



# Sea You There and Us

貓與海的彼端

**Comic Artist:** Monday Recover **Author:** Chiao Meow **Publisher:** Gaea Books

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**Awards:** 2022 The 16th Japan International Manga Awards, Silver Award

**BFT2.0 Translator:** Jacqueline Leung

Wu Hsiao-Jung, a shy and introverted third grader, often finds herself on the fringes of her class. In her new classroom, she sits behind a girl with a beautiful ponytail named Ke Wei. Unable to resist, Hsiao-Jung gently tugs at Ke Wei's hair, and this simple action marks the beginning of a close friendship between two girls with completely different personalities. They bond over drawing comics together and use "cat language" to express the words they can't say aloud.

The two girls drift apart, leaving Ke Wei's personal comic creation, *The Sound of the Sea*, shrouded in mystery. As Hsiao-Jung searches for clues, she is left wondering where to find answers to the unresolved questions about their friendship. The story follows her journey through fragmented memories of *The Sound of the Sea*, silent dreams, and a deep desire to uncover the truth. As the tale intertwines a longing for stories with youthful emotions, the question remains: what will be the final outcome for these girls?

This beautifully crafted and emotionally resonant tale of growth and friendship among young girls is created by the award-winning comic artist Monday Recover and scriptwriter Chiao Meow. It delicately captures the bittersweet rhythm of childhood regrets.



## Monday Recover

A Tainan native with a love for dogs and rabbits, Monday Recover's notable achievements include winning the Silver Award at the 16th Japan International Manga Awards in 2023 for *Sea You There and Us*, which was also published as a novel that year. This work was selected as an Excellent Extra-Curricular Reading for Elementary and Secondary Students at the 45th recommendation (Comic category) and as a Star Selection. Additionally, in 2021, *Fantastic Tales of Splendid Blossoms* won the Golden Comic Award for Annual Manga. The overseas rights of *Sea You There and Us* have been sold to Vietnam, Malaysia, France, and Japan.



## Chiao Meow

Chiao Meow is a playwright, musical theater writer, lyricist, and novelist.

# A Poignant Coming-of-Age Story of Friendship and Sorrow

by Yuni

*Sea You There and Us* tells a coming-of-age story about young girls. The original concept is by Chen Chiao-Rong and is illustrated by the award-winning manga artist Monday Recover, who has received accolades from the Japan International Manga Award and the Golden Comic Awards. Known for her flowing lines and brisk narrative pace, she captures the essence of youth in girls.

The protagonist, Hsiao-Rong, is a shy and introverted girl who lacks self-

confidence and often becomes a target for bullying in her neighborhood and at school. That is until she meets her classmate Ke Wei, a likable and outgoing girl with a good rapport with others, who gradually opens Hsiao-Rong's heart.

Driven by curiosity, Hsiao-Rong playfully tugs on Ke Wei's long ponytail. This casual act marks the

beginning of their friendship. Through delicate brushwork, Monday Recover conveys the charming interactions between the two girls—always together

at school and on the playground, secretly exchanging small illustrations in class, and even receiving unexpected praise from their teacher when they are discovered.

Hsiao-Rong and Ke Wei embark on creating comics together, serving as supportive partners for one another. "If there are words we can't say, let's speak in cat language!" This becomes their secret code, helping them navigate the complexities of childhood.

