

## The word box

Enriqueta just got back from the doctor's. She went to see about her memory, which seems to be playing tricks on her. Now she has to take half a pill a day, to see if things improve.

Enriqueta has a horde of grandchildren who often visit her, but the one she spends most time with is Cecilia, her youngest grandchild.

Every afternoon they go to Enriqueta's room to dust, water the geraniums or to do their homework... but Cecilia likes it best when they bring out:

## THE WORD BOX

Recently they've been spending a lot of time looking at the word box.

Today they took out her wedding photo. Grandma was very beautiful, and grandpa looked handsome too, with a flower in his buttonhole. There was another couple standing next to her grandparents:

“Oh! Look, my wedding photograph! I was so young and happy, it was like floating on a cloud. We didn't have much to live on, but we worked hard at the factory. The factory was huge. If you looked out of the windows, you could see the sea in the distance. We started early in the morning and finished work very late, when it was already night time. We even worked on Saturdays! And when Sunday finally came we put on our prettiest dresses and squeezed our feet in our best shoes to go out dancing. We danced all night, to an accordion playing the liveliest dances and the most romantic waltzes...”

“Things were different in those days! Look, that's Pia... and that's her fiancé Just, your great uncle! Your great uncle was very handsome. I think he liked me too, because he often waited for me outside the factory and walked me home. It was a bit like the tale of Little Red Riding Hood because we always took the longest way home!”

As Grandma Enriqueta speaks, her eyes slowly close and her voice grows softer until finally she falls asleep. At first, Cecilia thought Grandma was just making things up, but from the way she was speaking, it sounded as if she was still in love with that handsome great uncle! / While Enriqueta was sleeping, Cecilia looked for some more photos.

She found one from Grandma's birthday last year. She was 81, and the family brought her a cake that had so many candles on it, it looked like a bonfire! / Cecilia woke her grandma up, to chat a bit more.

“Look, Grandma! It's the photo of your birthday! Look at that cake! Isn't it amazing!”

Grandma Henriqueta straightened her spectacles and looked at the photo in surprise.

“What a lot of candles! There was no need to waste so many candles for an eighteenth birthday. Wait until you turn 18, you'll be like me and you'll be able to do so many things by yourself. / I'm thinking about buying a scooter to go to work.”

When grandma starts to say silly things, the best thing to do is change the subject as quickly as you can. Cecilia hurried to put the photo away and fetched the book that they look at every afternoon to practice remembering words and pictures. It's an easy game. You just have to look at a drawing and say what it is, without stopping to think about it. When they first started, grandma got most of the words right, but lately, she seems to get everything mixed up.

“Here we go grandma! Today we're going to do kitchen words!”

Cecilia points at the pictures, and grandma says: saucepan, ladle, fork, table mats, scouring pad... bicycle-spoon-apple! says Henriqueta, as if she were sure she'd got everything right. Then she suddenly, she scratches her forehead and says:

“I'm very tired... It's so hard to find the words. It's as if they were trying to escape, and I want to catch them, but I can't... I can't... Let me rest for a while, I'll have a little napkin...”

And this time her tired eyes close and she falls so deeply asleep that Cecilia doesn't want to disturb her.

To keep herself entertained, she rummages in the word box. She knows it inside out from having looked at the words so many times, but suddenly, she finds an envelope that wasn't there before. On the front, in Grandma's neat handwriting, it says: MY FAMILY. It's full of photographs! Brothers, uncles, cousins, grandchildren... The photo of her Dad was taken recently. He always has such a serious face in photos... but when she looks closely, Cecilia sees her father's name: MIQUEL... She looks at the next photo. It's of her mother, from last summer. She looks very nice. AMANDA. Cecilia is a little worried. She looks at a photo of herself. It was only taken a few weeks ago. Grandma has written: CECILIA.

Cecilia doesn't know what to do. She knows that Grandma gets words muddled up, it sometimes makes her laugh... but sometimes she feels sorry for Grandma. They both try hard to do the memory exercises, not to give in to the black hole that seems to be swallowing up Grandma's word box, / but they don't know if things will be OK. Whatever happens, they will always be Cecilia and Henriqueta, the old Grandma she loves so much. She gives her a big kiss. It comes from somewhere deep inside her, near her heart. Grandma murmurs sleepily:

"Ooh, my bicycle! She must really love me!"

Script: Carme Aymerich