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WINTER NIGHT

p.1-30

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 民族自決
 國際公理
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 POUR LACHINE

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WINTER NIGHT

by

Pai Hsiem-yung

Translated by the Author and Patia Isaku

Winter nights in Taipei, it usually rains cold rain.
^{This} That evening, a bleak wind suddenly rose and the rain began
to fall pitter-patter again. In no time the water had
risen an inch ~~in~~ in the alleys around Wen-chou Street.
Professor Yü Ch'in-lei walked ^{in a pair of wooden clogs,} to the entrance of the alley
and looked around. He ^{held in his hand} was holding an oilpaper umbrella;
the paper had torn ^{and through the} leaving a large hole; the raindrops
~~leaked through and~~ fell on his bald head. It sent a chill
^{that made him} through him; he hunched his shoulders and shivered. On his
feet were a pair of wooden clogs. He was wrapped in that
thick, heavy, old padded gown of his, but even this was
not able to ^{ward off} withstand the ^{somber,} bone-chilling cold of a
Taipei winter night.

The alley was veiled in hazy gray mist. Not even
the shadow of a human being could be seen anywhere. Heavy
silence reigned, broken only by the sound of the rain that
falling like a gentle shower of sand on the tiled roofs
of the low houses far and near. Professor Yü stood in
the cold rain holding up the torn umbrella; after a while,
he turned and trudged back to his house in the alley.
He was lame in ^{the} his right leg, ^{and as} he limped along awkwardly
in his clogs, his body lurching ^{ed} to one side at every step.

The house that sheltered Professor Yü looked exactly like the other University faculty quarters in the alley; they were all old ^{structures left over from} ~~buildings that had survived~~ the Japanese ^{period.} occupation. Long years of neglect had left its doors and windows broken and decayed. The living-room floor was still covered with tatami; * years of dampness caused the mats to give off an incessant musty odor of rotten straw.

The living room's furnishings were modest and sparse: a desk, a tea-table, a tattered pair of armchairs, so worn with age their cotton insides ^{were showing} ~~burst~~ through the rents. All over the chairs, the tables, the tatami, strewn every which way, were books that ~~(had once) been~~ ^{on them,} hardcovers, but the bindings had come off some, others were frayed, ^{and moldy, and} many of them were so battered they lay about like ^{so many} ~~like~~ dismembered corpses. Mingled with these were ^{a number of} ~~some~~ knight-errant romances covered in brown paper from the rental library. Ever since ^{the} ~~that~~ time Professor Yü flew into a ^{tantrum} ~~rage~~ at his wife, no one ^{in the} ~~in the~~ dared touch anything ^{of the books piled high in his living room,} on the mountain of books. His wife had put his books out ^{to} ~~in the~~ sun to air and lost ~~the~~ ^{a sheaf} of notes ~~he had~~ left between the pages of the Oxford edition of Byron's Collected Poems — ^{notes that contained his own inspired} ~~he had written those notes,~~ ^{reflections on the English poet, written} more than twenty years before, when he was teaching at Peking University. they contained his own observations.

Professor Yü went into the living room and

* Footnote
Japanese straw matting.

sank into one of the tattered armchairs, panting slightly. He massaged his right knee-joint vigorously a few times; whenever it turned damp and cold, his injured leg would start to act up. That afternoon, just before his wife went over to Professor Hsiao's next door for a game of mahjong she had instructed him:

"Don't forget, now! Stick on that plaster from the ^{Drug Emporium,} Yü Shan Herb Clinic."

"Would you mind coming home a bit earlier tonight?" he had tried to persuade his wife. "Wu Chu-kuo is coming."

"What's so special about Wu Chu-kuo? Won't you be enough company for him yourself?" His wife wrapped up a wad of bills in her handkerchief and walked out the front door. He'd just happened to ^{have} be holding a copy of the ^{News in his hand, and} Central Daily; he'd wanted to stop his wife to show her Wu Chu-kuo's picture; ^{in it, with a caption reading:}

Professor Wu Chu-kuo, our world-renowned authority on history, presently residing in the United States, yesterday gave a lecture at the Academia Sinica. Over one hundred scholars and dignitaries attended.

