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一只中国蟋蟀

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CHIN LING *The Chinese Cricket*



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金玲——一只中国蟋蟀

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中国蟋蟀的故事

从前，在伟大中国古城北京的郊外，有一只没有名字的蟋蟀，因为蟋蟀不象人那样会给自己的孩子取名字。

这只小蟋蟀同它的父母和兄弟姐妹生活在一片广阔的田野里。它们常在长得高高的青草上跳跃嬉戏，练习格斗。

这只小蟋蟀是这片田野里最小的一个，在格斗中它的兄弟和其他蟋蟀可以轻易地把它打败。它尤其害怕其中一个又大又黑，样子凶狠的蟋蟀。那只大蟋蟀每次专挑最小的蟋蟀斗，以便尽情地耍弄欺侮。这使它非常伤心，因为它多么盼望自己能成为一只又大又强壮的蟋蟀，并在拼搏比赛中当上冠军呀。

一天，它独自坐在一片草叶上，感到十分孤独和伤心。突然间一个又大又黑的东西向它扑过来，它觉得自己给提到了半空中。

THE STORY OF THE CHINESE CRICKET

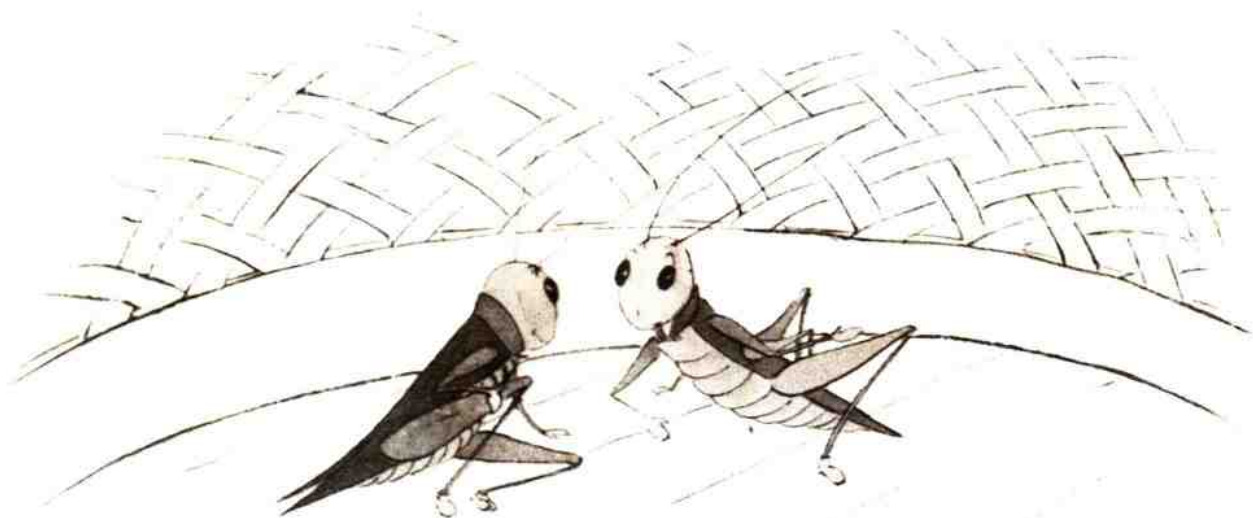
Not so very long ago there lived in the great country of China, just outside the walls of the old city of Beijing, a little cricket. He did not have a name, because crickets don't care about naming their children the way people do.

The little cricket lived in a big field with his mother and father and all his brothers and sisters. They would leap and hop in the tall grasses, and wrestle with one another for exercise.

The little cricket was the smallest one in all the field, and his brothers and the other crickets could easily beat him in their wrestling games. He was afraid of one of them, a big fierce-looking black cricket who always picked out the smallest cricket and beat him every time. This made him very sad because he wanted more than anything to be big and strong, and a champion wrestler.

One day he was sitting on a blade of grass, all by himself, feeling very lonesome and sad. Suddenly something large and dark came down over him, and he felt himself being lifted into the air!





小蟋蟀害怕极了，慌慌张张地乱蹦乱跳想办法逃出去。不一会，它感到身子往下掉，又来到了阳光底下。但这时它已被关进一个大篮子里，同许多别的蟋蟀关在一起了。

它不明白发生了什么事，就转身问旁边一只苍白无力的瘸腿蟋蟀，它们是在什么地方。

“我们已经给捉住了。”那瘸腿蟋蟀说，“他们将要把我们拿到城里的市场上去出卖。有人会把最强壮的买去参加斗蟋蟀比赛。”

He was very frightened. He began to hop around to look for a way out; then he felt himself falling and sliding, out into the sunlight again. But now he was inside a large basket with lots and lots of other crickets.

