

CHINESE LITERATURE

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The Tien An Men Poems

(A Selection)

Heads Raised We Unsheathe Our Swords

In our grief we hear the devils shrieking;
We weep while wolves and jackals laugh.
Shedding tears we come to mourn our hero;
Heads raised we unsheathe our swords.

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This poem was considered by the "gang of four" as the most vicious counter-revolutionary poem. Its writer was searched for throughout the country. He was a young factory worker from Shansi Province. The "gang of four" never caught him.

Why Are They More Afraid After His Death?

So great was our premier;
The people loved him; enemies feared him.
Why are they more afraid after his death?
Because we the people are strong.

The People Will Vanquish Them*

Our loyal hearts have won victories before.
Now our blood will nurture the revolution.
Should those monsters dare spew out their poisonous flames,
The people will vanquish them.

* This poem was written by some workers in a factory of the Academy of Science. It was inscribed on enormous placards which they carried to the Martyrs' Memorial on 2nd April 1976. That night it was removed. Two of the workers were arrested and others who had participated were persecuted.

A Star May Die

A star may die, but its light remains bright.
A flower may fade, but its fragrance is more sweet.
He has shed all his life's blood,
So our banner will be dyed redder.

Only a Few Flowers from Our Garden*

Only a few flowers from our garden.
With tear-filled eyes we plucked them for the festival.**
This bouquet contains the grief of all our family.
Our premier will live for ever in our hearts.

* This poem was pinned to a bouquet of flowers and signed "From our whole family, old and young."

** This is the *Chingming* Festival, formerly to pay homage to the dead and now to mourn the revolutionary martyrs. It usually occurs around 4-5th April.

Where Has He Gone?

Last night white blossoms appeared on all the trees;
Once more we know that spring has come.
Wiping our tears, we ask the grey sky:
Where has our premier gone?
Where has he gone?
Among our green hills and rivers.

So Much Grief and Rage on Earth

At *Chingming*, we mourn our dear premier even more,
Yet in the papers, no mention of your name.
The people's deep grief can never be suppressed,
As in crowds we gather at the Martyrs' Memorial.
With flowers we try to express all that is in our hearts;
Hot tears fall and wet our clothes.
Why has the spring come so late this year?
Because of so much grief and rage on earth.

Thousands Gather in the Square

Thousands gather in the square,
In grief mourning the dead revolutionary.
Old and young weep alike;
Children's clothes are wet with tears.
Wreaths we present to show our respect;
Poems we write to express our sorrow.
Deep our feelings for our dead premier;
Like pouring rain our falling tears.

Don't Boast That the Square Is Empty*

Last night no sounds of wind or rain,
Yet all those fragrant flowers are gone.
Don't boast that the square is empty;
Our tears have stained the memorial's steps.

* Until the 4th April millions of people took their flowers and wreaths to Tien An Men Square. They asked that they remain there until after the *Chingming* Festival had ended. On the morning of 5th April, however, all the wreaths were cleared away on the orders of the "gang of four". The whole nation protested and the people of Peking battled in the square. This poem appeared on the 5th April in protest.

Defend Him with Our Blood

Chingming should be bright and clear,
But the light has gone.
The day darkens as endless tears flow.
We offer our premier tears mixed with snow.
We'll never cease to mourn him;
We'll never suppress our hatred.
His grave is new. Who dares defile the dead?
We shall defend him with our blood.

Slay All Those Monsters!

Oh our premier!
Our premier!
You are the fiery flame;
You are the sharp sword.
Alive, you terrified your enemies;
After your death, they still quake in fear.
Let your fiery flame incinerate those devils!
Let your sharp sword slay all those monsters!

Today We Raise Our Swords

The Chinese people are courageous;
This raging storm will not shake them.
Yesterday we wiped away our tears;
Today we raise our swords to kill those monsters!

Angry Tide

Before the memorial, people surge like an angry tide;
All our grief turned into waves of wrath,
Whipped in all directions by the eastern wind,
Washing away the monsters lurking in the world of men.
Now the rats and foxes are rampant;
But the strength of the people is greater.
The time isn't ripe to catch and kill those beasts.
When it comes, we'll capture those tigers and wolves.

The Truth Cannot Be Hidden

The premier's ashes aren't cold,
Yet those monsters spew their poisonous flames.
With smiling faces, they try to fool the people,
While really shooting arrows in the dark.
Someone returns to work, they criticize him.*
Someone dies and they slander him.**
Someone tries to boost production, they attack him.***
Even trains can't run on schedule!
Oh, heavens, open your eyes!
The Chinese people are in dire danger.
But comrade, never fear;
The truth cannot be hidden.
We'll follow our leader Chairman Mao,
Advancing bravely to surmount difficulties.
All their base plots will be exposed.
Dark clouds won't always obscure the sky.

* This line refers to Vice-premier Teng Hsiao-ping who had been rehabilitated in 1975 and was viciously attacked by the "gang of four".

** Refers to Premier Chou En-lai, whom the "gang of four" attacked before and after his death in January 1976.

*** This refers to those who tried to work hard and who were criticized by the "gang of four" as being interested only in work and not in politics.

A Bridge Across the Whangpoo River

There is a bridge across the Whangpoo River,*
Already rotten and tottering,**
Tottering about to collapse.
We await your order, dear premier.
Shall we smash or burn it?

* In this line "bridge" in Chinese is "chiao", referring to Chang Chun-chiao; "river" is "chiang", here referring to Chiang Ching; the Whangpoo River means Shanghai, because the "gang of four" were known as the Shanghai Clique, all having their power base in that city.

** In this line, "tottering" in Chinese is "yao", here referring to Yao Wen-yuan.

Thus the poem mentions three of the members of the "gang of four". The fourth member was Wang Hung-wen.

Another Person

Mr. So and So,
Don't you know
You can't remain long
In your high position?
You're just a puppy,
Barely weaned.
What have you done
To build our country?
You want to be the heir,
But your laughter is premature.
The people will never forgive
An ambitious cur like you.

This poem refers to Wang Hung-wen.

On a Certain Woman

This woman is really crazy.
She even wants to be an empress!
Look at yourself in the mirror
And see what you are.
You've got a small gang of henchmen,
Who make trouble all the time,
Trying to kid the people, capering about.
But your days are numbered.
Mao Tsetung Thought will triumph.
It helps us to see the truth,
To distinguish right from wrong.
We'll never be fooled by you!
The premier was glorious like the sun and moon.
The thought of him will always warm our hearts.
For us he gave his life.
His memory is ever sweet.
Whoever dares attack our premier
Is like a mad dog barking at the sun.
To hell with you!

This poem refers to Chiang Ching.

Some Insects

Some insects are trying to shake the tree.
"We're powerful. Don't you know that?"
The tree replies: "Yes, I know.
You own one newspaper, two universities*
And a few clowns making a racket!"

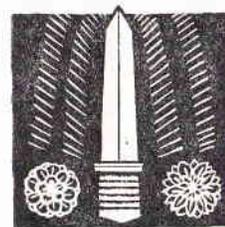
Those Poems of Rage

Flowers surround the Martyrs' Memorial.
Sounds of sobbing fill the square,
Mourning the dead at *Cbingming*,
All grieving aloud.
The premier will remain in our hearts.
The people's will can never be crushed.
These poems of rage will frighten the enemies.
We do not fear the darkness palling the sky.
You traitors!
You think you can rampage as you please?

*The newspaper referred to in this line was the daily Shanghai paper, *Wenbui Bao*; the two universities were Peking University and Tsinghua, both in Peking.

We'll See Next Year

Just men have always appeared in our sacred land.
We'll never let evil people usurp power again.
Don't think the people understand only a little.
Flowers may blossom or fade; we'll see next year.



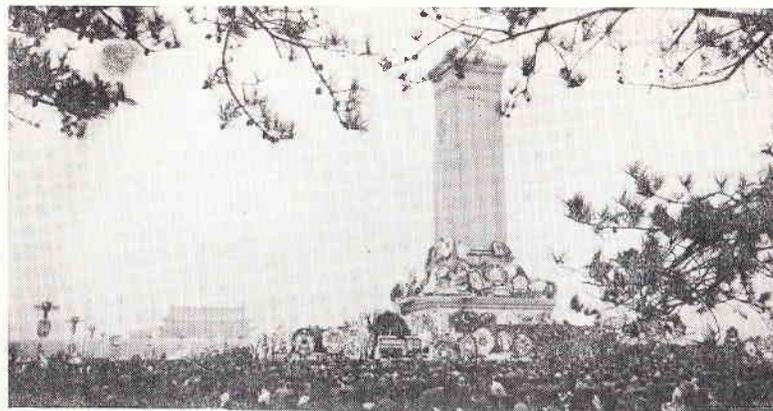
Pien Chi

Indignation Gives Birth to Poems

The Roman poet Juvenal once said: "Indignation gives birth to poems." We can see how true these words are when we read the poems written and recited by the angry crowds who gathered in Tien An Men Square in early April 1976.

The Chinese people were grief-stricken at the death of Premier Chou En-lai on 8th January 1976. The "gang of four", however, forbade people to mourn him publicly, wear black arm-bands or white paper-flowers. Thus hatred towards the gang began to increase.

The anger in people's hearts could never be suppressed by force. It was bound to erupt like a smouldering volcano. Just before the *Chingming* Festival, the traditional one falling on 5th April when people mourn their ancestors, the Peking people ignored the gang's orders and spontaneously made wreaths, wrote poems and surged like an angry tide to Tien An Men. This popular movement reached its climax on 4th April, the eve of the festival. More than two million people participated. The square was a sea of wreaths and people. Poems were attached to these wreaths, to the Martyrs' Memorial in the centre of the square and on all lamp-posts. They were even hung on strings attached



Tien An Men Square on April 4, 1976

to pine-trees at the south of the square. Many people recited their poems or copied others.

These poems had one common theme: mourning Premier Chou and denouncing the "gang of four". From their hearts the people praised their dead premier for his devotion to the revolution and for his noble character.

The people loved their premier;
The people's premier loved the people.
The premier and people shared weal and woe;
Their hearts were always linked.

Simple and poignant, this short poem was memorized by many the moment it was pasted on to the Martyrs' Memorial, and was quickly set to music and sung.

Another person recited this poem:

He left no property,
No offspring,
No grave,
No ashes.
Though he has left nothing,
He will live always in our hearts.
Our whole country is his;
We are all his sons.
Who is he? Who is he?
Our premier!...



A young person reciting his poem

On the “gang of four”, the people poured out their anger and hatred. Frightened by this mass demonstration, the gang started to persecute the participants. Late on the night of 3rd April, a Peking factory worker, Han Chih-hsiung, pasted his long prose poem on the memorial. Then a young man recited it aloud. The gist of the poem was the following:

“... In the past and now, today, some crows have been flapping their black wings and cawing raucously. While people in grief mourn at the Martyrs’ Memorial, these crows jeer and screech with joy.

Looking at them, people see only three crows, followed by a foul, dark swarm of flies. The crows know their dark plumage is ugly compared to that of the peacock. They covet it, blinking their eyes from the bough of a tree. With their flies they go in search of Khrushchov to ask his advice on how to steal the peacock’s feathers. Then they fight over these feathers and stick them in their tails. The chief crow, decked out in peacock’s feathers, starts talking Marxism like a theoretician. In reality he is an evil plotter. Behind him follows a female crow. She doesn’t care about peacock’s



A young person reciting his poem

feathers. She wants to wear a foreign blouse and skirt and carry a little white handbag. She looks a perfect fright! The third crow is a very evil plotter too; he’s fat and greasy. Their flies try to powder and perfume themselves, while contaminating everything with their foul droppings.

History will not permit such monsters to rampage unchecked. The people will strip off their feathers, tear off their false Marxist masks. They will be put on trial before the Martyrs’ Memorial amid the angry roar of the masses, and condemned as traitors to the Chinese people...”

Han Chih-hsiung was arrested on the spot and accused of being a counter-revolutionary. When he was asked at his trial: “Whom do you mean by those crows?” he answered firmly and fearlessly: “Chang Chun-chiao, Chiang Ching and Yao Wen-yuan!”

Another worker, Ho Yen-kuang, was jailed because he recited a poem in the square. In prison he continued to compose new ones such as:

Behind cold, iron bars,
Shackled and handcuffed,
I continue to fight,

My heart ablaze.
When I challenge them,
Those monsters are afraid.
When I sing the *Internationale*,
The whole world sings the chorus.

Many who wrote and recited such poems were illegally arrested. The gang ordered the confiscation and destruction of all the poems. Risking death, people hid copies of the poems in ingenious places such as in the fire-place, in flower-pots, inside a candle or even buried in the mountains. They were convinced that these poems of grief and protest written in their own blood would one day re-appear.



People copying poems

The Chinese people have a long poetical tradition with such great poets as Chu Yuan, Li Po, Tu Fu, Po Chu-yi, Lu Yu and many others. During the 1919 May 4th Movement, there was a popular movement to write poetry in the vernacular. The Tien An Men mass movement, where hundreds of thousands gathered to write and recite poems mourning the death of a hero and denouncing traitors was an epoch-making literary phenomenon never before witnessed. The anonymous poets who showed their



People copying poems

political wisdom and poetical talents have upheld the Chinese tradition, that poetry should express the will of the people.

These people's poems have a distinctive artistic style, employing folk-song forms, classical ones or modern free verse. Ideas and feelings are accurately and poignantly expressed. The language is simple and direct; the imagery vivid.

The appearance of this poetry was directly linked to the political situation. The spring of 1976 marked a critical turning-



People copying poems

point in Chinese history. Our revolution, forged by Chairman Mao and other veteran comrades, was in danger of being destroyed by the “gang of four”. At this crucial moment, the Chinese masses who had become more politically conscious as a result of the Cultural Revolution, chose to go to Tien An Men and fight, fearing neither imprisonment nor death. Poetry was their weapon.

Wang Li-shan, the writer of the famous poem *Heads Raised We Unsheath Our Swords*, has said: “Who could remain silent when the fate of our country was at stake? Our veteran revolutionaries were willing to sacrifice their lives, so why should we fear persecution? With irrepressible anger I felt compelled to put my poem on the Martyrs’ Memorial.” Another young Peking worker, Li Chou-sheng, said: “After Premier Chou En-lai died, the ‘gang of four’ became more rampant. They attacked our Vice-premier Teng Hsiao-ping, and forbade the people to mourn Premier Chou En-lai. Seeing this I decided to write some poems to express the people’s feelings. Though I knew this was dangerous, I felt I had to act. I made up my mind to be like a detonator



A worker showing to others his pledge written in his own blood

to blow sky-high the ‘gang of four!’” Within a few days, hundreds of thousands of Peking people, including students, workers, peasants, soldiers, intellectuals, government officials, old men and housewives, all took part in writing and reciting poems in the square. Thousands of poems began to appear, the direct product of the people’s war against the “gang of four”. They are the true record of this historic incident. It was also the prelude that led to the victorious overthrow of the gang on 6th October later that year.

The people’s will proved to be irresistible. It was a revolutionary action when the masses went to the square to mourn their dead premier and denounce the gang. These poems were revolutionary poems. The gang, however, said the incident and the poems were counter-revolutionary. On 14th November 1978 this unjust verdict was finally reversed, and those revolutionaries who had been suppressed and persecuted were vindicated. During those difficult days when the gang was in power, many people had secretly collected and copied the poems. Some were printed,



A girl presenting
white flowers

some mimeographed, or written by hand. Sixteen comrades of the Peking No. 2 Foreign Languages Institute, for example, collected and edited more than one thousand of these poems and had them privately printed using the pseudonym "Tung Huai-chou" (All mourning Chou En-lai). Now this collection has been re-edited and published by the state. These poems of protest, the Tien An Men poems, will remain like a great monument in the history of Chinese poetry.

Lu Hsin-hua

The Wound

New Year's Eve. From the speeding train, as it flashed past, nothing could be seen in the pitch dark outside save red or white lights. It was early spring 1978.

Hsiao-hua averted her eyes from the window to look at her watch. One minute past midnight. She smoothed her untidy fringe, put her long black pigtailed behind her and rubbed her slightly red eyes. Then she took out a small square mirror from her old shoulder bag, hanging from a peg. She looked at herself, in the dim carriage light, at her plump cheeks, straight nose, small mouth, slightly jutting out chin, square jaw and fair complexion. Her calm, melancholy eyes, that sometimes gleamed, stared at her from the mirror.

Never before had she so carefully examined her face. Noticing her eyes moistening, she automatically pressed the mirror to her heart, looking around nervously in case she might have been observed. Fortunately all were asleep in the carriage with its misted windows. She sighed softly with relief, then put the mirror back into her bag.

She felt drowsy, but was unable to sleep. She leaned forward, her arms and head resting on a small table in front of her. But after only a few minutes she sat up again unable to sleep.

On the opposite seat were a young unmarried couple on their way to Shanghai to visit their parents. During the day they had chatted animatedly about their work, study and current events. Now they leant against each other, fast asleep. At the other end of the carriage was a young mother of about thirty, obviously from the city, her head resting on a small table and her little daughter aged about four or five lying beside her. All of a sudden the child stretched her legs and cried in her sleep: "Mummy!" The woman awoke at once and, kissing her daughter, asked: "What's the matter, my little pet?" The child said nothing, but with a movement of her hand turned over and slept.

Quietness again, broken only by the train's rhythmic chugging like a lullaby, the rocking train like a large cradle. All the passengers were lulled asleep.

Hsiao-hua no longer felt sleepy. Looking at the young couple and the mother and child intensified her feeling of loneliness and sadness. Her heart had ached hearing the child cry out "mummy". The word seemed strange to her after so long, yet it gave her hope. By now, her own mother's hair must have turned grey and her face become lined. How she longed to throw herself into her arms and beg forgiveness. But . . . she shook her head sadly, tears filling her eyes. Fighting them back she gave a deep sigh. With her elbows on the table, she cupped her jaw in her hands and turned her eyes once more to stare out of the window. . . .

Nine long years, she thought remorsefully.

Nine years earlier, when she had first learned that her mother was a traitor to the revolution, in desperation and anguish she had applied to work in a remote rural area, although she had not yet completed her schooling. She could not bear to think that her own mother, an old revolutionary, was a renegade.

She hoped that the accusation was false, since her father, while he was still alive, had told her how her mother many times had risked her life on the battle-fields to rescue the wounded.

How could such a person break down before the enemy in prison?

Because her mother was labelled a renegade, Hsiao-hua began to lose her closest friends and was shunned by her class-mates. She and her mother were forced to move into a small dark room. Hsiao-hua was deprived of her Red Guard membership. . . . was treated with a contempt she had never experienced before. Naturally she blamed her mother for all this, despising her for her disgrace. She knew that her mother loved her dearly, as being the only child she was doted on by both her parents. All that love, however, was now contaminating her innocent life. She felt deeply wronged. The contempt others showed her and her own sense of shame made her criticize herself for her petty bourgeois thoughts and feelings. So she decided to break with her mother and have nothing more to do with her.

Young and hurt, she boarded a train and left her home in Shanghai, aged only sixteen.

Alone in a corner of the carriage, she stared out of the window. Only when the train entered a tunnel did she turn to look at her luggage on the rack, a canvas hold-all and some bedding, which she had packed without her mother's knowledge. Even then her mother was unaware that she and some school leavers were on the train. When her mother returned home she would find a note:

6th June, 1969

I've decided to have nothing more to do with you. Don't try to find me.

Hsiao-hua

Her mother would weep and be desolate. Hsiao-hua thought of the love her mother had for her. But why had she become a renegade? There was no room for sympathy.

The noise in the carriage quietened down. Only then did she become aware of the others. Some were already asleep in their seats; others read. A boy about her age sat opposite her, gazing at her questioningly. Noticing this, she shyly lowered her head.

He, however, asked in a friendly tone, "Which year did you graduate?"

"It should be this fall," she replied, looking up.

The boy was puzzled. "How come. . .?"

"I left school a bit early." As she finished, her flashing eyes shone for the first time, warmed by his concern. At the same time she plucked up enough courage to steal a glance at the boy. He was of medium height, with an oval-shaped face, fair complexion and lively eyes. "What's your name?" she asked.

"Su Hsiao-lin. And yours?"

"Wang Hsiao-hua."

Others joined in the conversation. "Why did you leave school early?"

She was lost for words for a moment. Too innocent to tell a lie, she blushed and told them everything. As usual, she lowered her head, expecting their contempt. To her surprise they comforted her.

"You're all right," Su Hsiao-lin said emotionally. "Don't worry. When we get to the village, we'll help you." Hsiao-hua nodded gratefully.

Living in the countryside with so many young people to support and help her, Hsiao-hua began to feel secure and happy. The bad memories faded and became remote. Together with the other young people from Shanghai, she settled down in a village by Pohai Bay in Liaoning Province in the northeast.

She worked well and so the following year applied to join the Youth League and was given an application form. To her surprise, the county committee refused to admit her on the grounds that her mother was a renegade.

She told the village branch secretary with tears in her eyes: "Listen, I've broken off all relations with my mother. You know all this. . ."

Su Hsiao-lin and the other youngsters supported her: "When her mother found out last year that she was here, she sent her a big parcel of clothes and food. But Hsiao-hua returned it unopened, like all the letters she has received from her mother."

"Well," the man shrugged his shoulders apologetically, "Shanghai replied to the committee's inquiry, saying that your mother's case was serious. And nowadays, the provincial committee insists that the Youth League members must have a good class background. . . ." His voice trailed off as he smiled wryly.

Hsiao-hua was at a loss what to do.

It was not until the fourth spring that she was allowed to join the Youth League. By then her enthusiasm had waned.

The Chinese New Year was always a miserable time for her, as all her friends went to their homes in Shanghai for the holiday. Now again it was the New Year, and she was left alone in her little room. Outside was the noise of fire-crackers, their strong, pungent smell filling the air. Children were running around, shouting and laughing, amid the beating of drums and gongs.

In the day, she had visited some local peasants' families and shared in their festivities. But as soon as she entered her room again, she felt very depressed.

The friendliness of the peasants had been a consolation to her. They looked after and helped her whenever there were problems. They'd even sent a petition to back her Youth League application. And there was Hsiao-lin, who often came to see her. Their friendship had developed during those four years they had worked together and lived in the same village. Hsiao-lin loved Hsiao-hua because she was innocent, hard-working and practical. She regarded him as her boy-friend, the only person on whom she could really depend, so she often told him about her unhappiness.

