a high school girl put a five hundred won coin in, and even a man who was drunk put in two thousand won.

“Yeongjae, if we keep this up, the box will be full in no time.”

Seulgi was about to sing in joy. Yeongjae must have been happy as well that he had a wide open smile on his face. As more people started to appear, more money started to fill the box. If this continued, it seemed like hundred thousand won would be collected soon.

But that was when a man with dark glasses showed up.

“Who told you guys that you can collect money here?”

Without a reason, the man with dark glasses started to yell and snatched the donation box out of Yeongjae’s hands.

“No! That’s a donation for the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation.”

Shouted Yeongjae, as he reached out to steal back the donation box.

“What donation? I know your pretending to help the poor, and collecting money to go to the arcade, aren’t you?”

The man with dark glasses gave a look at Seulgi and Yeongjae as if they were collecting money to do something bad.

“No we’re not. We are not like that.”



“You little brats, are you still out of your minds. Do you know who I am? If you want to do business in someone else’s property, you have to notify the owner, understand? I’ll let you go this time, but if I see you guys again then you’ll have to pay the consequence.”

The man with dark glasses warned Seulgi and Yeongjae with a very scary expression and left with their donation box. They looked at the man with dark glasses leave with their box, as if they had been possessed. They should have screamed ‘It’s a thief!’ or ‘Give our money back!’, but the words did not come out of their mouths and they just stood stunned.

With their box, the man with dark glasses disappeared unhurriedly into the alley.

“Is this real? for real? really?”

Yeongjae had nothing more to say than to repeat the word ‘real.’

Seulgi for a while stood still looking at the direction the guy with dark glasses disappeared.

“Lets go home now. It’s really dark.”

Spoke Yeongjae, in a soft voice.

“What do we do if we leave now?”

“What do we do? Is today our only day? We have tomorrow and even a day after tomorrow.”

“We do, but...”

“What do you mean, but? Cheer up! Stop acting like your going to die because of this.”

Said Yeongjae, while patting Seulgi on the shoulder.

“What a bum?”

Seulgi was so angry that he wanted to scream it out loud.

“Anyways, let’s call it a day.”

There was nothing that Seulgi could do, so Yeongjae and he walked

across to the bus station. Even on the bus, their hearts did not stop pounding. They felt pathetic that they did not even shout, 'You bully, give back our donation!' They really regretted not being able to curse at the man, who disappeared with their donation box.

## Chapter 4. A Good Day

The day was hot. Anyone would sweat even though they just sat still.

“Darn it, we should be eating watermelon on a day like this.”

Said Seulgi carefully, aware of Mom.

“Mom, Seulgi says he wants a watermelon.”

Bora jumped in, as if she wanted to eat as well.

“Why are you guys crying for watermelon? Eat your meals!”

Shouted Mom, as she was preparing Seulgi and Bora’s meal in the kitchen.

Mom’s nagging had increased, recently. She was unsatisfied with Seulgi staying at home and doing nothing for the summer vacation. Even in the morning, when Mom wakes Seulgi up, she would start lecturing.

“Seulgi, wake up now! Are you going to sleep the whole vacation? You should not be playing the whole time. Please, do some reading as well.”

There was no way Mom would look nicely at Seulgi crying for watermelon, when he was not even doing his studying.

Seulgi was angry. Mom was acting irritated, when he did not even say that he had to have watermelons.

As Seulgi listened to Mom’s harsh words, he gave a stare at Bora.

Then, Bora yelled out.

“Mom! Seulgi’s trying to hit me!”

“What? You, you...”

Seulgi was so shocked that he could not say anything.

“Mom! He’s really trying to hit me!”

“Seulgi, are you really going to disappoint me?”

Seulgi’s heart began to pound. Mom’s punishment was so unusual that Seulgi could not help but to shiver in fears. Whenever Seulgi was in trouble, Mom would say, “Are you going to disappoint me?” and then

punish him. The punishment was ‘No Television’. For Seulgi, who loves to watch television, this was a harsh punishment.

“Mom!”

Seulgi felt that this was so unfair that he moaned loudly.

“How many brothers and sisters do you have? Does it make sense for you to mistreat the only sister that you have? You’re all grown up, how can you think like a little kid?”

Once again, Mom’s lecture began.

Seulgi did not like hearing Mom nag, but he could not make any excuse and kept silent. Making an excuse was not going to get through mom anyways.

Then, the bell rang. It was Dad. Dad always pushes the bell twice, then, the music from the bell plays six times.

“Why is everybody down?”

As Dad came in through the door, Seulgi and Mom gave each other a look and then talked with a laughter. Dad was holding a bag of fried chicken on one hand. When Mom saw the chicken that Dad would bring, whenever work went well, her face brightened instantly. And it was Mom who was more depressed than Dad because people did not come to look for houses due to the recession.

“Seulgi, don’t touch your little sister again. If you don’t love your little sister, who will?”

Said Mom warm-heartedly as she took the bag of chicken from Dad.

Seulgi was upset. Mom knew nothing, but blamed everything on Seulgi even if it was Bora who was being unreasonable. However, Seulgi could not ruin the mood, so he just gave Bora a stare. Rather Bora felt sorry or was in an appetite for chicken, she who would have screamed and yelled at any other times, just ignored Seulgi staring down at her.

“Come quick, Seulgi. Let’s enjoy this delicious chicken.”

Dad must have had one or two drinks, he was talking happily.

“Okay, dad.”

Seulgi went next to Dad.

Seulgi now felt better. It’s true that the tangled heart unravels when your stomach is filled.

“Did something good happen?”

Asked Mom, while stripping off the leg of the chicken. What Mom really wanted to ask was ‘How much did you earn today?’ That’s probably because she had to borrow money from Seulgi’s aunt.

“Of course something good happen.”

Dad swung his arms behind and sat with his belly sticking out.

“Did you make a deal? Is it a big one? What is it?”

Mom continuously asked question, giving no time for Dad to answer.

“Of course, it's a big one, it’s big alright. Once this deal is closed, we’ll make a sizable fortune.”

As soon as Dad said those words, Mom’s face darkened. Mom must have thought that the money was already in Dad’s pocket. However, Mom now knew that the money was not in his hands, yet. There was a time before, when Dad talked big about filling up his pocket with cash, but things did not go as he had hoped. How great would it be, if everyone who came looking for a house or a land would make a deal. There are many people who show up like they are going to make a deal, but disappear suddenly or just take a look and leave.

As Seulgi was listening to Dad talk big, a great idea came to his mind. Like they say, opportunity comes to those who are prepared, Seulgi knew that if he asked Dad for favor when he’s happy, he would listen.

“Dad, can you please give me a hundred thousand won, if your deal goes well?”

Seulgi asked Dad as he kept thinking about the donation box, he lost in

the afternoon. Seulgi imagined Dad saying, 'Of course, I'll help you', and started to flatter him. Seulgi was willing to do anything that Dad would ask for.

But Dad stared at Seulgi with a surprised look. Seulgi's request was out of the blue, and he was surprised by the amount that Seulgi mentioned.

"What was that? a hundred thousand won?"

"Yes, a hundred thousand won."

There was no backing down. If Dad gives the money, all the problems would be solved. Dad is a type of person who would give an allowance for no reason when he has some drink.

"Where are you going to use it? That's a big amount."

Asked Dad, with a serious look. Then, Mom horned in.

"What is all this talk about? Does a hundred thousand won grow on trees? How can you ask for a hundred thousand won? Did you break a window or something?"

Asked Mom with a stunned look. There is no doubt that a hundred thousand won is a big money for Mom. Even though she knows that Seulgi loves watermelon, she only buy them once awhile because of the price.

"What are you going to do, that you need such a big amount?"

"..."

"Is it something hard to tell us? What did you do, that you need such a big money?"

As Seulgi hesitated, Mom asked again with a piercing voice. Mom raised her voice as if Seulgi had done something worse.

"Are you going to say anything? What in the world are you going to do with that money?"

Shouted Mom, again.

"Mom, can't you trust me? Do I look like a kid who would do something

bad?”

“So why don’t you just tell us.”

Seulgi could not hold it any longer, and had to tell the truth. Even the story about the man who took their donation money.

“How can there be such a person? What is the world coming to?”

Dad clicked his tongue in disgust.

“That’s great. See that’s exactly what happens when you do something that you should not have been doing in the first place. So from now, don’t even think about doing such a thing and just study!”

Mom talked as if what happened was a good thing. Although what she was saying was actually for Seulgi, her words hurted his feelings. Moreover, the donation he collected was to help the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation.

“Honey. You have to compliment them for doing something good so that they will do something again with the same good heart. Good boy. If I get the deal done, I’ll give you the hundred thousand won.”

When Dad took Seulgi’s side, Seulgi started to feel happy again.

“What did the customer look for? A store? Or a farm?”

Mom seemed interested once again in the commission. She asked knowing that the more expensive the land costs, the more commission they would earn. Selling a small apartment or a rent does not give you much.

“No. They’re not thinking about buying, but looking for a land to lease.”

“A lease?”

Said Mom with a very disappointed voice. If they lease, there was really no money to talk about to start with. Mom already knew that the commission would be small for introducing a piece of land for lease.

“A Japanese man came by. He said that he would give a descent amount to lease a farm in the mountain area. He also said he would double the

commission if he can lease.”

“A Japanese person? What is he going to do by leasing a farm?”

Seulgi was curious and asked immediately. A Japanese person would not think about farming himself by leasing a land.

“I don’t know either. He just came and without a reason, asked for a land to lease. He must have his reasons.”

“That’s strange. Maybe some treasure is buried in the land or something?”

“I don’t know. All I need is commission.”

Said Dad as if it did not matter.

“Of course, there’s no reason to know the purpose. All you have to do is receive commission.”

Said Mom as if she was just interested in the commission.

Seulgi had nothing more to say. Whether the Japanese person rents the land or not was no business for Seulgi. That was the Japanese person’s problem, and all Seulgi needed was for Dad to earn the commission and give him a hundred thousand won. However, something did not feel right. What is a Japanese person planning to do renting a farm in the mountain region.

“But the land that the Japanese man wants to rent happens to be your friend Yeongjae’s family’s farm.”

“Yeongjae’s family farm?”

“It seemed like they planted summer cabbages. Makes sense, since it’s on highland and has cooler temperature.”

“But why do you think he’s think about renting the farm?”

“Well, it’s not polite to ask, so we’ll have to wait and see.”

Seulgi was curious. Why would a Japanese person want to borrow Yeongjae’s family farm.

“Okay that’s it, now go study. You had enough fun. Hurry up.”



Mom cannot bear to see Seulgi having fun. He was trying to watch television using the chicken as an excuse, but Mom knew it instantly, and sent him to his room.

“Mom, you really can’t help seeing me have fun, can you?”

Seulgi could not talk back to Mom, so he got up grumbling.

“Our Seulgi is such a good boy. I am so happy to have such a good son.”

Mom joked to cheer up Seulgi.

“Study hard. You studying hard is helping mom and dad. There is no better way to make mom and I happy.”

Dad, who had some drink, added to what Mom had to say.

As soon as Seulgi went into his room, he ran to the telephone.

Yeongjae picked up the phone.

“It’s Yeongjae, isn’t it?”

Seulgi immediately thought that it was Yeongjae who picked up the phone. But it was not.

“No, this is Yeongsu. Yeongjae’s in the bathroom.”

“Really? Then, could you quickly get him on the phone?”

“It takes my brother at least a fifteen minutes to get out, once he’s in the bathroom.”

“It’s an urgency. Get him on the phone, quick.”

“What’s more important than going to the bathroom? I have to go do my choirs, so call back later.”

Yeongsu just hung up the phone.

“That brat has no manners.”

Seulgi was mad, but there was nothing he could do than to hang up. Dad’s voice in the living room could be heard. He must have been happy, just thinking about receiving a commission in a long time.

‘Yeongjae’s so lucky. If the Japanese man rents Yeongjae’s family farm,

he will be giving a lot of money. That's what we call hitting the jackpot. Why don't we have a farm like them?'

Seulgi envied Yeongjae, you would need to own a farm if you wanted to give rent or farm. At that moment, the phone rang.

"Is this Seulgi? It's me Yeongjae. Did you call? Is there a good new you'd like to share?"

Yeongjae poured out questions.

"You, you know that your family just hit the jackpot? Your dad, last night, must have had a lucky dream. I bet your happy."

Said Seulgi, as if he was jealous.

"What are you talking about? Jackpot? What did my dad do?"

Yeongjae must have been curious as well, as he asked more questions right after.

"Yeah, from what I heard from my dad, someone is trying to rent your farm. I heard the price is quite high."

"Really? But why is that a jackpot? It's not even a big farm."

Yeongjae had an lukewarm reaction. He had thought that the jackpot meant a great amount of money, but it was just a rent.

"It's not that. A Japanese man said he will give a lot of money to rent your farm. If you don't believe me, ask my dad! Check if I'm lying."

Seulgi was angry. He did not call just to hear those words from Yeongjae.

"Okay. I'll believe you. I'm gonna hang up now. I heard it was urgent so I ran out the bathroom. I think I have to go again."

Yeongjae hung up on Seulgi.

Seulgi could not believe it. He could not believe that he was the only one who got excited and started to jump in joy.

## Chapter 5. The Old Japanese Man

“Seulgi, will you go to your dad’s real estate office and give this to him?”

Seulgi was doing his homework, then Mom asked, giving him the stamp.

“Okay.”

Seulgi was getting tired of sitting, so he got up quick and took the stamp from Mom.

“Seulgi, take me with you.”

Bora came out wanting to go along.

“No. Stay at home.”

Seulgi cold-heartedly rejected Bora’s request.

“I’m going too! Mom, I want to go too!”

Bora must have really wanted to go out, as she stubbornly followed even when Seulgi said no.

“Seulgi, take your sister with you. Why don’t you take this money and buy ice cream for you and your sister, also.”

Mom gave Seulgi a thousand won in coins.

“Okay.”

Seulgi took the money from Mom as if he had no other choice.

“Don’t cause trouble!”

Seulgi warned Bora, as he held her hand walking out the apartment into the main road.

“Seulgi, I want ice cream!”

