

## Singing Eggs

China. Present day.

Chang woke up in the middle of the night — either from thirst, or from some strange sound. He didn't want to get out of bed and kept lying there, listening to the never-ending noise of the city outside the window.

Shanghai. He had already spent 20 years here and had gotten used to it. To its rhythm. To its endless rush.

Chang got up, poured himself a glass of water, and heard that quiet sound again — the one that had woken him. At first he thought it was the wind blowing through the half-open window, but then realized that someone was softly, sadly singing in a language he didn't understand.

He started walking around his one-room studio, trying to find the source, because it felt like the sound was coming from everywhere.

Soon he found it. It was the fridge — the singing was coming from inside. He kept listening, staring at the fridge door with a strange sense of déjà vu. Suddenly exhaling, he opened the door — and the singing stopped.

He looked through everything inside, then closed the door — and the singing resumed. Chang opened the door again quickly — and the singing stopped again.

He took out all the food from the fridge and shut the door. Silence.

Then he began putting the items back in one by one — there weren't many: a pot of rice, a carton of milk, a dozen chicken eggs, and a few apples.

And soon he understood — the eggs were singing.

Ordinary chicken eggs. Softly, sadly, in a language he couldn't understand...

And when Chang opened the fridge again — he remembered.

Chang had been the older brother. Yunsheng, the younger, had been under his care. Back then, their parents had just bought a refrigerator, and he and his brother had once wondered — does the light stay on when the door is closed? They found out it didn't — because Yunsheng climbed inside and said, laughing:

"Close it!"

Chang smiled at the memory and opened the door again, for a moment thinking Yunsheng would suddenly jump out, laughing.

But no.

That day, the day Chang finished school, he was watching his little brother. It was lunchtime, and their father had arrived on a tractor from the nearby farm where he worked. Their mother leaned out and happily called everyone to the table.

Father drove into the shed, and Chang was waving his report card in the window, proudly showing off his high marks, when a crunch rang out — and from under the wheel, guts spurted out like a bloody snot, and a pool of scarlet, child's blood spread quickly across the floor.

The horror of what had just happened pierced Chang completely, ripping the joy from his life forever.

His father hadn't yet seen anything, and Chang could hear his mother coming down the stairs, cheerfully hurrying them to lunch.

"No! No, Mom, don't come in!" Chang screamed in horror, covering what was left of Yunsheng with whatever rags he could grab.

That day, the parents lost both of their children.

Chang collapsed in front of the fridge — the one where the eggs were singing — and began sobbing,

choking on tears, crushed by the weight of what he had done.

He should've stayed. He shouldn't have run.

He should've stayed with his parents, who needed his love, even if he was guilty, even if he had failed.

But like a coward — he fled.

And for twenty years, he never called. Never wrote.

His parents never knew where he went.  
Chang — their son — buried alive under the weight of guilt, vanished from their lives forever.

As the eggs sang their sorrowful song,  
Chang began hurriedly packing his things to go home.  
An anxious feeling haunted him, and as he got on the first train (it was so easy), he rode back —  
back to the place where he thought he had buried everything — alive, in memory.

When he saw the old family house from afar, he quickened his pace. But when he saw the  
windows and doors shut tight, he felt the approach of irreversible loss.  
He knocked on the door: “Mom? Dad? Are you home?”  
A neighbor looked out and said: “Wait a moment, I’ll come out.”  
A little later she came out carrying two small boxes and handed them to him with the words:  
“They waited for you every single day, Chang.”

Without raising his head, he took the boxes with his parents’ ashes. And in that moment, he  
realized the full depth of what he had done.  
He felt a sharp, bitter cold of true loneliness —  
when even the warmth of those closest to you has left this world.  
“They suffocated in their sleep — from smoke in the stove,” the neighbor said.

Chang cried bitterly and helplessly, sitting by the window, holding the ashes of his parents, while  
the train carried him back to the city.  
To the city of lights — the city that never sleeps.  
To the dark world of people — where no one was waiting for him anymore.

The End

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