

Newsletter

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Interview

Mainland Chinese Food Appeals to Taiwanese Palate

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What is the most serious problem for students away from home? That must be EATING OUT. In Sanxia (三峽), this problem is more obvious because there are few good and special stores for students to go. Having great passion towards tasty food, we had searched for delicious food and asked for advice. We discovered that foods in some Chinese stores are very special, and they make the restaurants very popular among residents in Sanxia. It is proved that good food stores can always earn their fame. Chinese food has unique flavor that is very different from Taiwanese cuisine. Because of that, we wanted to know more details about Chinese food. Therefore, we were eager to introduce two special and delicious Chinese food stores in Sanxia: *China Honan Handmade Che Mian* (河南手工扯麵) and *Gao's Northern Chinese Pastry* (高家北方大陸餅).

The first store, *Honan Handmade Che Mian*, is around An-Xi elementary school. The store owner is a middle-aged Taiwanese, Mr. Li. Five years ago, he married a Honan lady and moved to Taiwan with his beautiful bride. After they moved to Taiwan, they could not find any job during the first few years. Due to the unemployment, they decided to

run a store. We asked Mrs. Li, the proprietress, why they chose to sell Honan handmade pulled-noodles. She told us that handmade pulled-noodles are very common in Honan. People in Honan see the pulled-noodles as a basic food. No matter adults or children, everyone likes to eat this. However, Honan pulled-noodles are a kind of special food to Taiwanese. So, her husband and her wanted to bring this new taste to Taiwanese people. She believed that the different and special Honan pulled-noodles would become the successful key to their store. She said, "We have our own special feature which can make our store better than others."

We looked at the menu on the wall and found that there were almost ten varieties of pulled-noodles. So, we wondered if they had so many tastes of pulled-noodles when they first started the store. Mrs. Li told us that at the very beginning, they only offered beef-stew noodles and tomato-egg noodles. As time past by, their business was getting prosperous and she came up with several ideas to increase the variety of the menu. For example, she read cookbooks, making another Japanese pulled-noodle with cream, which tastes milkier. On the other hand, Mrs. Li also mentioned the difference between Taiwanese's flavor and China's. In Taiwan, more and more people focus on the way to keep in good health, so Mr. Li uses sugar to stew soup instead of monosodium glutamate, as it is used in China. What's more, Mr. Li stews the soup at eight every morning and

insists on using the natural material without adding any antiseptic. In this way, the soup tastes sweet and less greasy, which is different from China's highly spiced flavor. Another factor contributing to the changes is the weather. The average temperature of China is much lower than Taiwan's. Therefore, in China, they cook mutton noodles, not beef noodles, to warm up the body after eating the noodles. According to Mrs. Li; she makes the noodles by herself on the previous day before starting the business. The process of making noodles is tiring and it almost takes her six hours to make the noodles. First, she has to hit the dough; next is to ferment it for half an hour, and then roll a shaft on the dough back and forth. After that, leave the dough to ferment for another two to three hours. Her husband is in charge of cooking, he tears off part of the dough and then draws out the noodles by hands before putting the noodles into boiling water. Besides, because "Che Mian" is wider than other kinds of noodles, the noodles need boiling for two minutes, which is longer than others. Customers can also ask Mr. Li to cook different kinds of noodles, either thin or thick, according to their own preferences

At the end of our interview, Mrs. Li shared her feeling about Taiwan with us. She told us that she thinks Taiwan is a cultivated country and Taiwanese people are warm and affable. Moreover, the most memorable thing to Mrs. Li is Taiwanese's honesty. She said that sometimes she would give

excessive changes to the customers; however, some customers would return the changes to her. Mrs. Li was really impressed by Taiwan people's honesty.

We also asked Mrs. Li to give some advice to those who want to run stores. She pointed out three key points to run a store well. First of all, the food itself is the most important part. She is proud of her handmade noodles and the soup because they are different from others. Next is the attitude toward customers. "We regard them as our friends and trust each other." She said. The third is the hygiene. We have to offer a comfortable dining environment and pay attention to the food to make sure they are clean and fresh. If we are well prepared for the above points, we will have a good beginning to start running a store.