He could not imagine what had happened. He turned to the cricket beside him, a pale one with a lame leg, to ask where they were.

“We have been captured,” said the lame cricket. “They will take us to the market place in the city and sell us. People will buy the strongest ones to fight in the cricket ring.”



“那末象你我这样不强壮的蟋蟀命运又会怎样呢？”小蟋蟀问道，“你是瘸子，我又这样瘦小。”

“象我们这样弱小的，恐怕卖不出去。我们可能会被扔回田野里，然后靠自己的本事找路回自己家里去。我很清楚，因为我的一个叔叔就碰到过这样的事。”

这时篮子离开了地面，小蟋蟀知道它们给挑到北京城里的大市场上去出卖了。它心情沉重，但它尽量克制自己，耐心地等待着。

“But what will happen to crickets like you and me?” asked the little cricket. “You are lame and I am so small.”

“I am afraid that we who are weak will never be sold. We will probably be thrown out in a field to find our way home as best we can. I know, because that is what happened to an uncle of mine.”

At that moment the basket was swung up from the ground, and the little cricket knew they were on their way to the great market inside the walls of Beijing. With a sinking heart he settled himself down to wait as patiently as he could.

过了没有多久，它们就来到一块大的空场地，成百上千的人在那里散步，指手划脚地谈天说地。

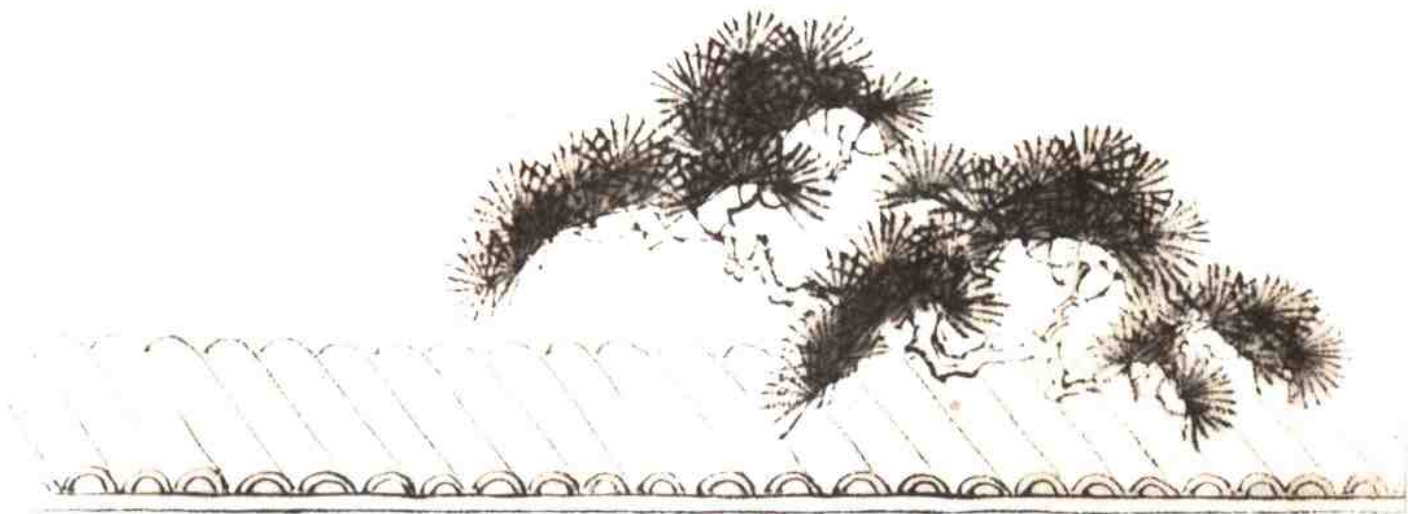
挑蟋蟀的人砰地一声放下了篮子，摆起一个小摊。他先在桌子上铺上一块蓝布，然后摆上几个笼子和罐子。他把又大又壮的蟋蟀同那些又小又弱的分开来，把大个的摆在桌子上显眼的地方，把小的留在篮子里放到桌子底下。小个儿的非常担心，不知道自己将会遇到什么情况。

不一会儿，一个大胖子来到小摊前。他拿出一块手巾擦擦脸，因为天气热，又脱下他那顶黑色小圆帽擦擦他那个秃了顶的头。

Soon they came to a great open space where hundreds of people were walking about, talking and waving their arms.