Shouted Bora in front of the supermarket.

“Fine. You little slick.”

Seulgi pinched Bora’s cheek.

“I’m telling mom you pinched me.”

Said Bora as if she was about to burst in tears.

“Okay, okay. Good girl. If you tell mom, I’m never bringing you along. You’re never coming with me again, so okay?”

Seulgi intimidated his little sister.

Seulgi went into the store, and picked two carp-shaped ice creams and gave one to Bora.

“I don’t want that! I want choco ice cream.”

Bora went to the freezer, and quickly picked out a chocolate ice cream.

“Alright, that’s it. I’m never gonna come with you again.”

Seulgi was tired of Bora, but she was cute too. However, when they got to the point where they could see the real estate office, Bora stuck her hand out.

“Seulgi, give me the stamp. I’ll take it.”

“Fine. As you wish.”

Understanding what Bora was trying to do, Seulgi could not help laughing. Bora, taking the stamp that Seulgi handed, walked proudly towards the office.

When Seulgi and Bora opened the door and went in, Dad was talking on the phone. Also, an old gentleman, who looked to be in his sixties, and a young man with dark glasses were sitting in the office. When Seulgi and Bora came in, the old gentleman gave them a smile.

“Dad, here’s your stamp.”

Bora handed the stamp to Dad.

“Okay, thank you.”

Said Dad as he stopped talking on the phone and received the stamp from her. Then, his attention went back to the phone. Bora, expecting to hear good words from Dad, was disappointed. Seulgi could not help but to laugh at Bora’s disappointment.

‘That’s what you get for trying to take all the credit.’

Seulgi felt that it served her right. He even felt respect for Dad because

it seemed Dad focused on the call and ignored Bora, as if he read Seulgi's mind.

"Okay, I understand. Yes, yes. Please tell him to drop by my office as soon as he gets there."

Said Dad, as he kept nodding at everything. Even though the person, Dad was talking on the phone, could not see him, he continued to bow his head as if he was making a video call. Seulgi was worried that, if Dad continued his neck would break and he would have to be hospitalized. Dad was on the phone for a long time before he hung up.

"Dad, Seulgi was mean to me."

Lied Bora.

"You have to love your sister."

Dad gently scolded Seulgi.

"When? When was I being mean?"

Seulgi wanted to smack his sister. But being a big boy, he knew he could not hit his little sister in front of guest.

"At the store, you were mean!"

"No, I wasn't!"

Seulgi was so angry about his sister lying that it almost made him cry.

"Stop it now, and go home. There are guest here."

Said Dad considering the guests' feelings.

Seulgi also saw their faces. However, the guest smiled looking at Seulgi and Bora.

*"Are they your children?"*

Speaking a word at a time, the guest sounded like he had just learned Korean. How can a grown man not speak our language? Seulgi felt that something was not right. The guest did not look stupid.

"Yes, he's all grown but has no manners."

Said Dad in embarrassment, as if Seulgi made a big mistake.

*“Kids are all like that. Kids in my country are the same.”*

The strange guest blundered on looking at Seulgi and Bora.

‘Kids from my country? I guess this means he’s not Korean. Just by his accent, he seemed Japanese.’

Seulgi looked at the guest’s face and wondered which country he was from.

‘Oh! The person who wants to rent Yeongjae’s farm.’

Seulgi realized that the guest was the Japanese person who wants to rent Yeongjae’s family farm. He could not believe that the Japanese person spoke Korean. He thought that the man must have studied Korean very hard.

“Go home now. Go and do your homework or something.”

Dad rushed Seulgi and Bora to go home as if he knew that Bora would cause more trouble.

Seulgi did not get up right away. He wanted to hear what the Japanese man was going to say. Also, the old man from Japan was not the only reason why Seulgi did not want to leave the office. Another reason was the young man with glasses who came with the old man. Seulgi could not see the whole face because of the dark glasses, but he felt like they have met before, just by the shape of his face.

The young man sitting next to the Japanese man got up and said in a rude tone, “If you get the deal done for us, we’ll give you plenty of commission.”

‘That disrespectful man looks much younger than dad.’

Seulgi was mad, but he knew he should not get involved, so he kept quiet.

*“Yes. If this deal goes well, we will give you a generous reward.”*

Muttered the Japanese man rubbing his hands.

“Don’t worry. I gave him a call, he will be here soon. There should be

no reason for him to turn down the deal, you are giving a lot of money for a small land.”

Said Dad in confidence.

At that moment, Yeongjae’s dad walked in through the door. He must have ran, as he was trying to catch his breath.

“Were you looking for me? For what?”

“Yes, I have a good news. Please, meet Nakamura from Japan.”

From Dad’s introduction, the two exchanged bows to greet each other.

But Bora once again had to say something.

“Dad, I want Choco-pie.”

“Oh! Okay? Here’s some cash, go to the store, buy them and go home.”

Soon as Bora said something, Dad took out a thousand won bill and gave it to Seulgi.

“I want it.”

Bora wanted to take care of the money.

Seulgi was so curious about what the Japanese man and Yeongjae’s dad were going to say and about the young man who came along that he did not want to get up right away. So he kept dawdling to get up.

“Leave quick. Didn’t Bora say she wanted choco-pie?”

Dad started rushing them again...

There was nothing that Seulgi could do but to stand up. Then he gave a bow to the guest and went out the door.

Seulgi rushed back home.

“Was dad in the office?”

Asked Mom, but Seulgi gave a simple answer ‘Yes’ and ran to the telephone. It was too hard for him to keep his mouth shut.

“Did he just ignore what I said? If he’s already ignoring me now, it’s a no brainer what he’ll do later.”

Grumbled Mom, but Seulgi pretended he did not hear anything and

dialed a number.

Seulgi just could not wait, but Yeongjae's family must have gone out because nobody was picking up. Just thinking about talking with Yeongjae made Seulgi rush back home. But the excitement was gone when nobody answered. As soon as Seulgi put down the phone, Mom urged Seulgi,

"If you have nothing to do, go read a book."

"Oh my goodness mom! You don't read when there is nothing to do. Don't you know that reading a book is more important than studying?"

Seulgi responded to Mom's demand.

"I'm glad you know that. That's why I'm telling you to go and read."

"Okay. I'll go, so please calm down and can I have my dinner? I'm hungry."

"Yes. Read while I get your dinner ready."

Mom quickly went into the kitchen.

Seulgi, trying his best not to get Mom angry, called Yeongjae time after time but he never answered. What was Yeongjae up to? That he was burning Seulgi's heart.

Dad came home, way after the day got dark.

And as soon as he came into the house, he told Mom,

"I ate already."

"Oh my goodness, you could have called at least."

Mom started complaining as she was about to prepare dinner for Dad.

Seulgi ran right next to Dad.

"Dad, the guest in your office today, he's Japanese right?"

"Who? Oh, that person? Yes. He's the Japanese man who is interested in renting Yeongjae's family farm."

"What is going to do with the farm? Is he going to plant crops?"

Seulgi could not hide his curiosity. He wanted to know the reason why



the Japanese man wants to rent Yeongjae's family farm. Seulgi started to massage Dad's shoulders in hopes that he would spill out some secrets.

"What is up with you? How would I know that? All I need is the commission. Whether he farms or builds a house, that's none of my business."

Dad must have felt relaxed to be home since he instantly fell a sleep and began to snore as soon as he laid on the floor without any blankets.

Now, all that Seulgi could do was to go to his room.

When Seulgi opened his eyes, the sun had already rose and was shining on him. To start the morning, Mom complained about the heat, but Dad was in a good mood saying how it felt nice to be energized by the sunlight early in the morning.

As Seulgi was about to go into the bathroom to wash up, Dad came out.

"Dad, did you get the deal on Yeongjae's family farm done?"

"Of course. Yeongjae's family should have some extra cash now."

"What about you, dad?"

"Me, I earned as little as a tear of an ant. Commissions are not a large amount."

As if Dad had forgotten bragging about making big money, now he was comparing it to the size of an ant's tear.

For Seulgi, money was not the issue. He was only curious about why the Japanese man wanted to rent Yeongjae's family farm.

"Dad, what was the reason that the Japanese man rented Yeongjae's family farm?"

"I don't know. But the strange thing is that he's going to dig a deep hole. Not build a farm. I didn't ask anymore since there was no reason for me to know any more."

"Did Yeongjae's dad agree with it?"

“Of course, they made a deal to have it back to normal. If they fill up the hole again with dirt, I don’t see any problems. Anyways, Yeongjae’s family is lucky. They made a fortune.”

Said Dad as if he envied them.

“Did they make that much money? But doesn’t that seem awkward? Why would you pay so much to rent Yeongjae’s family farm just to dig a hole?”

“That’s true. It would be great if your grandfather would give us a farm like that.”

Said Mom as she came in, after finishing the dishes.

“He gave us a treasure greater than a farm, what’s there to complain about?”

Said Dad looking at Mom.

“A great treasure? What treasure did we get? I don’t even remember being given a spoon.”

Said Mom with an unfair expression on her face.

“No, I don’t mean it in that sense. I mean I’m the treasure. Don’t you think that I’m the treasure of this family?”

Said Dad letting out a hearty laugh.

“Treasure? Then what am I? A diamond?”

“Diamond is us~!”

Seulgi butted in.

“Our house is full of treasure. I guess someone will try to rob us.”

Dad made another remark.

Mom, who could not believe what she was hearing, made a laughter and went into the kitchen.

But something was bugging Seulgi. He felt like he had seen the man with dark glasses before, but he could not figure out where.

“Dad, the young man who was with the Japanese man, do you happen to

know him? The young man who was wearing a dark glasses.”

“Not that I know of, Why? Is something wrong?”

“No. I think I’ve met him before, but it just doesn’t ring a bell.”

“There are lots of people who wear glasses. Where could you probably have met him? Stop all this nonsense and go study.”

“Okay. You always say go study.”

Seulgi felt disappointed going back to his room. But he was more frustrated not being able to remember where he had met the young man with glasses.

‘Who was he? Where did I see him?’

## Chapter 6. Yeongjae's Family Farm

"Do you have time today?"

Yeongjae called. Just as Seulgi was getting bored, he was happy to get a call from Yeongjae.

"Why? Do we have somewhere to go? Maybe your birthday party?"

"You sure have a knack of trying to get free meals."

"It's not that, I'm just happy because I was getting bored. So what's up?"

"Well, I promised mom I would go to the farm with her to help."

"The farm? So you're trying to make me work? I can't work."

"Don't get ahead of yourself. Forget it if you don't want to. I thought you would like to come along. But I guess I'll go alone. I don't want to force you."

As Seulgi did not respond approvingly, Yeongjae had to take his chances. Then, Seulgi started to get interested. What was such a big deal that Yeongjae talked big.

"When did I say I didn't want to go? It just bothered me that you were beating around the bush. You guys have a tangerine farm? Are we picking tangerines today? Then I guess we can eat all the tangerines we can."

"What tangerine? In summer? I don't know if we had a greenhouse farm."

"Oh yeah, you guys don't raise tangerines. Then, what are we going to do at the farm? Oh yeah, you guys planted strawberries. My mouth is watering just thinking about them."

"Boy, you just say whatever's on your mind. Did I say we're going to a strawberry farm? Besides, doesn't strawberry grow in May?"

"That's not it? Then what is it? Just say it. You're killing me."

Seulgi was slightly getting angry.

‘If we’re going to a farm, that’s fine, not like I’m dying to go.’

Seulgi was a bit angry.

“I was just asking you if you wanted to go to our farm, since you seemed to be interested. You know, the farm that the Japanese man rented. We planted cabbages there. Since the Japanese man is going to work on the farm, we thought we pick the cabbages ahead. We’ll give you some if you come along and pick them. Your mom would like it since cabbages are expensive today.”

“Alright then, is it really the farm that the Japanese man rented?”

“That’s why I’m asking you to come along. Why you don’t want to?”

“No, I’ll go. I’ll definitely go.”

Seulgi promised to meet Yeongjae at the bus station and hung up the phone.

“Mom, can I have my lunch? I’m gonna go out.”

“Lunch? Oh my goodness.”

Mom lost her words and gave Seulgi a blank look.

“Mom, what are you doing? I’m in a hurry. I’m going to Yeongjae’s farm to pick cabbages. He said I can take some home.”

Seulgi used the cabbages to bribe Mom.

“Really? The cabbages these days are extremely expensive. I’ll have your lunch ready in no time.”

As Mom heard about the expensive cabbages, she rushed into the kitchen.

Seulgi got on the bus with Yeongjae. Soon as the bus started to move, it felt like they flew and stopped at the Sancheondan entrance. Seulgi and Yeongjae rushed off the bus and entered the side road.

As they moved towards Yeongjae’s farm, they saw large pine trees. There were not only pine trees but all kinds of trees, such as cherry

blossom trees, hackberry trees, bead trees, nutmeg trees, camellia trees, etc. that formed a forest that made shades around the area. But there was one really thick pine tree.

“Hey, this pine tree looks like it’s over a hundred years old.”

When Seulgi saw the pine tree and talked in a surprise, Yeongjae said something looking down on Seulgi.

“Stupid. This Japanese black pine is over five hundred years old.”

“What? Five hundred years old? Then, when was this tree planted?”

“I’m not sure, but this is not your typical tree. You can tell just by knowing that this area is Sancheondan.”

“Sancheondan? What is that?”

Seulgi was embarrassed to sound stupid, but he had to ask because he was so curious.

“In the past, people practiced ‘Sansinje’ (a religious ritual for the mountain spirit) twice a year at the Baekrokdam crater of Halla Mountain. But, how hard do you think it was to practice the ritual at the Baekrokdam crater of Halla Mountain on the first day of January? Lots of people were frozen to death or hurt practicing religious ritual for the mountain spirit on the snow covered Baekrokdam crater. So in 1470, the newly appointed Lee Yakdong Moksa (a government official during Joseon Dynasty) declared the ritual to be practiced here in this area.”

“So that’s why the this place is called Sancheondan. So I guess that tombstone is in memory of Lee Yakdong Moksa.”

Seulgi said, looking at the tombstone.

“You have sharp eyes. Anyways, how old do you think that pine tree is?”

“I know. I guess that means its at least over five hundred years old.”

