

Lynx: A Literary Magazine



**University of Colorado Denver /
International College Beijing
Spring 2014**

From the Editor:

Welcome to the first-ever issue of *Lynx*, a literary magazine published at the International College Beijing. Our title refers partially to the University of Colorado Denver's mascot, but also, in a homophonic sense, to the *links* we hope to create – between countries (China and the United States) languages (Chinese and English), and campuses (in Denver and Beijing).

Writing is a bold act, and the fact that our students are writing in their second language makes that act all the more impressive. While faculty editors did suggest minor grammatical changes, we did our best not to alter our writers' original authorial voices.

Thank you for supporting the arts at ICB, and thank you for reading our magazine. We hope you enjoy it!

Rob Vogt, Faculty Editor
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“A 365-Day Love” by Wu Jingxi

“May 13rd, 2010. Rainy. This is the 187th day since I broke up with Keith. Still sad. He used to pick me up after class on rainy days. We liked sitting next to the French windows, drinking a cup of thick mocha, reading silently while listening the concerto of rain against the window...” Typing the last word, Irene looked out the window and reached out to touch the rain. She sighed, turned back to the screen sadly, and pressed “send”.

Irene, a quiet college girl, lived in a small town. Like many girls, she had previously been involved in a romantic relationship. The young gentleman she loved, named Keith, liked to wear a dark blue baseball jacket. When he smiled, she could see his even teeth. But now, all she had were those sweet memories. She missed Keith’s curly brown hair, but she couldn’t touch it anymore. She missed the temperature of his palm, but she couldn’t feel that again. She also missed the moments when she was sat on the back seat of his bicycle, but maybe that seat already had a new owner.

Irene became even quieter than before. She liked to write a diary-type blog. She wrote about her memories of Keith with sadness, and wrote her fantasies about reuniting with deep hope. “I admit, I still love him now,” she wrote. “His gentle eyes still appear in my dreams. He holds my hand, walking through the lavender flowers in the spring...”

Days passed, and Irene logged into her blog again. Unintentionally, she noticed that there was a new, strange visitor who had appeared on her homepage. He didn’t have a name; even his personal picture was not real. Irene frowned, because her blog was only known by her intimate friends. Who could that mysterious man be? Irene felt nervous. Quickly, she thought of all people she knew, but there was no possible result.

The message box popped up at the bottom of the screen: “You have a new comment.” Irene promptly clicked the box and entered the comment page. The comment under her new diary entry made her even more confused, and a little bit panicked.

“Love never dies.”

Every letter of this short sentence was like cold ice surrounding Irene’s heart, making her tremble. Then, she felt hotter and hotter, like she was bathed in

flames. *Is that him?* she asked herself, but then denied the possibility. They had not been in contact since breaking up. Irene checked the IP address of the mysterious visitor, but it still no provided result.

Feeling confused and worried, Irene continued her diary: “July 19th, 2010. Sunny/Windy. The 254th day since I broke up with Keith. I am not as sad as before, but I still miss him. A man visited my blog and left a message for me. His words made me think of Keith. Keith told me that when the lovers look into each other’s eyes, they see what they mean to each other. If he shows up in front of me someday, he will know me...” Finishing the diary, Irene lay back in her reclining chair, drifting to sleep with those vague fantasies.

* * *

Many days later, winter came again. Irene still received mysterious comments, which were getting on her nerves. She pored over those comments and tried to find some clues about the mysterious commenter. One day, while she was staring at the screen with rapt attention, the sudden voice of the message box startled her.

It was a chat window. Someone on the blog wanted to talk to her.

“Strange,” Irene said to herself, opening the chat window. In a matter of seconds, her eyes lit up.

It was a long message from the mysterious man.

“Dear Irene, I read your diaries. You wrote everything about a young man. I can feel you really love him, but that man is bad. He must regret what he did which makes you sad. If I were him, I would come back to you again. The thing is, will you accept that?”

Surprised, Irene took a deep breath, typing with trembling fingers, “Who are you? How you know my name? Why do you ask me that?”

