

# *THE OLDEST DAUGHTER*

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The children were happy to see their father again. He had been gone for so long that the youngest child did not know who he was.

Their father had been working in a faraway place where he had to work long hours. He usually worked six days a week. There were not any jobs where they lived. He had to go to another country to earn enough money for his family to eat. He had to work hard to provide for his family

Now he was coming home. The factory where he worked closed. The jobs went to another country.

The children were older now. It had been fifteen years since he left. He had only visited once during those years. The children had finished high school, except for the youngest. The older ones were in college.

When their father was working the money was very good, and the children had what they needed. He was now out of work, and they were very poor.

The children had little to eat. The older children stopped going to college. There was not enough money to pay the tuition to go to school or for the books.

To help her family the oldest daughter found work as a housekeeper. The oldest daughter felt responsible for her family.

Her employers invited her siblings to come and stay with her. The youngest sister was too shy so she stayed at home, even though there was not much to eat. Two of her sisters joined her and helped clean the house when they could. They were able to stay in school because of the generosity of her employers.

The oldest daughter worked hard. She would get up early. She would work after the family had gone to bed. She worked six days a week, and then on Sunday she would work some more. She wanted to help her family so much that she worked very hard for her employers. She was a very good worker.

On the day when their father arrived home, the family ran to hug him. They were so excited to see him again. He had been gone for fifteen long years.

After many weeks, her father finally found work. It was for very little pay and for very long hours. He only had a contract for six months. He would be fixing sewing machines. This was the same work he had in the other country; only in his country the pay was much less.

Mother found a job as a seamstress sewing clothing. She also received low pay and worked long hours.

The oldest daughter felt responsible for the family. The daughter decided she needed to do more.

She found a job as a salesperson selling cleaning products. The job was far from her home and she had to pay a lot of money for transportation. Plus, she didn't like the job very much.

She read that there was work in another country, so she decided to go abroad as her father had. Her old employers, where she had been a housekeeper, told her they would help her to prepare her papers.

There were so many things to do. They had to fill out Government papers, go to the doctor for medical examinations, attend meetings and classes, and so much more. Traveling all over the city cost a lot of money. She had to travel by bus, taxi,

train, or walk. She did all these things without complaining. She got all her documents prepared, and then she had to wait. She had to wait for the agency in the other country to find her an employer.

The agency finally called. They said they had a position for her in a far-off country. She was so excited but sad to be leaving her friends and her family. She knew that the money she would earn would be very helpful for her loved ones. After all, in her country it is the duty of the oldest child to help her family.

The day came for her to leave for her new job. All of those she loved were at the airport to watch her leave. There were many tears, because it might be more than five years before she would come home. She gave a hug to everyone and kissed them on the cheek. She was ready for this new life, but it was so hard to say goodbye.

She pulled her bag up to the guard at the entrance to the airport. He looked at her papers, and then let her go into the terminal.

She looked back with tears in her eyes, and said, "I love you! Thank you for all you have done for me."

Then she disappeared inside the airport.

Her family went to the fence and watched her plane. They watched as it pulled away from the terminal, and then it took off for her destination. They waved goodbye and cried.

Then her father yelled, "Goodbye our wonderful daughter! We'll miss you."

The family turned and left for home. They knew that the oldest daughter would help them in the future.

Father knew what it was like to be gone for so many years. He appreciated his daughter and all the things she was willing to do for her family.

**VOCABULARY:** (*Match the word to its definition*)

- |                   |                                 |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. youngest _____ | a. grumble, whine               |
| 2. earn _____     | b. boss, business owner         |
| 3. factory _____  | c. college fees                 |
| 4. job _____      | d. upcoming, impending          |
| 5. employer _____ | e. burden, obligation           |
| 6. college _____  | f. littlest child               |
| 7. duty _____     | g. occupation                   |
| 8. complain _____ | h. to get wages or salary       |
| 9. tuition _____  | i. university, higher education |
| 10. future _____  | j. place where things are made  |

**TRUE / FALSE:**

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|--|-------|
| 1. The oldest daughter worked very hard.               | T / F |
| 2. The littlest one remembered her father.             | T / F |
| 3. The daughter's employers were unkind to her family. | T / F |
| 4. The daughter worked as a salesperson.               | T / F |
| 5. The airport was closed.                             | T / F |
| 6. Her brother had to quit school.                     | T / F |
| 7. Everyone was happy to see the daughter leave.       | T / F |
| 8. The daughter would send money to her family.        | T / F |
| 9. Her father and mother found low paying jobs.        | T / F |
| 10. It might be five years before she would come home. | T / F |

**MULTIPLE CHOICE:**

1. How long had the father been out of the country? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) one year
  - b) five years
  - c) fifteen years
  - d) twenty years
  
2. Why did the father return home? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) he lost his job
  - b) he ran out of money
  - c) he was in jail
  - d) the family was poor
  
3. What kind of work did the oldest daughter do? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) librarian
  - b) clerk
  - c) housekeeper
  - d) server
  
4. Who helped the oldest daughter get her papers to go abroad? \_\_\_\_\_
  - a) her employer
  - b) her mother
  - c) her friends
  - d) her brother

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

1. How long had the father been gone?

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2. Why was the daughter going abroad?

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3. Who helped the oldest daughter to get a job abroad?

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4. Who else lived with the oldest daughter at her employer's house?

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5. What kind of work did the oldest daughter's mother do?

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6. Why did the father have to come home?

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7. Why was it hard for her sisters to help the family?

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8. Where did the family say goodbye to the oldest daughter?

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9. How long would the daughter be gone?

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10. What two kinds of work did the oldest daughter do before she left?

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