But his wife had already raced off next door. She never missed a single one of Mrs. Hsiao's Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mahjong games. The minute he tried to protest,

she would shush him. "Don't rock the boat,^{spoil my fun,} old boy! I'm going to win a hundred dollars and stew a chicken for you." He couldn't impose economic sanctions on her, either,^{for} she always won,^{at the game} and she had her own nest egg to draw from. He'd suggested they invite Wu Chu-kuo over for a family dinner, but no sooner had he raised the subject when his proposal was vetoed. As he watched her broad, corpulent back disappear, he was suddenly overwhelmed by a sense of helpless resignation. If Ya-hsing were still alive, by all means this evening she would ^{for sure} go into the kitchen and cook a whole tableful of Wu Chu-kuo's favorite dishes herself to welcome him back. That time in Peiping,^{when} they gave Wu Chu-kuo a farewell banquet, and Wu Chu-kuo ate and drank until he was quite expansive and aglow, ^{with delight,} "Ya-hsing," he said, "Next year when I ^{come} get back to our country,^{from abroad} I'll have more of your Peking duck." Who could have known that the following year Peiping would fall? Wu Ch-kuo's one trip abroad ^{had} lasted twenty years. The other day at Sung-shan Airport, when he saw him, Wu Chu-kuo was engulfed in such a flood of people, government officials, newspaper reporters, curious onlookers, that not another person could squeeze through. He himself was elbowed to the edge of the crowd and didn't even get a chance to greet him. Wu Chu-kuo

(This phrase sounds too American.)

had on a black woolen overcoat; he was wearing a pair of silver-rimmed glasses. His hair had all turned snow-white, till^d it shone. Pipe in hand, he looked completely poised as he answered the reporters. His scholarly ~~elegance~~^{and}, his awe-inspiring bearing seemed to have grown ~~even~~ mellow with the years. In the end, it was Wu Chu-kuo who had spotted him in the crowd; he made his way through to him and gripped his hand.

"Why don't I come see you in a couple of days," he whispered in his ear.

* * * * *

"Ch'in-lei — "

Professor Yü started up; he limped over to greet his visitor. Wu Chu-kuo was already walking into the vestibule.

"I went to the entrance of the alley a while ago to wait for you. I was afraid you couldn't find your way." Professor Yü crouched^{down}, fumbled around in the low wall-cabinet and fished out a pair of straw slippers for Wu Chu-kuo to change into; one of them was so worn out it had popped open at the toe.

"These Taipei alleys are a regular labyrinth," Wu Chu-kuo smiled. "Even more confusing than ^{the} Peiping hutungs." *

* Footnote

Residential alleys in old Peking.

(It may be more subtle & effective just to skip some space for a break — as in the original.)

His hair was wet from the rain, and his glasses were spotted with water. He took off his overcoat, shook it a couple of times and handed it over to Professor Yü. Underneath, he had on a Chinese jacket of padded silk. As he sat down, he pulled out his handkerchief and gave his head and face a brisk rub; his silvery-white hair got all fluffed and ruffled.

"I've been wanting to ask you over for days."

Professor Yü took out the thermos-glass he reserved for his own use, brewed some Dragon Well tea in it and set it before Wu Chu-kuo; he still remembered Wu Chu-kuo had never liked black tea. "I can see how busy you must have

been the last few days, I ^{felt I had better not join the crowd and} didn't want to get on the bandwagon." *add to your burden.*

"Yes, we Chinese still love to give lavish official entertainments, don't we!" Wu Chu-kuo shook his head with a smile. "I've been invited to banquets every day for the past few days, course after course, well over a dozen each time — "

"At this rate, if you stay longer, I'm afraid you'll eat your way back to your old stomach trouble," said Professor Yü, smiling in turn. He sat down opposite Wu Chu-kuo.

(This phrase has become an idiom of American campaign politics.)

可不是?

(This is a snappy, youthful American rejoinder that doesn't quite fit the personality of an old Chinese professor.)

Kwan-Teng's "I'll say." Chu Li-ming's "You've said it." also don't sound right.

absolutely, in quite a right!

"You can say that again!" I can't take it any more, as it is. Shao Tzu-ch'i gave a dinner tonight, and I hardly touched a thing. — He told me it's been a good many years since he saw you last. You two . . . " He looked at Professor Yü intently.

Professor Yü passed his hand over his bald head and heaved a gentle sigh. "He's a government official now, and a very busy man, too, you know." He smiled. "Even if we were to meet, each other, we wouldn't have much to talk about. Besides, I'm not all that good at idle chat, least of all with him. It's probably just as well we don't run into each other. You remember, don't you, the year we all joined the Moral Endeavor Society for the Common Cause? What was the first oath we took?"

Wu Chi-kuo let out a chuckle. "No to become a joining the official Government for Twenty Years!"

"And to think Shao Tzu-ch'i was the one who led the oath-taking that day! Of course, of course, the twenty-year time-limit has long expired — " Professor Yü and Wu Chu-kuo both broke out laughing. Wu Chu-kuo put his hands around the glass of Dragon Well tea; he lifted it, blew aside the tealeaves floating on the surface, and had a sip. The hot steam from the tea fogged his spectacles. He took

Do you think we could say "Moral Endeavor Society" + get away with it? Sounds better than the other two.