“Yes. That’s why they protect this area so well.”

“How much longer do you think this tree will live?”

“It’ll probably live another five hundred years.”

“That’s too long. I’ve never heard of a pine tree that’s a thousand years old. I don’t know if it was a ginkgo tree.”

That moment, Seulgi saw the signboard. The story that Yeongjae told was all written on the signboard.

“Yeongjae, do you come here often?”

“Of course, I always pass by when I come to our farm.”

“That’s why you know so much about Sancheondan.”

“Did you just figure that out? Like the old Chinese saying, ‘opportunity makes the thief’, meaning the often you see it, naturally you learn.”

“I think you have the wrong meaning. ‘Opportunity makes the thief’, means when you see an object, the desire of that object rises. I guess you’re not that smart after all.”

Seulgi stuck his nose in the air, correcting Yeongjae on his mistake. He had felt like he was less smarter than Yeongjae, when Yeongjae poured out stories of Sancheondan, but he realized his understanding of Chinese character was better.

Seulgi and Yeongjae were now really close to the farm. It was not far from the Sancheondan pine tree.

“You guys came late playing around, didn’t you? Because you guys don’t want to work.”

Said Yeongjae’s mom as she was cutting the root of the cabbage.

“No. We’re out of breath running all the way here. Look at us, catching our breath.”

Seulgi stuck out his tongue and pretended to catch his breath.

“Okay. Just put those cabbages into the bag.”

Said Yeongjae’s mom without even looking.

Seulgi and Yeongjae started to put the cabbage that Yeongjae’s mom had picked into a gunny sack. Seulgi, looking around the farm as he

worked, noticed that the farm was not that big. The farm seemed about six hundred sixty one square meters big. No matter how much he looked around, it did not look like a farm that a Japanese person would be interested in.

Seulgi returned home with cabbages that Yeongjae's mom gave.

"I never thought I live til the day, you do something for us."

"Oh my goodness, mom."

Dad started to get busy. There were days when he would leave early in the morning and would not come home until late at night.

When Seulgi asked what kind of work Dad does, Dad replied, "Why do you want to know? Just do your studying. Don't worry about anything else." Dad did not show any signs of answering his question. In other ordinary days, Dad would give answers to anything that Seulgi would ask. However, for some reason, this time his mouth was locked shut.

While Seulgi was reading a book, Yeongjae's family farm once again came to his mind. He wondered what they were doing at the farm, if they were burying a treasure or if they were looking for a treasure.

Seulgi went to the phone.

"Who are you going to call, again? Don't hold up the line for no good reason. Do you think a man can be successful talking on the phone so much? Why don't you read."

"Oh, mom. I don't want to be a man."

"Watch what your saying. You're going to end our family descent."

"Okay, so can you please go somewhere else. Don't bother me, so I can make a call."

"Alright. Don't hold a call all day."

Mom nagged at Seulgi for being on the phone for so long as she went into the bathroom to get the laundry.

Seulgi pressed the button, "ting-a-ling", as soon as the phone rang,



Yeongjae picked up.

“Is this Yeongjae? You’re bored too, aren’t you? It’s killing you, isn’t it?”

“Yeah, I’m so bored, it’s killing me. I thought I’d be having fun once vacation started, but I guess not. I already miss our teacher and our classmates. I wish it’s September already. I hate listening to my mom lecture.”

“I guess we’re feeling the same. Yeongjae, have you gone to the farm?”

“What farm? That’s out of the blue.”

“You know. Your farm in Sancheondan. The farm you guys rented to the Japanese man.”

“Why would I go to the farm? Did the Japanese man steal the whole farm or something? We’re going to get the farm back next year anyways, so there’s no reason to look after it.”

“Oh my goodness, did I say you should guard your farm? I meant have you been to it. Because it’s odd. If you haven’t, let’s go.”

“Should we? Okay let’s go. Sounds good, I was getting bored anyways. What time do you want to meet?”

“What do you mean what time? Let’s go right now. Like they say, strike the iron while it is hot. Come out to the bus stop in front of the bank.”

“Okay.”

Seulgi took out the one thousand won bill he had hidden in between the book, and rushed out the house.

“Come back home quick. It’s best to take a cold bath and eat watermelon at home in a hot weather like this.”

Whether Mom does not like Seulgi going out or just wanted to brag about the watermelon she had bought in a long time, she told Seulgi right to his face.

Yeongjae was already waiting at the bus stop.

“Let’s go, quick.”

Getting off the bus, Seulgi and Yeongjae passed the pine tree and went into the forest path. But something was wrong. A veneer core plywood was surrounding the farm. And inside, a strange sound that sounded like an excavator was making a noise.

“That’s strang? Why did they block the farm?”

“Really, why did they?”

Seulgi replied with the same question to Yeongjae’s. Seulgi and Yeongjae walked around in hope to find a place that was not blocked by a plywood. And it was at that moment.

“Who is that? Get out of here!”

A young man with glasses suddenly appeared and shouted. It was the young man he had seen last time at the real estate agency with the Japanese man. Just as the last time, the young man was wearing glasses.

“Why are you guys here? Just get out of here!”

Shouted the man with dark glasses with a haughty attitude.

“What are you guys doing that you have to cover it with plywoods?”

“We covered it so that people won’t get hurt. Think about what would happen if someone got hurt by something that fell. We’re just preventing accident ahead. That’s that, aren’t you guys going to leave? This is not a place for kids. It’s dangerous, so go back.”

The man with dark glasses threatened with a insidious smile.

Seulgi and Yeongjae got scared and without waiting for one to say lets leave, they turned around and left. They were disappointed, but thought that nothing good would come out, getting in a fight with the tough-looking man with dark glasses.

“I feel uncomfortable just leaving like this.”

“It’s not because we’re afraid of him that we’re avoiding him, it’s because we don’t want his dirt rubbing off on us.”

“That’s right, it’s because we don’t know what will happen.”

Yeongjae and Seulgi made excuses as they turned around and left. Although they made excuses, they felt uncomfortable just turning back.

“They are hiding something. It’s strange that a Japanese man rented the farm and it’s also strange that they are covering it up so that no one can see.”

“That’s true.”

“They are hiding something, but what is it?”

Yeongjae could not clear his mind of doubts.

“What’s the worst thing that could happen? Let’s go. Bus is about to come. If we miss this bus, we have to wait an hour for the next.”

“Okay. Lets hurry.”

When they got close to the bus stop, the bus turned on its engine. Seulgi and Yeongjae quickly ran for the bus and hopped on.

## Chapter 7. The Secret of the Caves in Songaksan Mountain

“Seulgi, don’t you want to visit Moseulpo? Why don’t you go and spend a day or two before your academy starts.”

Asked Mom as Seulgi was fiddling around since the morning. Mom liked Seulgi visiting his grandparent’s house. It must have made her feel better since she could not visit her parents herself.

“Are you serious? That would be great. I’ll have to examine the caves for my research assignment.”

Seulgi said as he thought of the caves that he saw last time he visited. He felt like it would be a great research to examine the caves made by the Japanese people.

“That is a good idea. You should quickly finish your assignment so that you can start studying.”

“Oh mom, are you saying that a research assignment is not studying? It’s all part of studying.”

“Okay, I get it. So get ready to go, quickly.”

Whether Mom did not want to fight with Seulgi or just liked that he was going to Moseulpo, she backed away from Seulgi’s remark. Mom packed crab preserved in soy sauce, which Grandpa liked, and antineuralgic, that Grandma had asked for, into Seulgi’s backpack. The backpack was quite heavy, but Seulgi did not say a word. Even though it was a bit heavy, he knew that it made Mom happy to send all the stuff.

“Don’t get lost and have fun.”

Mom came all the way to the bus stop to warn Seulgi.

“Okay. I’ll be back soon.”

Seulgi quickly said goodbye and hopped on the bus.

By the time Seulgi arrived in Moseulpo, the sun had slightly tilted downward. Seulgi got off the bus and looked for Grandpa. If it was any

other time, Grandpa would have been waiting for him but he was nowhere in sight. Seulgi slowly began to walk. Although it was tiring to walk with the heavy backpack that Mom had packed, he could not wait forever at the bus stop. Right away, sweat began to drop from Seulgi's head. When he had walked about a hundred meters, he heard a honk. Seulgi quickly turned around to look. Inside the car was Grandpa waving his hands at Seulgi.

"Did you have to wait long?"

Asked Grandpa feeling sorry, as Seulgi got on to the car.

"Nope, I just got off the bus."

Said Seulgi looking at Grandpa.

"So your mother tells me that you came to examine something? What are you going to examine?"

Asked Grandpa curiously.

"I want to examine the caves. The caves we saw last time at the sea. I'm curious why the Japanese built the caves."

As Seulgi started to talk about the caves, in a second, Grandpa's face darkened. He remembered that Grandpa tried hard to avoid the caves the last time as well.

"Don't you think that will be too hard?"

"I want to examine, even though it's hard. I think it'll be easier if you help, grandpa."

Said Seulgi as he picked up his backpack.

"I guess I'll have to help but... Let's go in the house first. You look like you need to wash up."

Said Grandpa as he saw Seulgi's clothes soaked in sweat.

"Our Seulgi is here."

Grandma greeted Seulgi.

When Seulgi finished taking a shower and came out, he saw that

Grandma had sliced watermelon on the tray.

“Hurry and eat. Watermelon is the best on a hot weather. It should be very cold, I had it kept in the refrigerator.”

“Grandma, have some.”

“It’s okay. I had a lot already.”

“Grandpa, please have some.”

“Our Seulgi is all grown up now. He sure knows how to have manners. No matter how smart a man, if he has no manners he is not man. Let’s eat.”

Seulgi started to eat the watermelon while Grandpa complimented him. As the cold watermelon went down the throat, it felt like the heat had gone away in a second. The watermelon filled with the hard work of a farmer and Grandma’s love was really delicious.

“Okay now, let’s go.”

Said Grandpa when Seulgi finished the last watermelon.

“Okay, I’ll be right back with my notebook.”

Seulgi took out a notebook and a pencil from his backpack and followed Grandpa outside.

“Be careful. Stay away from dangerous places.”

Worried Grandma as she come out all the way to the gate.

“I will. Don’t worry.”

Seulgi was thankful for Grandma’s non-stop worrying.

The place that Grandpa took Seulgi was the caves on the coast which were drilled on the cliff of Songaksan Mountain. Seulgi made his way into the cave.

“They must have had a hard time making this cave.”

“Of course, the village people were forced to dig the cave using a pickax. There are fifteen caves like this.”

Seulgi was surprised by Grandpa’s words. How can someone dig a huge

cave like this with a pickax.

“You mean, this wasn’t made by a machine? They must have been really tired digging through these hard stones.”

“Your right. They took away all the crops, so there were no food to eat, the work was really hard, and everybody suffered very much.”

As Seulgi listened to Grandpa, he imagined how the people suffered digging the cave. Then, Grandpa added that the Japanese soldiers violently forced the workers to work without mercy.

“At that time, it didn’t feel like we were alive. There was nothing to eat, we had to eat whatever we could just to say alive. Without caring, the Japanese continuously took away our rice. They took every bit of rice, even the ones we had hid for the rituals.”

Grandpa talked as if he was getting angry.

Seulgi wrote everything Grandpa told him on his notebook.

“Now, let’s climb up the Songaksan Mountain. There is a fortress made by the Japanese military up there.”

Seulgi followed Grandpa up the Songaksan Mountain.

It was quite tough hiking Songaksan Mountain. The mountain was not a tall mountain, but the slopes were steep that it made Seulgi’s legs tired. But trying not to show Grandpa that he was weak, he stayed strong and gathered the strength to climb the mountain.

“Wow, you’re doing well.”

Following behind Seulgi, Grandpa complimented him. Seulgi felt more energized, when he heard the compliment.

When they got up to the top of the Songaksan Mountain, they saw an odd looking thing. It was a cylindrical building. It was too big to be someone’s house and it was oddly shaped to be called a stadium.

“Grandpa, what is that?”

“That is an anti-aircraft gun trench. The Japanese military made it so

that when an US aircraft flies by, they can shoot it down.”

“An anti-aircraft gun trench? It must have been tough to make a trench like that all the way up here.”

Said Seulgi with a sound of sympathy. Building a trench on a top of a mountain meant that people had to carry heavy rocks and cements all the way to the top, and Seulgi could not imagine how tough that must have been.

“This is nothing. They had to do enough more tough stuffs.”

Said Grandpa with a darkened face.

Then, something else caught Seulgi’s attention.

“Grandpa, what is that? Is that a royal tomb?”

“No, that’s not a royal tomb, that’s a hangar. It’s like a storage to hide the aircraft. Well actually, I think it’s correct to say that, that’s an air-raid shelter. It was built to protect the fighter planes from the US bombers.”

“If there is a hangar, does that mean there is an airfield as well? Is it that place, that looks like a track?”

“Yes, that was an airfield. Airplanes don't land there anymore, but until few years ago that was where US Air Force aircraft use to pass by.”

Listening to Grandpa, Seulgi started to become frustration. He could not believe that it was an Japanese military airfield. It was a shock. Fifty years have passed since the liberation, but it was strange to see traces made by the Japanese military here and there still remaining.

“Why did they make an airfield here?”

Asked Seulgi in curiosity.

“It was during the World War I, when a military base was built in Moseulpo. The Japanese Air Force stationed here, in order to help the German Air Force stationed in China. On the Moseulbong Peak that you see over there, they built a radio facility to detect electric wave and



stationed navy and fighter planes. The combat air force was called 'Kamikaze'”

“Kamikaze? Wasn't that the combat air force that the US Navy feared the most? I've heard stories that they flew into the ships with bombs and sunk the US warships.”

“You know well. The story's that they sacrificed their lives for the Japanese Emperor. It's a horrible story.”

“But why did the Japanese military build an airfield here in Moseulpo? They could have made it in Japan.”

“Well, Jeju is the southernmost area, closest distance to China, and it's also in the Pacific Coast. So for Japan, it was an important strategic point.”

“Why don't we get rid of those kinds of things?”

“If you just think about the violence that Japanese committed, yes, we should immediately get rid of them. But don't you think that our descendants should learn a lesson not to lose our country again by seeing such things?”