The second store we interviewed is *Gao's Northern Chinese Pastry*. This Chinese store for breakfast belongs to the Chang's. Mr. Chang grows up in a veteran family, and his wife, Mrs. Chang is originally from Shanghai. They met each other in China and have been married for about a decade. The idea of opening a Chinese store for breakfast was not in their plan. Mr. Chang was a business man in China and Mrs. Gau worked as an accountant in a company. Mrs. Chang told us a warm story about her store. Although Mrs. Chang came from China, actually she didn't know how to make this Chinese Pastry before coming to Taiwan. One of her best friends, Miss Gau, in Shinzhu taught her this dish. The Gau family ran a traditional rehabilitate clinic. Miss Gau's parents were generous and kind to their patients. Once, there was a veteran, who had no family, came in to his father for help. The veteran recovered quickly under their treatment. In order to return his favor, he decided to teach Miss Gau's parents how to make the

pastry. It was a big shot that everyone likes this Chinese pastry whenever they taste it. Until now, The Gaus owns many branches in Shinzhu. Mrs. Chang learned how to make Chinese pastry from Miss Gau and decided to open a store in Sanxia since it is Mr. Chang's hometown and nothing like that was sold there. In order to offer various flavors, they also sell soybean milk, rice ball and so on.

At first, people in Sanxia were not used to this kind of flavor so the Chang's made some changes on the recipe, such as putting some fillings (tuna fish, pickled mustard tuber, pork floss) in it. Even now, the fillings can be various to fit customers' tastes. The reputation of Chinese pastry now spreads not only in Sanxia but also in Taipei city. Now, they sell an average of one hundred fifty to two hundred pastries everyday, sometimes even more. If they get the order from Taipei city, they can sell about 1000 Chinese pastries a day.

When asking about the different tastes between Taiwanese and Chinese people, Mrs. Chang said, "In China, people like to eat traditional food and prefer dense and heavy food. Also the price is the most important element; however, in Taiwan, people prefer soft and chewy flavor. Here, people care most about whether the food is hygienic or healthy enough."

Running a store is not that easy after all. They want their customers to taste the fresh and delicious food. Therefore, everyday, the Chang's wake up at Two o'clock for preparing all the stuff they need and open the restaurant at five thirty in the morning. Usually around ten thirty, all the foods are sold out.

At the end of the interview, Mrs. Chang treated us different flavors of Chinese pastry. They taste delicious. We strongly recommend that anyone who has never tasted the famous Chinese

pastry should give it a try!

During our interviews, we are deeply impressed with proprietresses of these two restaurants. Both of them are positive toward life and their businesses, and try to introduce Chinese food to Taiwan. Through adapting to Taiwan and working hard to do their job, these two Mainland Chinese brides and their husbands are building their dreams for the future. Now, if you have not tasted these two special cuisine yet, go try them as soon as possible, or you will be missing out on not just great delicacies but also wonderful places to pass time in Sanxia.



Advertising analysis

A Warm Heater

By 吳黛敏 Tammy

It was freezing at one December night. Huddling up on the couch, I stared at the TV screen, unconsciously watching commercials passing one by one, with their colorful frames and ear-splitting sound effect buzzing in front of me. Suddenly, all noises quieted down. But I was sure I didn't turn the TV off. Setting myself straight, I found out what happened—it was another TV commercial, playing quietly in front of me.

In this commercial, the story goes as following: A family living in a small country town for decades was moving. In the yard, I heard neighbors sobbing, saying good-bye to the mother. Inside the dark, old and narrow house, a girl in her teens was packing beside piles of large cartons, when all of a sudden, she saw an old heater standing quietly by her foot. "What is this?" She picked the heater up, checking it for two seconds, and then turned to her father, saying: "See? You regard it as treasure but it has been broken ages ago!" "Just keep it then," said the father

shortly in Taiwanese. “You always keep everything no matter it’s useful or not!” finishing this sentence, the girl walked out of the house, leaving her father behind.

Then the scene changed. In a Quan Guo Electronic Outlet (全國電子), the mother and the daughter were standing at the counter, with that broken heater in their hands. In Taiwanese, the mother explained to the clerk why they insist on getting the heater repaired instead of buying a new one. “Her dad bought this decades ago when she was still an infant, for she was born in cold winter time. Her father knows a heater will keep his little girl warm when we bathe and change diapers for her.” “Oh, I see,” said the clerk brightly, “No problem. We take care of our customers’ needs for a life time, just as you take care of your daughter!”

