

# CHINESE LITERATURE



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Front Cover: Friendship in the Table-Tennis Circles

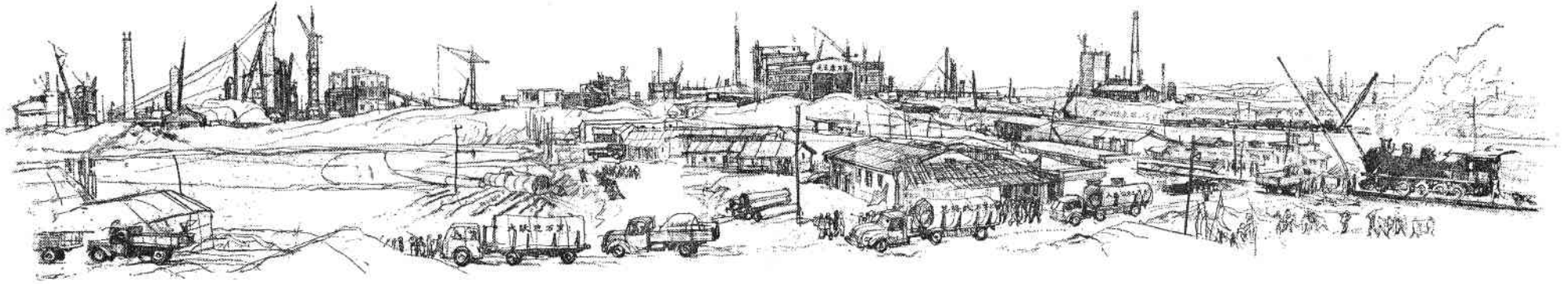
## The Third Battle

It was mid-summer. A shaft of golden light from the setting sun gilded the No. 1 blast furnace of Project 9424. Molten iron, sputtering fiery sparks, writhed like a burning dragon towards an iron tank which was then carried to the foundry by train. Lu Hsiao-lin, a young worker in the cooling plant who had just finished a shift, came out after a refreshing shower and stood watching the tapping intently. He made his way slowly to the left to look at the coke oven. Red hot coke being pushed mechanically into a car broke up into translucent glowing pieces to be cooled by a downpour of water in the quenching station. Instantly the colour of the coke changed and swirling steam saturated the air. The breeze condensed the steam into a fine spray that soothed Lu Hsiao-lin's face.

Lu Hsiao-lin strode light-heartedly towards his hostel. Now that the battles in the blast furnace and coke oven workshops had ended in victory, the installation of the sintering workshop would soon start. Its completion would enable iron ores to be desulfurized before being charged into the blast furnace and so hastening the smelting

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For information about this reportage see the article on page 98. The four sketches in the text are scenes seen at the construction site of Project 9424.



process — more and better iron would be produced while saving a large quantity of coke. What a pity that Yen Hui-ming, an experienced worker and Hsiao-lin's teacher, had needed an operation some time ago. He would certainly have played an important role in this third battle. As Hsiao-lin brooded a young woman welder, Chao Hung, beckoned him.

"Hsiao-lin, your brother is looking for you."

Lu Po, Hsiao-lin's brother who was in charge of the sintering workshop installation, was pondering over the work plan at his desk in a shed which served as headquarters for the project. Though he had held a leading position in the factory for more than ten years and knew much about industrial production, he had never set eyes on many of the huge modern machines to be assembled this time. The sintering machine alone weighed 800 tons! Although more than 3,000 workers from a dozen units were taking part in this undertaking, only 40 per cent of them were skilled. This was a far cry from the number the project needed, for it consisted of thousands of large and small parts. What must they do to ensure victory? His train of thought was interrupted when his younger brother Hsiao-lin entered.

"Please read this letter," Lu Po said:

It was from Dr. Yang, a specialist in a Shanghai hospital. She wrote that Yen Hui-ming had tried to get her permission to start

work again. Knowing it was too soon, she had avoided seeing him and asked another doctor to tell him that he must return a week later for a final check-up. He needed a longer convalescence. But now, she continued, she found it difficult to keep him from work any longer. If Yen returned to the work site she asked Lu Po to look after him. He must not do heavy work, must eat frequent meals of easily digested food and return to the hospital for regular check-ups. When Hsiao-lin finished reading the letter, he exclaimed happily, "Good! Comrade Yen's coming back!"

"Did you write and ask him to come?" his brother demanded severely.

Hsiao-lin sensed the reproach in his brother's voice. "No. Honestly, I didn't," he denied quickly.

"You must have mentioned the talk given by the comrade from the Municipal Revolutionary Committee about the installation of the sintering workshop."

"I only told him the most important bits. But I also put in a long paragraph urging him to take a good rest and so on." Hsiao-lin congratulated himself on not having been stupid enough to ask his teacher to return.

Nevertheless he received a dressing down from his brother. "You're over twenty. Aren't you ever going to grow any wiser?"

Since you told him the most important news, do you think he can continue resting with any peace of mind? Even if you did urge him to rest, you should have known it would be useless."

Lu Po produced an electric hot-plate from under his table and told his young brother to keep an eye on Yen in case he came back. "He must not do any heavy work but must eat frequently and regularly," he ordered.

"You know how he is, brother," said Hsiao-lin with some hesitation. "I shan't be able to do anything with him."

"Well, get some of your mates to help. Besides, I am not too far away."

Hsiao-lin laughed.

Lu Po had met Yen three years before when Lu was given the urgent task by the Municipal Revolutionary Committee of installing a 10-ton boiler in a week. When Lu talked it over with those who were to do the work they said they needed at least 20 days to do it. It was Yen who then made a proposal.

"Since this is an urgent task we must do it in a special way. I and my team members have talked it over. We'll finish it in a week."

Lu Po had joined them at the work site. Yen and his mates worked day and night, taking short naps on the cement floor only when tired out. Putting into practice Chairman Mao's philosophic thinking on grasping the major contradiction, they finished the work in 120 hours. Yen had left a deep impression on Lu. On Project 9424 Yen again fought fearlessly during the installation of the coke oven. But now, three quarters of Yen's stomach had been surgically removed. Soon after he was out of the hospital, Lu Po had written to tell him that he must be in no hurry to start work again. But now Yen had asked to come back. Lu Po shook his head sceptically.

## II

Early morning. The clock on the Shanghai customs building chimed to the strains of *The East Is Red*. The asphalt streets were swept clean and the air was fresh. Yen was on his way to the hospital. Had

Dr. Yang returned from her medical rounds in the countryside? He wondered. It would not be easy to convince her that he was fit for work. That he knew.

Yen looked at his watch again as he neared the hospital. In his eagerness he had arrived an hour earlier than the regular time for patients. To pass the time he read the big-character posters in the yard. Some of them were repudiations of the revisionist line in medical work. Some discussed the class struggle in the hospital. Others were the names of doctors who had applied to go on medical teams to various work sites. When a man arrived with a cartload of hospital necessities, Yen went to help him unload. The man thanked him.

"Is Dr. Yang back?" Yen asked casually.

"She's never been away."

What! She has not been away? But when he went to see her the previous week the other doctor said she had gone away. And since she was his doctor he must wait another week till she returned to have his check-up.

"What time does Dr. Yang come to the hospital?" Yen inquired again.

"Half past seven. But she came early this morning. She had an appointment with a special patient, so she said."

Yen nodded. He entered the hospital and went to the usual room.

Dr. Yang, a middle-aged woman, was consulting her medical textbooks in connection with Yen's case. She was doubtful as to whether she should allow him to return to work. But the lifeless books gave her little help. Yen's case history told her more about the living patient, but still not enough. Besides studying the surgical aspect of the case a doctor should study the type of man the patient was. Without this personal factor, no correct diagnosis could be made.

When Yen first arrived at the hospital he brought with him Chairman Mao's works and several blueprints. He talked little in the ward but studied Chairman Mao's philosophic works and pored over the blueprints continually, while pressing one hand on his stomach to reduce the pain caused by a cancer. Before the operation Dr. Yang tried to find out whether he feared it.

"Our medical science is developing by leaps and bounds. There is no danger now, when cancer is discovered early. . .," she told him.

"Don't you worry, Dr. Yang," Yen cut her short. "I shan't die."

What an extraordinary patient. Was he trying to comfort her? Dr. Yang wondered.

"I shan't die because I've not done enough work for the Party yet," Yen explained. "Not nearly enough."

Dr. Yang was very impressed. Then Yen inquired, "When are you going to operate?"

"Tomorrow morning."

"Is there anything else you want to tell me, doctor? There are still some questions about these blueprints I want to think over." Fearing that he might offend her, he explained, "You see, under the leadership of Chairman Mao, the industrial front is also developing by leaps and bounds, Dr. Yang. Some equipment for Project 9424 is new to us and we need time to learn how to assemble it."

What more could Dr. Yang say? She realized that Yen's reticence was not a sign of his fear about cancer. His mind was on something far more important than that.

Yen's operation lasted several hours. Dr. Yang made sure there was no spread of the growth. She was confident that Yen would recover and continue to work for the Party.

The next day she went to see Yen who told her that she had done a marvellous job. Silently she gathered up his blueprints.

"When you want to study Chairman Mao's works you can ask the nurse to read them to you. I'll keep your blueprints for a while and give them back to you when you leave the hospital."

"But, Dr. Yang. . . ." Yen was exasperated.

"I want to make sure that you'll be able to go on working for the Party," Dr. Yang cut him short. Her severe expression demanded his obedience and silenced him. As Yen began to recover he asked for the blueprints more than once. But Dr. Yang refused each time. When the incision healed, Yen walked around the ward to regain his energy quickly. Dr. Yang warned him not to over-exert himself. He just laughed it off. One day, the hospital elevator broke down

and the operator had some difficulty in fixing it. Yen went over and volunteered his help. After fiddling around with it for a while he found out what was wrong and set to work. Dr. Yang arrived just when he was replacing the screws.

"You are simply beyond my control. I'll have to get someone from the Workers' Mao Tsetung Thought Propaganda Team to discipline you," she announced.

Yen quickly threw down the wrench and told the operator to tighten the screws. He was back in his bed by the time the elevator was working again. He watched anxiously to see whether Dr. Yang would bring somebody from the workers' propaganda team with her when she came to the ward later.

All that she said, a little angrily, was, "If this happens again I'll certainly get some help." Yen smiled contentedly.

As Dr. Yang sat at her desk, she remembered such incidents though they were not recorded in his case history. Now, this obstinate and disobedient patient who worked so whole-heartedly for the Party was coming for his final check-up. Should she allow him to take part in the battle at the sintering workshop? She decided to compromise. She would let him work if his medical check-up was satisfactory, for she knew that a person like Yen might recover more quickly at his post. But she would place severe restrictions on him. He must follow the directions she would write in a letter to Lu Po, who was in charge of Yen's work site. She heard a knock on the door just as she was gathering up her books and closing Yen's case history.

"Come in!" she said. It was Yen.

"You are an early bird, Comrade Yen!" she said warmly.

"I was afraid you'd be away on a round in the countryside again if I was late, Dr. Yang."

Had he discovered her little ruse the previous week? Dr. Yang wondered. She evaded his remark by saying, "I came early because I have something special to do this morning."

"To see a special patient?" Yen wanted her to know that he knew about her little trick. Then perhaps she would let him go back to work. The doctor sensed this.

"Sit down," she laughed. "Special or not special. Everything depends on your check-up."

Yen sat down.

"Is there any pain along the incision?" the doctor inquired.

"Not the least. You did a marvellous job," Yen replied seriously.

"Not the least?"

"No."

"You may go now," the doctor said, also keeping her face straight.

"Excellent. Please give me a work certificate." Yen's face flushed with excitement. He had not thought it would be so easy.

"You must go back and continue your convalescence. Come back again when the next check-up is due," Dr. Yang spoke calmly. But Yen was stunned by her words.

"Time and again I've told you that you must not hide anything from me," Dr. Yang went on very seriously. "You must co-operate with me if you want me to check up on you. You've been lying to me instead of telling me the truth. There's no pain at all, you say. That's nonsense! It simply isn't true. Since you won't co-operate I'll have to send you back. You can see me again later."

Shamefaced, Yen had to admit he had lied. But still he grumbled.

"It's not fair. A doctor can lie to her patient occasionally but not vice versa."

Dr. Yang knew that he was trying to expose her little subterfuge, but she paid no attention.

Yen finally told her how he felt in general and Dr. Yang gave him a thorough check-up. She found his condition satisfactory. Still looking slightly reluctant, she said perhaps he might work again, but, she added, his health would suffer if he was not careful.

Yen was so anxious that he pleaded, "Please give your consent, Dr. Yang. If I do no more than merely tighten up a screw it will be that much work done. Do you know that the comrade from the Municipal Revolutionary Committee said he had written a report to Chairman Mao pledging to finish the sintering workshop by October? Isn't that thrilling? I bet it'll be finished according to schedule too. How do you think I can sit idly at home? I know you are a Communist. Don't you think we should contribute our

all?" He began to show signs of deep agitation. Greatly impressed, Dr. Yang felt that she had learned much from Yen. While she treated him, he had re-educated her. Yet she was a doctor, and while she respected him a great deal, her job was to guard his health. The fact was, she should issue even more severe instructions for such a comrade to ensure his complete recovery so that he could make greater contributions to the Party. She handed him a piece of paper and asked him to write down her instructions to which he must pay strict attention. Then she wrote underneath, "If the patient guarantees to follow these instructions I agree to his resuming work." She stressed the seriousness of what might happen if he was careless. Yen nodded solemnly.

Both were satisfied. At parting Yen was in a joking mood again.

"Well, well, Dr. Yang. Did you have to have my guarantee before you gave your consent?"

"Well, you're a special case!" She told him that she had volunteered to go to Project 9424 too, in answer to the hospital's call for medical personnel's support for the project.

Soon after leaving the hospital, Yen was on his way by train to the work site.

### III

The third battle was about to begin.

Late at night a lively meeting of the leading group was held in a brightly-lit shed where everybody pooled ideas about installing the sintering workshop.

Lu Po was speaking. Outside the shed a tall figure lingered, then hesitated, but finally walked away. It was Yen who had just returned.

During the journey he had been thinking about this big job. He had always liked to use his brains. During his convalescence he had studied Chairman Mao's philosophic works and several blueprints. Between the lines in Hsiao-lin's letter he had gathered that the task was difficult, urgent and new to all of them. He tried to think of ways to tackle the problems. He felt that his study of Chairman

Mao's philosophic works had helped him to sum up his past experience better. When all the comrades taking part in this project were armed with Chairman Mao's philosophic thinking they were sure to win the battle. He had meant to tell Lu Po this as soon as he arrived at the work site but he didn't want to interrupt the meeting. Lu Po's talk confirmed Yen's own ideas anyway, so he slipped off.

The first thing he did in the hostel was to ask for Lu Hsiao-lin's Mao Tsetung Thought study notes.

"Why haven't you related your theoretical study to practical work?" he asked Hsiao-lin after reading them over.

"I know so little about the large condenser we are assembling and I don't know exactly how to apply Mao Tsetung Thought to solve this problem," Hsiao-lin replied.

"Understanding and not understanding are two sides of a contradiction. Through study one can learn and gain new understanding.



You'd better spend more time on the study of Chairman Mao's works and on technique instead of looking after my health," Yen advised.

Lu Hsiao-lin was surprised. Yen was becoming smarter all the while, Hsiao-lin thought. How did he find out that Lu Po had given his young brother the task of looking after him? Hsiao-lin would have to discipline Yen right away or he'd never follow the doctor's instructions.

"Just now you mentioned contradictions, Comrade Yen. I know something about them too. For instance, there's a contradiction when I'm told to look after you and you refuse to let me! If you insist then this contradiction will become antagonistic. Then I'll ask my team mates to help. I'll even enlist my brother too if necessary. Then the contradiction won't develop, eh? Isn't that right?"

H'm! So Hsiao-lin was acting on Lu Po's instructions, thought Yen. Without a word he turned off the light and lay down. Hsiao-lin, chuckling to himself, left the room.

Difficulties can be overcome once you find the right way to conquer them. After two days of study there was a cheerful atmosphere at the work site, now covered with big-character posters, showing how to apply Mao Tsetung Thought to solve difficult problems. The masses analysed and criticized all the conservative ideas which were hindering the work. Everybody was confident of winning the battle according to schedule. That evening, Lu Po joined the workers and militiamen in paving four temporary roads meant to ease the traffic when the equipment was to be brought in. This was one question raised by the masses during their study.

These extra roads were finished in no time. As it was still early Lu Po took Yen, Chuang and several other experienced workers to have a look at the sintering workshop. Chuang, about Yen's age, was a versatile worker who considered every aspect of the work. The place was ready, waiting for the machines to be brought in the following day. As Yen walked around the spacious workshop, he immediately spotted something that was not quite right. He squatted, pulling Chuang down beside him. They felt the floor carefully and agreed that it was not quite level. Inquiring about this they were told that the ground had been checked many times and that



it met requirements. But it did not look level to either of them. Two new levels were borrowed and they showed that the ground was not quite up to standard. The instrument used formerly must have been defective. Would the installation of the sintering machine, which was to start the following day, have to be postponed? This machine was 180 feet long and required great precision.

Moonlight slanted in through the window of the empty workshop. But these experienced workers were still discussing the problem. Yen had forgotten his meal. The bowl of cereal Hsiao-lin had made was cold. He could not interrupt Yen when he was concentrating so deeply to think of some way out.

#### IV

The air that August morning was fresh and clear.

Lu Hsiao-lin, carrying a long rubber tube on his shoulder, raced back gaily to the workshop. An innovation had been thought out by the experienced workers the previous night during their discussion. Yen attached a glass bulb to each end of the tube and filled them with water. By using this improvised water level the ground was improved by placing some thin iron plates where they were needed.

The battle continued. Lu Po looked for Yen and said to him, "I haven't had time to talk to you since you came back. Will you come to my place for a while?"

