# CHINESE LITERATURE

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*LIU PAI-YU*

# Typhoon

A flurry of urgent knocks on the door awakened Wu Hsing-wen, chief of the People's Liberation Army coastal observation station. Although he had been sleeping soundly, years as a seasoned battle campaigner had implanted in him the habit of getting up immediately at the least sound. But even before his feet touched the floor, a young soldier barged into the room, crying:

"Station chief, station chief, a typhoon! It's coming this way!"

A typhoon! Truly a fearful word to the people living along the sea coast, a word that stirred the heart like a call to battle.

Wu hurried to the rattling window and forced it open. A wild rain-laden wind at once tore at his hair and shirt. But he did not fall back. Gripping the window-sill, he leaned out and peered at the inky night sky. Blue, white and fiery red streaks of lightning writhed and danced like ten thousand dragons. Not far from the cliff-top observation station was an army barracks, also very firmly built. Below was the great sea. Ordinarily, the sea was calm and the breeze was warm and gentle. White gulls soared and dipped outside the window. But now the sea thundered angrily in the darkness, savagely heaving, flinging high white spray, as if trying to smash the cliff to pieces and swallow it up. Driving against the window, the storm seemed to be seeking openings through which

to pour in and rip off the roof, blow down the walls. Only by their combined efforts were Wu and the young messenger, Hsu, able to push the window shut. By then, both of them were drenched.

Wu wiped the rain from his face and looked at his watch. The luminous hands pointed to eleven forty-five. Lightning flashed between claps of thunder. His ardent young eyes fixed on his chief, the messenger waited for orders.

"To the rescue!" cried Wu. He flung open the door and ran to the barracks. The men jumped from their beds when he entered and hastily began to dress. A glaring flash of lightning illuminated him as he stood in the doorway. The PLA fighters hurried towards him. In the ringing decisive voice he had raised so many times on the battlefield, he shouted:

"Comrades, we've got to save the villagers! We can't let the typhoon take a single life. Leave one man here to guard the station. The rest of you come with me, now!"

He turned and went out into the howling storm. Amid thunder and lightning, the men, some grabbing their raincoats, some bare to the waist, ran after him.

The observation station was a small one. Including the chief, it was manned by only a dozen or so soldiers. The barracks faced the sea and had its back to groves of bamboo and tangerine trees. A steep path led down to a fishing village near the beach.

With almost his entire complement, Wu raced through the gale towards the village. Who could have known that the typhoon would strike so suddenly and so fiercely. The wind and rain drove with such savage intensity that the men were gasping for breath. If you turned your body to avoid receiving the full brunt, the weight of the storm tried to bear you to the ground.

One shoulder lowered, Wu bucked head first into the gale. Someone grasped his left arm and he looked around impatiently. It was Young Hsu, the messenger.

"What are you up to, Young Hsu?" he barked.

"Chief, take this. . . ."

The boy draped a raincoat over his shoulders.

"I don't want it! . . ." Young Hsu was bare to the waist, while Wu at least had a shirt on. He wanted to give the raincoat to the



boy. But Young Hsu had already splashed through the mud and run off into the night.

A surge of warmth swept through the station chief. He paused for a moment, holding the wildly flapping coat. He saw that his comrades had all run on ahead of him, and he hurried to catch up.

Young Hsu was only eighteen. Short in stature and with a chubby red face, when he laughed his eyes became mere slits and his eyelids fluttered. Because of the nature of his job, he travelled the whole length of that section of the coast, sometimes barefoot, sometimes on a bicycle. Nearly everyone in the fishing village knew him, and they fondly and courteously called him Young Comrade Hsu.

The boy always carried a song book and a book of stories in his haversack. When he rested, he liked to lie with his back against a tree and gaze at the vast blue ocean. Born and raised in the mountains, he had a special love for the sea. To him it was an ever-changing beautiful picture. When the reflections of the morning clouds turned the surface of the water into crimson glass, and the wind stirred up waves of gleaming satin, Young Hsu loved to set out to sea with the fisherfolk, sails billowing, the little boats sliding through the waves, decks aslant.

Although young and lively, he did his work in a careful responsible way. He knew that Wu was a hero of countless battles with half a dozen wounds, and he saw how enthusiastically Wu plunged into his job with never a thought for himself. Yet it seemed to Young Hsu that the station chief had a number of serious shortcomings. When they were busy, Wu often forgot to eat, and it never occurred to him to put more clothing on when the weather turned cold. What's more, he liked to run around doing things himself. He frequently got up in the middle of the night, took his flashlight, stole out on tiptoe so as not to disturb anyone, and made a round of the barracks to see how the men were sleeping. Sometimes he'd relieve a man on night duty in one of the observation posts, sending him back to sleep, while he himself took over the telescope and stayed on watch until dawn.

It was this sort of thing that made Young Hsu feel he had to keep a careful eye on the station chief. He remembered what the leader of the messenger platoon had said: "On the battlefield, it is more important to protect the lives of your commanders than your

own!" Of course, this wasn't exactly a battlefield, but it was part of coastal defence. And so, Young Hsu woke up several times each night and crept softly to the door of the office and listened to make sure that the chief was inside.

Once the chief opened the door and found the boy seated with his back against the doorway, a carbine in his arms, his head on his shoulder, fast asleep. Wu looked at the youngster, and his heart filled with love. He went back into the room and got his own officer's jacket, gently covered the boy, then went off to the observation posts.

Now Young Hsu, in spite of the storm and the blackness of the night, flew along the familiar path, swiftly overtaking the comrades in the lead, and entered the fishing village first.

In the glare of a bolt of lightning, he saw before him a fearful sight. The wind was raging madly over the limitless sea, the rain slanted down like millions of sharp swords. Wind, rain and sea all howled together in an insane clamour. Big trees flew through the air. Roofs were ripped off, walls collapsed, unable to withstand the terrible gale.

Then the flash subsided, and people and houses were gone from sight. Tripping and stumbling, Young Hsu finally groped his way to a home. The building was already dangerously askew; it would fall any minute. He hurried inside and a glow struck his eyes. It was a lantern. An old lady was shielding it with her body to prevent it from being blown out.

"Young Comrade Hsu, you've come at last!" cried the old lady. Her face was stained with tears.

"You've got to get out of here quick, old mama!" the boy urged, agitatedly waving his bare arms.

"I'm old, I don't matter. But you must save my daughter," she pleaded, seizing his wrist. "She's ready to give birth. What am I going to do?"

Young Hsu hastened forward. In the lamplight, he saw a young woman lying on the bed, her head bound with a white cloth, her eyes large and staring. She didn't utter a sound, but from the way she looked at him, the boy could sense that her whole body must be trembling.

At that moment, the house shook violently and the roof split open. Rain poured in and the wind whistled through cracks that



had formed in the walls. Chilled, Young Hsu rushed out into the street, shouting:

"Station chief! . . . Station chief! . . ."

No one answered. On all sides was nothing but darkness. The boy ran a few steps and called again. He did it several times. This won't do, he thought. "We can't let the typhoon take a single life!" If that building collapses, that young woman and her unborn baby will both be killed! The boy turned and ran back to the house. . . .

Wu tore down the slope. Young Hsu's raincoat was no longer on his body. For he had run into a bearded old man who had clutched him with trembling hands, unable to speak. Wu promptly draped the coat over the old man's shoulders. "Station chief! . . ." cried the old man. But by then Wu had waved his hand and run on towards the village.

Wu and the other PLA comrades reached the settlement just in time to meet the fiercest stage of the typhoon head-on. Lightning flashed and they saw a big tree topple over. A calf bawled twice, then was snatched up by the gale and disappeared without a trace. Chickens flew out of a smashed coop, squawking in terror; they too vanished. There was water everywhere, some of it knee deep, as if the sea had already inundated the land. Village government personnel and young men, shouting, dashed about in the storm, rescuing the inhabitants. But the typhoon was merciless. It knocked them to the ground also.

At this critical juncture, Wu and the army comrades, arm locked in arm, hand gripping hand, crouching low, plunged through the rain to the centre of the village. Wu immediately sent his men to get the people out of the houses. As he himself was about to do the same, a tree sailing through the air struck him heavily on the forehead. His ears ringing, he fell, unconscious.

When he came to, he found himself in the arms of the secretary of the village Communist Party branch, Old Lin. They were ringed by men with flashlights. The Party secretary was both happy and miserable when Wu recovered. Tears rolling from his eyes, Old Lin mumbled:

"Go back to station, chief. This is my job. . . ."

Wu grasped his hand. It was as hot as fire. He knew how concerned the Party secretary must feel about him.

"What's all this talk about your job or mine, Old Lin," he said. "It's the job of all of us. The people must be saved. Comrades! On with the rescue!"

He struggled to his feet. His head felt heavy and the bruises on his body were painful. But his mind was clear and through it flashed recollections of the times he had been wounded in battle. The fighting had gradually subsided, although flames reddened the sky and there was still some desultory firing. He had crawled and crawled until he fainted. Then, when the boom of artillery had awakened him again, he crawled and crawled some more, alone on the front. . . .

But now he was surrounded by his comrades. They were asking anxious questions. "What about the people? These thatched shacks are collapsing."

"Lead them out of the village," he replied.

"But where?"

"To our barracks. If there's no room for everyone to lie down, they can squeeze in all standing."

"How can we fit in so many?"

"Turn the whole barracks over to the villagers. We'll stay outside. . . ." Waving his hand, Wu hailed the Party secretary. "Old Lin! You take the east end, I'll look after the west. We've got to get everybody out of this village and up to the barracks!"

The rain poured down in a deluge. Spreading its ebony wings, the wind insanely screamed, leaped and howled. . . .

Chief Wu was the last to reach the office (which also served as his living quarters). His shirt was in tatters and he was covered with mud from head to foot. But his eyes were bright, cheerful. He removed his wet clothes, hung them on the back of a chair and changed into something dry. The Party secretary entered.

"How's it going, Old Lin? Did you check the names?"

"The entire village has moved into the barracks, without exception. But the army comrades are all out in the rain. . . ." Lin wanted to say how moved he was, but Wu cut him short.

"That's fine, that's fine!" His face lit up with a smile. "That means we've licked the typhoon!"

The door creaked open a bit and remained that way, as if the person outside was hesitating whether to enter. Finally, a head



poked in with dripping wet hair beneath which were jet black eyes and chubby red cheeks.

Wu tried to remember what he had done with the raincoat, and he looked around for it on the bed. "I'm afraid I've lost your raincoat, Young Hsu," he said apologetically. "The typhoon must have blown it off somewhere. What shall we do?"

The boy came into the room and looked solemnly at the Party secretary. Then he turned his eyes to the station chief. Awkwardly wringing the edge of his shirt, he said hesitantly:

"It's this way, commander. There's a woman, she's pregnant. She's going to give birth. But the barracks are so crowded. There's hardly room to stand. . . ."

A gust of wind and rain made the window panes rattle. . . . The door opened wider. A group of soldiers who had accompanied Young Hsu and had been waiting outside surged into the room. They had been through a fierce struggle with the storm and their hair and faces were plastered with mud. Many were bruised and cut. Some were still bleeding. But they came trooping in, eager to discuss this urgent matter.

Wu stood up, thoughtfully rubbing his hands. "Give birth to a baby. Hmm. . . ." For the moment he didn't know what to suggest. He had been in many critical situations, but he had never been confronted with a problem like this. His eyes roved about the office and he took a couple of steps to his desk and rested a hand on the leather case of the field telephone. Then he turned around and said:

"I've got it! We'll give her the office!"

"You can't do that, station chief," Old Lin protested. "After all, this is a military organization, an important post. How can you – "

"Old Lin!" Although not very tall, Wu always gave the impression of great stature, especially now, as he spread his arms and walked up to the Party secretary and grasped his shoulders. "You talk about importance. Is anything more important than the people, eh, Old Lin? I ask you!"

That was the station chief – warm-hearted, full of drive. Wherever he was, whatever happened, with a few words he could always convince people and put an end to any argument. Now he rushed

around to the front of his desk, swept up the field telephone and shouted over his shoulder:

"Hey, Young Hsu! Lend a hand, will you? Let's move our stuff outside!"

The comrades knew from the way the station chief's brows suddenly contracted at times and the fact that he was limping that his old wounds were torturing him. They were painful on any damp rainy day. What agony they must be after all that rushing about in the typhoon. But Wu's voice was as vibrant, as gentle as ever. He waved his hand and called:

"Young Hsu, tell them to carry her in. Come on, Old Lin, let's get out of here!" He cast a quick look around the office, at the lamp, the desk. Then, with a smile, he walked from the room.

Outside the door, a chilling wind bit into his bones. He touched his forehead. It was rather feverish. Someone draped a padded overcoat over his shoulders and he wrapped it around him tightly. He stood at the door with his men, hanging the field telephone on a nail in the wall. Soon, some PLA fighters came carrying a stretcher. The woman was completely covered over by a quilt and an oilcloth. Through them, her groans could be heard faintly.

A hush fell on the group when the stretcher appeared. People spoke in whispers and walked softly. As the stretcher was passing through the doorway, the young woman pushed back the covers and looked gratefully at the comrades standing out in the rain. She seemed to want to say something, but by then the stretcher-bearers had carried her inside. Her old mother and several village women followed. Then the door was shut.

From that moment on, the village government personnel and the whole complement of the observation station waited outside the door, casting anxious glances at it from time to time. Although the wind was buffeting the cliffs, and the rain was churning the sea, and blue streaks of lightning were eerily illuminating the men's faces, no one seemed to heed the fearful typhoon.

In the office the young woman's face was pale. It was her first baby, and the child's father had gone out to sea with the fishing boats. There was no telling where the gale had blown him. Fighting against the pain, she bit her lips till they bled. Beads of perspiration trembled on her brow and tears shook on her eyelashes. But in her eyes was a look of happiness, of glory. Lightning kept



flashing outside the window, as if the storm too wanted to witness the inception of a new life.

At first Wu stood with his comrades at the doorway. Later he slipped away and walked to an isolated spot near the edge of the cliff. He gazed out at the vast ocean. The impenetrable darkness was gradually fading. Stretches of dark blue were slowly becoming visible on the surface of the water. Soon he could see waves, then a few whitecaps. . . . He raised his head and the cool rain laved his face. Although he was tired and ached all over, in his heart he felt peaceful, refreshed, even gay.

Facing the sea, he pondered in the early dawn light. The patter of running footsteps interrupted his thoughts. Young Hsu, an expression of solemnity and awe on his chubby red face, raced up to announce breathlessly:

"Chief! The baby . . . it's coming!"

Wu ran after the boy back to the office building.

The PLA men were still standing outside the door in the rain. The long drenching seemed to have washed the colour from their faces. Water flowed down their bodies in rivulets, streaming off their trouser legs. They looked very serious in the dawn's faint light, particularly those who stood with tommy guns slung across their chests, as if on guard at some very important post.

As Wu approached, the men separated to let him through. He walked to the steps of the doorway, then halted and stood there quietly.

From the other side of the door came the strong clear wail of a new-born infant. . . .

*Translated by Sidney Shapiro*

*HU WAN-CHUN*

# Spot of Red in the Sky

It had rained the night before, but in the morning the sky was clear and the sun, which had just risen above the horizon, was pleasantly warm. A woman in her fifties trudged along the muddy road. Arriving at the gatehouse of Construction Site 218, she set down her heavy basket and beat the dust from her blue cloth jacket with her handkerchief. Then she hailed the man in the bamboo gatehouse.

"Is this Construction Site 218, old brother?"

---

Hu Wan-chun, former worker in a steel rolling mill, is an outstanding young writer. He started writing in 1951 and has published three collections of stories and reportage, *Flesh and Blood, What Master Pu Kao Remembered* and *People of Character*. His story, "Flesh and Blood," won an honorary prize at the 1957 World Youth Festival. Most of his writings reflect the life and struggles of the workers.



The man smiled. "It is. Who are you looking for?"

"I've come to see Ah-chen. . . ."

"What's your relation to her?"

"Me? I'm her ma."

"We've got thousands of people working here. I don't know what section your Ah-chen is in. . . ." Seeing the worried expression gathering in the woman's eyes, the gate-keeper hastened to add, "But if you'll just tell me her full name, we're sure to find her. You don't have to worry. Come in and rest a while. I'll have someone take you to her soon."

After giving the necessary particulars, Ah-chen's mother, carrying her basket, entered the gatehouse and sat down on a bamboo chair. The old gate-keeper became very busy just then, for big trucks, laden with all kinds of equipment, started rolling in and out of the site, engines roaring, tires churning up the mud and flinging it high. There certainly was plenty of activity.

Seated in the bamboo chair, Ah-chen's mother realized how tired she was. She had been unable to sleep a wink the previous night on the steamer from Ningpo, thinking of the daughter she hadn't seen for two years. When the girl's father had found work in Ningpo, at first she and Ah-chen had remained in Shanghai where the family had been living. But later Ah-chen's mother also returned to Ningpo to join her husband. She left Ah-chen in the city to complete her middle-school education.

Ah-chen's father had laboured humbly for more than twenty years in the old society, doing the dirtiest and heaviest kind of jobs, earning only enough to provide his wife and daughter with bran gruel and garments of rags and tatters. Thinking back on the hardships they had endured, people of the older generation naturally were determined to provide the best for their children, now that the country had been liberated. Ah-chen's mother had borne six children before Ah-chen came into the world, but they all had died for lack of proper nourishment. Ah-chen was the couple's only living child; is it any wonder they treasured her so? After the People's Republic was established, pa's income rose to over one hundred yuan a month. Life was comfortable. Ah-chen's parents always gave her the choicest morsels at their table and clothed her in the best garments they could afford. The older she grew, the more they spoiled her.

Ah-chen's mother had worked as a housemaid before the country was liberated. She saw what pampering did to the daughters of the rich, how weak and delicate they turned, and she vowed to herself that she'd never let her daughter become like them. But at home she did all the housework; she wouldn't let Ah-chen lift a finger.

For the past two years everything had been fine, but she still worried about Ah-chen. Several times she had people write letters for her telling the girl to come to Ningpo. She felt that only if she had her daughter by her side could she be at ease about her. But Ah-chen's replies said she couldn't leave school in the middle of a term. Then one day a letter arrived from the girl announcing that she was already working at a construction site. . . .

A heavy truck abruptly ground to a halt at the gate, startling Ah-chen's mother from her thoughts. The gate-keeper led a middle-aged driver in and said to him: "This is the old mama who wants a lift to her daughter's place."

"Where is Ah-chen?" her mother asked.

"Number Seven Barracks," said the driver. He picked up the basket, helped her into the driver's cab, then set the truck in motion.

She gazed through the window at the construction site. Weird looking machines were puffing blue smoke and snorting forward, pushing and levelling the uneven earth. Machines with long steel arms snatched huge chunks out of the ground, then swung around and deposited them into trucks, one scoop filling an entire van. She watched, amazed. Does Ah-chen drive one of those strange vehicles? she wondered.

"What have you brought for your Ah-chen, old mama?" the truck driver asked.

"Dried dragon's eyes,* red dates, two bottles of honey. . . ."

"Ah, all tonics!"

"Yes. My Ah-chen's health is poor. Her face is always so pale and colourless. I'm really a little worried. I don't know what she does here, whether she's strong enough. . . ." Noticing the grin on the driver's face, she quickly changed the subject. "Ah-chen wrote me that she does some electric something-or-other work," the mother said. "Does that mean she drives one of those machines crawling around out there?"

* A fruit, known as the *longan*.



The driver shook his head. "She's an electric welder."

"Where does she work, then?"

"There! You see?"

Ah-chen's mother looked in the direction he was pointing. Six or seven structures reared up into the sky like tremendous black thermos bottles. She estimated they must be every bit of four or five stories high.

"What are they?" she asked curiously.

"Blast furnaces, old mama. They make iron."

"Oh! Oh!" She suddenly observed many black dots moving about on the scaffolding that embraced the furnaces. "Aiya! People working so high up. . . . Ah-chen – does she do that too?"

"Yes mam," the driver replied casually. "She certainly does."

Ah-chen's mother fell silent. She was almost afraid to think. A girl like Ah-chen who couldn't even wash a handkerchief properly – how could she dare . . . dare to climb all the way up there? Her mother could practically see Ah-chen's pallid complexion. She pictured the girl standing fearfully on the high scaffold, her knees trembling. . . .

The driver braked to a stop. "We're here!" he said. He took her basket, gave her an arm down from the cab and led her to the door of Number Seven Barracks where he shouted: "Hey! Young Hsu, a visitor – "

"Shh! Not so loud!" said a young man who hastily emerged from the outer room.

"What's the matter?" demanded the driver. "This lady has come to see Ah-chen. She's her mother."

"That's fine. Old mama, please have a seat." Young Hsu pulled over a bench powdered with white particles and wiped it clean with the sleeve of his work tunic. "It's not dirty," he assured her. "It's only cement."

The driver gave Young Hsu a playful tap on his woven willow work helmet. "Where's Ah-chen? Where have you hidden her?"

"She was up all night. She's gone to bed."

"Even her mother can't see her?"

Young Hsu thought a moment, then said helplessly, "All right, all right, I'll take her in."

The driver laughed, waved farewell to Ah-chen's mother, and airily departed.

"This way, old mama," said Young Hsu. "But please don't disturb her. She was working in the rain all night. She didn't have a minute's sleep!"

Why, this young fellow with his helmet of woven willow seemed even more concerned about her daughter than she was herself. "Thank you, comrade," she said gratefully. "It's nice of you to take such good care of Ah-chen."

They entered the barracks. The inner room wasn't very large. Near one of the walls was a bamboo platform resting on two wooden benches. On this bed, covered by a quilt and lying on her side was Ah-chen, fast asleep. Young Hsu placed the basket on a table and whispered:

"You stay here. I'll bring your lunch at noon time." He left quietly.

Sitting down on a stool beside the bed, Ah-chen's mother stared at her daughter. She had changed. Her oval face was sunburnt, ruddy. Her brows were still gracefully arched, but they were no longer so fragile, so vapid. Why, the girl was glowing with health! She could scarcely believe her eyes. Tears of joy blurred her vision.

Square orderly rays of sunlight like the beams of motion picture projectors streamed in through the windows and illuminated the small table. Shining and soft, they formed a golden carpet that spread in a long roll from the table to the floor.

Ah-chen's mother sighed peacefully. How comfortable and relaxed she felt. Her hand brushed against her daughter's canvas work clothes which were hanging over the foot of the bed. They were cold and damp. She could picture Ah-chen working in the dark rainy night, the wind whistling about her ears as she crouched on the high scaffold against the tall edifice that resembled a thermos bottle. Ah-chen wore a willow helmet and her canvas work clothes. Neither wind nor rain could stop her! The heavy canvas was soaking wet, but she refused to come down. . . .

The mother remembered something the girl had written in one of her letters: "Mama! We're building socialism, we're building the foundations of communism." Ah-chen's mother smiled proudly. Removing the helmet, she quietly spread the damp clothes on the table and smoothed them out with her hands, letting them dry in the golden even squares of sunlight.



In the immediate area of the barracks, it was very still. But the noise of busy machines could be heard faintly in the distance.

The bamboo bed creaked and Ah-chen's mother turned around. The girl had rolled over on her back. She stretched lazily without opening her eyes and again lapsed into deep slumber. It reminded her mother of that day back in 1937 when the Japanese attacked Shanghai. An artillery barrage was making the windows rattle and the ground tremble. "The battle with the invaders from across the eastern sea has begun!" She had rushed into the bedroom where her little daughter was sleeping. Then too Ah-chen had extended her small fists, poked up her belly, and stretched. She would never forget that moment. Picking up the child, she had hurried out and joined the shouting, weeping, disorderly throngs of fleeing refugees. Years of hardship and chaos followed. But struggling every step of the way, she had managed to bring her daughter up and get through the long tragic period.

Today Ah-chen was twenty-two. It hadn't been easy! Who but a mother could love a daughter as she did? Just then the door opened and Young Hsu tiptoed in. He said in a low voice:

"I've brought your lunch, old mama. Come on and eat."

She followed him to the outer room, and they dined together. "Have some more vegetables, old mama," the young fellow kept urging politely.

"On my way here on the boat last night, the rain was terrible," she said, after thanking him. "Did Ah-chen still have to work?"

"Emergency protection measures," he explained simply.

She nodded. "Ah-chen is very timid. Did she . . . did she climb up that big furnace that looks like a thermos bottle?"

"Ho! She's faster than any of us. While we were still struggling to get up, she shined her flashlight down to show us the way!" Young Hsu unconsciously let his voice rise. Suddenly he remembered that Ah-chen was still asleep, and in a lower tone, he went on, "To tell the truth, your daughter is making very rapid progress. She's the leader of our Youth League shock brigade."

As the words entered the mother's ears, warmth flowed into her heart. She couldn't repress a pleased smile.

"She was pretty spoiled when she first came here," Young Hsu continued. "Once we Youth Leaguers volunteered to move some steel. The next morning at five o'clock, everyone met at the agreed place. But she never showed up."

"Why?" Ah-chen's mother asked quickly.

"Why?" Young Hsu blinked. "She overslept."

"Hmm," the mother said disapprovingly. "That minx."

Young Hsu flung out a hand in a wide gesture. "Her attitude towards work wasn't so good then. Later, we held a meeting of our Youth League group and criticized her."

"How did she take it?"

"She cried. . . ."

Ah-chen's mother put down her bowl. For a moment she said nothing. She could just see her daughter, weeping in a corner, averting her face and pouting. The mother sighed.

"The minx. That's how she is. What happened next?"

"Next?" Young Hsu blinked. "We held another small group meeting," he said firmly.

"Oh. And this time?"

"This time we really told her off." Young Hsu again made a sweeping gesture.

Ah-chen's mother paled, plainly distressed.

Young Hsu looked at her, put down his bowl and burst out laughing. "We were only trying to help her, old mama. It was for her own good. True, we overdid it a bit, but we truly helped her."

The mother couldn't help smiling.

"Don't you believe it? Just ask your daughter. She's very thankful to everybody now!" Rising to his feet, Young Hsu inquired solemnly: "Old mama, who do you think is even more concerned about us than our own parents?"

"Mothers are always very concerned about their children," she replied.

"Old mama, whether your daughter or me, in addition to our own mothers we have another mother who loves us even more, a mother who makes very strict demands!" Young Hsu pushed his bowl and chopsticks aside and took off his willow helmet. "This mother is our Communist Party. The Party has taught your daughter and me to be the way we are today. Take your daughter. I don't



know how many times the secretary of the Party branch came to me and said, 'We've got to help her, look after her. But only by steeling her in difficulties, only by making strict demands on her, will we be showing her true love. The best daughters of the Party have all been steeled in struggle. That's why they can withstand any storm!' We carried out the Party secretary's instructions, and your daughter progressed. Old mama, the Party looks after us like a mother. But she doesn't rear us on milk and honey, she tempers us in life's hardships. She's really strict!"