The last scene took place in the family’s new house. Again it was freezing and raining outside. The girl was sitting at her desk studying, rubbing her hands together when her father quietly entered her room. Walking toward the desk, the father bent down, put that repaired heater beside the girl’s feet, and talked to his daughter in Taiwanese: “Keep the feet warm, and then you won’t feel cold in the upper body. And don’t stay up too late.” “Okay,” replied the daughter in Mandarin, gazing at her father, who is turning and walking out of her room. On the girl’s face, a sweet smile emerged.

The commercial lasts less than a minute. But I found myself choked with silent sobs every time I watched it. Somehow, it reminds me of my dear daddy—a reserved man keeping quiet most of the time, yet cares about me in every detail, and never complains. The commercial actually focuses on the good and nice selling service of Quan Guo Electronic Outlet, yet it delivers this message through a unique and sweet way.

First, the setting was not in any fancy buildings or luxurious mansion, but lies in a brick house in the countryside. This reflects the simplest facet in traditional Taiwanese society, from where people originated and grew up. Second, elders in the community, including the parents and neighbors, all speak Taiwanese, while the daughter and clerk speak Mandarin. This contrast points out different language ideologies between two generations. On the other hand, such down-to-earth country setting and the language also create a sense of self-identity among ethnic groups within Taiwan, so that the audience knows what kind of message the commercial is sending, and then they might identify with the idea very easily.

What’s more, the commercial uses another skill—male impression—the father, to emphasize males’ way of showing affection. Compared with females, fathers most of the time hold their emotions and feelings. They might not be good at expressing their love to children verbally, but they give equal concerns to their loved ones, quietly and demurely. In the commercial, the father was unwilling to get rid of the heater, and at last he put it back to his girl’s room. All these look nothing special, yet in fact, parent’s deep love and affection to their children hide behind the message. At last, the spotlight zooms back to that old heater. It was repaired, brought to the new house, taken into the girl’s room by her father once again to continue its job ten years ago—to keep the girl warm in cold winter. That old heater, in the end, carries abundant messages and becomes a symbol of parents’ everlasting love. Babies grow up, things worn out, a family might move to a new place initiating a new life, but a father’s concerns to his daughter never change or fade away, no matter how time flies.

I really like this commercial. It has not only reached the purpose of advertising, but also impresses audience by recalling everyone’s common childhood memory through meaningful settings, languages, and ordinary people. And these are the elements which make this commercial successful.



Short Fiction

Loser

By 李春安 Train

“Good. It’s 15-30, and I have two break points. I just have to get two more points and I can get this set and it will be 6-1. The score of last set was 6-0. I only have to get this game and I can win this match. I will be the winner. Poor Jack. You knew you can’t defeat me. You should have known it. I am sorry for you, Jack. Ha.”

Jack is my classmate—and my friend. Is he my friend? Oh, I am not sure. Or maybe I should put it this way: I am his friend. Wearing a pair of glasses, he is a plain guy who is about five feet eight inches tall. His thick hair stacks on his head. It makes me think of pudding whenever I see his head. He is the kind of person that people won’t pay much attention to. That’s why I didn’t notice him until we play tennis together in our PE class.

I remember that it was my first tennis class, when the PE teacher was calling roll; I found that a guy from our department also took this course. Yes, that was Jack. I have to say that if he had not been the only person in our department to take this class, I would not have played tennis with him during my college life. It seemed that we came from different worlds. He looked like a dumb fool. On the contrary, I was a super star in tennis domain. When I played tennis with him, it seemed just like Roger Federer was playing tennis with a rookie in

tennis. Even though it was boring to hit the ball through the net that would never bounce back, I still had to do this, because he was my partner. However, some girls would glance at me, I was sure. And this made it not so boring after all.

