

Of all the places in the world, I love to stay at Grandma Genia and Grandpa Yuda’s house. I spend all my vacations there—away from my nagging sister, away from my parents—without ever having to wake up early, without having to go to school.

Grandpa Yuda—he’s my best friend. He always has time to play with me.

Grandma Genia—she makes me yummy hot chocolate and bakes my favorite cookies. Sometimes she sits with us and knits quietly.

There’s a kind of quiet in Grandma and Grandpa’s house. It’s the silence of people who come from a faraway world—a vanished world that still lives in memories.

Of all the rooms in my grandparents' house, I prefer to play in Grandpa's study, where he keeps his desk, his piano, and lots of other stuff.

Grandpa's desk has three drawers.

In the first drawer, Grandpa keeps his pens and paper. My pencil case and favorite crayons are also there.

The second drawer has all sorts of special old toys that are made of wood or metal. Grandpa used to play with them when he was a boy before the war. When Grandpa had to leave his house in Germany, his neighbors kept his toy box for him until the war was over.

The third drawer of his desk is always locked. No one ever opens it . . .

I wonder why it is forbidden . . .





Breakfast at Grandpa and Grandma's lasts for as long as you like.

The wonderful smell of freshly baked bread fills the house. Grandma sets the table with beautifully decorated china and crocheted napkins. There are all sorts of special ornaments in the house: Grandma's handmade tablecloths, pretty glass vases, and paintings of spectacular landscapes.

The morning sun shines through the curtains, creating spots of light on the tablecloth. Sometimes a ray of light slips in, and you can see thousands of dust particles floating in midair.

*A*fter breakfast, we usually spend time in Grandpa's study.

I like to take my crayons from the first drawer of his desk and draw. I can draw for as long as I want, and no one tries to snatch the crayons away from me. I also love playing with Grandpa's old toys—the ones in the second drawer.

But I always look at the third drawer and wonder what's inside it. Why am I not allowed to open it?

When we are together, Grandpa likes to listen to music. He doesn't listen to the news or read the paper. He has an old record player on which he plays his favorite music by Mozart and Beethoven.

Sometimes he'll sit and play the piano.

Grandpa says that playing Mozart makes him feel like he lives in a perfect world. When he plays, his eyes sparkle. He looks into the distance as if he were somewhere else.

Perhaps he thinks about days long gone, when he was a boy like me.