“I read your diaries many times,” he continued, ignoring all her questions. “You said you wish he could appear in front of you, you wish he still loves you. The thing is, if he really appears, will you accept him?”

Irene lingered in a fog. She couldn’t say a word, and her fingers were too stiff to type. A strong instinct was telling her the man she missed day and night had silently come back to her life. Suddenly, there was a knock on the window. Turning her head, Irene saw a face with a tender smile. The dark blue baseball jacket looked exceptionally good in the winter sun.

Irene gasped and blinked back tears, hardly believing what she saw. The man outside her window was waving to her, trying to say something, but all Irene could hear in her heart was a strong and loud voice: “Keith is back! He is standing outside my window now!”

Rushing out of the house, Irene couldn’t control her tears. She walked step by step towards him, looking into his eyes. The young man’s eyes looked like a shimmering lake, with love flowing out continuously.

He held out his hand and gently touched her hair. “Irene, you know my heart now. I should have come back earlier. Luckily, it’s not too late. Your dream from your diaries will come true, I promise. Irene, do you know what day today is? This is the day we broke up one year ago, but my love has never died. Now, I’m back. The thing is, will you accept me again?”

At that moment, a huge weight dropped from Irene’s heart. Smiling through her tears, she took his hand, writing “I will” on his broad, warm palm. It was the afternoon, and the sunshine dispersed through the cold air. The breeze blew Irene’s beautiful long hair. The difficult time for Irene had passed.

“November 11th, 2010, sunny. The 365th day since I broke up with Keith. Also, the first day we are together again. I spent 365 days missing him, and it took him 365 days to summon up the courage to come back to me. I will keep writing my blog, but the sad stories are coming to an end...” Typing the last word, Irene stood up, walking to the sleeping young man on the sofa. Kneeling down gently, she touched his curly brown hair and laid her head on his heart. Their peace would never be broken again.

“Kent State Shooting” by Gou Wenlu

Death comes suddenly, without any omen. A boy falls down on the ground. A girl is shocked by that action. She cries and cannot believe what has just happened before her eyes. Last second, they chatted with each other happily. This second, he keeps silent forever. Death comes at the speed of light. It does not give people a second to react. People surrounding them don't seem to realize what has happened. They walk, talk, and think about other things. However, death takes over that boy's life in a common moment on a common day.

** Note – The author wrote this text after seeing John Filo's Pulitzer Prize-winning photo of the tragic shootings at Kent State University in 1970.*



“Floating”
by Mu Yajie

“Living in the Blues” by Chai Liang (Liana)

I’ve been learning English for over 17 years, and among all skills I have or I may use in the future, English has been the most frequently used tool in my life. Although practicing English has already been set in my mind as a routine, to the point where I even took it for granted that English would be used in many situations in my life, there are still several moments that impressed me so deeply that I’ll never forget them. One of those romantic literacy moments I experienced was when I watched a live blues show for the first time.

I forgot all the details that happened before I opened the bar’s heavy wooden door, including how I got the sudden invitation and how I got there, but everything in the bar is safely stored in my memory. The room was dark, lit by alternating colors of deep-ocean-blue and copper-mine-purple. The tables were almost deserted, dotted with just a few cups of Lime Margarita or Tequila. The bar counter, the shiniest and the quietest place, smelled like a mixture of glass and oak barrel. I couldn’t detect the trace of alcohol among the components of the smell – it wasn’t

distinct – since it had simply drifted over into the air molecules and dominated my nasal cavity. I was immersed in a totally novel atmosphere that I'd never experienced before, wandering in a dream full of exotic decoration, and basking under the gaze of green or blue eyes.

Suddenly, the air stirred with some sound, subtle but extraordinary. The rhythm emphasized by the bass was knocking against my heart, the melody twisted by the guitar was drilling into my ear, and the lyrics lamenting from the singer's hoarse throat was perplexing my mind. Just at that moment I had an impulse to cry, although I heard nothing that was literally sad. I looked over to the other side of the bar and found that my friend Tony was beckoning me toward a seat among a group of musicians in the same direction as a mini-stage. I had met him just a few times before, and we had become platonic friends.