On the eve of the Moon Festival, strolling along the beach, they had confided in each other what was in their hearts. Since then they had become even closer. They had sat down side by side on the sand after a long walk along the shore. In the moonlight, the wind whipped the waves beating against the shore. There was a salty sea smell in the air.

They sat in silence for a while. Then Hsiao-lin asked unexpectedly: "Are you homesick, Hsiao-hua?"

She looked up, surprised: "No. Why do you ask that?"

The boy lowered his head and said slowly: "I think you should write a letter and find out if it was all a mistake. You know,

Lin Piao persecuted many old revolutionaries these last years. Perhaps your mother was one of them.”

“No. Not possible.” She toyed with her coat edge, shaking her head sadly. “I wondered about it before, but you see it was Chang Chun-chiao* who finally approved the verdict. So it’s impossible. . . .” She shook her head again.

Sighing, Hsiao-lin said as if speaking to himself: “Chairman Mao says that we should consider a person’s class origin, but that should not be the only criterion for judging him. Words and actions are what count. Yet in fact the reality is that a hero’s child is always considered good and a reactionary’s always bad.”

The wind was chilly. “Are you feeling cold?” Hsiao-lin asked looking at Hsiao-hua’s thin clothes.

“No. Are you?” She looked at him in concern.

“I’m O.K.” Again he lowered his head, staring at the moonlit sea and asked thoughtfully: “Is it correct that a revolutionary should have no personal feelings?”

She said nothing, but thought of her own sad life.

Seeing the tears in her eyes, Hsiao-lin tried to console her: “Please, Hsiao-hua, don’t always look on the dark side of life.” He himself was wiping the tears from his own eyes. “Hsiao-hua,” he stammered, at last telling her what had been in his heart for a long time, “you’ve no one to turn to. If you believe in me, shall we . . . become engaged? . . .”

“Do you really mean it? You won’t. . . .?” Her heart beat faster. Her eyes shone.

“I mean it.” He nodded and stretched out his hands. “Trust me, Hsiao-hua.”

She was so excited that she threw herself into his arms. . . .

Smiles returned to her face and her happy voice could often be heard coming from the fields or her room. Even her cheeks turned rosy, adding beauty to her youth.

* One of the “gang of four”, formerly the head of Shanghai Revolutionary Committee.

The following autumn, she was transferred to be a teacher in the village primary school. She was not strong enough to work in the fields, and the school needed a teacher. Hsiao-lin was also transferred to work in the commune administrative office.

One afternoon after an education meeting in the commune, Hsiao-hua went to see him. Although the door of his room was ajar, no one was there. She went in and picked up his dirty clothes to wash. Then she spotted a diary on the bedside table, lying open. She couldn’t help herself from reading it as a few words caught her eye. It was the entry for the previous day.

“. . . My head aches. Secretary Li told me this morning that the County Party Committee had been considering asking me to work in their propaganda department, but he insisted that I must give up Hsiao-hua, saying it was all a question of my world outlook. He said I should also try to understand the political importance of class back-



ground. If we continued with our engagement, the Party committee would withdraw its offer. I can't understand. . . ."

Hsiao-hua felt numb. Closing the diary she immediately left the room. As she walked back to her school, her mind was in a turmoil. Later lying on her bed, she could no longer control herself as tears, bitter tears, poured down her face.

The next morning as she combed her hair, her head ached. Her eyes were swollen. After breakfast she asked for leave and went to the commune to talk to the Party secretary. "Secretary Li," she began calmly, "from today I shall have nothing to do with Hsiao-lin any more. I don't want him to ruin his future because of me."

She became like another person. More introverted, talking little, her face expressionless. Hsiao-lin refused to be transferred and remained in love with her, but she deliberately avoided all contact with him.

She came to understand her position at last. Though she had broken with her mother, she was unable to free herself from the stigma of being a renegade's daughter. Whoever loved her would be contaminated too. As she truly loved Hsiao-lin, she had to avoid him and she determined never again to open her heart to another man.

What remained of her love she devoted to her pupils. She lived economically, spending most of her salary on necessities for the children's education. In the evenings, she often visited their homes and helped them with their homework. The warm bond that developed between her and the children helped her temporarily to forget her unhappiness.

Another two years passed. Her oval face became rather square-jawed as she matured into a young woman. After the downfall of the "gang of four" in October 1976, she was more relaxed and shadows of smiles flickered across her mouth, and she experienced an excitement she had not known for a long time. But whenever she was alone, she still felt sad.

One day, as she was marking her pupils' exercise books, one of her colleagues handed her a letter from Kiangsu Province. She opened it hesitatingly. It was from her mother, though the address

was new to her. In the past she would have destroyed it, but now she read:

My dear Hsiao-hua,

For eight years we lost touch with each other. Don't think I blame you.

I want to tell you that the verdict on me has been reversed. I owe this to Chairman Hua. The "gang of four" and their followers falsely accused me of being a renegade. Now my case has been cleared.

I'm again the head of a school. Unfortunately I've been in poor health all these years, with serious heart trouble and arthritis. However, I've resolved to work hard for the Party as long as life remains.

My dear Hsiao-hua, it's been eight years since I saw you and I long to visit you, but my health won't allow it. So I hope you will come to me so that I can see you again. Please come as soon as you can.

I'm so looking forward to seeing you,

All my love,
Mother

Hsiao-hua was stunned. Could this be true? She trembled violently.

Ten o'clock that night, the letter still in her hand, she tossed and turned. She had read it again and again, thinking about its contents. Finally she slept and dreamt that she had arrived home. Pushing open the door, she saw her mother writing at her desk. Her mother called out her name and rushed to her. With a mixture of joy and sorrow, Hsiao-hua buried her head in her mother's arms. After a long time she lifted her head and asked: "What were you writing, mother?"

"Oh, nothing important." She looked frightened and quickly covered the paper with her hands.

The girl's suspicions were aroused. Snatching the paper from her mother she read: "Supplement Confession". Staring at her mother, she cursed her: "You renegade!"

As she turned to leave, her mother asked: "Where are you going?"

"None of your business!"

Then her mother, her hair dishevelled, ran to the door to try and stop her.

At this, Hsiao-hua awoke from her nightmare and got up, her heart pounding. She began to wonder if she should go and see her mother. Two days before New Year's Eve, she received an official letter from her mother's school telling her the truth about her mother's case. She hurriedly packed a bag and bought a train ticket for home.

Now sitting in the train bound for Shanghai, her mind was racing. Mixed with her excitement and happiness were feelings of sadness. . . .

The train arrived in Shanghai at six o'clock that morning. It was the Chinese New Year's Day.

Getting out of the train, Hsiao-hua helped the mother with the child to the bus stop. Then, with her hold-all in one hand and her bag over her shoulder, she hurried to her own bus stop.

Seeing the familiar streets and buildings once more made her heart beat with joy. It was an indescribable pleasure being back in her home city. She wondered what her mother would be doing on such a morning? As she was always an early riser, she ought to be up. "Perhaps she will be having her breakfast, her back to the door, when I appear," Hsiao-hua thought. "I'll call 'mother' in a low voice, and she'll turn round in surprise. She'll cry out my name, the tears pouring down her cheeks. . . ."

So thinking, she got off the bus and turned into Lane 954. She counted the numbers of the houses until she at last stopped before the grey door she knew so well. Her hand to her mouth, she raised her hand and knocked. No answer. Was her mother still asleep? She knocked louder. Still no answer. Anxiously she pounded on the door with her fist. Inside nothing stirred.

"Who are you looking for, auntie?" A little girl, holding a cake, spoke from behind her. She chewed her cake and blinked at Hsiao-hua.

"Where are the people who live here?"

"They moved only two days ago," replied the girl, licking her lips.

"Where to?" Hsiao-hua asked anxiously.

"I. . ." she hesitated before running to fetch a young woman.

"Are you looking for Principal Wang?" she asked. "Well, she's just moved to Number 1, Lane 816." Then she added: "I hope you won't mind my asking, but are you a relation of hers?"

Hsiao-hua thought for a moment before replying: "Well, it doesn't matter. I only dropped in to see her. Thanks for your help." Then she walked away.

Finding the new house, she noticed at once a potted winter-plum tree in front of the gate. Since her mother was a lover of winter-plums, she must have planted it. The brown gate was closed. Perhaps her mother was still in bed, since her health was poor.

She was about to knock when a middle-aged man from the house next door asked her in a friendly tone: "Are you looking for Principal Wang? She's not at home. Yesterday she had a stroke and was taken to hospital."

Hsiao-hua was shocked: "Where? Which ward?"

He shook his head: "I'm sorry but I don't know."

"Please can I leave my luggage with you while I go there?" she asked as she put down her bag and rushed to the hospital.

As it was New Year, the hospital only had a skeleton staff on duty, and she couldn't immediately find anyone at the reception desk. Seeing some doctors appear round a corner, she ran down the corridor towards them and asked: "Excuse me, but please could you tell me the ward number for a patient, Principal Wang?"

A thin doctor, wearing spectacles, scrutinized her for a moment before saying: "So you're from her school. Good. Please send a telegram to her daughter to inform her that her mother died this morning. Ask her. . . ."

"What?" Hsiao-hua almost shouted, her eyes wide with horror. She began to run forward impulsively and then stopped abruptly stammering: "Which . . . room, please?"

The doctor gestured with his hand, saying: "Room 2, Internal Medicine. Go straight ahead and then take the first turning to the left."

Running madly she flung open the door with a bang. The people inside all stared at her in astonishment. Not caring, she pushed her way to the bed and with trembling hands lifted the white shroud.

Mother! She had not seen her for nine years!

Mother! She would never see again.

Her gaunt face was lined and scarred, her hair grey. Her eyes were half-closed as if waiting for something.

"Mother! Mother! Mother!" Hsiao-hua's heart-rending cries shook the room. Again and again she cried "mother", a word she hadn't spoken for years. "Mother, please open your eyes. . . . Look, I've come back. Mother!" She shook her mother's shoulders.

Finally after a long, long time, she pulled herself together and rose to her feet. Her face was a blank. Everyone was weeping.

Unexpectedly Hsiao-hua saw a familiar face among the people. "Hsiao-lin!" she called out.

He stepped forward and said softly: "I'm so sorry, Hsiao-hua."

The next evening after the cremation, Hsiao-hua and Hsiao-lin, their eyes swollen from weeping, passed the Bund, where Hsiao-hua had often walked as a child. The night was dark. Cold gusts of wind blew from the river. As Hsiao-hua walked leaning against Hsiao-lin, for the first time she felt a warmth in her lonely, despairing heart. She was grateful to him. He had come to Shanghai for the holiday, and hearing about her mother's rehabilitation he had often visited her. On the Chinese New Year's Eve, despite the bitter cold, he had gone to see her at the hospital. It comforted Hsiao-hua to think that he had helped her mother, and that she could see Hsiao-lin before she died.

They walked silently under the street lamps. Hsiao-lin suddenly took out her mother's diary and turning to the last page showed it to Hsiao-hua. Under the pale light, she read:

"... Hsiao-hua's not back yet. Seeing Hsiao-lin has made me



miss her even more. Though she hasn't been persecuted like me, I'm sure the wound in her heart is deeper than mine. I hope she will come as quickly as possible. I know I haven't much time left. But I've made up my mind to wait until I see her again. . . ."

Hsiao-hua's eyes were blinded with tears. She wrenched herself away from Hsiao-lin's arm and walked to the river-side where, leaning over the embankment, she gazed at the river lights and the dark water beneath them.

Time passed unnoticed. Hsiao-hua lifted her head and her grief-stricken expression was transformed into one of deep rage. Taking Hsiao-lin's hands, she said in a low voice: "Mother, my dearest mother, rest in peace." She emphasized each word, her eyes burning with hatred. "Your daughter will never forget who inflicted those wounds on our hearts."

In the night, all was still. The river flowed to the east. Then in the distance was heard the loud angry hoot from a huge ship's siren. Hsiao-hua felt her rage coursing through her body. Then gripping Hsiao-lin's arm she started to walk down the stone steps in the direction of brightly-lit Nanking Road.

Illustrated by Chen Yu-hsien

Chu Lin

A Terror Transformed

It was no exaggeration to say that I'd never been afraid of any teacher during my primary school days since I enrolled in 1971. Now I was in my first year of middle school.

We had a maths teacher, Ma, a smiling fat old man, who on entering the classroom placed three things on his desk: our textbook, his watch and a box of chalk. After dismissing the class he would collect these things again. He always carried on with his lesson regardless of how much disturbance we made whispering to each other or making faces. Once when he turned his back to write something on the blackboard, I secretly moved the hands of his old watch half an hour forward. Not realizing what had happened, he dismissed us, as he thought, on time. I was so cock-a-hoop at my success that I jumped from desk to desk, while some of my class-mates admired me as a hero. Chang, our language teacher, wore very thick glasses, her nose almost touching the board when she was writing on it. Once I punctured her bicycle tyre, so that she had to wheel her bike all the way home. That was a sight to see.

When my class-mates decided to nickname me "Terror", I didn't mind at all. In fact the naughtier I became, the more rebellious

I was. I longed for them to acclaim me as the naughtiest boy in the school, as my best friend Square Head did.

Then I heard that a new teacher was going to take over our problem class. Sheng Hsiu-ying, a girl who sat next to me, turned and said: "Well, Terror, we're going to get a new teacher." Delighting in my discomfiture, she tossed her head, her two long pigtailed swinging behind her. What! That big-eyed coward of a girl, who'd scream at the sight of a worm, daring to challenge me! I couldn't allow that. Without raising my eyes, I snorted to show her my contempt for her and our new teacher.

While Sheng and the other girls in preparation were mopping the floor and cleaning the desks, I kept wondering what the new teacher would be like. Very strict? Wearing spectacles?

That evening I went round to see Square Head. As his parents were both on night shift, he was secretly smoking in his room, coughing and choking, tears running down his cheeks. But putting on a brave face, he handed me one saying: "Have a cigarette, Terror."

Pushing it away, I frowned: "Oh, forget it. When the new teacher comes, we'll have to behave ourselves."

"Behave ourselves?" He blinked his eyes. "You mean you're going to behave?" His look of incredulity comforted me.

I felt worried, however, as I continued: "I'm so far behind in my homework that I've had it if our new teacher is strict."

"Me too," sighed Square Head, spitting out his cigarette butt, his head drooping despondently.

"Well, let's put the new teacher to the test. Do you agree?" I leaned forward and started to explain my plan in detail.

He whooped for joy: "Wonderful! Marvellous!"

"You've got to time it well and take your cues from me," I warned him as I left.

The morning was fine when our new teacher arrived. The classroom was bright and quiet. As the bell rang, I snorted very loudly.

I craned my neck peering at the door. Would the new teacher be a man or a woman? Who would win our first encounter?

Would I be given a scolding and sent out of the classroom? Or would the teacher leave upset?

The new teacher entered and walked to her desk. Was this the person chosen by our school leadership to run our problem class? I could hardly believe my eyes. She was an ordinary little woman, quite nondescript except for her black spectacles. The glass was not thick, as if she was wearing the spectacles to make her more severe. I glanced at Square Head, who made two meaningful circles with his fingers and pulled a face.

I thought to myself, she'll be a pushover!

Standing at her desk, she smiled kindly at us, the kind of smile that all teachers wear for no special reason.

"Hello, girls and boys! This is our first meeting, so let's introduce ourselves." Her voice was pleasantly calm. "My name is Chao Wen-min. Can you remember it? Now I'll call the roll and you stand up as I say your name."

She had in front of her the register. Knowing that Sheng Hsiu-ying was the first name on the list, I put my foot against her chair to steady it. I'd already loosened one leg of her chair. Then I fixed my eyes on the teacher.

"Sheng Hsiu-ying," she called slowly.

"Here." She stood up, but as she sat down I kicked the leg loose so that she and the chair toppled over. Sheng yelled as she grazed her elbow on the desk behind her.

I sat upright, keeping a straight face as if nothing had happened. In fact my trouser leg had got caught on the chair and was torn. That was bad luck! I pressed my legs together hoping the teacher wouldn't notice. The whole class meanwhile burst into shrieks of laughter banging their desks. Only Square Head remained quiet, holding a handful of lime powder awaiting my instructions. I was in no hurry. I would wait for the teacher to come over and investigate, whereupon Square Head would throw the powder in the air scaring away all those goody-goody girls. That would be the end of our new teacher!

Miss Chao ignored me, though she frowned a little. Then she calmly said: "Will the monitor please take Sheng Hsiu-ying to

the clinic? All right. Stop talking. We'll continue with the roll-call."

She spoke those words as an order, brooking no disobedience. Immediately the class calmed down. When I tried to carry on making a noise, the others gave me disapproving looks. I silently watched the monitor help Sheng out of the room, while that coward Square Head passed me the lime powder from under his desk.

After the roll-call, the lesson began. She never investigated the incident, and I was left disappointed and wondering what she was up to.

Our lessons usually ended in a row, but this one was unbelievable! I didn't dare look her in the eyes once. I just couldn't fathom her.

Class was dismissed for lunch at noon. Square Head and I loitered in the streets for half an hour before going home. I was greeted with the smell of stewed pork. That reminded me, it was my father's day off, so he must be in the kitchen cooking. Quickly I sneaked into the bedroom, changed my trousers stuffing the torn pair under my pillow. Then I walked to the kitchen famished and licking my lips.

My father greeted me with a box on the cars and a telling off. He declared that because I'd been so bad at school that morning I could do without my lunch as a punishment. Then he threw me out.

So! She'd gone and told on me. Don't be fooled by her spectacles and nondescript looks! Just you wait and see, I thought to myself.

I hurried back to school. Lunch didn't matter so much now. The important thing was to get even with that new teacher.

Later Square Head ran over with a new basketball, saying: "Come and play with this new basketball!"

"New?" I was itching to play.

"Yes, I borrowed it from the school team. I'll return it later."

"Please lend it to me this evening, I want to use it." Then I confided to him my brain-wave. He was reluctant at first, but eventually I talked him round.



We had a terrific afternoon playing with that ball behind our school grounds.

In the evening Square Head and I went to spy outside Miss Chao's office window. Having come from another city, she boarded in the school hostel. As her office was empty, I sneaked in and placed the ball above the door so that when she returned there after supper, the ball would drop on her head as she opened the door. With any luck, it might even break her glasses!

Then I turned off all the lights in the corridor. Suddenly Square Head warned me: "Quick! She's coming!"

Footsteps! I tried to hide myself in the darkest part of the corridor. Miss Chao approached, surrounded by some of the girls. Had she been to visit their homes? Sheng Hsiu-ying was laughing and talking. Holding my breath, I waited for the fun to begin.

As she walked, Miss Chao turned on every light switch. Feeling scared, I tried to run away, only to be caught by her. My mind went a blank as she guided me to her office. I didn't know if it was awe or her strong grip which made me follow her like a

lamb. At the door she let me go, reached for the ball and tucked it under her arm.

My heart sank. I scratched my head, looking at the floor, waiting for a lecture. Instead, she smiled at me and handed me a lunch box. I found it hard to accept, surrounded by those girls and Sheng telling the teacher what she thought of me.

"Now take it. You've had no lunch or supper. If you feel shy, go and eat in the next room and come back when you've finished." She opened the lid. On top of some rice were spare ribs and cabbage. The smell made my stomach rumble. My mouth watered. So taking the food, I went and ate in the other room.

When I'd finished, I remembered the basketball. Square Head had borrowed it. Drat! I had to get it back. Steeling myself, I returned to Miss Chao's office and gave her the empty lunch box. She pulled out a chair and asked me to sit down. I complied meekly, better behaved than in the classroom. All the others had gone home. Miss Chao looked at me and smiled.

She asked: "Was it right to do what you did in class this morning and just now in my office, Wang Yu-hsin?"

"No." I could hardly hear myself speak.

"Good. As you know you were wrong, why not tell everyone about it in class tomorrow?"

So she wanted me to criticize myself in front of the class. Nothing doing! I'd never shame myself like that. I remained silent, wondering what to do about the basketball.

Her eyes fixed on me, Miss Chao smiled and said: "You should admit you were wrong. If you don't want to say it, then you can write it. How about that?"

There was no way out. I had to agree.

I felt depressed when I left. Square Head wanted his basketball, and I had none to give him. I'd have to plead with him to be patient until I got it back tomorrow.

Miserably I dragged myself home. At the door I stopped, hearing voices. It was Miss Chao. So she'd come to tell on me again? Furiously I turned away swearing never to make a self-criticism no matter what. But I was lured back, curious to find out exactly what she was saying to my father. I crept up to the open

window, hiding behind an evergreen tree. Their voices could be heard clearly.

"Yes, I do blame myself for not having given him enough attention. As a driver in a factory, I'm always working odd shifts. He's on his own here much of the time. It really upsets me to see him being so naughty. . . ." My father sounded very worried.

"Of course he is naughty, but he's also very bright. If we can steer him on to the right road, he'll be all right. You know, letting him go hungry at lunch won't help matters. I wanted to come and talk to you this afternoon, but something else cropped up. But from now on. . . ."

How I had misjudged Miss Chao! I felt very bad. She hadn't visited my home before. So who had told on me?

After a pause, my father sighed and continued: "I'm so sorry you've had all this trouble, Miss Chao. My wife died when he was very small and so I had to be both a father and mother to him. No one mends his clothes and he has to patch them up with adhesive tape when they are torn. . . ." His voice trailed off.

I came out from my hiding-place and went inside. My father looked at me kindly, though he spoke severely. Handing me my torn trousers, he said: "Here you are. Your teacher mended them for you."

Silently I took them and went into my room. Seeing the neat stitches reminded me of how much I missed my mother. I felt choked with emotion, but I didn't cry. I dashed out to find Square Head.

