

Mei sat up from his bed heading for breakfast, then going to work, he went and changed in the changing room, he waited and looked for Xukali but she wasn't there. He waited and searched all day for her, but she never came, and when the bells rang he retired from the job, walking down the stairs to his house.

He sat at the table waiting to eat, but his family didn't come. He saw that the food was half eaten but he had to wait for the rest of the family to come. He didn't want to be disrespectful, he couldn't be disrespectful, he waited and waited and when he checked the food it was all gone. "That's weird" he thought but he couldn't say it outloud, he waited a couple minutes to leave the table, he didn't want to seem rude.

When he went back to his room Mei checked his secret box under the loose floorboard, it had the same amount of coins as when he last checked. He was going to be free with them, how was he going to free himself with these coins? They're just sea bronze and iron, all he could do for them was exchange them for one thing or another, maybe he could buy his freedom.

Yeah that's what they're for, and that's why he got that job, so he could get his freedom, he went to his bed and fell asleep. Waking up when the bells rang, getting breakfast, but there was no breakfast, so he just left home hungry from both last dinner and this morning.

Climbing up the stairs and changing to his uniform, he cleaned and washed, looking all he could, but he still couldn't find her. Who was her again? He could remember a figure and shoulder length dirty blond hair, but he couldn't remember her face or anything else.

If he didn't remember her then she probably didn't matter, plus it's easier, just not dealing with people, hoping every word that you painstakingly thought over didn't backfire. When the twelfth bell rang he went back into his old clothes and returned home, back down the mountain.

When he arrived at the house where he resided, he sat at his usual spot at the table, waiting for some people to arrive so he could eat. Why did he wait again? He hadn't eaten anything since tomorrow, so he reached out for some of the already half eaten food. But he stopped, better not to, could be that it's rude, and he didn't want to be rude even if he didn't know why. "Better to stick to what you know." he thought, even if he didn't know why he waited for people to arrive.

And no-one did, he noticed the food had been eaten, so he waited a few more minutes to leave for his room. He checked the hidden box and wondered why he even had it, for freedom he remembered, but money couldn't solve that, and isn't it easier to just keep on doing this. Yes, yes it was, he would forget those foolish notions by tomorrow, he lied down to bed and fell asleep.

Waking up the next morning to the sound of bells, he went to find breakfast but there was none, so he went to his job. Climbing up the mountain he thought about how the day was

going to go, after he finished he would talk to Xukali, wait, who was that again? “Ah it didn’t matter,” and then he would go to town, wait was there ever a town. He went to look back and he saw nothing, but the ocean, the mountain and the bright sunless sky.

“Wasn’t there supposed to be land there, and other mountains too?” he thought.
“No, only here, and anyways isn’t it easier to just deal with this, being alone, it’s so much harder to be around anything else. So unpredictable, so draining, is’t it just easier, unchanging and alone?”

“Yeah, I think so,” he agreed,

And so he continued his trek up the stairs, changing into his uniform when he got to the, the uh, the um, whatever the building was again.

He cleaned and washed the halls, empty, never even a sign of life to begin with, after finishing he left and thought about what he was going to do. He was going to get tickets for both himself and Xukali, wait no, was he, no, no he did want to do this, no matter what.

“Sure, but you have to deal with everything else,” it said

“Yeah, but I still want to do this, even if it’s hard.”

Mei woke in his bed, covered in icy sweat, he could even see the dark spots on the sheets. He had a dream but not a nightmare, wait did he even dream? Ah it didn’t matter, he just needed to get this cleaned quickly so he could leave for work before the bells rang.