

Photo of the Past

Happy birthday, dear Zoey, happy birthday to you!, Zoey's family sang to her and cheered. Zoey blew out the candles on her homemade birthday cake. *Open your gift!*, her little brother Nio exclaimed as he handed her a pink polka-dot box with a bow on top.

She opened the box to find a pink-and-white Polaroid camera with her name bedazzled on the side. *I'm sorry it's not the new phone you wanted, but I hope you like it*, her mum apologized. *Mum! This is so pretty! Thank you all so much!*, she exclaimed as she ran to hug her mum. They continued eating the cake and listening to music. It was already very late, around midnight, and Zoey was already half-asleep, so she brushed her teeth and went to bed. The next morning, the bird chirping woke her up. It was a sunny Saturday, and her mum was preparing breakfast. Zoey decided to try out her new camera, so she took a photo of her messy desk. *Please, don't be blurry...*, she mumbled to herself. To her surprise, the image didn't show her wireless headphones or her phone. She rubbed her eyes to see it more clearly once, then again, but the picture stayed the same. It showed a grey Walkman and a flip cell phone, but not the new, modern one. It was black, with number buttons on the bottom and a small screen on the top. *What?*, she whispered. She has never seen a Walkman before, but she thought it looked very vintage, like something her mum had when she was little. Zoey had never had a Polaroid or anything like it, so she thought it was some glitch. She placed the photo on her desk and took another, this time of her blue and red Nintendo Switch. The photo came out of the camera showing a dark blue Game Boy. It had a screen, and underneath it, on the left side, it had four arrows: right, left, up and down, and on the right side, it had two buttons. Zoey didn't believe her eyes. She rushed to her mum to show her the photo she has just captured.

Mum! You won't believe this!, she shouted. *Look! I took a photo of my phone and headphones, and this came out!*, she exclaimed as she showed her the photo. *Wow...I had all of those things when I was young!*, her mum said. *But how did that happen?*, mum asked. *I have no idea! I just took a normal photo, and it came out like that!*, Zoey replied. *Maybe it's magical!*, they said in unison. *I know, I should take a photo of our TV!*, Zoey said. She took the photo, and, of course, instead of a modern flat-screen TV, it showed a

box-shaped TV that barely looked like a TV to Zoey. *Mum, weren't you bored when you had no phone?*, Zoey asked. *No. We were out all day, and we only got home for lunch and dinner.*, her mum replied. *But what did you even do outside? We played hopscotch, hide and seek, dodgeball, and I remember I even made a kite with my friends.*, her mum said. *Kids your age never go outside anymore!*, she continued. *Yeah, we do, mum, just not "that" much, and besides, we have homework to do! The times changed, Mum, you're old*, Zoey chuckled. *Okay, okay. I'm just saying you could get more time outside.*, her mum replied. *Oh, and we also watched movies and listened to music on cassettes! Are those the little rectangular things with two circles? Which movie was your favourite?*, Zoey asked. *Yeah, they are. Home Alone was a favourite of mine; we always watched it on Christmas Eve.*, her mum answered. *So, what do we do now, with this camera?*, Zoey questioned. *I have an idea, what if I take a photo of myself!*, she said. Zoey made a peace sign with her hand and prepared to take a selfie.

The camera flashed, and in that moment, Zoey woke up. She was in bed, and the video she had watched last night was still playing. *It was just a dream?*, Zoey asked herself. She was sad because the Polaroid wasn't real. *May we come in?*, her little brother Nio knocked on her door. Her mum and Nio came into her room singing Happy birthday. *Thank you, guys!*, Zoey said. *Here you go, it's your gift!*, Nio said as he handed her a pink polka-dot box with a bow on top.