勵志社

Kwan: "Common Cause" — a little too free + there's a U.S. organization ^{real} by that name.
Chu: "Moral Discipline" — trying to avoid the English name for the ^{then} 勵志社 in Hanking, known as OMEA (Officers' Moral Endeavor Ass'n)

and ^{at the same time} them off; as he wiped them, he ^{ting} let out a sigh as though he was deep in thought.

"Yes, now I've come back, and most of our old friends from the Society have passed away — "

"Chia I-sheng died last month," Professor Yü responded. "It was tragic the way he died."

"I read about it abroad in the papers; they didn't report it in detail, though."

"Very tragic — " Professor Yü murmured. "I saw him ^{the} on campus the day before he died. His neck was paralyzed, and his mouth was twisted to one side — six months ago, he ^{had fallen} fell and ruptured a blood vessel — when I saw how ill he looked, I urged him to go home and rest. All he did was force a smile. I understood he was ⁱⁿ having serious financial trouble, and besides, his wife was in the hospital. That very evening he had to ^{to teach someplace else — moonlighting, you know,} moonlight, teach a class. At the school entrance, he tripped ^{and fell} in the gutter, and he was gone." Professor Yü ^{turned} threw up his hands ^{palms up, & ^} and gave a dry laugh.

"So ended Chia I-sheng, just like that."

"So that's how . . ." Wu Chu-kuo mumbled.

"I heard somewhere that Lu Ch'ung had died, too. Living abroad, you're probably better informed about ^{it} that."

"I could see how Lu Ch'ung would end up long ago,"

Wu Chu-kuo sighed. "During the Communists' ⁶ Hundred Flowers ⁹ backlash, the students at Peita purged him." They accused him through his own History of Chinese Philosophy of being a lackey of the Confucian cult and forced him to write a confession. How could a man of Lu Ch'ung's character take that? He jumped off the building. Right in front of everybody in Peita.*

"Good! Good for him!" Suddenly Professor Yü got excited and slapped his knee twice. "What a man! I bow to him. He deserves to be called ^{a true} a Standard-Bearer of the Confucian Ethic!" ^{scholar with his unbending spirit!}

"Still, ^{wasn't,} ^{remarked sadly,} that ^{wasn't,} ^{wasn't it,"} Wu Chu-kuo ^{brooded.} "Time was when he was one of ^{the great} ^{those} ^{who rallied to the call for tearing down the} "Confucian Shop." ^{adversaries of "Confucius and Sons."} *

"Wasn't it, though?" Professor Yü agreed with a resigned smile. "Just look at us — Shao Tzu-ch'i, Chia I-sheng, you, me, and that big ^{traitor} collaborator with the Japanese, ^{collaborated with the Japanese and} Ch'en Hsiung, who ^{was} executed — when we were all at Peita, what plans did we make together?"

Wu Chu-kuo got his pipe out and lit it. He took a deep draw and blew the smoke out slowly. He remained silent for a while, lost in thought. All of a sudden he began to

* Abbreviation for Peiching Tahsüeh: Peking University.

* Foolinote
From one of the slogans of the May 4th Movement for intellectual reforms ~~in 1919 was~~ "Down with the Confucian Shop!"

shake his head, chuckling to himself. He leaned over.

"You know, Ch'in-lei," he said, "Most of the courses I give at universities abroad only cover our history up to the T'ang or the Sung. I've never taught a course on the Republic ^{an era.} Last quarter at Berkeley, I gave a course on the T'ang political system. The students ^{are} rioting all over America these days, and the UC students are the worst! They've burned down buildings on campus, chased the Chancellor out and beaten up professors. The idiotic way they carry on ^{It} really galls me! One afternoon, I was lecturing on the civil examination system in Early T'ang. Outside the students were scuffling with the police; they were spraying teargas all over the campus; it was absolutely insane! Just imagine — there I was in the middle of all that, lecturing on the civil examination system in seventh-century China. How could that possibly interest those shaggy-haired, barefoot American kids, ^{hell-bent} all screaming for action? They were sitting in the classroom and staring out the window. ^{So} I put down my book. ^{said to} I challenged them. 'Over forty years ago, Chinese students in Peking started a riot ten times, a hundred times more ferocious than yours!' That shook them up, all right; they all looked at me in

disbelief: Chinese students? Rioting?" Wu Chu-kuo and Professor Yü chortled.