"I know, I know," said Ah-chen's mother, quite impressed. "It's right, what you're saying."

"Mothers are great people. They give birth to children, and struggle through all kinds of adversity to bring them up. . . ." Young Hsu's long speech showed no sign of coming to an end. "But the Party is greater still, because she raises her children to be determined, genuine people who are as strong as steel!"

Ah-chen's mother nodded and slowly put down her bowl.

"Finished so soon?" asked Young Hsu, surprised. "Have you had enough to eat?"

"No, but she's had enough windy talk!" The driver in whose truck Ah-chen's mother had come to the barracks must have been listening for some time. "What about it, Youth League branch secretary?" he demanded jestingly. "Have you concluded your address?" He looked around. "Where's Spot of Red? Not up yet?"

Ah-chen's mother was curious. "Spot of Red?"

The driver laughed. "Spot of Red is your daughter's nickname. Her Youth League group once commended her, said she was being tempered 'red' through and through. Your daughter was modest. She said, 'I've a long way to go yet in my tempering. All I've got so far is only a spot of red.' That was a good one, particularly because she likes to wear a red sweat shirt. So everyone's been calling her Spot of Red ever since."

As they all laughed, the door to the sleeping quarters swung open and Ah-chen, wearing a red sweat shirt emblazoned with the word "Superior," came flying out, her two braids jouncing behind her. At the sight of her mother, she stopped short.

"I thought I heard your voice," she exclaimed, "but I figured I must be dreaming. You've really come!" Turning to the truck

driver, she remonstrated, "Party Secretary Chen, you shouldn't be telling stories about me."

Her mother looked at the driver in stupefaction.

Noting her expression, Young Hsu explained, "This is our Party secretary, Comrade Chen Ming-san, old mama. He's doing a temporary stint as a truck driver."

She hastened up to the Party secretary and grasped his hand. "Comrade Chen, I don't know how to thank you. The Party's done so much for my daughter. . . ."

"Take a good look at her," said Chen amiably. "Not quite what you expected, eh?"

Ah-chen came close. "Ma," she said. Her mother examined her carefully from head to toe. The girl's bosom was high, she was full and firm – really in splendid condition. The mother's lips trembled with excitement; she couldn't speak.

"Not a bad training camp we've got here, eh, old mama?" Comrade Chen demanded jocularly. "But what's even more important, old mama, isn't the way she looks, but this." He put his finger to his head. "How 'red' a person's thinking is – that's what counts. You'll come to understand that after a while." He shook hands with her and said, "I must be going. My truck is waiting."

He walked out the door. Young Hsu followed.

Mother and daughter went into the inner room and sat down. They gazed at each other, for a time unable to speak. As the mother groped around in the basket she thought, "What in the world can I give her?" Her daughter was in such blooming health she felt rather embarrassed to offer such "tonic" food as dried dragon eyes, red dates and honey.

"What's wrong, ma?" Ah-chen asked.



"Nothing, nothing at all!" her mother stammered. After a pause she made up her mind, and said: "Child, ma's brought you some things. You must promise that you'll take them."

Rather flurried, she took out the red dates, the dried dragon eyes and the two jars of honey and placed them before her daughter. "Here, child. Don't blame your ma. Take them."

An expression of reproach tinged the girl's face. "Ma, you're still the same! Can't you see how healthy I am now? Do I look as if I need any tonics?"

"I thought you did – until I saw you! But since I've brought these things, you must take them. Do you want me to carry them all the way back to Ningpo? Come on now, this is the last time," the mother urged.

Ah-chen, smiling, accepted.

Her mother was happy. "Child, tell ma all about your life and work here."

"Let me show you around the work site, ma. I'll tell you at the same time."

Ah-chen led her mother outside and they walked shoulder to shoulder through the noisy, bustling building area. Men were talking loudly, a big pile-driver was pounding rhythmically. Around the dark, mountainous blast furnaces and stoves being constructed a thick gas pipe wove like some huge python, here climbing high upon a platform, there coiling around a furnace body. Far above, electric welders like so many dragon-flies clung to the upper parts of the furnaces, emitting glaring flashes that made you blink. A curved section of gas pipe was swinging from a crane. Dangling there in mid-air, it looked a bit frightening to Ah-chen's mother. As Ah-chen chatted animatedly, her mother could only nod her head. To tell the truth, she didn't understand too much of what her daughter was saying.

"Ma, you see that blast furnace?" The girl pointed at the furnace's upper section. "I welded quite a few of those steel plates."

Her mother looked up and squinted. "Which ones?"

"Ma! How do I know? Many people are working on it together. We take a collective pride in the success of each of our projects, because the collective effort contains the labour, the sweat of every one of us. . . ."

Those words had a familiar ring to the girl's mother. Ah! She remembered. Ah-chen's father often talked like that. Once in Ningpo when the weather suddenly turned cold, she brought his padded jacket to the factory gate. He pointed to a diesel engine that was leaving the yard on the back of a truck.

"Take a look at that, old woman," he had said. "Your old man machined many of the bolts on that engine!" He had the same note of pride which today rang in his daughter's voice.

Ah-chen shook her arm. "Ma, what are you thinking about?"

"Child," she replied with deep emotion, "you really sound like one of our workman's family now. You talk just like your father."

That was how mother and daughter spent the afternoon. They slept together in the barracks that night, after talking endlessly for hours. The mother had a feeling which was difficult to express in words. She seemed to sense in her daughter the glow of fresh thought, like the first rays of the early morning sun.

The mother stayed for two days. On the morning of the third day, she got ready to return to Ningpo. Ah-chen was on the first shift. She put on her work clothes, her red sweat shirt, her willow helmet and said:

"I won't see you off, ma. Don't worry about a thing. I'll write you often."

Although the mother hated to leave, she didn't show her emotions. Ah-chen asked Young Hsu to escort her mother to the gate and he willingly consented.

About 8 a.m., carrying her basket, he led Ah-chen's mother across the site. Halfway down the road, she stopped to look back.

*She's Catching Up!* →
by the Research Institute of Tunhuang Art

The Tunhuang frescoes, produced between the fourth and ninth centuries, inherited the tradition of Chinese classical art and absorbed certain features of Indian painting (see *Chinese Literature* No. 3, 1956). Our artists today are tentatively using the Tunhuang techniques to present modern life. This collective painting is one example.

Young Hsu pointed at a blast furnace in the distance and said cheerily:

"You see, old mama? There's Spot of Red!"

Against the background of a bright blue sky rose black furnaces and stoves. High on one of them the tiny figure of a girl in a red sweat shirt waved her hand as if to say, "I'll be seeing you, dear mama! How fortunate your daughter is to be living in this great era! I'll do fine, ma, you can rest assured!"

Many words were in the mother's heart, but they did not pass her trembling lips. Walking on a few paces, again she turned and looked back. On all kinds of structures, on the steel girders of growing plant buildings, on the big gas pipes, on the blast furnaces and stoves . . . innumerable young people, lively and full of youthful vitality, clambered on high, vigorously attacking their jobs.

The rosy morning sun, rising behind the huge dark shapes of the blast furnaces and stoves, dyed red the vast building site and the many complicated, intricately connected structures. Spot of Red had already merged into one large over-all crimson glow. It was a beautiful, stirring scene. A strong emotion surged through the heart of Ah-chen's mother like a warm current. Tears filled her eyes. . . .

*Translated by Sidney Shapiro*
*Illustrations by Shu Lan*

*LU HSUN*

# Essays in Memory of the Martyrs

This year we celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the China League of Left-Wing Writers, a revolutionary literary organization with Lu Hsun as its standard-bearer, led by the Chinese Communist Party. The League of Left-Wing Writers was set up in Shanghai on March 2, 1930 and dissolved on the eve of the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression, its term of life spanning the most difficult period of the Chinese revolution. In those years of the White Terror, when the Kuomintang reactionaries were attempting to suppress revolutionary culture by brutal force, the League of Left-Wing Writers raised high the red banner of proletarian, revolutionary literature and waged a heroic battle. They not only achieved a big advance in the new revolutionary literature of the May the Fourth period, but prepared the ground for further developments in revolutionary literature and art during the anti-Japanese war. The League played a notable part in the Chinese people's revolution — at the cost of great sacrifices. Many of its best fighters were arrested, imprisoned or even killed. To commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the League of Left-Wing Writers, we are publishing two essays by Lu Hsun with works by some of its martyrs.

## The Revolutionary Literature of the Chinese Proletariat and the Blood of the Pioneers

The revolutionary literature of the Chinese proletariat which is now coming into being has grown under slander and persecutions, and at last in the utter darkness its first chapter has been written with our comrades' blood.



Throughout history our toiling masses have been so bitterly oppressed and ground down that they have not even been granted the boon of an education, and could only be butchered in silence. Our difficult pictographic writing gives them no chance to learn to read themselves. When our young intellectuals realized their duty as pioneers, they were the first to utter a battle cry — a cry which terrified the rulers as much as the cries of revolt of the toiling masses. Then flunkey-writers rallied to the attack, spread rumours or acted as spies. And the fact that they always operated in secret and under false names simply proves them creatures of darkness.

Since the rulers knew their flunkey-writers were no match for the revolutionary literature of the proletariat, they started banning books, closing bookshops, issuing repressive publishing laws, and putting authors on the black list. And now they have sunk to the lowest tactics of all – arresting and imprisoning left-wing writers and putting them to death in secret — they still have not made this "execution" public. While this proves them creatures of darkness about to perish, it testifies also to the strength of the camp of revolutionary literature of the Chinese proletariat. For, as their obituaries show, the age, courage, and above all the literary achievements of our massacred comrades, were enough to stop the dogs from barking so madly.

But the murder of these comrades of ours is naturally a loss to the revolutionary literature of the working class and a great grief to us. Our proletarian literature will continue to grow, however, because it belongs to the great ranks of the revolutionary toilers; and as long as the people exist and gain in strength, so long will this revolutionary literature grow. Our comrades' blood testifies that the revolutionary literature of the working class suffers from the same oppression and terror as the toiling masses, that it is fighting the same battles and shares the same destiny, for it is the literature of the revolutionary toilers.

Now according to the warlords' report, even old ladies of sixty have been poisoned by "heterodox writing," and the patrols in the foreign concessions are searching even primary-school children. All

they have left, apart from the guns given them by the imperialists, are a few flunkeys; but they have enemies all around, even children and old folk, to say nothing of the young. And all these enemies of theirs are on our side.

Today when with bitter grief in our hearts we commemorate our comrades fallen in battle, we must impress on our memories that the first page in the history of the revolutionary literature of China's proletariat was written with our comrades' blood, as a lasting exposure of the enemy's contemptible savagery and an inspiration to us never to cease from the struggle.

## In Memory of the Forgotten

### I

I have long been wanting to write something in memory of some young writers – for no other reason than that grief and rage have assailed my heart now for two years, and I am eager to shake them off in this way so that I can relax. To put it bluntly – I want to forget these young people.

Two years ago now, in February 1931, during the night of the seventh or the morning of the eighth, our five young writers were murdered. No Shanghai papers dared carry the news: they may not have wanted to or thought it worth-while. *Literary News* alone had a few articles containing veiled allusions to it. In Number 11, which came out on May 25, Mr. Lin Mang observed in his *Impressions of Pai Mang*:

> He wrote a good many poems, and translated some of those by the Hungarian poet Petöfi. When Lu Hsun, then editor of *Torrent*, received his manuscript, he wrote to say that he would like to meet him. But as Pai Mang did not care to meet celebrities, finally Lu Hsun looked him up himself and encouraged him as best he could to write. The young man could never sit in one place writing, though. He ran off again on his business, and before long he was arrested again. . . .



This account is not quite correct. Pai Mang was not so supercilious. It was he who called on me, though not because I had expressed a wish to see him. I was not so supercilious either as to write casually to a contributor I did not know, telling him to call on me. The reason for our meeting was a perfectly normal one. He had sent in a translation from the German of a life of Petöfi, and I wrote to ask him for the original, which was printed as the preface to the collected poems. He found it more convenient to deliver the book than to post it. He was a young man in his twenties, with a serious face and a rather dark complexion. I forget what we talked about on that occasion, and can only remember that he told me his surname was Hsu and he was from Hsiangshan. I asked why the woman who signed for his mail had such a peculiar name (just what was peculiar about it I forget), and he said she liked it that way – she was a romantic. He didn't altogether see eye to eye with her. This is all I remember.

That night I checked his translation roughly with the original and found that, beside one or two slips, he had in one place deliberately distorted the meaning. Apparently he did not like the expression "national poet," for in each case he had changed this to "poet of the people." The next day I received a letter from him saying how sorry he was to have talked so much when we met, while I had talked so little and seemed cold. He had been conscious of a kind of pressure. I wrote back explaining that it was human nature to speak little at a first meeting, and told him he should not alter the original according to his own likes and dislikes. As his book was with me I sent him two of mine, suggesting that he translate a few more poems for our readers. He did so, and brought them over himself, and this time we talked more. The life and poems were later published in Volume II, Number 5 of *Torrent*, the last number to appear.

The third time we met was on a hot day, I remember, when someone knocked at the gate and I opened it to find Pai Mang.

As he was wearing a thick padded gown and dripping with sweat, we both burst out laughing. Only then did he tell me that he was a revolutionary and had just been released from gaol. All his clothes and books had been confiscated, including the two volumes I had given him. He had borrowed this gown from a friend who had nothing thinner, but he had to wear a long gown. That was why he was sweating like that. I dare say this is the occasion Mr. Lin Mang was referring to when he says: "He was arrested again."

Delighted by his release, I immediately paid him for his translation so that he could buy a thinner gown. Still I was very sorry about my books falling into the hands of the police – bright pearls cast into darkness. There was nothing special about the books themselves. One was a volume of prose, another of verse. According to the German translator, the collection he had made was more complete than any collection in Hungary. They were printed by Reclam's Universal-Bibliothek, so that in Germany you could have bought them anywhere for less than a dollar. But to me they were treasures, for I had ordered them from Germany through the Maruzen Bookshop thirty years before, when I was a passionate admirer of Petöfi. I was afraid, as the book was so cheap, the shop would be unwilling to order it, and made my request with considerable trepidation. For a while I always carried it about with me; but as times alter men's affections change, and I gave up the idea of translating it. I decided it would be a happy fate for this book to be given to this lad who was as devoted to Petöfi as I had been. That is why I took this presentation seriously and got Jou Shih to deliver the two volumes for me. How unjust that they should have fallen into the hands of "Three-stripers"* and their like!

## II

It was not modesty alone that stopped me from trying to meet contributors. The desire to save trouble was an important factor.

* Members of the Shanghai police force who wore three stripes on their armlets.



I knew from long experience that nine out of ten young people, especially young writers, were hyper-sensitive and took themselves tremendously seriously. If you were not very careful, misunderstandings tended to arise. So I generally avoided them. If we met I was naturally too nervous to dream of asking any favours. The only man in Shanghai in those days with whom I dared laugh and chat freely, and whom I even asked to do odd jobs for me, was Jou Shih, who had taken the books to Pai Mang.

I forget when and where I first met Jou Shih. I believe he once said he had attended my lectures in Peking, so it must have been eight or nine years earlier. I forget, too, how we came to be so close to each other. However, he lodged in Chingyunli, only four or five doors from my house, and somehow or other we struck up a friendship. The first time he called I fancy he told me his name was Chao Ping-fu (Peaceful Return). But once, when talking about the colossal arrogance of the gentry in his parts, he said a certain local worthy had taken a fancy to his name, wanted it for his son, and told him – Jou Shih – to stop using it. So I suspect his original name was Ping-fu (Peace and Happiness), for that would appeal to a country gentleman more than the *fu* meaning "return." He came from Ninghai, Taichow, as you could tell at a glance from his brusque Taichow manner. He was rather impractical too, and sometimes reminded me of Fang Hsiao-ju,* who I imagine must have been very like him.

He stayed at home writing or translating, and after we had met a good many times and found a good deal in common he started bringing a few more young people with the same views, and we set up the Dawn Blossoms Press. Its aim was to introduce the literature of Eastern and Northern Europe and to import foreign woodcuts, for we felt we should give what support we could to this vigorous, simple new art. Then we put out *Dawn Blossoms, Modern Short Stories of All Countries* and *The Garden of Art*, all in line with this aim. We also published the paintings of

* A minister who was killed for opposing Prince Yen during the Ming dynasty.

Koji Kukiya* to put a spoke in the wheel of the pseudo-artists of the Shanghai Bund and to put paid to that imposter Yeh Ling-feng.

Jou Shih had no money, though. He borrowed over two hundred dollars to start printing. In addition to buying the paper, he did most of the editing and most of the odd jobs – running to the printers, making prints, or proof-reading. He was often disappointed, however, and would frown as he related what had happened. His early work is filled with a spirit of gloom, but actually this was not his character. He believed that men were good. When I described cases of deceit, friends betrayed or blood-suckers, the sweat would stand out on his forehead, and he would stare in short-sighted, shocked surprise.

"Are such things possible? . . ." he would protest. "Surely not. . . ."

But before long Dawn Blossoms Press had to close down – I will not go into the reasons here – and for the first time Jou Shih knocked his idealistic head against a brick wall. All his work had been wasted, and on top of that he had to borrow a hundred dollars to pay for the paper. After that he was less sceptical of my contention that "human hearts are evil," though sometimes he would sigh: "Are such things really possible?" None the less he went on believing that men were good.

Then he sent the few books left to Dawn Blossoms Press, which should have been his, to Tomorrow Bookstore and Kwanghua Bookshop, hoping to raise a little money on them. At the same time he went on translating for all he was worth in order to repay the debt. He sold to The Commercial Press his translations of *Danish Short Stories* and Gorky's novel *The Artamanovs' Business.* I fear, though, these manuscripts may have been lost last year in the fighting and fire.**

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* A contemporary Japanese artist, whose work Yeh Ling-feng plagiarized.

** On January 28, 1932, Japanese troops invaded Shanghai, setting fire to the part of the city where The Commercial Press was situated.



By degrees he lost his aloofness, till he dared walk out with girls – friends or girls from his home town – but he always kept three or four feet away from them. This was a very bad habit, for when I met him outside and there was a pretty girl three or four feet away I could never be sure if she was his friend or not. Yet when he walked with me he kept close to my side, supporting me, in fact, for fear I might be knocked down by a car or a tram. For my part, it disturbed me to see him with his short sight looking after someone else, so we floundered along the whole way in a state of tension. That is why I never went out with him if I could help it. The sight of the strain on him made me feel a strain too.

Whether by the old morality or the new, if he could help others at his own expense he would choose to do so and take up a new burden.

In the end he made a deliberate change. He told me plainly that in future he should alter the contents and form of his writing. I said I thought that would be difficult. If he was accustomed to using a knife and was now required to use a stick, how could he do it? He answered simply: One can learn!

This was no empty boast. He did start learning from scratch. At about that time he brought a friend to see me, a Miss Feng Keng. After chatting for some time I felt there was still a barrier between her and myself, and suspected that she was a romantic, eager for quick results. I also suspected that she was at the bottom of Jou Shih's recent decision to write a long novel. But I suspected myself as well – perhaps Jou Shih's uncompromising answer the last time had found the weak spot in my laissez-faire attitude and I was unconsciously transferring my resentment to her – in fact I was no better than the proud, hyper-sensitive young writers I dreaded meeting.

She was a delicate creature, not pretty either.

## III

Not till after the League of Left-Wing Writers was founded did I discover that the Pai Mang I knew was the Yin Fu whose poems

appeared in *The Pioneer*. I took a German translation of an American journalist's account of his travels in China to one meeting to give him, thinking this might help him to improve his German. But he did not turn up. I had to enlist Jou Shih's help again.

Not long after this they were both arrested, however, and my book was confiscated again, falling into the hands of "Three-stripers" and the like.

## IV

Then Tomorrow Bookstore asked Jou Shih to edit a periodical and he consented. This publisher also wanted to print my translations, and asked him to find out what arrangements to make for royalties. I copied out my contract with the Pei Hsin Bookshop and gave this to him. He stuffed it into his pocket and hurried off. That was late in the evening of January 16, 1931, and little did I know that this was to be our last meeting and our final parting.

The next day he was arrested at a meeting, and I heard that I was wanted by the authorities because he had that copy of my contract in his pocket. The contract itself was quite plain and intelligible, but I had no wish to go to such unintelligible places to explain it. I remember a venerable monk in *The Life of Yueh Fei,** who sat cross-legged and died as soon as a bailiff who was pursuing him reached the gate of the monastery. He left behind this couplet:

As from the east the law arrives
I seek the Western Paradise.

That was the best way of leaving this sea of bitterness that slaves could imagine. When no "champion" was in sight, this was the ideal way out. Not being a venerable monk, I cannot seek nirvana at will. Besides, I hanker after life. So I ran away.

That night I burned old letters from friends, picked up my son and went with my wife to a hotel. Within a few days all sorts

* A popular novel about the famous Sung dynasty general who resisted the Golden Tartars.



of rumours had spread to the effect that I had been arrested or killed, but of Jou Shih there was very little news. Some said the police had taken him to Tomorrow Bookstore and asked whether he were an editor there or not. Others said he had been taken to Pei Hsin Bookshop and asked whether he were Jou Shih or not. And he had been handcuffed – a sign that his case was grave. But no one knew the nature of the charge.

During his imprisonment, I saw two letters he wrote to fellow provincials. The first was as follows –

January 24

> With thirty-five other prisoners (including seven women), I came to Lunghua yesterday. Last night we were put in chains, creating a precedent for political prisoners. This case involves so many people that I don't expect to be out very soon, so I would appreciate it if you would take over my work in the bookshop. Everything is all right, and I am studying German with Yin Fu — please tell Mr. Chou* not to worry — we haven't been tortured. The police and the security officers have asked for his address several times, but of course I don't know it. Don't worry!
> All the best!
>
> Chao Shao-hsiung

That was on the front of the page.
On the back was written:

> I want two or three tin rice bowls. If they won't let you see me, just leave the things for Chao Shao-hsiung.

He had not changed. He wanted to study German and work harder than ever. And he still showed the same concern for me as when we were walking together. Some of his statements were wrong, though. They were not the first political prisoners to be put in chains, but he had always thought too highly of official-

* Lu Hsun's real name was Chou Shu-jen.

dom and imagined it had been enlightened until it started to be cruel to him and his friends. In fact that was not so. Sure enough, his second letter was very different. He wrote most bitterly, and said Miss Feng's face had swollen. Unfortunately I made no copy of this letter. By that time even more rumours were rife. Some said he could come out on bail, others that he had already been sent to Nanking. Nothing was certain. And more telegrams and letters were arriving to ask for news of me. Even my mother in Peking fell ill of anxiety, and I had to write letter after letter to put things right. This went on for about three weeks.

The weather turned colder, and I wondered if they had quilts where Jou Shih was. We had. Had he received the tin bowls? . . . But then we received reliable news that on the night of February the seventh or the morning of the eighth Jou Shih and twenty-three others had been shot at the Lunghua Garrison Headquarters. There were ten bullets in his body.

So! . . .

Late at night I stood in the hotel courtyard, surrounded by junk. The whole world was asleep, including my wife and son. I was profoundly conscious that I had lost the best of friends, China the best of young men. I grew calmer after my first distress, but force of habit asserted itself in the calm and made me string together these few lines:

> I am used to long nights in spring;
> With my wife and child my hair is turning white;
> A mother's tears I see in a dream,
> On the city wall the warlords' banners keep changing;
> I have seen my friends become ghosts;
> In anger among the swords I seek for a poem.
> I lower my head. How can I write out these lines?
> Moonlight like water shines on my dark garment.

The last two lines were not true though, for in the end I copied the verse out and sent it to a Japanese singer.

But in China at that time we could not publish this poem. We were sealed in more tightly than in a tin. I remember Jou Shih had gone home just before New Year and stayed so long that some of his friends reproached him on his return. He told me



in great distress that his mother had lost the sight of both eyes, and he could not bear to leave when she asked him to stay a little longer. I know the heart of that blind mother and Jou Shih's devotion. When *North Star* was first published, I wanted to write something about Jou Shih, but could not. All I could do to commemorate him was to select Käthe Kollwitz's woodcut *The Sacrifice,* which shows a mother giving up her son in agony of spirit, and this I alone understand.

Of the four other young writers killed at the same time, I had never met Li Wei-sen, and had only seen Hu Yeh-ping once in Shanghai and exchanged a few words with him. The one I knew relatively well was Pai Mang or Yin Fu, for we had corresponded and he had written for my magazine. But I can find nothing of his today. I must have burned all his contributions on the evening of the seventeenth, before I knew he was among those arrested. I still have his *Poems of Petöfi,* and looking through this I found four lines of his translation written in ink beside one of the "Wahlspruch" (Maxims):

> Life is a treasure,
> Love even dearer;
> But to win freedom,
> I would throw both away!

On the second page is written Hsu Pei-ken, which I suspect was his real name.

## V

Two years ago today, I was lying low in a hotel while they went to the execution grounds. A year ago today I was escaping through the gunfire to the International Concession while they lay buried none knows where. Only this year am I sitting at home again on this day, while the whole world is asleep, including my wife and son. Once again I am profoundly conscious that I have lost the best of friends and China the best of young men. I grow calmer after my distress, but force of habit asserts itself in my calm, and has made me write.

If I go on, I shall still be unable to publish what I write in China today. When a lad, I read Hsiang Tzu-chi's *Reminiscences* and

blamed him for writing a few lines only, then finishing when he had barely begun. But now I understand.

It is not the young who are writing obituaries for the old, but during the last thirty years with my own eyes I have seen the blood of so many young people mounting up that now I am submerged and cannot breathe. All I can do is take up my pen and write a few articles, as if to make a hole in the clods of clay through which I can draw a few more wretched breaths. What sort of world is this? The night is so long, the way so long, that I had better forget or else remain silent. But I know, if I do not do so, a time will come when others will remember them and speak of them. . . .

February 7 and 8 (1933)

*Translated by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang*

*HU YEH-PING*

# A Poor Man

For two days now Po-tao had not tasted food. Pangs of hunger roused him from his sleep early on the third morning as sunlight began to peep from behind pearl grey clouds. Quietly he lay on the cold hard bed, his round sunken eyes staring with a strange glint at the bare date tree outside. His mind, however, was busy picturing the delicious products of his home village, the pomelo, sugar cane, potato and figs; the fresh carp, frogs and shrimp from the river, the lotus-seed dumplings at Dragon-boat Festival and the cassia moon-cakes at mid-autumn. . . . His thoughts dwelt on everything that was edible. Although mere thinking could not fill his rumbling insides, he let his mind dwell in detail on every delicacy, placing them in fancy on the table by his bed until it was overloaded and another table and then yet another had to be added. It was only when the room was full of tables all groaning with delicacies that he mentally picked up the choicest morsel – his favourite of course – put it slowly into his mouth and chewed it daintily before letting it slip down his throat. . . .