Lu Hsiao-lin reminded his brother, "Don't forget that Comrade Yen must have a light meal at ten o'clock." Lu Po smiled and nodded.

In the shed which served as the headquarters Lu started to prepare some food for Yen but had to go and fetch some fresh hot water.

While he was gone, Yen heard people talking outside. A girl said, "I guess we need Comrade Yen to help us."

A worker argued, "No. He's just had an operation. Lu said he mustn't do heavy work."

Another worker suggested, "Suppose we ask Comrade Chuang to help. But I heard he went on working by himself in the workshop

after the meeting of the experienced workers and didn't go to bed until this morning."

This conversation upset Yen. Comrades thought highly of him; they were concerned about his health too. Surely he was fit to do some heavy work now? He went out and said to them, "What's happened? Let me have a look."

The workers hesitated. Yen was so anxious he said, "Well, if you don't tell me I'll walk around until I find the trouble." Finally they told him what it was.

When Lu came back with the hot water, he couldn't find Yen. He waited for a while, but when Yen didn't show up Lu went to search for him. It was eleven o'clock when Lu found Yen suspended from an overhead crane in the sintering workshop. The motor wouldn't start the crane, and no one knew what was wrong. It would hold up the assembly of the equipment if it was not fixed quickly. Yen was removing a loose screw while suspended with a safety belt around his waist, holding onto a beam with only his right foot and left hand. His overalls showed sweat marks and the veins in his arms were knotted with the pressure he was exerting. Knowing that it would be useless to stop Yen then, Lu watched with deep concern.

"Is that Yen?" someone beside Lu asked him quietly. He turned around and nodded silently to the army representative, who was responsible for the political work of the project. Yen finished his work before the army representative could stop him. "Start the motor," Yen said. It hummed and the crane began to move!

Workers offered Yen towels to wipe his glistening face. Some even wanted to give him their dry overalls to change. Lu Hsiao-lin came in with some spare parts as they were leaving. He asked, "Have you had anything to eat, Comrade Yen?" Yen just nodded non-committally.

Back in the shed, Lu cooked the cereal. "You must pay more attention to your health, Yen," he urged earnestly. "You must remember Dr. Yang's instructions."

"Ever since we worked together on that boiler three years ago," Yen replied, "we've known each other fairly well, so I'll tell you

what I think. Dr. Yang's a good doctor and takes her patient's feelings into account in her treatment. But she doesn't know us workers. My inside isn't so delicate. I must fight this disease and train myself to get fit again. What's a cancer in the stomach? It's been removed now, hasn't it? A Communist must fight continually. He must fight against nature as well as the class enemy. Do you think I'm going to let this slight disease bind me hand and foot?"

Yen's words touched Lu's heart.

## V

A week later when the installation of the sintering machine neared completion, something unexpected happened.

A light railway was needed for the condenser for the feeding and discharge of material. But the angle of the rails, which were of high-quality steel, was not correct and did not meet the specifications of the workshop. "Old Yen," Hsiao-lin complained, "if these rails were not faulty we could have finished our work ahead of schedule and gone to help the other units. It'll take a fortnight at least to send these rails back to Shanghai to be reprocessed." Hsiao-lin sighed, but looked amazed at Yen's suggestion:

"Let's do it ourselves."

"My brother and I," Hsiao-lin began, "have been to the factory that makes these rails..." He wanted to tell Yen how difficult it was to have the complicated equipment and technique readjusted for the purpose. But he stopped short, remembering that his teacher Yen could always think of some way out.

Back in his hostel Yen took up his copy of Chairman Mao's article *On Contradiction*. He concentrated on the sentence, "**External causes are the condition of change and internal causes are the basis of change... external causes become operative through internal causes.**" Then he turned to the chapter on "**The Particularity of Contradiction**", reading on until he reached "**The particular essence of each form of motion is determined by its own particular contradiction.**" To this sentence he gave much thought.

He was still in a brown study when Hsiao-lin walked in. Yen had forgotten his meal again, Hsiao-lin realized, and he quietly plugged in the hot-plate to cook some cereal. Yen looked up when it began to simmer. Glad that Hsiao-lin had come, Yen pulled over a chair and said, "You're just the man I want to see, Hsiao-lin. You said you went to the factory where these rails are made, eh?"

"Sure."

"How complicated is the process?"

"Well. There's much large machinery and..."

Yen waved his hand. "Tell me that later. I want to know what method they use to bend steel rails."

Hsiao-lin thought a moment, "Extremely high temperature and pressure."

"Right, this is necessary because of the particularity of the steel's inner contradiction," said Yen excitedly.

"What did you say?"

"Oh, I learned that in my study," Yen explained with a laugh. "Now tell me what methods are used to change the shape of steel?"

"Cooling, forging, cutting, welding and so on. You know all that, teacher. Are you giving me a test?"

Yen was silent for some time and his silence puzzled Hsiao-lin who watched wide-eyed.

"Whew! What's burning?" someone exclaimed at the door. It was Lu Po. Hsiao-lin, seeing the cereal was burning, quickly pulled out the plug. "It's my fault. I've spoilt his meal."

"What you've been telling me is better than any food," Yen exclaimed.

"Ha! What makes you so clever?" asked Lu Po laughing.

"Yen's been giving me an examination. Must you join in and make fun of me too?"

Lu Po told his brother to go and get something else for Yen to eat. What had brought Lu Po here, Yen wondered.

"Any directives, commander?" Yen asked.

Lu Po punched him playfully. "Thought out what to do about those rails?"

"Nearly. But you didn't come here about a trifle like that."

Lu nodded and told him that because the work had gone smoothly the past week, some leaders and workers had become complacent. They considered their work a big leap forward compared with similar projects in the past. This attitude of looking backward was dangerous and Lu wanted to know whether Yen thought a new study movement should be started. The same kind of thinking had appeared in Yen's team too. They had spent six months assembling a smaller condenser, some said, but they needed only six weeks this time. Even if it took a couple of weeks for the rails to be reprocessed, they were still making a record for speed in the country. "When we were studying Chairman Mao's works this morning," Yen said, "we realized that this kind of thinking ran counter to Chairman Mao's teaching, **'Man has constantly to sum up experience and go on discovering, inventing, creating and advancing.'**" Yen also thought it necessary to organize more political study so that the masses should understand the need for continuous revolution.

"Yes! There's no end to contradictions. We must wage continuous revolution to solve them," Lu agreed.

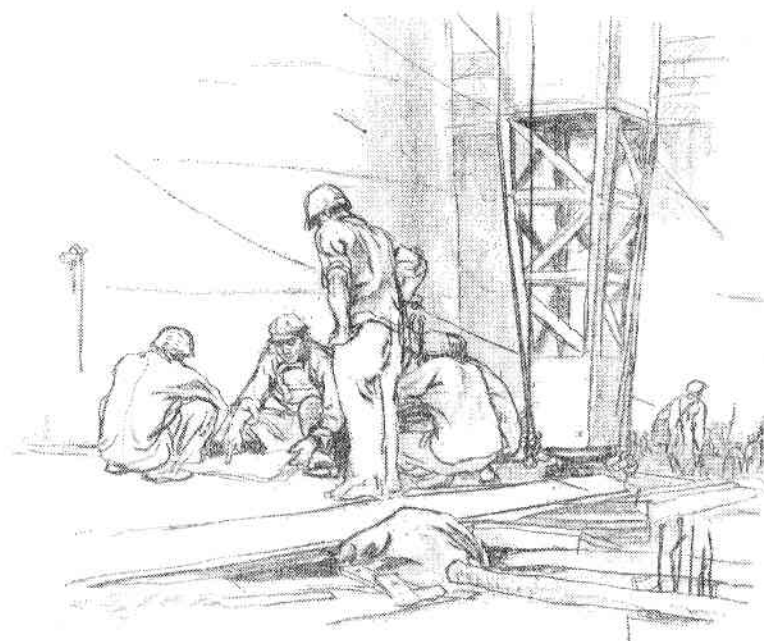
Since metal expands with heat and shrinks when cold, Yen decided to bend the rail to the desired angle right there by using extreme heat on the outer edges and sudden cold on the inner ones. He submitted his idea to his team members for discussion. They approved it readily. Yen suggested trying it out on an ordinary rail first to gain experience. He told Hsiao-lin to ask Chao, the welder, to come over to help.

Chao came out from a large gas tube she had just finished welding, sweat coursing down her face. Realizing that she had just completed a difficult job, Hsiao-lin went outside with her to freshen up in the cool breeze.

"What can I do for you?" she asked.

"Nothing." Hsiao-lin just laughed. Her apparent fatigue made him hesitate to tell her why he had come. "I'm here to see what I can learn from you."

But Chao demanded to know the real reason. He finally made a clean breast of it.



"You're the limit," the girl said. "Comrade Yen is solving a new problem by using Chairman Mao's philosophic thinking. What a chance to learn from him! So you try to keep me in the dark, eh? Tell him I'll be there at twelve o'clock." Hsiao-lin went off with a broad grin.

The trial made with an ordinary rail was successful. Everybody was eager to work on the special steel rail, to strike while the iron was hot. But Yen wanted no slip-ups.

"We must use an even higher temperature for this rail," he said to Chuang. "Will it crack, I wonder, when the other edge is suddenly cooled?"

"I was thinking the same thing, Yen," Chuang admitted. "We have a piece of the same high-grade steel. I'll get it and we'll do one more experiment." Yen's relief was obvious when the second experiment proved successful.

## VI

The time spent on study was not much but the result was tremendous. There was no more self-complacency when comrades compared themselves with the people Chairman Mao wrote about. The cadres, with Lu Po in the lead, stood side by side with the workers wherever difficulties were great, often staying in the evening too. This boosted the workers' spirits, and many of them stayed on the job, grabbing a meal when they could and snatching some sleep at the work site. The whole project advanced like a horse at full gallop.

When near completion, the large condenser looked like a strange steel tower with people clambering all over it.

"We're lagging behind Comrade Chuang's team," Hsiao-lin commented to Yen after he had put a framework together. "Look, there's still so much welding to be done."

"Lu Po has arranged for all the welders to come here tomorrow," Yen answered. "Some of us will help to install the sintering machine and the draft fans too."

At this point a militiaman ran over. "Report!" he shouted. "We are all here."

Yen told Hsiao-lin to stay on the framework and give a hand while he and the militiamen put up several lengths of grooved steel seven metres long which weighed several hundred pounds. They had to be raised fifteen feet above ground.

The crane had other work that day. In order to start as quickly as possible, Yen and the militiamen carried them on their shoulders. On one end they tied a rope which Hsiao-lin and his mates could pull up. But the other end had to be hoisted up by a man standing on a high trestle. Unfortunately the militiamen were still not tall enough. Yen stood on the trestle and raised the other end. Hsiao-lin spotted him and called out, "Stop, Comrade Yen! You mustn't do such heavy work."

"Why not?" retorted Yen slowly, at the same time he lifted up three more. "No. No. The doctor said you mustn't," Hsiao-lin shouted anxiously.

"All right, I'll stop when they're all up." Yen ripped off his jacket and continued working.

In a low voice Hsiao-lin cautioned him, "My brother is coming. There's somebody else too."

Was Hsiao-lin trying to threaten him? "What if your brother does come," Yen asked laughing. "And is the somebody else the army representative? Even if Dr. Yang came now, she couldn't get me down."

"Comrade Yen," a woman called out.

Yen looked. To his annoyance there stood Lu Po and Dr. Yang. Instead of ordering him to come down, Dr. Yang calmly watched in silence. Yen didn't know what to do with the piece of steel in his hand — lift it, or put it down.

"You've disobeyed the doctor again, Yen! Come down quickly," Lu Po shouted in an effort to avoid an awkward situation.

Yen climbed down, grinning sheepishly. "Why do you do such heavy work, Comrade Yen?" asked Dr. Yang reproachfully, as she glanced at Lu Po.

To Yen's dismay, Hsiao-lin came down from the framework and walked over. Was he going to add more fuel to the fire? But no, Hsiao-lin started to criticize himself.

"Don't blame him, Dr. Yang. It's a habit of his to shoulder heavy loads. I should have looked after him better. I guarantee this won't happen again without your permission." Yen's heart slipped back into its usual rhythm. The army representative, coming over from the sintering machine, asked, "Anything the matter here?" Lu Po introduced Dr. Yang as the one who had operated on Yen and who had now come to work at Project 9424. The army man welcomed her.

"Has the patient been disobeying the doctor's orders?" he inquired. Hsiao-lin told him what had happened.

"That explains why these steel pieces are still on the ground. I'm only a layman," the soldier continued, "but I'm tall. Let me have a try." He vaulted onto the trestle and lifted them up. Then, jumping down he said to Dr. Yang, "It was quite easy, they're no weight

at all." Wiping the sweat from his face, he turned to Yen. "But certainly you must not do that again." Everybody laughed.

Dr. Yang reminded Yen that his next check-up was due and that he should go to the hospital the next day. Yen protested, saying he felt fine and couldn't leave before the battle ended. Finally the army representative supported Yen, and Hsiao-lin guaranteed that he would keep a closer watch on him. Dr. Yang reluctantly agreed.

Dr. Yang was inspired when Lu Po told her later how Yen had worked since his return to the work site and what he had said about illness. She realized she should get closer to the workers, know them better and learn from their fine qualities in order to remould her world outlook and become a better people's doctor.

Another week passed. The third battle was nearly won. A general trial operation of the larger machines was to take place that day. Chuang looked around for Yen. He wanted Yen to watch the two draft fans which were fixed with one inlet, for Chuang was not quite sure whether they worked well that way. Hsiao-lin wanted to be there too.

The two giant draft fans were housed in a tall building, the chimney of which was about three hundred feet. One single valve on its pipeline was two stories high. Yen and Hsiao-lin entered the building and walked over to the square iron inlet, the opening of which, nine feet above ground, was covered with a number of two by six inch boards. There was a ladder on each side of the inlet. When Yen and Hsiao-lin had mounted them, Yen told Hsiao-lin that these boards must be removed one by one, after the draft fans started, to make sure that the rate of flow increased gradually. A glass breaks easily in winter if hot water is poured into it, Yen explained. Luke-warm water must be used to heat it gradually. The draft fans needed the same careful adjustment. "Chairman Mao's philosophic articles explain this," Yen said, but he couldn't say why because he had not studied them well enough.

The bell rang for the test to start. Everyone was ready. When Chuang hurried over, Yen told him that he and Hsiao-lin would remove the boards. Chuang nodded and went away.

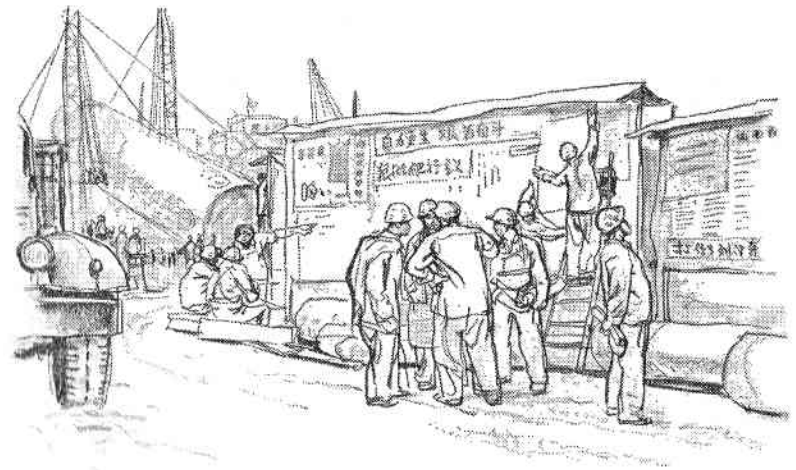
"Shall we be able to pull them away once the draft fans start?"

Hsiao-lin asked. "It'll be too strenuous for you. Let me find someone else to do it, Comrade Yen."

"It will be difficult to pull them away because of the suction, of course," Yen agreed. "But we can move them sideways, slowly. That won't be too bad."

"Philosophy explains that too," Hsiao-lin commented. Lu Po began to speak over the public address system. "We must remember Chairman Mao's teaching, '**One divides into two**'. We've won our battle so far. But we are not celebrating it today. The aim of this trial operation is to discover our shortcomings in order to win still greater victories."

At his order, the draft fans started to roar, drowning out all voices. His head cocked, Yen listened carefully to the hum of the machine, while motioning Hsiao-lin to begin sliding the boards away one by one. When they came to the fourth board there was an accident. With a loud snap it cracked! Yen and Hsiao-lin both clutched it quickly to prevent it from being sucked into the fans and damaging the spinning blades. They fought against a tremendous suction equivalent to the weight of many tons. Using their arms like levers they pressed down on the cracked board.



Hsiao-lin yelled for the machine to be stopped, but he was neither seen nor heard, for the others were some distance away. Then Yen saw a nail in a small hole along the crack. This board had apparently been used before. From his many years of experience he knew that this often caused cracks. If this nail were sucked in, it too would damage the blades. Drawing a deep breath, Yen stretched out his left hand and tried to pull the nail out. The strain was tremendous and Hsiao-lin, who was in no position to help, was terribly anxious. A worker passing by realized that something had gone wrong. He rushed to report. But by then Yen was finding it very difficult to hold on. Sparks danced before his eyes. He knew that a single moment's relaxation would damage the machinery and lose the nearly won battle. So, though barely conscious, he brought his whole weight down on the end of the board, using what little strength he had left. He was quite aware how dangerous this was for him. But Chairman Mao's teaching about serving the people wholly and entirely rang in his ears. To increase the weight, he bent over so that his stomach pressed on the edge of the board too.

Tears streamed down Hsiao-lin's face as he shouted his teacher's name. The giant draft fans slowly stopped but the suction continued several minutes longer. With his left hand Yen still held onto the nail, clenching his teeth and shutting his eyes, sweat streaming down his face. Nearly fifteen minutes later, when the suction ended and he opened his eyes again, the broken board was still in his hands. Hsiao-lin threw down his half of the broken board and climbed up the other ladder to help Yen. But he could not detach it from Yen's hand. Looking carefully, he saw the nail was embedded in Yen's palm which was bleeding freely. A crowd gathered below. Yen ripped away his hand and pushed the broken board aside.

