



# *Zebra And Cage*

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Supernatural

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A friend gave me a photo, a six-inch photo in a light blue wooden frame. In the photo, a zebra was standing in an iron cage.

“Why are you giving me this?” I asked. It was neither my birthday nor a holiday. It was just an ordinary day, the kind of day that I would never remember once it was gone.

“I thought you would like it,” she said. “The zebra stands for freedom.”

“But it’s in a cage,” I muttered to myself. I couldn’t say whether I was glad or angry about receiving this unexpected gift.

By the next day, I had completely forgotten it.

About a year later, I lost my third job. I lay alone in the 100-square-foot apartment late at night. I had not eaten for 40 hours and couldn’t sleep, thinking that tomorrow would be the same.

Since when had my luck become so bad? Then that photo came into my mind of the caged zebra with its moist, sad eyes.

Why hadn’t I seen it before? Everything went downhill just after I got that damn photo!

I started rummaging through the messy apartment looking for it. To my surprise, it was lying quietly in the bottom drawer of a plastic storage box. Its light blue wooden frame had become a bit paler as if it was covered with a thin layer of frost.

What should I do with it?

Throw it away? No, I couldn’t do that. After all, it was a gift from a friend.

Keep it? No, I had a strong feeling that it would bring me bad luck.

As I was staring at the photo, hesitating, the zebra’s eyes suddenly moved.

It turned its face to me and said in a low, gentle voice, “Hey, want to come with me?”

“What?” I was astonished.

“Come with me,” it said. “The zebra stands for freedom.”

Freedom? It seems that this zebra has no idea of its own situation. How funny it is!

“No, thanks,” I replied as politely as I could.

“Really? Haven’t you always wanted to be free?”

I looked at the twisted barbed iron bars in the photo, then looked at my small, shabby room, and shook my head again.

“No, I’m fine. ”

“Are you?”

What kind of question is that? You are in a cage! Who is a caged zebra to talk to someone on the outside about freedom?

Of course, I wouldn’t say something so rude. I only curled my mouth into a tiny grin.

“Then I’ll go alone,” the zebra said. “What a shame! I’ve been waiting for you for a long time.”

Then it pawed the ground with its hooves, turned around, and ran away as fast as a bolt of lightning.

As the zebra drifted away, I could see the world in front of it.

It was an endless grassland.

The sun rose from the east and illuminated the west. The wind blew from the sea in the south to the sea in the north. As far as the eye could see, green grass surged like tireless waves.

I fell to the floor.

I was the one in the cage.

“Hey – come back! Please take me!” I shouted out, but the zebra ran farther and farther away and finally disappeared into the endless grassland.

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