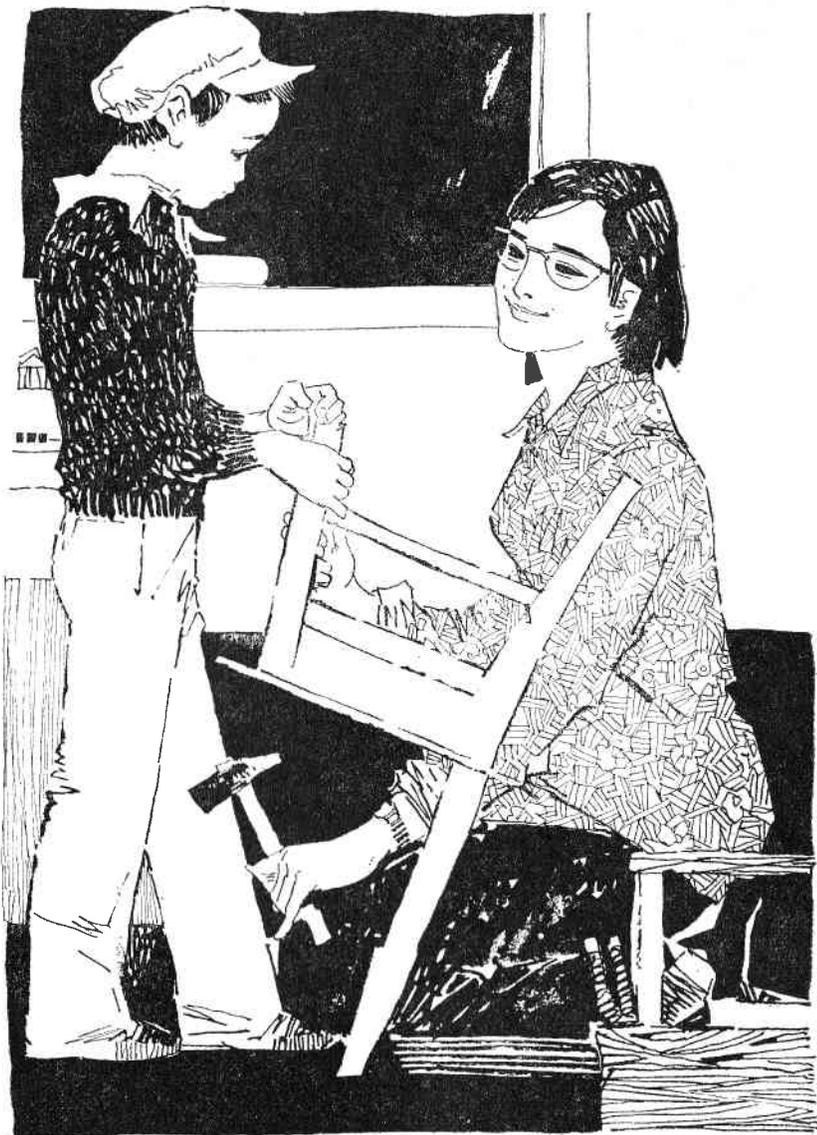
I made up my mind. I would write that self-criticism.

When I told Square Head of my decision, he said: "Miss Chao came to my home too and gave me back the ball." He added how he'd discovered that she had visited some of the others including Sheng, who had told her our tricks. The girls had seen me putting the basketball in her office and had warned her. That was why my trick had failed.

I wasn't interested in this, however. "I'm going to write a self-criticism," I announced resolutely.

"Go ahead," he sighed lazily. He seldom disagreed with me.

I sat at his desk, turned on the light and took out a piece of



paper. I began to write. Immediately I had a problem. I didn't know how to spell "criticism". Square Head did not know the spelling either. I sat there not knowing what to write. In the end I put the paper, full of holes from my pencil, into my pocket.

The following morning I went to school to look for Miss Chao, yet all the while fearing to run into her. I peeped into her office and, as she wasn't there, went to the classroom. There was a sound of hammering coming from inside. Miss Chao was repairing the chair I had broken.

"Excuse me, Miss Chao," I called shyly.

She turned round. "Oh, Wang Yu-hsin! Please come and give me a hand with this," she said kindly.

Meekly I held the chair for her. Bang, bang! She hammered the leg, every blow touching my heart.

"Miss Chao, how do you spell 'criticism'?"

"You can't spell it?" She stopped hammering and looked at me gently.

"I . . . I didn't study hard. . . ." My head dropped.

"Why not?"

"Because . . ." I didn't know what to say.

"Because of the 'gang of four'," she said as she banged in a nail. "Look, don't write anything, but tomorrow you can speak about yourself at a meeting to denounce the 'gang'."

Next morning I told everyone about my mistakes. Some people said I was in awe of Miss Chao. But she wasn't a bit terrifying. It was because she was so kind.

Illustrated by Yun Yen

Mao Tun

Midnight

Following Chapters 10-11 of the novel *Midnight* in our last number, we are now publishing Chapters 12 and 19.

The story from the beginning to Chapter 11 describes the semi-feudal and semi-colonial metropolis Shanghai in 1930.

The main character Wu Sun-fu, an industrial capitalist, founded the Yu Hua Filature in Shanghai as well as a power-house, rice mill, bank and other businesses in his home town Shuangchiaochen.

Because of the fighting between different Kuomintang factions, the economic depression in Europe and, above all, the rising revolution of the workers and peasants led by the Chinese Communist Party, Wu's enterprises are seriously affected.

To consolidate them, Wu Sun-fu urges his brother-in-law Tu Chu-chai and some other capitalists Tang Yun-shan, Sun Chi-jen and Wang Ho-fu to set up the Yi Chung Trust Company and take over eight other factories.

A Shanghai financier Chao Po-tao wants to buy shares in the Yi Chung Trust Company but is refused. He makes bad blood between Wu and Tu and induces the latter to withdraw his investment in order to weaken the company and eventually take it over. In addition, Chao rigs the Exchange, leaving Wu in a tight corner.

While running his businesses, Wu Sun-fu speculates in government bonds. To learn what Chao is up to, he buys over his mistress Liu Yu-ying and a broker in the Exchange named Han Meng-hsiang. But Chao at the same time suborns Wu's confidants. So the struggle between them goes on.

The summary of Chapters 13-18 is as follows:

In the course of managing his Yi Chung Trust Company, speculating in government bonds and trying to reinforce the eight factories, Wu Sun-fu finds himself running short of capital. He resorts to dismissing workers, cutting wages and increasing working hours.

The workers in the Yu Hua Filature go on strike. And the workers of other filatures in Shanghai follow suit.

To show his loyalty to Wu Sun-fu, the scab Tu Wei-yueh pays an agent to worm himself into the workers' confidence, destroy their solidarity and arrest Party members. In collusion with the Kuomintang forces, he suppresses the strike so that the labour movement suffers a set-back.

Due to the intermittent warfare, business competition and dull market, many factories in Shanghai close down or are taken over by foreign capitalists. Wu's businesses in his home town close down too. And as the Yi Chung Trust Company is in desperate straits he orders the factories to switch to half-time. He is on the verge of bankruptcy.

Chao Po-tao offers to co-operate with Wu Sun-fu in managing the Yi Chung Trust Company in the hope of seizing control of it. After serious thought, Wu decides to mortgage his factories and house to a foreign firm to raise capital to continue his contest with Chao in the Exchange.

In the end, Wu Sun-fu's dream of developing national industry comes to nothing.

For information about the author of *Midnight*, read the serial article *An Interview with Mao Tun* in the last and this issue.

The Editors

12

Wu Sun-fu's careless smile was fading and giving way to a brooding expression; his purplish, pimpled face twitched slightly, and tiny beads of sweat gradually appeared on his temples. Avoiding Liu Yu-ying's eye, he sat looking sideways out of the window and drawing crosses on the table with the middle finger of his right hand.

A passer-by had apparently stopped just outside, for the shadow of the top of a head had appeared on the patterned window-pane. The shadow moved away, and another one appeared. Suddenly, there came the voice of a newsboy running past the window: "*Stop-press News!* Read all about it! Yen Hsi-shan orders his troops to the front! Big battle at Tehchow! Tsinan threatened! Read all about it! Circular telegram from the northeast!" Then came the voice of another newsboy selling the *Stop-press News*, bawling as he ran past.

Wu Sun-fu's eyebrows jerked up, and he suddenly sprang to his feet and began pacing round the room. He stopped in front of Liu Yu-ying and stood quite close to her, his piercing eyes search-

ing her made-up face and boring into her eyes, which had a suspicion of dark rings under them, as if he hoped to see through into the recesses of her mind.

She submitted to this scrutiny in unsmiling silence, patiently waiting for his next move.

"Yu-ying, you must do as I tell you —" he said slowly and quite firmly, without withdrawing his piercing gaze. Then he paused as if to marshal his ideas before telling her just what it was she was to do. Liu Yu-ying's lips twisted into a smile as she realized she was "getting results". Her heart pulsed with excitement and she could not help breaking in:

"But uncle, I hope you realize the difficulties of my position."

"Yes, I fully realize your position. You want to be sure you've got something to fall back on in case Chao Po-tao should find you out, don't you? Well, you can leave that to me to take care of. After all, we're relations, and we ought to stand by one another. Now, listen, Yu-ying: first of all you must make sure of Han Meng-hsiang. I'm sure you'll be able to manage that all right. And don't —"

Liu Yu-ying smiled again and blushed.

"And don't go ringing round everywhere trying to find me in future, and don't come to see me at the Yi Chung Trust Company! If you do, Chao Po-tao will soon find out that you're in touch with me and then he'll be on his guard against you —"

"Oh, I quite realize that. I was trying to get in touch with you for the first time today, and the only way I could do it was to ring up the different places. I'll be very careful in future."

"Ah, I can see you've got your wits about you! Right, now the other thing is this: I want you to take a room in a nice quiet hotel so that we'll have somewhere to meet and talk things over. I'll come round to see you every evening about six o'clock, so you be there waiting for me — can you manage it all right?"

"I'm afraid I can't make it every evening. I can never tell when I'm going to be busy."

"Oh, that's all right. So long as you just give me a ring at the Yi Chung Company if you find you can't get away."

"And what if you're not there?"

"I'm always there from four to five. If by any chance I'm not there, ask for Mr. Wang — Wang Ho-fu, H-o-f-u. You can always give him a message. You can't mistake him: he's a northerner and he always shouts."

Liu Yu-ying nodded and smiled understandingly. Suddenly the shadow of a head flashed across the patterned window-panes again, and then there was a thud as the head bumped against the window, almost knocking it open. Wu Sun-fu turned his head sharply towards the window and looked slightly annoyed. By now, the shadows of two heads were visible, one higher than the other, jerking to and fro. Suddenly suspicious, Wu Sun-fu moved quickly over to the window and snatched it open to reveal two angry faces glaring at each other with a fierce determination to fight it out if necessary. A couple of tramps quarrelling. Wu Sun-fu shrugged and closed the window, then returned to his seat at the table and wrote out a cheque. As he handed it to Liu Yu-ying he said quietly:

"And mind you don't take a room like this: it's too noisy! You want one upstairs and without a passage under the window."

"Don't worry, I'll arrange everything just right. Is that all, uncle? There's just one thing I'd like to mention —"

"What's that?" asked Wu Sun-fu, tilting his head and raising his eyebrows slightly.

"You'll have to get round Hsu Man-li and stick close to her so that Chao Po-tao will go on suspecting her and giving her the cold shoulder. That's the only way we can make sure that she doesn't give me the lie and ruin my chances of seeing him frequently and finding out anything more. If you don't know her very well, you'll have to hurry up and get to know her."

Wu Sun-fu puckered up his brows, but nodded all the same.

Outside the window, the two tramps suddenly burst into streams of abuse. They were apparently quarrelling about money. "Think you can double-cross me, eh? I'll show you a thing or two!" The voice rose clear and loud, and when Wu Sun-fu heard it his frown deepened. Glancing at Liu Yu-ying, he shook himself and stood up, but she was already making a second request.

"One thing more, uncle: I think I can manage Han Meng-hsiang all right, but not if I have to rely on just talking him round — we'll have to make it worth his while. Chao Po-tao's very fond of 'dollar diplomacy', you know! If you're prepared to give Han Meng-hsiang some encouragement, you must give me some idea of how far you can go so that I can get to work on him at the first opportunity."

"Er — well, I can't say for certain straight away — I'll let you know in a day or two."

"Oh, and one other thing —" she began, then stopped and giggled. She blushed and flashed a glance at him.

"Well, come on, let's hear what it is," he said hesitantly, noticing something peculiar about her smile and the look she gave him. He could not help feeling that this woman detective was proving rather too much of a stickler for detail for his liking; and, with things going the way they were, he was beginning to have his doubts about her — at least, he was not so sure he could handle her easily.

"Well, it's this: what shall I call you when you come to see me in our private room?" she said softly. She made an apparent effort to stop giggling, and her dark eyes gleamed seductively.

When he heard what it was she wanted to know, he smiled briefly, but failed to notice her blatantly suggestive look. He drew a sigh of relief, then stood up and said indifferently, "We're relations, so I shall still be uncle."

So saying, he waved her a perfunctory good-bye and hurried off. As he drove away from the hotel, he became suddenly conscious of the suggestion implicit in her smile, her blushes and the look she had given him a moment ago, and his heart leapt wildly; but the emotional disturbance was purely momentary, and his thoughts returned immediately to Chao Po-tao and the subject of government bonds. When the chauffeur turned his head inquiringly, he just snapped:

"The Stock Exchange — and fast!"

It was getting on for three o'clock, and a scorching sun had softened the asphalted roadways, so that each passing car left its

pattern of tyre-marks imprinted on the surface. In the streets, grimy, perspiring tramps and urchins were hawking the various "Stop-press editions", bawling a bewildering variety of mutually contradictory headlines in an equal variety of voices.

Wu Sun-fu had flashed in and out of the Exchange and was driving to the Yi Chung Trust Company offices. His mind was totally absorbed in plans for his various businesses, when suddenly he realized that he was full of serious contradictions himself. As an industrialist whose one great ambition was to help develop China's own industry, he had all along objected on principle to the way financiers like Tu Chu-chai employed their large capital solely in speculation in real estate, gold bars and government bonds; yet he himself was now head over ears in government bonds! He had been hoping that a truly democratic regime would soon materialize in China, and so he had also hoped for a speedy and successful conclusion of the military campaign being waged by the Enlarged Conference of the North; but, now that he had heard from Liu Yu-ying that his rival Chao Po-tao was turning bear and was preparing to resort to his "old methods" to snatch a victory, his main fear was that the campaign might be developing too rapidly for his present purposes! The last thing he wanted was to see any changes in the military situation in Shantung during the present month — that is to say, within the next five or six days. On top of this contradiction he had another: he had to use the limited capital in the Yi Chung Trust Company both for speculation in government bonds and for developing the eight recently-purchased factories. A month ago he had spared no effort to lay his hands on Chu Yin-chiu's cocoons and up-to-date filatures, but now that he had succeeded and had taken one more factory into his "iron hand", he found it was something of a white elephant without the capital to run it, and was more trouble than it was worth.

All these contradictions had come upon him all at once and so quickly that he had become deeply involved without realizing what was happening. Although he was now fully aware of their existence, it was already too late to pull out. He knit his brows in a tight frown and smiled wryly to himself.

But he was not a man to be easily daunted, for he had enough confidence in himself to see him through. Difficulties, he reassured himself, were only stepping-stones to success, only hurdles to be jumped. Was it not for the sake of foiling Chao Po-tao's conspiracy to establish a "finance trust" that he, Wu Sun-fu, was determined to wrestle with him on the Exchange floor and defeat him there? This was the chief cause of all the trouble. Such was the "rational" interpretation Wu Sun-fu put on his contradictions. There was just one problem that still worried him — that of the Yi Chung Trust Company: he still had to find a practical solution to the problem of how to speculate in government bonds and expand the eight factories at the same time. To make things worse, there was not the slightest hope of dissuading Tu Chu-chai from backing out of the company, and the loss of his support would prejudice the company's chances of getting the help they had hoped to get from the banks. This presented the biggest difficulty of all at the moment: until he had cleared this obstacle, there was no point in considering his next step.

The car stopped and his train of thought stopped with it for the time being. As he hurried into the company building he was worried, though not to the extent of despairing.

As he passed the counter, he noticed someone withdrawing a deposit and arguing heatedly with the cashier. What was the matter? he wondered. Was there anything wrong with the seal? Or was the figure incorrect? Whatever it was, it could not warrant such a red-faced display of anger! Wu Sun-fu glanced at the customer with a frown, then dashed straight up the stairs and burst into the general manager's office. Although it was called an office, it was furnished like a conference room, and the general manager's actual office was a "private den" next door to it. At that moment Wang Ho-fu and Sun Chi-jen were engaged in a tête-à-tête in the conference room; when Wu Sun-fu dashed in looking rather distraught, they sprang to their feet in wide-eyed surprise. Wu Sun-fu smiled reassuringly, but was in for a shock himself, for Wang Ho-fu immediately burst out:

"So you've come, Sun-fu! We've run into a bit of trouble!

We've been on the phone hunting for you high and low but couldn't find you anywhere!"

"He had a job chasing me up, too," added Sun Chi-jen. His voice was as calm and unhurried as usual, but his face betrayed a certain anxiety. "We were just discussing what to do about it. It's not as serious as all that, but it's come just at a time when we're pressed for money, so it's a bit of a nuisance! The point is you know that loan of a hundred thousand dollars that the Yuan Ta Native Bank promised us last week? Well, now they've changed their minds — though they were very nice about it, of course! Well, that's the score."

Wu Sun-fu was calmer now. Although the blow had fallen rather earlier than he had counted on, it was not altogether unexpected. Since the loan had been arranged through the good offices of Tu Chu-chai, it was only natural that it would fall through now that Tu Chu-chai had dropped out of the company. Calming himself with an effort and temporarily dismissing from his mind the question of government bonds, Wu Sun-fu concentrated his attention on the problem of bridging this sudden gap.

The loan had been intended to defray the payment of the wages of the two thousand six hundred workers in the eight factories and to buy new stocks of raw materials.

Wang Ho-fu brought out a pile of books and papers for Wu Sun-fu and Sun Chi-jen to look over, and gave them a brief summing-up:

"The wages total a little over fifty thousand dollars. They're paid at the end of the month, which gives us five or six days' grace, so it's not all that urgent. What really does matter is that we've taken delivery of certain raw materials — rubber, umbrella-frames, electrical goods, turps and sulphuric acid — which come to over seventy thousand dollars altogether; and all the goods must be paid for within two or three days."

Wu Sun-fu, who had been deep in thought, stroking his chin absent-mindedly, glanced up at Sun Chi-jen. With the end of the month only a few days away, he himself had to find the money to pay the workers in his own silk factory and also the one recently taken over from Chu Yin-chiu. This meant he would have to do

some fast thinking on his own account. His enterprises, it was true, had multiplied, but never before had he found himself so short of ready money. The total value of his assets had gone up by leaps and bounds — at a conservative estimate, he put the increase at two hundred thousand dollars — but a hundred thousand of this was locked up in the cocoons stowed away in a warehouse. On top of that, there had recently been a sharp drop in silk prices, so that he just could not afford to sell off his stock of silk, which meant another one hundred thousand tied up. To crown it all, more than a hundred thousand was frozen down in the country as a result of the peasant rising. Consequently, the company's present deficit, though it amounted to no more than a hundred thousand, was proving an insurmountable difficulty however hard he racked his brains.

"So we must have seventy thousand dollars within two or three days, eh? Well, just you leave it to me!" This cheerful offer to find the money came from Sun Chi-jen. As he said this, he glanced at Wu Sun-fu, for he was well aware of the latter's financial straits. He paused a moment to flick through the books and papers, then went on:

"Though of course all this robbing one to pay the other won't provide a permanent solution to the problem, even though it'll tide us over. Apart from the eight factories, we've got Chen Chun-yi's silk goods factory on our hands on a one-year contract, so that although you can't say we're going in for things in a really big way, we've still got our hands full. This means we *must* have an over-all plan. We started with a paid-up capital of eight hundred thousand dollars, which we laid out on buying the old Yi Chung Trust Company together with the eight factories. Now that Tu Chu-chai's withdrawn his share of the capital, we've only got about four hundred thousand left, and this has gradually become locked up in government bonds. I was thinking, this small amount of capital is just not enough to run the factories and speculate on the stock market, both at the same time. We'll just have to drop one or the other of them. The trouble is, we're in both things right up to the neck, and we can't easily give up any one of them."

"If it's just a question of keeping the eight factories running as they are now," said Wang Ho-fu, "I think we might be able to scrape through on four hundred thousand dollars; but I thought we'd decided to expand them. Besides, we've still got Chen Chun-yi's silk goods factory to think about. No, I don't think four hundred thousand would be enough! And what with the war disrupting communications, there's no way of shipping our products anywhere. We haven't even been able to cover our overheads this month. Yes, I agree with Chi-jen that we must have an over-all plan!"

The factories were Wang Ho-fu's special responsibility, so it was the factories that he emphasized.

While listening to his partners, Wu Sun-fu had been thinking things over, and now his face suddenly took on a look of determination. He glanced up at them, his eyes alight with courage and optimism. The look in his eyes was the one which could always inspire his colleagues with enthusiasm, fire their imagination and steel their will; it was that look of compelling intensity which came into his eyes whenever he was drawing up some great plan or making an important decision, a look that made lesser mortals quake.

Just as he was going to speak, however, there was suddenly a tap on the door.

"Who's that? Come in!" called Wang Ho-fu, turning towards the door and then rising from his seat with an air of impatience.

The head of the business department downstairs appeared. Hunched forward, he tiptoed lightly and swiftly across to Wang Ho-fu, and said in a low voice:

"There's someone else here who wants to withdraw his deposit before the time's up. We showed him our new regulations, but he wouldn't take any notice. He said he was quite willing to forfeit his four months' interest. We suggested that he might discount it, but he wouldn't hear of it. He's making a great deal of noise at the counter. What should I do about it, sir?"

Wang Ho-fu snorted, and instead of replying he glanced round at his two partners. Wu Sun-fu frowned, while Sun Chi-jen rubbed his chin and smiled wryly. Wang Ho-fu turned to the head of the

business department again and asked, "How much is it?"

"Ten thousand dollars."

"Oh, ten thousand, eh? Oh, all right, let him have it. And don't insist on discounting it, either. Oh, damn!"

The man nodded with a respectful smile and quickly tiptoed out again. The door, which was fitted with a Yale automatic closing device, closed slowly and lightly behind him; there was a slight thud, after which a deathly hush suddenly filled the room.