"It's all over now, so don't tell them, Hsiao-lin," Yen urged as he stopped the bleeding with a finger. "Talking won't do any good. I am going to have a check-up soon. There's no use making everybody uneasy. D'you know, that machine didn't sound right to me. I have a few ideas to suggest when we get down."

Once more he cautioned Hsiao-lin to say nothing. . . . Hsiao-lin nodded.

Everybody began asking what had happened. Yen told them that a board had snapped and Hsiao-lin managed to remove it. He wanted to talk to Chuang and was told that the latter was arguing with a technician about one of the draft fans.

Yen went over and listened to them. The blades of one fan knocked against the casing — that was the noise Yen had heard. The technician claimed that this was caused by a crooked axis. Yet he refused when Chuang suggested removing it to find out. His reason was that the manufacturers would not exchange it for a good one if they did that. They might be blamed for whatever was wrong with the axis. "Who'll be responsible if that happens?" the technician asked. Yen was furious, but kept his temper. "The noise might be caused just because the axis is loose and wobbles a bit," Yen suggested. "So it must be taken out and examined before we know what's really wrong. We'll take full responsibility." Comparing himself with Yen who was a cancer victim, the technician felt so ashamed that he slipped away.

The axis turned out to be quite sound. But it didn't work smoothly because, using only one inlet, the flow of air was uneven. Each fan worked well by itself. This could be corrected, now that it was known to be the crux of the matter.

Chuang went off to fix this, urging Yen to rest. Just then the army representative arrived, accompanied by Dr. Yang and Lu Po. Yen assumed that they had come to look at the huge fans. But Dr. Yang's expression and the look on Hsiao-lin's face told him otherwise. The army representative announced, "It was decided at headquarters that I'm to take you to the army hospital for a check-up. Since we don't have your case history here, Dr. Yang who knows it will come with us."

Yen scratched his head. "We won't be leaving right now, will we?" he asked.

"The car is waiting outside the workshop."

"That means I've to retreat from the third battle?"

"This trial operation proved that the third battle has ended in victory. You'll not be needed to help clear up the battlefield. The fourth battle has still to be fought."

Yen pulled a long face when he passed Hsiao-lin. "Did you tell them?" he whispered. Hsiao-lin remained silent.

"May I go to my hostel first?" Yen asked the army representative.

"There's no need," Hsiao-lin cut in. From his pocket he pulled out a copy of Chairman Mao's essays on philosophy which he knew Yen studied every day. A smile flitted across Yen's mouth.

As the car rolled along the highway, Dr. Yang noticed Yen's hand.

"Show me," she commanded. "Don't think you can hide it." She opened her kit and bandaged his hand.

"Promise me one thing, army representative," Yen pleaded.

"What? I'll promise if it's possible."

"Give me the set of blueprints for the next battle as soon as possible."

The army representative looked intently at Yen. "Certainly," he said emphatically.

The car crossed a long bridge and, rounding a bend, disappeared over a hill covered with mountain flowers.

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*Friendship Among the Table-Tennis Players* ►  
water-colour painting) by Tung Chen-sheng



## *Two Stories*

**EDITORS' NOTE:** Lu Hsun, whose real name was Chou Shu-jen, was born into an impoverished scholar-official family in 1881 in Shaohsing County, Chekiang Province. His father was often ill and the boy, always being sent to medicine shops and pawnshops, was looked down upon. After his father's death he went to live with a relative in the countryside where he got to know many poor children and began to understand the misery of the peasantry and the injustice of the society.

In 1902 he went to Japan to study. He had chosen a career in medicine, thinking that relieving the suffering of the people was the way to save the country. A newsteel of the Russo-Japanese War which he saw while in Japan was a turning-point in his life. He was shocked by the way a crowd of Chinese spectators stood apathetically by as a Chinese, said to have worked for the Russians, was shot by the Japanese. He came to the conclusion that what his country needed most was a change in men's spirit, and that this change could be effected by literature. He gave up medicine and took to literature.

He returned to China in 1909 and engaged in educational work. During the period between 1918 and 1926 he published several collections of stories, essays and poems. He also translated extensively from progressive foreign literature.

On April 12, 1927 Chiang Kai-shek engineered a counter-revolutionary coup, followed by large-scale arrest and murder of Communists and progressives. Lu Hsun was also persecuted. He had to leave Kwangchow, where he was teaching, for Shanghai in October 1927. From then on he devoted himself to writing and the literary movement. By studying Marxism-Leninism diligently and taking an active part in the class struggle he gradually developed from a revolutionary democrat into a great communist. He spent his last ten years writing and fighting in Shanghai until death took him on October 19, 1936.



His most militant essays were written during this period. He also produced a volume of stories, under the title *Old Stories Retold* in addition to a large number of translations from foreign literature. He left a wealth of original writings and translations amounting altogether to more than seven million Chinese characters.

September 25, 1971, was the ninetieth anniversary of Lu Hsun's birth. To commemorate the occasion *Chinese Literature*, No. 10, 1971 carried a number of his stories and essays. In the present issue are two more stories, *Medicine* and *My Old Home*.

The incident in the first story took place in the later years of the feudal Ching Dynasty (1616-1911). Chiu Chin, a woman revolutionary killed by the Ching government for her activities against the monarchy, provided a clue for the character Hsia Yu, who is executed as a revolutionary by the reactionary rulers. Superstition had it that bread soaked with human blood could cure tuberculosis. Hoping to cure his consumptive child, Old Chuan, owner of a tea-house, buys a piece of bread dipped in blood at the victim's execution ground, but it does not help. The child dies anyway. Through this story Lu Hsun lashes at the cruelty and ignorance to which the rulers resorted to fool the people. The wreath placed on the martyr's tomb symbolizes the idea that the revolution will eventually succeed.

*My Old Home* is set against a background of village life in the later years of the first decade of the present century. The peasant Jun-tu is the hero. Aggression and exploitation by imperialists in China, constant domestic civil wars by feudal warlords, and oppression and extortion by the landlord class had brought the Chinese countryside to a state of general bankruptcy and reduced the Chinese peasants to paupers. The story presents a graphic picture of the ruined village life and the fates of little people like Jun-tu on whom Lu Hsun pours out infinite sympathy. The story concludes with a sentence implying the idea that the people will rise to overthrow the old social system and create a new life: "For actually the earth had no roads to begin with, but when many men pass one way, a road is made."

## Medicine

It was autumn, in the small hours of the morning. The moon had gone down, but the sun had not yet risen, and the sky appeared a sheet of darkling blue. Apart from night-prowlers, all was asleep. Old Chuan suddenly sat up in bed. He struck a match and lit the grease-covered oil-lamp, which shed a ghostly light over the two rooms of the tea-house.

"Are you going, now, dad?" queried an old woman's voice. And from the small inner room a fit of coughing was heard.

"H'm."

Old Chuan listened as he fastened his clothes, then stretching out his hand said, "Let's have it."

After some fumbling under the pillow his wife produced a packet of silver dollars which she handed over. Old Chuan pocketed it nervously, patted his pocket twice, then lighting a paper lantern and blowing out the lamp went into the inner room. A rustling was heard, and then more coughing. When all was quiet again, Old Chuan called softly: "Son!... Don't you get up!... Your mother will see to the shop."

Receiving no answer, Old Chuan assumed his son must be sound asleep again; so he went out into the street. In the darkness nothing could be seen but the grey roadway. The lantern light fell on his pacing feet. Here and there he came across dogs, but none of them barked. It was much colder than indoors, yet Old Chuan's spirits rose, as if he had grown suddenly younger and possessed some miraculous lifegiving power. He had lengthened his stride. And the road became increasingly clear, the sky increasingly bright.

Absorbed in his walking, Old Chuan was startled when he saw the cross-road lying distinctly ahead of him. He walked back a few steps to stand under the eaves of a shop, in front of its closed door. After some time he began to feel chilly.

"Uh, an old chap."

"Seems rather cheerful..."

Old Chuan started again and, opening his eyes, saw several men passing. One of them even turned back to look at him, and although he could not see him clearly, the man's eyes shone with a lustful light, like a famished person's at the sight of food. Looking at his lantern, Old Chuan saw it had gone out. He patted his pocket—the hard packet was still there. Then he looked round and saw many strange people, in twos and threes, wandering about like lost souls. However, when he gazed steadily at them, he could not see anything else strange about them.

Presently he saw some soldiers strolling around. The large white circles on their uniforms, both in front and behind, were clear even at a distance; and as they drew nearer, the dark red border could be seen too. The next second, with a trampling of feet, a crowd rushed past. Thereupon the small groups which had arrived earlier suddenly converged and surged forward. Just before the cross-road, they came to a sudden stop and grouped themselves in a semi-circle.

Old Chuan looked in that direction too, but could only see people's backs. Craning their necks as far as they would go, they looked like so many ducks, held and lifted by some invisible hand. For a moment all was still; then a sound was heard, and a stir swept through the onlookers. There was a rumble as they pushed back, sweeping past Old Chuan and nearly knocking him down.

"Hey! Give me the cash, and I'll give you the goods!" A man clad entirely in black stood before him, his eyes like daggers, making Old Chuan shrink to half his normal size. This man was thrusting one huge extended hand towards him, while in the other he held a roll of steamed bread, from which crimson drops were dripping to the ground.

Hurriedly Old Chuan fumbled for his dollars, and trembling he was about to hand them over, but he dared not take the object. The other grew impatient, and shouted: "What are you afraid of? Why not take it?" When Old Chuan still hesitated, the man in black snatched his lantern and tore off its paper shade to wrap up the roll. This package he thrust into Old Chuan's hand, at the same time seizing the silver and giving it a cursory feel. Then he turned away, muttering, "Old fool..."

"Whose sickness is this for?" Old Chuan seemed to hear someone ask; but he made no reply. His whole mind was on the package, which he carried as carefully as if it were the sole heir to an ancient house. Nothing else mattered now. He was about to transplant this new life to his own home, and reap much happiness. The sun too had risen, lighting up the broad highway before him, which led straight home, and the worn tablet behind him at the crossroad with its faded gold inscription: "Ancient Pavilion."

## II

When Old Chuan reached home, the shop had been cleaned, and the rows of tea-tables were shining brightly; but no customers had arrived. Only his son was sitting at a table by the wall, eating. Beads of sweat stood out on his forehead, his lined jacket was sticking to his spine, and his shoulder blades stuck out so sharply, an inverted V seemed stamped there. At this sight, Old Chuan's brow, which had been clear, contracted again. His wife hurried in from the kitchen, with expectant eyes and a tremor to her lips.

"Get it?"

"Yes."

They went together into the kitchen, and conferred for a time. Then the old woman went out, to return shortly with a dried lotus leaf which she spread on the table. Old Chuan unwrapped the crimson stained roll from the lantern paper and transferred it to the lotus leaf. Little Chuan had finished his meal, but his mother exclaimed hastily:

"Sit still, Little Chuan! Don't come over here."

Mending the fire in the stove, Old Chuan put the green package and the red and white lantern paper into the stove together. A red-black flame flared up, and a strange odour permeated the shop.

"Smells good! What are you eating?" The hunchback had arrived. He was one of those who spend all their time in tea-shops, the first to come in the morning and the last to leave. Now he had just stumbled to a corner table facing the street, and sat down. But no one answered his question.

"Puffed rice gruel?"

Still no reply. Old Chuan hurried out to brew tea for him.

"Come here, Little Chuan!" His mother called him into the inner room, set a stool in the middle, and sat the child down. Then, bringing him a round black object on a plate, she said gently:

"Eat it up... then you'll be better."

Little Chuan picked up the black object and looked at it. He had the oddest feeling, as if he were holding his own life in his hands. Presently he split it carefully open. From within the charred crust a jet of white vapour escaped, then scattered, leaving only two halves of a white flour steamed roll. Soon it was all eaten, the flavour completely forgotten, only the empty plate left. His father and mother were standing one on each side of him, their eyes apparently pouring something into him and at the same time extracting something. His small heart began to beat faster, and, putting his hands to his chest, he began to cough again.

"Have a sleep; then you'll be all right," said his mother.

Obediently, Little Chuan coughed himself to sleep. The woman waited till his breathing was regular, then covered him lightly with a much patched quilt.

### III

The shop was crowded, and Old Chuan was busy, carrying a big copper kettle to make tea for one customer after another. But there were dark circles under his eyes.

"Aren't you well, Old Chuan?... What's wrong with you?" asked one greybeard.

"Nothing."

"Nothing?... No, I suppose from your smile, there couldn't be..." The old man corrected himself.

"It's just that Old Chuan's busy," said the hunchback. "If his son..." But before he could finish, a heavy-jowled man burst in. He had over his shoulders a dark brown shirt, unbuttoned and fastened carelessly by a broad dark brown girdle at his waist. As soon as he entered, he shouted to Old Chuan:

"Has he taken it? Any better? Luck's with you, Old Chuan. What luck! If not for my hearing of things so quickly..."

Holding the kettle in one hand, the other straight by his side in an attitude of respect, Old Chuan listened with a smile. In fact, all present were listening respectfully. The old woman, dark circles under her eyes, too, came out smiling with a bowl containing tea-leaves and an added olive, over which Old Chuan poured boiling water for the newcomer.

"This is a guaranteed cure! Not like other things!" declared the heavy-jowled man. "Just think, brought back warm, and eaten warm!"

"Yes indeed, we couldn't have managed it without Uncle Kang's help." The old woman thanked him very warmly.

"A guaranteed cure! Eaten warm like this. A roll dipped in human blood like this can cure any consumption!"

The old woman seemed a little disconcerted by the word "consumption", and turned a shade paler; however, she forced a smile again at once and found some pretext to leave. Meanwhile the man in brown was indiscreet enough to go on talking at the top of his voice until the child in the inner room was woken and started coughing.

"So you've had such a stroke of luck for your Little Chuan! Of course his sickness will be cured completely. No wonder Old Chuan keeps smiling." As he spoke, the greybeard walked up to the man in brown, and lowered his voice to ask:

"Mr. Kang, I heard the criminal executed today came from the Hsia family. Who was it? And why was he executed?"

"Who? Son of Widow Hsia, of course! Young rascal!"

Seeing how they were all hanging on his words, Mr. Kang's spirits rose even higher. His jowls quivered, and he made his voice as loud as he could.

"The rogue didn't want to live, simply didn't want to! There was nothing in it for me this time. Even the clothes stripped from him were taken by Red-eye, the jailer. Our Old Chuan was luckiest, and after him Third Uncle Hsia. The latter pocketed the whole reward—twenty-five taels of bright silver—and didn't have to spend a cent!"

Little Chuan walked slowly out of the inner room, his hands to his chest, coughing repeatedly. He went to the kitchen, filled a bowl with cold rice, added hot water to it, and sitting down started to eat. His mother, hovering over him, asked softly:

"Do you feel better, son? Still as hungry as ever?"

"A guaranteed cure!" Kang glanced at the child, then turned back to address the company. "Third Uncle Hsia is really smart. If he hadn't informed, even *his* family would have been executed, and their property confiscated. But instead? Silver! That young rogue was a real scoundrel! He even tried to incite the jailer to revolt!"

"No! The idea of it!" A man in his twenties, sitting in the back row, expressed indignation.

"You know, Red-eye went to sound him out, but he started chatting with him. He said the great Manchu empire belongs to us. Just think: is that kind of talk rational? Red-eye knew he had only an old mother at home, but had never imagined he was so poor. He couldn't squeeze anything out of him; he was already good and angry, and then the young fool would 'scratch the tiger's head', so he gave him a couple of slaps."

"Red-eye is a good boxer. Those slaps must have hurt!" The hunchback in the corner by the wall exulted.

"The rotter was not afraid of being beaten. He even said how sorry he was."

"Nothing to be sorry about in beating a wretch like that," said Greybeard.

Kang looked at him superciliously and said disdainfully: "You misunderstood. The way he said it, he was sorry for Red-eye."

His listeners' eyes took on a glazed look, and no one spoke. Little Chuan had finished his rice and was perspiring profusely, his head steaming.

"Sorry for Red-eye—crazy! He must have been crazy!" said Greybeard, as if suddenly he saw light.

"He must have been crazy!" echoed the man in his twenties.

Once more the customers began to show animation, and conversation was resumed. Under cover of the noise, the child was seized by a paroxysm of coughing. Kang went up to him, clapped him on the shoulder, and said:

"A guaranteed cure! Don't cough like that, Little Chuan! A guaranteed cure!"

"Crazy!" agreed the hunchback, nodding his head.

#### IV

Originally, the land adjacent to the city wall outside the West Gate had been public land. The zigzag path slanting across it, trodden out by passers-by seeking a short cut, had become a natural boundary line. Left of the path, executed criminals or those who had died of neglect in prison were buried. Right of the path were paupers' graves. The serried ranks of grave mounds on both sides looked like the rolls laid out for a rich man's birthday.

The Ching Ming Festival that year was unusually cold. Willows were only beginning to put forth shoots no larger than grains. Shortly after daybreak, Old Chuan's wife brought four dishes and a bowl of rice to set before a new grave in the right section, and wailed before it. When she had burned paper money she sat on the ground in a stupor as if waiting for something; but for what, she herself did not

know. A breeze sprang up and stirred her short hair, which was certainly whiter than in the previous year.

Another woman came down the path, grey-haired and in rags. She was carrying an old, round, red-lacquered basket, with a string of paper money hanging from it; and she walked haltingly. When she saw Old Chuan's wife sitting on the ground watching her, she hesitated, and a flush of shame spread over her pale face. However, she summoned up courage to cross over to a grave in the left section, where she set down her basket.

That grave was directly opposite Little Chuan's, separated only by the path. As Old Chuan's wife watched the other woman set out four dishes and a bowl of rice, then stand up to wail and burn paper money, she thought: "It must be her son in that grave too." The older woman took a few aimless steps and stared vacantly around, then suddenly she began to tremble and stagger backward: she felt dazed.