"Well, then I told them all about it: 'On May Fourth, 1919, the Peking University students in the vanguard, a mob of student rioters out in protest against Japan fought their way into the house of a treacherous government

official; they set it on fire, dragged out the envoy to Japan, who happened to be in hiding there, and gave him the beating of his life.' All at once those American

students ^{sat up and listened to me} ~~were listening~~ with awe. They talk and talk all the time against the war in Vietnam, ^{but} and after all they ^{I continued:} still don't dare burn down the Pentagon. [^] Later, all those students ^{were} got arrested and imprisoned in the Law School at Peking University, over a thousand of them.' When

I saw I had their complete attention, I announced gravely, ^{of those Chinese students} 'The leader [^] who beat up the envoy to Japan is standing ^{here} right [^] in front of you.' The whole classroom roared ^{at this,} some stamping their feet ^{and} others clapping, they even ignored ^{forgetting} ^{about} the police gunfire outside — "

Professor Yü shook with laughter, his bald head bobbing up and down.

"They were all falling over themselves asking how we

中文:慢
说. To
convey the
intended
suspense,
this sentence
must be
drawn out
a little.)

stormed Chao's Pavilion.** I told them we formed a human pyramid and climbed into Ts'ao Ju-lin's house. The first student to jump over the wall ^{had} got his shoes knocked off; and then he ran around barefoot all over the courtyard setting everything on fire.

"Where is that student now?" they asked with one voice.

"He's at a university in Taiwan," I said, "teaching Byron." The American kids were overjoyed. ^{to hear this, and} They all rocked with laughter — "

Professor Yü blushed ^{at this,} all at once; his wrinkled face ^{breaking} broke into a boyish smile. He grinned in ^{sheepishly} embarrassment and looked down at his feet. He didn't have his slippers on, just a pair of heavy woolen socks with large black patches on the heels. ^{inadvertently,} In spite of himself, he put his feet together and rubbed them against each other a couple of times.

"I told them: 'While we were imprisoned in school, a lot of girl students came to cheer us up. The belle of the Women's Normal College and the barefoot arsonist got married eventually; they were China's Romeo and Juliet of the day — '"

"Aw, Chu-kuo, you really know how to ^{make a joke!} poke fun at a guy!"

^{name} ** "Chao's Pavilion" (Chao Chia Lou) is the historical ^{residence} term for the mansion of Ts'ao Ju-lin, a pro-Japanese cabinet minister in the warlord government, as were Lu ^{Tsung-ji} Cheng-hsiang and Chang Tsung-hsiang, who are mentioned later in this story.

不由自主的
(too shy)

Professor Yü ran his hand over his bald head; a nostalgic smile appeared on his face. ^{Seeing that} He saw Wu Chu-kuo's tea was cold, he got up and hobbled over ^{for} to pick up the thermos bottle. As he refilled Wu Chu-kuo's glass with boiling water, he retorted, "Why didn't you tell your students about the student leader who carried the flag in the demonstration that day and got his glasses knocked off in the fight with the police?"

^{It was} "Well, as a matter of fact," Wu Chu-kuo ^{turn to} laughed a little self-consciously. ^(P) I did tell them how Chia I-sheng slit his finger and wrote TSINGTAO BACK TO CHINA on the wall in characters of blood and how Ch'en Hsiung paraded through the streets, dressed in mourning and carrying a funeral banner ^{that proclaimed}

→ TS'AO, LU, AND CHANG WILL ^{LIVE} STINK TEN THOUSAND YEARS IN INFAMY

"^{yes} Chia I-sheng . . . You know, all his life he wanted to do something grand ^{for his country} . . ." Professor Yü sat down with a doleful sigh.

"I wonder, did he ever finish that book of his, The History of Chinese Thought?" Wu Chu-kuo asked with a look of concern.

"I've just been editing his manuscript, actually. He'd only gotten as far as the Neo-Confucianism of the Sung

* Footnote Tsingtao

and the Ming, and besides — " Professor Yü knitted his brow. "The last few chapters seemed a bit slapdash. His reasoning wasn't at all as keen and original as it used to be. I haven't been able to find a publisher for his book yet. Even his funeral . . . the few of us, his old friends, had to put up the money for the expenses."

"Oh?" Wu Chu-kuo was taken by surprise. "Was he really that . . . "

Professor Yü and Wu Chu-kuo sat facing each other, *and* ~~by and by~~, they fell silent. Wu Chu-kuo slid his hands into his sleeves, *while* Professor Yü kept patting his stiff, aching leg.

"Chu-kuo — " After a long while, Professor Yü raised his head and looked at Wu Chu-kuo. "I must say, you're the most successful of us all."

"Me? Most successful?" Wu Chu-kuo looked up, startled.

"Yes, really, Chu-kuo!" Professor Yü's voice grew agitated. "All these years I've accomplished nothing. Every time I've read in the papers about how your name has become known all over the world, I couldn't help feeling heavy-hearted, and at the same time, *I* felt comforted. At least we have you to vindicate us in the scholarly world — " As he spoke, he stretched out his hand impulsively and took Wu Chu-kuo's arm.