After my first PE class, our teacher came to me and said, “Hey, Tomposon, you play very well in tennis. Why don’t you join the tennis team in our college?” To tell the truth, I had been playing tennis since I was ten years old. I was not bragging myself but I really played very well in tennis. I was the captain of the tennis team in our senior high school. However, I turned my PE teacher down. “Well, could you please give me some time to consider it? You know, I am a freshman. I haven’t got accustomed to the freshman life. When I think it is time, I will tell you. Is it okay?” I was lying. That was not the real reason. The truth was that there were many pretty girls in our PE class and I wanted to pick one of them to be my girlfriend. If I joined the tennis team right away, I could not take regular PE class and I had to practice tennis with sweaty guys. Without girls around me, how could I live? I would participate in the tennis team, maybe I will, if I can get that pretty babe to be my girlfriend.

I glance around the court and find her in the crowd. “There she is. Look at her! She is really a hot babe. The slim legs, the hips and the bumping breasts—she is my goddess!” I wipe the sweat off my face with my polo shirt and take another glimpse at her. I know she is watching our game, or to be specific, she is looking at me. It is strange that she looks worried. “Hey, my cute girl, don’t worry, I am gonna win this game.” I look at Jack—my opponent. He wears a white Nike cap in the opposite side. He has never worn a cap on the court. “Who do you think you are?

Lleyton Hewitt? Far from it!” I sneer. Lowering down my hips and crouching down slightly, I flip around my racket and swing my body with rhythm and wait for Jack’s second serve. He tosses the ball into the air and hits it softly. “Oh, come on, Jack, can’t you use all your strength to hit the ball?” I step forward, strike a cross shot with forehand and run to the half court. He hits the ball back. With single backhand, I volley the ball back into the right court. He runs up and tries to save the ball. But it is too late. The ball bounces on the ground before his racket touches it. The score now is 15-40. “Good, next point is match point.” I swing my head backward and comb my hair with my fingers and I know that she must be watching me. I can not help but smile.

She is really a charming girl, majoring in Foreign Languages. She is the prettiest girl I have ever seen. As soon as I saw her, I knew that she was what I want. She had never played tennis before. To get close to her, when the teacher let us practice what he has taught, I would walk to her and taught her how to strike forehand and how to serve. In this way, we become friends. It is normal that she and I became friends, but it is strange that Jack and she also become friends. I don’t know how they get to know each other. Maybe it is because they picked balls up together. In our tennis class, everyone picks balls up and puts them into baskets only when teacher asks us to. Strangely, she and Jack will volunteer to pick balls up into the baskets. Several times, I saw them talking to each other when they picked balls up. Last week, I asked her to go to a movie with me. “Hum.... Well, it is strange that only you and I go to the movie. Why don’t we find one more person? Let’s see.... How about Jack?” she replied. That’s why we three went to a movie together. She sat between us when

we were watching the movie. As we saw the movie, I whispered at her ear when I found something interesting in the movie. She just nodded with a smile. However, she didn’t whisper to my ear; instead, she talked to Jack from time to time. After watching the movie, we went to a department store. As we walked out of the MRT station, someone was distributing fliers. I took it, glanced at it and threw it away. Jack picked it up, scratched his head with an embarrassed smile and said to me, “Tomposon, it is not good to throw something on the ground” “It’s no big deal, okay? All right, if you insist, I won’t do it next time,” I replied.

“15-40. Match point. It is your last chance, Jack.” Just like he always does, he serves a washy ball into the court. I hit the ball back. He tries to strike the ball back, but it misses the sweet spot. The ball flies high up in the air. I run up to the mid-court, stretch my left hand up in the air, crouch down slightly, and poise myself to get ready to hit the ball. Bang! I strike an overhead smash. The ball hits the ground just on the baseline. He misses it. I am the winner! I walk up and shake hands with him. “You did a good job, Jack. Nice play,” I say. “I wish you can get the title,” he replies with a grin. With a big shining smile, I say to him “By the way, the cap looks good on your head.” He smiles again with shyness. But that is not what I want to say, what I really want to say to him is: “You loser.”



Memory or Dream

By 楊婷雅 Allyson

When I open my eyes, I see this dark bedroom and the gray window curtains.

I get up from my bed and walk laggardly toward the window. Then I find that it is cloudy; however, I have great hope that I could see the sun instead of the

clouds. Staring at my son's picture, I find myself really miss Stan very much. And I miss the days that Andrew, my ex-husband, and I were together. In the past, I would prepare breakfast for them in the morning and dinner in the evening. Whenever I was preparing breakfast, Stan and Andrew would just get up and say "morning" sweetly to me; whenever I was preparing dinner, they would just come home, and Stan would keep telling me his school life happily while Andrew would always bring a bundle of flowers and give it to me romantically.