I wandered over toward my seat, pointed to the musicians, and asked Tony, "Who are they?"

He bought me a glass of Bailey's Irish Cream and answered me, "They're just some brothers."

I was confused since Tony was 72 and it seemed like the musicians were in their 30s. It was not until he started subconsciously humming along with the

band that I understood what he meant. Tony is a foreigner here in Beijing. The blues resonated with his culture and his nostalgia. At that time, I was equipped with a pitifully poor cultural and historical background of American music. I wasn't able to recognize the blues lyrics long enough to comprehend their meaning, although I used to boast of my outstanding ability to listen to and speak English.

I was really frustrated at that moment, when Tony, along with all the other blonde-haired and white-skinned people, was intoxicated by the floating musical notes. I felt lonely, and I shivered because of a sudden nip in the air. I could recognize the infectiousness of the blues thanks to my basic music knowledge, but obviously I was excluded from the emotional bond everyone else was sharing, linked by their common understanding of language. I saw their cultural lives in the blues, from the remote history to the distant future.

That moment was like a processed photograph, one which I mounted carefully in my memory. From then on I started to pay more attention to all the cultural details connected to language itself, since I was enlightened that literacy is not limited just to the abilities of reading and writing, but also the words'

cultural significance. I believe that one day, I can experience living in the blues as well.



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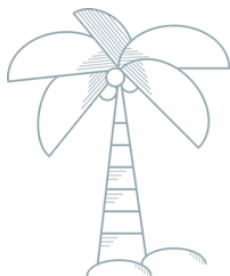
**I SAW HER WEEP ,
A BLUE TEAR,
TRICKLING DOWN HER CHEEK,
STREAMING OVER
SCRATCHES ON HER SKIN.**



**Blahs teemed with her eyes.
She wept,
For losing “Humans”.
Anyway, she loved them.
Humans amused themselves with new favorites:
“Money” “Ambition” “Prosperities”.
I saw her shunned bitter tears.**



**I saw her weeping into the Ocean,
A colossal derrick roaring.
The monster's claw
Delving into the her tissue,
Drumming up her vital fluid,
To satisfy human's undying Hedonism.**



**I saw her weep,
Welling up in the desert.
A tiny tree endured,
Craving a drop of water.
A lumberjack came,
Blocking my view.
Shadows blurred.
Wind blew up grains of sand,
Leaving the world without
Any green.**



**I saw her weep,
Gliding through chunky haze,
Stumbling into a bustling city.
Skyscrapers shielded Everything.
Giant chimneys disgorged dark Evil smog.**



Even air stuck.
 A bird leaned against a stone,
 She was lonely.
 Where to go; what to care about?



I saw her weep,
 Bright Tears.
 Left off, nowhere to go.
 Greasy and battered,
 She was desensitized.
 Silent and desperate,
 She heard human grumbles.
 They gurgled limited resources,
 Appalling pollutions,
 Capricious catastrophes.
 They debated on Mars,
 A neighboring planet...
 Iced and immersed
 In immortal blues.

**I SAW HER WEEP,
 THE LAST WEEP,
 A BLUE CRYSTAL,
 STREAMING OVER HER SCARRED HEART.**

“My ‘Blue Mountain’ Home” by Han Zhihong

Blue Mountain is not a real mountain. Instead, it is a small Japanese restaurant that lies in a small alley near my university. And it is also a secret haven for me. This place always makes me conjure up those special memories with my friends and the difficulties I have overcome.

The first time I went to Blue Mountain, it was because my roommates recommended it. They had gone there, and they told me that it was a great restaurant that I should try. I was not aware of how important this place would become for me in the future.

Sitting in Blue Mountain, I always feel cozy and relaxed because of the home-style environment and delicious food. The restaurant is a small place with wooden furnishings. All the wood chairs and tables make it feel natural and fit perfectly with the food.

