

SILVER AWARD

TIFFANY ONG YING XIN, 13, MALAYSIA

THE STORY OF FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

Dear, it is time for bed! For today's bedtime story, Grandma will tell a story about an awe-inspiring person called Florence Nightingale, a nurse. A nurse may sound ordinary, but she is not just a typical nurse; she is an excellent nurse who helped the sick and achieved many accomplishments in her life. Now let me start the story by introducing the early life of Florence Nightingale.

Nightingale was born in the 19th century into a wealthy and well-known family. As her family was wealthy, her father managed to provide her with a classical education, including German, French and Italian studies. From an early age, Nightingale was interested in helping the sick and the poor people around their neighborhood. By the time she was sixteen, it was clear to her that her passion for becoming a nurse was unyielding. Nightingale decided to approach her parents to let them know about her ambitions. She wished her parents would support her in pursuing her dream of becoming a nurse. Unfortunately, her parents were not pleased with her thoughts and forbade her to pursue nursing. Nightingale did not want to give up despite her parents' objections, so she enrolled as a nursing student at the Lutheran Hospital of Pastor Fliedner in Germany. This was her first step in pursuing her dreams.

In the early 1850s, Nightingale returned to London, where she took a nursing job in a Middlesex hospital for ailing governesses. She managed to impress her supervisor with her fantastic performance as a nurse, so eventually, she got promoted to superintendent within just a year of being hired. The position was challenging as Nightingale had to deal with a cholera outbreak. She tried her best to improve hygiene practices which could help lower the rate of cholera spreading around like crazy. Due to lack of rest and too much work, she developed some health issues, and she barely recovered when one of the biggest challenges of her nursing career came barging in.

Next, we are going on to the part of her most incredible accomplishments. In 1853, the Crimean War broke out. The British Empire was at war against the Russian Empire for control of the Ottoman Empire. Thousands of British soldiers were sent out for war, and death cases quickly increased. More than 18000 soldiers were admitted into hospitals due to injury during the war. There were just not enough nurses and doctors to help the injured soldiers, so Nightingale got a letter. The letter asked Nightingale to organise a corps of nurses to tend to Crimea's sick and fallen soldiers. Nightingale quickly assembled a team of 34 nurses and set sail to Crimea in a few days.

The situation at the hospital was horrid. Patients were filling in the hallways; some were on stretchers while others were on the floor. Greases of blood were everywhere. Seeing the wounded in pain and not getting treated to was heartbreaking. More soldiers were dying from typhoid and cholera than from injuries in the

battle. Nightingale then immediately asked the least injured patients to scrub the hospital from floor to ceiling, wishing this would decrease the rate of typhoid and cholera spreading around. Nightingale herself didn't take any rest because, to her, caring for the wounded was more important than anything else. In the evenings, she often moved around the dark hallways by holding a lamp to check on the soldiers one by one. This was how the calling of 'the Lady with the Lamp' came into the picture.

As you see, grandson, Nightingale, could have chosen to pursue a high-salary career. But she didn't. Nightingale did this because she wanted to pursue her passion as a nurse and help people. She didn't want any high salaries. Nightingale was happy enough seeing the patients that she treated become better. Imagine abandoning your family background and pursuing the ambition of being a nurse; how touching is that? Grandson, you must be brave like Nightingale, brave enough to pursue your dreams. Okay, this is the end of today's bedtime story! Goodnight, grandson, and sweet dreams. I hope you enjoyed my story.