However, I am all alone now. Since Andrew divorced from me three years ago and I had been separated from Stan, I have been all by myself in this dark and unhappy house. All the past days seem very far from me. I feel very grief-stricken because I have my sweet and lovely family no more. Just when I am crying, I hear that loud but uncomfortable phone ring. It is the call from Stan's school, the heart-breaking call by a man with low and grave voice. "Madam, I am sorry that I have to tell you. Your son Stan was hit to death by a group of hooligans." All of a sudden, I feel that I am feeble and dizzy, and all I can see is a complete blank vision in front of my eyes.

When I open my eyes again, I see a bright bedroom which is very familiar to me.

As I turn my body to the other side and see my ex-husband Andrew who is just sleeping calmly by my side, I am shocked. And I see the bright and energetic sunlight passes through the familiar romantic window curtains. Then I walk to my son Stan's bedroom and open the door slowly with hope that I could see him. At first, I see the brightness in the room when the rattling door opens. Then, I see Stan sleeping tight on his bed with his quilt uncovered. I

feel very excited. All of these seem very familiar to me. Then I walk softly toward Stan and help him cover the quilt on his body, with tears in my eyes.

Then I go happily to prepare breakfast for Andrew and Stan. Suddenly, I hear sweet and familiar sounds. "Morning, mom." "Morning, dear." It is my lovely son Stan and my dear husband Andrew who just get up. When they eat breakfast, they just talk to me sweetly as usual. I feel very warm and everything seems wonderful to me at this moment. After they go to school and to work, I clean the house with my heart filled with satisfaction.

In the afternoon, Stan comes back and looks very happy. He just keeps telling me excitedly, "Mom, you know what? I get good grades today and Mr. Bryan just praised me in front of all the classmates. Isn't that great? And I played football very well in today's gym class. I just think I am a genius!!! Ha, ha, ha!" After a few minutes, Andrew comes back with a bundle of roses in his hand. He gives the roses to me, hugs me, kisses me, and tells me, "My dear, I love you." At this moment, I feel that I am the happiest woman in the world because of the ordinary but lovely family life. With Andrew talking to me romantically and Stan running around me and telling me his school life, I have my happy family life again. At night, lying on the bed, I am happy and close my eyes tranquilly.

When I open my eyes....



Silence

By 黃郁雯 Daphne

As the approach lights flash, the train draws into the MRT station. Seeing the train arriving, passengers on the platform all crowd into the train. Shortly, the warning bell is ringing, and the

door is about to close. "Quick! The train is leaving," yells an elderly woman, beside her is a little girl aged seven or eight. The little girl steps onto the train, while the elderly woman still stands on the platform, looking back and calling a couple to hurry up. Yet, it is too late. The door closes like a wall separating the little girl and the elderly woman. The elderly woman cannot do anything but looks nervously and anxiously at the little girl through the window until the train rushes too far away from sight.

Everyone in the train sees what happened but none says a word, not even a slightest change of expression. The little girl looks around, searching every passenger's face for some hints of favors. Passengers on the train—sitting on the seats or standing with hands holding on to the straps—look forward aimlessly and absently. Still, nobody even bothers to take a look at her. She turns slowly to the window in which reflects a pair of eyes beginning to blur with tears.

Two minutes have passed but it seems like several hours. Except for the rumbling of the train, no single sound is heard. The girl's hope sinks down to the bottom. All of a sudden, a deep voice says to the little girl, "Is that woman your grandma?" The girl looks up. It is a man in his mid-forties. He stood in the corner of the carriage, witnessed the incident, and now walks close to the girl. "Yes," says the girl, a little timidly. She is not sure whether it is right to talk to a stranger, but maybe the man can give her a hand. "Do you know where you are going?" asks the man again. With uncertainty, the girl slowly shakes her head. "Umm...Let's see...Do you remember your phone number?" Their conversation draws some attention from the passengers; yet, the passengers remain silent.

Yes," the girl replies.

"I think I can help you to find your grandma...."

"Really?" interrupts the little girl, whose face is lit up with hope.