"Disgraceful!" He could not help feeling angry with himself.

Even as he raged, he noticed once more the old torn ceiling, with dangling pieces of paper which looked ready to fall any minute. The wall-paper was even more dingy and yellow, besmeared with dead flies and mosquito blood. Someone had writ-

Hu Yeh-ping was born in 1905 in Fukien. He was killed by the Kuomintang reactionaries in Shanghai in 1931. His major works include the well-known short novels, *Off to Moscow* and *A Bright Future Awaits Us.*

ten on the wall in fancy characters, "A monk takes a wife," and "So and so is a bastard." Some child or maybe even an adult must have written this to mark his presence.

"Really, this is no place for human beings," he thought again.

Slowly the kindly sunlight began to stream down on him through the tree, the eaves and the latticed window. Wafted in by a gentle breeze came the clear crisp song of a child: "Little sister, it's time to rise!" As Po-tao listened, the ghost of a smile appeared on his face. Quickly he jumped out of bed, picked out a picture of "Spring Morning on the West Lake" from the pile of tattered books and papers in one corner of his room and dashed out of the door.

The singer was a little girl. School-bag slung across one shoulder, she was on her way to class. Po-tao had grown attached to this child two months ago; sometimes he gave her postcards and pictures. Feeling the gap between them, and for another reason as well, he wavered, an expression of shame and indecision on his face. "This can't be the kind of thing I do! Shameless and vile!" Still, the fiery burning sensation was working havoc in his empty stomach, tempting and urging him. He went up to the child.

"Look, Little Lai," he said, showing her the picture in his hands. "Like it?"

"Give it to me," she demanded, quite delighted.

"What's that bulging in there?" Po-tao pointed at her school-bag.

"Cakes."

"Will you give me them in exchange?" he asked timidly.

"All right." She went away very pleased.

Holding the cakes, Po-tao felt wretched. As he avidly gulped them down, he told himself, "Too low and vile for words! Cheating a child of her breakfast!" The little cakes barely filled the spaces between his teeth and were all too quickly digested, leaving his empty stomach emptier than ever. The fiery hunger seemed to burst into a stronger flame. This was quite unexpected. You'd think it would be better having a little to eat than nothing at all, yet hunger was torturing him worse than ever. A weary pallor made his haggard face paler. His lips quivered and his body shook as if with cold. . . .



"I might as well starve," he told himself silently in white fury.

The little girl's voice had died away in the distance. Sunlight carpeted the ground with infinite warmth as more people appeared in the little lane.

"I've done something shameful. But what kind of misfortune is this? I have become such a person, so. . . ." In a dreadful, hushed voice, he added, "There is no doubt that I will do something desperate today, just one bold deed . . . something . . . I must. . . ." Vaguely, and still trembling all over, he headed for the street.

As he turned into another lane, a fat, black pug-dog jumped out from behind a threshold. The little bell round its fat neck tinkling, it began to growl at Po-tao. Again he felt the wrath of one insulted and humiliated.

"Men are so snobbish that even their dogs are snobbish. This is indeed a snobbish world."

The little dog followed close at his heels, barking annoyingly until he at last lost patience. Picking up a piece of broken brick, he hurled it at the pug with all his might. The brick landed with a thud on a bright crimson gate. This unexpected result gave Po-tao some sense of satisfaction anyway because within the gate lived rich people and through the gateway a cook, in a long black gown, often carried heavy hampers of food – big chunks of pork and mutton, juicy white plucked chicken and duck and other delicacies. This evidence was enough to convince a man who had not eaten for two days that those within were his absolute enemies.

"Grrr. . . ." The little dog, its tail between its legs, growled at him from a distance, but Po-tao had already forgotten all about the pug. His thoughts lingered on the hampers of pork, mutton, poultry and other food and he remembered their delicious flavour. Once again he was only too painfully aware of his empty stomach and the feebleness of his legs.

"What shall I do? This hunger!" He walked down the road, his head bent in thought.

The cool autumn wind hit him in the chest, he trembled a little. "Cold and hungry!"

Just at that juncture, something hard bumped into him and a voice cried loudly, "Watch where you're going!"

He looked up to discover a young restaurant lad of about fourteen standing close by, a look of disgust and anger in his eyes.

"What's the matter with you?" asked the lad. "Look!" and he pointed at the muffins and fried bread on the ground.

"What the devil . . ." Po-tao wondered.

"Pay me," shouted the lad.

"But it was you who bumped into me."

"You must pay me for the muffins I lost."

"When a man's poor, he's out of luck in everything." Slowly, Po-tao walked away. The lad rushed up and grabbed him by his long cotton gown which had not seen water for some time. "Running away eh?" he shouted. "Come on, give me back my five muffins and fried bread."

"Go away!" Po-tao was at last roused to fury. He gave the lad a vigorous push and slowly continued on his way.

The lad scrambled up, sobbing loudly, picked up the soiled muffins and fried bread and cursed under his breath, "Damn you . . . you bandit."

For some time the word "bandit" rang in Po-tao's ears. "Bandit," he muttered to himself savouring the multiple meaning of the word. It brought to his mind a very different meaning of life. Slowly, before his tired eyes there appeared a vast uninhabited forest where a score of gallants sat merrily drinking and smoking. Piles of gold and silver lay beside them, to say nothing of the pigs, sheep, chickens and ducks which they could kill and cook as their fancy desired. On a misty moonlight night, Po-tao hid with these bold fellows in an ambush deep in some long weeds. He aimed at one of those so-called dignified officials or rich men and opened fire at him . . . bang! . . . and then . . . then . . . .

The idea so tickled him that he couldn't help chuckling. But he didn't have strength to carry the thought a step further to an even more pleasant situation.

"Bandit!" He thought with pride and satisfaction as he strode ahead, his footsteps stronger and surer now.

A small grey cart wheeled past, sending a strong aroma of baked sweet potatoes to his nostrils. Instantly the mental picture disintegrated.



"Mm. . . . Delicious!" He again felt the emptiness of his stomach.

"I must do something daring today," he thought. "Only one thing, one. . . ." Then he was somewhat angry and disgusted.

"Let it be just this one thing! Just this one thing!" he made up his mind. Again a sense of satisfaction and pride filled his heart, his legs strode bravely down the road but this time in the direction he had come.

Soon, he was back in his own room. Lying on the bed, he contemplated on how mighty, magnanimous and happy he would be, and this made him laugh aloud.

"Are you in?" suddenly a voice coming from the doorway broke through his laughter.

He knew it was that miserable landlady of his, that lonely and grey-haired old woman, come to ask for her rent. "Come in," he called.

"Have you any money for me today, Mr. Chen?" she asked at the door.

"Plenty," he sounded extremely confident and self-satisfied.

Suspicion and surprise were in the old woman's face but she said with the hint of a smile, "That's good. Please give me some, I must buy some flour. I'm very hungry."

"I'll go and get the money." He still had that gloating look on his face.

"Must you? . . ." The old woman hesitated a moment. "Hurry and go, then. Lord of heaven, I certainly need some food to fill my stomach."

"All right, all right," said Po-tao firmly and with some arrogance. Brushing past the old woman, he quickly sailed out of the room.

"That wretched swindler and rogue, he still owes me three months' rent," cursed the old woman every time she looked at the pile of tattered books left behind by Po-tao.

*Translated by Tang Sheng*

*YIN FU*

# Two Poems

## The Children's Pagoda

Since the times require me to advance, to become more healthy, I want to consign these diseased bones to the "children's pagoda." For the graveyards in my part of the world provide these pagodas for the bodies of dead infants. I will not claim to have undergone a change of heart, since I have seen the light for some time now. I am simply burying these tainted bones, for only so can I hope to build up my courage.

—A note to the collection of poems
with the same title published in 1930

Children's Pagoda, old palace for young bones,
Standing alone on this far-stretching plain,
Hearing the helpless moan of the evening wind,
The cawing in concert of crows,
You are the dwelling-place of fledgeling ghosts,
The home of the forgotten.

Yin Fu was born in Chekiang in 1909 and killed by the Kuomintang reactionaries in Shanghai in 1931. He was the author of several collections of poems including *The Children's Pagoda* and *The Black Waves of the Volga*.



White briar-roses bloom at your feet,
And magic toadstools murmur endless secrets;
The windmill rests motionless against the horizon,
In the pallid sky there is no sign of storm;
This peaceful, powerless world
Is shrouded for ever by dank northern mist.

Small, quiet ghosts forgotten by mankind,
Bright angels' tears will wash your wounded hearts;
You had your mortal life, you had your passion,
Your songs of life, your dreams of flowers to come.

But now, forgotten by the world,
No trace remains of your cries;
Foxes bark in glee, wolves howl;
Your innocent sobs echo softly through the wilds.

Your tiny hands are empty,
The fingers clutching only a mother's grief;
The night is still, the moon low, no more the wind moans,
And sleepless, somewhere, in secret a mother sighs.

Pour forth your wordless songs then, gentle souls,
Till the briar-rose quivers, the toadstools bow their heads,
The quiet tears of the far-off stream are frozen
And in silence the black-garbed prophet flies away.

Gather green will-o'-the-wisps, my gentle souls,
To light up the dead wastes and darkling paths,
Till guiltless wayfarers halt at the sight and say:
"Here will-o'-the-wisps are dancing. . . ."

*Written as a vagrant in Shanghai, 1929*

# Weep Not for These Brave Dead

Weep not for these brave dead,
Not spilt in vain their blood;
Smiling they lie
Like one who nods his head;
Their blood has traced our map,
Staining so many towns and hamlets red;
A glorious end they made
And need no tears of ours;
The enemy's guns are trained on us,
No time is this for tears.

Weep not for these brave dead,
Not spilt in vain their blood;
No time is this for grief or sighs,
A long road lies ahead –
    We must march on!
Tears would betray us to the enemy:
Their task is done –
    For us to battle on!

*Translated by Yang Hsien-yi*
*and Gladys Yang*

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*Mountain Carts* (108.8 cm. × 49.4 cm.) →
anonymous

This Sung dynasty (960-1279) painting shows travellers through the mountains and carters stopping at a mountain inn.

YANG MO

# The Song of Youth *(cont'd)*

*THE STORY SO FAR*

The story takes place in the thirties. A lonely girl with high ideals, Lin Tao-ching becomes the wife of the university student Yu Yung-tse, who has saved her from drowning. But when she discovers that he is thoroughly selfish, with no concern for the fate of the nation and the people, they become estranged. She comes to know a Communist, Lu Chia-chuan, and realizes better the treachery of Chiang Kai-shek and his clique who will not resist Japanese aggression. In the national crisis of 1932, ignoring Yung-tse's opposition, she joins in the March the Eighteenth patriotic demonstration and the May Day march organized by the Peking students. In the course of the struggle against the military police who come to suppress the students' movement, her respect for Lu Chia-chuan grows. She also becomes increasingly disgusted with Yung-tse, who supports Hu Shih's theory that students should study hard and leave politics alone.

## CHAPTER 21

One evening Yung-tse went out after supper, leaving Tao-ching to clear the table and wash up. The landlady turned on the radio, and a mawkish popular song assailed Tao-ching's ears.

A gentle rain
Is falling still;
The sky is dark,
The wind is chill. . . .

Listlessly, Tao-ching put away the supper things. The more disgusted she was by the sentimental music, the louder it seemed to grow. As she heaved a helpless sigh she felt a tap on the shoulder. Turning around, she found it was Lu Chia-chuan, whom she had not seen for months. Excitedly flinging the dish-cloth aside, she flushed and said breathlessly:

"Brother Lu! It's ages since I last saw you! Where have you been all this time? . . ."

Tao-ching had not seen Lu Chia-chuan since May Day. Pai Li-ping had left for Shanghai. And though Hsu Ning still dropped in occasionally, he was always in a hurry. Once more Tao-ching's life had become a mere dull routine. Her great eyes, once cheerful and sparkling, had lost their lustre and she no longer sang about the house. Once more she fell a prey to despondency.

"Forgive me for not having called earlier – I have been busier than usual the last few months." Lu set down the brief-case he had brought and asked: "How have you been, Tao-ching? Feeling depressed again?"

"Yes, I am!" Tao-ching lowered her head to wipe away a tear. "My life is like a stagnant pool – nothing but quarrels and reading one book after another. . . . Brother Lu, tell me what to do!" With upturned face, she looked at him earnestly, her lips trembling. "I've been expecting you – expecting the Party – to save me. . . ."

After glancing casually round the room and the courtyard, Lu took his seat beside the table and smiled.

"I know how you feel, Tao-ching. But don't lose heart. We'll do our best to help you. . . ." His voice was grave, though his eyes were as calm and kind as ever. "The White Terror is becoming more and more deadly. The Third Regiment of Gendarmes led by Chiang Hsiao-hsien is arresting young patriots right and left in Peiping. Did you know Hsu Ning has been arrested?"

"No! Not Hsu Ning!" Tao-ching was horrified. "When did they take him?"

"The same evening that Lo Ta-fang and some other students left for Chahar to join the army. Lo Ta-fang was released from prison, you know. Hsu Ning meant to go too, but he kept putting it off till he was arrested. We're living in cruel times, Tao-ching, and the struggle is sharpening. Do you ever think of these things?"

"More often than I can say!" Tao-ching blushed and leaned over the desk. "It has always seemed to me better to die a heroic death than to lead a vain, humdrum life! I'm not afraid of death or anything else!"

As Lu's keen eyes searched her pretty face, flushed with naive excitement, he felt he could have complete confidence in this girl whose life was so fraught with contradictions. Looking straight into her eyes, he asked: "Do you still want to die a heroic death on the battlefield?" He chuckled. "That's wrong, Tao-ching! We join the revolution not in order to die but to live – to live a more worth-while life and to bring happiness to hundreds of thousands of the oppressed. Why think of death before you have done anything worth-while? That's a mistaken notion."

"Well then, Brother Lu, show me how to join the revolution! There's nothing revolutionary about my life now."

"All right, if that's what you want, I'll ask for your help now." Lu grew suddenly grave. "There are three things I want you to do. Please think them over, and see if you can help. First, I have some papers which I'd like to leave here for a couple of days in safe-keeping. Secondly, I want you to deliver a message for me tonight. Thirdly. . . ." He paused to glance at her thoughtfully. "Thirdly, I should like to stay here for a while – if possible, overnight. I've had agents after me for the last few days – I had to dodge one of them to come in here."

Tao-ching's pleasure in this assignment was mixed with anxiety for Lu. While he was talking with her calmly about her daily life and other problems, she had had no idea that he was in danger. Amazed by his coolness and cheerfulness, she stared at him blankly.

"I'll do whatever you want, Brother Lu. I've been longing for you to treat me as one of yourselves. Of course you can stay here – I'll just go and tell Yung-tse and that will be all right." The mention of this name made her blush.

Lu was bending over with one foot on a stool and one hand to his forehead. His handsome, dependable face was grave and

his brows were knitted. After a moments silence, he shook his head and tapped the table.

"No, you'd better not tell Old Yu, Tao-ching. It won't do for me to spend the night here. . . . Suppose we arrange it this way: To-night I have some writing to do, and I'd like to stay here a little longer. Can you ask Old Yu to come home rather later than usual?" He handed his brief-case to her. "There are some propaganda leaf-lets here. Put them in a safe place, and mind you don't let Old Yu see them."

"All right!" Tao-ching took the worn brown case as carefully as a mother receiving her new-born child. In an instant, the joy in her heart dispelled the anxiety that had just gripped her. Clasping the brief-case in her arms, she fixed glowing eyes upon Lu. "Brother Lu, do spend the night here! If you don't want to see him, he and I can put up somewhere else so that you have the place to yourself. I promise to. . . ." She wanted to promise to keep him safe from harm, but the words remained unspoken. How could she, young and childish as she was, use words framed for a mother's lips to a man she looked up to as her teacher?

"There's no need!" Tao-ching's vehemence brought a smile to Lu's face. "I want you to call on someone, Tao-ching," he said. "As she lives rather out of the way, quite a distance from here, you had better start at once. She's a Mrs. Li. Just ask her: 'Have Little Tai, Little Wu and Little Fang come back from the cinema yet? Little Feng is doing very well.' If she says they're back, that's fine. If you can't find her and someone asks what you want, you can say she's a relative of yours or that you must have come to the wrong number. Just do what seems best. Have



all your wits about you and keep cool. . . ." He impressed upon her the need for secrecy and gave her some other tips.

"The children who went to the cinema – what does that mean?" Tao-ching's eyes were wide with wonder.

"What you don't need to know, don't ask – that's one of our rules." Lu spoke kindly but firmly.

Tao-ching nodded and stood twisting the edge of her jacket. Confused and anxious as she was, this new element of mystery added a spice to life. She had much to say, yet could not bring herself to speak.

They faced each other in silence.

Then she rose to go, not wanting to be late. Nodding to Lu, she made for the door. But the thought crossed her mind that outside there might be spies lying in wait for him. Perhaps the moment she left, he would be taken. Dread rooted her to the ground and she leaned against the door, watching him blankly, unable to express her mingled reluctance to leave and indignation on his behalf.

"It's half past eight, Tao-ching. You'd better go!" Lu had not taken his eyes off her all this time.

"All right, Brother Lu, I'm off! Wait for me here!" Biting her lips, she turned to go. But before she had crossed the threshold, Lu called to her:

"Don't look so flustered and in such a hurry. Keep calm! Nervousness may spoil everything. I'll wait here for you as long as I can. If you don't find me here when you come back, you needn't worry. I'll call in three days for my things."

"You must wait for me! Don't go away. . . ." Tao-ching took his hand. Her long lashes were glistening with tears.

Lu's feelings at that moment were extraordinarily complex. The girl's enthusiasm for the cause and her admiration for him, which she sometimes failed to conceal, stirred him so that he longed to open his heart to her. But this was out of the question. With her hands in his, he spoke to her like a brother, affectionately and solemnly:

"Tao-ching, you haven't yet been through a bitter struggle. You don't yet realize its seriousness and complexity. . . . Suppose after three days I haven't turned up. . . ." His kindly, brilliant eyes gazed at her intently. ". . . Then you had better burn the

things I've left here. In future — in future, if only you have faith in our cause and can fight on for the good, happy days that are to come, I know you will reach your goal and your ideal will come true. Never forget this, Tao-ching. Communism can never be wiped out. They will never succeed in killing us all — we are legion! We shall probably meet again. . . ."

Tao-ching fixed her gaze on him, pulling herself together to grasp every word that he said. To her, his speech was golden. But when she caught the significance of what he was saying, tears began to stream from her eyes. She wished desperately that she had some good hiding-place where she could lock him safely away from the reactionaries. But where was such a refuge to be found? She stood there lost in thought until she remembered that it was time to be going — she mustn't wait to be reminded again. So with unwilling steps she started out, while Lu gave her one last warning:

"Remember all I've told you, Tao-ching. You must give Mrs. Li my message word for word. And be careful on the road. If anyone follows you, don't come back right away. . . . One more thing! Please ask Old Yu not to come home too early!"

"I'll do all you say. Don't worry!" With this, Tao-ching walked quickly out and vanished into the dusk.

Lu leaned against the door-frame with a smile, as if Tao-ching were still standing in the quiet courtyard.

Tao-ching went straight to Li Kuo-ying's room in the East Hostel, where she found Yung-tse. She beckoned him out and told him earnestly:

"Tonight I have to go out on business. Will you go home later?"

"What's the matter? Why should I stay out if I don't want to? What difference would it make if I waited for you at home?" Yung-tse's suspicious eyes narrowed.

Tao-ching did not know what to say. She disliked keeping anything from him. And this was nothing of which to be ashamed. So she whispered into his ear: "Yung-tse, Lu Chia-chuan has spies after him and has just gone to our place for safety. Do go home later, will you? I am going on an errand for him."

Yung-tse stood there motionless, thinking: "On this beautiful summer night, scented with flowers, she must be meeting a



lover. . . . That's why she doesn't want her husband to go home. . . ." He cast a sidelong glance at Tao-ching and hissed: "So your boy friend is waiting for you! But that happens to be my home. I shall go back whenever I please!" He turned and strode back into Li's room, banging the door behind him.

Tao-ching was thoroughly wretched and indignant. For a few seconds she stood irresolutely in the dim corridor. Her instinct was to rush in and talk Yung-tse round, but the thought of Lu Chia-chuan made her calmer. Clenching her teeth and tossing her head, she took on her earlier look of determination. "No, I'd better go. It's no use arguing with him."

Two hours before calling on Tao-ching, Lu Chia-chuan had gone with Tai Yu and some others to the largest cinema in the East City. When the audience had nearly filled the house, they closed the door and Lu, as previously arranged, climbed up the stage and began to speak on communism, the victories of the Workers and Peasants' Red Army and the need to resist Japan and save the country. Meanwhile the others scattered snowy pamphlets. The cinema attendants lost their heads and the audience was thrown into confusion, but though many tried to escape, the way was closed. Naturally, before Lu reached the end of his speech, the place was surrounded by police. With great presence of mind, Lu took off his cap, put on a hasty disguise and left with the crowd. Since he did not know what had happened to his friends, he had sent Tao-ching with a message to their headquarters.

But by now he was a marked man. The secret police had their eyes on him, and he was being shadowed by several men in turn. Fortunately he had managed to shake off the agent on his track to reach Tao-ching's home in safety. Since no one could suspect Yung-tse of communist sympathies, he knew he would be safe here. He realized, of course, that Yung-tse would not want him to stay; but he dared not show himself outside. His urgent need for a temporary hiding-place outweighed all other considerations.

Though he had just been through an exhausting ordeal and had eaten nothing all day, Lu sat quietly down at Yung-tse's desk to write an urgent memorandum. Several times, as he was trying to concentrate, his mouth watered at the sight of some white

steamed bread in Tao-ching's small larder. But he had no time to eat. The task in hand was urgent, and he didn't want Yung-tse to arrive before he had finished. That was what happened, however. And that led to a heated clash of another sort.

Lu was writing when the door opened and in came Yung-tse in a grey felt hat and long blue gown, with a pile of old Chinese books under one arm. He turned livid at the sight of a visitor seated in that calm proprietary manner at his desk. His small eyes bored into Lu as if this were some stranger. But he held back the angry curses on the tip of his tongue, because to shout abuse would have been unseemly. Before he could think of any reproach both dignified and cutting, Lu nodded to him with a smile.

"So you're back, Old Yu! I haven't seen you for months." Coolly folding the paper on which he had been writing, he rose.

Doing his best to suppress his rage, Yung-tse asked:

"What are you doing in my house?"

"Tao-ching asked me to wait for her here."

"Asked you to wait for her?" This reply goaded Yung-tse to still greater fury. Still, he did not burst out. He whirled to the wall and said hoarsely:

"Lu Chia-chuan! Please stop trying to bewitch Tao-ching with those great Marxist principles of yours! I'd have you remember she's my wife! No one's going to use underhand means to destroy our happiness!"

Standing by the door, Lu looked quietly at Yung-tse's bony, stooping shoulders – the shadow of his head on the wall was like a large black mushroom, his lanky body like the mushroom stalk. . . .

"Aren't you ashamed to talk like that, Old Yu?" he countered gravely. "Don't forget that besides being Tao-ching's husband you're one of the students who loudly professed your patriotism. If your happiness has been destroyed, you've only yourself to blame." With this, he calmly opened the door, cast one last look at Yung-tse and strode away.

When he had gone, Yung-tse dropped as if stupefied into the seat by the desk and buried his head on his lean arms. Despair had driven all his anger away. When he raised his head again



the electric light, dim at this time of night, made his long face appear more haggard and gaunt than ever.

"Women are the root of all evil. . . ." He took out a handkerchief and wiped his eyes.

Having found Mrs. Li without any difficulty and given her Lu's message, Tao-ching went out to the street again and took a rickshaw home. She was excited and pleased to have carried out her mission. But the danger Lu was in filled her with foreboding. As she sat in the rickshaw, her thoughts wandered, and not until she approached the entrance to their lane did she call to mind Lu's warning that she should see if there was anyone following her. Reproaching herself for her carelessness, she turned to look in all directions. She was reassured to see that the dark road was deserted, with not a soul in sight. Alighting, she made a detour back to their lodgings, her heart filled with misgivings.

It was midnight and the room was pitch dark. Entering, she switched on the light with trembling fingers. There was no sign of Lu, while Yung-tse was lying in bed with his face to the wall. He turned to stare at her without a word. Not stopping to wonder what sort of mood he was in, she demanded:

"When did you come back? Where is Lu Chia-chuan?"

"How should I know? It's not my job to look after your honourable friend!"

"You ought to feel ashamed of yourself, Yung-tse! I tell you, if Lu Chia-chuan is arrested tonight, I shall think it was you who betrayed him!" Tao-ching stared at him as if he were an enemy.

Yung-tse sat up abruptly. Confident that this time he had a genuine grievance, he made no attempt to plead with her but sneered:

"I've not come to that yet. But if someone stole my wife from me, I might."

In the dim lamplight, both their faces were pale.

After a moment's silence, Tao-ching calmed down a little, reflecting that she must at all costs find out Lu's whereabouts as soon as possible. In a gentler voice she said:

"Yung-tse, don't let's misunderstand each other! No one's going to steal your wife. The situation is desperate – do tell me where he's gone!"

"He left as soon as I got home — at eleven." Yung-tse shook his head with a bitter smile. "How could he stand the company of someone as backward as I am? Naturally the moment he saw me, he went away. Don't worry! I still have some conscience. How could I inform against anyone?"

Tao-ching did not know whether to be glad or sorry. She was relieved that Lu had not been arrested here. But the fact that she had failed to keep him overnight meant that she would be responsible if he was arrested after leaving here. Deep in thought, with bent head, she sat there for some time. Then, because the room was close and her heart was heavy, she went out to the courtyard and stood under a jujube tree, gazing blankly at the starry sky. It was painful to think that her task was uncompleted.

"Tao-ching, aren't you ever coming to bed? Are you going to stand out there all night?" Yung-tse called from the room. Apparently, waiting for her, he could not sleep either. But she paid no attention as she stood there with her eyes on the dark horizon. After a long, long while, she seemed to wake up and heaved a sigh.

"I'm just a bundle of nerves," she told herself. "It can wait! After all, three days will go very quickly."

## CHAPTER 22

Leaving the cinema in a hurry, Tai Yu turned into a narrow lane. But at once he was seized by secret-service agents who were lying in wait for him there.

