

(4) The Water Heroes of Taiwan

It was a very dry spring on the island of Taiwan. The sun was hot, and the sky was clear for many days. No rain fell, and the rivers were low. In a small house near the mountains, a boy named Wei-Wei was brushing his teeth. He left the water running from the tap. The clean water ran down the drain and was lost. His grandpa walked by and saw the water. He quickly turned off the tap and shook his head.

"Why did you turn off the water, Grandpa?" Wei-Wei asked. "We must save every drop," Grandpa said. "There has been no rain for a long time. Our water is running low."

"Is it really that bad?" Wei-Wei asked. "I thought we still had a lot of water." "No," Grandpa said. "The lakes and rivers are not full. We must be careful each day." Wei-Wei looked at the sink and then out the window. "Why can't we use ocean water?" he asked.

"We can't drink salt water," Grandpa said. "It is not safe for our bodies." "Can we clean it first?" Wei-Wei asked. "It is very hard and costs a lot," Grandpa said. "So we must save rain water and keep it clean." Wei-Wei thought for a moment. He did not like to waste things. "Is it hard to keep water clean?" he asked.

"Yes," Grandpa said. "It is not easy. If we throw trash in rivers, the water is not safe. Then we should not play water fights at school," Wei-Wei said. "That's right," Grandpa said with a smile. "Every drop we save helps our home stay green." Wei-Wei wanted to help right away. "What can I do?" he asked. "You can start small," Grandpa said. "Use a cup when you brush your teeth."

"I can do that," Wei-Wei said. "And don't throw trash in water," Grandpa added. "Tell others too." Wei-Wei said, "I will tell my friends to save water too!" "That's a good idea," Grandpa said. "We can all help if we work together."

Wei-Wei felt proud and happy. He learned that water is very important for life.

In Taiwan, the rain falls in some seasons, but not all year. The water flows to the sea very fast, so people must save it when they can. Every person can help in small ways each day. Wei-Wei went to the kitchen and got a small cup. He used it to rinse his mouth and used less water. He also turned off the tap when he did not need it. These small steps made a big change over time.

Later that day, he made a poster for school. He drew a happy raindrop and a big lake. He wrote, "Save Our Water" at the top. He also drew people using water in smart ways. He wanted people to know that clean water helps us stay healthy and strong. Without clean water, we cannot grow food or wash our hands. We need water every day at home and at school. From that day on, Wei-Wei saved water every day. He knew even a small boy can help the world and make it better.