"Yeah, don't worry. We'll find your grandma. Just tell me your phone number, so I can call your family." The man takes out his cell phone while talking to the girl. During their conversation, the train arrives at the next station. "Now, let's stop at this station, and I'll take you to your grandma." The man takes the girl in her hand, and they get off the train. Some passengers also get off the train while others stay, still saying nothing. Slowly, the man and the little girl are hidden from view in the crowd. After the door closes, the train rushes to the next station. Soon after the man and the girl leave, in the train, there is an announcement coming from the speaker: "Attention. Passenger Chen Qi-Zhen, please take the train back to Dingxi station. Your family is waiting for you at the information desk. Passenger Chen Qi-Zhen, please take the train..." Hearing the announcement, the passengers, going on their journey, remain unmoved.



Body Bag

By 袁行崑 Sigrid

This is the sixth bottle of beer.

It is the last one, and Paul can't afford to buy any till next week. After drinking it all, he puts a straw in and tries to get the last drop but the bottle is completely empty.

"Damn it!" he curses furiously.

Suddenly, the phone rings. Paul answers with a weak voice, puts down the phone and shouts. "Damn it! Today's Sunday, why I got to work on Sunday?" Then he puts on his coat and goes out reluctantly.

The place he goes to is a TV

company. Paul has worked there as a temporary assistant for about a month. Actually, all the jobs that Paul has ever had are "temporary"; he hates labor and switches jobs all the time. But he still works, even on Sunday, for he is always lack of money.

When Paul steps into the storehouse in the back of the company building, someone yells to him. "Hey, Paul, come here and help me to throw this god damn lumber out!" says the foreman, Martin. The so called "assistant" is just like a worker that is responsible for labor. But Paul doesn't care about it; to him, works are all boring.

After finishing today's work, he is exhausted. In order to comfort himself, he takes the money reserved for food to buy another bottle of beer. Paul knows he must starve one or two days for this, but he can't hold the desire of drinking.

"The only company in my life is beer." He murmurs to himself.

That is very true. Paul doesn't have any friends or relatives. They all run away because Paul owes everyone some money and never thinks of paying them back. As to family, Paul lost his parents at very young age, and he doesn't have any brothers or sisters. He doesn't need to take care of anyone, and neither does he take care of himself. He indulges himself to live a messy life without dignity.

Paul keeps thinking of killing himself. "The meaning of my life is to think of a good way to die. Ha ha..." once he commented on himself. He has imagined all different ways to die, practices and practices in his mind, then, gives up. He knows he isn't brave enough. Every time when he gives up the notion of suicide, he always laughs and mocks himself. Sometimes he cries for himself and goes to sleep.

No matter in what respect, Paul is a useless man.

* * *

Today is Paul's last working day as an assistant. In the evening, when he is going to leave, Martin calls him back.

"Please, Martin, today's my last day here, don't give me extra work! And, right, why can't ya pay me today? I can't wait till next week... I don't have money now!"

"Come on, if you take this work, somebody can pay you today." Martin replies.

The work is to be a temporary actor in a drama. The original actor is seriously sick and can't come today. And the character is a homeless man, who is dirty and degenerate. Also, he must be short and thin and fit the size of the body bag. So when the director tries to find a substitute, Paul is the first to be considered.

"What the hell is this? Ya want me to act? On TV? Are you crazy?" Paul yells to Martin.

"Don't be nervous, it's easy! You just pretend to be shot, and die, and someone will put you into the body bag. That's all! It won't last more than two minutes. And I can pay you right after it's done. It's a nice deal, don't you think so?" The director wears an exaggerated smile and explains to Paul.

"You say ya'll pay me right after this?" Paul hesitates for a while.

"Of course! I promise!"

"Well... okay, I can do it."

When the staff help Paul put on ragged clothes and makeup, it makes Paul feel a little bit flattered as if he is a very important actor. He begins to take this job seriously.

"Three...two...one...camera!" the director shouts.

Standing on the left of the scenery set, Paul pretends he is wandering. Suddenly, a man with a mask on his face holds a gun and shoots him. Paul falls down, struggles, whimpers, cries, and dies painfully. The lights fade out.

After a few seconds, the whole scenery set is lit up again. Two policemen come to Paul, put him into a body bag, zip the zipper, and then drag the body bag out of camera.