“But still, it feels uncomfortable to know that there are traces of Japanese military still left.”

“That's true too. Well, lets head back down now.”

Grandpa started to stride down the mountain. From behind Seulgi saw the white hair of Grandpa's head shine by the reflection of the sun.

Seulgi followed Grandpa down the mountain. As the car passed by the cave that they have passed before, Seulgi asked carefully to Grandpa, “Grandpa, why did they dig that cave?”

When Seulgi asked Grandpa, without turning his head to look, he replied, “That cave was also made by the Japanese military. The strategy was that they would hide in the cave and when the US military would land and go up the mountain, they would attack from the back.”

But something did not feel right. Last time, Grandpa's face grimed looking at the cave, but this time he did not even try to look at it. What could be the reason for that? No matter how much Seulgi thought about it, he could not come up with an answer.

'That's strange. What is he not telling me about the cave?'

Seulgi looked throughly at the side of Grandpa to figure out, but his curiosity remained.

'What is the incident that he wants to hide from me?'

Seulgi was thinking intently that he did not even notice that Grandpa was looking at him.

"What are you thinking so hard about? Let's go home now."

"Okay."

Seulgi quickly got on to the car.

"Seulgi, would you like to have an ice cream?"

Grandpa stopped the car in front of a store and looked at Seulgi.

"Yes, please."

Seulgi was happy. He got off the car and followed Grandpa into the store.

"Is he your grandson? He looks like a smart boy."

The tan skinned owner of the store asked Grandpa looking at Seulgi.

"Yes, this is my grandson. He's visiting, since it's summer vacation. Can we have an ice cream, please?"

"What about you grandpa?"

"Me? Then, should I have one also with my grandson?"

Grandpa was proud of Seulgi for offering him to have one as well, then he asked the owner for two ice creams.

"Your grandson is very smart and has good manners."

The owner said giving a delighted smile at Seulgi.

"Well, I think my daughter did well raising her son."

“Of course. Your daughter is a smart girl.”

The owner talked as if he knew Mom very well.

“That’s that. Should we go now?”

As Grandpa went out the store eating his ice cream, Seulgi quickly followed and got on to the car. Grandpa was eating his ice cream, but his eyes were on the Songaksan Mountain. His eyes were on the cave that we had passes just a moment ago. The look Grandpa had on the cave seemed depressed in spirits.

‘What secret could there be?’

Seulgi was curious but did not ask any further.

## Chapter 8. The Treasure Map

“If everything goes well, our lives are going to get better. Like they say, there’s a light at the end of every tunnel. There’s no law that says we have to live like this forever.”

“Someone will hear us. Calm down and go to bed.”

Seulgi heard the voice of Mom and Dad in his sleep. Dad must have had some drink because his tongue was twisted.

“I know that I haven’t made it easy for our family ‘til now. Now, you can live like a princess, no I mean a queen. I’m going to make you into a queen, do you understand? You’ll be a queen. Then, I guess I’ll be a king. Haha.”

“Don’t get ahead of yourself, and just go to sleep.”

“What are you saying? You don’t believe me, even with this map? Look at this map, this is a treasure map.”

“Okay, I see. A gold buried underground can’t go anywhere. So don’t worry and go to sleep. You’ll wake up the kids.”

Seulgi heard Mom settling down drunken Dad.

‘A map? What map? and gold?’

Seulgi was right awake. A map all of the sudden? And gold? Does that mean we have a treasure map in our house? Seulgi’s heart started to pounce as he heard Dad’s voice. He started to get excited to think that there is a map, where the treasure is marked, at home.

‘Then maybe?’

Yeongjae’s family farm came to Seulgi’s mind. The farm that the Japanese man rented and was digging with an excavator.

‘Certainly. There must be gold buried on Yeongjae’s family farm. But why keep it a secret?’

Seulgi started to get strange thoughts. What is the reason for hiding the

work of digging for gold in the farm? And where did the gold come from? Seulgi had learned that there are no underground resources in Jeju Island because it is a volcanic island. Then did the gold fall out of the sky?

Seulgi could not fall a sleep.

‘How big is the gold? How much of a share would dad get?’

Seulgi struggled to fall a sleep thinking about the gold. Then his mind turned to the map.

‘What kind of a map is it? Is there a big tree or a rock or a skull drawn on it? Would there be a gold where the skull is drawn? Then would that mean Yeongjae’s family farm is where the gold is located.’

Seulgi could not stay laying down. There was no doubt that Dad has the map after hearing him telling Mom, ‘look at the map’. If Dad has the map, Seulgi wanted to do all that he could to take a peak at the map.

The living room was quiet. Hearing some noise in the kitchen, Mom must have been doing the dishes.

Seulgi sneaked out of his bed. And without making any noise, walked out into the living room. His heart started to pound at the thought of sneaking into his parents’ bed room. Seulgi peaked his head into the kitchen to see what Mom was doing.

Mom was washing the pots. The white pot that Mom was holding sparkled clean.

Seulgi silently opened the door to his parents’ room.

Without even covering himself with the blanket, Dad was a sleep and snoring. Seulgi, without making any noise, searched Dad’s suit hanging on the hanger.

‘Oh, it’s here.’

There was a stiff piece of paper inside the pocket.

Seulgi quickly put the paper in his pocket and came out the room. He

heart was beating knowing that Mom might catch him. Luckily, Mom did not see him come out with the map that he had stolen, since she was busy wrestling with the pot that she was holding.

Once he went into his room, he pulled the lamp under the blanket and turned it on. His hands shook like someone who was planning a scheme. The thought of looking at a treasure map made his heart beat faster. Seulgi steadily spread opened the paper. But on the piece paper, there was only an address written on it. It must have been a paper that Dad had taken a memo for an apartment he was going to show because no matter how many times he rubbed his eyes, it was not a treasure map.

‘All that work for nothing.’

Seulgi got up again and went out the room. He heard Mom doing the laundry in the bathroom.

Seulgi opened his parents’ room again.

‘Got caught red handed.’

Dad was laying, looking at the direction that Seulgi was coming in.

Just as Seulgi was about to close the door immediately, he heard Dad snore.

Dad was sleeping with his eyes open. snoring.

Seulgi once again searched Dad’s suit. But there was no treasure map.

‘Where did he put it? Did he brag about a map that he didn’t even have?’

Seulgi even carefully searched Dad’s pants, but no treasure map nor even a piece of paper that looks like a map came out.

‘Did all that for nothing.’

Seulgi, disappointed, was about to go back to his room, then he saw a folded paper on top of the cabinet. The possibility went through his mind. So he immediately spread opened the paper.

‘This is it!’

Seulgi quickly came out his parents' room with the paper. And like an alley cat, he went into his room without making a noise. His hands and legs were shaking. He went inside his blanket and opened the piece of paper. Under the bright light, a strange drawing was clearly shown. There was a pine tree drawn on it and next to it a small road and following all the up the road was a letter 'G' written on it. There was no doubt that letter 'G' stood for 'Gold'.

Seulgi, at a glance, knew that the pine tree drawn on the map was the pine tree in Sancheondan. If this was a treasure map, it should have been hard to solve like a puzzle, but it was too easy.

Seulgi could not help but to laugh.

As he folded the piece of paper and came out the room, he jumped in surprise. He ran into Mom.

"Why are you awake? Do you have to go to the bathroom?"

Mom had seen Seulgi when she was coming out the bathroom, wiping her hands.

"Yes."

"Well, hurry back to bed. I want you to go jogging with me to Byeoldobong mountain early tomorrow morning."

"Okay, mom."

Seulgi's heart relaxed when he found out that he was not caught. And within a moment that Mom went into the kitchen, he quickly went into his parents' bedroom, put the paper on top of the cabinet, and left.

Seulgi could not go to sleep. He could not believe that he actually saw a treasure map that he had only heard about. If it was the real treasure map, it should be faded and in tatters, but the paper was clean since it was a copy.

In his dream, he was happy that he had found the treasure, until Mom shook him awake.

“Wake up Seulgi, you promised to go jogging with me, remember?”

“I’m tired, mom. I slept late because I couldn't fall a sleep.”

Seulgi did not want to wake up.

“Fine do what you want. There will be a time when you beg me for favor.”

Mom intimidated Seulgi.

“Fine, I’ll go.”

Seulgi was annoyed but he got up quickly and followed Mom outside. His body felt chilly in the cold dawn air.

“I knew you would join. I know how much my son loves me.”

Mom smiled broadly as if she had forgot about intimidating Seulgi a moment ago.

Seulgi and Mom lightly jogged all the way to Byeoldobong. He was running out of breath, but it made him feel good that Mom was happy. Mom has been jogging every morning with the goal of getting back to the shape that she was when she was a young single woman.

When Seulgi and Mom got back from Byeoldobong, Dad had gotten up and was reading the newspaper. When Seulgi glanced to the side, there was no treasure map in sight.

“Oh my, did my daring get back from her workout? You look like a young single woman again with your young-looking face.”

Dad was surprised when he saw Mom come through the entrance soaked in sweat.

“Are you making fun of me?”

Mom gave Dad a stare with her sweaty face.

“No, I’m not making fun of you. I’m just bad-mouthing about how much prettier you gotten.”

Dad joked again as if he enjoy Mom getting angry.

Seulgi went into the bathroom and took a shower. The feeling of the



cold water after a good workout was an excitement.

When Seulgi came out the bathroom drying his hair with a towel, he noticed that Dad was still reading the newspaper.

“Is there a good news?”

“A good news? I just wish I win the lottery.”

“The lottery? What do you want to do if you win?”

Seulgi thought is was funny that Dad mentioned the lottery. He felt that it was because of the gold that Dad, who had never bought a lottery, talked about how great it would be to win the lottery. Seulgi believed that Dad was happy about the gold, as if he had won the lottery.

“There would be so much to do if I win the lottery. Buy you a puppy that you like, we’ll need to buy a house to raise the puppy, and also buy a car.”

“Dad, that’s never going to happen, so stop dreaming.”

“Don’t say that. There’s no reason, we can’t have a better life. A jackpot would change our life. So dream big.”

Dad talked big as if he had really won the lottery.

“Is there anything else that you would want? Dad will buy it for you.”

“It’s okay. But I do wish I had a computer.”

“A computer? Okay. I will buy the best computer for you.”

Dad talked as if he had hit the jackpot.

Seulgi thought that it would be great if Dad really did hit the jackpot. If Dad hits the jackpot, that would mean that him, Mom, and his sister Bora, all hit the jackpot.

## Chapter 9. The Identity of the Guy with Dark Glasses

When Seulgi was coming back from the private educational institute, he saw a man with sunglasses. The sun was not even bright outside, but the man was wearing sunglasses and showing off. As Soon as he saw the man with sunglasses, he remembered who the guy with dark glasses was.

‘That’s right. The thief. The petty thief that stole our donation.’

Seulgi thought that he had seen him before, the person that stole their donation money was the man with dark glasses who was working with the Japanese man. Like they say ‘The beacon does not shine on its own base’, all this time Seulgi did not notice even though he was right there. Seulgi decided to check. He would feel sorry, if the person who he accused to be the petty thief, really was not.

Seulgi ran over to Yeongjae’s house.

“Yeongjae’s not home. He just left with his aunt to play at the sea.”

Seulgi was disappointed when Yeongjae’s mom told him so. Seulgi was planning on running over to Sancheondan with Yeongjae.

‘Oh well. I guess I’ll have to check by myself, whether he really is the person who stole our money or not’

Seulgi hurrying his steps went to the bus stop. Soon after the bus arrived, Seulgi got on the bus, and the bus left right away. However, the bus did not go to Sancheondan and turned in another direction.

“Mr. Driver, wait!”

The bus driver looked at Seulgi through the rear-view mirror above the handle and gave Seulgi an annoyed look as if he could not understand why he was calling him.

“Sir, I need to get off!”

The urgent shouting by Seulgi made the angered bus driver hit hard on

the brakes that it almost made him roll down the bus aisle.

As soon as the bus door opened, Seulgi hopped off the bus.

‘Darn it, I’m in a hurry.’

Seulgi started to walk complaining to himself. Seulgi decided to walk all the way to Sancheondan because all he had in his pocket was only two hundred thirty won. The day was hot, and in a second, Seulgi’s clothes were soaking with sweat.

Seulgi trudged along. Sancheondan was quite far. It felt even further because of the hot weather. Seulgi sat in the shade under a black pine tree to cool off. The wind passing through the leaves made a swishing sound. The sound was refreshing.

Soon, Seulgi got up and swept his bottom. He had not come to rest in a shade under a tree. As Yeongjae’s family farm got closer, Seulgi could hear the noisy sound of the excavator engine.

‘Did they find the gold? Oh yeah, the excavator must be still digging because they have not found it yet.’

It seemed as if Seulgi could see the shiny gold in front of his eyes.

‘If it was a gold hidden by the Japanese soldiers, then would it be a bag full? Or a truck full? If it was a truck full, how much would that be? If we change that to cash, would it fill up our house?’

Seulgi’s steps became faster.

Seulgi could hear the sound of dirt pouring and the sound of excavator engine louder and louder. And Yeongjae’s family farm surrounded by boards appeared.

Seulgi was curious and looked through the gap between the boards.

‘Wow, that’s deep!’

The farm was very deeply dug. Inside the big hole was a excavator digging dirt and pouring it into a truck.

‘I guess they haven’t found the gold yet.’

While Seulgi was looking inside, not knowing what was going on around him, someone grabbed him by the collar. It was the man with dark glasses.

“Who are you? Who are you to be spying on us.”

“My, my name is Seulgi.”

“Whatever your name is, why are you looking through someone else’s farm like a thief?”

The man with dark glasses urged Seulgi to speak while grabbing on his collars.

Seulgi could not breath.

“Let go of me! I can’t breath.”

“So who told you, you could look in like a stray cat?”

“Why can’t I take a look? Is there a law that says I can’t? What are you hiding, a military secrete or something?”

Struggling to get loose, Seulgi fought back.

“What a military secret? You sure don’t watch what you say. I am the law. If I say you can’t see, then you can’t see. You’re that kid that I caught last time, aren’t you? Do you want me to teach you a lesson or two?”