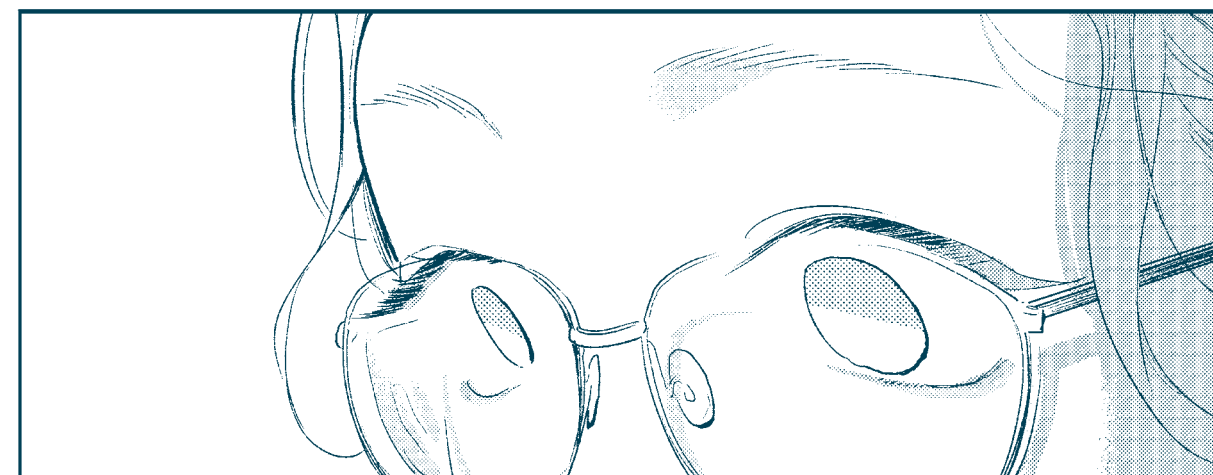
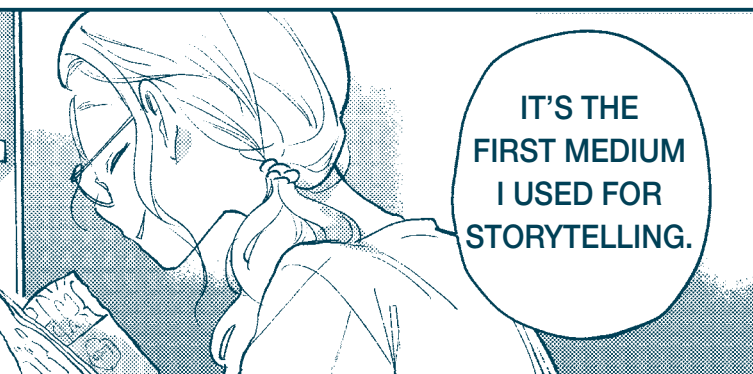
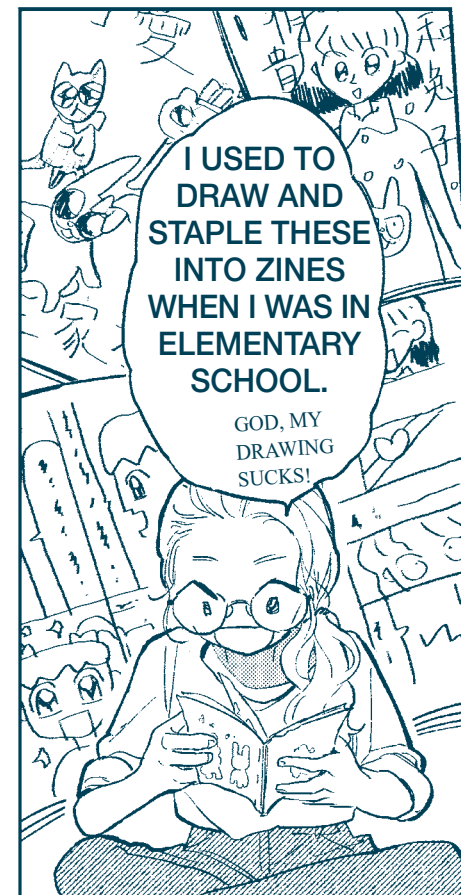
Tragically, one day, Ke Wei dies in a car accident, leaving Hsiao-Rong to face her loss alone. What kind of work will her dear friend's creation, *The Sound of the Sea*, become? This remains a mystery, and the past lingers in Hsiao-Rong's heart as a regret. In the illustrations, the surging

waves frequently appear, symbolizing Hsiao-Rong's inner turmoil and enhancing the tension between the visuals and text. Through creation, dreaming of her friend, and allowing time to heal her, Hsiao-Rong ultimately returns to a calm sea.

*Sea You There and Us* suggests that the bittersweet memories of childhood provide the courage to continue living, composing a poignant poem filled with love and sorrow.