In a closely curtained car, he was taken to a forbidding compound. His captors led him through two courtyards and into an unexpectedly handsome room, where a young man in a Western suit invited him to sit on the sofa before he too withdrew. Alone in the room, Tai Yu scrutinized every corner uneasily. Strange! It bore no resemblance to a prison or police station. . . . It was obviously the sitting-room of a well-to-do family. Pale green silk curtains hung at the large windows; thick, handsomely bound books filled the bookcases lining the wall. An antique porcelain



vase with flowers in it stood on a little round table in the centre of the room, surrounded by a number of bottles — Maotai, white wine and brandy. There were comfortable sofas and armchairs too. These and the scrolls of calligraphy and painting on the white walls struck Tai Yu particularly. He was completely bewildered. A few moments ago he had been shouting and struggling in a seething crowd, while Marxism was preached in the cinema; and here he was now in this quiet, luxurious room. This was utterly different from the dank, dark cells and cruel torture he had been expecting when he was bundled into the car. But here he was. These unexpected surroundings were not unfamiliar, however. A long time ago he had lived in such a world. Before he joined the revolution at the age of eighteen, he too had possessed a home like this, bookcases filled with all kinds of books and an abundance of the Maotai wine which he loved. His landlord father, who was also an official, had brought him up in comfort and luxury. But later, when he accepted the revolutionary truths taught him by a communist school friend, he entered a new world, a world full of hard work, struggles, difficulties and danger. After the lapse of many years he had virtually forgotten the bookcases with glass doors to keep out dust, the Maotai wine, the pretty curtains and the fine paintings that had once hung in his room. But today, less than an hour after his arrest, when he once again laid eyes on these luxuries, his long forgotten past rose up before him. He felt he must be dreaming.

Seated on the plush sofa, darting furtive glances around him, he was conscious of very mingled sensations. Just then a door opened and in came a beautifully dressed and heavily made-up woman followed by a thin middle-aged man in a Western suit. Before he had decided what attitude to take, they were at his side with outstretched hands like old friends.

"How do you do, Mr. Tai!" The man tried to take his hand. Tai Yu withheld it, casting him a bewildered glance. He turned away only to confront the woman, who offered him her hand with a coy smile. Lowering his head in confusion, he kept his eyes on the ground.

But the threats and blandishments of the enemy soon made Tai Yu begin to waver. The warm familiar world of his past and

this luxurious world before his eyes drew him like a magnet and broke down his feeble resistance. In barely half an hour, he was sitting with his host and hostess at the round table drinking Maotai. Soon after that he was released. Just before he left that tastefully furnished room, his host said to him with an approving smile:

"You are a clever man, Mr. Tai. You will go far if you look out for yourself. I don't suppose you know who I am? My name's Hu Meng-an. I'm on the committee of the Peiping Kuomintang. We must keep in close touch in future."

The woman smiled graciously and said languidly: "I'm Wang Feng-chuan. We shall often meet again."

So Tai Yu walked out of the Peiping Kuomintang Headquarters. Since no one in the Communist Party knew of his arrest, he acted as if nothing had happened. Naturally, before long, members of the organizations he knew began to be arrested, and one raid followed another. Lu Chia-chuan's arrest, too, was due to information given by this renegade.

When Lu was driven out by Yung-tse's return, he went back to the lodgings of a friend with whom he had been staying. He was arrested before he crossed the threshold. Since he had long been prepared for this, he had taken the necessary precautions. The enemy found no incriminating documents on him, nor did their search of his friend's room produce any of the evidence for which they were looking. Lu was escorted to the headquarters of the Third Regiment of Gendarmes, but of course they wrested no confession from him. Thus Lu Chia-chuan embarked on the hard struggle a Communist must wage in prison.

At first, the enemy tried the methods so successful with Tai Yu to make Lu Chia-chuan capitulate. Their efforts were in vain, but Lu made use of the time during which they attempted to win him over by setting up a Party branch and heading a struggle against the prison authorities. When the enemy realized that he was too steadfast to turn renegade, they changed their tactics. He was subjected to inhuman tortures.

At midnight, Lu Chia-chuan regained consciousness. Lying on the floor of his cell, his first sensation was thirst. His parched,



cracked lips, clotted with blood, were burning, and there was a bitter, salty taste in his mouth.

"Water . . . water . . ." he moaned. He tried to turn over, but such pain shot through him that, grinding his teeth, he lay still.

"Water. . . ." Bemused, he was conscious only of unbearable thirst. This sensation of thirst, however, made him aware that he was still alive. With an effort he opened his eyes and looked feebly round his pitch dark cell. Beyond the iron-barred window high up the wall a few stars were gleaming in a patch of dark blue sky. In the distance sounded the heavy tread of a sentry. A few famished rats scurrying near him seemed eager to gorge themselves on his blood-caked limbs. . . . As, slowly and painfully, he regained possession of his faculties, one thought was uppermost in his mind, enabling him to forget his agonizing thirst and the pain racking him.

"I must tell . . . my comrades. . . ." He lay rigid on the damp ground, fighting down his pain. "I must get word . . . to them. . . ."

He had now been more than two months in the prison of the Peiping Gendarmerie. Cruel tortures had not succeeded in weakening his resolve; he had fought stubbornly on. He had been beaten within an inch of his life; but to fight for a public trial and better treatment for political prisoners, he had organized a hunger-strike within the prison. On the third day of the strike, they were drawing up a statement about the inhuman treatment to which political prisoners were subjected, to be sent out through a "connection" and made known to the general public, when Lu was dragged from his cell for cross-examination. During the torture that followed, he had both his legs broken and his ten fingers pierced with needles till the blood spurted out. He was flogged till there was barely breath left in him, bruised and battered out of all recognition. But not a word of information passed his lips. The thought of Li Ta-chao, who had trained him for the Party, was a constant inspiration. He was ready to shed his last drop of blood for the cause. . . . The wily enemy had deliberately stopped short of killing him, however. One day, lying well-nigh unconscious on the ground, he heard two of his butchers say over his prostrate body:

"This fellow is finished. Why trouble with him any more? It would be simpler to put a bullet through him and have done with it!"

"Such an easy way out for him? No. Our commandant sets store by him. Most probably he'll send him to Nanking as a prize catch."

When Lu regained consciousness and triumphed once more over death, as he lay on the damp ground his resolve to warn his comrades of their danger transcended his suffering.

He peered painfully into the darkness – why, it was not the same cell! He had been in a tiny cell at the end of a row. In its small iron door was an opening the size of a piece of bean-curd, through which he could see a fragment of grey wall and barbed wire. But beyond this window was blue sky dotted with stars. Obviously, the enemy had struck fast. To break up the Party organization and stubborn hunger-strike of the political prisoners, they had moved him – and perhaps some others as well. They had shut him up here to prevent him from having any contact with his comrades. . . . He lay still, thinking over the situation. He would probably soon be removed or taken out and shot. Whatever happened, he must find some means, while there was still a spark of life in him, to get word to the others.

He began to wrestle with his body, over which he no longer had control.

His legs were broken, and the sinews holding the bones were mangled and bleeding. His back and arms were half paralysed after protracted pain. His swollen, blood-soaked hands were weighted with heavy handcuffs. Yet he was not going to take this lying down. He decided that his only course was to get to the wall, to establish contact with his fellow prisoners.

He closed his eyes and remained motionless for a moment, in an attempt to gather his reserves of strength. But when he tried to roll over, it was beyond him – he was as inert as a rock. Gnashing his teeth, he exerted all his strength, but failed again. The only result was a wave of such excruciating pain that he lost consciousness again.



When, late that night, he came to and saw the patch of blue sky and a few wan stars, his mental agony far exceeded his bodily suffering.

". . . Will it be morning soon? . . . When daylight comes – will they let me live till daylight?" He recalled the events of that night. At about ten o'clock, when most prisoners were asleep, he had been taken out unexpectedly for interrogation. In a badly-lit room, behind a long brown desk, sat a fat pasty-faced individual who smiled at him knowingly.

"You're a clever young fellow, aren't you, Feng Shen! It's too bad that you can't carry on with your operations. . . . Give me the names of the members of your new Party branch. Quick now! . . . So you won't talk? Not even when you're reduced to such a state? . . . Forming a branch right inside the prison, leading a hunger-strike to fight for what you call your rights . . . you've been at the bottom of all this! You're the ring-leader, and you can't hide the facts from us now! . . . All right, I see you've made up your mind to sacrifice all your 'comrades.' Let me tell you, though, we know all their names, all your plans. And what's more, we're going to have the whole lot of you shot before you can pass word to anyone outside."

Notwithstanding the threats and bribes of this fat scoundrel, Lu kept his head and remained silent. He knew that if the enemy really had the information they claimed, they would not be wasting time on him now. They were simply bluffing. He also realized, however, that his organization's activities and plans had been betrayed. As things now stood, some prisoners might be killed as suspects. To avert this danger and carry forward the struggle in the present emergency – his comrades were ignorant of this surprise attack – he must expose the enemy's plot as quickly as he could, so that the fight could go on till the final victory.

Once again he tried to move his rigid body. He threw his whole weight on to his arms and, gritting his teeth, propped himself up. Blood and sweat poured from him, but he remained immovable as a rock.

Panting and delirious, he felt a terrible thirst draining away his last reserves of energy. He was fast sinking into a coma. He licked his parched, swollen lips, and tried to moisten his throat

with some saliva, but his mouth was utterly dry. He clawed with his fingers at the ground, meaning to put some damp earth into his mouth, but before he could do so a stinging pain shot through his bones.

From near by came the sound of low voices and the heavy tramp of boots. Judging by experience, it must be about three in the morning, when the last guards for the night came on duty. In another hour or so it would be light, and then – but no, he might be dragged away at any moment. . . . His own life, his personal concerns counted for nothing. But the cause of the Party, the collective cause, must at all costs be safeguarded. The torch of the struggle must at all costs be kept alight. He reproached himself for his weakness. So long as he had breath, so long as he had a single drop of blood in his veins, he must fight on – whether against the enemy or his own "rebellious" body. With a violent spasm like a wounded tiger, he rolled over. . . .

When he came to, with his lips against the clammy ground, he smiled. He shut his eyes, disregarding the wild palpitations of his heart and the pain searing him. On his elbows, inch by inch he dragged himself forward.

He fainted twice before reaching the wall. But as if possessed of inexhaustible vitality, the minute he came to he rapped the wall with fingers thick and stiff as pegs.

Rat-tat-tat-tat.

Several minutes passed. There was no response. In the still night the only answer to his anxious knocking was the scuffling of rats over the floor.

It would soon be dawn. Beyond the window the stars in the blue sky were fading. His time was fast running out, yet he had not accomplished his last task in prison.

"A man lives only once . . ." he said to himself, and a faint smile twisted his battered, livid face. "What! Am I to finish like this? Wait quietly for the butchers to take me out and shoot me? See my comrades trapped and do nothing? Never! . . ."

Somehow, he dragged himself to the second wall. Again he knocked at the cold wall, and again there came no response. Then he turned to the third wall — his last hope. If there was still no response, all his efforts would have been wasted. It would



mean there was no comrade near. . . .

Rat-tat-tat-tat.

Blood was flowing once more from his wounds, but disregarding it he repeated his knocking.

He pricked up his ears to listen.

Rat-tat-rat-tat-rat-tat.

The knocking from the other side made him frantic with joy. He had received a reply from one of their own people. He fainted again. When he recovered consciousness, greatly enfeebled, and had made sure that there was no other sound near by, he tapped out a question in Morse.

"Who are you?"

"Number Eight . . . Li Liang."

"Number One . . . Lu. . . ." He closed his eyes to rest before he resumed. "Urgent message. Pass it on. The situation in prison has worsened. The enemy knows our plan. Some of us may be killed or removed. But the struggle must go on! Our hunger-strike and the enemy's plot must be reported to the outside world. Make haste! Comrades in the prison must be vigilant and unite closely. . . ."

He had finished what he wanted to say. All the blood seemed to have drained from his body, but Lu Chia-chuan's face was radiant with a smile. Now, at last, with this load off his conscience, he could lay down the heavy burden on his shoulders. His breath became fainter and he lay utterly still.

## CHAPTER 23

Three days went by, but Lu Chia-chuan did not come. Ten days passed, then a month, but still he did not appear.

What could have happened?

Tao-ching distinctly remembered his assurance that in three days he would come back for his things. But there was no sign of him. With every passing minute she lost hope. And as her anxiety grew, so did her self-reproach and anger against Yung-tse. She was desperately eager for news of Lu, but did not know to whom to turn. Hsu Ning had been arrested and Lo Ta-fang had gone to the north. She had called on Mrs. Li, to whom Lu Chia-chuan had sent her with a message; but Mrs. Li had moved away and none of her neighbours knew where she had gone.

As the days passed, Tao-ching's worry and sense of loss deepened.

"Why didn't I make up my mind to let him stay here? Why didn't I do more to help him?... Suppose there were difficulties – couldn't I have overcome them?" She was torn by remorse at what she considered a betrayal on her part, disgusted by the weakness and vacillation which had made her fail one whom she so deeply admired, and more than ever repelled by the backwardness and selfishness of Yung-tse. Wrapped in painful thoughts, she would sit all day at the window, gazing dully at the emerald leaves of the solitary jujube tree in the courtyard. To her mind, the world had turned grey, the door of happiness that had opened to her knocking had swung shut again before she had time to enter. When there was no one by, she would get out the brief-case left by Lu Chia-chuan and finger it abstractedly – she had not burned it according to his instructions – hoping against hope that he would come back to claim it. Remorse and anxiety made her pale and haggard.

"What's the matter? Have you something on your mind?" demanded Yung-tse one day, noticing the change in her. She merely shook her head and said nothing. But he persisted with his questions till she lost patience and burst out:

"No one with a conscience could rest easy! Who knows if he was betrayed or not?..."



Yung-tse stared at her, a mocking, supercilious smile on his face.

"So this is on account of your respected friend Mr. Lu?... In that case, I advise you to forget him! No adventurer of his type ever came to a good end!"

Tao-ching looked at Yung-tse for a moment without a word. Then seizing his arm convulsively, she cried in despair:

"Is it true? How did you hear?... Has he been arrested?"

Yung-tse nodded with an air of insolent confidence. He meant to destroy whatever interest Tao-ching had in Lu Chia-chuan, though he did not know whether Lu had been arrested or not.

Unable to restrain herself any longer, Tao-ching sank down by the table, her head in her hands, and wept. The imprisonment of the man she loved and honoured made her oblivious to Yung-tse's jealous taunts. Yung-tse stood beside her, his thin lips tightly compressed, till at length he could contain his anger no longer.

"I can hardly believe your communism is all you think it!" he cried. "What a pity that he's been caught and your sweet dreams have come to nothing!... But never mind. You must still have plenty of other 'comrades' at large...."

"Be quiet!" Tao-ching jumped up, trembling with rage. "How dare you make fun of my distress!" After a moment's pause, she sobbed: "How can you be so heartless! A fine young man is arrested – his life is in danger – but all you can do is gloat and jeer at him.... Just leave me alone!" Pushing Yung-tse aside, she ran out of the room.

When Tao-ching came back that night, both of them shed tears – both of them grieved over their unhappy union.

To Tao-ching, life had become utterly joyless. She felt as if she were on a desert island, far from friends, kin or anyone who could understand her sufferings and longings. One thing was plain, however. Two people with incompatible political views could not live together. It was self-deception to imagine that "affection" by itself was enough to bind them – they were bound to destroy each other's peace of mind.

"I must leave him! I can't let him ruin my whole life!" This resolve was slowly taking shape in her mind.

One day, she took out Lu Chia-chuan's brief-case again, meaning to burn the contents this time, since there was no likelihood of his coming back. Opening it with some agitation, she discovered rolls of red, green and white leaflets. They caused her a pang, oddly intermingled with gladness, for they made her feel as if Lu were at her side.

When Lu Chia-chuan gave her the brief-case she had been tempted to find out what was inside, but restraining her curiosity had stowed it away in a bundle of tattered cotton wadding. Today, however, having bolted the door, she put the leaflets on the table and read several of them with eager curiosity. There were slogans mimeographed on thin paper in small but legible characters.

"Celebrate the Workers and Peasants' Red Army's great victory over the Fourth Encirclement Campaign of the Kuomintang!"

"People of China, rise in arms! Down with Japanese imperialism!"

"Long live the Chinese Communist Party!"

"Long live the Chinese Soviet Government!"

There were also two lengthier statements issued by the Peiping Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and the Peiping Anti-imperialist League.

The Chinese Communist Party . . . Tao-ching found inspiration in this name. Her fingers closed tightly round the red and green leaflets, and the exaltation that welled up in her heart scattered all the fears and worries that had been weighing upon her. She felt as if she were meeting someone near and dear to her after a long separation. Under no circumstances could she burn such precious things! Pressing them to her breast, it suddenly struck her that these red and green handbills, with their challenge to all reactionaries, had linked her own fate with that of the Communist Party. Surely they could never be separated again! She counted it a supreme honour to have these pamphlets entrusted to her keeping. . . . Her spirits soared, her faith in life was renewed.

"What shall I do with them if I don't burn them?" she asked herself that night. He would not come back, and to keep the leaflets was dangerous, not to say meaningless. She thought of Vlassova in Gorky's *Mother,* who took leaflets to a factory and distributed them to the workers. She determined to do the same. Like a naughty child plotting mischief, or a soldier conceiving a



good plan of attack, she was too excited to sleep. But how to set about it? Inexperienced as she was, she knew the risks involved. After turning the matter over in her mind for the greater part of the night, she hit upon what seemed to her a good plan.

Three days later, she went into action.

It was a summer night. Across the star-studded sky the Milky Way lay like fine, gleaming sand, while the earth was sleeping. But for the fitful whisper of the breeze and the occasional barking of dogs, the deserted streets were silent. But through this eerie stillness in and out of the narrow lanes of the East City moved a modish young woman with a smart hand-bag. She glided along, alert to the slightest sound. When she heard distant footfalls, she halted to press her slim figure against the wall. She listened intently, with bated breath, her dilated eyes gleaming in the darkness, her heart beating so violently that she could almost hear it. When she made sure that there was no cause for alarm, she relaxed and broke into an innocent, childlike smile. Then, breathing fast, she glided forward again.

For Tao-ching, this was an extraordinary day. Never in her life had she known such suspense and excitement. Ever since her decision to post up the handbills secretly at night, she had not enjoyed a moment of ease. More than once she had trembled at the thought of being caught red-handed, but she was strengthened in her resolve by Lu Chia-chuan's parting injunction: "Have faith in our cause. Keep on fighting for a happy future. . . ." She must keep these words firmly in mind and fight on fearlessly. So she busied herself with the necessary preparations, which included the purchase of three small bottles of glue and a pair of soft-soled shoes that would make no noise. The question of a suitable disguise perplexed her till she went to borrow a small brush from her landlady and found her dressed in a close-fitting pink gown, heavily rouged and powdered. She decided to pass herself off as a *demi-mondaine.* To carry out her plan, she told herself, she would not even mind being taken for a street-walker. That evening, fearful that if Yung-tse saw her he would stop her, she went to the landlady's room to change. She slipped into a pale green silk gown that he had had made for her, rouged her lips, put on a pair of flesh-coloured silk stockings, and equipped herself with a smart hand-bag. This transformed her into a

glamorous young lady, and the landlady gaped — so plain and simple had Tao-ching's dress been hitherto.

"She must be going out to meet a lover," thought the landlady. With a meaning smile, she whispered to Tao-ching: "Mrs. Yu, are you? . . . Well, well! I quite understand. . . . So you have some one too. . . ."

Glad to have her conduct viewed in this light, Tao-ching merely smiled. Before she left she said:

"If Yung-tse should ask for me, please tell him I shall be back soon. Will you do me that favour?"

So she slipped out with her heart in her mouth, like a raw recruit on the battlefield who has to advance alone. She stole in and out of the lanes like a street-walker searching for a client. When finally she was sure there was no one about, she summoned up her courage for the task in hand. Moistening with the tip of her tongue the tops of the leaflets already smeared with glue, she pasted several on the wall. Her hands shook and her legs would hardly support her as she put up the first. . . . At that moment, she saw in her mind's eye all the young men and girls she had met at that New Year's Eve party. . . . If they were here, the job would be done in no time. But as it was, she must go about it alone, in the depth of night. . . . She was afraid not only of the police, but of men who might take her for a prostitute. After pasting up a few leaflets and thrusting a few more through the slits of doors, she could continue no longer and hurried home.

She was tired out. When she lay down, she felt too exhausted to move.

But the next night she went about the same task, this time with more confidence. She pasted up handbills or thrust them through the door in quite a number of lanes. She set out just before dawn, when the police on night duty stopped patrolling their beats. So, having disposed of all the sheets she had taken with her, she returned safely home.

The townsfolk were stunned by these leaflets which had appeared out of the blue. Young people passed them around out of curiosity, while timid old men were thrown into a panic.

"Is the number of Communists growing now?" people asked each other in whispers.

The students' unions in many middle schools and universities received by post newspapers which, unrolled, dislosed communist leaflets sent out by Tao-ching. The students were cheered as well as nonplussed. Some of them speculated for days on the identity of the sender. They were convinced, however, that the Communist Party was on the move again and that there would soon come another high tide of revolution.

The police who discovered communist leaflets on the walls of the streets were startled. Angry and afraid, they made haste to tear them down.

Unknown to Yung-tse, Tao-ching resorted to every conceivable means to distribute the handbills in her possession, posting some to people she knew to be progressive. Before long, she had disposed of the larger portion. The remainder she kept because she could not bear to part with them all so soon.

Those small red and green sheets had rescued her from the brink of despair. Before finding them, there had been days when she felt that all was over with her, that without Lu Chia-chuan's guidance and the Party's care she was once more reduced to a narrow, stifling existence as Yung-tse's docile wife, with nothing to look forward to but the day when he could afford to buy her velvet gowns and a woollen overcoat. . . . Such a future was too wretched to contemplate. But the leaflets had brought her a sense of liberation. The more she disposed of, the happier she felt. Yung-tse had always declared with a sneer that petty-bourgeois intellectuals could do nothing but shout slogans. But now she had done something more practical.

Soon the summer vacation came. To find out what effect the leaflets had produced, she called on Wang Hsiao-yen, now in her second year at Peking University.

"Hsiao-yen, yesterday morning I found something very odd!" She grasped her friend's arm excitedly.

"What was that?" Hsiao-yen slowly closed the book in her hand to stare at her with myopic eyes.

"Look!" Tao-ching took three leaflets out of her pocket. "Yesterday morning I was going to take a walk. I had no sooner stepped out of the door than I caught sight of these. . . ." She dropped her voice to a whisper. "Don't you see? They are put out by the Chinese Communist Party!"

Hsiao-yen took them, glanced through them and threw them casually on the desk. "I thought you meant something really unusual . . . but these are nothing new. I've seen them before."

"That's very strange! Where could you have seen them?"

Hsiao-yen did not answer immediately, but opened a drawer and took out a package of sweets.

"Have a sweet, Tao-ching. My father has just brought these back from Shanghai. Tell me, why are you so interested in these leaflets? Is that why you came today?"

"The whole thing's beyond me. Can there be so many Communists still?"

"I think there must be quite a number." Hsiao-yen sat down beside Tao-ching. With a sweet in her mouth, she said slowly: "A few days ago, just before the term ended, our Students' Union received a copy of the daily *Ta Kung Pao* through the post. Inside it were leaflets just like yours. Some people were surprised and excited, others felt afraid, and a few suggested that they should be posted on the bulletin board. But not everyone approved of the idea, for fear of the consequences."

"How about you? Were you afraid? You're an active member of the union, aren't you?"

"I didn't mind one way or the other. But as a matter of fact those leaflets did appear on the board the very next day. They caused a great commotion. . . . The university authorities, of course, lost no time in tearing them down. President Chiang Meng-lin was furious, and the university hasn't settled down again even now."

Hsiao-yen tossed her thick black hair and smiled faintly, though her face remained solemn. Tao-ching was overjoyed. She threw her arm round Hsiao-yen's neck, her face as radiant as a flower.

"Hsiao-yen! How happy you've made me!"

"What's the matter with you? Why are you so excited? . . . Don't tell me you had something to do with this?"

By this time Tao-ching could no longer contain herself. Then and there she confessed to Hsiao-yen all she had done.

"Mind you don't breathe a word to anyone, Hsiao-yen! . . . It was I who posted all those leaflets!"

"What! Do you really mean it? . . . When did you join the Communist Party?" Hsiao-yen stared at her incredulously.



"I'm not a Communist." Tao-ching shook her head dejectedly. "But I have friends who are – remember what I told you about Lu Chia-chuan? He left these leaflets with me before his arrest. After that I lost track of him. . . . I couldn't think what to do with these, till I hit on this way of disposing of them."

Hsiao-yen fixed astonished eyes on Tao-ching as if she were seeing her for the first time.

"But why didn't you burn them? Don't you know how dangerous it is to post material like this right and left?"

"No, Hsiao-yen, you don't understand!" Clasping her friend's shoulder, Tao-ching went on in a voice charged with feeling: "I've changed since last year. Now it makes me happy to be able to do things like this. . . . I'm feeling miserable, though, because all those friends of mine have been taken by the Kuomintang. . . . But never mind how many they take – 'No fire can burn them off the face of the earth; when a spring wind blows, they will grow again.' I'm sure that they'll come back sooner or later." She looked out of the window at the clouds floating on high and then lowered her head again, stricken by her loss.

Impressed by her friend's courage and enthusiasm, Hsiao-yen pressed her hand, torn between exasperation and sympathy.

"I understand you, Tao-ching – you are like a flame. But think of your future! What future is there in joining the revolution? . . ."

"What future will there be if you just bury yourself in books all day?" Tao-ching was utterly in earnest. "This is a time of national crisis, when the whole country is seething. Don't you know the proverb: 'No egg stays unbroken when the nest is upset?' "

Hsiao-yen grunted but said no more, absorbed in her own thoughts.

"Wake up, Hsiao-yen! We've known each other since we were children. If you've nothing against me, won't you help me a little?" Tao-ching took Hsiao-yen's arm. "I've still some leaflets left. To hold on to them would be dangerous. Will you help me send them out?"

Hsiao-yen was thoroughly taken aback. After a long silence, she shook her head.

"And you call yourself a friend!" muttered Tao-ching indignantly, turning to go.

"All right. Give them to me." Hsiao-yen reluctantly pulled Tao-ching back. "I'll try to get in touch with those students who were for posting them on the bulletin board. But to tell you the truth, I don't approve of this new phase of yours."

Tao-ching was too elated to catch the concluding sentence. She squeezed Hsiao-yen's hand and said:

"That's wonderful! You're a true friend, Hsiao-yen! . . . When Lu Chia-chuan comes out, I promise to introduce you to him."