"What a nuisance! It happens almost every day!" muttered Wang Ho-fu to himself as he sat down again. Lighting a cigarette and blowing out a cloud of smoke, he went on, "All these odds and ends of deposits were passed over to us by our predecessors. Now about sixty per cent of the total amount has been withdrawn."

"Oh! What about the deposits we've taken in ourselves?" asked Sun Chi-jen.

"Oh, there's enough to see us through," Wang Ho-fu replied, leafing through the books. "Tang Yun-shan has roped in over a hundred thousand dollars in deposits, some fixed and some current. I think we have quite good prospects of absorbing more."

Wu Sun-fu smiled, then suddenly his eyes smouldered. He looked from Wang Ho-fu to Sun Chi-jen, then said firmly:

"Let's send round a circular tomorrow informing the old depositors that we'll accommodate them by permitting them to withdraw their deposits prior to maturity within the next fortnight with interest calculated on a daily basis. What do you say to that, Chi-jen? We're just wasting our time messing about with these odds and ends. There must be a reason for all these old depositors rushing to withdraw their money, and it's my conviction that they've heard rumours that our credit isn't good. And you know who our champion rumour-monger is — Chao Po-tao! Just now he's doing everything he can to put a spoke in our wheel. He said once that if the banks tightened their credit a little, we'd be done for. That was no idle threat: he's up to his tricks already!"

"You're quite right!" Wang Ho-fu hurriedly put in. "The way the Yuan Ta Native Bank let us down today must have been Chao Po-tao's work, too. I detected it in the way the manager spoke this morning."

"And then again, look at this business of Tu Chu-chai. It appeared on the face of it that the reason why he backed out of the company was that he couldn't agree to the purchase of the eight factories. If the truth were known, it was because Chao Po-tao had put the wind up him with his rumours. Tu Chu-chai wouldn't admit that to me, but it stuck out a mile. When he found that Tang Yun-shan had left for Hongkong, he kept on at me to bring Shang Chung-li into the company, but I absolutely refused, and the next day he decides to withdraw!"

"Ha ha! He's rather timid, rather timid," said Wang Ho-fu. "But, in all justice to him, he's never shown any great interest in running factories."

He glanced at Sun Chi-jen, who nodded abstractedly. At this moment, a dark cloud was gradually settling on Sun Chi-jen's mind: he was no more keen on stock speculation than Tu Chu-chai was on factories. Not that he was averse to speculation on principle, but he already had quite enough to cope with, and felt he was not equal to speculation on top of his industrial enterprises. As it was, the company was deeply involved in both things, and at every turn new dangers were looming up: it was becoming more and more evident that Chao Po-tao's projected "financial blockade" against the company had already been put into operation. Things were so disheartening that he had come to the conclusion that there was not much chance of their succeeding in running the blockade. Still, they had no alternative but to press on.

In spite of everything, Sun Chi-jen remained calm. Realizing that Wu Sun-fu was waiting for him to express his opinion and that Wang Ho-fu had no definite views of his own, he looked calmly into Wu Sun-fu's purplish face, which now looked alert and excited, and said in his usual unhurried way:

"If we put our own house in order, we've got nothing to be afraid of. Credit is credit, and rumours are only rumours: we mustn't let ourselves get flustered. I quite agree with Sun-fu that we shouldn't waste our time on trifles, and that since the old depositors have been swallowing rumours we ought to send out the circular and make them sit up with a jerk. But the first thing we must do is to put ourselves in a strong position by re-organizing the fac-

tories and putting them on a firm footing. Now, let's get it clear in our minds which of the factories can be overhauled so as to cut down costs, and which of them should be expanded and the minimum amount of extra capital that would take. Ho-fu's just said that four or five hundred thousand dollars won't be enough, so even if we withdraw the capital now invested in government bonds we'll still be short and we'll have to find some way of making it up. But just how much is needed for expansion? How much can be saved on overheads? And how much must we be prepared to lose during the next two or three months due to a possible dull market? We must work out realistic figures to cover all these things."

"The cost of expansion has already been worked out in detail," replied Wang Ho-fu, for the factories were principally his responsibility. "It comes to a total of three hundred thousand dollars for the eight factories together. And that's an absolute minimum!"

As he said this he was wondering to himself how their government bonds were faring, since all the company's ready money of three hundred thousand dollars was invested in bonds. He turned to Wu Sun-fu and was just going to ask about the state of the stock market, when Wu Sun-fu forestalled him:

"As for the whole of the company's capital going into government bonds, we just had no choice in the matter: on the third we just bought a million, in the hope of making a bit while the going was good, but when the situation changed after that, we had to hold out in spite of ourselves until we actually turned bulls. At the moment we're holding ten million in bonds. At this morning's closing price we ought to be able to net around three hundred thousand dollars, which isn't too bad. Before I came round here I told our broker to sell five million first thing this afternoon."

The light of victory shone in Wu Sun-fu's eyes, and he rubbed his hands with glee.

"But Sun-fu," Wang Ho-fu chimed in hastily, looking as gleeful as Wu Sun-fu, "don't you think the rise will probably continue? Ever since the fifteenth prices have been rising steadily, even though it's only been a matter of twenty or thirty cents a day."

"I wouldn't be too sure about that!" Wu Sun-fu replied. He

was smiling, but his voice was perfectly serious. He turned and looked at Sun Chi-jen with such a look of determination and confidence in his eyes as would have made the most hesitant of men decide there and then to follow him. He now spoke rapidly and clearly, and every word went home:

"Yes, the first thing we must do is to make sure our feet are on firm ground! We're fighting a battle, a battle against two enemies, one in front and one behind. Our enemy to the front is competition from the Japanese factories in Shanghai; the enemy to our rear is Chao Po-tao; and before we can get our feet on firm ground, we'll have to beat both of them! As soon as we possibly can we must put the eight new factories into decent shape by tightening up on the management, putting really efficient men in key positions, drastically cutting down waste of materials, getting rid of redundant office staff and sacking any undesirable elements among the workers! I don't doubt for one moment that the budget for every one of these factories could be cut by twenty per cent!"

"Right-o, then," said Sun Chi-jen calmly, apparently ignoring the first and more important part of Wu Sun-fu's remarks. "Let's cut their budgets by twenty per cent as from next month! So far as the present office staff is concerned, I've thought all along that they're practically useless, but it's so difficult to get hold of competent people just now that we've had to keep them on; but now we must come down on them hard. Ho-fu, you're down inspecting the factories practically every day, so you must have some idea who should be the first to go."

The gleam in Wu Sun-fu's eyes — the gleam of optimism and determination to fight it out with Chao Po-tao — was now reflected in Sun Chi-jen's eyes. This was not lost on Wu Sun-fu, who seized the opportunity to press his argument home:

"I was telling you just now that we had got rid of half of our ten-million holding of bonds. Even so, it's going to be a close thing, because Chao Po-tao's all set to 'kill the bulls'. Fortunately for us, his secret leaked out today — someone who's well in with him sold me the information for a mere two thousand dollars and promised to keep us informed of his activities into the bargain! Chao Po-tao's plan is to knock the bottom out of the market just

before the settlement at the end of the month. But he little thought that we should unload half of our holdings today! Tomorrow we'll get rid of the rest, and Chao Po-tao's little scheme will be knocked for six!"

As he was speaking, Wu Sun-fu sprang to his feet. He looked for all the world like some great general telling the story of a decisive battle he had won, and he was almost watering at the eyes with excitement. He smiled at his two partners and added, "We've got a better chance of beating Chao Po-tao now than we've ever had!"

The question of reorganizing the factories was then temporarily shelved, and their discussion concentrated on Chao Po-tao and government bonds. Wu Sun-fu had won his victory. He first put his own defence line in order: he made Sun Chi-jen and Wang Ho-fu realize that to speculate in government bonds and expand the factories at the same time, far from being a contradiction, was in fact a necessary step towards success; he explained to them that it would be suicidal to adopt a passive policy of "self-sufficiency" — in other words, to try to manage without financial assistance from the bankers; and he showed them that they must defeat Chao Po-tao and run the "blockade" he had engineered before they could really be sure of being able to stand their ground. In the end, Wu Sun-fu had succeeded in increasing his partners' knowledge of Chao Po-tao and ensuring their animosity towards him, thus transforming the Yi Chung Trust Company into the headquarters of the "anti-Chao camp".

Finally, they returned to the subject of reorganizing the factories. In view of what had just been said, their efforts in this direction were naturally redoubled. The reduction of staff, a wage-cut, the increasing of working hours, besides a new set of draconian regulations for putting the factories under the strictest control, were all proposed and decided on in principle in little more than ten minutes.

"Between three and five hundred workers to be discharged, then," began Wang Ho-fu, summing up, "Sunday overtime to be abolished; working day to be extended by one hour without additional pay; workers to be searched at the gate, both when coming in and going out; ten per cent of the monthly wage to be deducted

by the management and retained as a deposit up to a maximum of sixty-five dollars for each worker, to be refunded in the event of discharge. . . . I think all these regulations can come into force immediately. Now, the last item — a ten-per-cent wage-cut — Well, I'm afraid they'll kick up rough about that! The stopping of Sunday overtime is already as good as a ten-per-cent wage-cut. If we knock off another ten per cent on top of that, it's going to be the last straw, and it's quite likely they'll come out on strike, which will put us in a tight spot. I propose we shelve this suggestion for the time being — what do you say?"

Wang Ho-fu scratched his head and looked hesitantly at Wu Sun-fu, whose face was tense.

Wu Sun-fu smiled, but before he could answer Sun Chi-jen butted in, his voice betraying an unwonted excitement:

"No, no, I can't agree with you, Ho-fu! I think we're strict where we must be, and more liberal than other people wherever we can afford to be. Have you forgotten that we're going to grant a special bonus to those workers who exceed the norm which we set? Take the electric light bulb factory, for instance: the present daily quota for each worker is two hundred bulbs, which is really a very considerate norm; but a skilful, conscientious man can easily make two hundred and fifty a day. If he does, we'll give him a bonus of fifteen cents, which will mean that over a month he'll earn more than he ever did in the past."

"Yes, Chi-jen, I must agree with you that we do very well by our workers," said Wang Ho-fu, who was not to be silenced so easily. "But you must remember they're a very unreasonable lot: if you cut their wages, they notice it; if you offer them a bonus, they don't! Now, don't think I'm afraid of trouble, Sun-fu, but I really do think we should give the matter our careful consideration."

Being in charge of the eight factories, Wang Ho-fu was aware of signs of unrest that had existed among the two thousand-odd workers in them for some time.

Wu Sun-fu and Sun Chi-jen said nothing for the moment, and the room was again plunged into a silence broken only by the intermittent rumbling of trams passing under the windows, through

which the rays of the setting sun picked out the snowy tablecloth and the sofa covers in a blaze of golden light.

A look of intense absorption and concentration had appeared on Wu Sun-fu's face. He was not worrying about a possible strike, for he was always having one sort of trouble or another in his own factory, and every time he had settled it without much difficulty. There was one thing he had learned from these experiences, however: that one must have loyal and competent executives in one's factory if one is to come out on top. At present, he had not any such "good" staff for any of the company's eight factories, and the problem was made all the more difficult by the fact that there was no co-ordination between the eight factories. No, Wang Ho-fu's fears could not be dismissed just like that!

It so happened that what Sun Chi-jen next said showed that he and Wu Sun-fu had been thinking along exactly the same line.

"Yes, I think it would be all right to leave the question of a wage-cut open for a month or so; but there's no getting away from the fact that the executive staffs of the factories must be reshuffled at once! Young hotheads and old stick-in-the-muds must all go to make way for new blood! I was wondering if you could spare a few men from your own factory, Sun-fu? We must set ourselves a time-limit of one month to complete the staff changes, and then during the following month we can announce the wage-cut. But the bonus system should be introduced without delay, so that the workers realize that we're playing fair with them and that those who are more highly skilled and who work hard can earn a nice fat pay-pocket!"

As he listened, Wu Sun-fu nodded his approval. Then, all of a sudden there came the sound of heavy, hurried footsteps pounding right up to the office door, and the agitated voice of the office boy: "Who do you want to see? You can't go rushing in just like that!" The three men in the room looked up in surprise just as the door flew open and their visitor burst in; he had a bulging briefcase under his arm, and his face was bathed in perspiration. He kicked the door to behind him, and as he marched across the room he rapped out, "Yen Hsi-shan's army's on the march! Tehchow's in a state

of chaos! How's Tang Yun-shan getting on in Hongkong? Have you heard from him yet?"

The intruder was Huang Fen, the famous blusterer.

Wu Sun-fu's face fell, but Wang Ho-fu laughed as he jumped up and asked quickly, "Is that true? When did you hear about it?"

"Only half an hour ago — 'course it's true!" Huang Fen gasped, thumping the briefcase under his arms as much as to say that he had the important news stowed safely away in it, so there could be no mistake about it. "Had a wire from Yun-shan yet?"

"How about Tsinan?" Wu Sun-fu asked hastily, his bushy eyebrows now quivering with agitation. "Surely they'll have a big battle on their hands when they get to Tsinan?"

"They'll take Tsinan in a matter of four or five days. No question of a big battle there; the heaviest fighting will be along the southern part of the Tientsin-Pukow Railway!"

"A matter of four or five days, eh?" Wu Sun-fu muttered to himself. "And no heavy fighting!"

He laughed hysterically, then stepped back and flopped on to a sofa; his face had suddenly become quite ashen and a look of ferocity had come into his eyes. The military situation along the northern part of the Tientsin-Pukow line was changing much too rapidly! So rapidly, in fact, that even he could not keep pace with it, for all his alertness and agility!

The significance of the news had also struck Sun Chi-jen; he heaved a deep sigh, then glanced from Wu Sun-fu to the clock on the wall: just on four o'clock. His thoughts immediately went to the Exchange: perhaps at this very minute prices were plunging down to the limit amid the frantic yelling of the crowd! His heart pounded wildly, and he dared not think about it any more.

"Can't understand you not hearing from Yun-shan!" said Huang Fen, turning to go as abruptly as he had come. "Let me know the moment you hear anything, Ho-fu!"

Wu Sun-fu sprang to his feet again, his teeth clenched tightly together and his eyes glaring. He paced savagely round the room, then suddenly wheeled round, stopped in front of an apprehensive Wang Ho-fu and a mournful, brooding Sun Chi-jen, and said in an excited, agitated voice, "So far as I can see there's only one

thing we can do — bribe the brokers to bring the settlement forward two days! Didn't Huang Fen say that they wouldn't be in Tsinan for four or five days yet? Let's say four days; that means that if we can bring the settlement forward two days we can just get it in before Tsinan falls, so that for all the rumours there won't be too rapid a slump. If the settlement's advanced by two days, that'll mean that the account will be closed in three day's time. The bears won't be able to do much tomorrow, and tomorrow we'll get rid of our remaining five million. If we can work it like this, we should be able to break even. Hmm, I wonder what they're up to now, suddenly putting in a whole army like that?"

"Still, we're lucky to have heard about it in time," said Sun Chi-jen. "It was the same last month: we heard in good time about Chang Fa-kuei and the Kwangsi armies evacuating Changsha, and so we were able to save ourselves before the rot set in."

He said this partly to express his agreement with Wu Sun-fu's suggestion, and partly to give himself what consolation he could.

"Sun-fu, I think you're right! Let's get cracking straight away!"

Now that he had caught on to the idea, Wang Ho-fu was his usual cheerful self again; he had faith in Wu Sun-fu's resourcefulness in a crisis.

"All right," replied Wu Sun-fu, "I'll ring up Lu Kuang-shih and ask him to come round straight away. 'Man proposes, God disposes.' I think ten thousand dollars would probably do the trick."

His voice was calmer now, and as he spoke he looked up at the clock with puckered brows. Never, he thought, was the proverb "An inch of time is an inch of gold" more true than now. He smiled grimly and hurried into the "private den" next door to ring up the broker.

Wang Ho-fu and Sun Chi-jen sat silent. The latter gazed at a vase on the table in front of him, and then up at the chart on the wall: "Plans for Industrial Development". He was still fairly calm, except that he kept stroking his chin. Wang Ho-fu, however, was fidgety. He went across to the window and stood looking out for a moment, then suddenly came back and pressed the bell. After a moment a young clerk poked his head round the door and looked inquiringly at Wang Ho-fu, who beckoned him in and in-

dicated that he should sit down at a Chinese typewriter under the window. When the typist had sat down, Wang Ho-fu said:

"Now, type as I dictate. 'New Bonus System. As an experiment . . . in scientific management . . . with a view to increasing production. . . .' Come on, slowcoach! Can't you go quicker than that? — with a view to increasing production . . . and in order to encourage good workers . . . we have decided . . . to adopt . . . the following new system. . . .' Come on, don't dawdle! . . . 'the following new system' — got it? Now, new paragraph. . . ."

"What's the news, Sun-fu?" Sun Chi-jen suddenly demanded. Wang Ho-fu abandoned his typist and whirled round to find Wu Sun-fu standing by the table, his hands clasped in front of his chest and a look of exasperation on his face. Wang Ho-fu grunted, then turned and snapped at the typist's back:

"That's all! You can go now!"

When the three of them were alone again, Wu Sun-fu muttered through clenched teeth, "Half a dollar down already!"

Wang Ho-fu felt the blood freeze in his veins, and Sun Chi-jen heaved a sigh. Wu Sun-fu took a couple of steps forward, his head on his chest. When he looked up again, his eyes were fierce.

"The session closed with a drop of half a dollar," he muttered. "Our five million was unloaded first thing, when the quotation was even five cents higher than the closing quotation of the morning session. After that, the rot set in. We'll probably make a profit of about a hundred and twenty or thirty thousand dollars on the first five million, but it's a job to say whether we'll make anything on the other five million. 'Man proposes, God disposes.'"

"Don't you believe it!" said Sun Chi-jen. He forced a smile, but his voice trembled slightly. "There's still tomorrow! Let's push ahead with our original plan. It's man that does the disposing!"

"That's quite right!" echoed Wang Ho-fu, though without Sun Chi-jen's smile. "It's man who does the disposing, and we've still got tomorrow!"

Suddenly he turned, pulled the unfinished notice about the "bonus system" out of the typewriter and flourished it at his partners.

"As for the factories," he cried, "we'll get cracking on them

tomorrow: discharge of three to five hundred workers, no working overtime on Sundays, working day to be increased by one hour without extra pay, a deposit to be stopped out of wages, and last but not least . . . a ten-per-cent wage-cut! I'll put up the notice tomorrow morning. And if the workers cut up rough? Huh! We'll bloody well close down the factories for a couple of weeks and see how they like that! And, of course, all this will apply to the silk goods factory on loan from Chen Chun-yi!"

"That's the stuff! 'Man disposes!' Go ahead, Ho-fu!" Wu Sun-fu and Sun Chi-jen simultaneously voiced their approval. Three pairs of eyes now gleamed with an iron determination to squeeze out of the nine factories, by every means in their power, compensation for their possible loss on the Stock Exchange: it was their only way out!

It was nine o'clock when Wu Sun-fu arrived home. He was dead-beat. It was a muggy evening, with a sky full of stars, and a slender, almost invisible crescent moon. Only in the shade of the trees was there any suggestion of a breeze. His wife and several others had come out into the garden for a breath of fresh air, leaving the house in darkness except for two lighted windows on the second floor, so that the building looked like some great monster crouching in the gloom, while the two windows were its gleaming, ravening eyes.

Mrs. Wu and her three companions were sitting under the trees fringing the pond. Only one or two of the lights fixed on the trees were on, and their clothes showed white against the dark background of the trees. They were silent except for an occasional faint sigh.

Suddenly Lin Pei-shan broke into a dreamy rendering of the melancholy popular song *Romona*; then suddenly she stopped again.

Ah-hsuan gave a low, despairing laugh.

A carp splashed in the pond.

Huei-fang was quite taken by the tune Lin Pei-shan had begun singing, for it echoed her mood exactly. She thought how lucky people were who could sing. Singing was another way of speaking. When you had something you wanted to say, and no way of saying



it, and you sang, it was as if you were telling a dear friend your inmost thoughts. She thought of what Fan Po-wen had said to her that day, and in her pounding heart she felt happy and afraid.

A pall of silence hung over the pond and over the four people on the bank, each of whom was savouring the silence according to his or her own individual mood. Suddenly the silence was shattered by an uproar which flooded outwards from some distant storm-centre and swept over the group at the edge of the pond: it was the angry voice of Wu Sun-fu raging and storming in the house.

"Let's have some lights on here! It's enough to give you the creeps!"

When the lights went on, his pyjama-clad figure was suddenly visible in the blaze of light. He was standing on the veranda in front of the drawing-room windows, looking angrily all round as if seeking something to vent his rage on. The bath had washed away his tiredness, but inside him there still seethed a volcano of anger. He caught sight of the four white figures by the pond: "Creeping about there like four ghosts!" he thought, and a sudden fury welled up inside him. Just then the maid Wang Mah happened to walk past him carrying a tray of tea-things and heading for the pond. Immediately seizing this opportunity to let himself go, he roared at her:

"Wang Mah! What are you going out there for?"

"Madame and the others are sitting out there by the pond —"

Without waiting for her to finish, he waved her impatiently away, then turned and stalked back into the drawing-room. He suddenly realized how ridiculous he had just made himself by his display of bad temper. It was not at all like him to behave like this, he thought. The glare of the lights in the drawing-room, however, only served to make him more bad-tempered than ever, and every bulb seemed to be a little furnace scorching and blistering his skin. To make things worse, there was not a single servant in attendance there. "Where have they all sneaked off to?" he muttered. "Lazy good-for-nothings!" Furious, he bounded out on to the front steps and roared:

"Come here, somebody! Blast you!"

"Here we are, sir!" came two voices simultaneously from the

bottom of the steps. As a matter of fact, the butler, Kao Sheng, and Li Kuei, one of the footmen, had been waiting round the corner all the time. Wu Sun-fu was taken aback by their sudden appearance, and just fixed them with a stony stare while he tried to think of something to say to them. After a moment he hit on something.

"Kao Sheng! Did you ring up Mr. Tu Wei-yuch and ask him to come round as I told you? Why hasn't he turned up yet?"

"Yes, I rang him, sir; but didn't you say you wanted him over at ten, sir? Mr. Tu said he was busy but that he could get here by half past —"

"Nonsense!" Wu Sun-fu interrupted with a sudden fury. "What do you mean, 'half past'! Don't tell me you agreed to half past ten?"