*Yuni loves photography, reading, and writing.*

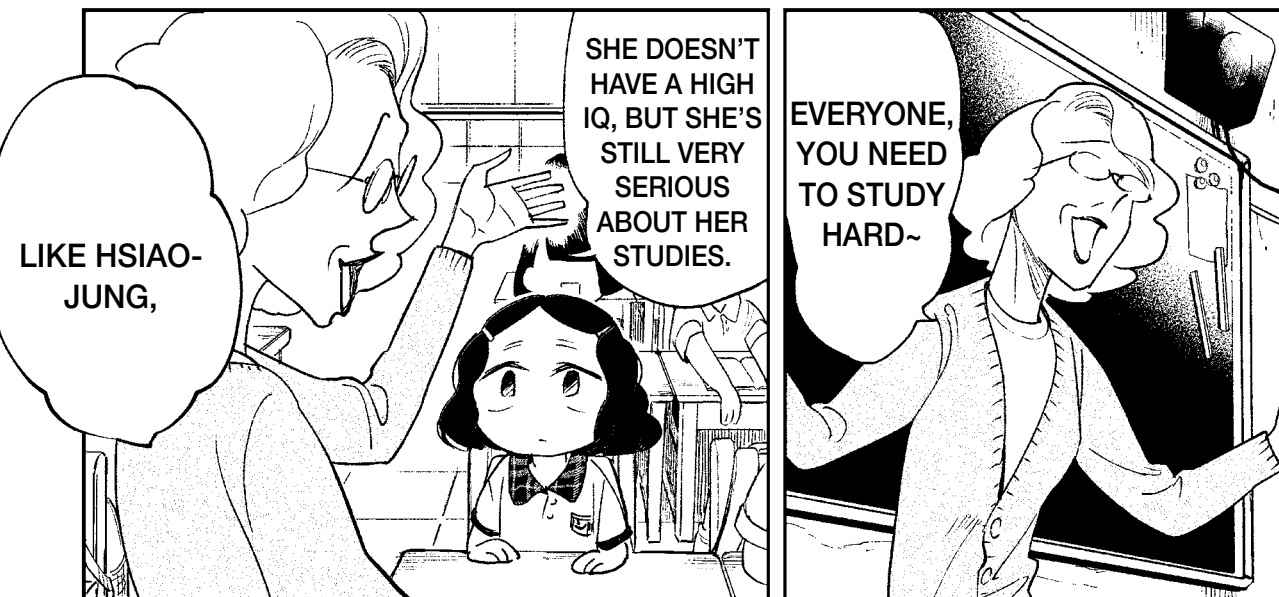
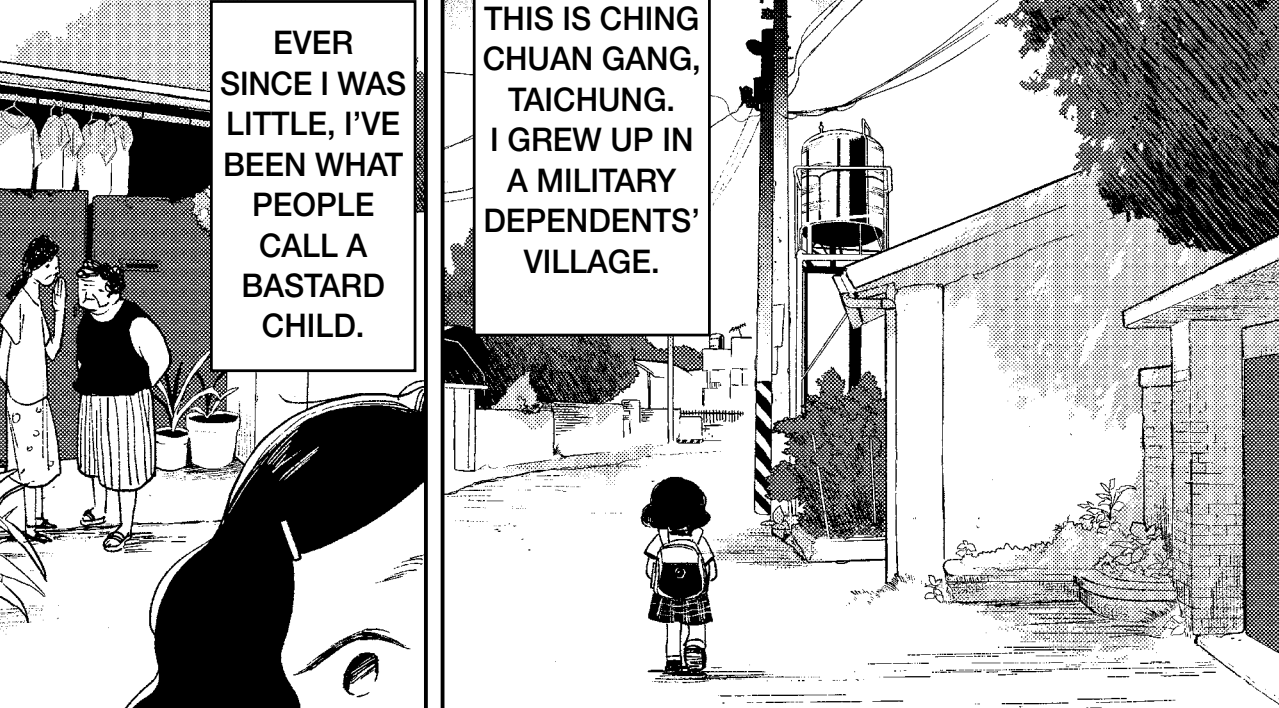












I NEVER FLIPPED IT OPEN.

THIS IS A SKETCH BOOK WITH THE TITLE SOUNDS OF THE SEA WRITTEN ON IT.

COMPARED TO THE COMICS I DREW AND STAPLED,

THIS PICTURE BOOK IS HEAVIER AND WAY MORE SOPHISTICATED.