## CHAPTER 24

For several days in succession Tao-ching, painted, powdered and smartly dressed, had been slipping in and out of the house at all hours – sometimes not to return till after midnight, sometimes disappearing before daybreak. Yung-tse's anger knew no bounds. Since Tao-ching did not take him into her confidence, he had no idea where she was going or what she was doing. Once he ventured to ask, but she snapped: "Mind your own business!" He had come to the end of his patience. So one night in bed, he turned to grip her arm and said through clenched teeth:

"What do you mean by this, Tao-ching? Aren't you ashamed of the way you're carrying on?"

Tao-ching lay there quietly and for some time said nothing. After long deliberation she had reached a decision with regard to her future, and this helped her to remain calm. Slowly sitting up to switch on the light, she said in a low voice:

"Yung-tse, you know what a gulf there is between us. It's making us both unhappy. As we are still young, don't you think it would be better for both of us to separate?"

Her extraordinary presence of mind and gentle manner, so different from the stormy petulance of the past, made Yung-tse realize that the situation was past saving. He could not hope to keep her. Her indifference to him was a blow to his pride. He sat up and thought for some minutes, his head bent. Finally, with a frown, he said hoarsely:

"All right, then. Let each of us go his own way."



Early the next morning Yung-tse left the house. Soon after noon, Tao-ching had just put together her things to move to another student hostel in the East City, when a visitor called. He was a short, bespectacled man with a round, sallow face. Though she did not remember him, to her surprise he treated her like an old friend. Shaking her hand, he said in a low voice:

"Are you Lin Tao-ching? I am Lu Chia-chuan's friend – Tai Yu."

Thinking that perhaps he brought her news of Lu, she ushered him eagerly in and offered him a seat.

"This is a delightful surprise. Has Brother Lu really been arrested? How is he now?"

Tai Yu did not answer at once. He looked around the room and then let his gaze linger on Tao-ching's face before replying quietly: "Yes, it was most unfortunate. He was arrested three months ago. At first he was detained in the Military Police Headquarters. I don't know where he is now." His voice trailed off as he noticed that Tao-ching had turned very pale and was gripping the bed-rail so hard that her knuckles were white.

"Are you very attached to him, Comrade Lin?" He smiled gently at her.

Tao-ching was surprised and delighted to be greeted as "Comrade." Though Lu Chia-chuan was her good friend, he had never addressed her as this stranger was doing. She suppressed her agitation over this confirmation of Lu's arrest, to answer softly and frankly:

"I am so pleased to meet you! Though we've never met – no, that's not true, I remember now you were the one who spoke first at the March the Eighteenth demonstration. I can see Brother Lu must have told you about me . . . I'm so inexperienced, I hope you'll often call to give me help. . . ."

"Of course I will! Didn't you know what good friends Old Lu and I are?"

Overwhelmed by a combination of sadness and joy, Tao-ching was at a loss to reply.

Tai Yu lit a cigarette and took several puffs before asking casually: "By the way, didn't Old Lu leave something in your charge? The last time he was here, what assignment did he give you?"

Tao-ching gave him a detailed account of her last meeting with Lu Chia-chuan, and of how she had distributed the leaflets.

When Tai Yu had attentively heard her out, he nodded and said:

"Well done! That was very brave. But why didn't you ask some other comrades to help? You know how dangerous it is to carry out a job like that alone."

"I didn't know anyone to ask! Brother Lu, Hsu Ning and the few other revolutionaries I knew had all been arrested."

"I see." Tai Yu's protuberant eyes were intent behind his spectacles, and the shadow of a smile hovered over his sallow face. "Well then, how do you intend to carry on the struggle?" Without waiting for an answer, he continued: "There are plenty of progressive young people with leftist ideas. You must do all you can to enlarge your circle of friends and acquaintances. . . ."

"No!" interrupted Tao-ching in a voice tinged with sadness. "I haven't a single progressive friend, Old Tai. Can you introduce me to some? I'm living such a futile life since Brother Lu's arrest, I've become like a frog in a well. Now I'm going to leave my lover – perhaps you know about him? – because he's so backward. We have such different outlooks that the only way I can be free is by leaving him. I do so want to make my life more meaningful – to live the way you and other comrades do. How I envy you your rich, militant life!"

"Yes, of course. . . ." With a cigarette between his lips, Tai Yu got up and walked round the room, examining this and that. When he saw an asparagus fern in a pot on the wall trailing its emerald fronds, and a small, fine antique porcelain vase on the bookcase, he turned to Tao-ching with a smile.

"Comrade Lin, these playthings of the bourgeoisie you have exhibited here do no credit to a revolutionary. A revolutionary fighter of the proletariat sets no store by such trifles because, as the saying goes: 'Delight in possessions weakens a man's will.' Well, I must be going now. Please give me your new address so that I can call when I have the time. As soon as I have news of Old Lu, I'll let you know. . . . The important thing for you now is to take an active part in the revolutionary struggle and do your best to keep in touch with revolutionary organizations. Of course, the two of us have already established contact."



After seeing Tai Yu off, Tao-ching came back to the room and sat on the edge of the bed. Her excitement at this renewed contact with the revolutionaries and the prospect of a more active life made her forget that it was time to move to her new quarters. But at the thought of Lu Chia-chuan, her heart grew heavy again. For some time she stared out through the window at the azure sky, not waking from her reverie till her eye fell on the photograph of herself and Yung-tse on the wall and his long blue gown on the clothes rack. She stood up and looked round. Could she really be going to leave the man she had once loved so ardently? Would she never return to this small room where she had spent so many happy days? . . . Her bedding-roll was already tied, her small leather suitcase was packed – everything else in the room would be left for Yung-tse. Her eyes grew moist. "I must leave at once!" Ashamed of her hesitation and sentimentality, she sprang to her feet and picked up her bedding-roll. But at the door she turned back to leave a hastily written note on the desk.

September 20, 1933

Yung-tse,

I am going. I shan't be coming back. Take good care of yourself. Try to be broad-minded and don't take things too hard. I wish you every happiness!

Tao-ching

## CHAPTER 26

To make a little money, Tao-ching, at Hsiao-yen's suggestion, started acting as private tutor to Professor Wang's younger daughters, with whom she spent nearly the whole of each afternoon. One evening after supper with the Wangs in the West City, she started back to the East City in the dark. To save money she was walking. When she had passed the Winter Palace and was skirting the foot of Coal Hill, a car drew up with a screech of brakes beside her, and two men jumped down to seize her by the arms. Before she could scream for help, a third man

jumped down and gagged her. Then the three thugs bundled her into the car which continued swiftly on its way.

To Tao-ching, it was a nightmare. As soon as she was in the car, two rough hands tied a black cloth over her eyes. She was too panic-stricken to think clearly. The car was speeding along, and in her terror her heart kept missing a beat.

Eventually she was pushed out of the car, the bandage was taken from her eyes, the gag from her mouth, and her hands were released. It began to dawn on her what had happened. She had heard that the Kuomintang often seized suspects by kidnapping them, and that those arrested in this way seldom came back.

"I am ready to die if the time has come to give my life for the Party!" While she was forming this resolve, she was pushed through a doorway. She kept her eyes shut, like one doomed to die and waiting to breathe her last.

The floor of the cell was damp and cold. When squatting became too tiring she sat down. Unable to sleep, she cudgelled her brains to think out why the Kuomintang had brought her here, and how they had discovered her. If it was on account of the handbills or of her revolutionary friends, they should have put her with the political prisoners. There were still a few leaflets in the pockets of some of her clothes, while at the bottom of her trunk were the banned publications lent her by Tai Yu. They might search her trunk and find these. And just for that, the Kuomintang might shoot her. This thought made her grow hot and cold by turns. Wide-eyed, she felt no desire to sleep, and not till nearly dawn did she doze off.

The next afternoon she was taken out for questioning. The judge had barely asked her name, age and place of origin when from the dark recess behind the court appeared a tall, slender man in a Western suit. He stepped up to the judge and whispered to him for a few minutes, during which the judge nodded repeatedly. The man's face seemed familiar to Tao-ching, but she could not place him. She had not recovered from her surprise when the judge informed her:

"Lin Tao-ching, your case has been transferred to the City Kuomintang Headquarters. You are now released on bail offered by Mr. Hu Meng-an."



Who was Hu Meng-an? Why should he go bail for her? With a heavy heart and grave misgivings, she walked out past a forbidding dark grey wall, and turning to look back realized that she had spent the night in the lock-up of the Public Security Bureau. She hired a rickshaw to take her straight back to her lodgings. Once there, she was looking round to see if anything was missing, when her door opened and in walked the man responsible for her release, Hu Meng-an.

"I'm afraid you've been badly frightened, Miss Lin! I looked in to see how you are!" He took off his fine grey felt hat, and smilingly greeted her with a bow.

But Tao-ching had jumped as if stung by a scorpion. Too appalled to speak, she retreated to a corner of the room to stare at Hu's thin yellow face and the flashing whites of his eyes. This was the Director Hu whom her stepmother had intended her to marry. Evidently he was a special agent of the City Kuomintang Headquarters.

"Now don't be afraid, Miss Lin!" He chuckled. "I haven't seen you for a long time, and I've come especially to ask after you. Please sit down." The guest waved his hostess to a chair. Tao-ching did not sit down, but with another bow Hu took a seat.

Tao-ching did her best to overcome her panic and to disguise her loathing for this man. She walked slowly to the door and stood there.

"How time flies! It is more than two years since we last met." Hu Meng-an was smoking quite at his ease, puffing out one smoke ring after another. He spoke in the soft voice of a scholar and gentleman. "When you left home, your mother was nearly distracted. I was worried too. . . . Do you know what great respect I have for you, Miss Lin? . . . I was so wounded by your departure that I have never considered marriage again. . . ." He stubbed out his cigarette and glanced expectantly at Tao-ching, who was now deathly pale.

But the girl neither looked at him nor uttered a word.

When Hu saw that she had no intention of speaking, he lit another cigarette. Finding his hard chair uncomfortable, he moved it out a little and leaned the top of it against the wall, so that he could loll back as if on a sofa.

"I don't suppose you know all that has been happening to your family!" There was concern in his eyes, narrowed almost to slits. "Your mother has died, and your father has gone to Nanking. I intended to take care of your younger brother Hsiao-feng, and bring him here to study in Peiping, but he chose to go to his father. They are probably both in Nanking now. Well, Miss Lin, I hear that you now have a husband to your liking. Why isn't he here?"

Tao-ching shivered, wondering how he knew so much about her. Shifting her position a little, she said coolly:

"Yes, we get on very well."

"Ha, ha, ha!" A loud shrill laugh rent the air in the small room like the blast of a whistle. "Don't try to deceive me. How can you be getting on well? You have separated because of divergent outlooks, wasn't it?... Well, Miss Lin, I can guess that you must be in financial difficulties. We are old friends. Don't have any scruples. Let me look after you. I don't suppose you've been following my career. During the last two years, things have gone well for me. I draw an income almost too large for a bachelor. . . ."

Tao-ching could contain herself no longer. She spat out her answer, with loathing, through clenched teeth:

"If you have any business with me, say so frankly. Why did you have me arrested? Why did you bail me out? I don't want to hear anything about the past. That family and you mean nothing to me."

Pleased to have goaded Tao-ching into speaking, Hu Meng-an straightened up, put down his cigarette and inclined his head to listen attentively. When she finished, he smiled as calmly as before and picked up his cigarette.

"Those are easy questions to answer. You were arrested because the Third Regiment of Gendarmes knew that you had taken part in communist activities. Fortunately, when I heard of it, I was able to bail you out in the name of the Party Headquarters. . . . Don't be childish now, my dear young lady! Calm yourself! I took up this work, you know, because I love young people and want to save them. . . ." He nodded complacently, then drawled affectedly: "The number of young people deluded by the Communist Party has not been small, I'm afraid. But I never thought,



Miss Lin, when you left home to make your own way in the world, that you would be swept away by them. I never thought it of you! I never thought it of you!" He sighed repeatedly, leaning back for greater comfort. "You have nothing to worry about, Miss Lin," he went on slowly. "With me to help you, nothing can happen to you. Even if you have taken part in activities harmful to the Republic, as long as you have my help, I can promise you. . . ."

"I've never done anything harmful to the Republic! I don't need your help!" Tao-ching's eyes flashed fire as she continued vehemently: "I saw through you long ago. I know what you are! You and I have nothing in common. I don't want your promises, I don't want your pity! The authorities can do what they like with me!"

Hu's smile had disappeared. His face was twitching as if someone had slapped him. But being a man of considerable experience, he assumed a conciliatory attitude. Gazing intently at Tao-ching, more beautiful than ever because of her pallor, he proceeded calmly:

"Please don't misunderstand me, Miss Lin! As old friends, we can talk frankly. Do you know how serious the charges against you are? Who was it who posted up all those communist leaflets in the streets of Peiping? Who sent leaflets to so many schools? Who joined in the subversive activities of the Communist Party? Whose trunk contained communist publications? You must know for yourself how serious all these charges are, so I need not say more. Commandant Chiang Hsiao-hsien is utterly ruthless — he kills prisoners without blinking an eye. Having gathered all this information about you, he wants to judge your case himself. So you see, Miss Lin, your position is very critical. . . . I'm not asking for thanks, but the fact is that I went to a lot of trouble to get your case transferred to the City Kuomintang Headquarters. The case may be easy to settle or it may be difficult, all depending upon your attitude. I'm sure you're intelligent enough, Miss Lin, not to insist on knocking your head against a brick wall. Surely you won't throw away your precious life?" There was unmistakable menace in this earnest, persuasive speech. At its conclusion he heaved a deep sigh as if to express heartfelt sympathy.

Tao-ching remained motionless, stupefied to find that all her actions were known to the enemy. Their discovery of these secrets doubled her distress and fear. She bit her lips and tried not to shiver. Her one thought was: "How did they find out?"

"Don't worry, dear lady, you can rely on me. . . ." Hu Meng-an quietly stood up and walked over to her, putting his hands on her shoulders.

"Don't you dare touch me!" cried Tao-ching, darting to the other side of the table. Panting a little and looking him steadily in the eyes, she challenged him: "You speak of leaflets, subversive activities, of the Communist Party – it's all a wicked lie! What proof have you?"

Hu Meng-an, without answering, picked up the big leather brief-case on the table. He slowly took from this several red and green leaflets and a number of other pamphlets which he flashed before her. "What are these, young lady?" he demanded with a smile.

As she looked at the familiar handbills, the bright characters "The Chinese Communist Party" caught her eye, and she saw that the *North China Red Banner* given her by Tai Yu had also fallen into the enemy's hands. Her heart was burning, and she almost wept. Never in her life had she known such a frenzy of hate. All her past hatred for her father and stepmother, for society and those who had persecuted her mother and herself, was centred now upon this man who had stolen her leaflets. She gazed steadily at him, and her pale face flushed crimson. Anger made her throw caution to the winds. In her innocence, she cried recklessly: "The leaflets are mine! It was I who sent them to the various schools. . . . I hate you! I hate you! Now do your worst!"

Hu Meng-an's face twitched again, but with an air of indifference and a laugh he said:

"I'm genuinely sorry for you, Miss Lin! Why should someone of your intelligence suddenly lose all sense of balance? Don't be so stubborn. You must be very tired. Try to have a good rest. I am going now, but I shall come back some other time."

He closed his brief-case and put on his hat. On his way out, he turned to give a parting nod to Tao-ching, who was standing dazed by the window.



"Think it over well. Use your intelligence, my dear young lady. I won't trouble you any more now."

## CHAPTER 27

The next morning Tao-ching rose tired after a sleepless night. She was no sooner up than Hu Meng-an arrived, dressed in a smart brown suit, with his large brief-case in one hand and a bouquet of roses in the other.

"Good morning, Miss Lin! You're up early." He made a deep bow, put the flowers in a glass vase and stood by the door to light a cigarette, glancing at her as he did so.

Tao-ching was very red. She wanted to hurl this hateful man's flowers outside, but she controlled herself, putting her clenched hands behind her.

They stood facing each other for a while in silence.

"Yesterday I saw that you were not in a good mood," said Hu at last, tilting a chair against the wall again and sprawling on it. With his eyes on Tao-ching, he continued expansively: "So I didn't finish what I wanted to say. Today you ought to be calmer and we can talk this over properly." He lit another cigarette and blinked thoughtfully, then turned with a smile to Tao-ching who was still standing there without stirring. "As an old family friend, Tao-ching, I am really very much concerned for you. I needn't talk about what passed between us – I believe in freedom in love, and shan't put any pressure on you. But I must make clear how much I love and respect you. During the last two years there hasn't been a day when I didn't think of you. Since you probably don't want to hear this, I shan't talk of it now. It is my belief that absolute sincerity will move even a heart of stone, not to say your heart, when the time comes. But for the moment, let us talk of the urgent matter in hand. Last night, Chiang Hsiao-hsien telephoned again to ask about your case. He is giving it special attention and wants it settled as quickly as possible. The best thing I could do was to come early this morning to warn you." He drew deeply on his cigarette and then threw it away

half-finished. Having closed his eyes for a moment in silent reflection, he opened them to say with a smile: "Tao-ching! You're in a critical position. You must trust me and believe that I have your interests at heart. You are still little more than a child, and don't understand the complexity and wickedness of this society. The Communist Party is pretending to save our country and the world in order to lead young people astray. How many young men and women have been victimized by it! Can the world be saved by a little blind enthusiasm? Can a society so thoroughly rotten as this we have in China be saved by enthusiastic children like you? Wake up, Miss Lin, I beg you! Look at life more clearly! Then you will turn back from the wrong path you have taken."

Talk like this jarred on Tao-ching's ears and made her heart contract in pain. She cried out incoherently in protest.

"Don't talk nonsense! I refuse to listen."

Hu looked up from where he was sitting as if nothing was amiss, and smiled as he continued:

"Now, Miss Lin, don't be so reckless! I'm not joking, I assure you! Many girls, when first arrested, try to brave it out. It seems that is the fashionable thing to do. But they are foolish, foolish in the extreme." He shook his head pityingly and tapped one of his crossed feet on the floor. After another pause, since Tao-ching did not respond, he pursued the subject. "This fellow Chiang Hsiao-hsien is utterly ruthless. Last night he had fifteen Communists shot, all pleasant, hopeful young people, three of them girls. Please think, Tao-ching, is it worth-while? Why sacrifice your precious life needlessly? Will this world become a paradise on earth just because a few of you die?"

"Mean, petty souls can never understand a fine heroic cause! If you have anything to say to me, please come to the point. If Chiang Hsiao-hsien has sent you to arrest me, I'll go with you!" Tao-ching had kept her gaze on the window and door, and was speaking more calmly than before.

"Come now, Miss Lin, this is no joking matter! As if I could do such a thing! If I were in charge, it would be very simple. Unfortunately you have fallen into the hands of Chiang Hsiao-hsien, who only released you when I insisted on bailing you out.



I want to—I must—find a way to save you!" He went to the table where his brief-case was lying and took out a roll of bank-notes. Going slowly up to Tao-ching, he held out the notes and urged her: "Take this money and make yourself some good clothes, Miss Lin. Life is fleeting. I have known many beauties, but none to compare with you. . . . Don't be offended now, it's only a small sum."

Tao-ching stood there white as a sheet, motionless as a statue.

"Please take it! Take it in your jade-white hands!" With a sidelong glance at her, Hu took her hand.

Smack! The roll of notes flew into his thin, complacent face before scattering over the floor. For a moment he was dumbfounded.

Then, with a few swift movements, Tao-ching sent the roses flying into the courtyard. She rushed out after them towards the front gate, but a rough-looking man blocked her path and growled:

"Stay where you are!"

An armed man in plain clothes was stationed at the gate. She could not get away. She instinctively fell back to lean against the small wall screening the courtyard from the street. When she had caught her breath and was a little calmer, she retreated under a lilac tree. Her eyes strayed to the doors of the other rooms around the courtyard in her longing to find a place of refuge. But every door was shut tight—evidently all the occupants knew that something was wrong and had quietly locked themselves in.

When she realized there was no escape for her, she stood calmly where she was to face the consequences.

"Stand still! Don't move!" shouted Hu Meng-an. Having gathered up his bank-notes, he dashed into the courtyard. Gone was his earnest compliance of a moment before. Like a highwayman, he pointed a pistol at her. His eyes were blazing with anger and frustration as he snarled: "Fine . . . fine. . . ." He gnashed his teeth, flourished his pistol and swore: "You bitch! Don't you know you're an important communist criminal? Have you no sense of shame? Out of the kindness of my heart I've been trying to save you . . . but you refuse to repent. . . . You shameless bitch!"

Tao-ching continued to stand there under the lilac. The early morning sun was shining on her pale, expressionless face. She had no sense of fear, nor yet of anger. She was beyond thinking or feeling anything. If he had fired, she would have slumped down where she was. But Hu Meng-an was simply threatening her. When he saw her determination and apparent indifference, he gave a couple of angry laughs and said: "You're a bold one, aren't you? You struck me! You dared to strike *me*! . . . In view of your youth, I'll give you one more chance. You shall have three days to think things over. After that, if you still show no signs of repentance. . . ." He cast her an ugly glance and spat in disgust. "Then, young lady, you can't blame Hu Meng-an for whatever happens!" With that he stamped off, his brief-case under his arm.

When she saw that her persecutor had gone, Tao-ching went back to her room and collapsed limply on to a chair. She felt lonelier and weaker than ever before. Her little room seemed to have grown vast and threateningly still. The sight of its confusion and the cigarette butts which Hu had thrown over the floor made her break down. Leaning her head and arms on the table, she wept.

"Don't cry like that! Who was that bully here just now?" A warm hand was stroking her. Tao-ching raised her head in alarm, and saw four or five of her neighbours standing around her, mostly students of Peking University. The one speaking to her was a pretty, slender girl, whose name she did not know. The faces of the others showed deep concern too.

"Who was that bully? What did he want? . . ." the girl asked eagerly. The four men also looked at her earnestly and inquiringly. Tao-ching took heart and found new strength. She rose to offer them seats, and having dried her tears recounted all that had happened in the last few days. The other girl cried out indignantly: "The beasts! How utterly vile!"

A man of about thirty, who wore glasses and a long gown, shook his head and pursed his lips angrily. "The idea!" he cried. "Threatening you with a pistol! You can take the case to court and sue him for it!"

"Don't you believe it, Brother Teng! Spending all your time on the ancients, you don't know what the world is like today,"



said a younger student with a smile. "You'd get nowhere taking the matter to court. Even if you went to the government itself, it would be no use — they're all in league together. There's no justice in the present social set-up."

The young people stood there looking at one another. Though they sympathized with their unfortunate neighbour, they could think of no way out.

"Thank you all," said Tao-ching softly. "I'm not the only one to be victimized. . . ."

"That's just it! . . ." someone murmured compassionately as all the men left, sighing. The only one to stay was the girl. When the others had gone, she took Tao-ching's hand warmly and said:

"Shall I go and fetch Wang Hsiao-yen so that you can talk things over with her? I know you are good friends. I'm Li Huai-ying, by the way, Hsiao-yen's fellow student."

"Let me go myself."

"No, you'd really better let me go. There may be spies outside waiting for you. Just now quite a number of men were standing outside the gate." With a gentle wave of her hand, Li Huai-ying slipped away.

Tao-ching had no lunch and went without supper too. When dusk fell, instead of turning on the light she lay down, but her mind was in a turmoil. She knew that she was in serious trouble. It was not so simple as she had imagined that night in the lock-up. She had been expecting death, which would end everything. But apparently the position was far more complicated. She did not want to die now, for she hated Hu and wanted to avenge herself on him, to struggle against others like him. But how weak and powerless she was, utterly alone with no comrades or relations! Lu Chia-chuan and Hsu Ning had been arrested, Tai Yu came and went without warning so that there was no way of getting in touch with him. What was she to do?

The door opened and she heard light footsteps. Then the gentle voice of Li Huai-ying asked:

"Why didn't you turn on the light? Were you tired of waiting?"

Tao-ching put on the light and took Li Huai-ying's small hand in hers.

"I saw Wang Hsiao-yen!" announced Li Huai-ying in a low voice. "She was fearfully worried about you but could think of

no way out. We went together to see Hsu Hui, who used to be an officer of our Students' Union, and she thought up a plan. Hsu Hui said she would come to see you in my room tomorrow afternoon. Here is a letter for you from Hsiao-yen."

"Hsu Hui? I know her!" Tao-ching was very pleased. Having thanked Li Huai-ying, she asked for more news of Hsu Hui. But all Li Huai-ying would say was:

"I'm going back to my room. There are secret-service men outside all the time, it seems. Hsu Hui said we should be careful what we talk about when we're together. And we shouldn't see too much of each other. You'd better not go out anywhere, not even to Hsiao-yen's home."

The next afternoon, at five o'clock, when students were passing in and out of the hostel, Li Huai-ying had a visit from a fashionably dressed, slim, vivacious girl. As soon as Tao-ching saw through the crack of her door that this was Hsu Hui who had tackled the chief of police at the March the Eighteenth memorial meeting, she hurried over to Li Huai-ying's room. Hsu Hui quickly rose to greet her and seizing her hands exclaimed:

"Lin Tao-ching! I haven't seen you for so long. What a pleasant surprise to find you here! . . ."

Li Huai-ying closed the door and went out to buy something to eat.

Holding Hsu Hui's hand, Tao-ching was too excited to speak.

Hsu Hui smiled at her and said: "Tao-ching, is it true that you asked Wang Hsiao-yen to help you distribute some leaflets?"

Tao-ching's eyes brightened and her anxious face flushed with pleasure. She nodded gently.

"It is – did you help too?"

"Let's not talk about that now! Please tell me what's been happening to you." Hsu Hui's eyes were sharp and brilliant.

Tao-ching described how she had been arrested and bailed out by Hu Meng-an. Hsu Hui listened carefully. Sometimes she shook her head and smiled indulgently, sometimes she frowned and patted Tao-ching on the shoulder. At the end, she began making comments as if they were old friends.

"Tao-ching, you mustn't be hurt if I speak my mind. You are brave enough when it comes to a fight, and I like your frankness and honesty, but your tactics are no good. Why should you tell



that assassin the truth? That was really very foolish. You should never have admitted that you distributed the handbills! And tell me, what was the real reason for your arrest? Do you know?"

Blushing, Tao-ching grasped Hsu Hui's hand and cried as she looked into those brilliant eyes:

"Big Sister Hsu! I see now how very foolish I've been! I can't understand my arrest at all. I'm quite bewildered by it. What do you advise me to do?"

"H'm. . . ." Hsu Hui looked thoughtful. "What are you planning to do?"

"I was thinking of escaping, but I don't know how to get away."

Hsu Hui chuckled.

"You're right! You ought to get away! Just make up your mind to it, and we shall help you." At that moment Li Huai-ying returned with some peanuts, melon seeds and crab-apples. Hsu Hui calmly whispered something to Tao-ching, who smiled.