The man with dark glasses gave a great smack on Seulgi’s back.

“OUCH!”

Shouted Seulgi out loud feeling scared and hurt. What scared him was thinking that nobody would know even if the man hurts him, since they were distances away from the village.

“OH MY BACK!”

Every time the man smacked Seulgi on the back, a shout in pain came out of Seulgi’s mouth.

“You’re at the wrong place, at the wrong time. I’m going to teach you a lesson, today.”

The man with dark glasses raised his fist as if he was about to cause trouble.

At that moment, Dad appeared. Dad, who was supposed to be at the real-estate office, was at the construction site and stuck out his head to see what was going on.

“Dad!”

Shouted Seulgi as if he met a savior.

“What’s going on? Seulgi, how did you get here?”

“Mr. Kim, is this your son? I’m sorry about that, I didn’t know. You should have told me, kid.”

When the man with dark glasses was spotted by Dad, he was embarrassed about what he was doing.

“No, Seulgi, why are you here? Is there something wrong?”

Dad was extremely surprised to see Seulgi at the construction site.

“I just came by for no reasons. I was just curious.”

“About what? What are you curious about? Go home, immediately.”

Dad appeared very confused.

“Go home, right this instant. Your mother must be waiting.”

Seulgi could not say a word, and left the construction site. As he was leaving the site, he turned around to take one last look. Dad and the man with dark glasses were exchanging some words. However, there was no doubt that the man with dark glasses was the thief that stole the donation for the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation that Seulgi and Yeongjae had collected.

Seulgi went to see Yeongjae.

“Yeongjae is sleeping. He must have been tired from his trip to the sea.”

Seulgi was becoming a bit angry at Yeongjae, who went to the sea and was a sleep, not knowing that Seulgi was in agony.

“Could you please tell him that I came by, when he wakes up?”

Knowing there is nothing he could do, Seulgi turned his steps and went back home.

When Seulgi arrived home. Bora was waiting in front of the gate and said, "Seulgi, your in big trouble. Mom is angry at you for wondering around and not studying."

"What did I do wrong?"

Although Seulgi said it strongly, he was actually nervous. He felt it was reasonable for Mom to be mad, since he has been outside all day. Worried that he would have to listen to Mom lecture, he hurried into his room and opened a book.

"Are you studying? You should take a break."

Said Mom happily, coming back from the market and not knowing what Seulgi had been up to.

"I guess I'll take a break."

Seulgi could not pass the opportunity and came out from the room. It seemed that Seulgi just could not settle down to study without talking to Yeongjae.

"Alright. I was complimenting you for studying, but I guess your itching to get off that chair. Okay, I bought some corns, why don't you eat first and then study."

Said Mom smoothly so that she would not hurt Seulgi's feelings.

As Seulgi was about to go out the door, the sound of corn caught his attention. Even though Seulgi was in a hurry to talk with Yeongjae, in any situation eating comes first, and he wanted to eat corn.

"This is delicious, mom. You should buy it more often. Everytime you buy us corn, I'll study an hour longer."

Seulgi tried to please Mom.

"Really? Do you think I want you to do all that studying for me? It's all so that you'll be better off. If it will make you study, I could get you

more than a corn. I would go to the galaxy and bring a star for you.”

“Mom, taking someone else’s stuff is stealing!”

While Bora eating her corn looked as if she was playing the harmonica, she suddenly made a noise.

“Ha ha ha.”

“Ho ho ho.”

From the noise that Bora made, laughter came out of Seulgi and Mom’s mouth. Out of the blue, like any other kindergartener, Bora was reasoning with Mom not to steal the stars, even though she was just joking.

“Okay, little Miss Stingy, it was my mistake.”

“The teacher said, you can’t go to heaven if you steal.”

Mom thought that Bora was so cute and pinched her cheek.

“Why did you pinch me? I don’t like you, mom.”

Bora thought that Mom pinched her as a punishment and broke out in tears. The only weapon that Bora has, is her tears and she just could not stop from letting it out.

“You silly, what mom was trying to say was that you’re right.”

Seulgi could not stop himself from laughing while soothing his little sister.

“Then, can you give me a piggyback ride?”

Without missing out on the opportunity, Bora ran and jumped on Seulgi’s back.

“You spoiled brat, there’s no way to win you, is there?”

Seulgi could not believe it, but did what his little sister wanted. Seulgi felt good about carrying his little sister on his back in a long time. It was cute that Bora had her arms wrapped tight around Seulgi’s neck.

“Seulgi, can we go play?”

“Okay, there’s no way I can get through you.”

Carrying Bora on his back, Seulgi walked out on to the main street.

After buying Bora ice cream, Seulgi was able to apart from her.

“Go in the house, quick. I’m going to drop by Yeongjae’s house.”

Seulgi dropped Bora in front of the apartment stairs and turned around.

“You have to come back soon. If you don’t, I’m going to cry.”

“Okay, I’ll be back soon.”

When Seulgi saw Bora walk up the stairs, he ran to Yeongjae’s house.

Seulgi was in a hurry. He wanted to see Yeongjae fast as possible, and tell him that the man with dark glasses is the same man that stole their donation.

“Is Yeongjae awake?”

Seulgi rang the bell and shouted at the door.

“Yeongjae, Seulgi is here. Yeongjae is taking a shower. Why don’t you come in and wait.”

Yeongjae’s mom opened the door for Seulgi. You could hear the sound of water pouring in the bathroom. After awhile, Yeongjae came out the bathroom wiping his face with a towel.

“Yeongjae, I found out who the thief is!”

“What thief? What in the world are you talking about?”

“You know, that thief who took our money.”

“What money?”

“You stupid. The money that we collected for the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation at the central rotary. I found the guy that took our money.”

“Really? Are you serious? Where is he? Are you going to report him to the police? That thief, it’s like taking a candy from a child, how can you steal our money that was to help the needy?”

Before Seulgi could even finish what he was about to say, Yeongjae started to make a great fuss about going to the police station right away.



“Calm down and listen to me. Remember seeing the man wearing dark glasses when we went to your family farm in Sancheondan? Do you remember seeing that man somewhere else?.....”..

“Oh yeah, it’s that guy. Stupid, how did I miss that? Let’s go right now and catch that man. We have to catch him before he runs away.”

Yeongjae was riled up.

“Calm down. Calm down. Like they say, when in a hurry, take the long way around.”

“You know, whenever that moment appears in my head, I wake right up just thinking about it. I can’t hold back my rage.”

Yeongjae talked as if he was in rage.

“That man with dark glasses is still working at your family farm. So there no way he’ll run away. We have to think, and think about a way we can find our money back. Even if we report him to the police, what would we do if he plays innocent? There’s nothing we could do about that.”

“Don’t you think the police officer would believe our story?”

“Well, I’m not sure. We need a way to prove it.”

“That’s so frustrating.”

Listening to Seulgi, Yeongjae was even more angry at the fact that there is nothing they could do.

“Anyways, we know the criminal now. So lets take our time and come up with a plan that would bring our money back or send him to prison.”

“A bad man like that working with Japanese man, what would others think of our country?”

“Well, I would love to go to the police station and report the man, but you never know, it could be us who suffer from a disaster if he plays innocent. So let’s wait. There will be a day, we get our revenge.”

Thinking about Dad, who is working with the man, Seulgi thought that he should not cause a problem that could put Dad in an awkward situation.

At that moment, the phone rang and Yeongjae's mom's voice was heard.

"Seulgi, your mother called to tell you to come home quick."

Seulgi quickly got up, when he heard Yeongjae's mom.

"I'll see you tomorrow."

Seulgi put on his sneakers and ran home. His mom's angry look glimmered in his head.

## Chapter 10. Sancheondan Gold Nugget

“Is your father around?”

Seulgi was watching over the real estate office for Dad, when a strange man came in through the door. He was an unfamiliar face wearing a camera around his neck.

“He’s not here right now.”

Seulgi thought the man had come looking for houses to buy or rent.

“Where did he go? Is he far away?”

“I’m not sure where he went.”

Seulgi wanted to tell the man that Dad was at Sancheondan, but just in case, held himself back from telling.

“There is a strange rumor going around, do you know about it?”

“What’s the rumor about? Is there a famous singer coming or something?”

“No, nevermind. Just tell your dad that a reporter dropped by, when he comes back.”

“Okay.”

‘A reporter? That’s why he had a camera!’

“Did anyone come looking for me?”

After a long time had passed, Dad returned. Dad must have ran over, since sweat was pouring down his face. Seeing that there was mud covering Dad’s shoes, Seulgi had no doubt that he had come from the construction site.

“A man came looking for you, just a moment ago.”

“Who was it? Was it someone you know?”

Asked Dad with a surprise look on his face, when he heard that someone had come looking for him.

“It was someone that I don’t know, and he said he was a reporter.”

“Really?”

Said Dad with a nervous look.

After pondering about Dad’s reaction, Seulgi carefully opened his mouth.

“Dad, is there a gold really buried in Sancheondan?”

“What? How did you know? Who told you that? Did your mom tell you?”

“No. I just had a feeling. Who buried the gold?”

Seulgi spilled out all he had known up to now and what he had been curious about.

“Son, you sure have good senses. There’s a rumor going around that after the liberation, the Japanese soldiers buried gold in Sancheondan that they took by force in Manchuria. However, people haven’t found it yet because they don’t know where it’s buried. But, the map that the Japanese man had brought had a mark where the gold is buried.”

“How did the old Japanese man get hands on the map? Was he a Japanese soldier?”

“No, it’s not like that. A dead friend had given him the map and told him to look for the gold.”

“If that treasure map is true, I guess there’s a huge amount of gold buried, right?”

“I don’t know, son.”

Answered Dad in a quiet voice, which was different from his confident voice last night.

“Dad, did you invest also?”

“What money do we have to invest? We barely have enough to live on. I was just saying, we might get some share since I was the one who introduced Yeongjae’s family farm and helped out with small matters.”

“Then, if the old Japanese man doesn’t give us any money, that would mean we just did someone else a good favor?”

“He wouldn’t do that. He promised that he would give us enough

compensation if gold came out.”

It seemed like Dad firmly trusted the promise that the old Japanese man made.

“Don’t tell anyone, son. This is a secret. A man has to keep his promise, can you do that?”

Said Dad with a serious look as if it was top secret.

“Dad. Shouldn’t Yeongjae’s family also get a share if gold is discovered in their farm?”

“Well, I’m not sure. Although it is their farm, it is the Japanese man who paid for the land and is digging....”

Dad could not continue with what he was saying and became quiet.

Seulgi did not say anything anymore. He felt that it was not something that he should get involved.

The next day, while Seulgi was doing his homework, the bell rang and when he opened the door, the man who had come to Dad’s office looking for Dad was there.

“Is your father home? He wasn’t at his office.”

“Dad went to a relatives house, there is an event going on.”

“Really? Did he just leave?”

“Why? Why are you looking for my dad?”

“Well, there is something that I’m trying to find out. When your dad comes back, please tell him to call me by this number.”

The man gave Seulgi a business card.

Seulgi looked closely at the card.

It was the following day, when Seulgi met Mr. Nakamura. When Seulgi went to Dad’s office, he saw Dad and Mr. Nakamura in an argument. Mr. Nakamura with his poor Korean was continuously saying, “*We can’t. We must not.*”

However, Dad insisted, “Mr. Nakamura, if they find out later, we could

all go to jail for this. That's why we should tell him first and follow his decision."

'What was going on?'

Seulgi was curious, so he sat on the chair and listened carefully at what Mr. Nakamura and Dad was saying.

*"Mr. Kim, your problem is that your too nice. I understand how you feel, but we started without anyone knowing, so let's keep it that way. I will make sure to save plenty for you to take."*

Mr. Nakamura held Dad's hands and started to reason with him.

"I can't, in conscience, do such a thing. I hope you think carefully about it and give me an answer by tomorrow."

Dad remained adamant and rejected Mr. Nakamura's offer.

Seulgi could sense what was going on just by listening to what Mr. Nakamura and Dad was saying. He was certain that Mr. Nakamura and Dad was arguing about whether or not they have to tell Yeongjae's dad about the gold buried in their farm. Seulgi admired Dad for arguing that they need to tell Yeongjae's dad. And he was detestable about Mr. Nakamura for trying to take all the gold for himself.

As soon as Mr. Nakamura left out the door, Seulgi asked Dad,

"Was that because of Yeongjae's family?"

"Yeongjae's family? What do you mean?"

Dad thinking that Seulgi had not noticed, tried to pretend not to know what he was talking about.

"Nevermind."

Seulgi did not persist any further. Seulgi believed that Yeongjae's family should get a share if a gold is found in their farm. However, Mr. Nakamura was trying to take a greater share by not sharing with Yeongjae's family. Seulgi felt uncomfortable about it, but did not say a word. He did not want to get involved and cause problems for Dad. Also,

he believed that Dad would take care of problem wisely.

Since the morning, Seulgi had been struggling with his research assignment. He had organized all the materials that he had collected from Moseulpo, and was putting each paper into the file. At first he thought that the assignment was going to be difficult, but just writing down what Grandpa had throughly explained came out to be an excellent report. However, Seulgi felt that just explaining in words did not do enough, so he started to draw with his color pencils. From the images in his memory, he drew the hanger, ammunition chamber, antiaircraft artillery trench, and more. However, due to Seulgi's poor drawing skills, what he had drawn came out to be an awkward picture.

"I think it would be better to put photos."

Said Mom looking at Seulgi's drawing.

"Photos? That's right. That would give a more realistic feeling. A photo would be a hundred times better than a drawing, even though my drawing is excellent. My proud drawing."

Said Seulgi as he looked at his drawing.

"Why don't you stop talking and get ready to go to Moseulpo. I'll call your grandfather. I'll tell him to don't go anywhere and stay home, since Seulgi is going over."

Mom was already taking out the camera that was hanging in the closet.

When Seulgi arrived at the Moseulpo station, Uncle was waiting for him instead of Grandpa.

"Did grandpa go somewhere?"

Asked Seulgi in a worry.

'I needed grandpa, so that we can ride over and take picture.'

