

**NARRATOR**

Fangfang, a student at the Communication College of Jiangxi University, has just finished her end of year exams and has arrived back home.

This is Fangfang's first year at college.

During every holiday she works with her Grandma.

For the last 15 Grandma has been doing this kind of work every day. This woman works with Grandma He, the eldest of several scrap collectors.

**Interviewer**

How much money can you make each day?

**Grandma He**

Two yuan a day.

**NARRATOR**

In order to make enough money to live on, Grandma He leaves home at seven every morning and returns at four in the afternoon 365 days a year.

**Grandma He**

We feel hungry by noon. We eat two meals a day and have lunch at four in the afternoon.

We are used to it now.

**NARRATOR**

Every miner knows Grandma He and the stories about her and Fangfang.

**Liu Sheng Wen, Miner**

We know Grandma He collects scrap metal mainly for the sake of her granddaughter. Without this help she could not study.

**Interviewer**

Do you know this child has already been admitted to a university?

**Liu Sheng Wen, Miner**

Yes, I know.

**NARRATOR**

People have said this is a miracle. It is hard to believe.

Fangfang's mother passed away 17 years ago. And later her father died in an accident.

**Ai Fangfang**

I wish I had a happy home of my own and that my parents were still alive. I would have had a happy life with them.

**NARRATOR**

In this village, most of the people make a living from growing arable crops, raising pigs and other produce. The villagers' annual income is equivalent to about 450 US dollars. Most of the villagers use marsh gas for cooking and have modern electric appliances such as refrigerators and washing machines.

Grandma He is the only scrap collector in her village.

**Ai Fangfang**

As a child I liked to eat watermelon seeds – a delicacy, but too expensive. But I would talk myself out of it. Sometimes I would just forget.

I hardly ever talk about my desires. I usually keep them secret.

**NARRATOR**

Fangfang had a dream of being able to go to school. It was her grandma who helped her turn her dream into reality. The date she will never forget was 1st September, when she turned seven years old. Only then did people begin to understand why Grandma He had been working so hard.

Grandma He and Fangfang both share a room, which serves as their kitchen, study and bedroom. The clothes box is used as Fangfang's study desk.

**Ai Fangfang**

It doesn't matter that there isn't a desk lamp as long as there is some light.

**NARRATOR**

Although it was very hard, Fangfang felt happier than she had ever felt before. Although when it was almost time for her to go to middle school, Fangfang's joy almost disappeared.

**Ai Fangfang**

My going to school was too hard a burden for my grandma. When I went to bed, Grandma would stay up. She went to bed very late each night.

**NARRATOR**

Just as Fangfang was facing the likelihood of having to drop out of school, the Spring Bud Project gave her new hope. The project was initiated by the Chinese Children and Teenagers' Fund – a non-government, non-profit organisation.

It receives a variety of donations and contributes funds to help school dropouts in economically deprived areas to resume their studies.

Fangfang was among the first group of Spring Bud girl students.

In the summer of 2004 Fangfang was able to realise her long-cherished dream of going to college.

In rural mountain villages where conditions are harsh, families favour their sons when it comes to education.

Girls account for two thirds of school dropouts.

China's Spring Bud Project has helped over one and a half million girl students with financial aid.

**Huang Hui Feng, 'Spring Bud' Student**

I have a feeling that when I learn something new it's as if I were breathing in fresh air, which makes me happy.

**Zeng Sha Sha, 'Spring Buds' student**

I know that only by going to school can I really change my own destiny.

**NARRATOR**

Girls who have dropped out of school are now able to change their future prospects. In China, a consensus has been reached: and, as a nation, we will help them change their destinies.