From the direction of the pond came the dreamy strains of Lin Pei-shan's melancholy *Romona*. The effect on Wu Sun-fu's anger was to pour oil on the flames. He stamped his foot, ground his teeth and raved at Kao Sheng, "You blasted idiot! Go and ring him up again and tell him to come round at once!"

He threw the last few words over his shoulder as he stalked off fuming towards the pond, leaving Kao Sheng and Li Kuei gazing open-mouthed at each other.

The romantic, melancholy atmosphere among the group by the pond suddenly became still and tense: every one of them could sense the approach of the "storm-centre", and they prepared themselves for an outburst of gratuitous invective. The nimble-witted Lin Pei-shan darted away and hid in the trees, where she put her hand over her mouth to stifle a laugh and peeped out, straining her ears and eyes. Ah-hsuan, who was not over-bright on occasions like this, just stood there going through the motions of throwing a recently-acquired and highly-prized throwing-knife. His sister Huei-fang had become suddenly absorbed in watching the carp which kept rising to the surface of the pond and sending up bubbles. Mrs. Wu, who knew what was coming, lolled lazily against the back of her chair with a smile on her lips.

Wu Sun-fu, however, did not flare up at once. He frowned and narrowed his eyes and looked around as if selecting a victim

to get his teeth into. Actually, he really did feel like biting! He felt that only by "getting his teeth into" someone could he work off the rage that had consumed him ever since his return home. Such a "bite" would not, of course, be a real one, but it would afford him the same relief as a physical bite. He glared round for a moment until his eyes fell on the thing in Ah-hsuan's hand. Like the mousing cat that stalks in silence and keeps her sharp teeth and claws hidden, he asked in a quiet voice:

"Ah-hsuan, what's that you've got in your hand?"

Ah-hsuan was so flustered that, instead of answering, he just held out his precious throwing-knife for his elder brother's inspection.

"What the devil's this! Who teaches you to play about with this sort of thing?"

Wu Sun-fu was fierce both in look and voice, but Ah-hsuan's manner was so laugh-provoking that the former precariously parted his lips for a second.

"Er — Old Kuan is teaching me to use it," Ah-hsuan stammered, withdrawing his throwing-knife and turning to slip away; but Wu Sun-fu peremptorily called him to a halt.

"Stop! Where do you think you're going? 'Throwing-knife' indeed! Get rid of it! Throw it in the pond! A young fellow turned seventeen and still wasting your time on such nonsense as this! The trouble is, you've been spoiled down in the country! The summer holidays are nearly over and you ought to be thinking about getting ready to go back to school! — Go on, throw it in the pond!"

There was a heavy splash, and Ah-hsuan gazed miserably at the ripples spreading out above his precious knife.

Wu Sun-fu's irascibility appeared to have abated somewhat, for his frown disappeared. His hard eyes turned next to his sister Hwei-fang. He was well aware that she had been getting much more friendly with Fan Po-wen lately — quite the reverse of what he wished! As he remembered this, another wave of anger swept over him. Nevertheless, he turned away from her and looked at his wife again. She was leaning back in the chair and gazing up bemusedly at the stars in the sky. Just lately she had seemed to

be pining away, and even her eyes, once so sparkling and eloquent, had now acquired a vacant stare; when, occasionally, they recaptured their old vividness it was only to blaze with anger. Something seemed to be continually gnawing at her heart. And this change had come over her so slowly that Wu Sun-fu had never noticed it. Once or twice he had had a vague feeling that all was not well with her, but he had dismissed it and immediately forgotten it. Now he seemed to be realizing it for the first time, and the sudden discovery only intensified his exasperation. He immediately abandoned Hwei-fang and turned his attention to his wife.

"Pei-yao," he said sharply, "you don't have to stand on ceremony with my own brother and sister! If they do anything wrong you shouldn't try to shield them! I don't like all this hole-and-corner business!"

His wife stared absently at him, smiling but silent, which only made him all the more incensed. He snorted savagely and went on grimly, "Take Hwei-fang for instance. I'm not an old-fashioned diehard, and when it comes to a question of marriage I'm all for taking into account the views of the people concerned. But I, too, have a right to be consulted, to see whether it's a good match on both sides or not. It's no use trying to go behind my back! As a matter of fact, I've been giving a lot of thought to this matter, and somebody has actually approached me about arranging a match for her; but you people have to go behind my back and make a mess of it — you're going to make us look a pack of fools!"

"Well, this sounds a bit strange to me," said his wife, feeling she ought to make some protest. "I don't understand what you mean about making a mess! If you've a suitable man in mind, you might at least let us know who it is!"

He made no answer, but turned abruptly to his sister and said sternly.

"Hwei-fang, if you've got anything to say on the subject, let's hear it. We must get things straight so that I know what to do."

Hwei-fang hung her head till her chin rested on her chest; there

was not a single word from her in reply. Her heart was pounding wildly. She was afraid of her brother, and she hated him.

"All right, then: if you've no ideas of your own, I'll arrange everything for you!"

Wu Sun-fu felt the satisfaction of an archer in ambush whose arrow has struck down an enemy. With a triumphant laugh he turned and walked away. By the time he reached his study, this crumb of satisfaction had evaporated, and he again felt the need to "bite" someone — not just to relieve his pent-up rage, as he had done a moment ago — but to "bite" at his real enemy in any way he could to compensate himself for his loss. His angry mood had passed, and it was in a cool, stubborn, relentless frame of mind that he now set himself to the problem of making a desperate attempt to fight his way out of the net which was closing around him; but almost immediately he was gripped by a dismal feeling of frustration and despair. His heart now leapt with excitement, now sank into a torpor of despondency. His spinning brain seemed no longer to obey his will: he was just recalling the momentous decisions he and his partners had made in the managing director's office of the Yi Chung Trust Company, when suddenly he was assailed by a vision of Liu Yu-ying's seductive smile, her blush as she flashed her eyes at him, and the echo of the murmured temptation: "What shall I call you when you come to see me. . . ?" And just as he was cheerfully deciding how to dispose his forces for a resounding attack on the eight factories he suddenly found himself faced with the prospect of the two thousand-odd workers rising up in a desperate counter-attack. . . .

No matter how he tried, he just could not concentrate; especially when the memory of Liu Yu-ying's inviting smile, her lovely voice and her limpid eyes kept hammering away at his brain and distracting him as he tried to wrestle with his business problems. This was madness! It was just not like him to lose his head over a pretty face!

"Bah!" he roared, suddenly leaping to his feet and crashing his fist on the table. "You temptress!"

"— tress!" echoed the walls of the study. The trees outside the window rustled as if they were laughing at his vexation and

confusion. He collapsed into his chair again and gritted his teeth in an effort to pull himself together and shake off this shameful weakness and decadence that had taken possession of him and rid himself of this feeling of pessimism and despair.

At this juncture the door opened softly and Tu Wei-yueh appeared; he stood drawn up to his full height for a moment, then bowed gravely. He turned to close the door behind him, then walked calmly up to Wu Sun-fu's desk and looked at him with eyes that were placid yet alert.

For fully two or three minutes neither of them spoke.

Wu Sun-fu reached out and extracted a document from a pile on the desk. He bent over as if he were perusing it, then picked up a pen and twirled it in his fingers, so as to give himself time to compose his features and recover his self-possession. After a moment he looked up and indicated that Tu Wei-yueh should sit down. His tone was casual and there was a smile on his lips as he began, "I understand you said you were going to be very busy the first time I rang. Are you free now?"

"Quite free," came his laconic answer; but his twinkling eyes spoke volumes. They seemed to intimate that he was quite aware that Wu Sun-fu had been just having a fit of temper and depression, and that his present air of studied nonchalance was nothing more than a pose — it was the slow circling of a hawk before it swoops to the kill.

Wu Sun-fu lowered his eyes so that the young man should not be able to read his thoughts. Still twirling the pen between his fingers, he said, "I hear they're having trouble with the workers in some of the factories in Hongkew. Do you think anything will come of it? And if anything does happen, do you think it might affect our factories in Chapei?"

"Hard to say."

This answer was one word longer than the first one, and Tu Wei-yueh smiled guardedly as he made it. Wu Sun-fu looked swiftly up and roared with what looked like feigned surprise, "What! You sit there and say 'Hard to say'! I should have thought you would have stuck out your chest and said 'No fear

of that in *our* factories! I don't want to hear you say 'Hard to say': What I want to hear is 'I'm sure of it!' All right?"

"I could have said that in the first place, but the moment I came in I smelt a rat — I guessed that you had orders for a wage-cut to give me, so I changed my mind and said 'Hard to say.' Since you now want me to say 'I'm sure of it,' well, all right, I am!"

Wu Sun-fu listened attentively, while his eyes scanned Tu Wei-yueh's imperturbable face. After a short pause he asked, "Have you made all necessary arrangements?"

"Still one or two things to see to — nothing much, though. Of course, sir, when the axe falls, there's bound to be a certain amount of resistance; but within a day or two — three days at the most — everything will be under control. Though it may be —"

"What!" interrupted Wu Sun-fu. "You mean they might go on strike? And for three days at that? No, I won't have it! If they dare start any trouble, I must have it settled the same day! D'you hear? The same day! And what were you saying about 'It may be'? It may be that the strike will last more than three days, I suppose!"

His voice was harsh as he said this, though his expression remained calm and unruffled.

"It may be," replied Tu Wei-yueh with a mocking smile, "that a single spark of trouble in our factory would set off a general strike involving every silk filature in Shanghai!"

This was the fateful ladle of oil, so to speak, and the smouldering fires of Wu Sun-fu's anger, which he had been managing to control all this time, suddenly burst into flame. He flung down his pen and with blazing eyes raved at Tu Wei-yueh:

"I don't give a damn whether it means a general strike or not! If there's the slightest hint of trouble in *my* factory, I'll have it settled the same day without any ifs or buts!"

"In that case you'll have to resort to force —"

"Quite! That's just what I will do!"

"All right: in that case, sir, I must ask permission to resign!"

As he said this, Tu Wei-yueh stood up and fixed Wu Sun-fu with a hard, fearless stare. A brief silence. Wu Sun-fu's expression

changed gradually from amazement to cool indifference. Finally, he asked impatiently, "So you don't like the idea of using force, eh? Afraid?"

"Not a bit of it! Now, honestly, Mr. Wu. Have I ever shown any signs of being afraid? I don't mind telling you, I think I've put more than my share of hard work into the factory in the past month, and I refuse to be a party to undoing all that I've achieved through a solid month's planning and effort. Still, you're the boss, and it's up to you to do what you think best. All I ask is that you accept my immediate resignation. And may I repeat that I'm not in the least afraid!"

He squared his shoulders proudly and riveted his keen eyes on Wu Sun-fu's face.

"I'm well aware that you've been making all these plans and arrangements: I now intend to put them to the test and see if they work!"

"All right, Mr. Wu. Since you know all about it, let me tell you one thing more. You say I must use force and settle any trouble the same day. Nothing simpler: police, detectives, security guards — they're all ready and at our disposal. But if we settle the trouble today, and it breaks out again in ten days or a couple of weeks' time, I don't think you'd be at all happy about it. Besides, I just couldn't bring myself to betray your trust in me by doing as you say — in fact, my present position of trust means a great deal to me."

For a while Wu Sun-fu could think of nothing to say. He picked up his pen again, twirled it between his fingers, and sat staring at Tu Wei-yueh's face for quite a while. Tu Wei-yueh, his face betraying not the faintest trace of emotion, was quite content to let him look, though he was secretly rather surprised at Wu Sun-fu's unaccustomed hesitation.

After some deliberation, Wu Sun-fu asked, "Well, what do you think we should do?"

"Well, I'm in favour of using a little force myself — but not till the very end! Our workers aren't all cast in the same mould: some of them are a bad influence — Communists, most likely — and some of the more stupid of the workers just tag along with

them; but the majority are timid and don't want to get into trouble. The reason I ask for three days to finish the job is because three days of unrest will give me an excellent opportunity of finding out for sure just who these suspected Communists are, and then netting them all at one fell swoop! That's where the use of a little force comes in! After that, I think we can be sure of peace and quiet for six months at least. This is what I've been working on so hard for the last month!"

Tu Wei-yueh had spoken calmly and self-confidently, a smile on his lips; Wu Sun-fu had listened with concentrated attention, but now he suddenly rolled his eyes upwards and laughed grimly, then jumped up and roared excitedly:

"You may be very clever, Wei-yueh, but there are still certain things that you don't understand. You can't make a clean sweep of them just like that! They're like moths in a fur in the rainy season — they just keep appearing one after the other! You catch them all today, but tomorrow there's another lot there! All you can do is to wait until the rainy season is over. Unfortunately, we're just coming into a 'rainy season' now, and it's going to be a long, long time — nobody knows just how long — before it's over! Well, that's that: Your little plan will have to keep for the time being. We just can't afford that kind of patience as things are at present!"

Tu Wei-yueh bowed but said nothing. He was thinking that with this reverse his fate was surely sealed. If he did not resign, his 'régime' in the factory was doomed, and Chien Pao-sheng and his clique would step into his shoes. Suddenly, Wu Sun-fu flew into a rage again: his face dark with anger, he barked out his orders:

"I don't care whether there's a strike or not, or whether there's a general strike for that matter: my mind's made up! Starting next month, there's going to be a twenty-per-cent wage-cut! If the price of silk goes up to over nine hundred taels a picul again, I may consider a wage-increase — very well, you can go now! And I won't allow you to resign!"

"In that case, Mr. Wu, you must give me three days to do the job!"

"Out of the question!" Wu Sun-fu bellowed. "I can't even give you one day!"

Tu Wei-yueh's face twitched and his eyes glinted dangerously. Quite unexpectedly, Wu Sun-fu's manner suddenly changed again; he gestured impatiently and said, "Idiot! Thinking you can tie me down! Wait until they've gone on strike first, and then we'll see about it."

Tu Wei-yueh smiled and bowed again, but said nothing. He could see quite clearly that Wu Sun-fu was not his usual self — he seemed rather flustered. And then he remembered that he himself was probably heading for disaster. But he was tough, and there was plenty of fight left in him yet.

19

As the clock struck nine and the clear, measured strokes on the vibrating metal coil twanged in the ears of Wu Sun-fu, who was still asleep in the inner room, his eyelids seemed to flutter, but his mind was still submerged in the heavy black waters of a dream. He had heard the clear, vibrant strokes of the clock in his dream, but for him this sound was the urgent voice of the gong on the platform of the Exchange, the signal for the opening of another session and the signal for the beginning of a fight to the death for himself and his partners.

It was these gong-strokes in the dream that had made his eyelids flutter. The settlement was only three days off, and in the last few days Wu Sun-fu and his partners had thrown the last reinforcements they had been able to muster into the front line and waged a fierce offensive along the whole front, but nothing they could do seemed of any avail in dislodging the bulls from their position. Their only hope now was that Tu Chu-chai would rush in to their rescue. The night before, Wu Sun-fu had worked until the small hours trying to persuade Tu Chu-chai to come in with them. And this had been the fourth time he had tried! Tu Chu-chai had not yet refused outright, so they still had a glimmer of hope — though they realized that whatever happened they were still not out of the wood!

A despairing laugh came from the sleeping Wu Sun-fu, then his brows were drawn tightly together and he clenched his teeth and shuddered violently. Suddenly, his eyes opened wide, blood-shot eyes that stared fixedly as if in a trance, and tiny beads of sweat began breaking out on his forehead as he remembered the horror of his dream. A pale yellow sunlight threw shadows on the curtains and a faint breeze brought the hum of traffic from the distant street.

"Thank Heaven it was only a dream!" he thought, as he scrambled quickly out of bed. He had a wash, only to find Chao Po-tao's face grinning at him from the water in the wash-basin — it was the face that had haunted his dreams with its evil, gloating smile! As he was going past his dressing-mirror, he automatically glanced at it and saw his own face — a face stamped deep with the lines of defeat and despair. Down in the drawing-room and the dining-room, the servants were bustling round changing loose covers and taking the carpets up for beating. The moment his eye fell on this scene of activity, he remembered that the house was mortgaged and that if he could not pay back the loan in time his creditors would foreclose, and then there would be all the bustle and commotion of moving out.

It seemed to him that the house was full of leering eyes glorying in his misfortune. He felt that sitting here in the "rear" waiting for news was ten, twenty times more painful than going up to the "front" himself. Little caring that he had made an appointment with Sun Chi-jeu for ten o'clock, he hurried straight out to the car and drove off.

Although the car was speeding along a fairly unfrequented road at the record speed for 1930, Wu Sun-fu felt that even the car was trying to thwart him by refusing to go faster. He suddenly discovered that, without his noticing it, even the dismal pale sunlight had disappeared, and that they were driving through a fine drizzle which looked more like a thick mist. There was something strangely familiar about his gloomy surroundings — as well there might be! For it was on just such a morning as this — a morning of misty drizzle when everything became blurred in outline and acquired an air of grandeur — that he had once before sat in his

car plunging headlong in just the same way into an unknown, misty future. Suddenly, it all came back to him: two months before, when he had been co-operating with Chao Po-tao as a bull, the morning of their "decisive battle" had been just such a gloomy, wet morning as this! Nevertheless, though the scene was the same, their roles had now been drastically changed: he and Chao Po-tao were now at daggers drawn! To make things worse, an inscrutable Tu Chu-chai held their fates in the balance!

As he sat there in the car, Wu Sun-fu smiled grimly to himself: What point was there in going down to the Exchange at all? The really decisive days had been the last three, and they had gone. Everything humanly possible had been done and their last penny had already been thrown into the struggle: What difference could he or anyone make to the fortunes of battle at this late hour? Yes, today would be the final skirmish, as when a commander-in-chief sends even his own bodyguard to the front line in a last desperate offensive. But surely it would be enough to leave the execution of his orders to his front-line commander without going up to the front himself! Wu Sun-fu frowned and smiled wryly to himself as he decided to go back home and wait for news there; yet he could not bring himself to tell his chauffeur to turn back. He had now lost even the small amount of will-power needed to do this. No matter how anxiously he urged himself to "Keep calm! Even if you lose, you must keep calm!" he still found it impossible to repress his excitement.

He was still in this state of anxiety and doubt when the car drew up outside the Exchange. He threaded his way in through the main entrance as if in a dream and went straight over to the notice-board to find the number of his broker, Lu Kuang-shih. Trading had apparently not yet begun, yet the Exchange rang with the deafening din of voices. But Wu Sun-fu appeared to be blind and deaf to all this: all he saw was a vision of Chao Po-tao's face, which seemed to fill all the space.

Lu Kuang-shih's cubicle, which was not much bigger than a sentry-box, was completely occupied by a corpulent gentleman — it was, as a matter of fact, Wang Ho-fu — who was using the telephone. The broker himself stood outside talking with a floor-

man. Wu Sun-fu's arrival attracted no attention until he stopped in front of the cubicle, when Lu Kuang-shih suddenly turned round to find him standing there. Just at that moment Wang Ho-fu hung up the receiver.

"Ah! Sun-fu! Here you are! I've just been trying to get you on the phone!"

As Wang Ho-fu sprang up to greet him, he grasped Wu Sun-fu by the sleeve and pulled him into the cubicle, where he wedged him in the corner beside the telephone, as if he was afraid to expose his friend to public view. The latter smiled cheerlessly and would have spoken had he not been too agitated to find something to say. As it was, Wang Ho-fu immediately bent over and asked in a whisper:

"You haven't seen Sun Chi-jen yet, have you? Oh, well, he'll be here in a moment. What about Tu Chu-chai? Has he made up his mind yet?"

"Not quite. Though I don't think he'll put much on the market, in any case. Not more than a million, anyway."

The moment Wu Sun-fu had opened his mouth and said something, his optimism had begun to return and he now felt somewhat calmer. Wang Ho-fu stroked his beard and smiled.

"You think he'd sell a million? That would be splendid! The thing is, Sun-fu, we're left high and dry today! The mortgaging of your factory didn't come off. Chi-jen and I have tried everybody we can think of, but we've had no luck at all. All we can do today is to —"

"Is to what? Don't tell me we haven't even got the hundred thousand dollars left that we agreed on the day before yesterday!"

"No, it's all right! Though it's all we've got in reserve for today."

"Right, then, get rid of the lot the moment they open! Agreed? Have you told Han Meng-hsiang what we're doing yet?"

"Don't let me hear you mention Han Meng-hsiang's name again! I found out only last night that even he isn't reliable! Every time we've sold short we've done it through him for secrecy's sake, and — would you believe it? — he's now gone and

given the show away to Chao Po-tao! It's the worst thing that could have happened!"

As Wang Ho-fu said this, he dropped his voice until it was scarcely audible. Wu Sun-fu did not catch every word, but he understood perfectly. His face suddenly paled, his ears buzzed, and black spots danced madly before his eyes. Another of his subordinates had sold the pass! This was the unkindest cut of all! After a moment, Wu Sun-fu finally managed to mutter through clenched teeth: "You can't trust anybody! Well, Ho-fu, I suppose we'll have to go through Lu Kuang-shih today?"

"No! I've found another broker and everything's already fixed up. The moment they open, we sell!"

