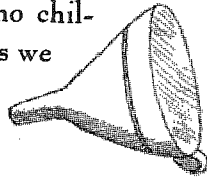




**A**lways many people in my house when I was young. Five sisters. Many friends. I always like being with people. Then I leave Korea with my husband to come to America, for work. We buy dry cleaning shop, live next block. Dry cleaning shop better than restaurant. Don't have to speak English too much and only work six days. We work together, seven until seven. At night I sew alterations. We save all for children's college, so they can have easier life. But no children come. Very many years we hope, but still alone. Then my husband die. Heart attack. Thirty-seven years



old. Now all alone, except for friends. I hire woman to work in shop. One afternoon when she gone, a man walk into shop with coat to clean. Under coat he has gun. He take out money, then push me down. He yelling at me. Very bad words. Then he kick me. Break cheekbone. Then he kick me again, head hit hard against wall and I go to sleep.

When I wake up, I no more like to be with people, like before. Afraid of everyone, all the time. I don't leave apartment for two months. Neighbor buys food for me at store. I don't open door if someone knocks, even friends—only for food. Afraid to walk on sidewalk with people. I hire Korean man to run dry cleaning shop. I never go in. That happen two years ago. Very slowly, I get better. I go to store and buy my food, but very fast. Then not so fast. Very lonely, but still afraid. Then I pass by garden.

Vietnamese girl was working there, picking beautiful lima beans. A man and a woman on other side, talking over row of corn. Hear man say his wife give him hoe for birthday. I want to be with people again. Next day I go back and dig small garden.

Nobody talk to me that day. But just be near people, nice people, feel good, like next to fire in winter.

Very hot and humid in July. Most people come early in evening, after work, when air is cool. People watering and pulling weeds. Even if don't talk to anyone, sound of people working almost like conversation, all around. People visit friends. I listen to voices. Feel very safe. Then man walk over and ask about peppers. I grow hot peppers, like in Korea. First time that someone talk to me. I was so glad, have trouble talking.

That man named Sam. He's American man and talk to everyone. Very smart. When people all the time complain about carrying water, he start contest. He said how adults couldn't solve problem, let children try. He say he give twenty dollars to child under twelve who has best idea. He write this on paper and nail paper to post close to sidewalk.

One week to contest. Kids out of school, walk around, see paper, tell friends. On Saturday, everyone bring plans. Sam has wooden box, let each one stand on it

and tell idea. One girl live in apartment by garden. She say she'll open window, people give her containers, she'll fill them with water. Then mother interrupt, say water bill too much. Boy say use water from fire hydrant. Another say run hose from Lake Erie. Many ideas. Sam explain how much money each one cost. Then little black girl say to let rain from spouts go into garbage cans. Everyone look. Three different spouts on walls of building around garden. Just have to take off bottom part of spout. Sam give girl twenty dollars. Everyone clap. Other people give money to buy garbage cans.

Next day, thunderstorm. Cans almost full. Little girl there, very proud. Someone bring three old pots to scoop water out of cans. Hard to pour into narrow containers. I quick go to store. Buy three funnels to make much easier filling containers. I put one by each garbage can. That day I see man use my funnel. Then woman. Then many people. Feel very glad inside. Feel part of garden. Almost like family.

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