## CHAPTER 28

Tao-ching was thinking of Hsu Hui's parting words: "Stay in till dusk, when someone will come to help you get away. But don't breathe a word about this to anyone." Laughing, she put her hands to her burning face and whispered to herself: "Compared with her what a fool I am!" Her sense of isolation had gone, for she was greatly encouraged by the genuine sympathy and support she was receiving from all sides. It seemed that if, in the sea of life, you could only keep afloat and struggle on, you would never be allowed to drown. As she began to put her things in order, she wondered what this new chapter in her life would bring. Another of Hsu Hui's questions came sharply to mind: "What was the real reason for your arrest?"

The real reason? . . . Tao-ching put down the volume of *World Knowledge* she had in her hand and sat on the bed to think. With the exception of Yung-tse and Wang Hsiao-yen, Tai Yu was the only one who knew anything of her affairs. Yung-tse would never go to the length of informing against her, while open,

straightforward Hsiao-yen was even more to be trusted. As for Tai Yu — a revolutionary himself — how could he do such a thing? Completely puzzled, she could reach no conclusion.

"Why did you tell the truth? That was really foolish!" Recalling Hsu Hui's words again, she laughed in derision at herself. "Traitors — do you suppose there are no traitors in the camp of the revolution?" The last time they met, Lu Chia-chuan had told her that owing to some traitor many of his comrades had been arrested. Much of Tai Yu's behaviour was open to suspicion. . . . But she brushed these suspicions aside as ridiculous. Late that night, she lay in the dark turning over many problems in her mind. Unable to find an answer to them, she longed for someone to consult. How different everything would be if only Lu Chia-chuan were with her now! At the thought of him, she jumped up and turned on the light. She decided to write down some of the many things she had to tell him. She sat down at the table.

"Brother Lu," she wrote, and then crossed out these two characters and started again, this time omitting his name.

> My dearest adviser and friend:
>
> I am writing to you in Peiping on October 19, 1933. I don't know where you are imprisoned, or what you have been suffering. But I feel I must write to you, friend, because I have so much to say. First let me tell you my most important news, which I am sure will please you. I have stopped hesitating, and resolutely joined you on the road which you are travelling. I have also managed to overcome that unhealthy petty-bourgeois sentimentality and indiscriminate sympathy for others regardless of principle. I have made a new start in life. To be more precise, I have left Yu Yung-tse. It distresses me, friend, to think of the year that has passed. It makes me feel so guilty. That evening when I went to see Mrs. Li, you had left by the time I returned, and soon after that you were arrested. I shall never forgive myself for failing you when you were in danger. I shall never be able to atone for this. But I shan't let remorse overwhelm me, and I shan't ask for your forgiveness. All I want to tell you is this: you have been arrested, but I have joined the ranks. And I believe that thousands of others like me are coming forward too. Of course, I am very inexperienced and can't in any way compare with you.



Having written so far, she stopped to reflect. Outside, the west wind was lashing the fallen leaves against the papered windows. It was late autumn and she was lightly clad. The cold wind blowing in through the cracks of the wall made her shiver. At the same time a new exaltation helped her to forget the cold and her immediate danger, enabling her thoughts and pen to move rapidly.

> My very dear and respected friend, another thing I want to tell you is that I have just been through a small test. The reactionaries nearly destroyed me. But when the situation was at its most critical and I could find no way out, the Party — our great, wonderful mother — reached out a helping hand. So though I was worried and distressed I was also very happy. It was the Party — through you — which showed me the way when I was lost and confused, and when danger faced me the Party came to my rescue again. . . . I am not out of danger yet, but I am confident that I shall soon be safe from my enemies. I am so happy to think that now my life is like yours — full of high adventure.
>
> Last of all, my dearest and most respected friend, I want to tell you something from the depths of my heart, something I never had the courage to say before. . . . Please don't laugh when I tell you that when you see this letter you will be seeing a truly candid heart. . . . Don't laugh at me, friend! I shall never forget you, never! No matter where you are, whether living or dead, no matter how the situation changes or what turn there may be for the worse, you will always live in my heart. When shall we meet again? I live in hope for such a day to come. If it does come in my life-time, how happy I shall be! Friend, may we really meet again! Take good care of yourself. Your unflinching resolution in the fight will always make you an inspiration for me.

When Tao-ching had finished this letter, she read it through. And it seemed less like a letter she had written to Lu Chia-chuan than one that he had succeeded in sending to her. Utterly absorbed in her reading, she was caught up by powerful emotions which made her forget her danger and distress.

"How shall I send it to him?" she asked herself. In the half-light of dawn, she fingered the letter and smiled. This was a letter that could never be delivered.

Wang Hsiao-yen entered her father's study moody and silent, as if something was weighing on her mind. Her mother asked anxiously:

"What's the matter, Hsiao-yen? Are you worrying about your lessons?"

"No!" Hsiao-yen shook her head, frowning, looking more grown-up than usual.

"What's the matter then? Tell us!"

Hsiao-yen rested her head on the desk without a word.

Professor Wang went over to her and raised her head, nodding affectionately.

"There's nothing you need keep from your father, child. Go on, what's troubling you?"

"Daddy, you've got to help me!" Hsiao-yen looked anxiously from her father to her mother.

"Well, but what is it, child?"

"Tao-ching is in dreadful danger from those Kuomintang gangsters. I'm sorry for her because she's all on her own. We must find some way to help her, daddy!" Tears were falling from Hsiao-yen's eyes.

The professor and his wife stared at their daughter in astonishment as they digested this information.

"I've already promised her that we'll help her, daddy. I'm so angry to think of all she's had to go through!" Then she gave her parents a detailed account of Tao-ching's experiences. When she had finished, Professor Wang Hung-pin took off his glasses and brandished them in the air, banging his fist on the table.

"This is beyond all reason!" he cried. "Beyond all reason!" He paused at this point to master his agitation, and continued presently in a calmer voice, "Well, Hsiao-yen, don't worry, and tell Tao-ching not to worry either. We shall find a way out for her somehow."

Hsiao-yen smiled. The plan she had made with Hsu Hui had proved effective after all. She knew that her aunt in Tinghsien was head of a primary school which was short of teachers, and a job there seemed the ideal solution for Tao-ching. But afraid to approach her father outright, she had beaten about the bush



to arouse his indignation and sympathy. Things turned out as she had wished, for Professor Wang, without waiting to be asked, immediately proposed that Tao-ching should be recommended to his sister and given a job. Later, at Hsiao-yen's suggestion, he even went so far as to promise to see Tao-ching to the station so that she could make good her escape from Peiping. When all this was settled, however, Professor Wang warned his daughter rather diffidently:

"Hsiao-yen, it's only right for us to help Lin Tao-ching. But in future, don't interfere in other people's affairs. It's best to leave politics alone. The less we concern ourselves with politics the better. Your duty is to study — nothing else."

Hsiao-yen nodded and said: "I agree, daddy. I don't understand anything about politics. It's Tao-ching I'm interested in — I'm so sorry for her."

The next morning Hsiao-yen called on Tao-ching, bringing with her a large basket of fruit. In contrast to her usual self-possessed manner, she called out before entering the room:

"What's the matter, Tao-ching? You haven't been to our house for two days to give lessons. Are you ill? Mother told me to come and have a look."

A lump came into Tao-ching's throat. The two friends embraced and for some time could not say a word. At last Hsiao-yen wiped her eyes and whispered to Tao-ching:

"By seven this evening you must be ready to leave Peiping. You're going to Tinghsien to teach in my aunt's school. You'll find a man's suit hidden in this basket. It's been arranged that a little after six some students will call for Li Huai-ying and the others to go to a film. Dressed like a man, with a hat on, you can join their group when they swarm out of the gate." Hsiao-yen had said all this without pausing for breath. Fearing that she had not made herself clear, she stopped, looked out of the window and went on in a low voice: "By seven it's just growing dark, and what with the crowd and the confusion, it should be quite easy for you to pass out unnoticed. But mind you disguise yourself well! Hold your shoulders back so that you can pass for a boy. You may not know it, but Hsu Hui is pretty sure that there are spies posted outside this gate. She wants us to be very careful." She smiled at Tao-ching and drew a deep breath.

Then, raising her voice, she said: "Tao-ching, mother is so worried about you! She is very busy today, or she'd have come herself."

"There's nothing much the matter. I shall be well in a day or two," replied Tao-ching. With a serious look, she whispered: "I am so grateful to you and to Hsu Hui for all your help. . . . But suppose something goes wrong and you're involved, what then?"

"Don't worry about that. Hsu Hui says there are risks we must take if we want results." Hsiao-yen had never been so excited before. She stroked Tao-ching's cold hands and, looking at her haggard face, continued in a loud, worried voice: "You do look bad! You can't have eaten anything for days. Go and have a meal at the small restaurant by the gate. What, don't you want anything?" She lowered her voice: "Hsu Hui says you must eat. If you starve yourself, you'll fall ill. . . . Oh, my! I almost forgot something very important. When you get out this evening, go to the turn of the road by the Red Building and you'll find a car waiting. My father and mother will be in the car — ready to take you to the station."

Having said this, Hsiao-yen turned to go. But Tao-ching caught her by the arm, taking from her pocket the letter she had written the night before. "Please give this to Hsu Hui," she begged her. "Say I'll be most grateful if she can manage to get it to Lu Chia-chuan."

"Lu Chia-chuan?" Hsiao-yen repeated with surprise.

"Yes! Please don't forget, and take care not to lose it!"

Hsiao-yen smiled at her friend, and left without another word.

After she had gone, Tao-ching's mind was still exercised by a number of problems. The basket of fruit, which was to assist her escape, was on a stool, but would the attempt prove successful? . . . The three days' grace given her by Hu Meng-an was drawing to an end. What would happen tomorrow did not bear thinking of — unless she managed to escape this evening. . . .

"What's on your mind, Tao-ching?" A low voice aroused her. Raising her head, she saw Tai Yu before her. He was wearing a shabby, drill student's uniform and carrying a small parcel wrapped in a newspaper. She stood up at once, put the basket of fruit under the table and asked him to sit on the stool.



"I was hoping you'd come, Old Tai. I'm so glad to see you!"

Tao-ching's doubts of the previous day put her a little on her guard towards Tai Yu but her caution was counter-balanced by her trust in her friend. She shook hands with him warmly and cordially offered him a seat.

After seating himself, Tai Yu lit a cigarette and looked at Tao-ching for a moment before speaking. Since this was his habit, Tao-ching attached no special importance to it.

"How have you been getting along these days? Are you still teaching?"

"Well. . . ." She wondered a little uneasily whether to tell him of the latest developments. But before she had made up her mind, Tai Yu went on:

"You're not looking very well. Have you been ill?"

"No, but I've had the most horrible experience," answered Tao-ching. It seemed to her wrong to keep her troubles from a fellow revolutionary who showed concern, even though his actions were somewhat questionable.

"What happened?" asked Tai Yu sympathetically, peering short-sightedly at her.

Thereupon she gave him a brief account of her arrest and Hu Meng-an's proposals. Engrossed as she was with her preparations for that evening, she was in no mood to talk at any great length.

"Why, that's incredible!" exclaimed Tai Yu as he stared at her. "That man's the limit. Have the reactionaries no sense of shame?"

"What do you think I should do, Old Tai? He gave me three days — and now two have gone."

Tai Yu looked thoughtfully at the floor for a while. Then, tapping the table in a worried manner, he asked:

"What plans have you made to get out of this fix, Tao-ching? So far as I can see, your position is really serious."

"Old Tai. . . ." Tao-ching was on the point of telling him Hsu Hui's plan, when her friend's injunction to absolute secrecy made her decide against it. "I'm at my wit's end," she said. "I've been so worried that for three days I've eaten nothing."

"Is that so?" Tai Yu raised his head and spoke gravely. "Well, you must think of a way out — has it occurred to you to run away?"

"No. I've nowhere to go, and even if I had I wouldn't know how to escape. Don't you realize that there are spies outside the gate? I dare not go out. For several days I haven't gone out to give lessons."

Tai Yu listened without much show of interest. With his head bent, he was puffing at his cigarette and seemed to be turning something over in his mind. For some minutes he said nothing.

Tao-ching fidgeted with a pencil on the table, conscious of exasperation and disappointment. Why hadn't he offered eagerly to help as Hsu Hui had done? Why was he so cold? She looked at him in silence. After a while he stood up, flicked some dust from his clothes and said softly:

"Don't worry, Tao-ching. Deal with that fellow Hu as you think fit. I'm going back to think of some way to help you. When I have something definite, I'll come and let you know."

"Thank you," said Tao-ching quietly, with a pang of distress.

Tai Yu shook her cold hand, then turned and went out of the courtyard.

"Maybe he will think out a way for me – but it will be too late." She sat there musing, forgetting her projected escape till the sight of the basket of fruit reminded her that she must start getting ready.

A flurry of footsteps in the courtyard was followed by loud laughter. Visitors were gathering in all her neighbours' rooms. The students talked and laughed at the top of their voices, so that in the dusk the hostel was suddenly lively.

Tao-ching bolted the door and hastily changed her clothes. She put on as many of her own garments as possible, and slipped into a Western shirt and trousers. Then she vigorously combed her hair up. At any moment now, it should strike seven. Her heart beat faster and faster.

*(to be continued)*

*Illustrations by Hou Yi-min*

*LIN MO-HAN*

# Raise Higher the Banner of Mao Tse-tung's Thought on Literature and Art

*(concluded)*

In the ten years since the liberation of our country, under new circumstances and conditions, Comrade Mao Tse-tung has continued to creatively develop Marxist principles of literature and art. Most important of his contributions have been with regard to the following:

First: Comrade Mao Tse-tung attaches great importance to the struggle between the two outlooks on the literary and art front. Since liberation, under the leadership of the Central Committee of the Party and Comrade Mao Tse-tung, a series of struggles have been waged among artists and literati – such as the criticism of Hu Shih's ideology, the struggle against Hu Feng, against the anti-Party clique of Ting Ling and Chen Chi-hsia, against the rightists in the world of art and letters, against revisionism. In essence all these struggles have been a struggle between two world outlooks – the proletarian and the bourgeois.

A year or so after the country was liberated Comrade Mao Tse-tung turned his attention to this struggle between the two lines in the ideological realm. Many of our comrades in literary and art circles, as Comrade Mao has pointed out, were quite incapable of distinguishing between what is revolutionary and what is reac-

tionary, what is new and what is old, what should be praised and what should be opposed. Many of them did not recognize the significance of this series of struggles, the fact that it was part of the class struggle on the whole ideological front, a decisive battle in literary and artistic thought, a battle to determine whether we would have proletarian literature and art or bourgeois, a battle to determine with what ideology we would cultivate the ranks of literature and art.

It was only after this series of struggles that we were able to establish proletarian literature and art and liberate their creative forces. As Comrade Chou Yang puts it in *A Great Debate on the Literary Front,** these struggles ". . . were a death blow to reactionary ideology, liberating the creative power of the literary and art world and its reserve forces, striking off the shackles which had been fastened upon them by the old society, dispelling the threatening reactionary atmosphere, and opening to proletarian literature and art a broad and continuing road." This is an entirely correct and factual analysis. Let us recall the situation in the literary and artistic world before these struggles began. At that time certain Communist writers were openly preaching bourgeois individualism, openly opposing the Party's leadership. Not a few writers and artists, instead of relying on the Party and merging with the people, were growing further apart from them everyday. Some young authors were quickly tainted by bourgeois ideology, almost as soon as they began to write. Quite a few, influenced by Hu Feng and Ting Ling, slid downhill.

Some comrades adopted a passive attitude to the series of struggles. Instead of having the anger a proletarian ought to feel against hostile things, they observed Hu Feng's mad attacks on the Party and socialism with placid detachment. They called themselves old Communists and defenders of Chairman Mao, but when they saw his thought on literature and art being attacked and slandered, they did not fight for it. They forgot completely that they were Communists, that they ought to preserve the Party line and defend Mao Tse-tung's principles of literature and art.

* This article was published in *Chinese Literature* No. 3, 1958.



Other comrades, although they have taken part in the struggles, do not fully appreciate their significance, do not realize that the accomplishments in literary and art work and these struggles were inseparable, that without these struggles the creative power of art and literature could not have been freed. That is why certain recent articles, in discussing the literary and artistic attainments of the past ten years, skim lightly over the importance of the ideological struggle, giving it only a few brief words, while opposing with great zeal those isolated instances of over-simplification and vulgar sociology which occurred in the course of the struggle or during the discussions with readers. We do not deny that such shortcomings cropped up during the ideological struggle, particularly among the criticisms voiced by some of our younger readers. But this was not the major aspect; such things are often inevitable in criticisms of a mass nature. According to the views stated in these articles, the present task is not to continue the ideological fight against revisionism, but mainly to oppose vulgar sociology. This is completely erroneous. The editorial "Hail the Great Accomplishments and Developments of Chinese Literature," which appeared in the October 1959 issue of the magazine *Literary Knowledge*, is typical. While, in general, it praises New China's literature, it forgets completely that there are class contradictions in our society, that hostile ideologies still exist in the realm of literature and art, that we must wage an ideological battle for a long time to come. This is very dangerous. Revisionism springs from just this sort of thing. It is extremely harmful.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung in his *On the Correct Handling of Contradictions Among the People* says: "It will take a considerable time to decide the issue in the ideological struggle between socialism and capitalism in our country. This is because the influence of the bourgeoisie and of the intellectuals who come from the old society will remain in our country as ideology of a class for a long time to come. Failure to understand this sufficiently, or worse still, failure to understand it at all, can lead to the gravest mistakes, namely, to ignoring the necessity of waging an ideological struggle." Led by the Central Committee and Comrade Mao Tse-tung, in the ten years since liberation we have waged a struggle between the two ideologies, the two world outlooks, on the art and

literary front. As a result, the leadership of Marxism in our literature and art has been fundamentally established.

Second: "Let a Hundred Flowers Blossom, Let a Hundred Schools of Thought Contend." This is the Marxist line for the development of academic studies, culture, literature and art, under our new circumstances and new conditions. It is a firm class policy of the proletariat. This line was put forward by our Party in 1956 because: 1. The socialist transformation in the economic field by then had been basically completed. At the same time, by virtue of a series of struggles in the realm of ideas, the leadership of Marxist ideology had been established. 2. But bourgeois views still exist among the people, as well as ideological class contradictions and all kinds of other thought. Only by applying the policy of "letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend" and bringing these varying ideas into the open through the medium of free criticism and discussion, using persuasion rather than coercion, only thus can such contradictions be resolved. 3. After completing the democratic revolution and fundamentally completing socialist transformation, we have the new tasks of rapidly building socialism and developing our national economy, culture and science. The policy of "letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend," an excellent line for the development of academic studies, culture, literature and art, was formulated to meet these new circumstances and demands.

It is now quite plain that this line is the best means of stimulating the enthusiasm of all literary and art workers and developing the various types of literature and art to their highest potential. With this line every literary and art worker can give the fullest play to his talents, and every type of literature and art can be developed to the utmost, each serving socialist construction in its own way. This is the best policy for developing socialist literature and art.

It is also the best policy for the struggle against bourgeois ideology. As Comrade Liu Shao-chi stated in *The Victory of Marxism-Leninism in China*: "The line we have adopted has absolutely nothing in common with bourgeois 'liberalization,' rather it is a firm proletarian policy. We implement this policy . . . in order to develop Marxism and the socialist ideology which Marxism



guides. . . . Its purpose is to aid the proletariat to defeat the bourgeoisie politically and ideologically, to eradicate their influence, not to permit bourgeois views to spread freely."

We are materialists. We believe that as long as classes exist, as long as the influence of bourgeois thinking remains, so too will various hostile ideologies remain and the poisonous weeds of bourgeois views continue to sprout. As to the latter, rather than preventing them from emerging, we prefer to let them come out and then uproot them, thereby sharpening the people's discriminatory power in the course of struggle and steeling their Marxist fighting strength. The facts have shown that the policy of "letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend" does not weaken Marxism or proletarian socialist literature and art. On the contrary, it forges and develops them.

Third: The principle of integrating revolutionary realism with revolutionary romanticism in creative work. This was advocated subsequent to the Party's General Line for socialist construction, and followed the enormous enthusiasm which surged up among the people with the advent of the Big Leap. After the people became masters of their own destiny, an unprecedentedly heroic era commenced. To portray this new era, its new masses, their new life, we had to adopt both a new principle regarding creative work and new methods of creation. A combination of revolutionary realism and revolutionary romanticism was proposed to meet these needs.

The literary and art world discussed the question and Comrade Chou Yang, in his article *New Folk Songs Blaze a New Trail in Poetry* (*Hongqi* No. 1, 1958), stated the fundamental provisions of this principle. I agree entirely with his views. Here, I would like to offer a few of my own impressions on the subject, particularly with regard to what revolutionary romanticism implies.

Revolutionary romanticism, it seems to me, has two sides — its romantic spirit and its romantic method. The two frequently go together, but not necessarily. A work which is romantic in spirit may or may not be romantic in method. Some of Lu Hsun's writings are an example of the latter type.

What is most important is to grasp the romantic spirit. Revolutionary romanticism sees what is new in life, excels at reflecting it, helps it grow. Today, this means seeing the seeds of com-

munism in life. The reason Lenin and Mao Tse-tung are great revolutionaries and revolutionary romanticists is because they could always see the positive and the new in the lives of the people, because no matter how difficult the circumstances, they always had full confidence in the revolution, in victory. There are a number of sections in Lenin's *Preface to the Russian Translation of the Letters of K. Marx to L. Kugelman* which might serve as an excellent explanation of revolutionary romanticism. Lenin says we should "learn from the firmness of spirit which admits of no faint-hearted whimpering after temporary setbacks of the revolution. . . . Whoever distorts a theory which soberly presents the objective situation into a justification of the existing order and goes to the length of striving to adapt himself as quickly as possible to every temporary decline in the revolution, to discard 'revolutionary illusions' as quickly as possible and to turn to 'realistic' tinkering, is no Marxist." In other words, we should coolly observe and analyse the objective situation, but we should not use it as an argument for the preservation of the existing order, or as an excuse for not seeking new-born revolutionary phenomena which can change it.

Lenin goes on to say: "During the most peaceful, seemingly 'idyllic,' as Marx expressed it, and 'wretchedly stagnant' (as the *Neue Zeit* put it) times, Marx was able to sense the approach of revolution and to *rouse* the proletariat to the consciousness of its advanced revolutionary tasks." What Lenin was advocating was revolutionary romanticism in revolutionary movements. He was opposing those "realists," lacking in ideals and vision, who defend the *status quo*.

After the failure of the First Revolutionary Civil War, Comrade Mao Tse-tung said, "A single spark can start a prairie fire." This was an expression of the highest kind of revolutionary romanticism. Some people, unable to see the sparks, thought the revolution was finished, hopeless. Others could see the sparks but didn't believe they could start a prairie fire. To be able to see the sparks, to firmly believe that they can enkindle the prairie and to actively expedite their doing so – this is the spirit of revolutionary romanticism. The ideals which the spirit of revolutionary romanticism expresses cannot be divorced from reality. They must arise from



reality; they should be the inevitable direction in which real life develops.

The writer or author must draw his ideals first and foremost from reality. Otherwise they will be only empty illusions. The combination of revolutionary realism with revolutionary romanticism is, therefore, an integrated and indivisible principle for creative writing. It is not, as some people understand it, realism daubed with a few "ideals" here and a touch of "romanticism" there. This is why the ideals we advocate have strength, are based on reality, and can inspire the author's love for them. This is why he wants to describe them and ardently desires to expedite their growth, their victory.

In accordance with the foregoing understanding, I believe that the synthesis of revolutionary realism and revolutionary romanticism includes three major elements. First: It sees and reflects what is new, revolutionary and vital. Second: The writer or artist has the warmest enthusiasm for these things. Third: The works thus produced have the strength and power to inspire and encourage. The combination of these three factors is characteristic of revolutionary romanticism. Empty illusions which are divorced from reality can encourage no one. Before he can grasp revolutionary romanticism, the writer or artist must develop the ability to see in life the new, the revolutionary, the vital. That is where the difficulty lies.

The other side of revolutionary romanticism is its method. Works of romanticism tend to use more exaggeration, more flights of fancy, more mythological coloration. But these alone do not give us revolutionary romanticism. Unless a work possesses a revolutionary romantic spirit, it still will not be a revolutionary romantic creation, no matter how much exaggeration and mythology it contains. Some of the poems of Comrade Mao Tse-tung have mythology in them; some do not. But every one of them is filled with the spirit of revolutionary romanticism.

To be able to write in the spirit of revolutionary romanticism, it is essential to acquire a revolutionary world outlook and merge with the revolutionary people. For it is only thus that the writer or artist can see the spirit of revolutionary romanticism in the lives of the people, and be able to convey it fully in his works.

In order to attain this goal, the basic approach is to study Marxism-Leninism, study the works of Comrade Mao Tse-tung, while going to the people and becoming one with them. Both of these aspects are essential. There is no substitute for going to the masses. But living among the people and failing to study Marxism-Leninism will not do either; you cannot automatically obtain a Marxist-Leninist world outlook in this manner. Marxism-Leninism is a science. It is possible to derive from the life of the masses various concepts that correspond with Marxism, but this alone will not give you a thoroughly Marxist world outlook. Both Lenin and Comrade Mao Tse-tung have fought determinedly against the empiricists who deny theory. We must study Marxist-Leninist theory, study the works of Chairman Mao. Otherwise, we are liable to become captive to all kinds of erroneous ideas.

To sum up, the many-sided important advances which Comrade Mao Tse-tung has made in Marxist literary and artistic thought are great contributions to the treasury of Marxism. They are fundamental principles which we must observe in order to further develop socialist literature and art.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung has not only directly expanded upon Marxist literary and artistic thought and developed a comprehensive scientific Marxist theory of literature and art, he has also made a deep and penetrating criticism of bourgeois views on art and literature. The *Talks at the Yenan Forum on Art and Literature* long ago thoroughly refuted the main tenets of the revisionists in these fields. Revisionism is the use of bourgeois views to rewrite Marxism, to emasculate its revolutionary essence, its revolutionary soul. Although it constantly dons new masks, essentially it still plugs the same old tunes. Its expression in literary and art thought, as in politics, in the main takes these forms:

First: An attempt to compromise class contradictions and gloss over the class struggle so as to strengthen the old system. This is the fundamental characteristic of the revisionists. One of the main tenets of Lukacs, a Hungarian revisionist of long standing in literature and art, perverts Lenin's principle that under certain conditions it is possible for different social systems to co-exist peacefully, into the proposition that socialist and capitalist ideologies can peacefully co-exist, that struggle is unnecessary. This "ideological co-existence" theory, like the proposal of our revisionists that we "give complete licence to our differences and seek similarities among us," is in effect a demand that we should "seek similarities" and "co-exist" with the bourgeoisie ideologically. Lukacs claims that since the death of Lenin the major contradiction determining Communist strategy has been not the contradiction between capitalism and socialism, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, but between fascism and anti-fascism; he wants to eliminate the class struggle. Earl Browder, renegade of the U.S. Communist Party, also takes this position.