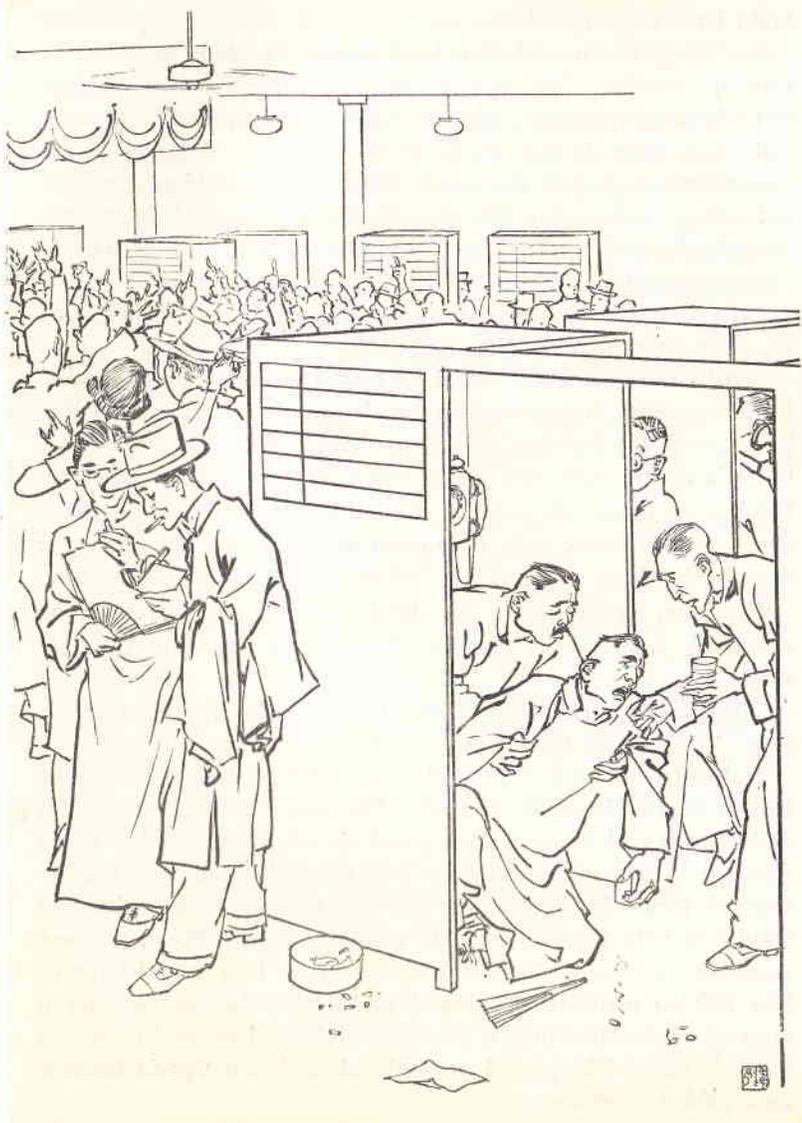
Hardly were the words out of his mouth when the gong sounded for the opening. Immediately, a thunderous uproar arose as trading began, until the building seemed to shake. Wang Ho-fu ran out, but Wu Sun-fu remained sitting where he was, unable to move. His legs no longer obeyed him, the buzzing in his ears came back again, and the black spots once more danced before his eyes. He had never felt as weak as this before — it was fantastic!

Suddenly, Wang Ho-fu ran back, panting and dejected; he wrung his hands as he gasped, "Opened with a rise! Up fifty cents!"

"What! — Sell out quick!" raved Wu Sun-fu, springing to his feet. "Get rid of the whole hundred thousand in reserve!"

Suddenly, Wu Sun-fu's head swam and he had a feeling of nausea in the pit of his stomach. His legs gave way under him and he collapsed, his eyes staring and his face deathly pale. Wang Ho-fu was so startled that he felt suddenly cold, but quickly stepped forward; he pinched Wu Sun-fu's upper lip with one hand and held him by the hair with the other. For a moment there was no one on hand to help; then, as luck would have it, Sun Chi-jen arrived. Cool and resourceful, he snatched up a glass of cold water, took a mouthful of it, and spurted it in Wu Sun-fu's face. The glazed eyes stirred, and Wu Sun-fu brought up a goblet of phlegm.

"Sell out quick —" he repeated, his eyes staring wildly. Sun Chi-jen and Wang Ho-fu exchanged glances, then Sun Chi-jen



patted Wu Sun-fu on the shoulder and said, "Don't worry, Sun-fu! Ho-fu and I are here to take care of everything. You'd better go home and take it easy. It's suffocating in here and you'll only be worse if you stay!"

"It's nothing!" said Wu Sun-fu, springing to his feet. "It was just a touch of phlegm, and I'm all right now. But tell me, have you sold them yet?"

His face was a better colour now, and life was returning to his eyes, though his forehead was as red as fire. Sun Chi-jen noticed it and recognized it as a serious sign. Between them, Sun Chi-jen and Wang Ho-fu forcibly dragged Wu Sun-fu out of the Exchange in spite of all his protests and bundled him into his car. Meanwhile the Exchange resounded with the fiercest duel between the bulls and the bears that it had ever known. Wu Sun-fu's partners fired their last shot — they threw one and a half million Disbandment on the market, and the quotations began to drop steadily!

If Wu Sun-fu's supposed ally Tu Chu-chai had now come on the scene and thrown himself into the fray with them, victory would have been assured for the bears. As it happened, Tu Chu-chai's car pulled up in front of the Exchange just as Wu Sun-fu's was moving off. The two chauffeurs honked a greeting at each other in passing, but neither's employer noticed what was happening. At the moment when Tu Chu-chai's car grated to a stop, Wu Sun-fu's was already speeding homewards.

It may have been the noise and lack of fresh air on the floor of the Exchange that had brought on Wu Sun-fu's attack of giddiness, for he felt much better as soon as the car started up. The hectic flush on his temples was gradually fading, and he could think "soberly" once again, though this "sober" thinking brought some of the pallor back to his cheeks and made his heart seem like a heavy weight in his chest, so that he had difficulty in breathing.

The drizzle had now become a downpour, and the wind had an edge to it. When Wu Sun-fu arrived home and got out of the car, he shivered and went gooseflesh all over. Ah-hsuan and Pei-shan were laughing and shouting noisily in the drawing-room,

and just as Wu Sun-fu was going past the door, Ah-hsuan dashed out with a book in his hand, pursued by Pei-shan. Wu Sun-fu frowned, but walked on without another look at them. Just lately he had ceased to bother himself with such minor "breaches of the peace". Besides, Huci-fang's recalcitrance seemed to have struck a blow at his authority in his own household, for Ah-hsuan, for one, was becoming rowdier than he had ever been before.

As soon as he was seated in his study, Wu Sun-fu sent for the butler. His first order was "Send for Dr. Ting"; his second was "I'm not at home to visitors"; his third — he broke off as he suddenly caught sight of a telegram on the desk. He waved the butler away and tore open the envelope.

The telegram was from Tang Yun-shan in Hongkong and contained forty or so words in code. By the time he had decoded seven or eight words, he had completely forgotten about the third order that he had been going to give. Suddenly, he remembered there was something else he was going to do. He laid the telegram aside and picked up the telephone. After a moment's hesitation he rang Tu Chu-chai's home number. When he heard where Tu Chu-chai had gone, he smiled. The last dying glimmer of hope in his mind now revived and became stronger and stronger.

What raised his hopes higher than ever was the discovery that Tang Yun-shan's telegram was full of good news: apparently, Tang Yun-shan was getting results in Hongkong, and the military situation was turning in their favour; he had made a number of extremely valuable business contacts in Hongkong, and with their assistance the Yi Chung Trust Company could be put on its feet again; and, finally, he was coming back to Shanghai immediately.

Wu Sun-fu was unable to repress a sudden burst of laughter. Heaven helps those who help themselves, and no mistake about it!

Yet almost immediately his elation began to fade. A faint smile still hovered on his lips, but it was a wry one. What if all this talk about "extremely valuable business contacts in Hongkong" were just another of Tang Yun-shan's castles in the air? It wouldn't be the first time he'd been caught that way. In any case, even if there was anything in what he said, "You won't put out a fire with water a league away!" The outcome of the struggle

would be decided by the next day at the very latest, and all Wu Sun-fu and his partners were interested in now was *immediate* help, for only immediate help could save them!

Even if Tang Yun-shan had struck lucky this time, Wu Sun-fu was still displeased with the man's muddle-headedness. Hadn't he sent him telegram after telegram urging him to wire any money back the moment he laid hands on it? And still all he got was promises! And what did he mean by "coming back to Shanghai immediately"? Anyone would think Hongkong was still in the eighteenth century and using bulky silver ingots which Tang Yun-shan could only bring back to Shanghai in person! Here was he crying out for money which Tang Yun-shan was blithely carrying round in his pocket!

As he thought this, even the faint, wry smile vanished from his face. To meet with disappointment after having one's hopes raised was more painful than never having one's hopes raised at all. At first, when he had just decoded the telegram, he had thought of ringing up Sun Chi-jen and Wang Ho-fu to tell them the good news, but now it was more than he dared do. As he sat there with his head in his hands, he felt as if his head was on fire. He stood up and began pacing to and fro, but he shivered at every step, and he felt as if cold water were trickling down his spine. He sat down again, but immediately stood up once more, only to sit down a second time. One moment he felt as if he was in a furnace; the next, as if he had been plunged into an ice-house.

He was at last forced to admit to himself that he was ill. Yes, ever since the go-slow in the factory he had been troubled by this strange malady, and just lately the attacks had become more frequent. And now it had come to this — being overcome with dizziness in the Exchange! It looked suspiciously like the first stage of congestion of the brain — the illness his father had died of. "What's happened to the doctor? Blast him! Just when I need him urgently, he lets me down!" He was so eager to get someone to vent his anger on!

Suddenly, the telephone rang, and its jangle seemed to hold a note of urgency.

Wu Sun-fu went suddenly tense all over. He was certain it was a call from Sun Chi-jen on the Exchange floor. His hand trembled as he picked up the receiver. He gritted his teeth for a weak "Hullo?" then held his breath as he listened to what Sun Chi-jen had to report about their desperate struggle. His eyebrows suddenly shot up and his eyes gleamed excitedly and finally he even smiled.

"Oh... Up and then down again, eh?... What! Dropped to thirty-three dollars? Whew!... What a pity!... Well, it looks as if the bulls are losing their appetite at last!... What did you say? 'Reorganization' is opening now?... What?... Selling another two million?... The deposit on credit?... By all means!... I just got a telegram from Tang Yun-shan — says he's struck lucky in Hongkong... Yes, we may as well go the whole hog!... No, he hasn't sent the money yet, but I think it's all right to go ahead just the same!... Oh, so Chao Po-tao's risking all he's got, as well! Makes us quits!... It shows what a rat Han Meng-hsiang is! If he hadn't gone over to the other side, Chao Po-tao would have given up yesterday!... You bet! We'll teach the little rat a lesson he won't forget in a hurry!... Chu-chai? He's already down there at the Exchange!... Haven't seen him yet? Well, have a look round... Oh!..."

As Wu Sun-fu hung up, his features darkened again. This time he was not so much worried as angry. So Han Meng-hsiang had let him down, the scoundrel! And Liu Yu-ying, too! Lining her pockets from both sides, the bitch! It had always been the same: all his great schemes had been wrecked by subordinates with neither conscience nor loyalty. It put one's teeth on edge to think about them. He had always played fair and never let anyone down, but his kindness was always repaid with ungrateful treachery! Apart from those two wretches Han Meng-hsiang and Liu Yu-ying, even his own sister had turned on him, and had now run away from home as if he were a cruel monster.

A wave of anger swept over him, and he trembled from head to foot. His face pale with rage and his teeth clenched, he began pacing swiftly up and down. These last few days his prestige had been trampled in the mud. He must do something about it! As

soon as the present crisis on the Exchange was over, he must firmly re-establish his waning authority. Both in public and in his own home he must again set himself up as the incarnation of authority! As he paced to and fro, he began planning all that he would be and do, once he had won this present battle on the Exchange.

Suddenly the telephone rang again with that same note of urgency.

This time he was not so nervous as he had been the time before, for he had already been fortified by the good news so far. As he picked up the receiver his hand was steady and deft. As a voice spoke at the other end of the line, he cried:

"That you, Ho-fu?... What is it?... Never mind that! Tell me what's happening!"

A sudden blast of wind swept through the garden and howled in the trees. As he listened, Wu Sun-fu's face suddenly paled.

"What!" he gasped. "Up again?... Somebody buying in while we're holding the price down?... Eh? Not Chao Po-tao? A new bull? Who? Who?... What! Chu-chai?... Well, I'll be damned!... We're sunk, then! Finished!..."

Crash! The receiver fell on to the desk as Wu Sun-fu staggered back and collapsed on a sofa, where he sat wide-eyed and panting. Even his own brother-in-law Chu-chai had stabbed him in the back. It was only the night before that he had been perfectly frank with Tu Chu-chai and told him exactly what the situation on the stock market was and what his own plans were — and all the time he had been playing into the hands of a traitor! "Every man's hand against me and even my own relatives betraying me! What have I done — what have I done to deserve it?" As this one thought hammered at his tortured mind, he suddenly sprang up with a wild laugh and pounced forward; he wrenched open a drawer of his desk, snatched out a revolver, and turned the muzzle towards his heart. His face was purple, and his eyes glared as if they would burst from their sockets.

Outside, the gale howled and drove the rain against the window in a crackling fury. The gun had not been fired. Wu Sun-fu drew a long sigh and collapsed on to the swivel-chair. The revolver fell

to the floor. Just then Li Kuei, one of the servants, came in with Dr. Ting.

Wu Sun-fu leapt to his feet and smiled wryly at the doctor. "Sorry to trouble you: there might have been a little accident just now, but it's all right now. Though now that you've come perhaps you'd like to take a seat."

Dr. Ting shrugged his shoulders in wonder, but before he could say anything, Wu Sun-fu had turned and snatched up the receiver again. This time he was ringing the factory. Having checked that it was Tu Wei-yueh on the other end, he shouted one peremptory sentence into the receiver: "The factory closes down tomorrow!" Disregarding the bewildered twittering from the other end of the line, he hung up and turned a smiling face to Dr. Ting:

"Where do you suggest I go for my summer holiday, doctor? I feel like a breath of sea air!"

"Tsingtao, without a doubt! Or if you'd like to go farther afield, Chinwangtao is quite pleasant."

"How about Kuling?"

"Kuling's all right, but you won't find your sea air up there. Besides, I heard a day or so ago that the Red Army is attacking Chian. Changsha is surrounded, and Nanchang and Kiukiang are both threatened."

"Ha! Ha! Ha! What does it matter? I've always wanted to have a look at this Red Army that everybody's so afraid of and see if it's all it's made out to be! As likely as not they'll prove to be nothing more than bandits! The only reason they've got away with it so long is that nobody's troubled to do anything about them. Excuse me a moment, doctor. If you'll just make yourself at home I'll go and see to one or two things. Won't keep you a moment."

Laughing hilariously, Wu Sun-fu left the study and ran straight upstairs. Now that he realized it was all over, he was beginning to feel calm and peaceful once more. He slipped quietly into his room and found his wife curled up on the sofa under the window with a book.

"Pei-yao! Hurry up and tell the servants to pack! We're leaving tonight for our summer holiday."

His wife leapt to her feet thunderstruck. The book fell off her lap on to the floor and a faded white rose fluttered out from between the pages. This was the third time Wu Sun-fu had seen the book and the rose, but, as on the other two occasions, he was too preoccupied to notice them. Her cheeks flushed, his wife glanced down at them and said absently:

"That's rather short notice, isn't it? Still, anything you say."

Illustrated by Yeh Chien-yu



Suzanne Bernard

An Interview with Mao Tun

We leave the subject of *Midnight* to discuss matters of more general interest. Mao Tun listens attentively to the questions and replies animatedly.

"We should like to know about your relations with Lu Hsun."

He reflects for a moment: "It was in 1921, whilst I was editor of the magazine *Stories Monthly*, that I began corresponding with Lu Hsun, who was then living in Peking. I invited him to write for us. Our first meeting took place in September 1927, in Shanghai. We both lived in Chingyun Lane, and so I could talk to him often. At that time I was writing my trilogy and I was confined to my house since Chiang Kai-shek had issued an order for my arrest. Lu Hsun also was not able to leave his home easily, lest he gave away his contacts with the progressives. Having finished my trilogy, I left for Japan where I stayed for one year. On my return, I joined the League of Left-Wing Writers. Later my contacts with Lu Hsun were more frequent and remained so until his death. We often worked together."

"In the work which you dedicated to Lu Hsun, *The Path of Lu Hsun*, you recalled some of that great writer's words: 'Literature is the best means of changing men's minds.' In Europe, intellectuals often ask themselves the question. 'What is the purpose

of literature?' and they seem in general very pessimistic. What is your opinion?"

He smiles: "I think literature serves some purpose. But if it fails to reflect the times, then it has no value!"

Mao Tun is well acquainted with the problem. During the twenties and thirties before Liberation, when exploitation and oppression still prevailed, he wrote much on the subject of the role of the writer and the function of literature. Unrelentingly, he urged writers to descend from their ivory towers and see the realities of life around them. He denounced literature for entertainment and 'escapist' literature. He demanded a *positive* literature, the role of which would be "to serve humanity", or "to awaken the people to seize power". He emphasized that the literature of the cities should depict the lives of the workers, "those workers, who sweated blood and tears before the machines". He has written: "The world-outlook of a writer must necessarily be expressed in his writing. A writer must use his writing to criticize society, to hate, to affirm and to commend what is right." He has praised those writers for whom "literature is a weapon with which they interpret, represent and help to advance their times." "If they decide to become writers," he says, "it is because they have sensed the political corruption, social unrest and the danger which threatens to transform literature into merchandise." In spite all obstacles, there should be a "true" literature, a "true" art, something "critical", "creative", "historical", and "belonging to the masses".

When asked how he became a writer, Mao Tun discloses: "I shall tell you simply and frankly. It was because I could not be a professional revolutionary!" He further explains: "At first I did some practical revolutionary work, but as I didn't make any great success in that field, I became a writer!"

"And now, what are your work and plans?"

"Now I am back in the twenties, working on my memoirs. These have as their theme both my life as a writer and as a revolutionary." He stops for a moment and then adds: "I have often composed some classical poems, if they can be considered as literature. Many were written after the downfall of the 'gang of

four'. Some have been published, others are addressed to old friends. This year I wrote an article about literary creation to help the young people to free their minds from the yokes imposed by the 'gang of four'!

The education of young writers is one of Mao Tun's main preoccupations. In the article to which he referred, he communicated to young people the best of his experience, about ideology, art and technique. . . . He reaffirmed there the fundamental choice which he made at the start of his career: to study Marxism, without which "even if one lives among the workers, peasants and soldiers, or takes part in the struggle, one cannot be certain of revealing and analysing correctly the many complex social phenomena. . . ." "New factors constantly appear in the real struggle," he writes. "We must thus make greater efforts in our study in order to adapt our ideology to the changes in the objective situation." He analyses equally the two dimensions essential to reality: depth and breadth. At the same time as the writer studies in depth the facts and the concrete phenomena that he wishes to represent — what Mao Tun calls a "corner" of life — he must also have an all-round vision. "It is difficult for me to conceive of a worthwhile work, which is confined to a factory workshop, a production team or some other small 'corner' of life, and yet which ignores everything else. . . ." "Young writers often attribute their failures to their lack of technique, but in my opinion, the fundamental cause is their ignorance of the dialectical relationship between the depth and breadth of life, which they have not succeeded in blending together."

Regarding problems relating to the work itself, Mao Tun affirms the importance of the "organic" structure of the whole, and of the harmonious relationship between the whole and its different sections. He links the writer's power of expression to his capacity of critical appreciation, two mutually complementary qualities which develop together. Finally he insists on what he calls the "main problem" in writing technique. "It is necessary to condense . . . crystallize the primary material of daily life. . . ."

We then asked Mao Tun our last question: "In pursuing the policy of 'letting a hundred flowers blossom', what prospects are

there today, according to you, for the further development of Chinese literature?"

He replied seriously: "I think that today one can truly say that this is a period of a hundred flowers and a hundred schools. In all fields things are moving. The situation is very good. Of course, one cannot know now if the flowers already blooming will stand the test of time. In the thirties, many works appeared and few have remained. Today's hundred flowers appear in the social sciences, history, philosophy, literature and particularly in the fields of theory and literary criticism. . . . I think there is too much empty talking! It is good to exchange ideas, but one must stop useless chattering. . . ."

"In the last ten years, the 'gang of four' forbade all literature with the exception of their works! It is absolutely necessary to break these moral and spiritual chains! Those stories linked with the criticism of the 'gang of four' have a certain role to play. We should appreciate and encourage them. But that shouldn't be the end of it. One must still go further to reflect on the new things in our society, the new struggles. . . . For that, it all takes time."

Then he made some reference to the trips organized by the Writers' Union for the benefit of writers. As president of the Writers' Union he has declared that if they wish they can go where they choose, to the countryside or to a factory, to write and participate in manual work. . . . "It helps writers to find their roots."

Dusk fell gently. Full of warmth and enthusiasm, Mao Tun showed no trace of tiredness. We had the impression he could have carried on talking with us several more hours. Through the window, the light lingered, caressing the wall and shining on the face of Lu Hsun in the centre of a porcelain plate hanging on the wall.

Wu Po-hsiao

Reminiscences of Yen-an

A Spinning-Wheel

The year I left Yen-an, the Party revolutionary base, I left behind some books and a spinning-wheel which I had used there. I often thought of my old wheel in later years, and each time my heart ached as if for an old friend on the battle-field.

It was an ordinary spinning-wheel. I say that because its frame, vanes and spindles were the same as those generally used by the peasants and was like the hundreds and thousands of spinning-wheels in Yen-an. In fact all the Yen-an people, whether government workers, teachers or students, commanders or soldiers, all spun in their spare time. The spinning-wheel was an intimate companion like the gun in battle, the plough in the fields or the book and pen in study.

In Yen-an, spinning-wheels actually helped us in our fight against the enemy. It was in the forties, at the worst period, when the Kuomintang reactionaries and the Japanese aggressors together

unleashed an anti-Communist offensive to blockade the Shensi-Kansu-Ningsia border area in an attempt to corner us. Everyone responded to Chairman Mao's slogan of "ample food and clothing through self-reliance". Eventually our army and people crushed our enemies. The people in Yen-an and other anti-Japanese bases not only had enough to eat, but also were warmly clad. Thus they were able to end the War of Resistance Against Japan in triumph. Land reclamation for growing crops and vegetables guaranteed a plentiful food supply, while spinning cotton and wool ensured clothing.

We knitted woollen sweaters and wove woollen cloth. With cotton, we made thread and wove cloth. Some of our clothes and shoes were made with the material we spun ourselves or were provided by other comrades in exchange for our helping in other work. Our troops in Yen-an could even supply themselves with army uniforms with the cloth they produced in the intervals between fighting, drilling, political study and literacy classes.

We felt very comfortable in our grey homespun uniforms, rough, natural-coloured sweaters, gloves and straw sandals, and took great care of them. Hating to throw away an old worn coat, we instead washed and mended it, wearing it year after year. Provided our clothes were clean, the more simple our dress, the better we felt. Western-style suits, leather shoes and bright clothes were only for actors and actresses when they performed on stage. The mere sight of such clothes at other times was offensive, and no one would dream of wearing them! Our idea of beauty was more natural. Clothes should be simple and neat.

