

WANG JIE MEETS A NEW FRIEND

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Wang Jie lived in the mountains in Sichuan Province, China. His father was a farmer. It was a hard life, and his family loved each other very much. The weather in their place was good for growing bamboo and rice.

Every morning, Wang Jie got up very early to help his grandfather milk the goat and feed the chickens. He had many chores to do before he left for school, like cleaning his room, washing the dishes after breakfast, and sweeping the floor.

It was a long walk to school every day. It took him almost an hour. He walked with his friends and they played games. This made walking to school go faster.

When he returned from school in the afternoon, he had many more chores to do. He had to do them before he did his homework. His parents wanted him to do well in school because they wanted him to get a good job when he grew up.

Wang Jie always looked forward to Sunday. It was his most favorite day. Although he still got up early to do his jobs around the farm, he did not have to go to school. After finishing his work, he would spend all day playing and finding new things to see and do.

Wang Jie was an explorer. He knew all the places in the mountains where he lived. He found streams and caves. He had a favorite tree he liked to climb. He even had a special rock where he would sit for many hours looking across the big valley. Below him was a river where he went fishing with his grandfather.

One day, as Wang Jie was walking through the forest, he heard a noise in the trees

above him. He thought he saw something. It was very big. It was moving slowly from branch to branch, but he could not see what it was.

Just then, the animal saw Wang Jie and became frightened. As the animal climbed up the tree, Wang Jie was able to get a better look at it. It was big like a bear. It had long claws. It was black and white. It was a wild panda! Wang Jie had heard stories about pandas in school, but he had never seen one before.

Wang Jie moved down the path to get a better look. Wang Jie and the panda looked at each other eye to eye. The panda did not seem to be afraid anymore. They just looked at each other for the longest time.

It was getting late, so Wang Jie said good-bye to his new friend in the forest. Then he went home to eat his dinner.

At the table, he told his parents all about what he had seen in the forest. He told his mother and father about the giant panda. He told how at first the panda was afraid of him, but later they became friends.

His father stood up from the table, and asked in a stern voice, "Where is the panda?"

Wang Jie was surprised at his father's reaction to what he had said. He became afraid.

He answered, "I saw him in the bamboo forest near the big rock that I sit on to look at the valley."

His father ran out of the house very quickly.

Wang Jie turned to his mother and asked, "Why is father angry, and why did he run out of the house so fast?"

"He's not angry," his mother told him. "Some men came to the house earlier in the day. They told your father that a giant panda had escaped from the research center in the village. They told him there was a reward for its return."

Wang Jie was upset. He had made a new friend, and now his new friend was going to be returned to the center where they take care of pandas. He thought about what he

could do to save his new friend.

Wang Jie left the table quickly and ran out of the house. He ran to the forest and ran to his rock. He stopped at the place where he had seen the panda, but he could not find him.

Wang Jie began to cry. He thought the workers had already found his new friend. He thought he was now on his way back to the research center.

Suddenly he saw something move. Wang Jie went a little farther down the path and there he saw the panda eating bamboo leaves.

Wang Jie yelled out, "Go away! There are bad men coming to get you. They want to take you back to the research center!"

Then Wang Jie heard voices. The men from the research center were coming toward him. They had followed him. His father had told them that Wang Jie knew where the panda was in the forest.

When the men caught up to Wang Jie, they looked up in the tree and saw the panda. One of the men aimed his gun at the panda.

Wang Jie shouted, "NO!"

BOOM!

The gun went off, and then the panda slowly began to fall through the branches to the ground. The gun had shot a dart with medicine to make the panda go slowly to sleep. When he was on the ground, the caretakers put him into a net. Then five men carried him to a truck that was waiting on the edge of the forest.

Wang Jie was angry and sad. It was his fault that they had found the giant panda, and now they were returning him to the research center in the town. It was no longer free.

Wang Jie went home. He went to his bed and turned to the wall. He was angry at his father for telling the men about the giant panda.