Fearing sorrow might send her out of her mind, Old Chuan's wife got up and stepped across the path, to say quietly: "Don't grieve, let's go home."

The other nodded, but her eyes were still fixed, and she muttered: "Look! What's that?"

Looking where she pointed, Old Chuan's wife saw that the grave in front had not yet been overgrown with grass. Ugly patches of soil still showed. But when she looked carefully, she was surprised to see at the top of the mound a wreath of red and white flowers.

Both of them suffered from failing eyesight, yet they could see these red and white flowers clearly. There were not many, but they were placed in a circle; and although not very fresh, were neatly set out. Little Chuan's mother looked round and found her own son's grave, like most of the rest, dotted with only a few little, pale flowers shivering in the cold. Suddenly she had a sense of futility and stopped feeling curious about the wreath.

Meantime the old woman had gone up to the grave to look more closely. "They have no roots," she said to herself. "They can't have grown here. Who could have been here? Children don't come here to play, and none of our relatives have ever been. What



could have happened?" She puzzled over it, until suddenly her tears began to fall, and she cried aloud:

"Yu, my son, they all wronged you, and you do not forget. Is your grief still so great that today you worked this wonder to let me know?"

She looked all around, but could see only a crow perched on a leafless bough. "I know," she continued. "They murdered you. But a day of reckoning will come, Heaven will see to it. Close your eyes in peace. . . . If you are really here, and can hear me, make that crow fly on to your grave as a sign."

The breeze had long since dropped, and the dry grass stood stiff and straight as copper wires. A faint, tremulous sound vibrated in the air, then faded and died away. All around was deathly still. They stood in the dry grass, looking up at the crow; and the crow, on the rigid bough of the tree, its head drawn in, stood immobile as iron.

Time passed. More people, young and old, came to visit the graves.

Old Chuan's wife felt somehow as if a load had been lifted from her mind and, wanting to leave, she urged the other:

"Let's go."

The old woman sighed, and listlessly picked up the rice and dishes. After a moment's hesitation she started slowly off, still muttering to herself:

"What could it mean?"

They had not gone thirty paces when they heard a loud caw behind them. Startled, they looked round and saw the crow stretch wings, brace itself to take off, then fly like an arrow towards the far horizon.

April 1919

## My Old Home

Braving the bitter cold, I travelled more than seven hundred miles back to my home town I had left over twenty years ago.

It was late winter. As we drew near my former home the day became overcast and a cold wind blew into the cabin of our boat, while all one could see through the chinks in our bamboo awning were a few desolate villages, void of any sign of life, scattered far and near under the sombre yellow sky. I could not help feeling depressed.

Ah! Surely this was not the old home I had been remembering for the past twenty years?

The old home I remembered was not in the least like this. My old home was much better. But if you asked me to recall its peculiar charm or describe its beauties, I had no clear impression, no words to describe it. And now it seemed this was all there was to it. Then I rationalized the matter to myself, saying: Home was always like this, and although it has not improved, still it is not so depressing as I imagine; it is only my mood that has changed, because I am coming back to the country this time with no illusions.

This time I had come with the sole object of saying goodbye. The old house our clan had lived in for so many years had already been sold

to another family, and was to change hands before the end of the year. I had to hurry there before New Year's Day to say goodbye for ever to the familiar old house, and to move my family to another place where I was working, far from my old home town.

At dawn on the second day I reached the gateway of my home. Broken stems of withered grass on the roof, trembling in the wind, made very clear the reason why this old house could not avoid changing hands. Several branches of our clan had probably already moved away, so it was unusually quiet. By the time I reached the house my mother was already at the door to welcome me, and my eight-year-old nephew, Hung-erh, rushed out after her.

Though mother was delighted, she was also trying to hide a certain feeling of sadness. She told me to sit down and rest and have some tea, letting the removal wait for the time being. Hung-erh, who had never seen me before, stood watching me at a distance.

But finally we had to talk about the removal. I said that rooms had already been rented elsewhere, and I had bought a little furniture; in addition it would be necessary to sell all the furniture in the house in order to buy more things. Mother agreed, saying that the luggage was nearly all packed, and about half the furniture that could not be easily moved had already been sold. Only it was difficult to get people to pay up.

"You can rest for a day or two, and call on our relatives, and then we can go," said mother.

"Yes."

"Then there is Jun-tu. Each time he comes here he always asks after you, and wants very much to see you again. I told him the probable date of your return home, and he may be coming any time."

At this point a strange picture suddenly flashed into my mind: a golden moon suspended in a deep blue sky and beneath it the seashore, planted as far as the eye could see with jade-green watermelons, while in their midst a boy of eleven or twelve, wearing a silver necklet and grasping a steel pitchfork in his hand, was thrusting with all his might at a *cha* which dodged the blow and escaped through his legs.

This boy was Jun-tu. When I first met him he was little more than ten—that was thirty years ago, and at that time my father was still

alive and the family well off, so I was really a spoilt child. That year it was our family's turn to take charge of a big ancestral sacrifice, which came round only once in thirty years, and hence was an important one. In the first month the ancestral images were presented and offerings made, and since the sacrificial vessels were very fine and there was such a crowd of worshippers, it was necessary to guard against theft. Our family had only one part-time servant. (In our district we divide servants into three classes: those who work all the year for one family are called full-timers; those who are hired by the day are called dailies; and those who farm their own land and only work for one family at New Year, during festivals or when rents are being collected are called part-timers.) And since there was so much to be done, he told my father that he would send for his son Jun-tu to look after the sacrificial vessels.

When my father gave his consent I was overjoyed, because I had long since heard of Jun-tu and knew that he was about my own age, born in the intercalary month,\* and when his horoscope was told it was found that of the five elements that of earth was lacking, so his father called him Jun-tu (intercalary Earth). He could set traps and catch small birds.

I looked forward every day to New Year, for New Year would bring Jun-tu. At last the end of the year came, and one day mother told me that Jun-tu had come, and I flew to see him. He was standing in the kitchen. He had a round, crimson face and wore a small felt cap on his head and a gleaming silver necklet on his neck, showing that his father doted on him and, fearing he might die, had made a pledge with the gods and buddhas, using the necklet as a talisman. He was very shy, and I was the only person he was not afraid of. When there was no one else there, he would talk with me, so in a few hours we were fast friends.

I don't know what we talked of then, but I remember that Jun-tu was in high spirits, saying that since he had come to town he had seen many new things.

The next day I wanted him to catch birds.

\*The Chinese lunar calendar reckons 360 days to a year, and each month comprises 29 or 30 days, never 31. Hence every few years a 13th, or intercalary, month is inserted in the calendar.

"Can't be done," he said. "It's only possible after a heavy snow-fall. On our sands, after it snows, I sweep clear a patch of ground, prop up a big threshing basket with a short stick, and scatter husks of grain beneath; then when I see the birds coming to eat, from a distance I give a tug to the string tied to the stick, and the birds are caught in the basket. There are all kinds: wild pheasants, woodcocks, woodpigeons, bluebacks..."

Accordingly I looked forward very eagerly to snow.

"Just now it is too cold," said Jun-tu another time, "but you must come to our place in summer. In the daytime we will go to the sea-shore to look for shells; there are green ones and red ones, besides 'scaredevil' shells and 'Goddess-of-Mercy's hands.' In the evening when dad and I go to see to the watermelons, you shall come too."

"Is it to look out for thieves?"

"No. If passers-by are thirsty and pick a watermelon, folk down our way don't consider it as stealing. What we have to look out for are badgers, hedgehogs and *cha*. When you hear a crunching sound under the moonlight, made by the *cha* biting the melons, then you take your pitchfork and creep stealthily over..."

I had no idea then what this thing called *cha* was — and I am not much clearer now, for that matter — but somehow I felt it was something like a small dog, and very fierce.

"Don't they bite people?"

"You have a pitchfork. You go across, and when you see it you strike. It's a very cunning creature and will rush towards you and get away between your legs. Its fur is as slippery as oil..."

I had never known that all these strange things existed: at the sea-shore were shells all the colours of the rainbow; watermelons had such a dangerous history, yet all I had known of them before was that they were sold in the greengrocer's.

"On our shore, when the tide comes in, there are lots of jumping fish, each with two legs like a frog..."

Jun-tu's mind was a treasure-house of such strange lore, all of it outside the ken of my former friends. They were ignorant of all these things and, while Jun-tu lived by the sea, they like me could see only the four corners of the sky above the high courtyard wall.

Unfortunately, a month after New Year Jun-tu had to go home. I burst into tears and he took refuge in the kitchen, crying and refusing to come out, until finally he was carried off by his father. Later he sent me by his father a packet of shells and a few very beautiful feathers, and I sent him presents once or twice, but we never saw each other again.

Now that my mother mentioned him, this childhood memory sprang into life like a flash of lightning, and I seemed to see my beautiful old home. So I answered:

"Fine! And he — how is he?"

"He?... He's not at all well off either," said mother. And then, looking out of the door: "Here come those people again. They say they want to buy our furniture; but actually they just want to see what they can pick up. I must go and watch them."

Mother stood up and went out. Several women's voices could be heard outside. I called Hung-erh to me and started talking to him, asking him whether he could write, and whether he was glad to be leaving.

"Shall we be going by train?"

"Yes, we shall go by train."

"And boat?"

"We shall take a boat first."

"Oh! Like this! With such a long moustache!" A strange shrill voice suddenly rang out.

I looked up with a start, and saw a woman of about fifty with prominent cheekbones and thin lips standing in front of me, her hands on her hips, not wearing a skirt but with trousered legs apart, just like the compass in a box of geometrical instruments.

I was flabbergasted.

"Don't you know me? And I have held you in my arms!"

I felt even more flabbergasted. Fortunately my mother came in just then and said:

"He has been away so long, you must excuse him for forgetting. You should remember," she said to me, "this is Mrs. Yang from across the road... She has a beancurd shop."



Then, to be sure, I remembered. When I was a child there was a Mrs. Yang who used to sit nearly all day long in the beancurd shop across the road, and everybody used to call her Beancurd Beauty. But she used to powder herself, and her cheekbones were not so prominent then nor her lips so thin; moreover she remained seated all the time, so that I had never noticed this resemblance to a compass. In those days people said that, thanks to her, that beancurd shop did very good business. But, probably on account of my age, she had made no impression on me, so that later I forgot her entirely. However, the Compass was extremely indignant and looked at me most contemptuously, just as one might look at a Frenchman who had never heard of Napoleon or an American who had never heard of Washington, and smiling sarcastically she said:

"You had forgotten? But naturally I must be beneath your notice..."

"Certainly not... I..." I answered nervously, getting to my feet.

"Then you listen to me, Master Hsun. You have grown rich, and they are too heavy to move, so you can't possibly want these old pieces of furniture any more. You had better let me take them away. Poor people like us can do with them."

"I haven't grown rich. I must sell these in order to buy..."

"Oh, come now, you have been made the intendant of a circuit, and do you still say you're not rich? You have three concubines now, and whenever you go out it is in a big sedan-chair with eight bearers, and do you still say you're not rich? Hah! You can't hide anything from me."

Knowing there was nothing I could say, I remained silent.

"Come now, really, the more money people have the more miserly they get, and the more miserly they are the more money they get..." said the Compass, turning indignantly away and walking slowly off, casually picking up a pair of mother's gloves and stuffing them into her pocket as she went out.

After this a number of relatives in the neighbourhood came to call. In the intervals between entertaining them I did some packing, and so three or four days passed.

One very cold afternoon, I was sitting drinking tea after lunch when I was aware of someone coming in, and turned my head to see who it was. At the first glance I gave an involuntary start, and hastily stood up and went over to welcome him.

The newcomer was Jun-tu. But although I knew at a glance that this was Jun-tu, it was not the Jun-tu I remembered. He had grown to twice his former size. His round face, crimson before, had become sallow and acquired deep lines and wrinkles; his eyes too had become like his father's with rims swollen and red, a feature common to most of the peasants who work by the sea and are exposed all day to the wind from the ocean. He wore a shabby felt cap and just one very thin padded jacket, with the result that he was shivering from head to foot. He was carrying a paper package and a long pipe, nor was his hand the plump red hand I remembered, but coarse and clumsy and chapped, like the bark of a pine tree.

Delighted as I was, I did not know how to express myself, and could only say:

"Oh! Jun-tu — so it's you?..."

After this there were so many things I wanted to talk about, they should have poured out like a string of beads: woodcocks, jumping fish, shells, *cha*. . . . But I was tongue-tied, unable to put all I was thinking into words.

He stood there, mixed joy and sadness showing on his face. His lips moved, but not a sound did he utter. Finally, assuming a respectful attitude, he said clearly:

"Master!..."

I felt a shiver run through me; for I knew then what a lamentably thick wall had grown up between us. Yet I could not say anything.

He turned his head to call:

"Shui-sheng, bow to the master." Then he pulled forward a boy who had been hiding behind his back, and this was just the Jun-tu of twenty years before, only a little paler and thinner, and he had no silver necklet on his neck.

"This is my fifth," he said. "He has not seen any society, so he is shy and awkward."



Mother came downstairs with Hung-erh, probably after hearing our voices.

"I got the letter some time ago, madam," said Jun-tu. "I was really so pleased to know that the master was coming back. . . ."

"Now, why ever are you so polite? Weren't you playmates together in the past?" said mother gaily. "You had better still call him Brother Hsun as before."

"Oh, you are really too. . . . What bad manners that would be. I was a child then and didn't understand." As he was speaking Jun-tu motioned Shui-sheng to come and bow, but the child was shy, and only stood stock-still behind his father.

"So he is Shui-sheng? Your fifth?" asked mother. "We are all strangers, you can't blame him for feeling shy. Hung-erh had better take him out to play."

When Hung-erh heard this he went over to Shui-sheng, and Shui-sheng went out with him, entirely at his ease. Mother asked Jun-tu to sit down, and after a little hesitation he did so; then leaning his long pipe against the table he handed over the paper package, saying:

"In winter there is nothing worth bringing; but these few beans we dried ourselves there, if you will excuse the liberty, sir."

When I asked him how things were with him, he just shook his head.

"In a very bad way. Even my sixth can do a little work, but still we haven't enough to eat. . . and then there is no security. . . all sorts of people want money, and there is no fixed rule. . . and the harvests are bad. You grow things, and when you take them to sell you always have to pay several taxes and lose money, while if you don't try to sell, the things may go bad. . . ."

He kept shaking his head; yet, although his face was lined with wrinkles, not one of them moved, just as if he were a stone statue. No doubt he felt intensely bitter, but could not express himself. After a pause he took up his pipe and began to smoke in silence.

From her chat with him, mother learned that he was busy at home and had to go back the next day; and since he had had no lunch, she told him to go to the kitchen and fry some rice for himself.

After he had gone out, mother and I both shook our heads over

his hard life: many children, famines, taxes, soldiers, bandits, officials and landed gentry, all had squeezed him as dry as a mummy. Mother said that we should offer him all the things we were not going to take away, letting him choose for himself.

That afternoon he picked out a number of things: two long tables, four chairs, an incense burner and candlesticks, and one balance. He also asked for all the ashes from the stove (in our part we cook over straw, and the ashes can be used to fertilize sandy soil), saying that when we left he would come to take them away by boat.

That night we talked again, but not of anything serious; and the next morning he went away with Shui-sheng.

After another nine days it was time for us to leave. Jun-tu came in the morning. Shui-sheng had not come with him — he had just brought a little girl of five to watch his boat. We were very busy all day, and had no time to talk. We also had quite a number of visitors, some to see us off, some to fetch things, and some to do both. It was nearly evening when we got on our boat, and by that time everything in the house, however old or shabby, large or small, fine or coarse, had been cleared away.

As we set off, the green mountains on either side of the river became deep blue in the dusk, receding toward the stern of the boat.

Hung-erh and I, leaning against the cabin window, were looking out together at the indistinct scene outside, when suddenly he asked:

“Uncle, when shall we go back?”

“Go back? Do you mean that before you’ve left you want to go back?”

“Well, Shui-sheng has invited me to his home . . .” He opened wide his black eyes in anxious thought.

Mother and I both felt rather sad, and so Jun-tu’s name came up again. Mother said that ever since our family started packing up, Mrs. Yang from the beancurd shop had come over every day, and the day before in the ash-heap she had unearthed a dozen bowls and plates, which after some discussion she insisted must have been buried there by Jun-tu, so that when he came to remove the ashes he could take them home at the same time. After making this discovery Mrs. Yang was very pleased with herself, and flew off taking the dog-

teaser with her. (The dog-teaser is used by poultry keepers in our part. It is a wooden cage inside which food is put, so that hens can stretch their necks in to eat but dogs can only look on furiously.) And it was a marvel, considering the size of her feet, how fast she could run.

I was leaving the old house farther and farther behind, while the hills and rivers of my old home were also receding gradually ever farther in the distance. But I felt no regret. I only felt that all round me was an invisible high wall, cutting me off from my fellows, and this depressed me thoroughly. The vision of that small hero with the silver necklet among the watermelons had formerly been as clear as day, but now it had suddenly blurred, adding to my depression.

Mother and Hung-erh fell asleep.

I lay down, listening to the water rippling beneath the boat, and knew that I was going my way. I thought: although there is such a barrier between Jun-tu and myself, our children still have much in common, for wasn’t Hung-erh thinking of Shui-sheng just now? I hope they will not be like us, that they will not allow a barrier to grow up between them. But again I would not like them, because they want to be one, to have a treadmill existence like mine, nor to suffer like Jun-tu until they become stupefied, nor yet, like others, to devote all their energies to dissipation. They should have a new life, a life we have never experienced.

The access of hope made me suddenly afraid. When Jun-tu had asked for the incense burner and candlesticks I had laughed up my sleeve at him, to think that he was still worshipping idols and would never put them out of his mind. Yet what I now called hope was no more than an idol I had created myself. The only difference was that what he desired was close at hand, while what I desired was less easily realized.

