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Share It

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SHARE IT!

 Aygul Porsyyeva

JUNE 2005. IT WAS MY FIFTH SCHOOL SUMMER BREAK and my brother's first. We both had been waiting for it impatiently, counting every single day. It was not because we were going to be off from school for almost three months, but only for our parents' *"we will go to the beach on your summer holiday"* promise.

We lived in Turkmenistan, far away from the Caspian Sea, in a small village partly surrounded by a desert. Waking up hearing roaming animals and breathing dusty morning air was how our typical days usually began. We had never been out of the village, so my brother and I felt like little birds who have just learned to fly and can't wait to explore the world outside of their nest.

Dad got our car thoroughly checked and ready for a long trip. Mom helped us with all the packing. We could hardly sleep that night. The next day, at about 5 o'clock in the morning we set off. Our dog Alaja was the one who saw us leaving, while the rest of all the living creatures in the village were still asleep. It was a dark, quiet morning. No light was in sight except the twinkling stars and the car's headlights. I stared at the stars behind my window in the rear seat. After a while I found my brother sleeping calmly in his seat which made me fall asleep, too. I slept like a brown bear until I heard my brother's voice, tapping on my shoulder with his right hand and jiggling two of my favorite jam cookies in his left hand.

"Aygul! Wake up, otherwise I'll eat your share!"

Mom looked at him from the front seat with her usual kind smile.

"Are you being fair in sharing the cookies with your sister, honey?"

"Of course, mom. You gave me four and I left two for Aygul."

"My good boy."

I grabbed the cookies from my brother's hand and looked outside as I started to eat. The Sun was on its before-noon position, but I could not find anything to satisfy my curiosity. All around was covered with gold-colored sand hills. No plants. No animals. Flames of sunshine were dancing unsteadily above the hills which meant the weather was very hot. We did not feel that though. The car fan had been doing a good job to

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keep us all cool enough. As dad said, we still had an eight-hour-drive to reach the sea. Our red Zhiguli (a popular Russian car) was moving forward like a ship in the sand ocean.

Feeling a little thirsty after eating the cookies, I asked mom:

“Can I have some water, mom?”

“Sure, honey!”

Mom reached her hand to the plastic bag next to her feet, which was filled up with snacks and drinks, took out a bottle of water and a cup. She then handed it out to me: “Here you are! Share it with your brother!” I did so, letting my

brother drink half and then I drank the rest myself. The radio was playing joyful music. Mom and dad were talking about the seashore conditions in the old days, how much it had changed since then and so on. During their conversation dad would frequently look at us from the front mirror and told us about how it would feel like seeing a real sea for the first time. Mom would hand out snacks, juices whenever we asked and would just say “Share it!” My brother got more involved in *sharing*. He put the snacks on his side, carefully divided them as equally as he could and handed me my share.

We were lost in fun playing cards when suddenly we were interrupted by our parents’ shouting. Their voices grew louder and louder that we forgot what we had been playing and stared at them in silence, trying to understand what the matter was. Within a minute it became clear that mom wanted dad to drive across the city, so she could do some shopping, but dad refused, explaining that it was a waste of time and insisted on driving through the suburbs. The city was on our way, but the sea was still 350 miles away from there. Their argument ended as suddenly as it had begun.

“You never have respect for my ideas!”

“Get out of the car if you want, but I won’t change my mind!”

Mom looked at dad as if she would burst with another shout, instead she just turned her head away from him. Dad lit a cigarette, still frowning. I was sitting in the back of my mom, my brother of my dad. Nobody uttered a word. Even the radio



IRRESISTIBLE Angela Chapman

began to play blues, deepening the family sadness. I peeked from the back of mom's seat to see if she was okay. I could only see half of her face. She was looking into the distance. The tears on her cheeks reflected the afternoon sunrays. It was the worst feeling ever. I wished I had been blind, so I wouldn't have been able to see those tears of my beloved mother. Not knowing what to do, I looked at my brother who was gazing at his share of the snacks. His thoughtful face had an expression "*I don't want it this way!*" I then aimlessly looked down, closed my eyes to escape from the real scene.

"Daddy!" yelled my brother as if he was going to ask a question. I unconsciously opened my eyes and looked at him, so did my mom and dad from the front mirror. After making sure that he was being paid attention to, he immediately hugged dad tightly, kissed him on his cheeks and said : "Please, share it with mommy!"

Our eyes lit up. The disappointment on our faces flew away. The atmosphere filled up with mom's and dad's laughter again. My witty brother turned his head to me in satisfaction and winked. I winked back turning my thumbs up as our parents kissed.



UNSUSPECTING Angela Chapman

"IN THE END IT IS NOT GOING TO MATTER HOW MANY BREATHS YOU TOOK, BUT HOW MANY MOMENTS TOOK YOUR BREATH AWAY."

AYGUL ALLANUROVNA PORSYYEVA