“Cut! Very good, Paul, you did a very good job!” The director says to the body bag.

Paul is very surprised. Partly because of the complement from the director, but more because of the acting itself. He finds that acting dead is so easy, for he has already imagined it for thousands of times in his mind.

“How can acting be so easy?” Holding the money for the acting, Paul can’t help but keeps wondering. “Maybe I can be an actor! Ha! Ha! Ha!”

Paul is excited for his new discovery. That night, he sleeps with great satisfaction.

However, the real surprise comes a week later. When Paul is still finding new job and almost forgets the acting, one day he receives a call.

“Hello? Paul? This is Martin! I have good news for you!”

“What?”

“The director wants you to act one more time!”

“Are you kidding? Is the actor sick again? Why me?”

“Nobody’s sick. You beat that actor! The director says your acting is much better than that actor, and he wants you back. And you know what? Some audiences even send messages to praise your acting. Just on our company’s website. You can check it up!”

“I...I don’t have a computer...”

“That doesn’t matter. Anyway, now you are a celebrity. Congratulations! And you got to come here, as soon as possible! Come on! See you later!” Martin hangs up.

Paul is completely astonished. He slaps himself to ensure this is not a dream and then he runs to the TV Company.

When he gets there, the director welcomes him with a more exaggerated smile.

“Welcome! I am so glad you can come.”

“What should I act?”

“You got to act a man who is hit by head with an ashtray. You must die painfully and miserably. You know how to do it, right?”

Again, Paul recalls his imagination and performs a tragic death. His acting is so serious and real that it seems he has put all his strength into the performance. After it is finished, many people in the studio applaud, some even weep for him.

When the drama is broadcasted, Paul gets great attention. Though the scene only lasts about three minutes, his performance is too attractive to be ignored. From then on, Paul is titled “professional corpse” for he can act all different ways of dying. He gets many acting opportunities, even on live stage. From a useless crap, he becomes a famous actor. That’s also part of his “legend” and it is soon spread widely.

* * *

Three months after Paul becomes famous, he has a chance to act in a movie. Although it is still a minor role and he still needs to be killed, Paul feels very proud of himself. As he goes around the studio, he meets an “old friend.”

“Martin!” Paul calls out the name.

Yes, that’s Martin. He is still a foreman in the TV company.

“Hey! Paul. Long time no see. You are... very different from the past. You look so good.”

“Yeah, thank you. How about ya?”

“Me? Oh, nothing is worth to be mentioned. Well...don’t talk about me. I know you get a role in the movie, right? It sounds so good.”

“Well, yeah, I am very excited now. Hey, you can come to visit us later.”

“Oh, thank you. What are you going to act? Another corpse?” Marin laughs.

“You get it. Today I’ll get poisoned and die. But I have several lines, not just die silently. So come to see me. I’m grateful for your recommending me in the very beginning. If you come to see me, I’ll be very glad...”

“Paul! You get to stand by!” someone yells.

“I got to go, see you later!” Paul pats Martin’s shoulder and leaves. Martin looks at his back with a complex emotion. Then he furtively goes toward a small room for stage properties.

“That’s it!” After scrabbles for a while, He picks up a small bottle with colorless liquid in it, pours into some white powder, and slightly puts the bottle back.

“Now it’s only the matter of time. I got to witness that scene!” murmuring to himself, Martin can’t hold the feeling of excitement.

About an hour later, Paul stands on the scenery set to welcome the big moment in his life. The first scene is to drink some poisoned water and die painfully.

“I’m going to be a movie star! I got to do my best!” He takes a deep breath, nods to the director.

“Three...two...one...camera!”

Paul walks slowly to the center of the scenery. He gently picks up the small bottle, pours a little into a cup of water, and drinks it all.

“Now!” Paul shouts in his mind, and he begins to perform the death.

“It hurts me.... I’m really so painful...” He keeps imagining the feeling of death. Then he feels his stomach is gradually wrenching and eroding. The pain strongly hits him and makes him dizzy.

“Help...help me...” he groans. His eyes are full of tears.

The pain is so real. He has never experienced this kind of

suffering before, not even when he tried to kill himself. He covers his stomach with both hands; his body unnaturally struggles, twitches, and finally rolls up.

