

## Grandma, Let's Watch Fireflies Together Again

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Every summer I have a very special memory to recall. It's about my Grandma's home in the countryside. A bright blue river kingfisher dives into the pond, and a big stag beetle greets me when I open the entrance door to fetch the newspaper. All I remember is full of delight. The best of all is when Grandma and I went out together at night to watch fireflies in the rice field.

"Try Grandma's back. I've wanted to give my grandchild a piggyback."

Grandma's back must have hurt but she still gave me a ride on her back. We sang "Come, Fireflies" together, and Grandma made it to the rice field in the distance. The bullfrogs went "Bwavum, Bwavum" on the way, so funny that we had a good laugh and played a "bullfrog croaking game" together.

"Here, look closely at the fireflies with your own eyes. It's like stars twinkling in the rice field."

Tiny soft lights floated about and moved between the rice plants. We watched them for a long time. It is my treasure memory.

But since then, I have never been to Grandma's house. Radiation showered on her house. Crops can no longer be grown in the rice and vegetable fields. We cannot go outside. Smiles disappeared from Grandma's face.

“I feel grateful to many people for their kind care and help,” Grandma says.

She tells me that it was not until she went through such severe experience that she came to understand how fortunate it is to receive help from others. For this reason, Grandma always makes a charity donation whenever she spots a collection box on the street. I think Grandma is great because she wishes for other people’s happiness despite the hard time she is going through.

Grandma loves nature and she is very fond of growing vegetables. Because of this, I wish her home will soon get back to what it used to be before. I want Grandma to laugh a lot outside. These days Grandma’s legs have become weaker. For years she has spent most of her time only indoors.

“When I think of people who died in the tsunami, and those who cannot go back home, however much they want to, I feel very blessed,” she says. But I want Grandma to be better and happier. I think she has put up with a lot already.

I cannot help wishing to do one thing with Grandma. If fireflies return to the rice field, I want to go to watch them with Grandma again. I want to play the “bullfrog croaking game.” This time, I want to give her a ride on my back. I want to see Grandma’s face burst into a big wrinkled smile one more time.