As I dozed, a stretch of jade-green seashore spread itself before my eyes, and above a round golden moon hung from a deep blue sky. I thought: hope cannot be said to exist, nor can it be said not to exist. It is just like roads across the earth. For actually the earth had no roads to begin with, but when many men pass one way, a road is made.

January 1921

*Kuo Mo-jo*

Three Poems

I

— to the melody of *Wan Hsi Sha*

For our comrades-in-arms from far Cambodia  
A rich feast is laid at the foot of the Tienshan.  
The thoughtful pastoral East Wind Commune plays the host.  
Racing stallions gallop, shaking the earth,  
Under a crystalline sky free of all dust.  
And cheers burst like thunder.

East Wind Commune, September 13, 1971

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These poems were written in September 1971, when the author accompanied guests from Cambodia on a visit to the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region. The first two poems follow the popular patterns of the classical *Tzu*, *Wan Hsi Sha* and *Man Chiang Hung*, with irregular lines, while the third follows the traditional form of *Lu Shih*, with regular lines.

II

— to the melody of *Man Chiang Hung*

Defending the frontiers  
Our PLA fighters at the military farms show heroism,  
Turning the Gobi desert into cultivable fields  
That extend to the horizon like a sea,  
Together with the fraternal national minorities  
Irrigating all the land north and south of the Tienshan.  
In addition there are many factories,  
And hosts of steeds grazing the pastures belted by forests.

Chairman Mao

The great commander,

The Communist Party

Loved by all.

Changing mountains and rivers,

All barriers removed,

Contemptuous of the imperialist and revisionist paper tigers,

The people create a world of gold.

Rid of complacency and pride, they make new contributions

To achieve still greater glory.

Shihotse, September 15, 1971

### III

—a Lu Sibih

I was once sight-seeing by the lake of Rigza,\*  
But the scenery here far surpasses what I saw.  
Honoured guests are welcomed with songs and dances on shore.  
Sheets of cloud above serve as paper for poems,  
The deep water in the lake our ink,  
The pointed trees just so many brushes.  
Doubly delightful is the feast of two roasted roebucks  
Enriched by wine flowing like fountains.

Tien Chih (The Heavenly Lake), September 16, 1971



\*A well-known scenic spot in the mountains of Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic.

### Stories

Hu Hui-ying

## The Case of the Missing Ducks

Mama Ling, head of the women's team, took my luggage from me and led me to her house.

According to Comrade Wang, secretary of the commune's Party committee, Mama Ling had a family of three. Her son Ah-yung was in fifth year primary school. Her husband, a cadre in the county administration, was seldom home.

We walked along an earthen road.

The sun was slowly sinking in the west, striking golden glints from the stream which the road skirted. Beyond, fields of rape flowers and luxuriant wheat cast reflections of brilliant yellow and green upon the water. A flock of quacking white ducks floated by, rippling the placid surface.

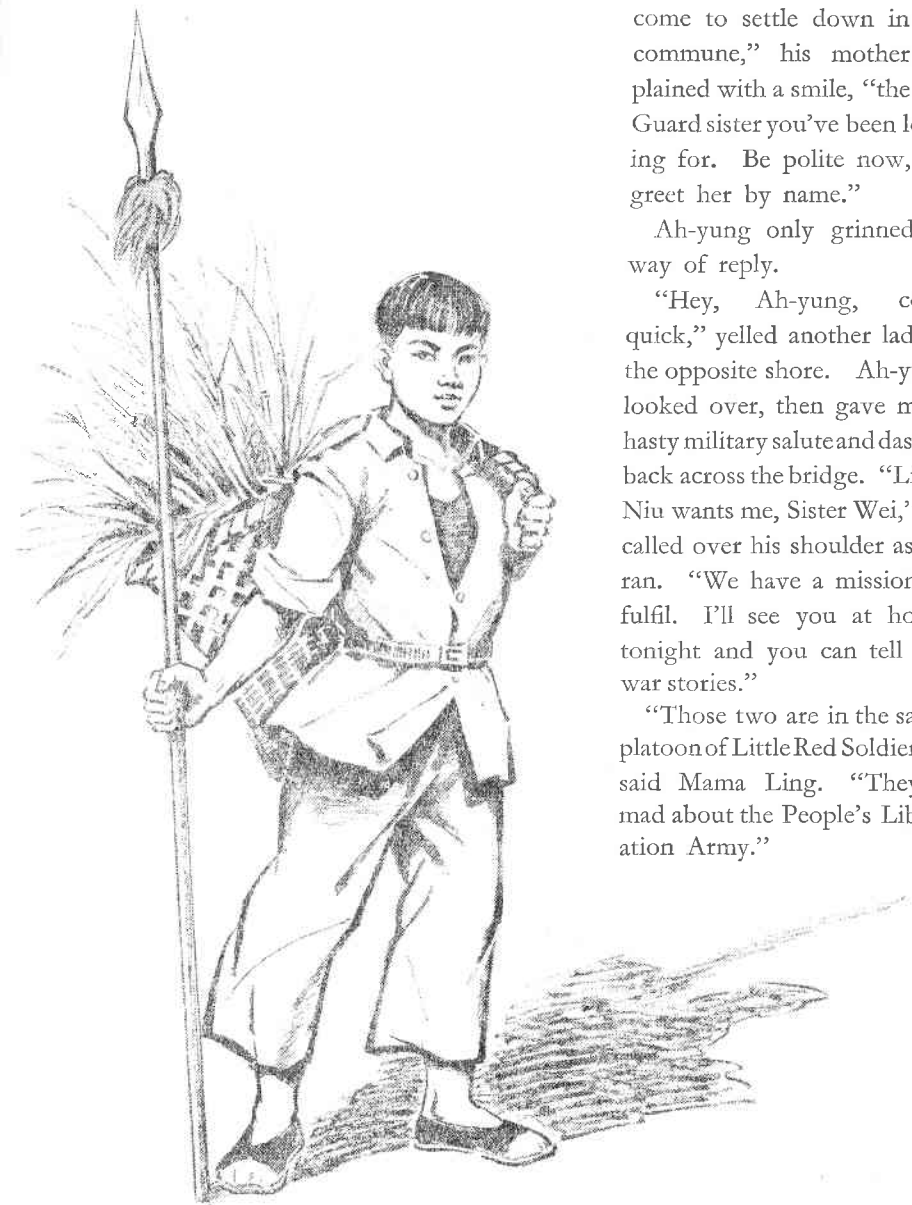
On the opposite bank stood a sturdy lad of twelve or thirteen, a red-tasselled spear in his hand, a small basket on his back, a leather belt around his waist. "Ma!" he shouted and flew across a wooden bridge. He halted before us and gazed at me curiously. He had a tanned face and lively questioning eyes.

"This is Li Wei, who has come to settle down in our commune," his mother explained with a smile, "the Red Guard sister you've been longing for. Be polite now, and greet her by name."

Ah-yung only grinned by way of reply.

"Hey, Ah-yung, come quick," yelled another lad on the opposite shore. Ah-yung looked over, then gave me a hasty military salute and dashed back across the bridge. "Little Niu wants me, Sister Wei," he called over his shoulder as he ran. "We have a mission to fulfil. I'll see you at home tonight and you can tell me war stories."

"Those two are in the same platoon of Little Red Soldiers," said Mama Ling. "They're mad about the People's Liberation Army."



"Does Ah-yung tend ducks for the production team?"

"No, our team has no ducks." She shook her head.

"Do they belong to your family, then?"

"They're not ours either. Those ducks are something of a mystery, you might say." Mama Ling told me the story as we walked.

A few days previous, as the sky was turning light, Ah-yung and his schoolmates were out on "manoeuvres". It had rained the night before and the ground was slippery. As the boys ran along beside the stream, Ah-yung skidded and fell. While getting up, he noticed something white among the reeds. A closer inspection revealed a flock of white ducks. There was no sign of anyone in charge.

The kids drove the ducks ashore and counted them. A total of thirty-two. Ah-yung told his mother about it. "We'll look after them for a few days till their owner comes for them," she said.

"Give that assignment to us," the lad requested.

The Little Red Soldiers were put in charge. They tended the ducks and cut grass for the team's pigs at the same time.

Mama Ling pointed ahead. "That's where we live. We're nearly there."

Not far beyond, a white-walled house with a roof of black tiles nestled in a grove of green bamboo. As we drew nearer I saw a brook on which a pair of big white ducks were gambolling. Mama Ling told me Ah-yung had raised them. He was tremendously fond of them, and fed them worms and snails. The ducks laid an egg each almost every day.

The interior of the house was spacious. "This place belonged to a rich peasant before Liberation," Mama Ling said. "It was given to us during the Land Reform." She put me in the inner room, saying she and Ah-yung would sleep in the outer.

After I had settled in and spread my bedding, I asked her to tell me something about the production team.

Just as she started, Ah-yung came home. He set down his basket and hurried over to me.

"My ma says that you students have come to the countryside in response to Chairman Mao's call. She says you're going to be like my own sister. We've got a fine production team here. It's a model

at grasping revolution and pushing production." His large eyes sparkled with intelligence, although he talked like a bout of cannonade.

I jotted down a few notes on what Mama Ling had told me about the team. Ah-yung peered at my little notebook.

"Sister Wei, put this down, too: Rich peasant Ling Chin-tsai is a big scoundrel. It's true. He smiles all the time, but don't let that fool you. He's rotten to the core. He's always thinking up all kinds of dirty tricks." Ah-yung grabbed my hand and pulled me into the next room.

He pointed to the rafters. "Up there. During the Land Reform the work team found a big cache of guns and ammunition. That scoundrel was hoping for a come-back of Chiang Kai-shek."

I stared into the shadows among the beams. Hot blood seemed to rise within me.

## II

My friendship with Ah-yung started from that day.

When I needed a hoe, he got me one with a well-polished new handle. When I needed a sickle, he sharpened it till it was gleaming bright. When I wanted something to read, he loaned me his copy of *Quotations From Chairman Mao Tsetung* and sat down with me and we studied together.

In summer, school closed for the harvest. Ah-yung and his Little Red Soldiers, leaving one to tend the ducks, went into town every day and collected used sugar-cane stalks. These were converted by the team into fertilizer.

At home one evening I saw him bent over a small table laboriously writing. I read these words, set down in a rather tipsy scrawl: "To the announcer at the county radio station. How are you, uncle? Did you receive the last letter our team sent you? Why haven't you found the owner of those lost ducks for us yet? They're growing big and plump. Hurry and find someone to take them away."

Ah-yung saw me reading his letter, and he asked: "Is that all right, sister?"

I added a few lines and said comfortingly: "Don't worry. When they broadcast this, the owner is sure to come."

"Really?" His pale eyebrows arched high with delight. He folded the letter carefully and put it in an envelope.

I sat down beside the oil lamp and placed my newspaper on the small table. That meant I wasn't going out. Ah-yung quickly hitched his small stool over beside me.

"Tell me another war story, Sister Wei."

"Quit pestering her. She's been busy all day and she's tired," Mama Ling scolded. "Let the girl get a little rest."

"Then tell me again about how you saw Chairman Mao in Peking," the boy pleaded.

I gladly complied. I related how Chairman Mao, wearing a green army uniform, waved to us from atop Tien An Men Gate, as thousands of us Red Guards marched before it.

Ah-yung's lively black eyes grew larger, as if he were actually seeing Chairman Mao. Smiles wreathed his chubby face. Excitedly, he leaped to his feet. Waving his little red book of *Quotations*, he shouted: "Long live Chairman Mao!"

One afternoon, I was returning from a study session at brigade headquarters. I could hear Ah-yung singing in the distance:

When we look at the sun, we see you,  
When we read your writings, we see you,  
When we wear your badge, we see you,  
Respected and beloved Chairman Mao...

Ah-yung was loading fertilizer from a pile into sacks. Though still a boy, he always wanted to do a man's work. Taking up the refrain, I walked over to help him. But before I reached the pile, his song ended abruptly. Strange. An old man was saying something to him and gesticulating wildly. Ah-yung was hotly retorting. I hurried towards them.

The old man had a deep harsh voice, like a water buffalo. "Quit making such a blasted racket," he was growling. "All that noise. It gives me a headache."

"A song about our great leader Chairman Mao. You call that a

racket? Your brain is so reactionary it's turned to stone. That's what makes your head ache."

"Tough little devil, aren't you? A man can't even say a word against you."

"That's it exactly. Your only job is to behave, not go around stirring up trouble." Ah-yung told him flatly. He stood head high, his chest raised.

"Little wretch," the old man grated, his eyes gleaming venomously. He moved towards the boy. But then he saw me approaching, and immediately changed his tone. "Where are your manners, child?" he said. "I ask you nicely not to make so much noise, and you heap curses on me. Let's ask this comrade," indicating me, "to settle this thing."

"Sister Wei, it burns him up to hear me sing," Ah-yung cried angrily. "Well, let's see him stop me." The boy sang at the top of his lungs: "Dear Chairman Mao, you are the sunlight in our minds. . . ." He nodded his head in vigorous accompaniment, as if saying defiantly to the old man: "Eat your heart out, you reactionary scoundrel."

"Sing, all right, sing," the fellow seethed.

Ah-yung thumped one end of his carrying pole on the ground. He clamped his other hand on his hip.

"We run this country now, we've every reason to sing," he stated proudly. "My ma says you reactionary rich peasants are like onions hanging under the eaves. Skin and roots all shrivelled, but still alive inside. Love to make a come-back, wouldn't you? You're dreaming, man, forget it."

The old rascal was stunned into silence. Then he said, with menace in his voice: "I'm not going to argue with you. Later. . . ." He raised his carrying pole to his shoulder furiously and stalked away.

That night while helping Mama Ling cook supper I told her what had happened. Soon the meal was ready, but Ah-yung still hadn't returned. We ate without him. By then it was dark. Ah-yung came in, scowling, his lips a tight line.

I knew something was wrong. Before I could ask, he walked up to his mother and said in a choked voice, as though his throat was stuffed with cotton: "We're missing some ducks."

"How many?" I queried.

"Two."

His mother straightened his army-style cap and brushed the dust from his clothes.

"Don't be so upset. Where did they disappear and how did it happen?"

"This afternoon Little Niu and the boys were tending the ducks and cutting grass for the pigs down by the stream. They heard a lot of threshing around in the water, but they thought the ducks were just playing. But later they counted them and found there were only thirty."

"Don't worry," I said. "I'll help you look for them."

"We searched all around the village and on both sides of the stream, but there's no sign of them." Tears rolled from the lad's eyes.

Mama Ling frowned slightly. She pulled the boy before her and said: "A fine Little Red Soldier platoon leader you are. Something happens and instead of using your head, you drip tears. You say you want to learn from the PLA. Did you ever see any of them cry?"

Her words had an immediate effect. Ah-yung wiped his eyes with the back of his hand and glared.

"We put those ducks in the care of you boys," she continued. "That shows we trust you. You've got to get them back."

Ah-yung nodded.

### III

In the village, rumours flew.

"All kids love to eat. He just took those two ducks home."

I was very annoyed. During lunch I asked Ah-yung: "Have you heard what some people are saying?"

"I've heard. Let them talk," he said coolly. I was astonished at his calm.

He leaned close and whispered a quotation from Chairman Mao in my ear: "**Never forget class struggle.**" He looked at me as if to ask: "Do you get it?"



He wolfed down a few mouthfuls of rice and said: "We Little Red Soldiers are trying to trace the rumour-monger. The Party secretary told us to. We'll find him, for sure."

Through the window we saw the postman tooling up on his bike. "Letter for you, Ah-yung," he shouted with a grin as he entered the yard.

The boy hastily put down his bowl and chopsticks and dashed outside. Reading the letter, he danced for joy. He waved it before my eyes. "The owner of the ducks has been found."

I read the letter. It was from the county radio station. It said the ducks belonged to the poultry farm of the Chiangcheng Commune. I too was pleased. But then I remembered.

"Two of them are missing."

"Don't worry." The boy confidently puffed out his chest. "I'll take care of that." He spoke as if he had some magic formula.

The summer harvest started and the fields were a hive of activity. The wheat was ripe, the rape plants were yellow. In a few short days, they all had to be cut and gathered, the early rice had to be planted and the fields' golden cover changed to a mantle of green.

Though only a boy, Ah-yung was a skilled hand at transplanting rice. He was so deft and fast, he didn't seem to be putting the sprouts into the mud at all. Rather, it was as if he had only to point at the watery surface and six rows of sprouts sprang erect in the paddy field. Each time he got to the end of the field he would work back to complete the row I was laboriously planting.

Suddenly, he straightened up and peered at the sky. "*Aiya*," he exclaimed. "It's going to rain."

I looked up. Except for a few dark clouds in the northeast, the sky was quite clear. "Impossible," I said. "A fine day like this."

"Those dark clouds will be here in a minute. The wind is from the northeast. I'd better go back and get raincoats for everybody. A storm is on the way." He jumped out of the paddy and dashed towards the village, his muddy legs racing along the ridge.

A gust of north wind blew with such abruptness it nearly knocked me off my feet. No sooner had I regained my balance than another

fierce wind struck. The sky turned dark. Tumbling black clouds surged above us like a torrent.

Thunder boomed in the distance, then crashed directly overhead. Big raindrops began to fall.

"Here comes Ah-yung with the raincoats," a boy working near me cheered. Sure enough, a short sturdy figure was running through the rain, coming rapidly closer.

"*Aiya!*" The boy let out a cry of dismay. Ah-yung had disappeared. I saw a head in the big irrigation ditch. He had fallen in. My heart sank.

But he leaped out and raced towards us along the dyke, holding the raincoats. He hadn't bothered to put one on himself. Barefoot, slipping and sliding, he flew along the slippery surface.

"Here, get into this, quick. . . ." Ah-yung handed out the raincoats.

"Were you hurt in that fall?" I asked him.

"Oh, no." He shook his head.

I took his hands and looked at them. Both palms were lacerated and bleeding. "Go on home," I directed, binding his cuts with my handkerchief.