“God...come... and... help me...” Paul’s voice sounds miserable. He feels he gradually lose the senses of his body except the pain in his stomach. He is also proud of himself, for his imagination can drive his all senses and produces a wonderful scene.

“I...I’m really a genius...” after uttering these few words, suddenly his body slackens.

All people in the studio, including Martin, are so stunned. Even the director forgets to cut the camera.

“...Cut!”

A great applause comes and lasts a very long time. The director goes toward Paul.

“Paul, you are really a genius. Your acting is so excellent...” he hits Paul in his chest.

“Hey, Paul, come on, the show is over. Wake up!” he laughs and hits him again.

But he won’t open his eyes again. Not anymore.

Even it's a must to Salvation

Won't it recall

*The firm and strong figure
Proudly stand on the mountain?*

Won't it remember

The chill before dawn?

The heat before twilight?

The embrace with snow and moonlight?

Sweet aromatic black tea

Elegantly dance in pot.

A whirl, a whirl, another whirl

*The pouring, the pouring, the pouring, the
pouring, the pouring*

Even it's fate to suffer

Can't it

Smell

The fragrance of being leaves?

O light, evaporate the dew of eyes

O night, generate the tears of grass

Can't it

Feel

The infinity and eternity

Of memories of body?

Rainy Day

By 陳虹好 Angel

Rain drops

Heart falls

Tears?

Nowhere.

Achieve? Nothing

Entreat? Something

Stop?

Never.

Within the world it rains

Behind the rain I repent

*Wash all away will the
rain?*

No answer could I obtain

In vain.

Rain stops

Light spots

Smiles?

Not here.

Seek? Something

Chase? Nothing

Move?

Never.

Behind my heart it rains

Within the rain I hang

*Wash all away can't the
rain.*

Still nothing will I get

In hand.

Hell

By 陳宜均 Eunice

No light

Forward darkness

Don't fight

Only hopeless

No feeling

Neither color nor sound, just

Down

Down

Down

Down

Doomed finally

New Year Steps

By 黎雅仁 Paz

Mocked by human comedy,

My fallen Pegasus plods

**On the muddy bank of Maryjane
lake.**

**Wavering meteors and dying
torches**

**Shoulder his clipped and stoned
wings,**

**Cynical and useless,
Cynical and useless.**

**(May rolls of northern timpani
dramatize a forgetful winter lane.)**

**Through an unguarded bleak lane,
Sunbeams cast rays,
Steely winds penetrate.**

**The icy road bursts
The grey wall shatters,
With floating sleet and dirt.**

**Gallop, gallop, gallop
Stepping towards the New Year**

Poems

Memories of Body

By 蔡雋彬 Graham

A white beautiful seed

Patiently in bowl

Lies itself on bottom.

A bite, a bite, another bite

Not far from the path to world under

Off shore of Reincarnation.

Even it's fate to say goodbye

Can it forget the sunshine

Life glorifies?

A sincere and modest book

Silently kneels and prays on the desk.

Slash, chop, tear, pierce, and thump.

Dark blade and black whip rain on it

No more blood can it bleed.

castle
That emerged yonder,
Pegasus flaps his worn out pair
Again, to chin up and spring.

New year is seen, yet not reached.
The closer the castle seems, the
farther it is.
Trot, trot, trot
Why so is the human pilgrimage?

Do not ask, my fallen Pegasus.
Let us go,
With me vanish in the violin.

(The poem is inspired by Mogwai's
music, "Xmas Steps")

Dark

By 蔡之浩 Tommy

Lying on this anonymous land,
In the mist, where is my pale hand ?
Tight, tense, twisted cage,
Chains me in this ironic band.
I try to reach the timeless sand,
But my fingers touch the edge.

Stepping in this lachrymose swamp,
In the bog, my lissome paces stop.
Sticky, thick, choky slush,
Caves my body from the top.
I try to approach the rootless stump,
But my toes are all in numb.

Wandering in this mischievous forest,
In the woods, branches cover my sight.
Lonely, silent, weepy shadows,
Reflect my sorrow under moonlight.
I try to escape the helpless night,
But my eyes turn into blind.

Diving in this monotonous ocean,
In the water, bubbles replace my
emotion.
High, low, broken waves,
Carry my soul to perdition.
I try to abandon the useless passion,
But my heart is no longer my
possession.

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