No matter what his parents said, he did not listen to them.

He was still angry when he went to school on Monday.

His teacher knew all about the panda, and of how Wang Jie had helped to find it.

She explained to Wang Jie, “When the panda was a baby its parents were captured and sent to a zoo in another country, so he had been brought up at the research center. Because of this, he did not know how to live in the forest. If the panda had stayed in the forest, he may have died, so it was best that he was returned to where he would be safe.”

She told Wang Jie that he was a hero. He had saved the giant panda, and everyone was happy that the panda was safe in the research center again.

Wang Jie was confused. He had made a new friend, and he wanted the panda to always be in the forest when he went to visit. Now the panda was back at the research center, and he would never be able to see the panda again because his family was so poor and they could not afford to pay to see the pandas.

When Wang Jie returned home, there were two men at his house. They were talking to his father.

The men asked, “Is this the boy who found our panda?”

Wang Jie’s father replied, “Yes, this is my son, Wang Jie. He found the panda.”

The men shook his hand and thanked him for helping them to find Ming Ming, the most popular animal in the panda research center. They handed him a red envelope, and then said good-bye.

After the men left, Wang Jie opened the envelope, and inside he found three lifetime membership cards to the research center to visit anytime they wanted. Wang Jie jumped into the air. He was so excited.

He yelled out, “Woo hoo! Now I can go anytime I want to see my new friend Ming Ming at the research center in the valley.”

VOCABULARY (*Match the word to its definition*)

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. farmer _____ | a. between two mountains |
| 2. explorer _____ | b. mad, furious, irate |
| 3. stream _____ | c. sharp nails |
| 4. valley _____ | d. grows food and raises animals |
| 5. claws _____ | e. prize, gift |
| 6. stern _____ | f. small river |
| 7. reward _____ | g. one who looks for new things |
| 8. angry _____ | h. serious, harsh, strong words |
| 9. hero _____ | i. star, champion |
| 10. lifetime _____ | j. until one dies, lifespan |

TRUE / FALSE

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Wang Jie lived in a big city. | T / F |
| 2. The giant panda was very dangerous. | T / F |
| 3. The giant panda was eating eucalyptus leaves. | T / F |
| 4. The men from the research center killed Ming Ming. | T / F |
| 5. Wang Jie had many chores to do before going school. | T / F |
| 6. Wang Jie was given a one-day card to the research center. | T / F |
| 7. The caretakers put Ming Ming into a net. | T / F |
| 8. Wang Jie was mad at his mother. | T / F |
| 9. Wang Jie liked Sundays. | T / F |
| 10. Wang Jie's teacher told him he was a hero. | T / F |

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1. What did Wang Jie find in the forest? ____
 - a) a big bear
 - b) a giant panda
 - c) a wild boar
 - d) a big valley

2. Who told the caretakers that Wang Jie had found the panda? ____
 - a) his mother
 - b) his brother
 - c) his teacher
 - d) his father

3. Why did the panda need to go back to the research center? ____
 - a) he did not know how to live in the forest.
 - b) he was going to be killed
 - c) he was afraid
 - d) he was hungry

4. What did Wang Jie do with his grandfather before school? ____
 - a) his homework
 - b) he milked the goat and fed the chickens
 - c) he went for a long walk
 - d) he helped his mother in the kitchen

COMPREHENSION: *(Write a complete sentence to answer the question.)*

1. Where was the panda when Wang Jie first saw him?

2. Where did Ming Ming live before he escaped to the forest?

3. How many people carried Ming Ming to the truck?

4. Why was Wang Jie upset?

5. What did Wang Jie's father do after Wang Jie told him about the panda?

6. What was Wang Jie's reward?

7. What did Wang Jie's father grow on their farm?

8. How many members were there in Wang Jie's family?

9. When Wang Jie sat on his rock, what did he see?

10. What were some of Wang Jie's chores?
