

The Lady With The Red Kite

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GRADE 3, AGE 9

“Rose?” called Rose’s Mom, Mrs. Diller. “Rose?” she called again.

A blonde, 12-year-old girl with bright green eyes came flying down a flight of stone stairs and sat on a stool in a kitchen, filled with boxes.

The house was plain, only a few family photos sat on the sides of halls and bedrooms. Most of the house was stacked with boxes labeled with things like kitchen items, tools, Rose’s things, school items or pillows and blankets.

“Rose?” asked Mrs. Diller.

“Yes, mom,” replied Rose.

“What do you think you’re going to do today?” asked her mother pouring berries into a little bowl.

“Why would you want to know?” said Rose impatiently.

“I’m your mother,” she said.

“Well, I was thinking of going to the swings,” Rose said taking the bowl of berries from her mother.

“The ones next to that lady’s house?” Mrs. Diller questioned, already knowing the answer.

“Those swings.” Rose sunk in her chair.

She looked up at two pictures next to each other. The pictures were alike and different. They both had the family, but in one picture there was a boy on Rose’s shoulders and in the other the boy wasn’t there.

Mrs. Diller stared up at the old, broken clock, which was somehow still running.

“Can you be back by 12:15?” she asked lowering her head to stare at Rose.

“Of course.” Rose sat back up in her chair.

“Can you stop at the store and get some batteries for you father?”

“What type of batteries?” asked Rose picking up a scrap of paper to write it down.

“Paul, what batteries do you need?” Mrs. Diller yelled over her shoulder.

After a moment of silence, she walked up the stairs. Then a few minutes later came down to say what he needed.

“Got it,” said Rose opening the door.

“Wait one second it’s cold out.” Her mother handed her a blue jacket, with some bird embroidery that once belonged to her grandmother.

Rose put it on and then marched out the door.

She walked through the little town watching little kids play in the dewy grass and drawing pictures of their siblings.

Soon she reached the swings. She was glad no one was there.

All by herself she swung back and forth.

This was the only place she could really talk to herself. It made her happy to think about when her brother was happy. He used to have so much fun just

watching the house of kites. People thought he was weird because he liked to watch the kites; that's because he had always wanted to fly.

The house of kites was bright yellow, ivy crawled up the walls and birds slept on the windowsill.

Suddenly a man walking his dog came by and bumped in to Rose. She flew off the swing and landed wrong.

As the man walked away with no idea of what he had done, Rose stumbled to her feet. Her left foot was in a tremendous amount of pain. The only person nearby was the lady that lived in the house across from her.

To Rose's surprise, out came the old lady with the kind eyes, carrying a watering can.

Rose had no idea what to do. She couldn't walk home and she couldn't just sit there till her mom sent out a search party.

Just as Rose was about to make up her mind the lady called, "Are you okay?" and put her watering can on the grass.

"I don't know." Rose hung on to the swing since her foot made her feel like she was going to fall over.

"Let me help you out," offered the lady as she crossed over to Rose and helped her inside the yellow house.

The old lady had puffy red hair, dark brown eyes, and a plaid dress.

Once the two were inside, the old lady had Rose sit on a red velvet couch.

“So, what hurts?” she asked kindly.

“My foot,” Rose replied.

“I see,” the old lady noted. “You must have sprang your ankle.” The old lady sat on the couch next to Rose.

“Well, at least I didn’t break my leg,” said Rose trying to be positive.

“I guess that’s true,” the old lady sat up. “I’m Violet Green, but you can call me what you wish to call me,” Mrs. Green, which is what Rose decided to call her, stood up. “I’ll be right back I’m just going to get you an ice pack.” Mrs. Green disappeared into another room.

Rose looked around. The house was neat and tidy with little pink roses in a vase in front of her. There were pictures of Mrs. Green in college with longer hair and pictures of Mrs. Green in kindergarten with a princess dress on. There was a golden chandelier above her and a crooked brick chimney.

As Rose was observing the silver stairs, Mrs. Green came in with a bright blue ice pack.

“Here,” she said handing the ice pack to Rose and sitting down next to her.

“Thanks.” Rose placed the freezing ice pack on her ankle.

“I should call your mom,” Mrs. Green stood up,

“What’s you mom’s number?”

Rose told her and with that Mrs. Green walked to the phone and dialed the number.

As Mrs. Green started to talk to Rose's mom, Rose noticed a little shed in the back of the house. A little red kite was sticking out of it. Rose leaned forward to try and get a better look. There were more kites in there. Not just one or two and not just red. There were blue, green stripes and dots, dragons, whales and even kites shaped like people.

As Mrs. Green walked back, Rose asked, "What is that little shed in the back for?"

Mrs. Green looked at the shed Rose was pointing to and said, "That's just the kites I keep."

Rose asked, "Why do you keep kites?"

Mrs. Green sat down and sighed. "In some cultures, a kite is released to remind you of your ancestors. Those kites remind me of mine."

"Why are some of them animals? I bet you didn't have animals as your ancestors," she said giggling a little.

Mrs. Green smiled at her and continued, "Those are their spirit animals," Mrs. Green said, putting her arm around Rose.

"Can I fly one?" Rose asked.

"It is a windy day," Mrs. Green considered.

"So, I can?"

"Why don't we fly one until your mother comes."

Mrs. Green helped Rose up and out to the shed.

Out in the old shed, there were a million kites to choose from. Rose didn't know which one to choose. Finally, she chose a simple red one.

"Nice pick," Mrs. Green said. "Why did you choose that one?"

"It was my brother's favorite color," Rose explained, as she picked up the kite, her eyes watering a little. "We used to swing here all the time and watch the kites fly."

Observing that Rose seemed sad, Mrs. Green asked, "Where is he now?"

"Where the kites fly," she said. "He always wanted to fly."

Mrs. Green understood. "Why don't you keep it," she said. "I bet your brother can see it."

They walked outside and onto the grass. Rose let the kite go and held on tightly to the string attached to the kite but not tightly enough. The kite flew out of her hand and up into the clouds.

Mrs. Green looked thoughtfully at her and said, "That happens sometimes." She patted her assuringly.

Just then a blue car pulled up with Rose's mom in it. "Rose?" she called.

Mrs. Green escorted her over to the car.

"Thank you for helping her," said Rose's mother getting Rose in to the car

“No problem,” said Mrs. Green closing the car door behind Rose.

The car drove off and back to Rose’s house.

When they got in Rose’s room, Rose sat down on the bed with her mom.

“You sprang your ankle I hear,” her mother said.

“I guess,” Rose said distracted, not really sure what her mom had asked her. Rose’s eyes filled with tears.

“Does your ankle hurt that bad?” her mom said.

“No. I just miss Timothy.” Rose leaned forward, wiping a tear drop that had fallen.

“We all miss him,” whispered her mom. Her mom held her tight.

Suddenly, a loud whistle came from the kitchen.

“Oh, I’d better get that,” said Rose’s mom. “Do you want some chamomile tea?”

“Sure,” Rose said. Her mother went down the stairs.

After her mother shut the door, Rose noticed something out of the corner of her eye. From her window, she could see a little tree house in the back yard that she used to play in with her little brother. In that tree house, was a kite. A plain red kite. And the rustling wind seem to make the tail wave to Rose. It was like her brother was right there, smiling at her.