

THE CIRCUS IS COMING TO TOWN

SAVING MONEY



The girls had been waiting for this day for many months. A man had come through their neighborhood with advertisements about the circus. He left a flyer on everyone's door. When the girls saw that the circus was coming to town, they ran to their parents to ask if they could go.

Both of their parents said it would be okay, but they would have to save their money to pay for the tickets and the food. The girls agreed to work hard to earn the extra money they would need to go to the circus.

Mai-Li and Lu-Jin were best friends. Many people said they were just like twins. They did just about everything together. Their parents became friends also, and they went on many trips and picnics together.

For three months the girls asked all of their neighbors if they could do extra work for them. They washed clothes, scrubbed floors, ran errands and did anything else they were asked to do. The townspeople were surprised at how hard they worked. They always had such big smiles.

When someone would ask them why they were working so hard, they would say, "We're going to the circus!"

Every day the girls counted their money. They had a special place to hide their money because they were afraid someone might steal it.

Day after day, week after week, the girls worked and worked, counted their money and got more and more excited. The circus was coming to town, and they were going to go!

A week before the circus was going to arrive, the girls counted their money and

cheered because they had just enough. During the next week they would earn more money to spend on food and games. They were getting so excited that everyone around them got excited too.

Three days later another man came through their neighborhood and passed out new flyers. This one said there was going to be a parade in the city to welcome the circus. The parade was going to be free and it would be three o'clock the next day.

The girls told their customers they would not be able to work, because they were going to see the parade.

The next day Mai-Li and Lu-Jin got all dressed up. They put on their best dresses, and they asked their mothers to fix their hair. They put flowers in their hair and red lipstick on their lips. They put red nail polish on their fingers and toes. They looked very pretty when they left home dressed in red, yellow and black.

The girls left very early. They wanted the best seats along the road. When they got to the parade many people were already there. They looked for a long time to find the right place to sit. Finally, the owner of the vegetable market waved at the girls to come to sit with him on his balcony so they could see the parade. The girls shouted out in glee. They had done many jobs for Mr. Kai, and he was happy to see them.

Right at three o'clock the parade began. The clowns were the first to come around the corner. They were so silly. They were dressed in bright colors and had funny hair. They jumped, twirled and sang funny songs. They were riding on very small bicycles, and some of them had cute monkeys dressed in clown costumes. They all looked so funny. The girls giggled and laughed at them.

Next to turn the corner was the marching band with the big drum. The drum was so big it took five people to push it down the road. There were men on each side of it with huge drum sticks banging on the drum. It was so loud, but it was fun to see. The trumpets and the trombones were making music, and everyone began to dance.

The next to appear were the lions and the tigers. They were in large cages that were pulled by horses. The lions and tigers growled as they walked back and forth in their cages. The girls were a little afraid, but Mr. Kai said they should not worry. The cages were locked and very safe.

After the lions and tigers went by, the elephants came into view. They had beautiful blankets on them and red hats. There were seven big ones and two little ones. They made the street shake as they walked by. Some of the children gave the elephants peanuts to eat. They laughed as the elephants took the food with their trunks.

The elephants were followed by all of the actors and performers as they came around the corner and marched together in front of them. There was dancing and singing in the street. The high wire performers, the trapeze artists, the pyramid builders, the gymnasts, and all of the people who entertain in the circus walked past them.

At the very end was the biggest wagon they had ever seen. The ringmaster, dressed in his red coat and high black hat, sat on top of the wagon waving to the people. He blew his whistle many times and welcomed the crowd to come to the circus the next day.

Everyone cheered and cheered! This was the most exciting event that had ever happened in this little town.

The girls thanked Mr. Kai for letting them sit on his balcony. They smiled at all of the people as they walked slowly home. They laughed and laughed as they remembered all of the things that they had seen. It only made them more eager to see the circus the following day.

The day of the circus was coming, and the girls got ready to go.

A few days before the girls had gone to the store to purchase matching clothes. Mai-Li bought a blue dress and a pink blouse while Lu-Jin bought a pink skirt and a blue blouse.

The day before the circus, and after they finished their chores at home, they went to the hiding place to get the money they had earned for the circus. They looked around to see if anyone was watching. They crawled under Lu-Jin's house to get the money.

They were going to the circus, and they had enough money to buy food, candy and prizes in the arcade. They were going to see the shows and best of all they were going inside to see the animals and the clowns.

They had put the money into a red music box that Mai-Li received from her grandmother for her birthday, and they had buried it under the third post. They took a small shovel to dig up the money.

