

With Eyes of the Heart

Ju Yung Jung

Iwai Middle School

When looking at the moon, what can you see? A rabbit? Do you know Americans see a crocodile or a woman's face? I heard Australians see a man's smiling face. Can you see them? Once we have a preconceived image, we are likely blind to others, even more so if our outlook is dark and black. But please don't miss what is important; it's usually unseen.

I can't go to school every day like most students. I often have terrible headaches. I was diagnosed with symptoms of depression around the time of entering junior high school. Sometimes I sat frozen on my bed unable to get up. Other times I put my mother's foundation on my cheeks to hide my pale face before leaving for school. Each time I couldn't go to school, I hated myself even more. My days were like a never-ending-dark night.

Challenging myself, I attended our school trip to Kyoto this year. I had a great time with my friends. But on the second evening, I had a terrible headache. Without asking for permission, I decided not to join the assembly. My teacher knew about my sickness, but was really mad at me anyway. She screamed, "Do you know how much your teachers worry? Do you know how hard your friends worked for you while you were absent? Many people care for you even though you don't see them!" I was so upset she didn't understand my pain that I couldn't see what was really important. After this trip, I returned back to my life in my small room.

One really dark night, when I couldn't sleep, my mother suggested we take a walk together. We went everywhere: my school, the shopping mall my mother likes, the park our family enjoys. After chatting for a long time, she stared at me with her warm but strong-willed eyes and said "You are just 15. You have another 60 years to live. There will be happy times after you jump over this wall. It'll be hard, but I'm sure you can do it. Everyone around you hopes that, too."

Faces of my family, my friends, and my teachers passed before my eyes. I didn't realize my mother cared for me this much. I didn't notice the dearest people in my life were waiting and welcoming me all along. I didn't notice there had been a future wide open in front of me. Lost in the darkness, I felt I had missed the important things. I regretted not trying to see them, though they were always there.

Helen Keller said "The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart." Now I feel a future full of hope, I feel the love of the people caring for me. You may get stuck in difficulties and feel alone on a dark night. But please don't close the eyes of your heart. Use it to feel the most precious things in life. The hope and the love of the dearest people in your life are right there. Thank you.

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