In order to gloss over the class struggle, the revisionists propose an abstract "humanitarianism," a "human nature" theory as substitutes for class nature, for Party spirit. This co-called "humanitarianism" is the universal love or "love of all mankind" which Comrade Mao Tse-tung has criticized. Marx said, "The *philanthropic* school is the humanitarian school carried to perfection." It wants us to "love" everyone. Today, this is the favourite trick of the bourgeoisie to blur class distinctions and make us forget about the class struggle. Its aim is, under the guise of "humanitarianism," to preserve the criminally inhuman system of capitalism. If a working-class writer should abandon socialism and communism and clamour loudly for a classless humanitarianism, he would be surrendering to bourgeois ideology. As long ago as the time of the Yenan *Talks,* Comrade Mao Tse-tung trenchantly exposed and refuted the hypocrisy and fraudulence of such concepts as the "human nature" theory and "love of all mankind."

Second: The revisionists propose to remove the educational function of literature and art. They are against literature and art serving politics. To eliminate the fundamental aim of the proletarian revolution, to change the proletarian movement into activities without revolutionary purpose — this too is one of the major objectives of revisionism. Early revisionist Bernstein said: "The movement is everything; the final aim is nothing." Since the aim of the proletarian revolution is to seize political power and set up a proletarian dictatorship, the revisionists, by trying to eliminate the aim of the revolution are, in effect, seeking to destroy the dictatorship of the proletariat.

As to literature and art, the revisionists are opposed to these serving the proletarian revolution and say they should have no educational function. This is the same tune all revisionists sing.

In the Draft Programme of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia the following appears: "The League of Communists of Yugoslavia simultaneously rejects all pragmatic distortion of Marxist viewpoints on the role of science and art in society, and any transformation of science and art into the exclusive instrument of daily political interests." They slander the principle that literature and art must serve politics as "pragmatic distortion," and scoff at it as an "instrument of daily political interests."

Actually, refusal to serve the political interests of the proletariat is a service to the interests of the bourgeoisie. One of our revisionists has said that literature and art should not become "the megaphone for certain political concepts." The intention of this is the same. In the Yenan days, people like Wang Shih-wei were also opposed to literature and art serving the politics of the revolution. They attacked us as being utilitarians. The Hu Feng clique was even more venomous on this question. Chang Chung-hsiao in a secret message wrote: "Utilitarianism . . . is a criterion that crushes genuine criticism and new writing."

Comrade Mao Tse-tung refuted this kind of argument long ago. He said there is no literature or art which does not serve politics. "In this world there is no utilitarianism which transcends the classes; in a class society utilitarianism is either of this or of that particular class. We are proletarian, revolutionary utilitarians and we take as our point of departure the uniting of the present and future interests of the great majority – more than 90 per cent – of the people of the country; therefore we are revolutionary utilitarians who pursue interests of the broadest scope and the longest range, not narrow utilitarians who are concerned only with what is limited and immediate."

Third: The revisionists on the one hand seek to blur class distinctions, water down class contradictions and cause literature and art to abandon their revolutionary aims, thus helping to strengthen the old world and its system of exploitation. On the other hand they abhor the new society, new system and revolutionary people intensely. They do their utmost to smear our new society. They contend that the task of literature and art is exposure – including exposure and satire of the revolution, the people and our new society. Their aim is to make the people dissatisfied with the new society, to create a mood of pessimism



and disappointment with the new world, so that the people will lose confidence in the revolution. Comrade Mao Tse-tung has thoroughly demolished this so-called theory of exposing the seamy side of life.

Plainly, Comrade Mao Tse-tung's Yenan *Talks* have already made a most penetrating and deep criticism of the fundamental tenets of revisionism in literature and art. Modern revisionism is an international phenomenon. It is not solely a question of literature and art. More important, it is a political question. Domestically, as long as the influence of bourgeois ideology remains, we will continue to have revisionism. Internationally, as long as imperialism exists, weak-willed persons will continue to be terrorized or bought over, and become revisionism's captives. The Moscow Declaration of the Communist and Workers' Parties of the Socialist Countries points out: "The existence of bourgeois influence is an internal source of revisionism, while surrender to imperialist pressure is its external source."

Imperialism is now using two methods. On the one hand it creates a war atmosphere to frighten the people. Timid individuals become panic-stricken, and they go among the people disseminating pacifist illusions. On the other hand, imperialism purchases adherents. It gives them seats in parliaments, raises their wages, makes labour aristocrats out of them. Or it bestows prizes – another form of bribery. Some people cannot resist this sort of thing. They don't understand that "when the enemy praises you, you'd better watch out." On the contrary, they consider the commendations of the bourgeoisie and the imperialists an honour. This is extremely dangerous. Ideological sources of revisionism today exist both at home and abroad. Comrade Mao Tse-tung tells us: "Revisionism, or right opportunism, is a form of bourgeois ideology. It is more dangerous than dogmatism." Today, the opposition to modern revisionism is an important struggle of international significance.

We should have a firm grasp of the thought of Mao Tse-tung when we oppose revisionism in literature and art, just as when we oppose it in politics. His thought on literature and art is our best weapon for defeating literary and artistic revisionism.

Now, I want to say something about how important it is for workers in literature and art to study the thought of Mao Tse-tung and thoroughly reform their world outlook.

Comrade Mao Tse-tung has pointed out the correct approach to creating socialist literature and art, setting forth a specific line and method. The present problem is how writers and artists should build and create socialist literature and art in accordance with his teachings. The reformation of their world outlook and the establishment of a proletarian world outlook is therefore of decisive significance.

A communist world outlook is precisely what the revisionists oppose most. They are for ever taking Balzac and Tolstoy as proof that a writer can produce great works without a correct world outlook, some even claiming that the more reactionary a writer is, the greater his creations. From Hungary's Lukacs to China's Hu Feng and Yugoslavia's Vidmar — all use these two great authors as their weapons. And so, we must get straight on this question.

First of all we must understand that the relation between socialist literature and society is entirely different from the relation between the old-type literature and society. Speaking in the broadest sense, there are two kinds of old-type literature. One praises and seeks to preserve the old order; this is the reactionary kind. The other exposes and criticizes the old order; here is its main progressive significance. As Gorky said, the value of critical-realist literature lies in the fact that its writers are bourgeois "black sheep." To a greater or lesser extent, intentionally or unintentionally, they reveal the dark deeds and crimes of capitalism, portraying its development and decline. They serve a certain function in pulling down the old order and society, casting doubt, as Engels said, on the immutability of the capitalist system.

Socialist literature is fundamentally different. It defends the socialist system, helps expedite its development, does not harm it. This is because the socialist system is a progressive system, one which the people had long dreamed about and fought for, a most reasonable system which eliminates the criminal exploitation of man by man. It is therefore our duty to safeguard it and help it grow to the still greater heights of communism.



It is possible to criticize the old society and old order from various ideological standpoints. Of course the most progressive is that of the proletariat. But many authors criticize the capitalist system from an enlightened bourgeois standpoint, while some take the stand of the small producer or even the aristocracy. The *Communist Manifesto* states clearly: There are various kinds of socialists, and they all criticize capitalism. We have, for example, the "feudal socialists." Although they suffer from a "total incapacity to comprehend the march of modern history," their attack, which is "half lamentation, half lampoon, half echo of the past, half menace of the future," at times "by its bitter, witty and massive criticism, strikes the bourgeoisie to the very heart's core."

Then we have the "petty-bourgeois socialist" writers. It is natural that they, "who sided with the proletariat against the bourgeoisie, should use, in their criticism of the bourgeois regime, the standard of the peasant and petty-bourgeois, and from the standpoint of these intermediate classes should take up the cudgels for the working class."

Lenin puts it well. He says there are two kinds of criticisms of the bourgeoisie. One is a criticism by the class that seeks to replace the bourgeoisie, that is, a proletarian criticism of capitalism. The other is a criticism of capitalism by the classes which the bourgeoisie has replaced.

Since one can criticize capitalist society from different standpoints, the question of reforming world outlook has no bearing upon writers of the past. Writers of varying world outlooks are all able to criticize capitalism. (Of course those with a proletarian world outlook do it the most thoroughly and correctly.)

Balzac was a royalist, a man with a profound sympathy for the nobility. He himself posed as a member of the aristocracy, and from their standpoint exposed the vulgarity and ugliness of the *nouveau riche*. His remarkableness lay in his pointed revelations of the laws of social development. Although he hated the crudity and repulsiveness of the bourgeoisie, he could see that this new force was bound to replace the feudal aristocrats, for whose passing his works were a dirge. Balzac trenchantly exposed and criticized capitalist society. It was for this reason that Marx and Engels considered his works of value.

Tolstoy described the tribulations of capitalism from the viewpoint of a small producer under a patriarchal system. He criticized the capitalist system "not because he wanted socialism," but because he wanted "a community of free and equal small peasants." Lenin said Tolstoy was the mirror of the Russian revolution in that he reflected both the revolutionary mood and demands of the Russian peasants of his time as well as the insufficient political awareness of a large part of them – people who were under the illusion that instead of revolutionary struggle they could resort to tears, prayers and petitions to obtain their needs. Lenin made a deep and scientific class analysis of Tolstoy's ideas and writings. He said that Tolstoy cannot be regarded as a "teacher of life" because his "resist not evil" doctrine was reactionary; it did not lead men forward. Lenin put it very well. He said, "The Russian people will achieve their emancipation only when they realize that they must learn how to secure a better way of life not from Tolstoy, but from the class whose significance Tolstoy did not understand, and which alone is capable of destroying the old world that Tolstoy hated, namely, the proletariat."

Since socialist literature should defend and develop the socialist system and propagate communist ideology, it is utterly incompatible for a writer or artist to be anything other than a socialist or communist and to fail to have a communist world outlook. The revisionists refuse to admit this fundamental change in relations, and so they necessarily reach these conclusions: 1. The primary task of socialist literature and art is mainly to expose, criticize and attack the new society, not to defend it. 2. There is no need for writers and artists to reform their ideologies, and no communist world outlook is necessary. The revisionists want the writers of today to take Balzac and Tolstoy as their models. It doesn't matter if your world outlook is backward or reactionary, they say; in fact, according to some of them, the more backward and reactionary the better. Of course, this view is absurd. It arises from their failure to recognize the fundamental difference between the relation of socialist literature to society and the relation of past literature to society.

The reformation of a writer or artist's world outlook is a key point. A socialist, communist writer or artist must have a communist world outlook. Today, the question of world outlook is



really a question of whether you are a democrat or a communist, whether you are a fellow traveller of the revolution or a thorough Marxist. What we mean by fellow traveller is the kind of person who went along with us during the stage of the democratic revolution, who approved of it and took part in it, but who, now that we have reached the socialist revolution stage, has become unwilling to go on, who wants to leave the revolution. Some time ago Chairman Mao pointed out that many of our writers formerly were revolutionaries, but that when we entered the stage of socialist revolution they became middle-of-the-roaders. He was referring to the fellow travellers. Actually, it is impossible to remain in the middle of the road. Unless you progress and become a revolutionary in the socialist revolution, you will retrogress; you may even become a rightist – anti-Party and against socialism. This sort of thing has happened. Ai Ching is an example. During the democratic revolution, he wrote some good poetry. Later he became a middle-of-the-roader; finally he degenerated into a rightist.

Many of our comrades were ideologically prepared for the democratic revolution and urgently desired it. For a long time we had been influenced by its ideas. We wanted to make China a nationally independent, free and democratic country. The success of the democratic revolution did us no harm. We had little or no connection with the three major enemies of the democratic revolution – imperialism, the feudal forces and bureaucrat-capitalism, and so we were able to fight them determinedly. But with regard to the socialist revolution, many people were not ideologically prepared. It came quickly and struck hard. Many only had a vague desire for it. They were not at all clear what it really signified. Socialist revolution not only cancels out the bourgeois class but also thoroughly eliminates individual economy and the individualist thinking that goes with it. The revolution affects each of us intimately, demanding improvements of our minds, and so many people cannot accept it.

We intellectuals are connected with the bourgeoisie by thousands of gossamer strands. Some of us are, in various ways, directly connected with the bourgeoisie. Many are involved with bourgeois intellectuals who are either friends or relatives. More common is our connection with bourgeois ideology, because in the

past we received bourgeois educations. Commoner still is our relation with bourgeois literature and art. We grew up permeated with them and were profoundly influenced by their ideological content. Gorky said that bourgeois culture is a mixture of honey and poison. We want to learn from bourgeois literature and art, but we must beware of the poison they contain. Most of them are strongly flavoured with individualism, anarchism, pessimism and other such negative elements. Many of us are connected with the well-to-do peasants in the countryside, and are readily influenced by them. When you add to this the fact that our work by nature is an individual activity and that we easily gain fame, it is not at all difficult for us to give rein to individualistic ideas and consider our successes personal achievements.

Writers and artists therefore, besides thoroughly solving the important problems involved in world outlook – such as how to correctly understand the General Line of the Party, how to approach mass movements, how to see clearly the connection between the theory of uninterrupted revolution and the theory of revolutionary development by stages – must also purge themselves completely of individualist thinking. Within the Party individualism has never been legal. Today it has no place in any part of our society, because our present society is a socialist, collective society. Individualism is one of the major obstacles to an acceptance of socialism.

It should be said that the world outlook of the vast majority of our writers and artists is correct, or basically so. Since the Talks at the Yenan Forum on Art and Literature a great many

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*Our Village Iron Works* by Lai Shao-chi→

Born in Kwangtung in 1915, in 1933 Lai Shao-chi organized the Modern Graphic Art Study Group with his friend Li Hua in Canton to encourage the development of woodcuts in South China. The artist took part in the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the War of Liberation. After liberation he became chairman of the Federation of Chinese Writers and Artists, first in Nanking, now in the province of Anhwei.

literary and art workers have been continually reforming their ideologies and joining with the masses. They either already have a communist world outlook or are working hard to transform themselves into communists. Without this, our fine attainments in literary and art work would not have been possible. But there are still some people who have not solved the problem of world outlook, or in any event, not entirely. This cannot help but be reflected in their work, in their creative activities, in their literary and art criticisms. Errors appear in our work at times, and bad tendencies in writing crop up. In criticism, some articles reveal a bourgeois outlook, or even use the fallacious reasoning of revisionism. While these errors are not all the same in extent and origin, all testify to the importance of a thorough reformation of world outlook and certify to the fact that any departure from the thought of Mao Tse-tung, however slight, will result in one kind of error or another.

And so, in order to improve our work further, to avoid mistakes and losses, we comrades of the literary and art world must diligently study Marxism-Leninism and the thought of Mao Tse-tung, and utilize them to arm ourselves ideologically and thoroughly reform our world outlooks. We must diligently study and comprehend the thought of Comrade Mao Tse-tung on literature and art, raising it still higher, like a banner, so as to impel an even bigger leap forward in every realm of literature and art.

*Great Friendship*

# Literary Ties

More than thirty years ago, Lu Hsun, the founder of China's new literature, wrote an article entitled "Literary Ties Between China and Russia" in which he said: "The mass of our readers already dimly perceive what will grow from this great, fertile 'black earth.' Indeed, things have grown from it already, as we have seen for ourselves: endurance, groans, struggles, revolt, fighting, changes, fighting, construction, fighting, success." The "black earth" referred to by Lu Hsun was Soviet literature. In that article Lu Hsun spoke warmly of the ties between Chinese and Soviet literature. With the passage of time and the forward march of history, this friendship has been ceaselessly developed and strengthened by our two peoples. It was carried to a new historical stage ten years ago, on February 14, 1950, with the signing of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance in Moscow.

Before liberation many well-known Chinese writers showed great enthusiasm in translating works of Soviet literature. In 1930, Lu Hsun translated Fadeyev's *The Nineteen.* Gorky's *Mother* was translated by Hsia Yen, Mayakovsky's *Our March* and *A Strange Adventure at the Summer Resort* by Kuo Mo-jo, Serafimovich's *Iron Flood* and various other works by the translator Tsao Ching-hua. At the same time Chu Chiu-pai, a noted Marxist critic, compiled and translated classical Marxist writings on literature. From the thirties onwards, Soviet literature occupied the most important place in the foreign literature introduced to China. Its progressive world outlook and revolutionary spirit have educated and aroused Chinese readers. The Kuomintang reac-



tionaries, fearing its influence, used all the means in their power to suppress it, persecuting those who translated and introduced Soviet literature. But those great works still succeeded in breaking through obstacles to reach Chinese readers.

After the establishment of the Chinese People's Republic in 1949, in the short space of ten years, a new chapter has been written in the introduction of Soviet literature under the guidance and care of the Chinese Communist Party and the government. Up to the end of 1958 some 3,500 translations have been made, largely of Soviet works but also including new translations of old Russian classics, and about eighty-two million copies have been sold. These figures alone testify to the popularity of Soviet literature in China.

Chou Yang, vice-chairman of the Federation of Chinese Writers and Artists, told the Second Congress of Soviet Writers held in 1956: "Works of Soviet literature and art have found more and more faithful and enthusiastic readers in China. Our young people have a passion for Soviet literature. They take as their best models the heroes in Ostrovsky's *How the Steel Is Tempered,* Fadeyev's *The Young Guards* and Polevoy's *A Story About a Real Man.* Works like Pavlenko's *Happiness,* Nikolayeva's *Harvest* and Azhayev's *Far from Moscow* have met with a most enthusiastic response from Chinese readers. In these novels they see a completely new type of man, who never appeared before in human history, a man with the noblest moral qualities and a communist spirit."

Recently, to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Sino-Soviet Treaty, the major publishing houses in China put out several dozen new editions of Soviet works, including Gorky's *Three Persons, Life of a Useless Man, Travels in Russia, Travels in the Soviet Union* and his selected letters; Gladkov's *Story of My Youth,* Fedin's *Early Joys* and *No Ordinary Summer,* Tikhonov's collection of poems *To New China* and Tvardovsky's long poem *Endless Vistas,* Lacis' *To the New Shore,* Kazakevich's *Spring on the Oder,* Alexeyev's *The Successors,* Brovka's *When the Rivers Meet,* Polevoy's *Seething Workshop* and Vasilyevskaya's *Life and Death Struggle.* The publishers also issued a special booklet entitled *Soviet Literature Is Our Good Teacher and Friend.* This contained articles by more than twenty Chinese writers and trans-

lators, introducing the works of Gorky, Mayakovsky, Alexei Tolstoy, Makarenko and others, as well as articles by three Soviet writers widely-read in China – Vera Ketlinskaya, the author of *Courage,* Perventsev, author of *Fame Sought from Childhood,* and V. Kaverin, author of *Two Captains.* By sharing their experience in writing with their Chinese readers, these novelists have satisfied a long-felt demand and helped to bring Chinese readers closer to the Soviet writers whom they love.

## *Notes on Literature and Art*

*TSAI JO-HUNG*

# Our Art Is Advancing with the Times

Art is developing in New China in step with our people's advance. All that is new in our society and the labouring people's magnificent achievements in the course of their work and struggles cannot but find vivid expression in our art.

An outstanding feature of the works of art produced in the last ten years is their concern with the labouring people's new outlook on life and new spirit since liberation. The working people rarely figured in the art of the past; and if they did, the artists seldom painted them in their true colours but – with the exception of a few works of folk art – presented them in a distorted or ugly fashion. Socialist art alone can truthfully reflect the life and struggles of the working masses. Since the Talks at the Yenan Forum on Art and Literature in 1942, under the correct leadership of the Central Committee of the Party and Chairman Mao Tse-tung, Chinese writers and artists have resolutely carried out the directive to serve workers, peasants and soldiers and depict their life and struggles. In our great task of socialist transformation and socialist construction, in the campaigns against bourgeois thought and other important political movements, New China's art has exerted a considerable influence on the people and done much to educate them.

Artists have scored successes in the ten years since liberation in expressing the new spirit abroad in China. They have shown us the creative, selfless labour of workers and peasants, their fearlessness in the face of difficulties, their incomparable strength in conquering nature, their soaring production in industry and their record harvests, the heroes among them who keep coming to the fore as model workers on our production front. . . . Our new art makes it clear that men and women will bring their initiative into full play only after exploitation is done away with and the labouring people have won the position of masters of their land. This is the most obvious difference between them and the labourers in a society where exploitation still exists, and the main proof of the superiority of our socialist system over the capitalist system. Many other works of art reveal the new moral standards of our people, their selfless, collective spirit, their mutual helpfulness and friendliness, their love for the Party and our leaders, their eager pursuit of knowledge. The new type of workers reflected in these works give a true picture of our people who no longer suffer from economic oppression and whose minds have been liberated too. Another common theme in modern art is the revolutionary struggles of the people, their tremendous revolutionary mass movements in history, their invincible revolutionary fighting spirit, their inexhaustible strength to defend their land and world peace. The central aim of all these works of art is to portray our labouring people who have stood up and, with full confidence in the future, have taken their place in the forefront of the revolution. These works affirm the power of labour to transform the world, express the joy of life today and foretell an even better future. They give our people fresh courage and faith in the construction of socialism, encouraging them to march boldly towards their great revolutionary goal.

The declining bourgeoisie of the West is using art as a plaything to express its decadence, lowering men's artistic creativity to the level of senseless animal activity by using monkeys, parrots or earthworms to produce "pictures," while the revisionists are endeavouring to rob art of any significant ideological content. But our art, unlike the decadent art of the bourgeoisie today, serves the labouring people and is an inspiration to them, safeguarding the noble role and value of art. Our artists' achievements in the



past decade are the result of carrying out the Party's directives on literature and art, and of combating various bourgeois views on art. Since the campaign against the rightists, our artists' targets have become clearer, they have grown more united and are producing better works. This makes it fully apparent that socialist art alone represents the main current of world art and has a splendid future. It is bound to go from strength to strength, supported by all the working people of the world. This accounts for its world influence and great significance.

Our labouring people, armed with the advanced outlook of the working class, formed the main force in the revolution and in winning the victory. They have changed their past life and are continuing to change it further. They are men and women with high ideals and a rich spiritual world. The range of our art must be as great as the spirit of the labouring people, its forms must be as varied as the demands they make on art. The Central Committee's important directive for literature and art, "Let a hundred flowers blossom! Weed through the old to let the new emerge!" is based on the demand that literature and art must satisfy the spiritual needs of the people.

In their attempt to meet the varied needs of the labouring people, by using a variety of forms to express different themes and contents, and creating different effects by utilizing the special features of different forms, our artists have come to see infinite new possibilities, and have done work of new significance on the basis of socialist ideas. Our landscapes are no longer quiet retreats to which to escape from reality but magnificent backgrounds for our socialist construction, the beautiful land possessed and loved by our people, nature remoulded by our hundreds of millions of hands. Our paintings of flowers and birds are no longer pretty toys for the leisured class, but express our people's love of life and their artistic sense. Our portraits are no longer the monopoly of emperors, nobles and landlords, but depict the heroes of a socialist age, the new men and women, the new characters produced by the masses. Our sculpture, on a scale never known before, has come out from private interiors into public squares to display the glorious statues of well-loved popular heroes in the hearts of our teeming cities and towns. Our cartoons are no longer concerned solely with raising a laugh, but are weapons to defend the cause

of revolution or strike a fierce blow at the enemy or at antagonistic ideas. Every branch of our art is advancing towards the goal of serving the people and the cause of revolution. In ten years, we have not merely produced some fine work, but with the enthusiastic support of the people as a whole have gone forward at an unprecedented speed. A hundred flowers are, in fact, in blossom now. And it is especially worth noting that, following the general economic and cultural prosperity in our country, the art of the national minorities has gained a new lease of life and made fresh progress.

The huge number of works of art produced by workers and peasants in 1958 is a sign that art has become an integral part of their life and is developing fast on a mass base; it is also a reflection in the field of art of their rapid ideological advance. With tremendous enthusiasm, the workers and peasants are expressing the triumphs of their toil and struggles, their dreams that have come true, their hopes for the future, their fearless, revolutionary drive and irresistible strength. Because their eagerness to express themselves in art is linked with their fervid fighting spirit, the pictures they paint are bursting with vitality, and they have broken through the ordinary methods of expression to create new styles of their own. Many fine works have been produced by men of the People's Liberation Army too. The artists among the workers, peasants and soldiers are providing strong reinforcements for our socialist art, impelling it forward and testifying to the tremendous strength of art closely linked with the people.

Socialist art does not arise out of nothing, but must grow and develop from the road already travelled, building a broad new highway forward. The road travelled by a country's art is that of its national tradition, and the precious foundation of this is laid by the national spirit, national character and distinctive forms and styles evolved in the course of centuries, as well as the methods and techniques which go to make up these forms and styles. Our socialist art has to be built up on the basis of national characteristics. Chinese art has developed during the last ten years by taking over and carrying forward the historical tradition, at the same time introducing reforms and integrating it with the practice in new creation.



Since our art has a history dating back thousands of years, whether in painting, woodcuts, sculpture or applied arts we have our distinctively Chinese style. We have entered into a splendid heritage laid up for us by the patient labour of craftsmen through the centuries – a variety of forms, a wide range of content, brilliant artistic technique and a wealth of different styles. Folk art is one important branch of our traditional art. It has deep roots among the labouring people, being an intrinsic part of their life. Folk art voicing the modest aspirations of the working people, also expresses their industry and intelligence in a distinctive style of their own — a vivid, healthy style which they can readily appreciate. In carrying forward and improving upon tradition, our professional artists have made effective use of Chinese folk art to give graphic expression to the transformation of China during the Big Leap and the new spirit of this age.

In this decade our artists have also rendered good service by preserving and reproducing old works of art. Traditional Chinese painting, woodcuts and sculpture reach a high standard of artistic attainment and have a distinctive national style. But from the later part of the Ching dynasty down to the time before liberation, this precious legacy failed to receive the protection it deserved from the state. Instead, art treasures were wantonly destroyed or stolen to enrich private collections. Not till the people took over, under the leadership of the Party, was there a radical change. Today precious monuments and works of art all over the country are safeguarded by the government and valued by the people. Many magnificent buildings which were in ruin and relics which were scattered or in need of repair have been restored or recovered by the state; and quite a few private collectors have made over their ancient works of art to be kept by the government. Artists have faithfully restored and reproduced murals and sculpture in such places as Tunhuang, the Yunglokung Temple in Shansi, the Fahai Temple in Peking, the sculpture in Tachu, Szechuan and in Tatung, Shansi, so that these now provide us with excellent material for study and enjoyment. In many places, special organizations for the study of our art heritage have been set up, like the Research Institute of Tunhuang Art, the Chinese Art Research Institute, and the traditional painting studios in numerous provinces and cities. The works and writings of the

great masters through the ages are being selected and edited by experts for publication. Our traditional coloured wood-block printing has also been raised to a higher level by modern artists.