"Go home?" He yanked his hands away and cocked his head to one side. "I've got to help Little Niu drive those ducks back into the shed." He turned and trotted off. His small figure was quickly swallowed up by the misty rain.

Late that night, I was awakened by a clap of thunder. I looked towards Ah-yung's bed. It was empty. Strange. Where had the boy gone? Mama Ling was away at a meeting in the county town. I was responsible for him. Worried, I hopped out of bed.

Lightning slashed across the night sky, followed by an ear-splitting explosion of thunder. Then rain came deluging down. I peered out through the window, consumed with anxiety. Where had Ah-yung gone? Could anything have happened to him? I glanced in the corner of the room. His tasselled spear was not there.

I couldn't wait any longer. I put my raincoat on, rolled up my trouser-legs, took a flashlight, and hurried out. Buffeted by hissing raindrops, I staggered towards the shed where Ah-yung and the boys kept the ducks.

When I was only about a dozen paces away, a sudden childish treble made me jump.

"Halt. Who goes there?"

It was Ah-yung. He was standing in the shadows of the shed, his red-tasselled spear in hand. I went up to him quickly and grasped his arm. He was soaking wet.

"What are you doing here?" I demanded.

"We're on guard," he replied mysteriously.

"Guarding what?" I was puzzled.

"The ducks." He stood like an experienced commander at the front, keeping his eyes peeled for the enemy. I took off my raincoat and started to drape it over his shoulders. He shrugged it off.

"I don't need that, thanks. I'm used to being wet. You wear it, sister."

A few days later, I was returning home from the fields. The two ducks were still missing. Ah-yung came bouncing towards me. He waved something before my eyes.

"Sister, sister, look at this."

I burst out laughing. "A chicken feather. What's there to see?"

He shoved it under my nose. "Look again, carefully. Is this a chicken feather?"

It was shorter and thicker than the feather of a chicken.

"All right. A duck had shed a feather. What's so remarkable about that?"

"You don't understand, sister. A duck might shed a fine, downy feather, but not a big thick one like this. Look here." He pointed to the end of the quill. "This was cut by scissors." He pulled me down and whispered in my ear.

That night, well after ten, he still hadn't returned. I supposed he was guarding the ducks again. But when I went to the shed I found Little Niu on guard.

"Where's Ah-yung?" I asked.

"The production brigade sent a few militiamen to help us. He went with them to search around the rich peasant's house."

I said a few more words to Little Niu, then headed for the home of

Ling Chin-tsai. It was near the stream. Surrounded by bamboo and haystacks, it loomed like an evil shadow in the night.

Suddenly a noise broke out in the distance. Then five or six little dark figures emerged from a bamboo grove and hurried towards the duck shed. I hastily followed them. There in the shed I found Ah-yung criticizing one of his companions who had carelessly made the noise.

#### IV

Mama Ling returned from her meeting. I reported to her the events of the past few days.

In the morning I carried fertilizer to the field with the others. Returning home at noon, I washed my hands in the stream in front of the house. Ah-yung met me at the door. His large eyes gazed all around us, then he slowly opened his hand and showed me an object he had been holding. A duck bone.

"I found this in the rich peasant's pig pen. He throws all his garbage there." Ah-yung angrily clenched his fists. "Now that we've got proof, we're going to have a show-down with that scoundrel. Our forces are already assembled. They're waiting for me."

He sped away like an arrow from a bow. I ran after him, panting. There, on a flat, half a dozen bold little lads were gathered around Ah-yung. Many people were watching from the sides. A militant display.

Further off, I saw the rich peasant squatting beneath the date tree in front of his house, eating with bowl and chopsticks. His beady eyes kept darting glances in the boys' direction. This was obviously something he hadn't expected.

"*Aiyaya*," his wife was screeching, "the Lord of the Sky has eyes. Why are you persecuting us? If we kill and eat one of our own ducks, what business is that of yours?"

One hand on his hip, Ah-yung pointed at the woman with the other. "There's no use denying it. You steal our ducks and then try to lie your way out. You had five ducks before and you've still got five ducks now."

Her face turned ashen, but she continued to cry shrilly: "Persecution, that's what it is. Not only does the leader of the women's team meddle in everybody's business, her son meddles even more. How can a person live? Wronging good folk like us is a crime."

Ah-yung and the boys furiously surrounded her. "You're lying in your teeth."

I looked to see what the rich peasant's reaction was. Damn, he had sneaked away. I ran around to the rear of the house.

Five large white ducks were eating out of a big basin. The rich peasant was standing there with his bowl in hand, furtively peering all around. I stuck close to a crumbling old wall and watched him from a distance. He was in such a state, he didn't see me. He extended a hand and grabbed one of the ducks. I started towards

him when two militiamen and half a dozen mud-plastered boys charged out of the bamboo grove.

"Don't move," they shouted. "Drop that duck. Raise your hands."

They had been concealed there all along.

The startled ducks waddled off in every direction, but were easily caught by the boys.

One of the lads blew a sharp blast on the whistle which had been hanging around his neck. Ah-yung and his boys came racing to the rear of the house, followed by Mama Ling and the neighbours.

The rich peasant angrily ground his teeth. But when he saw that he was caught with the evidence, he wilted and just stood limply.

People shouted slogans and denunciations. A stormy struggle meeting was held on the spot.

## V

After the meeting, Mama Ling hurried to brigade headquarters to report. She returned accompanied by a man pushing a bicycle. I was heading for the fields with Ah-yung and the lads, all carrying sickles, when she hailed us. The boys dashed towards her. I trotted behind.

She introduced us to the stranger. "This is Comrade Huang of the Chiangcheng Commune. He's come for their ducks."

Comrade Huang told us his commune was more than fifty *li* away. One evening during a storm their flocks of ducks had scattered. The people hastily collected them and drove them home. Only later did they discover that some were missing. They searched for the birds in vain. They were very surprised to learn that the ducks were here. Comrade Huang said he wanted to thank the poor and lower-middle peasants on behalf of the members of his commune.

The boys blushed. Ah-yung took Comrade Huang by the hand. "Rest a while. We'll get the ducks."

Ah-yung and his boys had a private conference. I could hear Ah-yung saying something about "... drive them here ... soon as



they've been fed. . . ." Then he and the lads went off in different directions.

Mama Ling had to go back to brigade headquarters for another meeting. She shook hands with Comrade Huang and left. I told him about the struggle regarding the two ducks the rich peasant had stolen.

The boys arrived with the missing flock. Every one of the waddling birds was fat and alert. Ah-yung also brought two large white ducks. I recognized them as the good egg-layers belonging to his family. He signalled to me quickly not to speak and placed the birds in with the rest of the flock. Spreading their wings, they quacked contentedly.

Beneath a locust tree were two large wicker hampers Comrade Huang had brought. We loaded the birds into these. When thirty ducks were inside the hampers, Comrade Huang clamped on the bamboo covers. Ah-yung, who had run home again, now returned with a feeding basin, his face as red as a beet from his exertions, his forehead beaded with sweat.

"Take this too," he said to Comrade Huang. The two family ducks, recognizing the basin, approached him, quacking eagerly. It was only then that Ah-yung noticed that they had been left out of the hampers.

"What about these two?" the boy asked in feigned bewilderment.

"You people here have already been more than kind to our commune. We can't take those ducks. They belong to you."

Ah-yung looked at the other lads, standing around helplessly. He nodded and gave them a significant glance. They swarmed forward. Some tried to grab the hampers, others snatched at Comrade Huang's big hands. But he clamped them down firmly on the covers, and they couldn't budge them.

To break the impasse, I asked: "Ah-yung, does your mother know about these two ducks?"

His eyes lit up and he said to Huang: "That reminds me. It's my mother — I mean the team leader — who told me to do this."

How could we solve the dilemma? Just then Little Niu came running up with two more ducks. He shoved them at Huang.

Panting, he said: "The Party secretary . . . told me . . . to deliver these. . . ."

They were the birds the rich peasant had to pay in return for those he had stolen and eaten. Comrade Huang was very moved. "We accept them," he said. "They shall be an object lesson to the members of our commune in class struggle. We must learn from your spirit."

"Not from us," Ah-yung contradicted him. "Chairman Mao says everybody should study Comrade Bethune's spirit of utter devotion to others without any thought of self."

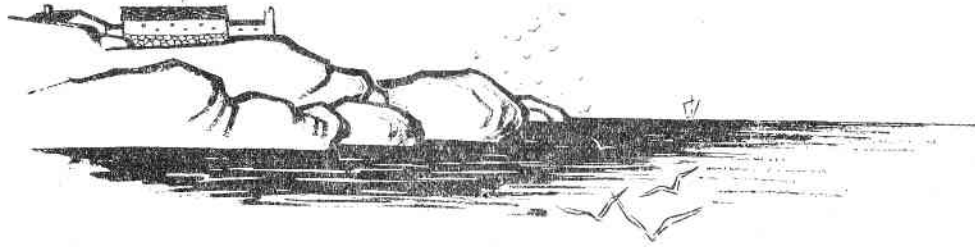
Comrade Huang nodded. I did too.

He hitched the small trailer carrying the hampers to his bike and started down the road. Ah-yung dropped the duck he was holding and handed him the basin.

"There are snails and worms in here. You can feed the ducks with this on the way home."

Comrade Huang mounted his bike and pedalled off. The ducks quacked loudly, as if bidding Ah-yung a fond farewell.





*Yeh Wen-yi*

## Windows

I was sent to a militia-army joint defence unit on the coast. My first task was to see the militia's company commander, Ting Ah-chiao, and talk with her about the training of militiamen.

Ting Ah-chiao's house was an ordinary one. Facing the hill and leaning towards the sea, it was built of black tiles and stone, like other fishermen's houses. Inside, I found stone all over the place—stone floor, stone stove, even the table and benches were of stone. But there were more windows than usual for a fisherman's house. With most of them on the wall facing the sea, some were rather small, so I looked at them quizzically.

There was a saying among the fisherfolk: "A gale from the sea is as fierce as a tiger; it pounces on you when you're least aware of it." What's more, when the tide was rising, spray would dash in through the openings. So what on earth were all these windows for?

"Did you get any mussels, Ah-chiao?" Looking in the direction of the voice I saw an old white-haired woman. It was Ah-chiao's mother. I went to meet her. Screwing up her eyes, she recognized

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Yeh Wen-yi is a PLA man.

me and taking my hands in hers declared, "Ah, it's Comrade Wang!"

"Is Ah-chiao home?" I asked.

"She's been digging mussels. She's coming now." The old woman ushered me inside and dusted a stone bench with her sleeve. "Sit down, please. I'll boil some water for you."

"No thanks, granny. I'm not thirsty. I've come to talk with Ah-chiao about. . . ."

"You PLA comrades are all the same," she cut me short. "Never enough time to stop for a rest or a cup of tea or a smoke."

I lowered my head and beamed silently.

"You may smile," she chided, "but you can't deny it."

I was still puzzled about the windows, so I asked, "What are so many windows for?"

Hardly had I spoken than her eyes dimmed. She fell silent and stared woodenly at the small window in the middle of the back wall. When she finally spoke her eyes were moist. "Comrade, you know what it was like before Liberation. With brigands looting from the east and rent collectors pressing from the west, it was hard for fishing families to survive. But poor and starving as we were, the Kuomintang bandits would not spare us either. They came to rob us, down to the last broken kitchen utensils." Her voice became hoarse and her eyes sparkled with anger.

"One night, the reactionaries came to pressgang labour," she continued. "It was too late to escape; we would have been seen. Ah-chiao's father grabbed a fishing fork and was ready to fight it out. But you can't pit one pitchfork against the enemy's guns and swords, so I persuaded him to slip out through this window."

"The whole family hid in a cavern with water waist-high. A sea breeze was blowing and it was freezing in there. We had no food either. One day passed, then the second and the third. . . . As I was hardly recovered from childbirth, after soaking in the water for all that time, I fainted from hunger and cold. I had no milk for my baby. My husband couldn't stand to see us suffer any longer, so he groped his way home to get some food that night. But before he even set foot in the house Chiang Kai-shek's gang caught him and took him away. They had broken into our house after we fled and

stayed there. That was twenty-one years ago. Ah-chiao's father still hasn't returned. . . ." She stopped, unable to go on any more. I found my fists clenched, rage burning inside me.

"And the child?" I asked with concern.

"I had only one child. But for the arrival of the Communist Party she would have been dead long ago. She's the very person you're looking for."

"Militia company commander Ah-chiao?" I was agreeably surprised.

"Yes. In the past we had only the one window I mentioned. Ah-chiao made the rest later on." Her voice rose. "But not these windows alone are for defence. We can fire at intruders from over there too. Come and see." She led me to the wall and drew out some stones.

"So, another window," I cried out.

"No. It's an opening for the gun."

I took a closer look. The aperture was similar to an embrasure in a pillbox, wider on the outside than on the inside. Peering through it I saw the vast sea with its white caps spreading for miles on end. Sails spotted the surface and sea-birds were rising and dipping. The sight was beautiful.

"Marvellous! What made her think of doing that?"

"On May 20, 1970, Chairman Mao issued the statement, *People of the World, Unite and Defeat the U.S. Aggressors and All Their Running Dogs!* Ah-chiao promptly responded and mobilized the whole village to put the statement on a solid footing."

"Brought the whole village into full play, eh?"

"Yes. My girl said we must make this islet a red frontier fortress so that every household is a sentry-box and every one of us a guard. Whenever aggressors dare to come we won't let a single one of them get away." The old woman laughed gaily. "Every day Ah-chiao has target practice through these openings. Oh, she's almost mad on that. She practises before she goes to sea in the morning and after she comes back, sometimes even forgetting her meals. She keeps a record of every shot."

So saying the old mother trotted over to the bed and fished out

a red note-book from under the pillows. The words "Shooting Record" on the cover caught my eye. I leafed through it and found detailed descriptions about the ranges and angles of each gun opening in relation to various targets. Ah-chiao had converted her own house into a stronghold and the sea-shore a battlefield against the invaders. Now I got the right answer to my question about the windows.

"See, this one is my responsibility." The old woman pointed excitedly at the window in the middle. "If we're invaded, I'm to fire from here. Just think, an old woman like me can also help fighting aggressors!" Her eyes flashed with pride.

"Mother!" A voice called from outside.

"Ah, here she is." The old woman moved towards the door when the girl came running in. She was barefoot, with her trouser-legs rolled up to her knees and a basket of mussels on her arm. Large bright eyes shone above her ruddy cheeks.

"Comrade Wang, are you coming to help us with our training?" she asked as soon as she saw me.

I nodded. Setting down the basket she gripped my hand. Her hand was still very wet.

"We've been expecting you for some time," she said.

"Ah-chiao, let Comrade Wang have a rest before you start talking," her mother put in. "Go and cook the meal."

"All right. But we've nothing special for our guest." She took up the basket. "We can boil some fresh mussels to go with soy sauce," she mused, poking at the mussels.

"No, no," I stopped her. "Mussels are costly stuff. Something ordinary will do."

"That's all right. We get them easily here in the sea."

"But it's difficult to pick them from the deep, isn't it?"

"Well, I suppose so," she laughed. "At least it's the case today, I nearly got into trouble."

"Nothing dangerous I hope?" her mother was a bit startled.

"I was diving in deep water and found a good bunch of mussels on a reef. With one stroke of the shovel I had enough to fill my bag. I sent one lot to the shore and went down again. I had only been

down a few seconds when a shark appeared from behind the rocks. Either it wanted the mussels I'd just dug or it was after me. Hah! Nothing doing, I thought. I had nothing to defend myself except my shovel. So I waited till it came closer and hit at it with all my strength. The blade of the shovel embedded into its head and the water turned black with its blood. I took the opportunity to pick up my bag of mussels and swim to the surface. Pity though, it cost me a shovel!"

"You took quite a risk," I said in awe.

"If you travel much in the mountains you're likely to run into a tiger, and if you often swim in the sea you can't avoid meeting a shark or two. Sharks look terrible but they're like imperialists. If you stand up against them there's nothing to be afraid of. Right, mother?" She giggled.

"What a girl!" Her mother was exasperated but had to laugh.

I held out the "Shooting Record" to her. "Are all these figures accurate?"

"Why not," she answered confidently. "I worked them out by taking aim and then rowed out with some other militiamen to measure the distance, and we tested the results with live shell."

I went over to the wall and stooped to look out through the second loophole. Pointing to a low tree in a cleft of Goose Rock, I demanded, "Well then, Comrade Ah-chiao, let's see how good they are. Take that little tree as a target and fire two shots at it."

"Right. Bring me my gun, ma."

Her mother drew a semi-automatic rifle from under the head of the bed and handed it to her. Ah-chiao adjusted the muzzle of the rifle in the eyelet and took careful aim. Two shots rang out in quick succession. Putting down her gun, she said to me, "Come on, let's collect the wild ducks."

Though a little puzzled by what she was saying, I headed for the door. She pulled me back. "Let's go this way." She dragged the cupboard to one side.

"Ho, there's a tunnel!" I exclaimed in surprise.

"Yes. We've to make due preparations in order to preserve our effectives. We can destroy more enemies this way you know."



The tunnel led to the shore. We got out and went to the edge of the sea. Ah-chiao jumped onto a sampan and rowed out a little way. In a few minutes she was back carrying two fat wild ducks by the feet.

"Report, PLA comrade!" She stood at attention before me and saluted. "I didn't obey your order and changed the target." She paused and chuckled to herself. "I saw a flock of wild ducks settling on the rock just as I took aim, so I fired at them instead." She waved the birds to me. "Another dish for your meal."

"You're quite a sharpshooter."