"Ch'in-lei!—" Wu Chu-kuo cried; abruptly he tried to free himself. Professor Yü heard the anguish in his voice. "If you keep saying things like this, I won't know where to hide myself!"

"Chu-kuo?" Professor Yü murmured, drawing back his hand.

"Ch'in-lei, let me tell you something. Then you'll understand how I have felt, being away from the country all these years." Wu Chu-kuo put his pipe down on the table, took off his silver-rimmed glasses and ^{pinched} kneaded the close-knit bridge of his nose. "I've spent all this time giving lectures here, attending conferences there, all over the world. It all seemed very exciting, all right. ~~Then~~ last year the Oriental Historical Association held a convention in San Francisco. At the session I attended, there was an American student, a graduate, fresh from Harvard, who read a paper entitled 'A Re-Evaluation of the May Fourth Movement.' Right from the start that young fellow tore the Movement to pieces. He concluded with quite a burst of eloquence. In an iconoclastic outbreak against tradition, ^{he said,} these over-zealous young Chinese intellectuals completely overturned the Confucian system that had prevailed in China for over two thousand years. These young Chinese, ignorant of the current conditions in China, blindly worshipped Western culture and had a superstitious belief in Western democracy

and science. This gave rise to unprecedented confusion in the Chinese intellectual world. But this generation, which had grown up in a patriarchal society and which had neither a system of independent thought nor persistence of will-power, suddenly found themselves bereft of their spiritual sustenance once the Confucian tradition crumbled; then, like a tribe of parricidal sons, they began to waver in panic; they became lost — they had overthrown Confucius, their spiritual father — carrying the heavy burden of their guilt, they set out on their spiritual self-exile. Some hurled themselves into the arms of totalitarianism; some turned back and embraced the remnants of their long-since-shattered tradition; some fled abroad and became wise hermits taking refuge in their isolation. Their Movement disintegrated, deteriorated.

He ended by saying:

Some Chinese scholars have compared the May Fourth Movement to a Chinese Renaissance, he concluded, but I consider it at best an aborted Renaissance. As soon as he finished, there was great agitation in the audience, especially among the several Chinese professors and students, all of whom turned to look at me, at once, thinking I would certainly stand up to speak. But I didn't say a word and quietly left the conference room."

"Oh, Chu-kuo — "

*(He already
"concluded"
on p. 15)*

"Actually, some of that youngster's ^{theses} theories wouldn't be too hard to refute, but Ch'in-lei — " Wu Chu-kuo's voice choked; he gave a nervous laugh. "Just think, I've been a deserter abroad for so many years — several decades! On such an occasion how would my own pride permit me to stand up and speak for the May Fourth Movement? That's why in all my years abroad I've never wanted to talk about the history of the Republic. That time at Berkeley, I only mentioned May Fourth because I saw how excited the students were by the riots and it put me in the mood to talk about it — I just wanted to have some fun with them; it was nothing more than a joke. It's so much easier to talk about our China's past glories. I don't have to feel ashamed at all when I tell my students; In its time, the T'ang Dynasty built the most powerful and culturally the most splendid empire in the world. — just like that, I've been thundering forth these pronouncements all these years abroad. Sometimes I can't help laughing to myself and feeling ^(when I talk to these foreigners) like one of the T'ang Emperor Hsuan-tsung's whitehaired court ladies who went on and on ^{never ceased} boasting to foreigners about the glories of the T'ien-pao Reign — "

我们
 (This is faithful to the original, "our" in the context here can may be confusing, it as though meaning "our group".)

"But Chu-kuo, you've published so many books!" Professor Yü interrupted, almost in protest.

"Oh, sure, I've written quite a few books, The Powers

and the Office of the T'ang Prime Ministers; The System of Garrison Commands in the Latter T'ang. I've even written a monograph, The Pear Garden Actors of T'ang Ming Huang. Altogether several hundred thousand words — empty talk, all of it!" cried Wu Chu-kuo, waving his hand. "Those books," he sneered. "They're ~~all piled up~~ ^{stashed away} in the library, and probably only some American student working on his Ph.D. would go flip through them."

"Chu-kuo, your tea is cold, I'll go get you some fresh." As Professor Yü got up, Wu Chu-kuo suddenly seized his hand.

"Ch'in-lei, let me tell you the truth." He looked up at Professor Yü. "I wrote those books only in order to ^{the requirements of the} satisfy American universities. If you don't publish, either they ^w don't hire you or you ^w don't get promoted; so every couple of years, or so, I'd grind out a book. If I ~~hadn't~~ ^{didn't} absolutely ^{had} to publish, I wouldn't have written a single one of them."

