

Viola  
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## Graven Scar

It pours suddenly. Olivia is astonished. It's April now, the most beautiful season of a year in her mind. It hasn't rained for several months this year. Olivia looks upward and wonders at this sudden downpour. Until she feels herself, she is all wet standing on the street. She looks around. All the passersby are gone. Everyone hurries to find a shelter from the heavy rain. Olivia starts to run in the rain. The downpour seems to cool her passion. She feels terrible. She was originally happy, on her way to meet her friend for shopping. Now she just wants to escape.

Olivia runs into a familiar café. It was her favorite place ten years ago, in her senior high school life. Olivia steps in to find a vacant table. Unexpectedly, she takes glimpses of a familiar person. Olivia walked towards her and asked in a soft voice, "Phoenix?" The woman with short hair raises her head. When they have eye contact, Olivia is stunned. This woman in front of her was once her best friend in senior high. She is Phoenix. After graduated from senior high, they haven't heard from each other for ages. Phoenix asks with a smile, "Would you like to sit with me, Olivia?" The two women chat about their recent situations.

All beautiful memories recur to Olivia. She still remembers what a vivacious girl. Phoenix was in senior high. Phoenix was the most popular person of their class. Her optimism attracted many people at school. Every time people saw her, the smile always spread on her face. Olivia loved her smile most. And Phoenix was also sporty and outgoing. She was regarded as a girl of the greatest vigor in the class. At that time, Phoenix and Olivia were best friends. Many classmates envy their intimate relationship.

About ten minutes later, Phoenix excuses herself to the lady's room. Olivia stirs her coffee. "Thanks for this downpour. It's really a surprise to come across Phoenix." she thinks. But after fifteen minutes, Phoenix still hasn't come back. Olivia feels strange about this. About twenty minutes later, Phoenix returns to their table. Olivia wonders, "Why does it take such a long time? Is the restroom occupied?" "No," Phoenix says, "that's because it always takes me much time to wash my hands." Olivia is aware of her hesitation. Phoenix stares at her tight, crossed hands. There is no expression on her pale face. After a brief pause, Phoenix unbosoms herself. "Tell you the truth, dear. I am sick. It's Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder. I have a

morbid fear of getting dirty, especially my hands. I always can't stop washing and robbing my hands together. I just can't control myself. But don't worry about me, Olivia. I am better now." Her smile appears again. It is the same smile as those old days, but it can't comfort Olivia like before any more. Olivia gets astonished. "What does she mean she's better? How can she have that shining smile? Why can she tell her illness with that ease? Almost twenty minutes, my dear!" Olivia doubts in her mind. She can't believe Phoenix sees it as a trifle. All of a sudden, Olivia's mind flashes back to her school life. It's an unforgettable memory Olivia tries to leave it behind.

It was the last school anniversary celebration in Olivia and Phoenix's senior high school life. At the end of the celebration, Phoenix, as a leader in charge of environment protection at school, went around the campus and inspected the environment. She picked up a big plastic bottle on the playground, which looked like trash. She didn't know it was a trick with full dry ice in the bottle. "Bomb!" Many people heard the loud explosion. Even if Olivia was in the classroom at the fourth floor then, she was frightened by the sound. The bottle just exploded in Phoenix's right hand. The fragments of the bottle even hurt her face and neck. When Olivia hurried to the hospital, she saw Phoenix smiling in the bed, with her right hand dressed. Olivia didn't see Phoenix's tears, so she pretended to be calm although her heart was broken just as the plastic bottle, into pieces. One month later, Phoenix got back to school, still with her hand dressed. She began to write with her left hand. After that, Phoenix seemed to be a changed person. She became quieter and more erratic. She even kept Olivia at a distance. Until Olivia went to her and tried to figure everything out, Phoenix tore off the bandage on her hand. A five-centimeter-long scar appeared. It was black and long across her right hand. Phoenix wailed bitterly. She couldn't take it any more. However, Olivia could only hold tightly Phoenix's trembling hands.

Olivia begins to stir her coffee again. She dares not mention this fading accident. But she knows that something occurs to Phoenix. Phoenix continuously touches her right hand with her left one. Olivia sees it. The long scar is still there, in her palm. Olivia doesn't know whether the graven scar is still torturing Phoenix or not. She can't tell Phoenix's emotions. Phoenix just sits in front of her tranquilly. Olivia is really surprised that Phoenix remains so calm when telling her illness. Seeing Phoenix's quietness, Olivia seems to rehear that bitter wail. She never forgets that

scene. Ten years passed by, she only knows her heart is still broken for Phoenix.

When the two women step out of the café, the rain has evaporated in the sun. But Olivia feels gloomier than before. Phoenix says goodbye to Olivia. “I have an appointment with my psychiatrist later. So I got to go. And I wanna tell you. I would really like to shake hands with you, but sorry I can’t.” Olivia stands still at the café and sees Phoenix walking away quietly. Looking at Phoenix’s leaving back, tears fall down from Olivia’s eyes. She can control herself no more. It’s just the same scene as ten years ago. Tears cover her face. Olivia stands there at a loss.