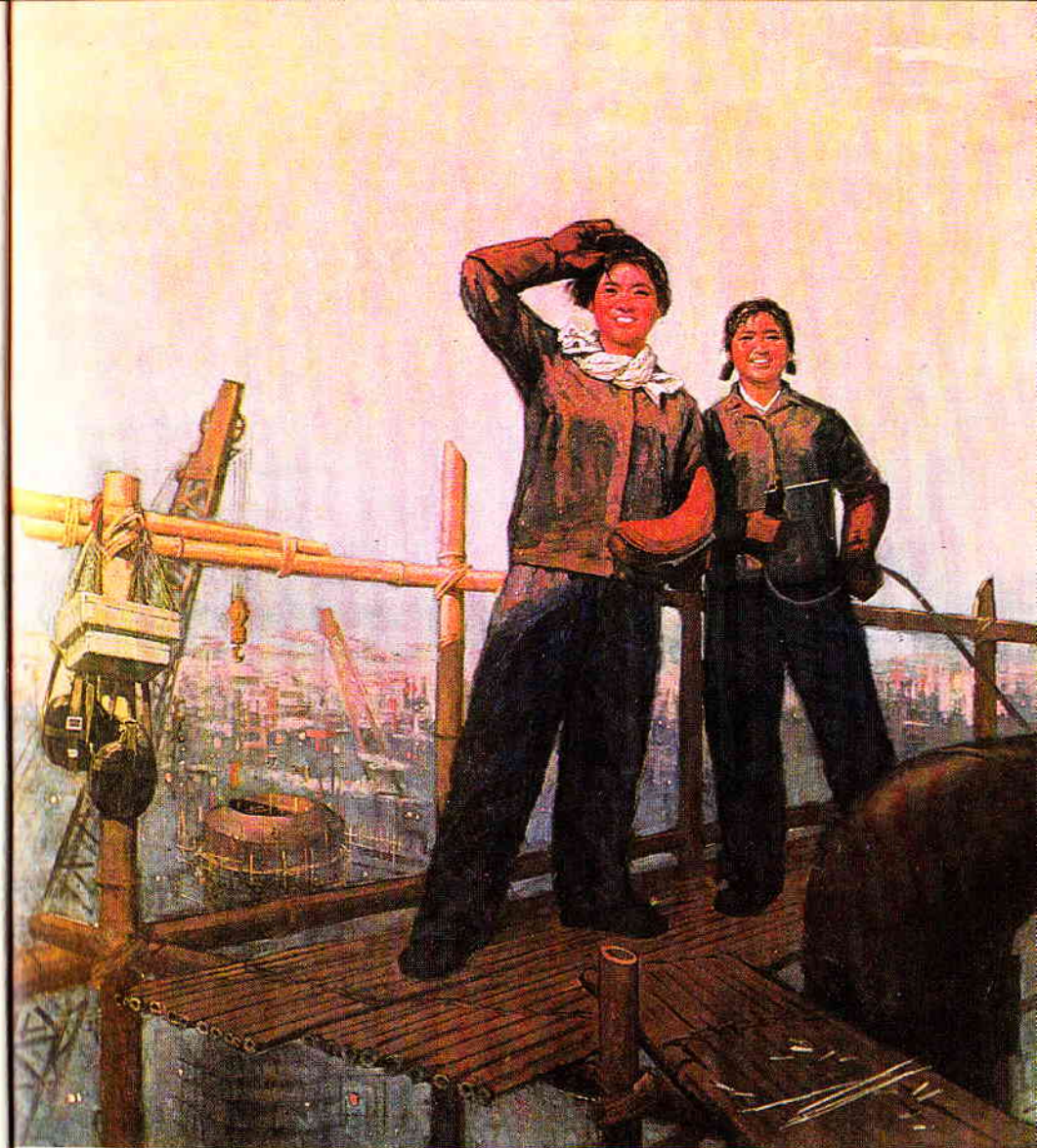
“No, far from that. But as you’ve come to coach us, I’m sure we will be able to improve a lot.” She smiled her thanks. “We’ll practise and study until we have raised our political consciousness as high as you PLA men, then we’ll never miss a target.”

“Well, so far you’ve done an excellent job keeping vigilant and prepared against war,” I praised. “Invaders would find it difficult getting past your bullets.”

“Woo, woo...” Ah-chiao blew on the conch-shell. The militia fell in and the military manoeuvre commenced in bright sunlight.

On shore, men and women started bayonet drill. The sea echoed their shouts that pierced the clouds and shook the rocks. In the harbour, sailors lifted anchors and set sails. Rifles slung across their shoulders, they sculled in orderly groups across the waves. On the waist of a mountain a battery of the Red Detachment of Women answered uproariously to the signal of the commanding red flags. In the village, one gleaming barrel after another poked out of the “windows” of all the houses.

A magnificent military manoeuvre unfolded before me and I felt my heart surging like the rolling sea.



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*Two Welders* (oil painting) by the artists of the Kwangtung Provincial Modern Drama Troupe ▶



## The Switchman

It was a winter's night. A heavily loaded freight train sped like an arrow through the Sungchiang Railway Station, stirring up a cold wind as it passed. Tseng Hsien-chiu, the switchman, jumped down onto the track from the platform to inspect the rails. Finding everything in order, he headed back to the station office.

As he approached, the telephone in the office began to ring. Tseng quickened his step. Inside, he set down his signal lamp and picked up the receiver: "Hello, Sungchiang Station . . . Freight Train No. 2229 . . . arriving 19:24 hours. . . ." He jotted the message down in his note-book as he repeated it and hung up.

Checking the time by his watch and noticing there was still some time before the train was due he lit a cigarette and went outside to smoke it. It was so quiet that the only sound was his own inhaling as he drew on his cigarette, and the little puff as he let little wisps of smoke escape into the night air. It was then a faint clink caught his attention and he fancied something might have fallen onto the rails further on out of sight.

The train was not long due by now. He hastened to the inside room to wake his workmate who was on the night shift. "Comrade Chiang, wake up," Tseng said, shaking him by the shoulder. "There's a train nearly due and I heard a noise along the track. You go and put the barrier over the crossroads while I go and investigate."

So saying he picked up his lamp and hurried outside along the track where he thought he had heard the noise. Nearing a bend in the roadbed he put out his signal light and proceeded more cautiously. Tseng Hsien-chiu was a Communist and was not unaware of the fact that someone might quite deliberately put something across the track to sabotage the train. Class enemies are never reconciled to defeat and Tseng was very much aware of Chairman Mao's teaching, "**Never forget class struggle**". Tseng wasn't going to take any chances, if this were the case. No enemy would get away from him. He crept quietly forward in the darkness.

A little further on he made out a dark form in the gloom. He crept closer. It was just as he had suspected! A man was stooping over the track and laying a big iron bar across the rails. The saboteur had his back to Tseng and apparently was so intent on his evil task that he was unaware of being watched.

Tseng, his eyes aflame with anger, acted at once. He put down the lamp and leapt at the saboteur, knocking him to the ground. The enemy, startled at first by the sudden attack, then began to struggle desperately and gripped the rails to stall for time. Suddenly, the train whistle sounded in the distance. Tseng clenched his teeth. With the determination of a true Communist he vowed to himself: "I'd rather be ground to powder than endanger the train. A Communist is not afraid to die for the revolution!"

He dislodged the saboteur from the rails and with a sudden flow of strength knocked him, unconscious, to the ground. The train was advancing every instant. The tracks vibrated and the whistle sounded again. Forgetting the danger to himself, Tseng turned his attention to the iron bars across the rails. If he failed to get them off, the lives of everyone on the train would be in jeopardy. "A Communist should fear neither hardship nor death," he thought to himself. "I must clear the track, no matter what happens to me!"

With this fighting spirit urging him on he began to heave and tug at the heavy bars and slowly removed them one by one to the side of the track. By now the headlight of the train was close enough to cast a little light on the section where he was working. The rails gleamed full of foreboding. The train was rushing on. Every instant counted. Sweat streamed from Tseng, both from the tension and his stupendous effort.

At this crucial moment, the saboteur came to and struggled to his feet. Tseng was beside himself with anxiety lest the enemy get away but it was impossible for him to stop removing the bars when the train was coming closer every second.

At that moment he heard a grunt and glanced up just long enough to see the saboteur hit the ground with a thud and lie still. Tseng's workmate, Chiang, had arrived just in time to put the enemy out of action, and then he too leapt onto the railway line waving his emergency lamp and frantically blowing his whistle.

The train's headlight lit up the sky and its roar was deafening but still Tseng worked on. His comrade joined him in shifting off the last bar and just as it rolled to the side of the track the train came to a halt within a few feet of the two workers. The driver had seen the sudden signal just in time for the emergency brake to be effective.

The driver and some of the train workers leapt down from the engine and ran to the side of the two men, asking what had happened and whether they were all right. They inspected the track to see if there were any further dangers ahead. Assured that the way was safe to continue, they thanked the two signal men for their bravery and the train went on its way, slightly late but nevertheless, unharmed.

Tseng and his comrade turned their attention to the saboteur lying in a heap beside them, roused him and led him firmly back to the station where they phoned the militia to come and arrest him.



### *Chi Peng*

## Friendship in Full Bloom

— *Written in Honour of the Afro-Asian Table Tennis Tournament*

Warm is the autumn sunshine in October  
When chrysanthemums bloom in splendour;  
Vivid crimson are the leaves of the maple,  
When Peking welcomes her many friends.

Welcome, friendly Afro-Asian table tennis teams,  
How dear to meet friends, both old and new.  
Together we'll foster goodwill betwixt peoples and sportsmen,  
In our two great continents the sport will grow.

Exciting matches so well played,  
Bear witness to far deeper friendship;  
The shuttling silver balls have woven ribbons of light  
Tying together the hearts of Afro-Asian peoples.

Warm is the autumn sunshine in October  
When chrysanthemums bloom in splendour.  
The blossoms of friendship will bear rich fruit,  
In unity we'll combat, for an ever youthful tomorrow.



*Wang Hsin-kuo*

## Chairman Mao Visits Our Ship

Chairman Mao is to visit our ship!  
Glad news fly, swift as a spring breeze;  
Even the mighty Yangtse sings with joy,  
Red banners festoon our entire ship.

Happiness spreads to both river banks,  
Flowery slopes a colourful tapestry;  
The great river is a glistening brocade,  
From the Kunlun Range to vast East China Sea.

Chairman Mao waves to us from the gangway,  
Smiles, then comes down among us all;  
"Long live Chairman Mao, a long, long life to you!"  
The ship is loaded with our boundless love.

Planets revolve around the sun,  
Our hearts are linked with Chairman Mao;  
A thousand cheers, ten thousand songs  
Overwhelm even the river's roar.

Small sails jostle around in greeting,  
As Chairman Mao strides onto the bridge;  
Rapids and whirlpools are wreathed in smiles,  
Crimson clouds are reflected in waves below.

Chairman Mao shakes hands with us,  
His kindness vast, our joy beyond expression.  
Happy wavelets dance and lift their heads,  
Singing aloud on their way to the sea.

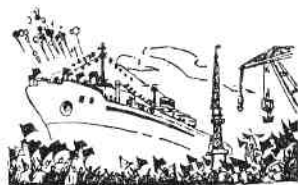
Chairman Mao waves his hand to us,  
Small clouds gather around to watch;  
Chairman Mao points to the flowing water  
That gleams with colour like flowers in bloom.

Many a time when dark clouds gathered  
We opened your book of poems and read:  
**"I care not that the wind blows and the waves beat;  
It is better than idly strolling in a courtyard."**  
Then we stood strengthened in the wind and storm.

Often across turbulent tidal waves,  
We looked towards Peking's Tien An Men;

When Chairman Mao charts our course,  
With mounting confidence we go on our way.

This happiness we've shared today  
We'll tell our children and they, other generations.  
*S.S. Tungfangbung* 1028 will brave all storms  
To make history for ever and a day!



*Yu Tsung-hsin*

## Scene on a Birch Tree

By a mountain spring  
Where horses are watered,  
Birch trees growing close and tall  
Touch the clouds.  
I do not know which hunter  
Used his knife to cut a scene  
On the bark of a birch tree.

The carving is of Tien An Men  
Each line carved with love.  
With vivid strokes and bold,  
This unknown artist made  
The tall cloud-pillars,  
The majestic red walls

And massive ancient tower  
With its bright painted eaves.

Who says this new Olunchun hamlet,  
Buried deep in the Khingan Range,  
Is too far from Peking?  
Gazing at this fine design  
Adorned with fleecy clouds,  
It seems to me that Peking  
Is right here before me.

This crystal mountain spring  
Reflects the red flags over Peking!  
This birch grove surely touches  
The same sky that covers Peking.  
The birds that sing here  
Sing the same songs in Peking.  
These towering mountains  
Are closely linked with Peking.

There's no need to ask,  
"Who is the artist?"  
All our Olunchun people  
Have for Peking a heartfelt love.  
The very moment they see  
A portrait of Chairman Mao  
When they enter a place  
The song, *The East Is Red*,  
Flows from hearts and lips.

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*Newspaper Reading* (painting in the traditional style)  
by Yu Chih-hsuch ▶



*Cheng Fan and  
Chuan Yeh*

## Militia Women on Tungting Lake

Dawn comes up. Rosy clouds drift away  
As morning wakes the sleeping lake.  
Rifle shots ring sharply from the reeds;  
Floating targets bobbing far across the water  
Are closely riddled with bullet-holes.

Water birds ask in wonder:  
“Who is that at target practice?”  
The ripples reply with great glee,  
“What fine sharpshooters they are!”

Suddenly conch-shell trumpets sound  
Here and there among the rushes.  
From their dense ranks small boats swarm;  
Boats full of laughter, boats full of song,  
Filled with our young militia women.

Brand-new rifles have a dazzling sheen,  
Ruddy cheeks glow in the morning sun;  
Skimming the wide expanse of Tungting Lake,  
Brave red hearts full of vim,  
Are learning to prepare against war.

They dare to ride the swiftest speedboat,  
To capture stubborn foes,  
They'll dive into the deepest water,  
If vicious "water-demons" lurk there.  
Facing the prow they look ahead,  
The Five Lakes and Four Seas  
Join and mingle in their hearts.

Back from target practice,  
The girls sing cheerfully on the way;  
**"How bright and brave they look,  
Shouldering five-foot rifles!"**  
Their voices resound over the vast lake.



*Liang Wen-cheng*

## The Mountain Postman

Wearing a wide-brimmed bamboo hat,  
With mail-bag slung across one shoulder;  
Up and down he goes through the mountains,  
To visit every Chuang village.

Clouds and mist screen the pathways,  
Steep cliffs tower on every side;  
Month by month, year in year out,  
Along the winding trails he goes.

He delivers newspapers en route,  
Takes Chairman Mao's works everywhere;  
Soft spring breeze, rain and dew,  
Bring Tachai\* flowers to early bloom.

\*A village in Shansi Province. Self-reliant and hard-working, the former poor and lower-middle peasants turned rocky hills into fertile land and have ensured bumper harvests every year. The "Tachai Spirit" now flowers everywhere in China's countryside.



As he walks with giant strides,  
Revolutionary seeds he scatters;  
Coming and going, his red heart  
Is the link that binds us all together.



*Hu Wen*

## Militant Songs and Dances from Romania

Last October while the China Dance Drama Troupe was touring Romania, the *Doena* Art Troupe of the Armed Forces of the Socialist Republic of Romania paid its third visit to our country. Through their outstanding song and dance performances the Troupe conveyed to us the friendship of the Romanian people and army.

Art works created for workers, peasants and soldiers should have revolutionary political content combined with the highest artistry. The Romanians have succeeded remarkably well in this respect. Both their music and dancing had a strong national flavour, and reflected the revolutionary life and traditions of the Romanian people and army. They were both effective and inspiring.

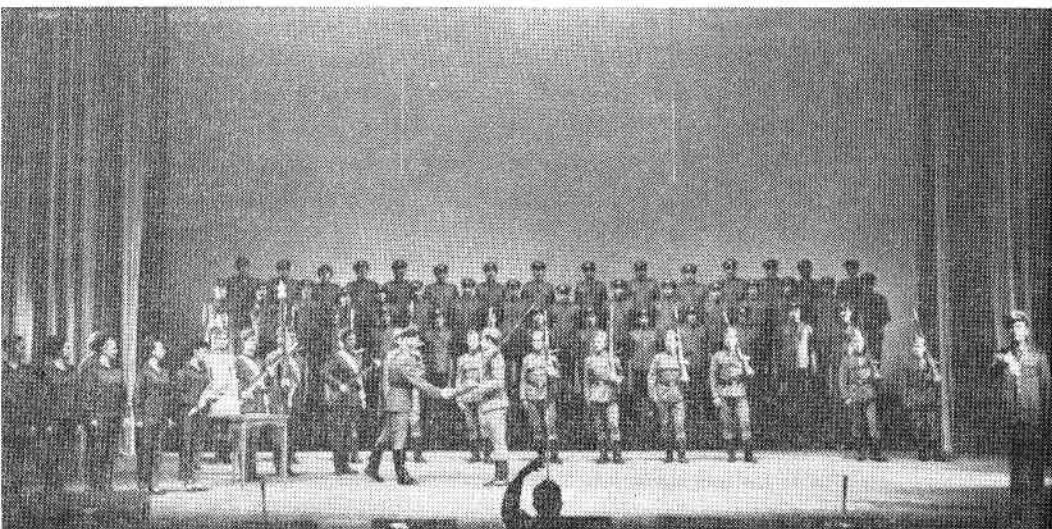
*Ode to Our Party* and *Motherland, Party*, each a stirring chorus, convey the noble feelings of the Romanian people and army for their motherland and Party and their determination to build their socialist motherland under Party leadership. The solos *Beloved Motherland*, *Beautiful Hills and Rivers*, *Prosperous Motherland* and *The Pride of My Republic*

are fresh melodies, that highlight the strenuous but happy labour of the Romanian people participating in the socialist construction of their country.

Similarly, *Harvest Morning* and *Song of the Miners*, each a chorus without accompaniment, create a picture of how the Romanian peasants and workers are building their beautiful motherland with one heart and one will. They blend lyricism with fine political feeling. The tunes, with their many variations, are colourful.