"I'll just go make you another cup of hot tea," Professor Yü faltered. He noticed a slight spasm had appeared in Wu Chu-kuo's ^{elegant} scholarly face. He dragged himself over to the tea-stand in one corner of the living room, ~~and~~ emptied the cold tea into the spittoon, and ^{brewed} ~~made~~ a fresh cup of

Dragon Well tea. Holding the thermos-glass with both hands, he limped painfully back to his seat. His right leg was feeling more and more stiff after sitting for so long, and a numbing pain seemed to seep out in waves from his knee-joint. After he sat down he couldn't help giving it a hard squeeze.

"Your leg seems to have been pretty badly hurt."

As he accepted the hot tea, Wu Chu-kuo looked concernedly at Professor Yü.

"It's that injury from ^{the time} ~~when~~ I got run into; I've ^{fully} never recovered from it. It's pure luck I haven't turned into a cripple by now," Professor Yü said with an air of self-mockery.

"Have you tried everything possible to treat it?"

"Oh, don't ~~even~~ ^{treatment} talk about it." Professor Yü waved his hand. "I stayed in Taiwan University Hospital for five months. They operated on me, they gave me electro-therapy, they did this, and they did that, the more they did the worse I got. Damned if I didn't get thoroughly paralyzed. Then, over my strenuous objections, my wife got some acupuncturist from God knows where. A few jabs and what d'you know! there I was, feet on the ground and running around again."

Professor Yü threw up his hands, laughing helplessly.

"I guess ^{we} ~~us~~ Chinese are pretty ~~damn~~ weird when it comes to illness; sometimes ~~W~~ western treatments just won't work, and

we have to turn to some secret native cure of our own — acupuncture, ^{it} for example. A random jab of the needle and just maybe you hit the magic spot — "

Wu Chu-kuo shook his head, echoing Professor Yü's helpless laughter. He reached out and patted Professor Yü's injured leg gently. "You have no idea, Ch'in-lei; ^{while} I was abroad, whenever I thought of you and Chia I-sheng, I couldn't help feeling ashamed of myself. Life here has been so austere for the two of you, and yet you still stand firm at your posts, educating our own young people — "

Wu Chu-kuo's voice started to shake; he gave Professor Yü another gentle pat. "Ch'in-lei, it really hasn't been easy for you — "

Professor Yü gazed at Wu Chu-kuo without saying a word. Then he scratched his bald head. "All my students are girls now; last semester, there wasn't a single boy left."

"Well, you are teaching the Romantic Period, after all; naturally girls take to it," Wu Chu-kuo tried to explain.

"There was one girl student who asked me, 'Was Byron really that handsome?'

"'Byron was a cripple,' I told her, 'Probably a worse one than I am.'"

"She looked so stricken I had to comfort her. "But he did have a ravishingly handsome face — " Professor Yü and Wu Chu-kuo broke out laughing. "On my final exam

I'm not convinced that this is better (see also p. 21) But it may be good to avoid duplicating too many of Kwan-Tung's key words.

last semester, I asked them to write an essay on the Romantic spirit in Byron; One girl wrote down an impressive list of Byron's mistresses; she even included his half-sister Augusta!"

Wu Chu-kuo doubled over with mirth. "Oh yes, teaching girls is fun, too! How's your translation of Byron's Collected Poems doing? It must be in great demand here, surely?"

"Byron's Collected Poems . . . I never finished translating it, ~~really~~."

"Oh . . ."

"Actually, I only have the last few Cantos of Don Juan left to ~~translate~~. ^{go.} ^{But} I haven't translated one word these past seven or eight years, and even if I had translated the whole of Byron, I'm afraid there wouldn't be many people who'd want to read it now — " Professor Yü uttered a forlorn sigh and looked directly at Wu Chu-kuo. "Chu-kuo, I haven't been at all as you've imagined me all these years; I never really made any effort to ^{'stick to'} ~~'stand firm'~~ at my post; in fact, all along I've been trying to figure out a way to go abroad. . . . "

"Ch'in-lei — you —"

"I haven't just wanted to go abroad, either; I've tried every scheme to grab the chance. Every year, the minute I

learned about any foreign grants to our Humanities Faculty, I ^{date} was the first to ^{apply} rush after them. Five years ago, after a great deal of trouble, I finally won a two-year Ford Foundation grant from Harvard, almost \$10,000 U. S. a year. All the formalities and my travel arrangements had been taken care of. The day I went to the American Consulate to get my visa signed, the Consul himself shook my hand and congratulated me. Would you believe, the moment I was outside the Consulate gate a Taita ^{drove his} student riding a motor-cycle drove straight into me; [†] the next thing I knew, I had a broken leg."