The man who was carrying the crickets set his baskets down with a thud, and began to set up his little shop. First he spread a blue cloth on top of a table, and then he arranged on it several cages and jars. Then he separated the big strong crickets from the little weak ones, putting the big ones on top of the table where they could be seen. The little cricket was left in the basket with the weak ones and they were placed under the table. They were very worried and wondered what would happen next.

Soon a large man came up to the little shop. He pulled out a handkerchief to mop his face, as it was a warm day, and even took off his little round black hat to mop his head, which was bald.



他用手指了指一个大蟋蟀问道：“这个卖多少钱？”

那摆摊的回答说：“这蟋蟀棒极了，保险能斗赢所有的蟋蟀。你要，就给两块钱吧。”

“什么？”那胖子嚷道，“胡说八道！这蟋蟀又瘦又弱。我看连四毛钱也不值，不过我可以出六毛五。”

那小蟋蟀听到这番谈话感到很新奇，就问它的朋友们是怎么回事。

“他们是在讨价还价呢。”瘸腿蟋蟀答道，“摆摊的总想把我们卖得愈贵愈好，但买的人又想愈便宜愈好。”

He pointed to a large cricket and asked, "What is the price of that one?"

The shopkeeper answered, "This fine big cricket? He is sure to be a great champion in the cricket ring, but I will let you have him for only two dollars."

"What?" cried the fat man. "Why, that's ridiculous! This cricket looks thin and weak to me. He isn't worth forty cents, I am sure. However, I will offer you sixty-five cents for him."

All this talk sounded very strange to the little cricket, and he asked his new friend what was happening.

"They are bargaining," the lame cricket answered. "The shopkeeper tries to sell us for as much money as possible, and the people try to pay as little as they can."



“噢，我明白了。”小蟋蟀点点头，接着又开始听那两个人的谈话。

胖子最多只肯出一块钱买那只大蟋蟀，说着就准备要走了。这时摆摊的连忙叫住他，“好吧，卖给你，一块钱就一块钱！”

那大蟋蟀给装进了一只笼子，胖子接过去提着就走了。

又有许多人来到这个摊子上买蟋蟀，所有又大又强壮的都给买走了，剩下的都是些小个子的蟋蟀。

一位漂亮的太太过来买走了那只瘸腿的蟋蟀，这使它非常高兴。那小蟋蟀也感到高兴，因为它看到自己的朋友能有一个好的家了。

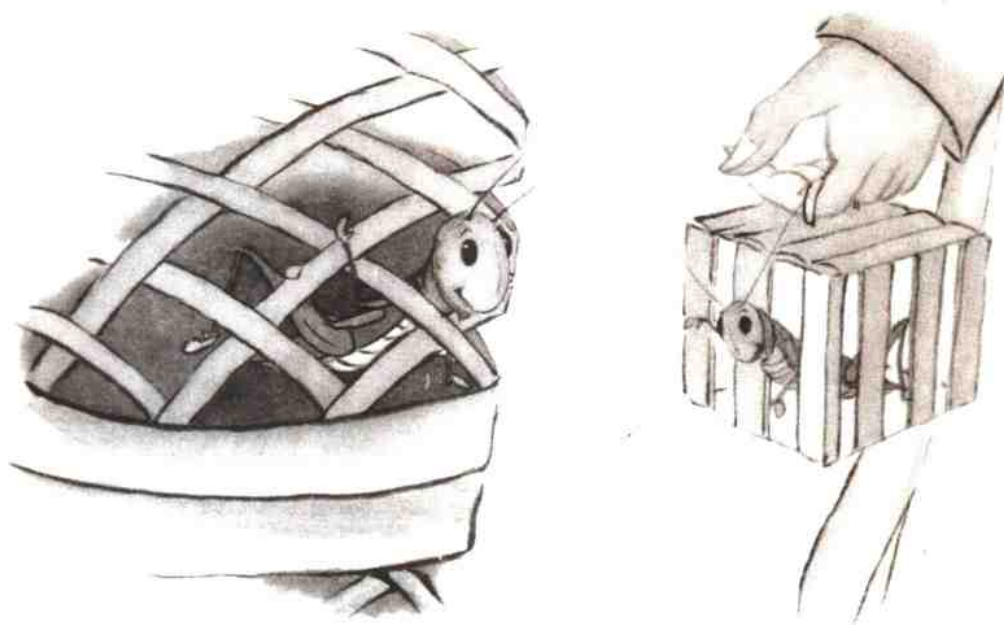
“Oh, I see,” said the little cricket, nodding his head, and he again began to listen to the two men.

