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Luck, Life, and Fishing

I was fishing in fish farm in Lau Fau Shan with my family in a nice autumn day. It was a pleasant day as the sunray shot down from the clouds to keep us warm in such breezy weather. However, it felt uneasy as I had been sitting on the wooden planks for ages, waiting for fishes to take the bait. My father separated my brother and I on two sides, preventing fishes from congesting on one side of the pond.

Seconds, minutes, and hours passed, but I was yet to catch a fish. The bread crumbs slowly dissolved in the water, therefore I had to put a new piece of bread on the hook. Sometimes, the fish were sly enough to eat the bread and leave the scene – I witnessed it with my own eyes, and it made me furious. My dad taught me to wiggle the fishing rod occasionally to make the bait look lively, however the fishes were too smart to took the bait.

Meanwhile, my little brother on the far side kept harvesting fishes. Every time he put the bait into the water, it did not take long for fishes to come knocking. His buoy always submerged into the pond, and he would scream, “Father! Father! Fish, look!” and father always netted the fish for him, and sometimes he even did it himself. Even though those were all small, unvaluable fishes, it was still better than nothing. Father always petted him on the head and complimented him, “Good job, son.” How I wish it was me.

Maybe it was the location problem? So I nagged my father to make him change our locations. But turned out the results were the same – fishes kept going towards my brother, while I was yawning at the side, still waiting for my fish to come. My father would keep going back and forth between us, but sooner or later he spent relatively more time at my brother’s side, even though it was basically the same. But I was envious of my brother back then.

Maybe the fishes were hibernating? My father quickly debunked this myth, “Fishes do not hibernate.”

To not waste any money, there was no options but to keep waiting. However, there was nothing whatsoever. I became more and more frustrated until I could no longer tolerate the

boredom anymore and stormed off to a nearby seat under a leafless tree. Looking at the pale dead fish lying by the shore, I blamed God for not sparing me a fish, for making things difficult for me. It was a childish thought looking back, but I was still a kid, unintelligent and small-minded.

My father seemed to notice and sat beside me, arms rested on my shoulder.

“What’s the matter, kid?”

“Well, I’ve waited since morning but there was no fish. All my hard work was futile. It didn’t pay off.”

“How come you are so sure? We still have around an hour left. Why don’t you keep trying? Maybe you’ll get one. Be patient, that’s how you play this game.”

I listened to his advice and headed back to the shore. I waited and waited, even there was only around twenty minutes left. *Patience*. I kept repeating the word in my mind, even though I did not expect anything to happen. Even as a child, I knew these miracles only happens in fantasies.

Suddenly, my fishing rod wiggled, and the buoy submerged into the water – “Fish! Father, fish!” My father quickly grabbed the net from my brother’s side and rushed towards me.

“Don’t pull it at once! The line will break if you force it like that. Pull it slowly and gradually towards you. Patiently.”

I listened and pull carefully. Step by step, the fish came closer and closer. As it approached the edge of the planks, my father dipped the net into the water and brought it to shore. I looked into the net, there was a small fish twisting and flicking in the net, splashing water all over my face. But it was nothing – I was gleeful and jumped up and down my father had to grab me to avoid me from falling into the water. A while later, I caught another one.

When we were at the cashier, the owner applauded me, “These were rare fishes, child. You caught not one, but two. Good job!”

While father was driving back home, he told me, “Listen, son. Don’t compare with others. Focus and only compare with yourself, and you will improve, bit by bit.” Turns out he knew all along I was comparing with my brother.

As for the two fishes, my father bought them even though they were kind of expensive. He put them into tanks for distribution, and every time relatives came visit, he would proudly told them, “My elder son caught these. They were flower horns, rare fishes.”

Twelve years has passed. The fishes were long gone, the fish farm was demolished, and I have grown to a young adult. My father is still running his business, and till this day he is still waiting for the government to grant him his licence. Every time I ask him about the licence, he is never in a hurry.

“Patience, son. Patience.”