

(4) Grandparent's Day

After Walter's wife died, he was very sad and lonely. He didn't care about anything. He didn't clean his house or cook meals. He ate TV dinners and toast. He didn't wash his clothes. He didn't shave, or go to the hairdresser. His daughter, Maggie, was very worried about him. She drove to his house and said, "Dad! This is no good! You can't stay here. Come and live in our house."

"I don't want to live in your house," said Walter. "I am OK. Go away!"

Maggie's father was very angry, so she went away.

One day, a few weeks later, Walter walked to the supermarket. He bought TV dinners and bread. He walked out of the supermarket and went across the road. He didn't look to the left or the right. A car hit him. The ambulance came and took him to the hospital. Maggie came to the hospital. "Dad!" she shouted. "You will not live alone. You will come to our house."

Walter went to Maggie's house. Maggie's husband, Roger, was not happy. "Your father is dirty. He is always angry. Why is he living in our house?"

"He is my father," said Maggie. "He is old and unhappy. He must stay here."

"I understand," said Roger.

Maggie and Roger's daughter, Rosa, was nine years old. One night while they are eating dinner, Maggie said, "Tomorrow, Rosa's school has Grandparent's Day."

"What is Grandparent's Day?" asked Walter.

"The children's grandparents go to the school. They see what the children do at school. The children sing, and the grandparents play games with them. It is very nice," said Maggie.

"I am Rosa's grandfather," said Walter. "I will go to Grandparent's Day."

Rosa jumped up. She ran away from the table. She went to her bedroom.

Later, Walter was going to bed. He walked past Rosa's bedroom. She was crying. Walter heard Roger's voice. "Rosa, stop crying."

"No!" shouted Rosa. "My grandfather is dirty. He smells bad. He doesn't clean his clothes. He is always angry. I don't want him to come to my school. The other children will laugh at me!"

"Rosa!" said Roger. "Many children have no grandparents. You are lucky. You have a grandfather. If Walter wants to come to your school, it is a good thing."

Walter went to his bedroom.

The next morning, Rosa did not want to go to school. "I don't want Grandpa to come to my school."

"You will go to school," said Maggie.

The grandparents came to Rosa's school at 1:00 pm. The students went to the school hall. All the children ran to find their grandparents. Rosa waited by the door. She looked all around the school hall, but she couldn't see her grandfather.

"Where is he?" she thought. "Maybe he didn't come."

There was one man who was alone. He was wearing a suit and tie. His shoes were very shiny. He looked very smart. "I wish that man was my grandfather," thought Rosa. "He looks like a nice man."

The man turned towards Rosa. "Rosa!" he shouted.

Rosa could not believe it. It was her grandfather, but he looked like a new man. Rosa ran to Walter and hugged him.

"I'm pleased I heard Rosa talking to her father last night," thought Walter. "It made me feel bad when I heard what Rosa said. But I understand. I will be a better person in the future."