

英文学习园地

A Story of Leftovers

剩菜的故事

Once there was a traditional family of five: two parents and their three children. The father worked, and the mother stayed home to look after the family. Every time the husband came home from work, he would say to his wife, "You're so lucky. You stay home all day with nothing to do. My work gives me headaches everyday!"

Being a virtuous woman, the wife put up with his words without protest. When the children came home from school, they would yell for food or that they needed a break from all the hard work at school. They even blamed their mother for not appreciating how tough schoolwork was since she stayed home all day doing nothing.

On one holiday, the mother told the rest of her family that she had to take the day off to visit her sister and requested that her husband and children look after their own meals and all the housework. The husband was a management expert, so he organized the children to work with him. He would do all the cooking, assisted by the seventeen-year-old daughter who would be responsible for cutting the vegetables and setting the table. The younger son would water the garden and sweep the patio, while the youngest daughter, who was thirteen, would just dust the furniture and sweep the floors.

When the day was over, the father and the three children were all tired and irritable, each of them complaining that doing housework was too much work. At that point, they realized that the work the four of them did was all done by the mother alone and that it was wrong of them to accuse their mother of having nothing to do at home. Mom had been very busy, and she was a great mother! The whole family then appreciated that it was not easy to be a homemaker!

Time flew by and the mother was about to celebrate her sixtieth birthday. The children wanted to treat their mother for all the work she had done for the family. They sat down and discussed what would be the best gift for her. Over the years, they had tried to buy her clothes, but she always said no to that. Someone suggested maybe they should treat her to a traditional banquet dinner, but then she never liked to eat that much food. After much discussion, the son said, "Mom enjoys leftovers best! On her birthday, we should just bring her leftovers to eat."

On her sixtieth birthday, her husband and children smiled happily at her and said, "You always tell us you like leftovers; therefore, we brought you leftovers for your birthday celebration." With tears in her eyes, mother replied, "Yes, over the years, I only liked leftovers!"

The twists and turns of the story fully illustrate the life of a home-maker and mother. It also shows us how compassionate and wonderful a woman can be. The greatest love in the world is understanding and appreciating the hardships of others. While it may not be easy for us to witness such virtues in society, within the family there should be more understanding and appreciation among spouses and their children!