Spinning was hard work. If you spun for a long time, your arms and body ached. Apart from the economic necessity, it was interesting to spin in the periods between our study and work. There was a certain satisfaction in seeing the long, fine woollen or cotton yarn being produced by your own efforts. The moving wheel and revolving spindle seemed to be competing with each other, humming a tune. The rhythmic sound was harmonious and sweet.

It demanded skill. If you turned the wheel too slowly or yanked the yarn too quickly, the yarn would break, or, vice versa, the yarn

would knot. It took some skill and a lot of patience, effort and perseverance to co-ordinate the two operations. A beginner didn't know how to use his muscles, perspiring profusely as the yarn knotted. An impatient spinner, trying to join the broken ends of the yarn, would get angry and feel like smashing his wheel. That was useless. Anger couldn't solve the problem. The wheel remained there unmoved, until the spinner had calmed down. Then, his left hand co-ordinating with his right with the correct pressure and speed, out would come the yarn from between his thumb and forefinger like a bright ribbon from a magician's hat. The yarn seemed more like one ready-made than a product of his own work.

An experienced spinner could spin in the light of a tiny flame or even dim moonlight. The yarn winding round the spindle would become thicker and thicker until it began to bulge like a ripe fat peach. Indeed, to take the yarn down from the spindle was rather like picking ripe fruit from a tree. No material comforts can compare to the fruits of your own labour. At that moment, even those who earlier had felt like breaking their wheels now grew attached to them. Such an attachment was like that of a victorious cavalryman to his horse or a fine archer to his bow.

There were several positions one could assume in spinning. You could sit on a rush mat or a low stool, or you could stand by the raised wheel. In the latter position you had to move backwards and forwards, arms outstretched like a crane unfolding its wings. In this way, you could move more freely and draw out the yarn farther. Engrossed in your work, it was hard to tell whether you were working, dancing or doing physical exercises.

In order to raise production, we experimented and made several innovations, applying the theory of friction. To accelerate the revolving spindle, we added an accelerating gear between the wheel and the spindle, thus semi-mechanizing the operation. Most of the wheels were made by amateur carpenters, who had formerly been spinners. The accelerator therefore was the result of collective effort.

We constantly reviewed our experiences. Wool and cotton

spinning required different conditions. Wool should be fluffy and dry, whereas cotton should be smooth and damp. The puffed wool should be lapped, while cotton should be made into slivers and needed a certain heat and humidity to dry and damp it. This technical knowledge could never have been obtained without practice.

In order to exchange experiences and encourage production, competitions were often held. Up to a hundred spinners and their wheels would gather to compete. They were given a certain time in which to work, and then their spinning was judged for both its quality and quantity. Prizes such as a spinning-wheel, a towel, a cake of soap or some notebooks were then given to the winners. It was regarded as a very great honour to be cited as a top-grade wool or cotton spinner.

The competition was sometimes held in a meeting hall, in front of the cave-homes, or at the river-bank at the foot of the hill. The most magnificent setting was on the latter. Perhaps the scene looked rather like an ancient general reviewing his troops with all the competitors lined up. But the atmosphere was jubilant. Imagine the scene: the earth was our mill; the valley our workshop; the ground our mat; and the sky our roof. Where else in the world was there such a scale of light industry?

In neat rows were the spirited spinners with their wheels. The order was given. The wheels hummed in unison. It seemed as if cavalry horses were charging. When the competition ended, all the participants felt the joy of victory, no matter how much each one had spun or if he had been awarded a prize or not.

We were self-reliant, working with our hands. Spinning not only guaranteed clothing for our people, but also taught us this ancient craft. It showed us that work is a necessity of life. We also came to understand that working for oneself was less important than doing something beneficial for everyone, and we felt very happy working for the collective.

That's why I recall the spinning-wheel, and when I do it's as if I am remembering one of my old friends. I think back to those days in Yen-an, where working directly under the leadership of the Central Party Committee and Comrade Mao Tsetung, we

united as one in our study, labour, friendship and the warmth of our large revolutionary family. We really felt united, alert, earnest and full of life. Although our material life was poor and difficult, it was nothing compared to the rich spiritual life we enjoyed. There was a real pleasure in overcoming difficulties with our idealism, determination and optimism.

Cave Dwellings

If you have ever lived in a cave dwelling, you may find that the longer you inhabit it, the more you like it. It is like the sentiment expressed by the ancient poet, Tao Yuan-ming:

“Stray birds pine for their old forests:
Pond fish yearn for their native lakes.”

Their longing deepens with each day. There are some differences, however. You'll take to your cave dwelling immediately and feel at home there on your first night. These homes are attractive because they are simple, unadorned and solid. I've no idea what the rough huts were like in the times of the ancient sage kings Yao and Shun, but if I had to choose between a feudal palace or a cave, frankly I'd choose the latter.

A cave dwelling is quite different from an ordinary house. The mountains in northwest China are mainly loess, and this loess plateau used to be on the seabed in prehistoric times. The layers of loess were formed with mud and sand. The countless ditches, ravines and chasms appeared on the plateau after centuries of soil erosion, when the water formed streams and rivers. Thus the countryside is a network of slopes, mounds, hills and ridges.

Gazing upwards from the foot of a ravine, steep slopes and cliffs loom above. At the top there is usually a plateau some square miles in area. Beside the streams and rivers are strips of silt, which form small or large plains. While such land is fertile enough to grow cereals, the ridges covered with grass and brambles can support livestock.

Cave dwellings are usually dug on the sunny slopes of a hill beside a stream. Part of the entrance serves as the door, part for the window. Above the lintels, two small windows are designed as stars, plum flowers and other traditional designs. Although the light only enters from one side, the caves facing south, east or west have plenty of light. On the windows are pasted scarlet scissor-cuts. Sometimes there are the symbols of twin happiness: to mark a wedding or celebrate the New Year. When the moonlight gleams through the window, it recalls to mind the first line of Li Po's famous poem:

“When I saw the moonlight play beside my bed. . . .”

The earthen *kang* is always built beside the window. It is heated by a stove, the chimney of which passes under the bed and out through the hillside. At sunset smoke spirals above the hills as the animals return from their pastures. The scene is like an idyllic painting. During the war years when we were based in Yen-an, our cave homes combined both living quarters and offices. There was a special atmosphere in those days. There was an unvarnished desk by the window, a crude three-legged side-table and a bench. A niche in the wall served as a bookcase. In a wall recess was a home-made sofa with a straw mat and cushions. Wooden planks were our mattresses, with only a blanket and quilt for covers. Although our material life was spartan, our spiritual life was rich.

On a snowy winter's night, we'd gather in front of our fire, the charcoal having been produced by ourselves. The room was cosy as we boiled some home-produced rose tea in our enamel mugs and ate boiled dates, a native fruit of Northern Shensi. We would eat, drink and talk until the small hours of the morning. In those days everyone liked to work late, reading or writing by the light of an oil lamp until dawn. We would go outside to refresh ourselves, taking deep breaths of the cool air or rubbing our cheeks with snow.

Who of the Yen-an revolutionaries is not acquainted with this story. When Chairman Mao Tsetung was writing his article, *On Protracted War*, his guards would say before going off duty: “The Chairman is still not in bed!” His food would be sent in and would be left untouched until cold. It would be taken away and

reheated several times. Thus we began to realize the popular saying: "Truth comes out of a cave dwelling." And these truths have set the hearts of all revolutionaries ablaze.

Cave dwellings are arranged in rows from the middle to the top of the hillside, looking rather like a huge multi-storey building. Before each row is a narrow path levelled from the excavated earth. If the paths are straight, then they can act as roofs for the lower tiers. Flowers, trees and vegetables are planted on the paths. Melon or gourd vines creep down to screen the doors on the lower levels. At night the scene is particularly beautiful, the lights twinkling like fishing boats at sea. This picturesque arrangement is an architectural feature of Northern Shensi.

There are various kinds of cave dwellings. In the past, the Northern Shensi landlords liked to build their houses in the open in the style of a cave home. They were built with brick or stone and some even had a pathway and storeys. The outer wall was painted, while the inner one was whitewashed or coated with a pale green colour. The floor was either paved or wooden.

Our revolutionary cave dwellings were quite different. We built them because they were both economical and saved manpower. You could build your own one yourself within a fortnight, with only a few tools such as a spade and a wheelbarrow. Air-raided shelters were built at the back. These were connected with each other by a network of tunnels. Tunnel warfare dealt a telling blow at the enemy troops.

On the Central Shensi Plain are underground villages like a beehive. From a distance the villages cannot be located. These contain pastures and enclosures for animals as well as for growing vegetables and flowers. They are solid and save arable land for other purposes. Crops can be grown on the roofs of the caves. Seeing these villages which seem unlike anything else on earth reminds one of the lines of the Ching Dynasty poet, Shen Kun:

"Their dwellings were dug halfway up the hillside;
On top of their roofs went horses and carts."

Chih Pien

"The Wound" Debate

Since the downfall of the "gang of four" two years ago, a number of short stories have appeared depicting the spiritual suffering of those who were suppressed by the gang. These have aroused much interest among literary critics and general readers and provoked debates. *The Wound*, published in this issue, is one such example. Its author, Lu Hsin-hua, is a first-year student in the Chinese Department of Fudan University in Shanghai. After its publication in the Shanghai daily, *Wenbui Bao*, in August 1978, more than a thousand letters and comments were sent to the editorial department or to the author himself. Here are some of the points raised.

First, there was the question of characterization. Some readers felt that the main character, Wang Hsiao-hua, was not typical, since she never doubted her mother's guilt after she had been labelled as a renegade by Chang Chun-chiao, a member of the "gang of four". Although her mother is bitterly persecuted and imprisoned, the daughter is unsympathetic and breaks off all relations with her. Even when her mother writes after the downfall

of the "gang of four" to tell her that her case has been cleared, she still refuses to believe her. Some readers argued that such a rigid attitude in a character like Hsiao-hua was not true to life and therefore unconvincing.

The majority of readers, however, held a different opinion. They felt the story, though set in a family, reflected the larger issues in society: the severe persecution of many old revolutionaries and the damage caused to the minds of the young. Hsiao-hua is an example of one of those young people who were fooled by the gang and who learned the truth through a painful lesson. A well-known writer, Chen Huang-mei, said in his article: "The 'gang of four' have turned many revolutionary families into 'nests of counter-revolutionaries'. Many tragedies occurred. *The Wound* is a true description of this historical fact." He continued: "Characters like Wang Hsiao-hua can be found in every walk of life; besides, our literature can describe certain individual cases, even if they are not typical enough."

Another writer, Wu Chiang, said: "Wang Hsiao-hua is typical, representing the children of veteran revolutionaries persecuted by the gang. She shares the general character of young people from those families as well as having her own individuality. Thus she is a real character who exists in our society today."

While affirming that Hsiao-hua was typical, several literary critics pointed out that her character was not fully developed, and that in this respect the story was weak.

Another point of discussion was whether or not literature should concentrate on the bitterness and suppression of those years. Those against this argued that it revealed the dark sides of our society and was, therefore, literature of exposure.

Most readers did not agree to this. They felt that what was exposed in this story was, in fact, the crimes committed by the "gang of four". The more thorough and deeper such exposure, the greater the educational value of such a story. There was a clear distinction between this and the other type of literature which vilifies the socialist system. Is it not permissible for literature to reflect the harm done by the "gang of four" to our society? They held that it was the task of literature and art to denounce the

gang, and that it was a mistake to lump together such literature and that which attacks socialism.

On the question of a tragic ending, some readers remarked that this story only elicited grief, since Hsiao-hua was unable to see her mother before she died after having been separated for nine years, and that it did not raise the people's morale.

Again the majority of readers thought differently. The writer Wu Chiang wrote: "We must reflect the many tragedies created by the 'gang of four' in our literature and art, so that the people will hate them for what they did. In reflecting reality, such literature can also inspire and encourage our readers. . . . Tragedy can be and needs to be written. It should not be a forbidden area."

Lu Hsin-hua, the writer of the story, also joined in the debate, explaining in his article how and why he came to write this story. This sparked off a further discussion. He had worked both as a peasant and a worker after he had left middle school. He met many people on whom he later based his characters. He said: "Many cadres who were hounded to death by the 'gang of four' and many young people who were taken in by them came to my mind. The idea gradually took shape: how the 'gang of four' had left a deep spiritual wound on our minds. So I created Wang Hsiao-hua not only to elicit sympathy for young people like her, but to show the people how the 'gang of four' had poisoned her mind and to help the readers to cleanse and heal their own wounds."

The debate on *The Wound* not only helped to assess the story but also generated an exchange of views on literary creation. The discussion is continuing. As it deepens, it will doubtless encourage the flourishing of literature and criticism. In such ways the policy of "letting a hundred flowers blossom and a hundred schools of thought contend" is being carried out.

Pu Wei-chin

New Ornamental Porcelain Produced by Cheng Ko

Recently an exhibition of artistic porcelain sponsored by the Central Institute of Arts and Crafts was held in Peking to display over a thousand examples of the work of Professor Cheng Ko of the institute and some young potters.

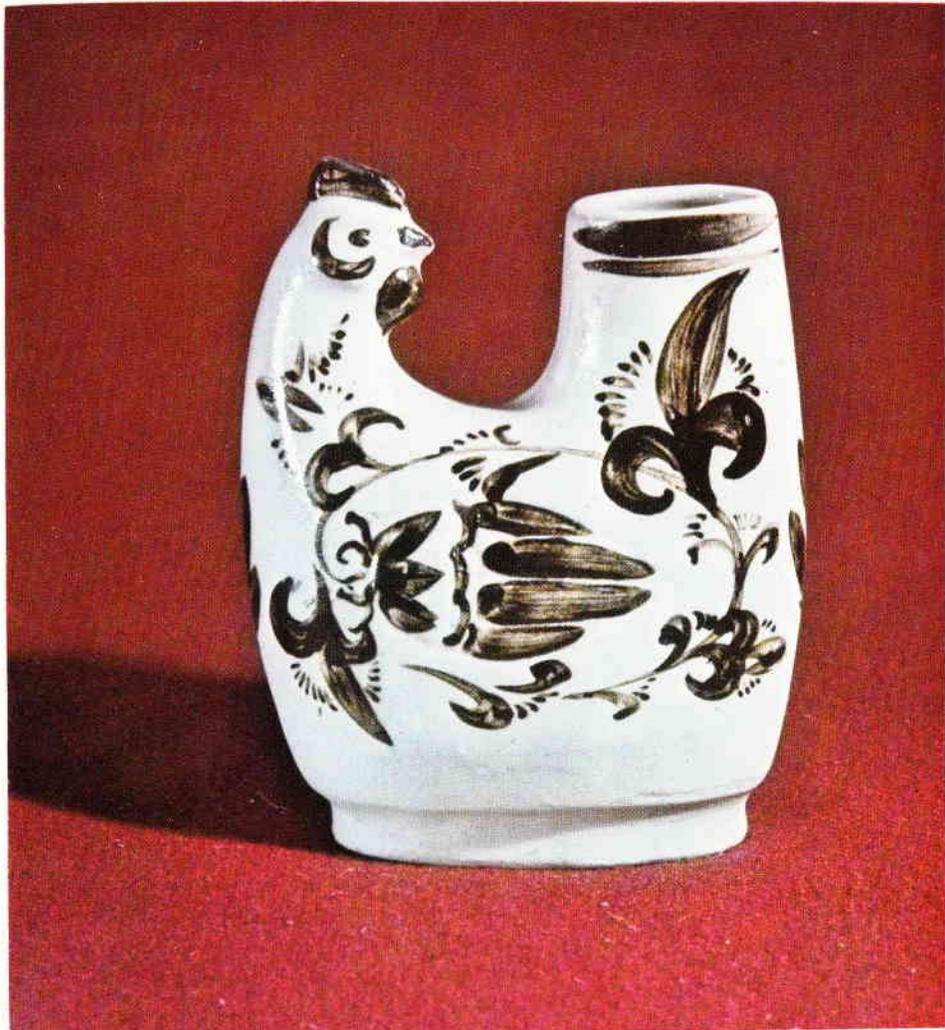
The first section exhibited animals with glazes of different colours, which revealed the artists' skill in fixing upon and stressing the subjects' chief characteristics. A polychrome owl, for instance, virtually rectangular in shape with a slightly convex breast, was the personification of an owl yet had the naivety of a chubby baby. A blue pelican with its huge beak sunk on its bosom was not only a true portrayal of its outward form but vividly conveyed that the bird was taking a rest. Not confining himself to modelling the more common postures of poultry, the artist made a hen, circular in shape, its neck tucked under its feathers as if roosting in the cold.

All the animal figures had distinctive features. Some highly animated ones were three squirrels on a pine, climbing monkeys,