One of my friends says that the chicken-and-rice at Blue Mountain tastes like a meal cooked by her mother. My favorite dish is a Japanese pancake made with fresh vegetable paste and Thousand Island

dressing. The fresh taste and perfect seasoning release my tension every time I feel like cannot hold up. The place gives me a sense of safety which no other restaurant can give me.

What makes Blue Mountain important to me is all the memories I have had there with the owner and my friends. There was a time when the restaurant closed for several days. I went there three times and even called them, but they just told me that they would not be open that week. At that time, I was not close to the woman who owns the restaurant and had no idea what had happened to her. The only thing I know is that the next time I went there the old man who used to serve food was gone, and the birds and turtles raised in the middle of the restaurant were gone as well.

Later on I heard that the father of the owner had passed away, and she was confronted with great agony. One time, I even saw her quarrel with one of the customers, who blamed her about a dish. She shouted at the men while crying loudly. I felt so sad that I walked over there and talked to the customers. After they left, I appeased the owner and told her how much I like her restaurant and that she should be strong and hold up for her dad.

After that day, I went to Blue Mountain nearly every week. Sometimes just to check up on the owner and chat with her. She recovered after several days, and the birds and turtles returned. She told me that she feels regret and guilt for not taking care of her father, and the restaurant now has become a symbol of the hope her father gave her. For her, listening to the birds singing is like talking to him in the old days. She smiled with tears in her eyes and said that she will be brave and face all the difficulties in life. Not only for herself, but also for her father.

Now, every time I go there she is energetic and affable, chatting with me about her recent life and asking about how I am doing. I learned a lot from her and what we have been through together makes Blue Mountain more like home than just a small restaurant to me. Deep inside, I am aware that no matter how hard my life becomes, as long as I go to Blue Mountain, she will always serve me my favorite pancake and tell me there is nothing to worry about. Blue Mountain represents her hope; somehow, this comforts me.

For me, taking my friends to Blue Mountain has become a habit. I take both old and new friends here because I want them to try my favorite restaurant as

well. In fact, my boyfriend and I ate our first meal together at Blue Mountain. I am glad that he loves it as much as I do. As time goes by, this place has become more and more important in my life.

Sometimes, I also go to Blue Mountain by myself. Enjoying the gentle smell of nature and the delicious taste of a pancake, I think about my life and the meaning of my existence. Watching the female employees work so hard, I understand that even if life is always unpredictable, we should stick to what we want and remember where we started. Just like the woman running the restaurant in her father's memory, I would like to work hard for a happy family as well. As long as we still have love and hope, life is meaningful no matter how hard it is. While tasting the pancake with simplest cabbage and classic salad dressing, I understand that maybe it is the simplest things that last the longest. So maintaining our innocence and treating others benevolently is a great way to achieve happiness and inner peace.

Blue Mountain will always be special to me. I feel so lucky that I have such a secret place. It gives me more courage to face the difficulties in the future and a stronger heart to fight for what I want. I wish everyone could find a "Blue Mountain" of their own.

“Chinese Education System: Giant Meat Grinder”

by Huang Julin

As the TV play "Child's Slave" says: "Chinese education is just like a giant meat grinder, which makes every child become the same sausages."

Although the original ingredients might be different, almost every sausage is the same as the others after 12 years of pressing. In our high school math course, we had to use the "standard" method. In our Chinese courses, our teacher gave us the "standard" explanations of each article. In our history course, we had to memorize the "standard" adjectives to describe an event. Finally, I became a "standard" student. Then, I successfully crossed the single-plank bridge named "University Entrance Exam" – offered only once every year! Tens of thousands of Chinese students took the same adventure, and many of them worked harder than I did. Unfortunately, they fell into the water, failing to get an ideal score. I was one of the lucky ones.

We are ordinary sausages. We can't disobey our parents' dreams, so we just put up a fierce struggle.

