My Grandpa Always Soldiers On!

It was a story about a war that my grandpa once fought.

When he was fifteen in high school, China was ravaged by wars. Food was precious and life was hard. Two weeks before he turned eighteen, he was asked to enlist in the army with other youngsters. His parents were sad and worried, but he had no choice.

One early morning in 1937, he carried a heavy bag which his mum gave him. It contained some clothes and food. This might have been the last day he saw them.

On the day the Japanese troops broke into Shanghai, his hometown, shooting and people’s screaming could be heard from afar. Buildings were set on fire and people escaped for their lives.

He was wearing a green uniform carrying his gun and followed his leader to fight back at the frontline. On the first night, he couldn’t sleep, often woken by nightmares – dead bodies everywhere, children losing their parents, crying alone, bombing sounds coming one after another.

On the second day, they had just a little bowl of congee with little rice. They retreated to a village nearby.

Some of them died, some lost their arms or legs and others were seriously injured. They ran and bandaged themselves as they arrived at the hills. They hid in the forest, setting a plan to fight back. When the Japanese came, they attacked them on both their left- and right-hand sides.

The Japanese were surprised and they retreated. The Chinese army fell back and their bombs finished the Japanese army off. This was the first battle they had won. Although they had won the battle, they were running out of food. Sometimes the soldiers needed to eat tree bark and insects and they had to drink dirty water. He was lucky enough to survive.

In 1945 the U.S. dropped an atomic bomb, so the Japanese surrendered
and the war finally ended.

‘Treasure all the things you have, my grandson,’ my grandfather told me.