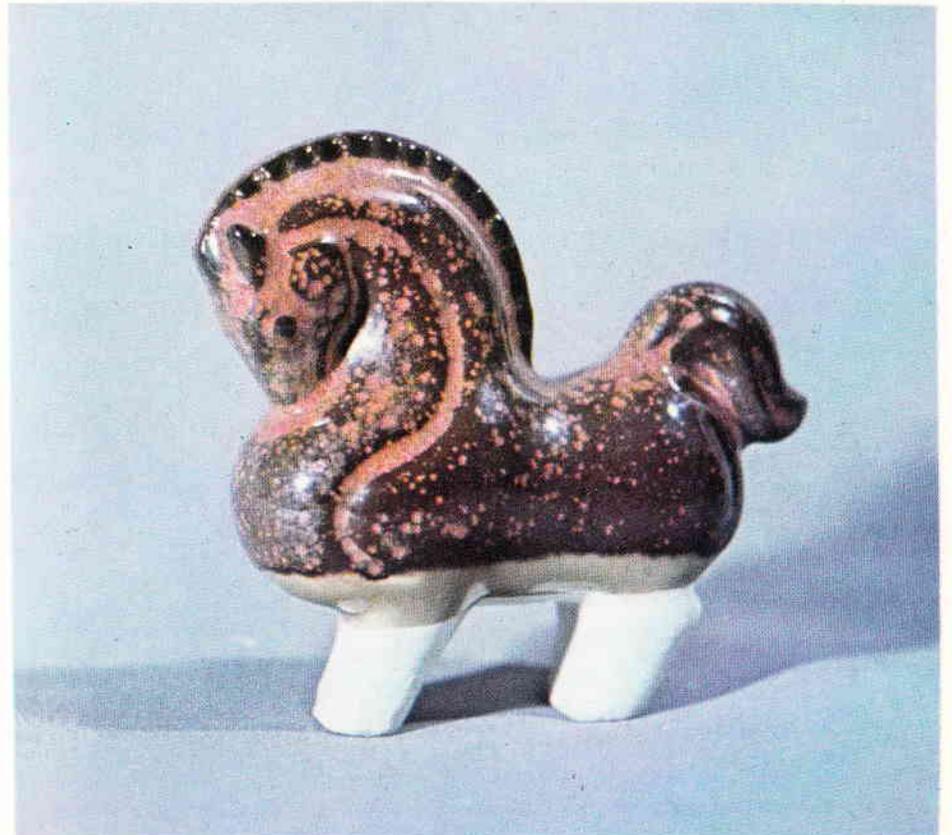


Vase

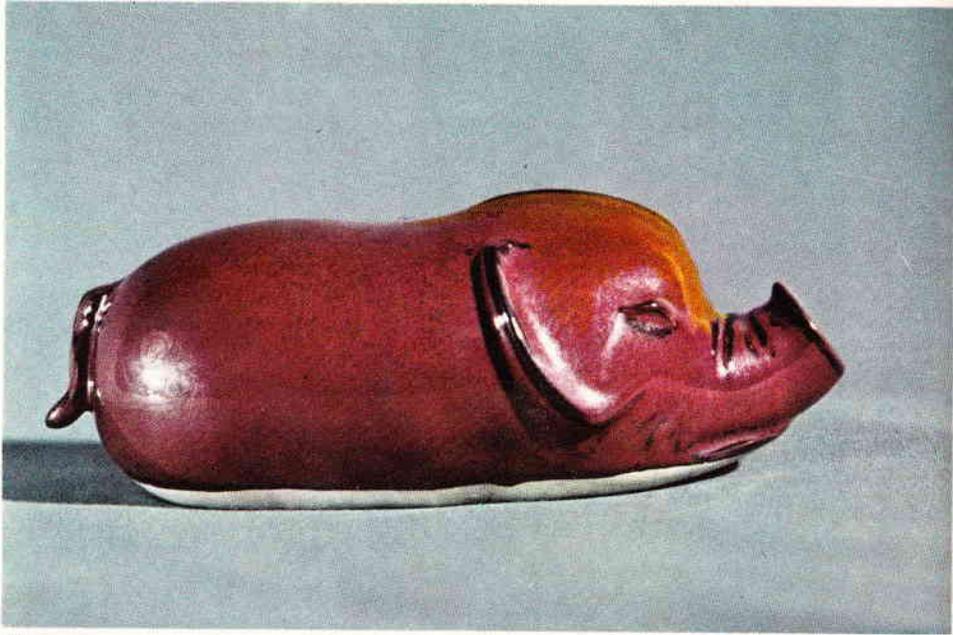
Ornamental Porcelain Ware



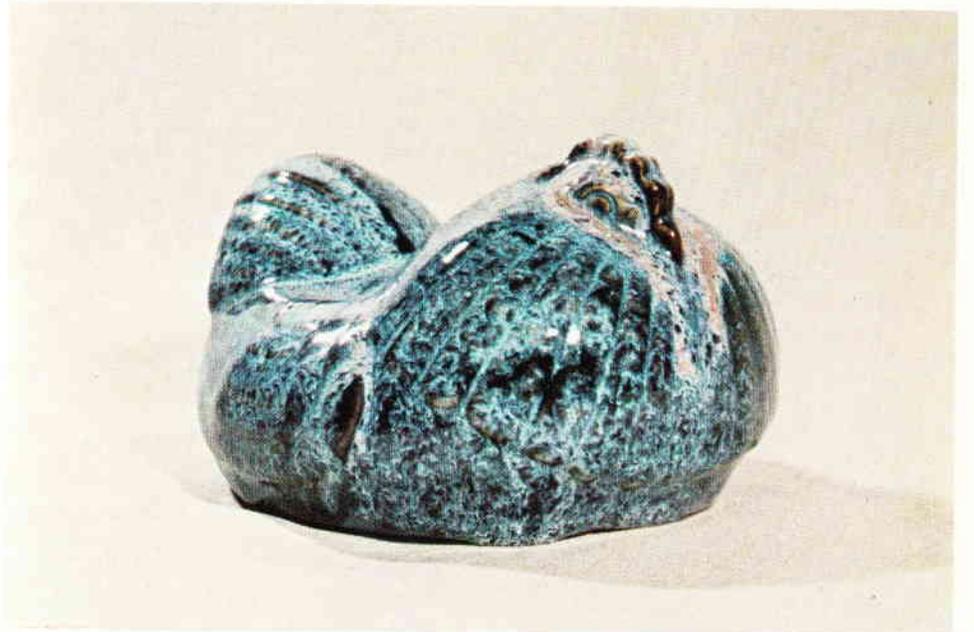
Hen-shaped container



Colt



Pig



Hen

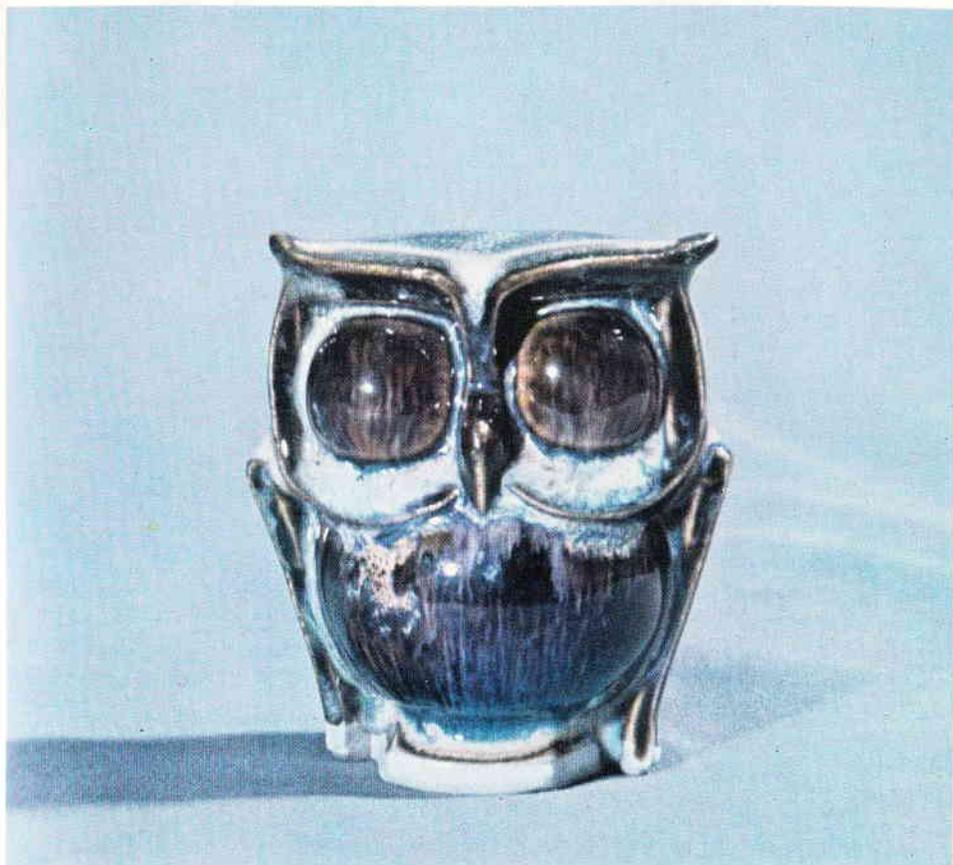


Fox



Pelican

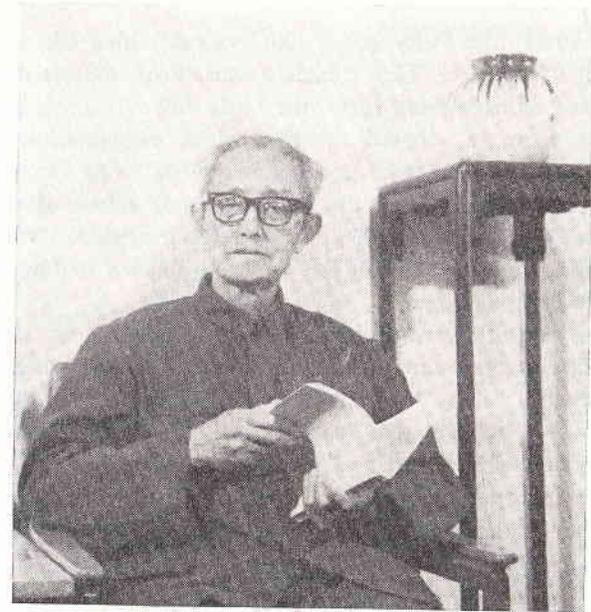
Camel



Owl



Flagon



Cheng Ko

flying storks, galloping colts and gambolling fawns. The appeal of others lay in the vivid portrayal of the nature of such animals as the fierce tiger, crafty fox, mischievous monkey, innocent cat and gentle rabbit.

The second section displayed teapots, cups, drinking vessels and ash-trays. These utilitarian objects were imaginatively designed. Thus a little coral-coloured teapot combined stability with elegance; a camel-shaped flower vase was charmingly life-like. Using traditional methods, the potters introduced fresh models and colours. Some works were incised, others carved in relief.

Some exhibits were derived from the Tzu Chou ware of the Sung Dynasty (960-1279), noted for its simple forms and striking contrasts between black and white. Embodying traditional characteristics, the vases, bowls, basins, dishes and plates enamelled with flowers and birds are original and highly decorative.

The colours of these new wares are distinctive; black like

ebony, white like jade, green like emerald, blue like malachite and red like blood. This creates a variety of impressive effects: the glazed animals seem furry, the birds downy. To heighten the effect, the artists adopted the method of exaggeration used by the village craftsmen who produce clay toys. On one terracotta vase for instance, making use of the natural colour of the body, the artist splashed a green glaze and let it trickle. The stripes of the reddish-brown biscuit left exposed make a striking contrast with the lustrous green.

These exhibits were designed and baked jointly by Cheng Ko and eight young potters in Hantan, Hopei Province when he paid a two-month visit to the Tzu Chou kilns there.

Cheng Ko believes that teaching techniques must be combined with ceramic production and research. Artists have to go deep into life in order to broaden the range of their subjects. Only when they understand the masses' tastes, can they make popular wares. However, drawing inspiration from life does not mean copying it as can be seen from the amusing pelican, innocent swallow, engaging owl and prowling squirrel.

Innumerable as are the images in life, in artists' eyes they can be divided into two categories: artificial and natural. The former includes buildings, bridges and boats; the latter, mountains, rivers, flowers and weeds and so on. The artists have to be expert in portraying objects in motion, such as birds about to fly, leaping beasts, swimming fish, swaying branches, sailing clouds or curling smoke.

A craftsman and sculptor of the older generation, Cheng Ko went to study in the National College of Fine Arts in Paris in 1927 and became a student of the celebrated sculptor Henry Dropsy. In 1933, returning from France to China, he started teaching in the Central Institute of Fine Arts. After the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, he took part in designing the national emblem and the Martyrs' Memorial in Tien An Men Square in Peking. He has been a teacher for over forty years and trained a number of artists. An indefatigable observer and craftsman, he has made more than ten thousand sketches. Now at the ripe age of seventy, he is still hard at work.

Liu Hu-sheng

"At the Crossroad Inn"

The Chinese theatre has a history of more than a thousand years, with more than three hundred art forms, combining music, dancing, poetry and acrobatics. The traditional operas are renowned for various features such as the singing, dialogue, acting or fighting. During the period of the "gang of four" these traditional pieces loved by the Chinese people were vilified as feudal and prohibited. Since the downfall of the gang, some fine traditional operas have been re-staged. One of these is *At the Crossroad Inn*, an opera with a famous combat scene.

During the Northern Sung Dynasty (AD 960-1127), General Chiao Chan was exiled to Shamen Island, as a result of a frame-up by the evil minister Wang Chin-jo. On the orders of the Commander-in-Chief Yang Yen-chao, Chiao Chan's good friend Jen Tang-hui secretly followed to protect him. One night both stayed at a crossroad inn. Jen's repeated inquiries about Chiao's whereabouts aroused the suspicions of the innkeeper, who mistook Jen for a hired assassin sent by Wang. A fierce fight ensued between Liu Li-hua, the innkeeper, and Jen.

On the brightly-lit stage, the only props are a table and chair. The actors, however, give the impression that they are fighting in the dark. The combat between the two men consists of wrestl-

ing for the sword in the dark, sword fighting and hand-to-hand combat.

The scene begins after Jen has inspected the inn and found nothing suspicious. Hopping on to the table, he falls asleep, his head on his arms. Sword in hand, Liu opens the door and gropes his way over to Jen. His hand touches Jen's left foot and he feels his way to the sword at Jen's back. Pulling it out, he awakens Jen, who stands up agilely on the table. Liu slashes at Jen but misses. Then he sits down on the table slashing the air around him, wondering what to do. Jen meanwhile gropes about following the movements of the glittering swords. Suddenly they come face to face, peering at each other. Jen strikes out with his fist, knocking Liu down. Both scramble for the swords. Regaining his, Jen ferociously attacks, while Liu nimbly defends. Liu's sword is



Hand-to-hand
combat

knocked out of his hand while Jen slashes left and right. Fearlessly, Liu kicks aside Jen's sword, and the two wrestle unarmed.

Fighting in the dark, both listen carefully to each other's movements before striking out or kicking in the air. Both use the table and chair as weapons. They lift the table at the same time and, while Liu is wondering what is going on, Jen drops the table on Liu's toe. It hurts so much that Liu rushes out of the room. Hearing the commotion, Chiao runs towards the room while Jen chases after Liu. The three now fight. The scene closes when Liu goes and fetches a lamp clarifying the situation. Thus the opera ends in laughter.

The combat in *At the Crossroad Inn* develops step by step, thrillingly and with much humour. It shows the heroism of the characters who disdain evil and treachery to uphold justice.



Sword fighting

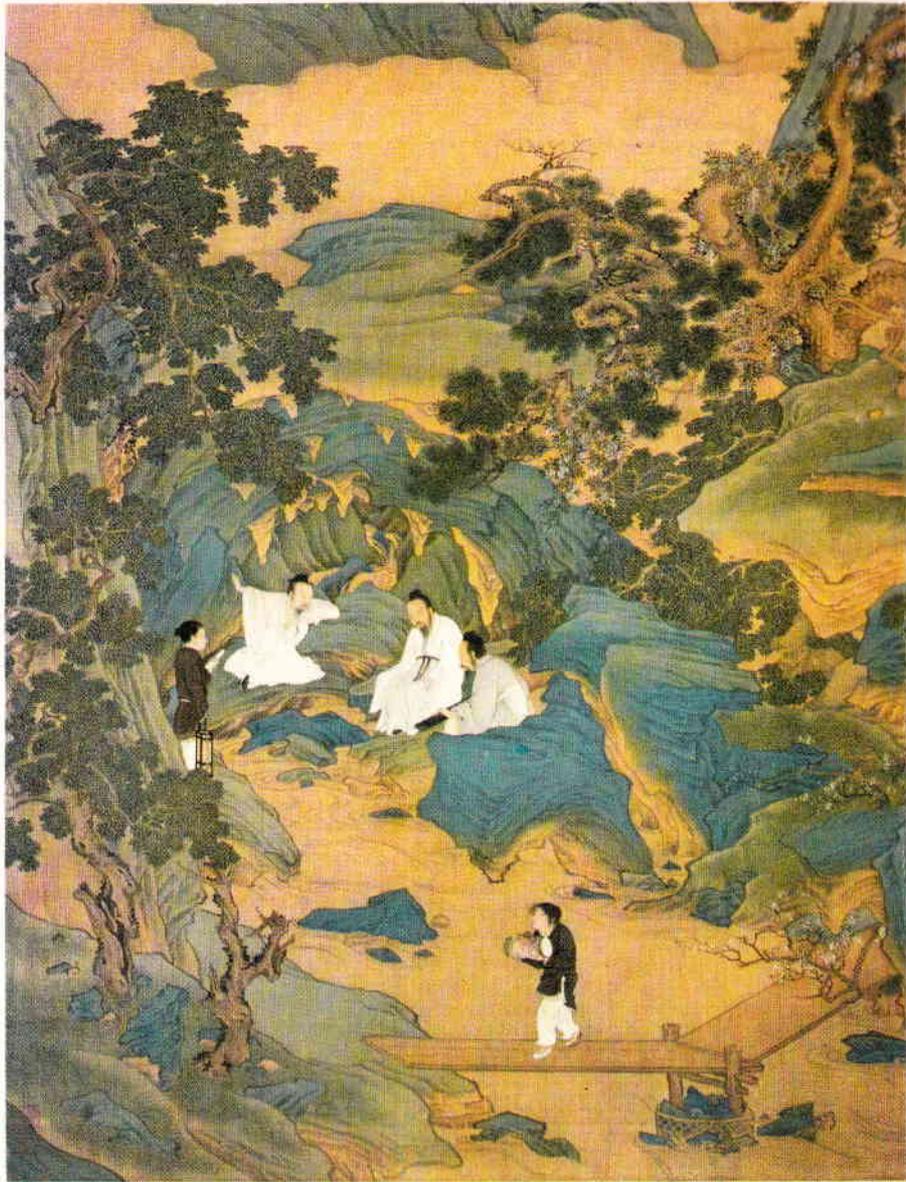
Chang Jung-jung

Chou Ying and His Painting "Peach Dream-land"

Chou Ying (?-1552) was a talented painter of humble origin in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) whose paintings had a unique style.

Originally a lacquerer, Chou Ying loved to paint when he was still a boy and showed remarkable talent. Chou Chen, a well-known artist at that time, admired young Chou Ying's gifts and taught him painting. Chou Ying copied many ancient paintings, studied the techniques of his predecessors and took over those which he appreciated, gradually evolving his own distinctive style. He and three other famous artists Shen Chou, Tang Yin and Wen Cheng-ming were known as the "Four Ming Masters". The other three were literati who always wrote poems and inscriptions on their paintings, the painting and the inscription offsetting each other. Chou Ying did not employ this device, and he became celebrated due solely to his superb painting.

Chou Ying was a master-hand at painting landscapes, figures and pavilions. The painting *Peach Dream-land*, a good example



Based on the State Council's decision to use the Chinese phonetic alphabet to standardize the romanization of Chinese names and places from January 1, 1979, our magazine will begin in the next issue to use this new system.

of his landscapes, was based on the poem *Peach-blossom Spring* by the Tsin Dynasty poet Tao Yuan-ming (AD 365-427). The poem is about a fisherman who loses his way and wanders into a dreamland where people who have escaped from the wars at the end of the Chin Dynasty (221-206 BC) are living together in blissful tranquillity. The landscape shows white clouds floating among looming mountains, green pines and creepers on the slopes, pavilions and towers nestling among the hills, and a stream flowing between rugged rocks at the foot of precipices. It is spring time, peach blossoms are about to bloom, and white clouds are drifting overhead. In this peaceful scene a recluse plays a lute, a traveller strolls with his bundle along a wooden bridge and a leisurely scholar gazes into the distance. All this adds liveliness to the quiet forest.

The focus of the painting is the group of people in the lower part. The lutanist is completely immersed in his playing, while his listeners are carried away by his music. One sits upright listening raptly, lost in thought, another rests one hand on a cliff and leans forward to watch the strings. Even the page with a basket listens intently. These figures are so vividly portrayed that we seem to hear the melodious strains of the lute as well as the rustling of trees and the gurgling of water.

Someone once wrote of Chinese landscapes that "a painting one foot long conjures up one thousand *li*." This is true of Chou Ying's *Peach Dream-land*. He uses a rectangular composition, making the mountains tower in the distance. The landscape is intersected into three parts by white clouds which at the same time integrate the whole, making the mountains look more magnificent. All the objects shown are beautiful and distinctive, so disposed as to form a harmonious composition.

The main colour used is green, using malachite and other mineral colours for the mountains and rocks, the trees and foliage. Skilful use is made of white powder applied to the silk to depict the white clouds and water. The pavilions nestling among the mountains, the flowing stream, the figures, trees, hills and rocks are very lifelike and have a strong artistic impact.

"The Tien An Men Poems" Published

The Tien An Men Poems, containing more than six hundred widely circulated poems mourning Premier Chou En-lai, was recently published by the People's Literature Publishing House, its title written by Chairman Hua Kuo-feng in his own calligraphy.

April 5, 1976 was *Chingming*, the traditional Chinese festival for mourning the dead. The people of Peking defying the "gang of four's" prohibition, took wreaths to Tien An Men Square and wrote thousands of revolutionary poems in praise of Premier Chou. Many of the poems denouncing the gang were pasted up around the square and then circulated rapidly all over China.

This collection is in three parts. Part One comprises poems in the classical style and couplets; Part Two, poems in the modern style; and Part Three, memorial speeches, pledges and prose poems. It also contains many valuable photographs.

The volume was compiled by a group of teachers of the Chinese department at the Peking No. 2 Foreign Languages Institute under the pseudonym "Tung Huai-chou", meaning "All Mourning Premier Chou En-lai". They wrote a preface for it entitled *The Call to Arms*.

A New Play by Tsao Yu

A new historical drama, *Wang Chao-chun*, by the famous playwright Tsao Yu, was published recently in the magazine *People's Literature*.

Wang Chao-chun tells the story of a 19-year-old lady-in-waiting at the Han court, Wang Chao-chun, renowned for her beauty, who in 33 BC left the palace to marry the Khan of the Huns in the north to foster friendship between different Chinese nationalities. Historically it shows the development of China as a multi-national country. Wang Chao-chun in Tsao Yu's play is a courageous intelligent woman, conscious of her role to foster friendship between different nationalities.

To ensure the play's authenticity, Tsao Yu did a tremendous amount of historical research, paying two visits to Inner Mongolia and Sinkiang. Many of the folk legends there related to Wang Chao-chun provided him with valuable material for his play.

Sinkiang Songs and Dances Performed in Peking

A Sinkiang song and dance troupe consisting of teams from twelve different regions, municipalities, counties and autonomous districts gave performances recently in Peking. The artists came from eight different nationalities including Uighur, Kazakh, Han, Mongolian, Hui, Khalkhas, Uzbek and Sibo. Items such as *Welcoming the Bride*, *Song of the Orchard* and *Rejoicing at the Foot of the Flaming Mountain* are full of local flavour and colour.

Schubert Concert Held in Peking

A Schubert concert was given jointly by the Central Philharmonic Society and the Central Conservatory of Music to mark the 150th anniversary of the death of this famous Austrian composer. The programme included his *Serenade*, *The Trout Quintet*, *The Unfinished Symphony* and *The Overture to Rosamunde*.

Concert Given by Iranian Pianist

The noted Iranian pianist Novin Afrouz recently visited China and gave a concert in Peking. She played Beethoven's *Eroica Varia-*

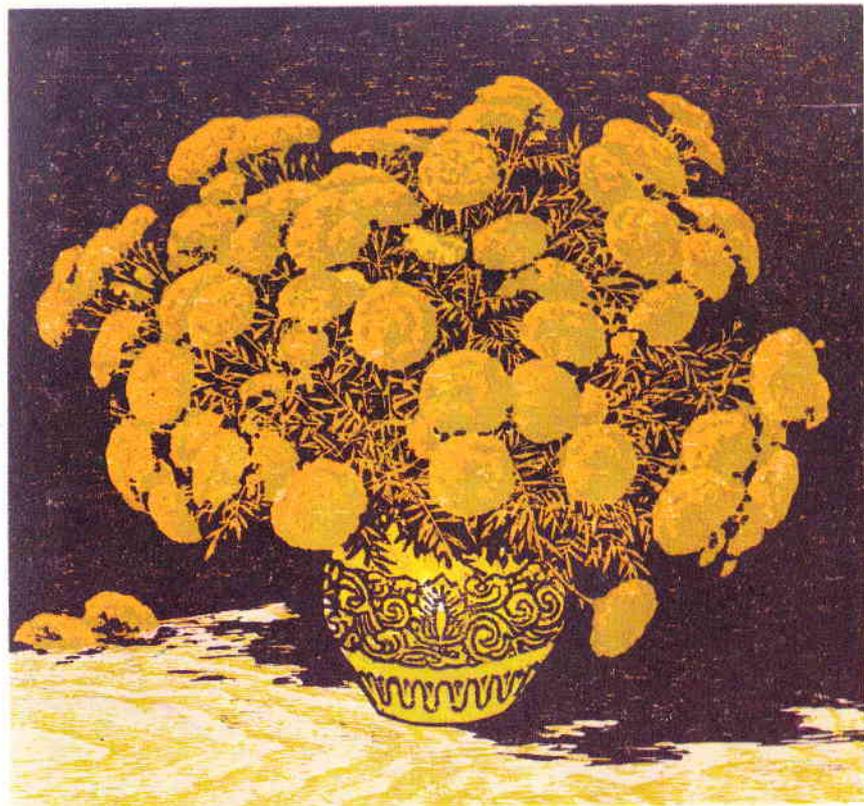
tion, six other variations and Tchaikovsky's *Piano Concerto in G Major* accompanied by the Chinese Philharmonic Society Symphony Orchestra. Her elegant performance was well received.

The New Peking Academy of Dance

The Peking Academy of Dance was formally opened recently. It has four departments of choreography and directing, performing, teaching and dance theory. The school will concentrate on contemporary dancing, but will also teach classical ballet and traditional Chinese dances.

Revival of a Hangchow Art Society

The noted Hsiling Seal-Engravers' Society, which stands by the scenic West Lake in Hangchow, was founded in 1903, specializing in the study of stone rubbings, seal-engraving and paintings. Forced to close down by the "gang of four", many items in its valuable collection were lost or damaged. After the downfall of the gang, it resumed its work and has been formally recognized as an authorized publishing house. It will edit and publish art reproductions and art books.



Chrysanthemums (woodcut)

by Tu Ying-chiang



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