We can't disobey the marking criteria of the exam, so we just give up our creativity. Before I began studying at our university, I regarded "literacy" as the knowledge I learned in school, and I hated to study extra knowledge after school. Du Fu was an annoying writer, and so was Lu Xun, because they wrote so many abstract essays and poems I had to analyze! As a result of Chinese culture's refusal to foster creativity, only one Chinese (Mo Yan) has won the Nobel Prize.

While suffering hellish, exam-oriented education, Chinese students hold a faithful belief: "University is a haven of freedom." Chinese university management is extremely loose compared to high school, so students suddenly break free from previous restrictions. Many boys play video games all night, and many girls watch endless TV plays. When studying for exams, they choose to pull "all-nighters". Isn't it ridiculous to allow twelve years blood and sweat to crumble to dust?

We should be aware that school knowledge is not always the same as true knowledge. The goal for Chinese education is to get a diploma. In China, "diploma" can be literally divided into 2 words – "literacy ability" and "proof". It is evident that a

diploma cannot reflect one's literacy ability gained in an exam-oriented educational system. Both Steve Jobs and Bill Gates were college dropouts, but that is because school knowledge couldn't satisfy their intellectual needs. Even ordinary people like me are aware that the knowledge from school is limited. After breaking free of my high school mentality, I began to read some great novels, like *1984* and *Animal Farm*. I was shocked by the wisdom hidden in these books.

Actually, literacy is an attitude that fosters life-long learning. Gradually, I developed the habit of reading. My mother, who spared no effort to do everything for me when I was in high school, now loves reading and learning new things, as well. During my sophomore year, my mum said to me: "I am already adapting to the life without you. I realize that I should have my own life. Now, learning English, reading books, doing yoga are my housework, too."

Now that I am achieving my dream in Beijing and my mother is developing her own hobbies, I feel so good. Life seems more meaningful than it did before.



“Snail”
by Mu Yajie

“Phone Girl” by Lin Zilun

This summer was greatly different for An. Her father bought her her very first smart phone ever, a gift celebrating the best midterm grades of her last year of high school. She smiled, and her father smiled. This was the very first smile that An saw on her father’s face since her mother left them to find a better life with another man.

“Thank you so much, Dad. I really love this fantastic phone! I know that you must have taken more part-time jobs to earn the money to buy it...I will keep working hard in school.”

“You deserve it, An. I know you have dreamed about a smart phone for a long time, so I wanted to buy it for you.”

An took her new smart phone to school next day so that she could be a “normal” person who owned this “necessary tool” in high school life. She held her head erect and her back straight, and her eyes seemed to be shining. When she put the phone on her desk, some girls noticed and whispered: “Do you see that

old lady's new phone? My grandma would not use it now!"

An froze up; she put her phone back in her backpack and started staring at her textbook as usual, with her eyes covered like an eclipse. *There is still no way to get attached with them*, An thought. But even though An still did not have a friend in her class, her life became totally different because of this new smart phone. She became a popular girl in many online social apps, which was in the complete opposite situation of reality. Posting fake photos of herself (which were actually other girls) made her become a princess as she never thought she could be. *I get it*, she thought. *This is why people love smart phones*. The smart phone became like drug An was addicted to. It gave her great joy, but it also took away her good grades.

"Do you know what are you doing? I have not seen your hands and eyes leave your phone for one second! This is not why I gave it to you!" An's father was trying his best to control his anger, but blue veins stood out on his face.

"I am doing what I want, just like I've learned from you. Why do you think mom left?"

An's father did not say any word. She continued her complaining: "I don't want to be lonely, and I want to have some friends. That's all."

"Where are your friends? In your phone?"

"Yes," she said, with no hesitation.

"Show me your friends in the phone right now."

An hesitated this time. Finally, she said, "No."

"If you are not willing to show me, then I can only see it by myself." As An's father tried to grab her phone, her face turned pale. They grappled with each other, and An's father slapped her hard across the face. Finally, he got the phone and saw her "friends" and the sweet but inappropriate conversations An had carried on with them.