"Your grandfather's at the gateball court. He couldn't make it, so he asked me to pick you up because he's playing a game with his friends. The game should be over by now. Let's go see him at the court. Hop

on. I have a customer waiting, so I have to hurry over to the store.”

Uncle quickly turned on the engine.

Seulgi also quickly opened the door and got on to the car.

In a moment, the car arrived at the gateball court.

“Well, I have to go now. Drop by the store and have a chicken before you leave, okay?”

Uncle dropped off Seulgi at the court and left.

On the court, Grandpa and Grandma was smacking a ball with a wooden stick that looked like an hammer.

“Oh, our Seulgi is here.”

Grandma greeted him happily.

“Come here, son. I had to send your uncle instead, since we have to practice for the competition in a week from now. So I hear, you need to go take some pictures? Well, just hold on a second. We’ll be finished soon.”

Grandpa talked while he hit the ball with a wooden stick. The ball rolled through a small goal.

“Director Jang sure is a pro. We won this game.”

One of the senior on Grandpa’s team shouted happily.

Seulgi felt good. He was happy that Grandpa had won the game, but also the fact that he stays young by playing sports. They say life starts once your sixty, and that seemed to be case for Grandpa.

“My grandson came to research the stuff that the Japanese soldiers made. He is a very smart boy.”

Grandpa bragged about Seulgi as if he had been waiting to do so.

“Research what the Japanese made? Those cruel jerks, it makes me shudder just thinking about them.”

A senior with a dark mole on his forehead made a bad remark about the Japanese soldiers before Grandpa even finished his sentence.



“Do well on your research. And make sure that you guys make our country strong so that those kind of events do not happen again.”

The senior with a mole strongly requested to Seulgi.

“Yes, sir.”

Seulgi responded politely. And he also thought that he must do so.

“Grandpa, did the Japanese soldiers do something bad to that man?”

“Of course. He lost his father, his brother, and you wouldn’t believe how tough his life was because of that.”

“Why?”

“His father was forced into the battlefield and never returned, and his brother passed away when a dynamite exploded while digging the Songaksan Mountain cave. The Japanese even took his farm to build an airfield, so he had to take care of his family at a young age. How tough do you think that was for him? It was even normal for him to not have any meals. So how could he like the Japanese?”

Listening to Grandpa, it even angered Seulgi. Seulgi felt bad with the thought that it was not only the senior with a mole who suffered such pain, but that it was all the people of the nation who suffered from it.

“Tomorrow is the National Liberation Day. Still, we are lucky to be liberated. Our people would have suffered even more, if we were not liberated, don’t you think?”

“Yes, but I guess there is something that our Seulgi doesn’t know. Jeju Island was not liberated on August 15.”

“Uh? What do you mean? Is that possible?”

“Why you don’t believe me? The day that the Japanese surrendered was August 15, 1945. But the day that all the Japanese soldiers left was February 15, 1946. So technically that would be the real liberation day.”

Like an expert, Grandpa explained the past situation. Seulgi could not understand that the Japanese soldiers had not left right after

surrendering and had stayed in Jeju Island for month.

Seulgi followed Grandpa around and took pictures. Seulgi took pictures of all the traces that the Japanese had left, such as the anti-aircraft artillery trenches, coastal cave, hangar, airfield, ammunition chamber, air-raid shelter, etc.

“Son, a weak country is always intervened by other countries or suppressed by them. So in order to become a strong country, we have to work hard at everything we do.”

Said Grandpa staring at the hangar with a mournful look on his face.

“I know. Our country was not able to build strength, that’s why the Japanese invasion happened, and why we lost our country to them.”

“Do you think that’s all? That’s even why the Korean War started. Oh, do you know about the Incheon Landing Operation?”

“Of course. It’s a famous operation where our army and the UN army landed on Incheon to reclaim Seoul, and even drive out the Communist army.”

“During the Korean War, even I joined the Marine Corps and took part in the Incheon Landing Operation.”

“Really? Grandpa, you were in the Marine Corps?”

“Believe it or not, yes. I even had times where I almost got killed. That was where I got this scar.”

Grandpa rolled up his sleeves and showed his scar.

Seulgi was proud of Grandpa.

‘My grandfather is courageous.’

## Chapter 11. Where is the Gold?

It was very late at night when the man with dark glasses came to Seulgi's house. Everybody was asleep when the door bell rang.

"Who could that be, this late at night?"

Mom complained walking towards the door with her sleepy eyes.

Since it was summer, all the doors were open, so Seulgi was wakened by the sound of the bell.

The time on the clock was pointing at one am.

"Who is it?"

Asked Mom annoyed.

"Is Mr. Kim home? Please tell him that Hyeontae is here."

A voice of a drunken man could be heard.

"Hyeontae?"

Mom had a strange feeling and did not open the door for the unfamiliar voice.

"Tell him to come in."

Said Dad quickly putting on his clothes.

The sound of the door opening could be heard and a sound of foot steps was heard. Unable to keep himself steady, the man named Hyeontae fell in front of the door.

"Be careful. You'll hurt yourself."

As Mom worried, the man with a drunk voice said, "It's okay. It's not going to kill me."

Once Mom went into the kitchen to make some tea, Dad asked the man,

"What brings you here, this late at night?"

Asked Dad feeling a little nervous. He seemed worried that something urgent or an accident might have happened.

However, the word that came out of the man named Hyeontae's mouth

was gold. When Seulgi heard the word, gold, his mind was right awake.

“Mr. Kim, what are you going to do about the gold?”

“What do you mean? What gold?”

Asked Dad as if he was a bit shocked by the question.

“You know, the gold that is buried under ground. What are you going to do about the gold that the Japanese soldiers buried?”

“What can we do with a gold that hasn’t even been discovered yet? Besides, even if we did find the gold, it does not belong to us.”

Seulgi was thinking that the gold had been discovered, but he was disappointed when he heard what Dad said.

‘They haven’t discovered the gold yet...’

However, for the man named Hyeontae that was not the case.

“There is no doubt that the gold is there. Mr Kim, you saw the treasure map? Why would Mr. Nakamura be crazy enough to spend all that money, if there was no gold? He would never be on the short end of a deal.”

“...”

“The gold is there. You watch. So, what I’m trying to say is, let’s make a plan ahead so that we can take the gold for ourselves before Mr. Nakamura finds it.”

The man named Hyeontae was cooking up a scheme. Secretly taking the gold before Mr. Nakamura discovers it, is no different than stealing.

However, Dad did not say a word.

‘I wonder if, dad’s not saying anything because he wants the gold as well?’

“Alright, Mr. Kim. But Mr. Kim, does it make sense to let a foreigner take away a gold that is buried here in our country? Do you know how many people suffered when the Japanese ruled our country? Some died digging coals in the far Hokkaido or Sakhalin, some were taken by the

Japanese soldiers to be used as human shields on the battlefields, and many were killed for shouting for independence. They didn't even let us use our language, and didn't they even make us change our names in to Japanese? They even stole our precious cultural assets... It would take a more than this night to talk about all the terrible stuff that they have done. If you think about all that they have done, stealing a gold from them is a drop in the bucket. Am I wrong?"

The man named Hyeontae sounded drunk, but the argument that he was making sounded very logical.

"You do have a point, but still stealing is not the right answer."

Dad spoke in a very subdued tone. After Dad's tough voice was heard, there was a moment of silence.

It seemed that the man named Hyeontae felt a prick of conscience when Dad said stealing from someone is wrong.

"But still, we can't just hand over the gold to Mr. Nakamura. So do whatever you want."

The man named Hyeontae made a strong statement.

Seulgi was curious. He wondered about who it could be to come this late at night to say all that. He was curious and wanted to take a look. So Seulgi got up and went out into the livingroom pretending to go to the bathroom. Seulgi looked at the guest out of the corner of his eye. It was the man with dark glasses. He was not wearing his glasses, but he was sure that it was the man with dark glasses.

Seulgi was angry. He was angry that someone, who had stole someone else's money, had brought up patriotism. Seulgi wanted to very much yell out, "You theft", but held his lips tight.

"I'm leaving now. I've gave you all my thoughts, so it's all up to you now, Mr. Kim!"

Not able to tell if the man was giving an order or giving a notice, he

spoke in a loud voice and got up to leave.

“Well, goodbye. I’m going to pretend we never had this talk.”

Said Dad firmly as he let the man leave.

It was the following day. Seulgi was having breakfast, when Yeongjae came over.

“Seulgi, is there something going on at our farm? Last night, my dad was saying that he couldn’t understand why they are digging so deep. Why are they digging, if they’re not even building a house?”

Seulgi’s heart sank at what Yeongjae said. When Seulgi thought that he should tell Yeongjae about the gold that the Japanese soldiers buried, the image of Dad’s look came to his mind. Even though Dad has not done anything wrong, he still felt like Dad was doing the wrong thing by pretending not to know. But that did not mean that Seulgi could tell Yeongjae about the gold. He felt that it would have to come out of Dad’s mouth so that there would be no misunderstanding.

“What would I know? Anyways, let’s just go to the library and look for a research project for you to do.”

Seulgi was able to pull himself out of the situation with an awkward excuse.

The next day, Seulgi went to Dad’s office. He had a feeling that things would end up in trouble if they kept hiding the secret of Yeongjae’s family farm. When Seulgi opened the door and went into Dad’s office, he saw Dad sitting slanted on his chair with his eyes closed. But it did not seem like he was sleeping. Dad opened his eyes when he heard Seulgi coming in.

“What brings you here, this time of the day?”

Asked Dad looking at Seulgi who had suddenly appeared.

“Just thought I drop by. But also there’s something I want to talk about.”

“What is it? Let’s hear it.”

“...”

“Why, do you need money? How much do you need?”

“It’s not money. It’s Yeongjae’s...”

“You mean Yeongjae’s family farm?”

“Yes, well...”

“Are you saying, well, you don’t feel comfortable about it?”

Dad received what Seulgi wanted to say even before he had finished his sentences. It seemed that Dad was also worrying about Yeongjae’s family farm.

“Yes.”

Seulgi did not say anything more and kept his mouth closed.

“I have been thinking about it, also. So just wait a little longer.”

Said Dad with a gloomy face.

Seulgi sat for a moment, then asked Dad.

“Dad, is there a gold really buried in Yeongjae’s family farm? Do you think it will come out?”

“Well, I don’t know either.”

“But, isn’t it foolish to invest a huge amount of money to dig the ground, just trusting the treasure map? Did they have machines to dig the ground during that time? I mean, people couldn’t have dug that deep.”

“That you never know. That’s because the Japanese military leader, who buried the gold, buried it himself and left to Japan.”

“Then, why do you think he buried the gold? And was that gold dug in a gold mine in our country?”

“I don’t think it’s from our country. There is a rumor that the Japanese soldiers brought with them a lot of gold when they withdrew from Manchuria. But the Japanese had to surrender when they lost the war against the US. So, they couldn’t take gold with them to Japan. That’s

why they had to hide the gold. The rumor is that, the Japanese military leader ordered the Korean people to dig the hole, and then killed them all once it was finished. Up to today, there have been many people who have searched hard to find the gold that the Japanese soldiers buried, but no one has found them yet.”

Dad told Seulgi the secret of Sancheondan’s gold.

Seulgi’s heart started to pound. If there is gold buried, like Dad says, it is a sure thing that whoever finds it first will become rich. That’s if they find it first. But also, like the man with dark glasses had said, Seulgi also felt that they should not let the Japanese person take the gold.

“Dad, in your opinion, do you really think that the Japanese military leader dug and buried the gold?”

“I’m not sure. Seeing that the gold has not come out yet, I get the feeling that maybe it’s not underground, maybe it’s buried inside a cave or something.”

“Is there a cave in Sancheondan? There’s no cave there, is there?”

“Of course, there is. There is a cave that the Japanese military dug. Haven’t you noticed that there are lots of caves around the Jeju Island? Who knows, there might be a cave in Sancheondan that nobody knows about?”



## Chapter 12. Ancestor Who Defeated the Japanese Raiders

It was noon when Seulgi went over to Yeongjae's house. Seulgi was thinking about taking a nap, but decided to go over to Yeongjae's to see how he was doing with his research assignment. However, when Seulgi got to Yeongjae's house, he found that the front gate was wide open and heard Dad's voice inside. Seulgi could not rush in and instead listened with strained ears.

"Don't worry about it. I don't think anything will go wrong. If they dug a hole, we'll just fill it back up. Like they say, you have to turn over the soil for better harvest. If it wasn't a highland, we could have planted tangerine trees, but it's too cold for them to grow well. So we were planning on planting sweet persimmon trees, so all is well."

It seemed that Dad had told Yeongjae's dad the truth, and Yeongjae's dad talked very generously.

"Thank you. I wanted to help you earn some money by lending the land for you, but was worried that I was causing more trouble than helping. Now I feel a lot better."

"Trouble? Do you seriously think a gold would come out that easily? Besides, even if there is gold buried, why be troubled by something that's not ours to begin with? And also, I don't think it will be easy for them to take it back to Japan even if they discover it. I'm disgusted by Mr. Nakamura trying to hide about digging for gold, but I still hope that the gold is there because that would mean our country's wealth would increase."

It seemed that Yeongjae's dad was talking to Dad like a good hearted man, in order to make Dad feel comfortable.

While, Seulgi diverted his attention to what was being said inside, someone came from his back and covered his eyes.

“Guess who?”

“Yeongjae.”

“Mr. Know-it-all. Were you waiting for me?”

“It’s not that, my dad is here at your house.”

“Really? Let’s go in.”

Yeongjae pulled at Seulgi’s sleeve.

“Okay. I’ll go in.”

Seulgi was dragged in through the front gate by Yeongjae.

“Oh Seulgi! What brings you here?”

Asked Dad.

“Hi, Mr. Kim. Why, is Seulgi not allowed to visit? Seulgi comes to our house everyday.”

“Really? I hope you guys are getting along well, and don’t fight.”

Added Yeongjae’s dad.

“Dad, we’re not enemies. We don’t fight.”

As Yeongjae talked back to his dad, Yeongjae’s dad laughing said,

“Okay. My mistake. I guess I have to learn more about my son. You sure don’t let me get away with a mistake.”

Yeongjae’s dad talked like he was mad, but his look was filled with laughter. He seemed like a very generous person.