Close links between artists and the people are a necessary prerequisite if art is to give a truthful picture of life and serve the people faithfully. Since art reflects life, it is conditioned by the artists' understanding of life. The beauty in works of art stems from the artist's recognition of the beauty of life. The artist's task is to express the beauty of life, which is created by the labour and struggle of the working people. If an artist stands aloof from life and the struggle and does not grasp the truth of life from personal experience, he cannot reflect life and its beauty faithfully. In our socialist country, the reflection of life in art involves a gradual deepening of the artist's understanding of life and his closer identification with the working people. He can improve the content of his works only by establishing close ties with the people and reaching a deep understanding of the significance of labour and struggle.

In 1942, in the Talks at the Yenan Forum on Art and Literature, Comrade Mao Tse-tung urged revolutionary writers and artists to go into the midst of the workers, peasants and soldiers, to the heart of fiery struggles. Many artists responded to this call by taking part in the work in villages and in the army, living and working with the masses, which not only strengthened them ideologically but enriched their knowledge of life and made them more creative. After the liberation of the mainland, many more artists took part in land reform work, in mass movements aimed at socialist transformation, in the struggle to resist U.S. aggression and aid Korea. They lived with the labouring people, sharing their joys and sorrows, till in thought and feeling they became one with the people. Only by a conscientious study of Marxism-Leninism and the works of Comrade Mao Tse-tung, by living with the people, by ceaseless tempering, can an artist feel completely at ease with the masses, improve his work and strengthen his faith in the revolution. Only then does a broad vista open up ahead, enabling an artist to see the truth of life and understand the meaning of labour and struggle. And only then can he find true freedom in art and a never failing fount of inspiration in the



beauty of life. For beauty lies in fiery mass struggles, in the people's struggle to transform their life.

In the clear light of the Party's General Line, during the big leap of socialist construction, there has been a rapid advance in our people's outlook which is bound to be reflected in art and literature. The leap forward in the ideology of artists can be seen in their closer identification with workers and peasants, in their yet more active participation in mass struggles. Artists who had never been to factories or villages are working there now. They labour with the workers and peasants by day and study art with them in the evening, winning new confidence from the strength of the big leap in production. The artists' close ties with workers and peasants have not resulted – as some predicted – in finishing them as artists, but has strengthened their understanding of life, raised the level of their understanding of aesthetics, and in fact made better artists of them. Nor have their talents been buried among the people. On the contrary, by drawing on the collective wisdom, they have developed their talents. They have not lost their individuality either, but simply their sordid bourgeois individualism, and this has made it possible for them to develop a socialist and communist individuality. They have not lost freedom as artists, for only those who understand life and truth have real freedom. Those whose heads are stuffed with bourgeois notions can have no freedom as artists. Thanks to their close ties with the people, they can free themselves from the fetters of bourgeois thought and by so doing attain the fullest and truest freedom as artists. Only so can art creation scale new heights undreamed of hitherto.

OUYANG YU-CHIEN

# The Zenshinza *Kabuki* Troupe

The Zenshinza Troupe is a company of progressive Japanese artists who recently paid a visit to China, bringing with them the deep friendship of the Japanese people. While in China the troupe gave performances of the traditional Japanese drama, *Kabuki*. *Kabuki,* with its history of three hundred years, bears certain resemblances to China's traditional drama, embodying music, dancing and highly stylized gestures. There is singing, dancing and dialogue, but the singing and the dancing parts are kept separate. Great emphasis is laid also on the actors' use of their eyes, their voice control, postures and gestures; all of which are governed by special conventions. The Zenshinza Troupe has worked tirelessly to carry forward and improve upon the best traditions of the Japanese *Kabuki.* During this visit it presented four representative items: *Sakura Sogoro, The Contribution Book, Narukami* and *Shunkan. The Contribution Book* is a well-known old drama, in which Chojuro Kawarasaki and Kanémon Nakamura are at their best. *Shunkan* describes how a man exiled to a lonely island sacrifices himself to help two young lovers; and Kanémon Nakamura's interpretation of the title role is justly celebrated. *Narukami* deals with man's fight against religious forces; and Kunitaro Kawarasaki, who plays the part of the heroine Taema, gives an exquisite portrayal of a resourceful, quick-witted woman. *Sakura Sogoro,* the first *Kabuki* play to reflect the peasants' struggle, has gained in depth since its editing by Kenzo Hirata of the Zenshinza Troupe.



All four items performed were outstanding and each was distinctive. I want here to comment on two of them in particular, *Sakura Sogoro* and *The Contribution Book,* the premier of which I attended on February 15 at the Capital Theatre, Peking.

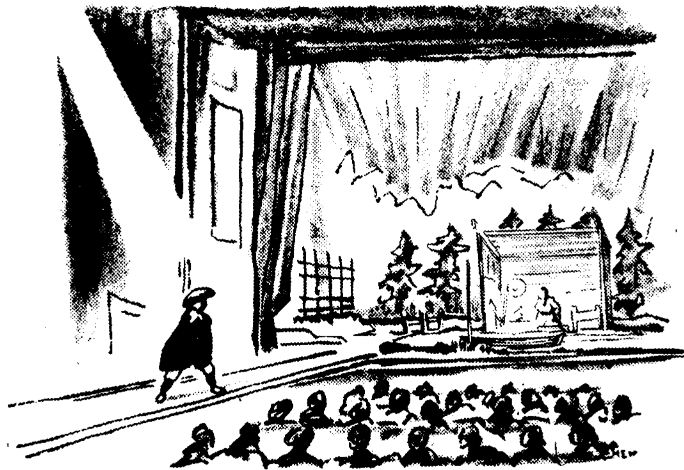
The concept of self-sacrifice is a part of traditional Japanese morality. In feudal society self-sacrifice took different forms and had different connotations. Sometimes it might be relatively narrow, concerned with personal revenge or the repayment of personal debts of gratitude. However, a character like Sogoro in *Sakura Sogoro* possesses this moral attribute in the highest degree, for he speaks up for the oppressed and exploited peasants, sacrificing his whole family for the common good.

More than three hundred years ago, the district of Sakura suffered several consecutive years of famine; yet grain was demanded from the peasants as well as various other heavy levies. Sogoro, at the head of a group of peasants representing twenty villages, requested the local landlord to reduce this imposition. The landlord curtly refused, and accused them of plotting revolt. Sogoro was compelled to go to the capital to appeal to a higher authority; but on the charge of insubordination he and his whole family were put to death.

The story is simple, but the effect on the stage is extremely moving. The opening scene, "The Appeal," is most impressive when the peasants go in a body to the landlord's house. Some rush forward to plead with him, some are bursting with anger but force themselves to submit, some are so torn with misery that they cannot speak, some sob with lowered heads. They convey tremendous indignation and despair. Sogoro comforts them and expresses his own determination. Then he stands there motionless and silent for some time, conveying such a depth of passion that the spectators share his anguish and foreboding. All eyes are irresistibly drawn to him.

In the scene presenting the snowy night at the ford, Sogoro, who has fled from his district, enters with a heavy heart from the Flower Path.* After looking cautiously round, he softly

* A kind of bridge leading from the stage across the pit to a side entrance of the theatre.



Sogoro enters from the Flower Path *sketch by Jack Chen*

approaches a small thatched hut and knocks at the door. The old boatman who lets him in hastily covers up the fire, forgetting to close the door in his alarm. They converse slowly and haltingly, in low voices, but it is clear that their hearts are beating fast, that their blood is boiling. The coldness and silence of the winter night, the tension in the thatched hut, the passion of the two men, are keenly felt by the audience. Sogoro and the old boatman do not gesticulate wildly, beating their breasts or stamping their feet in agony; but their acting makes a most powerful impact precisely because it is so restrained yet full of feeling.

Sogoro's farewell to his family is even more poignant. Since he has decided to go to the capital to appeal, and knows what fate awaits him, this is their final leave-taking; but for all his grief the action moves swiftly on. Sogoro hastily pulls on his cloth socks which have been warming by the fire, slips into his straw sandals and fastens them, while his wife puts on his cape. In this moment of farewell he is outwardly calm, showing courage and resolution. The acting of Kanémon Nakamura and Kunitaro Kawarasaki is brilliantly polished down to the smallest detail, and so truthful and natural that we forget we are watching a stage performance. When Sogoro starts off, his two children



seize his clothes and will not let go. He takes them in his arms and makes certain gestures which are entirely appropriate to the occasion. When the elder boy runs barefoot after his father through the snow, Sogoro stops him and pushes him away several times before climbing over the fence and leaving. All Kanémon Nakamura's movements are beautiful, indicating the depth and nobility of his feelings, and the two children act superbly, while his wife with tears in her eyes and their smallest child in her arms watches her husband from the window. Here the revolving stage is used to good effect. Incidentally, the revolving stage was invented in Japan and, like the Flower Path, is one of the distinctive features of *Kabuki.*

Kanémon Nakamura takes the part of Sogoro, Kunitaro Kawarasaki that of his wife, and Choemon Bando that of the old boatman. Their performance is outstanding for its total absence of affectation and exaggeration. They have a profound insight into their parts, and their movements while natural are polished and concise. The whole is perfectly executed, with nothing superfluous, nothing missing, and just the right shade of feeling in each situation. The play itself is also well constructed and concise. All these features deserve careful study from those of us working in the Chinese theatre.

*The Contribution Book,* one of the oldest plays in the *Kabuki* repertoire, is very well known in Japan. The hero Benkei symbolizes courage. Like General Kuan Yu in the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* or in Chinese traditional drama, he is loyalty and valour personified. In this play a ruler in twelfth century Japan, Minamotono Yoritomo, wants to kill his brother, Yoshitsune, who helped him to win the kingdom; but Benkei protects Yoshitsune and helps him to escape disguised as a carrier. Coming to the pass, they are questioned by Tomikashi, the warden there; but Benkei gives skilful answers to all his questions. When the prince is recognized, Tomikashi is so impressed by Benkei's loyalty and bravery that he lets them go.

This play presents extraordinary technical difficulties. The role of Benkei is a most exacting one. Chojuro Kawarasaki, who takes this part, has exactly the right voice and appearance for it. His dancing movements, elocution and acting are superb. In fact, he gives a flawless performance, presenting us with a forth-

right, quick-witted and powerful Benkei. When he drinks wine from a huge bowl at the pass and dances with his staff, the actor's brilliant technique is unforgettable. Since Benkei's task is to help the prince to escape, all his words and movements are subordinated to this end. His devotion, bravery and wit shine naturally through his every gesture and speech – evidence of a high level of training and artistic insight.

A good Benkei needs a good warden of the pass by way of foil, and Kanémon Nakamura is excellent as Tomikashi. He has made a careful study of this part, and his elocution is a joy to hear. He and Chojuro Kawarasaki make a matchless pair. Yoshitsune is also well portrayed by Yoshisaburo Arashi. Here is a splendid young prince, whose dignity is felt through all difficulties and dangers. The retainers and guards are also well presented. In short, this performance of *The Contribution Book* was a gem without a blemish.

In *Kabuki*, elocution is of supreme importance. The dialogues are rhythmic and musical and must be delivered with force. In *The Contribution Book*, Benkei's recital from the book and the verbal duel between him and the warden require an absolute mastery of the art of elocution. Both Chojuro Kawarasaki and Kanémon Nakamura have a brilliantly clear and forceful delivery. The dialogue in *The Contribution Book* is in verse, while in *Sakura Sogoro* it is fairly close to ordinary speech, hence the style of delivery varies too. In *Sakura Sogoro*, though the actors speak in low voices, every word is distinct, revealing a high degree of skill.

Benkei answers Tomikashi's questions *sketch by Chang Kuang-yu*

This year is the thirtieth anniversary of the establishment of the Zenshinza Troupe in Japan, and Chinese writers and artists were very happy to be able to celebrate this anniversary in Peking. Since many of the Japanese artists are our old friends, I wrote these few lines to greet them:

A hundred flowers are blooming to welcome our guests,
Strong blows the East Wind, deep and enduring our friendship;
Let the Plague God of the West begone.
The people of Japan united will banish war.

Through these time-honoured tunes your passion burns,
The deeds of ancient heroes are for ever remembered;
With hearts profoundly stirred,
We rejoice to advance with you shoulder to shoulder.

# *Commemoration*

## Chekhov's Centenary

January 29, 1960 was the 100th anniversary of the birth of the great Russian writer Anton Pavlovich Chekhov. In Peking, more than 1,200 persons of literary and art circles celebrated the occasion in the Capital Theatre. Mao Tun, the Chairman of the Chinese Writers' Union, gave a report entitled "The Great Realist Chekhov." Mao Tun pointed out that Chekhov's works had ridiculed and attacked all that was ugly and rotten in the old society, arousing men's indignation against the old social system. His works, which had a profound effect on Russian literature and society, also exerted considerable influence on the new Chinese literature during the period of democratic revolution. His opposition to despotism and slavery, to vulgarity and corruption, his progressive ideas, his belief in a better future, still have great significance for peoples throughout the world who are fighting for freedom and liberation today. Chekhov believed that artists must have definite views and a clear aim in writing. He said: "If I were a doctor, I should need patients and a hospital. Since I am a writer, I must live in the midst of the people." Many of his views are worth studying today. Mao Tun also said: "The Chinese people value Chekhov's literary heritage and will intensify their research and study of his works from the Marxist-Leninist viewpoint."

The meeting was also addressed by Sudarikov, counsellor of the Soviet Embassy, who said: "The commemoration of the 100th anniversary of Chekhov's birth is being held in the Soviet Union and China on the eve of the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance. On the basis of this treaty, during the last decade our two countries and people have continuously strengthened and developed our relations and our co-operation in various fields, greatly aiding our socialist and communist construction. The cultural co-operation between the Soviet Union and China has played an important part, enabling us to exchange experience in cultural construction and enjoy each other's latest achievements in literature and art."

At the end of the meeting, the People's Art Theatre gave a performance of *The Three Sisters*.



## 150th Anniversary of the Birth of Frederic Chopin

A meeting was held in Peking on February 22 in the Capital Theatre to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the birth of Frederic Chopin, the great Polish composer. Chao Feng, secretary of the Chinese Musicians' Union, addressed the meeting. He said, "Chopin is well known and loved in China. This is because, in the first place, the ideas expressed in his works kept abreast with the progressive ideas of his time, and secondly, because his rich national style makes a strong appeal to the Chinese people. Chinese music lovers treasure Chopin's ballades, waltzes and scherzos and, in particular, the famous C minor Etude and the A flat major Polonaise. This is mainly because China has undergone experiences similar to those of Poland in the nineteenth century. It is natural that we should feel particularly drawn to the patriotism which opposed alien oppression and the anti-feudal democratic thought expressed in Polish literature and art."

A. Debnicki, counsellor of the Embassy of Poland in China, spoke on Chopin's works and influence. He pointed out that "Chopin would not have become one of the creative geniuses of mankind if he had not found his source of inspiration in his earliest contacts with art, from the tradition and experience of his own people and from Polish folk music."

After the meeting, a concert of Chopin's music was given. Three young Chinese pianists, Yin Cheng-tsung, Liu Shih-kun and Chou Kuang-jen played his Ballade No. 2 in F major, Scherzo in B minor, Polonaise in A flat major and Concerto in F minor.

The mention of "Mazowszc" calls to mind *Cuckoo, Oh, a Little Bird Flew In, Bachelor* and the other songs the Polish Mazowsze Song and Dance Ensemble brought to China in 1953, which have been popular here ever since. Seven years later, the ensemble has come back with a new and equally delightful repertoire.

The ensemble performs Polish folk songs and dances which are simple, natural and full of life. These excitingly fresh and original items, performed with tremendous verve, gave Chinese audiences an idea of the distinctive customs and folk arts in different parts of Poland. The songs *Beloved Land* and *Thanks to Those Who Went Before* were solemn and beautiful. *The Coachman,* with its protest against the inequality of the old society, was simple and forceful. There were many humorous songs like *Two Little Hearts* and *I'll Marry a Poor Man,* as well as some haunting songs in praise of true love. The polkas, mazurkas and *obereks* were lively and impassioned, while the dances accompanied by a peasants' band had a strong local flavour and testified to the virtuosity of the Polish artists.

The ensemble toured China after its performances in Peking.

*Sketch by Li Ke-yu*

# New Books

**"Three Families Lane"**

By Ouyang Shan. Writers' Publishing House

This story is set in Canton, the cradle of the First Revolutionary Civil War during the twenties. It gives a truthful and graphic account of a series of revolutionary struggles waged by the people of Kwangtung under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party round about the time of the revolution in 1927. Some of the major incidents vividly depicted are the Canton-Hongkong Strike of 1925, the Shakee Massacre on June 23 of the same year when British and French imperialists massacred workers on strike during a demonstration, the Northern Expedition and the activities of the Revolutionary Government in Canton. As indicated by the title, the main plot of the book centres around three families living in one lane. These three Cantonese families of Chou the working man, Chen the comprador and Ho the landlord-official, represent three main classes in Chinese cities at the time and reflect conditions in a semi-feudal, semi-colonial South China city. The violent class conflicts and changes of that period are presented through the different outlooks and lives of the young people in these three families who as children play and study together. Their parents are related by marriage and they are schoolmates or sworn brothers, but they have very different political stands, for the fate of each is closely bound up with that of his class, and alters with the changes in his class.

Chou Ping, the young hero of the book, is most successfully portrayed. Born in a working-class family, he works as apprentice to a blacksmith, as cowherd, as assistant in a pharmacy and as a hand in a shoe factory. He has the best qualities of the working man: honesty, a clear sense of justice and the courage to stand up to petty tyrants. He comes boldly to the defence of Ah-tsai, a maid who is humiliated and persecuted, and exposes his comprador godfather Chen Wan-li's vicious behaviour towards the girl. When working as a cowherd, he is dismissed by the landlord for taking grain for a starving farm labourer. His goodness of heart is often misunder-

stood, so that some call him a fool; but young Chou learns a lesson from the Shakee Massacre and the Canton-Hongkong Strike, and gradually takes the path of revolution.

Since Chou Ping is closely connected with the wealthy Chen and Ho families, having cousins there, and since he himself studies for a few years in a secondary school, he is influenced to some extent by bourgeois ideas. He has something of the petty-bourgeois intellectual about him and indulges in sentimentalism and Utopian idealism. At every step forward he has to struggle hard against such tendencies. Thus while basically he is for the revolution, politically he tends to vacillate. In Chou Ping the author has painted a convincing picture of young revolutionaries in that early period of the revolution.

The many passages in the novel about Cantonese customs and scenes are rich in local colour and bring South China vividly before readers' eyes.

**"Red Anyuan"**—History of a colliery

Kiangsi People's Publishing House

This is a truthful and moving history of a coal-mine, consisting of 95 pieces of reportage, written by staff members of Anyuan Colliery with the help of veteran miners.

*Red Anyuan* uses the language of the miners themselves to describe their life and struggles yesterday and today. There are four sections: "The Dark Years," "The Storm of Revolution," "The Unquenchable Flame" and "Advance in Triumph." Every section is a vivid, stirring entity in itself, and together they add up to a composite picture of the experience of the Chinese working class. From different angles we are shown the hardships of Chinese workers in the old days, their joy in liberation and their revolutionary drive in the fight to build socialism. A brilliant account is given of the great Anyuan strike of 1922 and of the miners' role under Party leadership during the Northern Expeditionary War of 1926 and the Second Revolutionary Civil War in 1927.

The pit opened in Anyuan, Kiangsi in 1898, was one of the first coal-mines in China. From the outset, under the control of the German imperialists, it was a place where the foreign imperialists, feudal powers and bureaucrat capitalists allied to grind down the miners. But the oppression of the reactionaries only hastened the political



awakening of the Chinese working class, and spontaneous strikes and uprisings took place.

Soon after the Chinese Communist Party was founded in 1921, Comrade Mao Tse-tung visited Anyuan and went down the pits to find out conditions there, to educate the miners and sow the seeds of revolution in this soil so ready to receive them. Subsequently Comrade Liu Shao-chi worked for three years here. And the seeds sown by our revolutionary leaders in Anyuan were not slow to grow. The colliery became a centre of great workers' movements, of sharp clashes between the forces of revolution and counter-revolution.

This book starts with short memoirs like "It Happened to an Old Miner," "Chuan-nai's Family" and "One Day at Anyuan," which bring home to us in a very vivid way the miserable conditions of the miners before liberation.

The section entitled "The Storm of Revolution" graphically records Comrade Mao Tse-tung's trip from Hunan to Anyuan to investigate conditions in the mine, how he helped the miners and how quickly the miners became confident and militant. "The Anyuan Strike," one article in this section, presents an unforgettable picture of Comrade Liu Shao-chi's brilliant organizational talents and unshakable determination when he led the miners' strike. The enemy, greatly dismayed by this strike, wanted to negotiate and then arrest the miners' representatives in order to force the men to go back to work. At this critical juncture Liu Shao-chi, then only in his twenties, with the workers' terms in his hand marched alone to the heavily guarded enemy's headquarters. The Anyuan miners were deeply concerned for him, but Liu Shao-chi had no thought of his personal safety. He quietly stated the reasons for the strike and, when the management threatened to kill him as the colliers' representative unless the strike was called off, he firmly put forward their just demands. Within a few minutes the boastful, blustering reactionary was reduced to speechlessness and made to appear contemptible and ridiculous by the side of this great revolutionary. This section also provides moving descriptions of the pitmen's devotion to their leaders and their solidarity.

What impresses readers most in the 600-odd pages of this history of the Anyuan Colliery is the tremendous revolutionary spirit of the workers and their lofty goal. To build a new society, they carried on a brave and tireless struggle. This is the main theme of the book. In September 1925, the reactionaries brought the White Terror to Anyuan. The miners' club was destroyed; the chairman

of the club, Huang Ching-yuan, was butchered with many other miners' leaders, and half the men were discharged. They fought back fiercely, however. On the day of the massacre, the authorities sent a whole company of soldiers to suppress the workers and guard the corpses which they meant to expose for three days. But that night the miners recovered Huang Ching-yuan's body and sent it to Changsha, the provincial capital of Hunan, where workers, peasants and students bore it through the streets in a fearless demonstration. Another telling anecdote is of Mother Chiu, the wife of an ordinary miner, who at the risk of her life concealed a Red Army slogan on her wall with straw and vines, and used great ingenuity to keep it hidden from the Kuomintang gangsters. This vividly written slogan — Long Live the Anyuan Workers' Uprising! — was preserved for twenty-nine years, to appear once more to the public view after liberation.

The section "Advance in Triumph" has excellent descriptions of the miners' good life after liberation, their burning desire to rid China of poverty and want completely, and their notable achievements in socialist construction.

*Red Auyuan* is an outstanding tribute to the way in which the working class is transforming the world.

### "The Coal-Miner's Song"

By Sun Yu-tien. Kiangsu People's Publishing House

Sun Yu-tien has worked in a coal-mine since childhood. He started to collect loose coal when he was five, and to mine coal at eight. His poem *On the Way to the Nursery* shows that he knew

> The weight of the foreman's club,
> The sting of the policeman's whip.

The hardships he suffered in the old society, which he hated, have made him deeply conscious of the joy of living in the new society. This has given power and feeling to his poems in praise of life in New China.

In this collection, Sun Yu-tien has drawn on his own experience to depict two completely different worlds: the living hell of the old society, where the miners lived like cattle "branded by the foreman's whip," and



> Coming up from the pit after work
> To hear the cries of hungry children.
> *Sun-bathing*

Life was grim and tragic.

> Tears and blood seep endlessly into the ditch;
> The carts are full of ghosts hounded to their death.
> *On the Other Side of the Earth*

The other world is the earthly paradise of today with its singing and laughter, satisfying labour and joy.

> Inside the new workers' clubs
> They are beating gongs and drums,
> Young lads humming, girls in gay colours,
> Sing and dance to celebrate their happiness.
> *Past and Present at the Temple*

In bright colours he conveys the richness of life after the workers become masters of their own fate.

Using simple language and fresh images, these songs show the tremendous changes in the miners' life and the workers' gratitude and whole-hearted support for the Communist Party and Chairman Mao Tse-tung. *Sun-bathing* tells us that in the old days the miners, known as "darkies," could not even dream of sun-bathing; but after liberation

> The light brought by the Communist Party
> Shines deep into the pits.

And the ultra-violet ray treatment now provided symbolizes their new-found happiness. The poet writes with feeling:

> These are no ordinary lamps,
> But the eyes of Chairman Mao.

Here he expresses the miners' faith in and love for their leader, who has such concern for the labouring people. Chairman Mao Tse-tung, like the sun, gives the workers light, warmth and encouragement. Other poems, strongly contrasting past and present, voice heartfelt praise for our new life and for socialism. *On the Way to the Nursery* shows how different life is today for a miner's son.

> At five I was picking up coal. . .
> My small brother is sleeping on the nurse's knee.

This poem also reveals how stirred the writer was when he heard his young brother learn to say Chairman Mao's name. *Water* describes the sensations of an old miner when drinking lemonade, as he recalls the intolerable treatment of miners by the foreman in the past. Now the Communist Party has "turned brackish water into sweet water." These graphic, authentic songs make a strong appeal to Chinese readers.

Another group of poems about mining during the Big Leap present all kinds of outstanding workers with splendid qualities. Here is a broadcaster whose resounding voice

> Lends wings to the news of the mining community.
>
> *The Broadcaster*

A Young electrician

> Takes her kit down each day to the pits
> And the electric motors obey her will.
>
> *The Young Electrician*

A draughtsman "has given all her love to this glorious coal-field." *(The Draughtsmen)* All these workers in ordinary positions are toiling with selfless enthusiasm, dedicating their youth and skill to the realization of the splendid ideal of communism. And in the course of their toil they reveal magnificent qualities.

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# SELECTED WORKS OF LU HSUN

*(in four volumes)*

LU HSUN (1881-1936) was the founder of modern Chinese literature and a great standard-bearer of the cultural revolution in China. The first volume of the selected works contains 18 short stories, 19 prose poems and nine essays — Lu Hsun's best writings from 1918 to 1926. The second volume contains 70 essays written between 1918 and 1927. Concise and sharp, these essays occupied a very important position in the author's writings, being a weapon used by Lu Hsun as a thinker and political commentator, and they give a new insight into the life and revolutionary struggles of the Chinese people. The third volume includes essays written in the first period of the Second Revolutionary Civil War (1927-36) and shows us certain important developments in the author's thinking. Volume four, comprising essays from the last years of Lu Hsun's life, is now in preparation and will be in print in the latter part of 1960.

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