

The Chronicles of Artichoke

Ann Arbor is usually a very busy place. It's filled with college students, young and old. People are always crossing the noisy roads. But once every hundred years, everything is silent. No one drives on the roads. All the shops are closed.

That is because on that particular day, it is very dangerous. No one outside Ann Arbor goes anywhere near it. They would probably die if they went near it, anyway.

On one particular occasion that this happened, some children who lived in the same family were curious. The kids kept pestering their grandpa with questions. They asked questions such as, "What is happening?" and "Why are we inside?"

To this the grandfather replied, "Children, it is not safe to go outside. We will be in grave danger if we do. Have I ever told you the story about why we don't go outside on the first day of the century?" Based on the blank look on the children's faces he took that as a no. "All you children come around the fire and listen to my story." The grandfather said.

All the children gathered around the fire, eager for a good yarn. The grandfather began, "The year was 1899. Everyone was deep in celebration. It was New Years Eve! My Grandfather was on the street telling fortunes. Back then, he used to work for a Chinese fortune telling company. His job was to spread awareness of the company that he was working for. On that particular day, the only fortune that he predicted was 'eat an artichoke for good luck'. Everybody (including my grandfather) thought that this was complete nonsense. After all, artichoke is just a simple vegetable, or so they thought.

Very soon, the crowd died down. Everybody had gone to sleep. They all wanted an early start on the New Year. In the darkness of the night, something strange happened. In the middle of the road, a plant burst right through. The color of the plant was olive green and there were dark green spikes sticking out of the plant. As the night progressed, the plant got bigger and bigger. It became evident that the plant was an... artichoke!"

"What do you think children?" the kids' grandfather said. The children replied, "We like the story, okay. Continue already."

Their grandfather said, "Well where was I? Oh yes, now I remember. When 1899 had turned into 1900 it was daybreak. By that time, the plant had grown to about 15ft tall. Many people had started to go about with their daily routines. But any time somebody stepped out of their house the artichoke would simply reach out and grab that person.

By the time half the town was captured, it was afternoon. All the people who got their fortunes told by my grandfather decided that he was right. Hoping that the monster artichoke would be pleased, everybody started eating only artichoke. In fact by the end of the day, the town's artichoke supply was completely over. They had to try to import some from other cities just to make sure that the city had enough. After that day, people stopped eating only artichoke, although they did try to incorporate it into their meals. That is also why if people need good luck, they eat an artichoke."

Grandpa asked the children, "What did you learn from this story?" a little boy replied, "I learned the reason for you owning a fridge with only artichokes in it." Everybody laughed.

The End

Author's Note

If you are puzzled about this story, it is because it is not real. Do not be scared at the beginning of a new century. This story is a figment of my imagination. Also tell me if you liked or disliked this story. Actually, do it right now. I'm waiting! I'm still waiting. Are you going to answer me or not?