Seulgi went into Yeongjae’s room and looked at the document Yeongjae had made for his research. It seemed like Yeongjae had been working diligently, as his file was almost filled up. You can tell how tidy Yeongjae is, by looking at the pictures and drawings, explanations, etc. organized in his file.

“You really researched a lot. I think you’ll get the award for the best researcher.”

“No, you started your research before me, so you probably have more than me.”

Yeongjae blushed, and humbly denied Seulgi's compliment.

"You researched about the Beacon Fire Station."

"Yeah. Did you know that there are two types of Beacon Fire Station?"

Yeongjae asked Seulgi.

"Of course. Who do you think I am? One is Beacon Fire Station by the sea and the other is on top of mountains."

"You're right. Since the Goryeo Dynasty, Jeju Island frequently faced invasion by Japanese raiders."

"Probably because we're close to Japan."

"That's right. But even if the Japanese raiders invaded the island, the military in the mainland weren't able to help... So they built the Beacon Fire Station by the sea and the mountain, so that when the Japanese raiders arrived, they could first light the Beacon Fire Station by the sea, then the Beacon Fire Station in the mountains would send signals to neighboring villages and the city (Jeju City) about the invasion."

"If the Japanese raiders invaded so frequently, at that time, don't you think there was a great general, like Yi Sun-shin, in Jeju Island?"

"Of course there was. There is a record of defeating the Japanese raiders. In 1955, more than a thousand of Japanese raiders who invaded and plundered a village of Yeongam, Jeolla Do Province, were defeated, and they sailed to Jeju Island on about thirty ships and looked into the castle. If you looked from a top of a hill, you could see the inside of the castle clearly, so it was a sure battle to win. It was a destiny bound for doom."

"So what happened?"

"Well, then a Moksa (title of government official during the Joseon Dynasty) by the name of Kim Sumun and his army rushed into the enemy's position. But the enemy's general shot the arrow so well that, it did a lot of damage to our army. So when a soldier named Kim

Myeonggeun, shot an arrow and hit the enemy's general on the back, it shocked the Japanese raiders and they started to run away. Gaining strength from what had happened, our army chased the Japanese raiders and drove them out, achieving a great victory. More Japanese raiders came afterwards, but our army defeated them all."

"I only knew about the monk soldiers and loyal troops who defeated the Japanese raiders during in the Japanese Invasion of Korea in 1592, this is the first time I've learned that there was a similar case here in Jeju Island. Thanks Yeongjae."

"Don't mention it."

At that moment, Dad opened the door.

"I'm leaving now. Do you want to come along?"

Asked Dad with a longing look, hoping that Seulgi would go along. Seeing that Dad had a bright look, it seemed all the problems were solved.

"I'll go also. See ya, Yeongjae."

Seulgi got up quickly.

Seulgi was feeling great. He was happy to walk with Dad in a long time.

"Dad, can I hold your hand?"

"Of course, son. Here."

Dad held out his big hand.

Seulgi was happy. He was really happy to be walking, holding hands with Dad in a long time. Seulgi felt secured when he held Dad's big hand.

After walking for awhile, Seulgi asked Dad,

"Dad, shouldn't you report it to the police? What if Mr. Nakamura discovers the gold and runs away with it to Japan, if you do nothing about it?"

"Still son, the gold hasn't been discovered yet, and he really hasn't done anything illegal, don't you think it would be wrong to just randomly

report him to the police? So I guess, we'll just have to wait and see.”  
What Dad was saying made sense. You can't say there is anything illegal  
about digging a hole.

## Chapter 13. Grandfather's Tears

The month of August was almost over, but the heat was relentless.

"Mom, why don't we go to Tap-dong Sea? It's cool over there."

"On days like this, you stay home and wait for the heat to go away. But if it's too hot, why don't you take a cold shower?"

Mom, without even considering, rejected Seulgi's suggestion to go to the sea.

"Mom, aren't you hot? It's so hot that I can't even fall a sleep."

Complained Seulgi.

"You can't sleep? Should we go outside then?"

Said Dad as he tossed and turned struggling to fall a sleep.

"Yes. The heat's killing me."

"This heat's not hot enough to kill you."

"Oh, dad. I was just saying that it's really hot, not that I was really going to die."

"Then, let's go out."

Seulgi and Dad got up and went out the front gate. When they got outside, it felt a lot cooler.

"Seulgi, look at the sky. There are lots of star, aren't there?"

Seulgi looked up at the night sky that Dad was pointing at. Countless numbers of stars were shining like diamonds.

"How great would it be, if all those were golds?"

Seulgi blurted out. But Dad replied in a low tone,

"Seulgi, are you saying that in your right mind? How can you wish those stars are golds? Not acting your age. Your age should not be saying things like that. Money is not everything."

Dad could not believe what Seulgi had said. He scolded Seulgi, as he was very disappointed to hear Seulgi wish that the stars were all gold.

“I’m sorry. I didn’t mean anything.”

“You didn’t mean anything? You’re telling me, those stars don’t mean anything to you, when those stars are probably looking down at you saying, ‘Look at the bright star on Earth.’ They are probably thinking that you are a very nice and a very smart star.”

“Oh, dad.”

Seulgi could not help but to laugh. He had to admit, he could not say that he did not like what Dad said. A nice, smart star. That is the type of person that Seulgi wishes to become.

Seulgi and Dad sat on the chair and looked at the stars for a long time to cool off from the heat. Then, a taxi came running. And a man got off the taxi.

‘It’s the man with dark glasses! What’s he doing here this late?’

Seulgi recognized the man who got off the taxi. There was no doubt that it was the man with dark glasses.

‘I wonder if he’s here again drunk?’

Seulgi thought that the man with dark glasses had come to bother them again, drunk. However, that was not the case. As soon as the man with dark glasses got off the taxi, he ran into Seulgi’s apartment like someone in hurry.

“Dad, the man with dark glasses is here. Let’s go home to see what’s up.”

“Man with dark glasses? Who are you talking about?”

“The man that was at our house, the last time. You know, the man who came to our house drunk and talked about stealing the gold.”

“The man who came last time? Oh, you mean Hyeontae.”

Dad rushed through the apartment entrance. Even though it was dark, Seulgi could tell that Dad’s face had become serious.

Seulgi quickly followed behind Dad.

“Mr. Kim! Mr. Kim!”

The man with dark glasses was slamming on Seulgi’s house.

“What’s the problem?”

Asked Dad as he followed him up the stairs. The man with dark glasses, who was slamming the door, looked back.

“What’s going on? Is there an accident or something? Did the mud wall collapse?”

“No, it’s not that. I have something to tell you. We need to find a quiet place.”

Said the man with dark glasses looking at Seulgi. It seemed like there was something to talk about in secret. ‘Did he come to talk about stealing the gold from Mr. Nakamura, again, like the last time? Or did they find the gold? Or did the reporter find out? The man with dark glasses would not have come just because of the reporter, then did something happen to Mr. Nakamura?’ Seulgi could not organize all the thoughts that were coming to his mind one right after another.

“You can tell me here. It’s okay for my son to hear.”

Unlike the man with dark glasses, Dad talked in a calm voice.

“Mr. Kim! I think they’ve found the gold.”

The man with dark glasses talked in a very low, but with a very fast voice.

“What? Gold? When did was it found? Did they work at this night?”

Asked Dad in a loud voice, surprised.

“It’s not that, it’s Mr. Nakamura. He seems very suspicious. He is packing his stuff. When I went to his place, after meeting a friend, he was packing, and seemed surprise when he saw me. I think he’s getting ready to go back to Japan.”

“Are you sure? But what about the gold, you were talking about?”

“Oh, why do you think Mr. Nakamura is getting ready to go back to



Japan? Don't you think, it's because he found the gold?"

"So, you haven't actually seen the gold?"

Said Dad in disappointment.

"But I'm sure. I'm sure he found the gold."

"Really? But we can't assume that a gold has been discovered, if we haven't seen it."

"You are killing me. The excavator wasn't there today, either."

The man with dark glasses shook his head as he was frustrated.

"Alright. If he is planning to go back to Japan, the plane to Japan leaves tomorrow, so we still have time."

"If we do nothing and he gets on the plane with the gold, we will be the only one's who loss everything. Shouldn't we call the police or at least barge into his house and grab him by the collars or something?"

The man with dark glasses repeatedly said how frustrated he was.

"I understand you. I'll meet Mr. Nakamura, as soon as the sun comes up.

Frustrated by Dad's suggestion to just wait, the man with dark glasses left after saying they had to do something for several times.

After the man with dark glasses left, Dad sat still with his eyes closed.

"Dad, what are you going to do?"

Seulgi was frustrated by Dad. Like the man with dark glasses, he felt that they should run down right away and check. He felt that they could miss their chance if they just sit and think. Like the saying, 'So much for the plan', if they look for Mr. Nakamura after he leaves, everything would end in a failure.

"Well, I'm not sure what I should do. It's not like I know the law, or even get by it. I don't think this is something I should get involved. There has to be something illegal to report to the police, anyways."

"Oh, dad. He says that Mr. Nakamura is getting ready to leave to Japan.

Why would the man with dark glasses lie about that?”

“Well, I’m not sure. It’s too late right now, so let’s go to bed, and I’ll go see him tomorrow morning. Let’s go to bed.”

Said Dad as he got up like he could care less.

Seulgi could not fall asleep. He felt like he had to do something, but could not come up with a plan. For awhile Seulgi thought, then he remembered the business card that the reporter, he met last time, had gave him. He thought a solution would come out if he called the reporter.

“Ting-a-ling...”

The signal continued but the reporter did not pick up the phone. Seulgi was worried, so he made the call couple of times but still there was no answer. Then, on the card, he found a cell phone number. Rushing himself, he was not able to see the small numbers printed under the phone number, before. Then, Seulgi dialed the number in a hurry.

The signal went, then someone answered the phone.

“Hello? Who’s calling?”

The voice of the reporter came through the phone.

“Mr. Reporter, this is Seulgi, and there’s a big news!”

“Seulgi? What’s the big news?”

By the sudden phone call, the reporter thought that he had picked up an exclusive.

“I’m the son of the Hope Real Estate. Do you know?”

“Yes, Hope Real Estate. So what’s the news? Has something happened to your dad?”

“No, it’s not that. Mr. Nakamura is trying to run away.”

“Mr Nakamura? Who is he? And why is he trying to run away?”

“I think he found the gold. So, his trying to run away.”

Seulgi had lied, so that the reporter would think that it was urgent and

come right away.

“You’re saying more and more strange things. What is this gold? And where did it come from? Do you mean Sancheondan?”

At first, the reporter seemed puzzled by all the stuff that Seulgi was saying, then he mentioned Sancheondan. It seemed that the reporter knew about the Sancheondan gold as well.

“Yes! Hurry. Are you busy?”

Seulgi was in a hurry.

“No. I just finished a report and was about to go home. Where should I go?”

“My house. I’ll wait for you at front of my house.”

“Okay. I’ll leave right away.”

The hurrying sound of the reporter came through the phone.

Seulgi got dressed. He could hear the sound of someone breathing smoothly in the master bedroom. Dad must be deep asleep. Seulgi opened the main entrance door, and started to run down the stairs. It was becoming dawn, so the only thing out on the street were the streetlight.

‘Why isn’t he coming?’

Seulgi was worried that something might have happened. Worrying sick, Seulgi looked out onto the road that the car should arrive. Mr. Nakamura could have already disappeared without a trace.

Then, a car light shined, and came in a rush.

“Did you wait long? I tried to come as fast as I could.”

The reporter rolled down his window and talked in a very nervous voice. Seulgi got into the car and shouted.

“Hurry, go to Sancheondan. I’ll tell you as we go.”

“Alright.”

Then, the reporter’s car started to move in a hurry.

“So, tell me. What’s going on? Are you talking about the gold that, the people say, was buried by the Japanese military leader?”

“Yes. It seems that the Japanese man, named Nakamura, has found that gold. So, he’s trying to run away.”

“Really? How did you find that out?”

“The man with dark glasses said so. He said he’s packing his bags.”

“The man with dark glasses? Who is that?”

The reporter was interested about the man with dark glasses. Seulgi told the reporter everything that he knew. He told all about how Mr. Nakamura showed up with a map and borrowed Yeongjae’s family farm and dug a hole, and also how it seemed like the gold has been found, since Mr. Nakamura had stopped all the work and was packing to leave.

“Then, let’s hurry. Like you say, Mr. Nakamura might run away.”

The reporter stepped on the accelerator. The car passed by downtown and ran through the Ara-dong streets.

“I’m sorry that I told you I didn’t know anything, last time.”

“No, it’s okay. I understand. I’m just thankful that you called today.”

“Mr. Reporter, what if, Mr. Nakamura ran away already?”

Seulgi was worried with the thought that, they had to catch Mr. Nakamura before he runs away in order to get back the gold.

“I’m not sure, let’s worry about that later and first get to Sancheondan.”

The reporter talked calmly.

Then, the car arrived at Sancheondan.

“Let’s go. Hurry.”

In a rush, Seulgi ran to the alley that leads to Yeongjae’s family farm. Although the alley was dark, Seulgi in a hurry, did not hesitate.

The reporter ran right behind Seulgi.

When Seulgi and the reporter got close to the farm, they heard a loud shout.

The shouting was in Japanese, so Seulgi could not understand it at all.

“Let’s hurry and go see. Like you said, it seems someone is trying to run away. Someone is pressing for an answer to why he’s trying to run away.”

Said the reporter quickly.

Seulgi approached the container that was used as a temporarily quarter. Inside the container was the man with dark glasses trying to take away the bag that Mr. Nakamura was holding.

“What’s is going on? What are you doing?”

Mr. Nakamura’s face darkened even more, when Seulgi and the reporter appeared.

“The old man is trying to run away.”

Said the man with dark glasses feeling a slight embarrassed.

“Has this man done something wrong?”

Asked the reporter looking with his gimlet eyes.

“I can’t say he did something wrong, but I think there is a gold in that bag. If the gold that the Japanese soldiers buried was discovered, doesn’t that gold belong to us since it was buried in our land? But this man is trying to take it to Japan, so I’m trying to get it back from him.”

