



Spring vacation is here!

Rin is going to stay at Grandma's by herself for the very first time.

She's worried about going alone but she loves Grandma. She also loves Grandma's garden. It's much bigger than Rin's garden in Tokyo and it's always full of flowers.

Rin likes to watch the ants and roly-poly bugs scurrying about.

"I wonder what I'll see in Grandma's garden this time?" She thinks.

Two days after she comes to stay, Rin finds a yellow basket in the kitchen.

It's full of delicious spring vegetables.

Broccoli, spinach, muddy carrots and two heads of cabbage with leaves full of holes.

Rin turns to Grandma, her eyes shining.

"Wow! A basket full of goodies! Can we eat them for dinner?"

Grandma's eyes twinkle.

"You are such a good girl, Rin. You always eat your green. These special vegetable will make you even prettier than you are already."

That evening, the dinner table is groaning under the weight of delicious vegetable dishes. Rin eats until her belly is full.

The next morning when Rin goes to the kitchen, something catches her eye...

"A butterfly?"

"Grandma! Come and see! There's a butterfly in the house!"

"Oh, that's a cabbage white butterfly," says grandma.

"I wonder how it got here? The windows are all closed, so it must have come from...cabbage!"

Rin's mouth falls open. "The cabbage?"

Grandma picks up the second cabbage from the basket.

"See all the holes in the leaves?"

Rin nods.

"They make the cabbage special. They were made by our little friends living in the rich soil of the farm on the hill."

Grandma looks down at Rin and smiles.

“Once upon a time, inside the cabbage, a caterpillar was born. It ate through a lot of leaves, grew fat and then fell asleep. When it woke up, it had wings!”

Rin’s eyes widen. “Really?”

“Did you say it was called a cabbage white butterfly?”

“Yes. Look at the black spots on its wings.”

Rin and Grandma watch the butterfly as it dances around the kitchen.

“You are a very lucky girl, Rin. You are the first person this butterfly ever saw.”

Rin’s smile widens.

Grandma moves towards the window and lifts the latch.

“We shouldn’t keep it any longer. It needs to join its friends outside.”

Rin bites her lip. “Oh,···I see.”

She watches as the butterfly floats out of the open window.

“Bye, bye, little butterfly,” she calls. “Take care!”

Three days later, Rin is playing in the garden when her ball rolls under a patch of red freesia flowers. Her eyes sparkle when she sees what is perched on one of the petals.

“Grandma! Come and see!” She points to a small white butterfly.

“Do you think it’s our friend from the other day?”

Grandma peers at it closely. “Well, well. I’m sure it is.”

Rin claps her hands. “It must have come back to say hello.”

Grandma straightens.

“When I was young, the cabbage fields were full of butterflies, but not anymore.

This one surely came from the farm on the hill.”

Rin whispers to the butterfly as it rises in the air.

“Goodbye little cabbage white. See you soon. Next time, please bring your friends.”

In the gentle sunlight, the little white butterfly flutters higher and higher as it makes its way towards its home on the hill.