Something was not right. The dirt had been moved. Lu-Jin started to dig into the soft soil. She tossed the dirt away as the girls panicked. Lu-Jin looked up at Mai-Li. The box was missing. Their money was gone. Mai-Li took the shovel and began to dig new holes thinking they may have forgotten where they had buried the box.

Finally Mai-Li and Lu-Jin just sat and cried.

“What happened to their money?” the girls asked each other

The girls were covered in dirt as they walked into Lu-Jin’s house.

Her mother saw the girls crying, and asked, “What’s wrong girls? Why are you so dirty and why are you crying?”

“Someone took our money. We hid it under the house, but someone found it and took it. Now we can’t go to the circus,” The girls said as they sobbed through their tears.

Lu-Jin’s mother did not know what to say. She went to get her phone. She called the police to report the missing money.

The police came to the house about an hour later. They went with the girls to the spot where the money had been buried. The police then started asking questions of all of the neighbors to see if they could find the money.

After two hours the police returned to give them the bad news that the money was gone. The girls ran to Lu-Jin’s room and cried. They sat on her bed and tried to think of who might have taken their money.

Later that night, there was a knock on Lu-Jin’s door. Her parent’s answered the door and talked to a man who stood outside. The man left and her parent’s returned to the living room. Mai-Li and Lu-Jin were watching a movie and eating popcorn. They were very sad.

“Girls, we have something to tell you,” Lu-Jin’s father said. “Come here. I’ve got something to show you.”

The girls got up from the floor and went to the table. Lu-Jin’s father was smiling as he pointed to the table and told them to look inside the envelope. Inside the envelope were two tickets to the circus the next day. Also there was extra money for food, rides, prizes and other things they might want.

The girls looked up in surprise. “How, who, where, what.....” The girls did not know what to say.

“All of the townspeople were upset that you lost your money so they told the owner of the circus what happened to you. So he has given these tickets to you so you can enjoy his circus. He has one condition though,” Lu-Jin’s father told the girls with a smile on his face.

“What do we have to do?” the girls said together.

“You’ll have to dress up as clowns and join the show!” Lu-Jin’s father said with a big smile on his face.

VOCABULARY (*Match the word to its definition*)

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. circus _____ | a. small jobs at home |
| 2. advertisements _____ | b. shout, give approval |
| 3. neighbors _____ | c. bar hanging from ropes |
| 4. chores _____ | d. small laugh |
| 5. errands _____ | e. announcements |
| 6. trumpet _____ | f. show with clowns |
| 7. trapeze _____ | g. small tasks |
| 8. giggle _____ | h. people who live close by |
| 9. shovel _____ | i. musical instrument, horn |
| 10. cheer _____ | j. used to dig |

TRUE OR FALSE

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Mai-Li and Lu-Jin were sisters. | T / F |
| 2. Mr. Kai owned a movie theater. | T / F |
| 3. There were elephants in the parade. | T / F |
| 4. Mai-Li bought a pink blouse and a blue dress. | T / F |
| 5. The girls hid their money. | T / F |
| 6. A policeman gave them tickets to the circus. | T / F |
| 7. The money was in a shoe box. | T / F |
| 8. The girls were going to be clowns in the circus. | T / F |
| 9. The girls did chores at home. | T / F |
| 10. Lu-Jin's father found the thief. | T / F |

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. Why were the girls saving money? _____
 - a) to go on a school trip
 - b) to go to the circus
 - c) to buy a gift for their parents
 - d) to pay off a debt

2. What were the girl's names? _____
 - a) Mai-Te and Lou-Sung
 - b) Mai-Li and Lu Jin
 - c) Mai-Jun and Lu-Li
 - d) Sally and Beth

3. What happened to the money? _____
 - a) it was stolen
 - b) it was lost
 - c) they spent it
 - d) it was burned

4. Who let them sit on his balcony? _____
 - a) Mr. Kwan
 - b) Mr. Lee
 - c) Mr. Kai
 - d) Mr. Ames

COMPREHENSION: (*Write a complete sentence to answer the question.*)

1. What did the man put on the doors in the girl's neighborhood?

2. What color was Lu-Jin's skirt?

3. Where did the girls bury the music box?

4. Where did the girls sit during the parade?

5. What animals were in the parade?

6. Where did the girls go after finding the money was missing?

7. What kind of clothes did the ringmaster wear?

8. What were the girls doing when the man brought the circus tickets?

9. What did the man bring to the house?

10. Who sent the tickets for the circus to the girls?