The fat man had just offered a dollar for the big cricket and was about to walk away when the shopkeeper suddenly called, “All right, he is yours for a dollar!”

So the big cricket was put into a cage and the fat man took him away.

Many other people came and bought crickets at the shop until all of the big strong ones were gone and only the little ones were left.

A nice-looking lady came by and bought the lame cricket, which made him very happy. The little cricket was happy too, as he could see his friend would have a good home.



摊贩伸了伸双手，自言自语地说：“今天的生意不错，我想就收摊吧。这些小个的蟋蟀反正也卖不出去了，还是把它们放回田野里去吧。”

正在这时，一个大约七八岁的小男孩悄悄地走到摊前，全神贯注地站在那里看着剩下的那些蟋蟀。小孩身穿一套很旧但非常干净的蓝衣服，脚上穿着白袜子黑鞋子。他的头剃得光光的，只有两边头角上留着一小片头发，用红头绳扎起两根小辫子。他手里拿着三个角子硬币，他那乌黑发亮的眼睛盯着我们的朋友，那只小蟋蟀，小蟋蟀立刻也对这个小男孩产生了好感。

The shopkeeper stretched his arms and said to himself, "I have done a good business today. I think I will close up the shop. These weak ones will never sell, so I may as well put them out in a field somewhere."

Just then a little boy of about seven or eight came slowly up to the shop and stood looking at the remaining crickets with an anxious expression. He was dressed in faded but very clean blue coat and trousers, black shoes, and white socks. His head was shaved except for two locks of hair at either side, which were tied with red yarn. In his hand he clutched three pennies; and his bright black eyes were fastened on our friend, the little cricket! The cricket decided right away that he liked this little boy.



那孩子转身问摊贩：“这个蟋蟀卖多少钱？”

摊贩答道：“这只好蟋蟀？至少也得十个角子。不过你要，就给五个吧。”

“我给两个角子买那蟋蟀，另一个买只笼子。”那小孩说，他也同大人一样知道讨价还价。

小男孩早就盼望能买个小蟋蟀，并想尽办法攒起点钱，但表面上他装作并不特别想要买的样子。

摊贩也没有想再要价。

他终于说：“好吧，我得赶紧收摊回家了，给三个角子把蟋蟀和笼子都拿走。不过你要知道，这是照顾你。”

他抓起小蟋蟀装进一个小竹笼里，交给了小男孩，小孩郑重地付了钱。

The boy turned to the shopkeeper and asked, "How much is this one?"

And the man replied, "This fine cricket? He is worth at least ten pennies, but you may have him for five."

"I will give you two pennies for him and one penny for a cage to put him in," said the little boy, who knew how to bargain as well as any grownup.

He wanted the little cricket more than anything in the world and had saved all his money to buy one, but he pretended that he did not really want him at all.

The shopkeeper did not even try to get a higher price.

He just said, "Well, I am in a hurry to close up now; so you can have both the cricket and a cage for the three pennies. But just as a favor, you understand."

He picked up the little cricket and, placing him in a small bamboo cage, handed him over to the little boy, who solemnly paid the money.



小男孩一边在街上走，一边举起笼子对里面说：“喂，小蟋蟀！别害怕。我会好好喂养你，给你好吃的，叫你长得又胖又壮。”

小蟋蟀非常高兴有了这样一个好主人，兴奋地跳跳蹦蹦，还开始唱起来，唱得翅膀累了都不停止（蟋蟀是靠磨擦翅膀发声的，你知道吗）。小孩一边走，一边笑咪咪地听着。

不一会儿他们来到城墙边的一幢小屋前。小街上一些孩子在玩捉迷藏。看到小男孩，他们就停下游戏，都跑过来看他的蟋蟀。等他们一个个看够了，小男孩才往家里走。

他走进一扇小红门，高声喊道：“妈，快开门，我回来了！”

As the little boy walked down the street, he lifted the cage so he could look into it and said, "Hello, little cricket! Do not be afraid of me. I will take good care of you and feed you well so that you will grow fat and strong."

The little cricket was so excited and happy at finding such a good master that he hopped around and started to sing as if he would never stop. He did not stop even when his wings were tired (for that is how crickets sing, you know) and the little boy walked along, listening with a pleased smile on his face.

Soon they came to a small house near the city wall. Some children were playing blindman's buff in the little street. They stopped when they saw the little boy, and ran over to see his cricket. After they had all looked in the cage, the little boy went on down the street toward his house.

Turning in at a little red gate, he called, "Mother, I am home again!"