The man with dark glasses pointed at the bag.

*“There is no gold in this bag. None. Honest. Please, believe me.”*

Said Mr. Nakamura feeling frustrated for being falsely accused.

“Are you telling the truth? If so, why don’t you just show us what’s in the bag?”

Giving up, Mr. Nakamura opened his bag. Inside the bag were all kinds of stuff, such as clothes, a razor, and perfumes.

*“Look. I really don’t have the gold.”*

Said Mr. Nakamura as if the misunderstanding was straightened out.

“He wasn’t lying. Maybe he already hid the gold somewhere else?”

The man with dark glasses could not take his eyes off the bag, as he could not believe what he was seeing. He looked puzzled as he imagined that the bag would be filled with gold. But no matter many times he rubbed his eyes, the gold was not there.

Then, the police cars came rushing with their sirens on.

“I called the police, since I wasn’t sure what would happen.”

Said the reporter.

The man with dark glasses looked afraid when the police had arrived. It seemed as if he had something he felt guilty about. Unlike someone who has been going after Mr. Nakamura all this time, he closed his mouth.

“What’s going on? Was there an accident?”

Said the police officer looking at the deeply dug hole.

“I caught Mr. Nakamura trying to run away to Japan with the gold that was found.”

Said the man with dark glasses with a tough voice, sounding as if he was angered, after just watching what was going on.

“Gold? You’re telling me, there was gold here? What gold?”

The police officer asked questions, and the reporter explained about the gold that the Japanese soldiers have buried.

“So, is there really a gold?”

The police officer’s eyes got bigger at the story about the gold.

“We’re not sure yet. We are assuming that Mr. Nakamura has found it, because he, all of sudden, packed his bag and was trying to run away. But it wasn’t in his bag.”

Said the man with dark glasses with a greatly disappointed look.

At that moment, Mr. Nakamura’s cell phone rang, and suddenly, his face darkened. Mr. Nakamura hesitantly picked up the phone.

*“Moshi Moshi (Hello)?”*

As soon as Mr. Nakamura answered the phone, the police officer

snatched the cell phone from him and listened. The police officer's look became serious.

"Come quick to Sanji Harbor!"

The police officer quickly got into the police car, turned on the engine, and left the construction site.

The reporter also got into his car and left.

Then, Mr. Nakamura plopped down onto the ground. Mr. Nakamura looked as if there was no strength left in him.

"You try to trick us and run away!"

Looking like he was about to grab Mr. Nakamura by the collars, the man with dark glasses pointed his finger at Mr. Nakamura and shouted.

While the man with dark glasses was scolding Mr. Nakamura, the sound of a car rushing their was heard.

It was Dad who had arrived.

"Seulgi, what in the world are you doing here?"

Asked Dad in shock when he found Seulgi while rushing to the construction site.

"I, I came with the reporter."

Seulgi felt sorry for not telling Dad, before he made a call to the reporter. Then, another sound of a car came. It was the reporter's car. Getting out the car, the reporter said,

"This could have been terrible. It seems that Mr. Nakamura was trying to board the cargo ship to Japan. The search the ship, but the gold wasn't found. It seems that they were trying to leave everything and run off, since they couldn't find any gold."

Mr. Nakamura stayed seated on the ground with his head bowed down. He did not even talk back to the harsh words from the man with dark glasses and listened.

Seulgi felt sympathy for Mr. Nakamura, who had come to Jeju Island

dreaming to become rich by discovering gold, but was now trying to run away on a ship because he was not able to find it.

Dad said nothing and looked at Mr. Nakamura and the hole, back and forth.

“What should I say to Yeongjae’s father?”

Dad opened his mouth after awhile.

“Why, dad? Did you do something wrong to Yeongjae’s dad?”

“Look at this land. They farmed in this land, what could I have done if they ran away, leaving this big hole like this?”

Said Dad looking at Mr. Nakamura pitifully.

“Our people suffered thirty six years losing our country to the Japanese people, and I can’t believe I was fooled by a Japanese creep here in Sancheondan, where we now once again are able to hold the ritual for the Halla Mountain spirit.”

Dad must have been very mad because he used the word, creep, which he normally never uses.

“What do we do now, dad?”

“Let’s wait.”

Said Dad looking displeased.

Moments later, the police cars appeared again. Then, they took Mr. Nakamura away.

“Things could have been worse, if it wasn’t for you.”

Said the reporter.

“Why are they taking Mr. Nakamura with them? He didn’t even have the gold.”

“He’s not going to be punished for anything too serious. But he did ruin the farm and tried to run away, so he’ll probably be charged with property damage.”

The reporter explained kindly.



“Mr. Reporter, if a Japanese person came to our country and found a gold, who does that gold belong to? Doesn't it belong to our country, since it was buried in our land?”

“Yes, if it was discover in our territory, either on land or sea, it belongs to both the person who discovered it and our country.”

“Then, what about the person who owns the land?”

“Of course, even the owner of the land gets a share. It's the law that they split it into even shares, and each would get a share. It would have made many people happy, if the gold was really discovered.”

“I guess, there won't be anyone who believes that there is a gold buried in Sancheondan, anymore?”

“Not really. It just has not been found, we can't say that it doesn't exist. Someone might found it someday. Or maybe it'll never been found. Let's head down, now. There's nothing we'll get out of staying here any longer.”

Said the reporter dusting off his rear end.

Then, suddenly, the man with dark glasses came towards Dad. The way that the man with dark glasses was huffing and puffing seemed like he was going to cause trouble.

“Mr. Kim, how can you let this happen?”

The man with dark glasses stared fiercely and abruptly shouted at Dad. There was something peculiar about the way the man with dark glasses looked at Dad.

“What did I...?”

As everything happened all of sudden, Dad could not say anything and mumbled.

“You didn't listen to anything that I said. How can you call yourself a Korean?”

The man with dark glasses lashed out at Dad in a bit of rage.

“...”

Seulgi's father just blinked his eyes. He could not understand the reason why the man with dark glasses was so angry.

The reporter seemed to be bewildered as well, but did not intervene and just watched the man with dark glasses.

“I don't know about you, but I was being a patriot. You're a traitor. What would you have done, if Mr. Nakamura ran away with the gold? You have no love for your country! You should be ashamed of yourself!”

Treating Dad like a bug, the man with dark glasses spat in front of him.

“Hey! This is too much.”

Dad was bewildered, but said nothing and was at a loss.

“Did I say something wrong? If you can, say something!”

It seemed that the man with dark glasses was taking his anger out on Dad for not being able to make a sizable fortune through Mr. Nakamura. Seulgi was angry. There is no bigger insult for a father than being insulted in front of his own son.

“You're crossing the line. What did you do so well, that gives you the right to insult my father?”

Seulgi rolled up his sleeves and stepped in. Even though he was just a child, he could not just stand there and watch Dad take all the heat.

“What? What did I do well? Why don't you tell me, what I did wrong?”

Uh, what? Just stay still, kid. This is for grownups.”

Shouted the man with dark glasses raising a fist above Seulgi's head as if he was about to hit him.

“You're a thief.”

When the words came out of Seulgi's mouth, the man with dark glasses looked surprised. But then, the man with dark glasses, whose face turned red suddenly, grabbed Seulgi by the collars.

“You better watch what you say. You brat, who are you calling a thief? Did you see me steal something? Uh?”

The man with dark glasses shouted grabbing tighter on Seulgi’s collars. He looked like he would punch Seulgi with his big fist, if Dad had not been there.

“Hey, say it in words. What is an all grown man doing holding a little kid by the collar?”

Said the shocked reporter grabbing the arm of the man with dark glasses.

“This little kid, doesn’t know the difference between what you can say and what you should not say. He has no respect for adults. I’m warning you, you better be careful!”

Said the man with dark glasses roughly flinging his hands off Seulgi’s collars.

“You’re telling me, you’re not a thief? You stole our donation box, remember? And you tell me that you’re not a thief?”

Seulgi shouted everything out, since he started anyways.

“After you stoled the money that Yeongjae and I have collected, to donate to the ‘Little Brothers’ Foundation, in the alley at central rotary, you’re telling me that you’re not a thief?”

“Did that really happen? Now I see, you’re the bad guy.”

Said the reporter staring down at the man with dark glasses.

The man with dark glasses closed his mouth. He could have said no and play innocent, but his eyes widened in surprise and did not make any excuses. It looked like he felt guilty about what Seulgi had said.

“I’m telling the truth. It makes me jump to my feet, just thinking about what happened that day.”

As Seulgi talked in resentment, the man with dark glasses made an excuse by saying,

“I’m sorry. I didn’t have a job at that time and was having a hard time. Please, forgive me.”

Seulgi was puzzled by what the man with dark glasses had said.

Seulgi had thought that the man with dark glasses would jump up with anger or make excuses, but actually he had admitted his wrong doing and begged for forgiveness. Seulgi felt, if he had knew this would happen, he would have said it before.

“Alright. Don’t ever do that again. I was really mad that time.”

“Okay. I’ll never do that again.”

“Then, apologize to my dad. How can you do that in front of his son?”

“Okay. I’m sorry. I must have lost my mind. I had great hopes for founding the gold.”

The man with dark glasses seemed embarrassed to ask for Dad’s forgiveness, as he scratched his head while apologizing.

“It’s okay. I understand how frustrated you must have felt.”

Dad forgave the man with a light heart.

“I’m so glad everything is settled. I was getting afraid that a fight would break out.”

Said the reporter with a brightened look.

That day, Seulgi took a nap. He slept until the noon, the hours that he was not able to sleep because of having to go to Sancheondan. However, the phone kept on ringing. The continuous ringing of the phone was even heard in Seulgi’s dream that it woke him up.

“Who is it, this time of the night.”

Seulgi, complaining without even opening his eyes, picked up the phone.

“Seulgi? Your famous!”

Eunjeong’s excited voice came out through the phone.

“What are you talking about? Why am I famous?”

What Seulgi actually wanted to say was, what’s this all of a sudden.

“You’re on the newspaper. The Tamra Newspaper.”

“Me? Why?”

Seulgi was wide awake. He could not believe that he was on the newspaper.

“It says that you’re the one who reported about Mr. Nakamura, who tried to run away after digging for gold in Sancheondan. It praises about how he would have made it to Japan, if it wasn’t for you. Great job.”

“It was nothing. Was that all it said?”

“No, it talks about the story of how Mr. Nakamura came to look for a gold buried in Sancheondan and how the gold was buried there, in details. Don’t come over to my house tomorrow.”

“Why? What’s going on?”

“I’m gonna go look for the gold.”

“Oh, okay. I hope you find it. If you find it, your life will be on easy street.”

Wide awake, Seulgi made a joke at Eunjeong.

Right after ending the call with Eunjeong, the phone rang again.

“Who is it, this time?”

Seulgi picked up the phone, as he was trying to lay back down.

“Is this Seulgi? It’s me, grandpa.”

“Grandpa? How are you?”

“Good, good. But I saw you on the newspaper. I read that you reported the person who came looking for a gold to the police.”

“I didn’t really report him to the police, I just gave information.”

Seulgi talked like he knew a lot.

“Gave information? Our Seulgi is all grown up.”

“Of course. I’m not little anymore.”

“Oh, really? Anyways son, not all Japanese people are mad, but you have to always stay focused. Japanese people are known worldwide for

making great stuffs, being respectful, and keeping promises. So, if you want to beat them, you have to make efforts. There's nothing you can't achieve if you make efforts to it."

"I know. Grandpa, you told me that last time."

"I know, but I want you to hear it again, because it's more precious than gold."

Grand repeated what he had said before. But when Seulgi listened to Grandpa's words, it aroused his curiosity. He had always thought about asking him someday, and seemed like the chance had come. So Seulgi found the courage to ask.

"Grandpa, what's the secret behind the second cave that's located on the way up the Songaksan Mountain?"

"What secret are you talking about?"

Grandpa was surprised by Seulgi's sudden question.

But that did not stop Seulgi. He wanted to find out what the secret, that Grandpa was hiding, was.

"Grandpa, I know you have a secret. I can tell by the way you looked at the cave. Is it something that I shouldn't know about? Please, tell me."

"Well, I'm not sure if it's the right thing to tell you or not. It's actually a mistake that I am very shameful about..."

Although Seulgi had asked, it was not something that Grandpa could say easily.

What was so secret about it, that Grandpa could not say it? Seulgi was now more curious.

"What is it, grandpa? Please, tell me. Please?"

Then, Grandpa gave up.

"Okay. I guess, now, I'll tell my grandson the shameful secret that I have kept secret for more than fifty years. It makes me nervous, to think that I'm going to tell you my secret that I have kept deep inside of

me until now. To tell you the truth, my friend gave his life for me in that cave. He was a really good friend.”

Grandpa seemed really nervous, as he talked word by word.

Seulgi could feel the tears on Grandpa’s face through his voice that came out the phone.

“How did he die? Did the Japanese soldiers’ shoot him?”

“No, he was killed by a rock that fell from the ceiling of the cave.”

“But why is that your fault, grandpa?”

Seulgi was puzzled. It was not Grandpa’s fault.

“It was when I was fourteen years old. It was two months after I started digging the cave, that I was ordered to come out and dig. We had lack of food to eat, and my body was exhausted from working, morning to late at night. At the time, I felt it would be better to die. So while I was digging the cave, I pretended that I couldn’t work anymore because my stomach was in pain. When I said I couldn’t work, my friend had to go in the cave for me. Then, the cave collapsed and that’s how my friend died. It was all my fault. I made a terrible mistake.”

It seemed that Grandpa did not want to bring out the subject, as he talked spacing his words out. He seemed heart broken. As he mentioned the words, “He was a really good friend,” several times.

There was nothing more that Seulgi could say. It was difficult to find the words to tell Grandpa that it was not his fault, so forget about it or even just to comfort him. Seulgi wondered, how he could ease Grandpa’s pain with his friend buried in his heart.

Then, moments later, Grandpa’s determined voice came out through the phone.

“Seulgi, my hope is that you make our country strong, that no country will overlook us again. Can you do that for me?”

“Okay, grandpa. I can do that. I promise.”

Replied Seulgi, who suddenly seemed all grown up.