"Ah, Ch'in-lei!" Wu Chu-kuo moaned.

"^{When} Once I was laid up in the hospital ^{ized} I should have announced I was surrendering the fellowship immediately. But I didn't. I wrote Harvard to say ^{that} my leg had suffered only a minor injury and that I would leave for the United States as soon as I had recovered. I wound up staying in the hospital for five months, and by then Harvard had withdrawn the fellowship. If I had given it up early, Chia I-sheng would probably have gotten it."

"Chia I-sheng?" Wu Chu-kuo exclaimed.

† Abbreviation for National Taiwan University.

"He had applied for it, too, Chia I-sheng. That's why I felt so miserable when he died; I felt I had done him a great wrong. If he had gotten the fellowship and gone to America, he probably wouldn't have died like that. When he passed away, I ran around everywhere to raise money for the funeral expenses and his family. You know, his wife was very sick in the hospital, too. I wrote to Shao Tzu-ch'i^{and} all he did was send somebody over with a \$1,000 NT contribution — "

"Oh, good grief," Wu Chu-kuo sighed.

"But Chu-kuo," Professor Yü looked at Wu Chu-kuo in chagrin, "The fact is, I badly needed that fellowship myself. When Ya-hsing passed away, my two sons were still small. Just before she died, she made me promise to bring them up properly and give them the best possible education. When my older son went abroad to study engineering, he didn't have a scholarship; I had to borrow the money — a considerable amount, as it turned out. I've been paying it back for a number of years, but I'm still in the red. So I thought at the time if I got the fellowship and used it sparingly, I'd be able to pay off all my debts. Who could have known — " Professor Yü shrugged, with a mirthless laugh.

Wu Chu-kuo raised his hand as if he was about to

say something, but he only moved his lips a little and fell silent. After a while, he forced himself to smile.

"Ya-hsing . . . she was the kind of woman you always remember."

Outside the window, the rain came soughing down more and more heavily. The cold chill kept creeping in through cracks along the windows and doors. The front door opened and banged shut, and a tall, slender young man in a navy-blue plastic raincoat came up from the vestibule. His ink-black hair was wet from the rain. In his arms he carried a pile of books. He nodded to them with a smile and headed toward his room.

"Chün-yen," Professor Yü called to the young man, "Come and meet Uncle Wu."

Wu Chu-kuo glanced at the young man's handsome, lively face. "Ch'in-lei! The two of you, father and son! why — " Wu Chu-kuo laughed in spite of himself and pointed at Chün-yen. "Chün-yen! If I had seen you first when I came in, I would have thought your father had *been restored to* regained his youth! Ch'in-lei, you looked just like Chün-yen here when you were at Peita." The three of them laughed together.

"Uncle Wu is teaching at UC Berkeley. You want to go there to study, don't you? Now you can ask Uncle Wu all about it."

(the Physics Department at)

"Uncle Wu, is it easy to get a fellowship in Berkeley?"
Chün-yen asked eagerly.

"Well . . ." Wu Chu-kuo hesitated a moment. "I don't know that much about it, but of course there are a lot more scholarships in the sciences than in the humanities."

"I hear their Physics Department often spends half a million dollars or so on one experiment alone!" Chün-yen's youthful face gleamed with envy.

"America is indeed a rich and powerful country," Wu Chu-kuo sighed. ¶ Chün-yen stayed for a while; then he excused himself. As he watched the retreating figure of his son, Professor Yü whispered, "These days, all the boys want to go abroad to study engineering or science of some kind." ¶

trend all right.

"Well, that's the way it's going everywhere."

"We went all out for 'Mr. Science' in our day, didn't we. And now 'Mr. Science' has practically snatched the food out of our mouths." Professor Yü and Wu Chu-kuo chuckled. Professor Yü stood up to get some fresh tea; quickly Wu Chu-kuo stopped him and stood up himself. "I have to give a lecture tomorrow morning early at Chengchi University; I think I'd better leave now and get some rest." He mused for a moment. "The day after

大勢所趨: "That's the way it goes", while colloquial, is not substantive enough. ¶ To add "everywhere" is misleading, since they are clearly talking about Taiwan when they refer to 到國外去.

(original says one million - is this a textual change?)

tomorrow, I'm flying to West Germany to attend a conference on Sinology. Look, why don't you save yourself the trouble of seeing me off. Let's say goodbye here."

Professor Yü handed Wu Chu-kuo his overcoat. "Really," he said apologetically, "Now you're back at last, and I haven't even asked you over for dinner. My present wife" Professor Yü gave an embarrassed smile.