"Are these your friends? Are you insane?"

An's father's face turned redder and redder. After the last word, he threw the phone to the ground. It broke, just like An's heart and her tiny hope of getting friends. She cried because she knew that everything had come back to the original point, where she was all alone, by herself, without a mother or friends.

* * *

An wandered on the street, imagining her life after losing her phone. She was desperate, and her

eyes dully looked ahead. Suddenly, she saw a phone shop that was about to close. The staff was busy cleaning the shop; no one was taking care of the phones.

I can get friends if I take one, An thought. She rushed into the shop and seized the smart phone on the exhibition booth, then rushed out of the store. She had never run that fast since getting the phone that changed her life. All of a sudden, a truck drove crazily into An, and she lay on the street, seriously hurt. With the continued loss of blood, her life was steadily leaking away. But still she smiled, the phone clutched tightly in her hand. An left the world without ever learning the truth.

It was a fake phone.

“One Piece”

by Aki Mu

“monckey (monkey), kaite(kite), breen(brown)...”

Watching these spelling mistakes with neat and clear writing, I didn’t know what expressions put on my face – a frown or a smile?

“I must have misspelled every word,” Bill said, glancing at me with guilt, then looking down.

Bill was a pupil in grade 3. He was a shy, self-abasing and sensitive boy. Truth be told, his English was weak compared to his peers’. Noticing he was grasping the cuff of his left sleeve, I knew maybe he felt nervous when facing me, who had become his tutor just two weeks ago.

“Not every word, Bill,” I smiled. “Just the words I checked last week.”

“Oh! I thought you would not examine them anymore,” he explained in a low voice.

“Bill, you have to understand, I’ve already—”

Suddenly I stopped.

I heard a gentle voice in my mind--

“Tina, you have to understand, I’ve already learned these words well, so you are studying for yourself, not for me.”

This sentence brought me back to ten years ago. At that time, I still went by “Tina” ... a pupil in grade 3. And I was a shy, self-abasing and sensitive pupil, even more than Bill.

I remembered my English tutor, a kind but serious young lady. She was really strict with me. Once I misspelled the plural form of “grass” as “grasses”, and she made me copy the word “grass” 100 times.

Maybe it sounded unreasonable, maybe I felt unhappy at that time, maybe I hated her for a short time ... to be honest, I couldn’t recall all of my feelings. All I remembered was the “studying for yourself” sentence. Then I realized that I heard it not only one time, and not only from one person – but also from my parents, my math teacher, my high school headmaster ... all these people appeared one by one in my mind. At that moment, I realized that the decade from 9 years old to 19 years old had passed quickly, like a landscape I had seen through the window of a train. I didn’t know when I began to agree with the sentence from my childhood. Finally, I decided to repeat it to Bill.

“I’ve already learned these words well, so you are studying for yourself, not for me.”

I knew Bill probably didn't understand what I really meant in the present; however, I believed that he would understand it someday.

"Do I have another chance to get the poster of *One Piece*?" Bill asked timidly and his face turned to red gradually.

One Piece was Bill's favorite animation. I had promised that as long as he studied his English well, he could get a poster of it. Frankly speaking, Bill was the most sensible and clever boy that I had never seen before. Still, he was also a 9-year-old boy who was more interested in cartoons than studying English.

"Of course you have," I said, clapping his shoulder and smiling.

Bill looked up with excitement, and his bright big eyes once again took me back 10 years – to a girl trying her best to recite complex words in order to get a popular singer poster as reward from her tutor. Her eyes were filled with excitement, just like Bill's.



“Misty”
by Mu Yajie

“Seven Year Itch” by Hou Yiran

She is the princess in a black-and-white fairy tale.
She stands on the street in a white dress, smiling
sweetly. Even though her hands pull down on a
hiked-up dress, her beautiful, long legs still appear in
front of our eyes. Flying upward, her dress looks like
the wings of a swan – perhaps she is a Swan Princess.
Her beauty shocks the man who stands beside her.
She is a princess. She is Marilyn Monroe.