The two army choruses *I Am a Fighter* and *Gheorghita Joins the Army* are robust and militant. They tell how happily revolutionary fighters join the army and how strong their determination is to resist imperialist aggression and defend their socialist motherland. Conducted and directed by Major General Kinu Stelian, these performances demonstrate the loyalty of the Romanian people's armed forces to the people and the Party.

The Romanian artists keep in close contact with the masses. Each item they perform bears the deep imprint of their people's life and so retains a strong national style. *Hora Primaverii* and *The Skylark* played on the *Cimpoi* and *nai* (a flute made of many small bamboo tubes) are characteristically Romanian. The artists' skilful playing



of these instruments and the lively and moving melodies enchanted audiences.

Of the folk dances given by the art troupe, which are typical of certain localities in Romania, the *Calusari*, *Transilvania* and *Muntenia* are fine examples. With quick beautiful movements and colourful costumes, the dances emphasize the high aspirations, fighting spirit and optimism of the happy Romanian people today.

*Ecaterina Teodorescu* is an opera with dancing. Its fine composition, concise choreography and vigorous dances bring out the heroine in full relief. Ecaterina Teodorescu was a woman fighter during the First World War who gave her life in the struggle against the German aggressors and for her motherland's freedom and independence.

As the curtain rises the heroine stands in a sculptured pose on the stage, looking to where she points far ahead with her left hand while holding a gun in her right hand. An old man enters with bunches of flowers and tells of her great deeds: When the aggressors invaded her country, she took up a gun and went to the battle front; during the war she grew quickly into a brave fighter who, together with her comrades-in-arms, charged the enemy on the smoke-covered battlefield; even when seriously wounded she was still burning with anger, her eyes flashing with hatred of the foe.

The plot is close knit, the episodes simple and compact, yet the drama is extremely imaginative, taking the audience back to the events of those war years. The performance makes a very strong impact.

In 1970 Romania was hit by a serious flood. Armymen and civilians fought bravely together against this natural disaster. With this as background, the dance drama *Ready to Respond to the Call* pays tribute to the heroism of army and people.

In the dance the commanders and fighters gather in ranks, ready to fight the flood. When the deluge comes they plunge into it and battle selflessly to save both people and state property. The realistic dance movements show them sometimes diving into deep water, sometimes slowly breasting the waves. When a mother is drowning a fighter dashes through the waves to her rescue; when a child is washed away, the soldiers risk their own lives to save him. The strong ties the army establishes with the people and the heroism the fighters demonstrate when they conquer the flooded Danube left an indelible impression upon the audience.

During their tour the Romanian artists also performed the Chinese numbers *The East Is Red*, *The Great Road* and *Harvest Dance*. The enthusiasm with which they executed these displayed the great friendship existing between the people and army of Romania and those of China. Such revolutionary friendship and militant unity is as sturdy as green pines that weather all storms. So too will they persist in their socialist construction and their common struggle against imperialism and its lackeys.

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*Plum Blossoms Welcome the Whirling Snow* (painting in the traditional style) by T'ien Shih-kuang ►



## Revolutionary Japanese Ballet

During the celebration of the 22nd anniversary of the establishment of the People's Republic of China last year, the Japanese Matsuyama Ballet Troupe came to perform in our country, bringing with them the deep friendship of the Japanese people.

Following the principle "create revolutionary national ballet for the Japanese people", in their works the artists of the troupe endeavour first to ensure revolutionary content and then to express it in a finished artistic form loved and appreciated by the people. One of their fine achievements is the ballet *The White-Haired Girl*, adapted from a Chinese opera of the same title which depicts how the peasants fight against feudal exploitation. A means for educating the people and encouraging them to fight against their oppressors, it has been enthusiastically received by the broad masses of Japan, particularly by workers and peasants. It was quite a hit in China too.

The staging of *The White-Haired Girl*, however, was not smooth sailing. Ever since work on it began, obstructions and hindrances created by the U.S.-Japanese reactionaries had to be overcome.



But, fully confident that the cause of the people's struggle would win, the artists of the Matsuyama Ballet Troupe persisted in their efforts. By continually perfecting their ballets regardless of what might happen to them, they eventually succeeded in repulsing the attacks by the U.S.-Japanese reactionaries and the revisionists.

During their tour of China the troupe also staged some newly composed ballets reflecting the struggle both in Japan and in the world. One of these, *Vietnamese Maid*, depicts the fight of the Vietnamese people against the U.S. aggressors

and for national salvation.

The story of this ballet takes place in a village in south Viet Nam. A grandfather and his grand-daughter are asked by a woman fighter of the National Liberation Front to set up a signal post. They are to fly a kite at the river bank. The woman fighter then returns to the opposite bank to lead the other fighters across the river. When the enemy unexpectedly surrounds the village the grandfather and his grand-daughter try to notify the people's soldiers but are discovered by enemy agents before they can bring down the warning kite. The grandfather is captured, but the girl continues in various ways to alert the soldiers. Finally she dies in the struggle to protect the people's armed forces.

Through the story of how the Iejima villagers opposed the occupation of their land by the U.S. troops, *Five Okinawan Girls* illustrates the struggle of the Japanese people against the U.S.-Japanese reactionaries. *Japanese Drum*, another ballet, portrays the fighting spirit of the Japanese youth and their unity with the people of Asia and Africa.

Ballets like these are knives aimed at the very heart of U.S.-Japanese reaction.

Following the principle of "taking over revolutionary tradition and making foreign things serve Japan", the troupe has made great achievements in developing a ballet technique with a strong national flavour. In *The White-Haired Girl* they not only use traditional Western ballet technique but have also adapted many Japanese and Chinese dance movements to enrich the dance vocabulary. For instance, to present the atmosphere of elation as the villagers burn the landlord's deeds, the troupe composed a stirring *yangko* dance, which is a combination of vigorous movements from the Japanese folk dance, lively Chinese dance steps and swift Western ballet turns. The three are organically linked and, accompanied by percussion instruments, produce a very exciting effect.

Similarly, in *Vietnamese Maid* composed by Matsuyama Mikiko, many movements from the Vietnamese folk dance have been mingled with those of the traditional ballet, as in the girl's dance with a skipping rope, the *pas de deux* of the grandfather and grand-daughter and the woman fighter's dance. These vividly bring out the environment and emphasize the qualities of the heroes.

Also, many Japanese folk dance movements have been incorporated into *Five Okinawan Girls*. In a harvest scene the villagers execute one lively dance after another to the rhythm of hand clapping, which imparts a strong Japanese quality.

The artists of the Matsuyama Ballet Troupe are not only accomplished in traditional ballet technique but are also experienced in using folk dances to develop a national ballet that reflects the life of the people. They work with revolutionary enthusiasm and maintain a serious and careful attitude towards their work. The

heroes created and portrayed by the veterans and younger players made a deep impression on us. The brave girls in *Five Okinawan Girls* who rip up the wooden stakes from the land occupied by the U.S. troops for their drill ground and, united as one, boldly charge the enemy despite ruthless suppression, are still fresh in our memory.

In *Vietnamese Maid*, the little girl is sweet and gentle to her grandfather and the woman fighter. But to the enemy agents, she is hard and unyielding; together with her grandfather she fights them bravely. Regardless of enemy guns pointed at her, she shouts a warning to the comrades across the river that the enemy is there and they should not cross over. When the enemy's bullets strike her she remains confident to the last. Before she dies she releases a little bird the woman fighter had given her. A symbol of freedom, the bird soars into the sky as if to tell the people the world over of the Vietnamese people's revolutionary heroism.

The music of *Vietnamese Maid*, *Five Okinawan Girls* and other works, melodious and distinctive in nuance, is very moving. It suits the dances well and accentuates their central theme.

Associating with the comrades-in-arms of the troupe throughout their visit in our country, we are reminded of a line of a poem written by Lu Hsun for a Japanese friend thirty-nine years ago. It reads,



“Frozen earth sends out the flowers of spring.” Like a spring flower, the Matsuyama Ballet Troupe has sprung from frozen earth and is now blossoming in splendour among the thorny bushes — the outgrowth of the U.S.-Japanese reactionary “culture” which has tried hard to create public opinion for the revival of Japanese militarism. In the past twenty-odd years since its birth in 1948, the troupe has gone through many difficulties and hardships, but it has never stopped fighting. With revolutionary enthusiasm and a stubborn militant will its members have persisted in their struggle against U.S. imperialism, modern revisionism and the revival of Japanese militarism. The Matsuyama Ballet Troupe is indeed an experienced art group with an unswerving revolutionary spirit — one we can learn much from.

## New Writings by Workers

*Molten Iron Flows*, a collection of narratives about the construction of a mining and iron and steel base known as the Project 9424, was recently published by Shanghai People's Publishing House. Running to 300,000 words, it is another book of writings from the pens of workers since the cultural revolution. The other well-known ones include *The Nanking Yangtse River Bridge* and *The Song of the Project* 125. Construction of the Project 9424 started on April 24, 1969, the closing date of the Ninth National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party, and the project was named in its honour. The 25 stories in the collection show how the work was carried out in accordance with the principle of "maintaining independence and keeping the initiative in our own hands and relying on our own efforts" as laid down by Chairman Mao. *The Third Battle* appearing in this issue is one of them.

Many workers take part in the construction: outstanding veteran workers who suffered bitterly in the old society and who love and devote themselves to the socialist cause; experienced revolutionary

cadres; young people who have matured in the class struggle and the struggle for production. They are loyal to Chairman Mao and Mao Tsetung Thought and have a high sense of responsibility to the revolutionary task of the proletariat. As a collective, they work hard day and night, rain or shine, for a common goal. Keeping the needs of both China and the world in mind, they diligently study Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tsetung Thought, criticize Liu Shao-chi's revisionist line and endeavour to complete the project in an economical way. By tackling through hard work the difficulties which confront them, and by taking a scientific attitude, they win one victory after another.

*Molten Iron Flows* vividly portrays the deep understanding of these workers for the historical mission of their class, and their conscientious fight to realize it. Their noble qualities are brought out to the full through descriptions of incidents and struggles which take place on the construction site. This is an outstanding characteristic of the book as a whole.

*The Third Battle*, a reportage, through the story of assembling a sintering machine, shows the enthusiasm and resourcefulness of Yen Hui-ming, a veteran worker with a boundless sense of responsibility for his work. Yen is a Communist, whole-heartedly devoted to the cause of revolution. His mental outlook is revealed through his stirring deeds while working on the project. In a series of descriptions of his struggle to overcome illness and difficulties his image comes out in bold relief.

Chairman Mao has pointed out: "Socialism, which is something new, can come into being only through severe struggles against what is old." This is certainly true in the construction of the project. There is a continual battle against adverse natural conditions, but it is the struggle between the two classes, two lines and two ideologies of the proletariat and bourgeoisie, a struggle that runs through the whole process and dominates everything. Each victory is won only through intense struggle. With the spirit of daring to think and daring to act, the workers, cadres and technicians break down restrictions and out-of-date rules and promote technical innovation through

revolutionizing their thinking. The creativeness of the proletariat is demonstrated most prominently throughout the entire project. *Aiming High* and other stories centre upon the struggle between the two lines and two ideologies and reveal in its course the development of the heroes' mental outlook.

Another characteristic of the book is that the events described are actual happenings and the characters are real people found at the construction site. The writers have extracted raw material from their everyday life, refined and generalized it and made it more concentrated and more typical than life.

*Aiming High* deals with the construction of a giant coke oven. The story unfolds against a background of complicated struggle, laying particular stress on the noble spirit of Chao Sung-chuan, a revolutionary cadre, Wei Pao-teh, a veteran worker, and Fang Hua, a technician. All aim high, work hard and discharge their duties with flying colours. From then we can see how the general line of **"Going all out, aiming high and achieving greater, faster, better and more economical results in building socialism"** has been carried out on the industrial front. This brings out the central theme of the narrative most emphatically.

A third characteristic of this collection is its revolutionary enthusiasm and vitality. All the authors are themselves workers on the project. They write these stories collectively to praise the heroes of their own class and the wonders they create, and to take readers back to the seething activities on the construction site.

*Erect As a Mountain* portrays Kao Hung-ying, a woman welder who climbs dangerous heights to remove obstructions to the assembling of a blast furnace. Her heroism, boldness and consummate technical skill earn the admiration of the masses, who help her to mature into a fine socialist worker. She is described in a cogent and moving way. The authors are able to do so because they have worked shoulder to shoulder with their heroines and heroes, shared weal and woe with them and battled together with them. This also accounts for the lucidity with which they bring out the noble feelings of the Chinese working class armed with Mao Tsetung Thought.

Most of the writers are new at literary creation. They will have to make still greater effort in order to perfect their art. But this collection shows that they have great potentiality and unlimited creative power. It is also eloquent testimony that the masses of workers, peasants and soldiers are the creators not only of material wealth but of spiritual values as well. Their own deeds have placed them on the stage of literature and art. This was made possible only by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, which has won decisive victories under the guidance of Chairman Mao's revolutionary line.



### Performing for People in a Hilly Region

Living up to Chairman Mao's teaching that **"Literature and art should serve the workers, peasants and soldiers"**, the Peking and *pingchu* opera troupes, both of Peking, went to give performances in the hilly countryside around the city. They performed *The Red Lantern*, a modern revolutionary Peking opera, *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy*, a *pingchu* opera, and scenes from other model revolutionary



theatrical works for a total audience of some 300,000 workers, peasants and soldiers.

The troupes divided up into small groups and these went to out-of-the-way valleys, not only to perform but to live with the peasants and learn from them the good qualities of the working people. The actors carried water, swept yards for the former poor and lower-middle peasants, became barbers and mechanics cutting hair and repairing farm instruments. To learn more about class struggle and raise their understanding of the necessity to continue revolution under socialism, the actors asked the former poor peasants to acquaint them with their sufferings under cruel exploitation in the old society.

The performances by these two troupes were warmly received by the families living in the hills.

### Literary and Art Festival Held in Shanghai

At a festival held recently in Shanghai, scenes and arias from model revolutionary theatrical works, songs, dances and plays, composed by

the revolutionary masses themselves, were performed. The purpose of this festival was to encourage spare-time cultural activities so that literature and art might better serve socialist revolution and socialist construction. Some twenty items were chosen for the occasion from more than a hundred presented by 60 units.

These items were original and brief. *The Drivers Have Seen Chairman Mao*, an all male chorus, sung and acted by workers at the Shanghai Electric Motors Plant, showed their boundless love for Chairman Mao. *Weaving Straw Mats*, an operetta produced by members of the Chih sien Commune, reflected the class love of the poor and lower-middle peasants for the People's Liberation Army. Other items like the dance *Fighting Beside the Steel Furnace*, and songs by Little Red Soldiers were all warmly received.

### Telling Revolutionary Stories

A forum to discuss the writing and telling of revolutionary stories was held in Chinshan County, on the outskirts of Shanghai, a district long known for its story-telling. The tellers of revolutionary stories and spare-time writers took part in the forum which was sponsored by various cultural groups, the Shanghai People's Publishing House and *Wenbui Bao*, a Shanghai daily.

Chairman Mao's *Talks at the Yenan Forum on Literature and Art* and other important documents were carefully studied by participants. Experiences were exchanged, study classes organized and story-telling groups set up in various people's communes. During the National Day holidays story-telling sessions were held in tea-houses. Recently, many new stories about workers, peasants and soldiers have been produced and broadcast to commune members. Some were chosen and submitted to the workers, peasants and soldiers at the forum to solicit comment and suggestions for improvement.

The telling of revolutionary stories is an art which enables the masses to educate and encourage themselves. It became widespread on the outskirts of Shanghai during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution and, since this forum, it will certainly improve and gain in popularity.

### Colour Documentary "Shashihyu"

Shashihyu is the name of a production brigade in Tsunhua County, Hopei Province. It has become widely known because, through their own efforts, the peasants have transformed nature and gained high yields. A colour documentary of their magnificent achievement was shown recently in China. Shashihyu is situated south of the Great Wall in the rocky Yenshan Mountains. Before Liberation the whole area abounded with rocks, where both earth and water were as scarce as pearls. After Liberation, the poor and lower-middle peasants in the Shashihyu Brigade, full of determination and hard working, cut through rock cliffs to build irrigation ditches. They made terraces which they edged with rock walls. Then they carried earth in baskets from far away and spread it a foot thick over the terraces. Working





strenuously year after year repairing the havoc caused by storms, hail and drought, they have built up terrace after terrace of high yielding cropland and orchards from which they now reap rich harvests.

### Chinese Artist Delegation Visits Viet Nam

A group of Chinese artists, headed by Kao Hung, art instructor at the Military Museum of the Chinese People's Revolution and painter of the well-known oil painting *On the Eve of a Decisive Battle*, arrived in Hanoi in October 1971 for a friendly visit. They were invited by the Viet Nam Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. Members of the delegation included Liu Chunhua, an artist whose oil painting *Chairman Mao Goes to Anyuan* is so popular, and Kuan Chi-ming, who painted *Charge to the Last Breath* in gouache — opaque water colours prepared with gum.

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## Historical Revolutionary Songs

(In English)

This is a collection of ten historical revolutionary songs. They are: *Workers and Peasants Are One Family*, *Graduation Song*, *Song of Advance*, *The Great Road*, *Workers and Peasants Make Revolution* and *New Women* composed by Nieh Erh; *Battle Song of Resistance Against Japan* and *Go to the Enemy's Rear* by Hsien Hsing-hai; *March of the Swords* by Mai Hsin, and *Battle March* by Pei Chih. These songs are familiar to many revolutionary people.

Guided by Chairman Mao Tsetung's proletarian line on art and literature and proceeding from the class viewpoint, revolutionary art and literary workers have today re-written or revised the words. The new words stress the leadership of Chairman Mao and the Chinese Communist Party, Chairman Mao's great concepts on the people's army and people's war, and the revolutionary role of the worker and peasant masses. Thus the revolutionary nature of the melodies is better brought out and the actual conditions of the revolutionary struggles of the theme more effectively portrayed.

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