"Oh, yes! Where is your wife?" Wu Chu-kuo interrupted. "I've almost forgotten to ask you."

"She's next door." Professor Yü squirmed. "Playing mahjong."

"Oh, well, then please give her my regards, won't you?" As he spoke, Wu Chu-kuo walked toward the door. Professor Yü slipped into his wooden clogs, opened his tattered oil-paper umbrella and followed behind.

"Don't, don't come out, please." Wu Chu-kuo tried to stop Professor Yü. "It's so hard for you to walk."

"You don't have a hat on. Let me walk you part of the way." Professor Yü held the umbrella over Wu Chu-kuo's head; he put an arm around his shoulder, and they walked toward the entrance of the alley. The alley was steeped in darkness; everywhere the rain blew about endlessly. Leaning on each other, treading through the pools of water in the alley, Professor Yü and Wu Chu-kuo trudged slowly

along, halting at every step. As they approached the entrance of the alley, Wu Chu-kuo's voice dropped.

"Ch'in-lei, I'll probably be coming back myself in a little while."

"You're coming back?"

"I'll be retiring in a year."

"Really?"

"I'm all by myself over there now. Ying-fen passed away; it's awfully hard getting along alone. My stomach's giving me trouble all the time; besides — I don't have any children, you see."

"Oh . . ."

"It seems to me the area around Nankang is a rather nice, quiet neighborhood. The Academia Sinica is right there, too."

"Nankang's not at all a bad place to live."

Raindrops trickled through the tear in the umbrella and hit their faces. The two of them hunched their shoulders against the cold. Just then, a taxi drove up; Professor Yü immediately raised his hand to signal it. As the taxi driver pushed open the door, Professor Yü extended his hand to Wu Chu-kuo for a last farewell.

"Chu-kuo," Holding Wu Chu-kuo's hand in his,

suddenly his voice shook. "There's something I haven't been able to bring myself to ask."

"Eh?"

"Do you think you could possible write ~~me~~ a recommendation? ^{for me?} If any American university happens to have an opening, I'd still like to go ~~ahead~~ ^{abroad} to teach for a year or two."

"But — I'm afraid they wouldn't want to hire a Chinese to teach English literature."

"Of course, of course," Professor Yü cleared his throat. "I wouldn't go to America to teach Byron — what I mean to say is that if there's a school where they need somebody to teach Chinese or something like that."

"Oh" Wu Chu-kuo hesitated. "Certainly, ^{Why, yes,} I'll ~~give it a try~~ ^{← (I thought this comes is a bit more natural, but then I noticed Kwan used the same phrase)} try for you."

Hot

After Wu Chu-kuo was in the taxi, he reached out and gave Professor Yü a firm handshake.

Professor Yü plodded back home. By now the bottom of his gown was soaked through; wet and cold, it clung to his legs; his right knee had really begun to hurt. He hobbled into the kitchen, got the plaster from the Yü Shan ^{Drug} Herb Clinic that had been warming on the stove, and pressed the hot dressing snugly over his knee. As he returned to the living room, he noticed the window over his

✓ Superium

writing-desk had blowⁿ open and was flapping noisily in the wind. He hurried over and bolted it. Through the window's wooden slats he could see the light was still on in his son's room. Chün-yen was seated at his window studying, his head bent low, his handsome profile framed in the window. Professor Yü was somewhat taken aback; for an instant he thought he was looking at himself as a young man. He had gradually forgotten how he'd looked long ago. He remembered he was only twenty, Chün-yen's age, when he first met Ya-hsing. That time they were together at Pei-hai Park, Ya-hsing had just cut off her braids, and her beautiful hair flew about in the wind. In her dark blue college skirt she stood beside Pei-hai Lake. Her skirt fluttered in the breeze. The evening light in the west set the whole lake on fire and tinged her face with a crimson glow. He had contributed a poem to New Tide; it was dedicated to Ya-hsing:

Jade-green
 When you recline on the ~~emerald~~ waves,
 the sky's profusion of afterglow
 transforms into myriads of lotus-flowers
 that lift you up
 to drift away with the wind
 Hsing Hsing
 you are the Goddess "Who Walks on the Waves"

† Professor Yü shook his very bald head and smiled shamefacedly. He found it had rained in on his desk and wet the pile of books there. He gave them a quick wipe with his sleeve and picked up a book at random, The Hermit Knight of Willow Lake. He sat down in the chair under the dim light and turned a page or two before his eyes closed; soon he began to nod and dozed off. Half asleep, he could still vaguely hear the sounds of mahjong tiles being shuffled and of the women laughing ^{and chattering} next door.

The winter night in Taipei deepened as the cold rain outside the window continued to fall incessantly.