** Note – The author wrote this text after viewing the
iconic “sidewalk grate” photo of Marilyn Monroe in
the movie The Seven Year Itch.*

“Life is Full of Happiness” by Sun Yifei (Fay)

Frankly speaking, life is a process filled with unhappiness and dissatisfaction. All individuals are appointed to complete certain arduous assignments without considering their own emotional reactions.

However, you can still be surrounded by happiness no matter how desperate you feel, how unlucky the atmosphere is, and how worthless you may feel. As a matter of fact, happiness doesn't correspond to first prize in a lottery, an award, a luxury purse or something else. On the contrary, all those material goods are temporary and may cause you to unconsciously create inappropriate habits. If you are always trying to obtain an adorable lifestyle no matter what blocks your way, you ought to remember to be satisfied with your present status and try to please yourself even if you are situated in an unwelcome circumstance.

When you find the matches you put in your pocket a minute ago, you should be grateful they didn't burn your pocket and hurt your body; when someone you are not familiar with bothers you while

you are enjoying the harmonious scenery outside the window, you should be grateful he is not a robber; when a sharp nail pricks your finger, you should be grateful it wasn't pointing straight into your eyes; when your neighbor plays her violin at midnight and prevents you from sleeping soundly, try to regard the music as a masterpiece, treat it as a free concert. No matter how bad yesterday was, it should not impact the present and the future, so just dig out all the amusements that are hidden deeply in your daily life.

The distance between your dreams and reality is called action. If sadness saturates your heart due to a dissatisfied feeling, why not take action to realize your dreams in order to obtain sufficient happiness? When your colleague defeats you because of his or her unique talents, why not improve your mindset by benefiting from such a person rather than just sitting there desperately? When admiring other peers' travel experiences, why not arrange for an exciting voyage to fulfill your aspirations? When reluctant to take on something disgusting but crucial, why not force yourself to complete it? Although the process might be tough to some extent, the target can provide you plenty of happiness. Reality can be horrible but dreams are wonderful for people who desperately

want to alter a terrible situation into paradise. The stage between dreams and reality is named action. Only when you enhance your capabilities, no matter the circumstances, can you achieve your final targets and possess adequate happiness.

Objectively speaking, life is complicated. Nobody has a favorable wind permanently, and nobody goes downwards perpetually. If you pay more attention to what you possess rather than what you do not possess; if you devote yourself to manufacturing more possibilities to gain happiness, life may be not that hard.

“Beautiful Shocks” by Chai Liang (Liana)

For years now, her time at ICB has been coming back to her as a series of beautiful shocks.

She remembers always finishing her essays at the very last minute and rushing from the print shop to writing class. Each time she has to find a convincing reason to explain her slight tardiness. The “That’s OK” look on her instructor’s face is married with her parents’ appearance when she loses her cell phone again in Goddamn-somewhere. She walks around all of the classrooms, her dorm, and fast food stations near the campus in search of her “little elf”, but all are in vain.

The frustration keeps bothering her as she loses her keys, student cards, USB drives, and slippers. Before they are lost, they are components of her trivial belongings, which are piled up stack by stack in her cozy, chaotic nest. Socks are above scarves and requirements of the homework due the next day are underneath the brochures delivered last month. Among the bulk of leaflets, she sees the one for the ICB 2013 Halloween Dance Party, where she dresses

in a clown costume, complete with a multi-colored wig, a pair of bulky orange shoes, and a red, bubble-like nose.

She really likes her big red nose and all her red belongings, including her red-beaded, copper-wire earrings, which win her compliments from more than a dozen people. Of course, the praise that makes her the happiest is said by Timon: “You look so beautiful in your red dress that matches your red earrings.”

There are 22 other pairs of earrings waiting for her to pick every day, and there are definitely earrings she regards as more precious than the red ones. However, at that particular moment, she cannot help but think, *Thank you, Timon. Meeting you is the most beautiful thing.*



“Night Vision”
by Mu Yajie

