

TAKING THE MUSIC BOX HOME

Momma is making noodles in the kitchen.

Loon-Loon is sitting on the high chair eating corn on the cob.

"Momma, I want to tell you one thing, but you have to promise not to tell father."

"Okay."

"Well!" Loon-Loon sucks the juice from the corn on the cob. "And promise you wouldn't take the thing back to the owner."

"Take what thing back to whom?"

"Will you promise?"

"All right."

"You guess. Where did I get this little music box?"

"From your daddy's drawer?"

"No." Loon-Loon breaks her corn into two pieces.

"Your friend gave it to you?"

"No."

"You found it somewhere?"

"No."

"Well, where did it come from?"

Momma puts the noodles into the blue bowl with white flowers.

"You guess!"

"I don't want to guess anymore."

Loon-Loon climbs down from the high chair and sits close to her mother. She picks up some noodles with her hands and puts them into her mouth.

"It's Ting-Ting's music box."

A long noodle is hanging down from the corner of Loon-Loon's mouth. It just dangles there.

"Did Ting-Ting give it to you as a gift?"

Momma also has a noodle dangling from the corner of her mouth now.

"No."

"Did Ting-Ting's mother give it to you as a gift?"

"No."

"What happened then," Momma says, sucking the noodle with a noise into her mouth.

"I just took it," Loon-Loon also sucks her noodle with a noise. The noodle disappears.

"You just took it?"

"Yes. I put it in my sleeve. And no one saw me."

"Momma's hand is in the air holding noodles between a pair of chop sticks. She is looking at Loon-Loon.

It seems like a very long time. Momma then turns, puts the noodles down, and reaches over to get a piece of green onion. She goes to the sink and begins to wash it.

"Hey, Loon-Loon, isn't that stealing?"

"Of course not, Momma. I wasn't caught."

Loon-Loon grabs a noodle from the bowl and hangs it over her lower lip. Momma begins to cut the green onion into little pieces.

Cheu Huey-Ing