



The Funeral Concerto

A Full English translation is available.

送葬協奏曲

Author: Rimui **Illustrator:** Rimui **Publisher:** Gaea Books

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BFT2.0 Translator: Michael Kearney

Through the eyes of a rookie funeral home worker, this award-winning manga offers a moving portrait of Taiwan's funeral industry and Han Chinese mourning traditions.

Lin Chu-sheng abandons a prestigious academic future and runs away from home to follow her own path—only to find unexpected guidance among the dead. Entering the funeral profession, she quickly learns that death rarely comes with warning. Even after passing, tangled webs of family ties and personal conflicts remain unresolved, lingering at the edge of every ceremony.

From symbolic burials to soul-calling banners meant to summon the departed, the rituals depicted are at once deeply cultural and profoundly human. They not only honor the dead but sometimes bring the living closer together. At each funeral, the entirety of human experience plays out—grief, love, regret, reconciliation. As the dragon horn sounds and the funeral dance begins, unspoken words and hidden emotions rise to the surface.

In that moment, Chu-sheng comes to a simple, powerful realization: to cherish the rights we have, and the lives we lead, while we are still here.



Author **Rimui**

Rimui, a member of the Atayal indigenous peoples from Taoyuan, graduated from National Taiwan University of Science and Technology. Her notable works include *Where Are You Going?*, *Harmony in the Family*, *The Funeral Concerto*, and *CATzzz*. She was awarded the Golden Prize at the Japan International Manga Awards and was featured as a selected manga artist at the 2023 Angoulême International Comics Festival Taiwan Pavilion. Rimui Yumin also participated in the 2023 Taiwan–Thai Manga Exchange and the 2023 Lucca Comics & Games Festival in Italy.

Chasing Dreams is a Privilege of the Living: Creator Rimui Reflects on Her Award-Winning *The Funeral Concerto*

by Tomo Tzeng
(originally published on Creative Comic Collection)

As Rimui reached a certain stage in life, witnessing the loss of family members and pets led her to seriously reflect on mortality. Wanting to challenge herself with a manga about Taiwanese professionals, she began creating *The Funeral Concerto*.

Through the eyes of rookie mortician Lin Chu-sheng, the story delicately portrays Taiwan's comprehensive funeral industry and Han Chinese mourning customs. But for Rimui, what truly moved her wasn't the rituals—it was the ordinary yet profound moments of parting between the living and the

dead.

To capture this world, she immersed herself in research, even visiting a small funeral home and interviewing a newcomer in the field. One story shocked her: on their first day, the rookie had to handle a suicide case. Rimui had assumed there would be a gradual learning curve, but the reality was much harsher. "The more I researched, the more I realized funerals are really for the living," she said. Her parents, devoted to traditional practices like burning spirit money and chanting scriptures, prompted her to reflect on their deeper meaning. "Maybe

it's more about comforting the people left behind." A character in the manga voices the same thought: "It doesn't matter if the soul exists. A funeral is for the living to remember and say goodbye."

Though her work explores death, Rimui admits she fears it deeply. While reading real-life accounts during her research, she often cried and at times felt overwhelmed by solitude: "I'd lie awake at night wondering if I might just suddenly die."

Her earlier works, *Where Are You Going?* and *The Funeral Concerto*, both confront themes she struggles with—ghosts, death, and sorrow. Yet through the act of creating, she gradually calmed those fears, as if entering into dialogue with her own emotions.

One story arc, featuring Kuang, a child undergoing chemotherapy, was inspired by a news report about a young patient with a rare disease. Rimui was struck by how children can grasp the reality of death without succumbing to despair: "They can still find joy and live in the moment. That really changed how I see things."

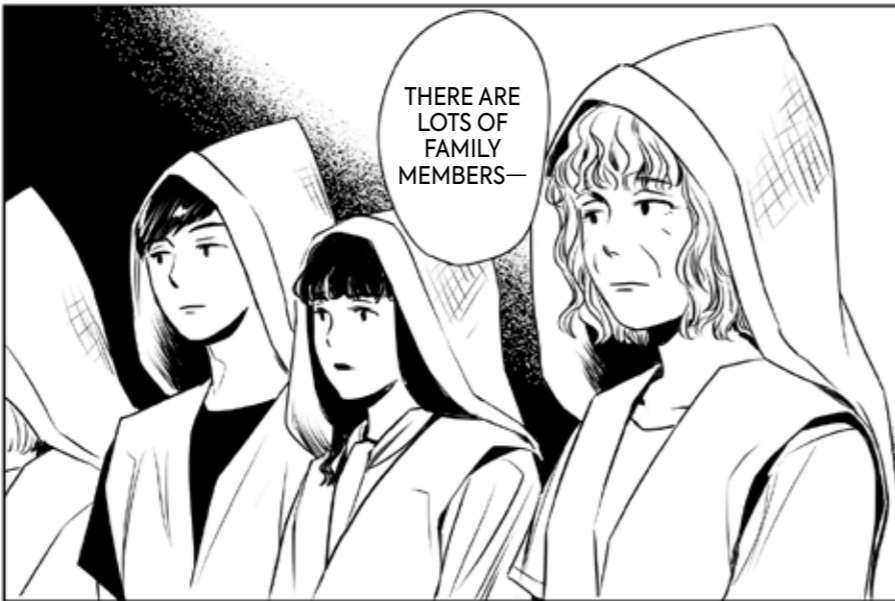
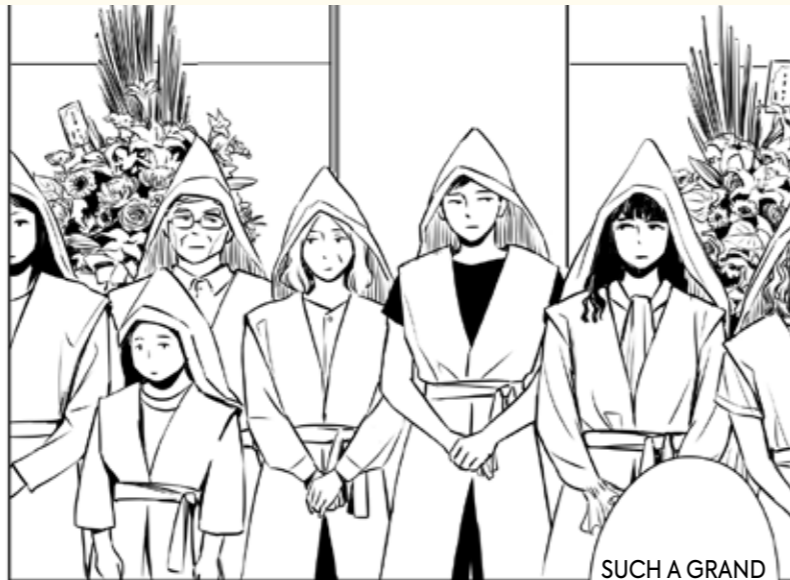
While developing the story, her own grandmother was diagnosed with cancer and passed away before the manga was completed. A funeral scene

in the work was drawn directly from her grandmother's memorial. Though painful, the process helped her grow: "It made me start living each day more consciously."

At its core, *The Funeral Concerto* is about human connection—especially the bonds of family. Rimui delves into their complexities: "You don't always get closure. But as we grow up, we understand our parents better, and sometimes even help them with their own struggles." The manga's closing message, voiced by the character Yang-Ching, is resolute: never give up. "Pursuing dreams is a privilege of the living," Rimui affirms. For her, hardships are real but should never become excuses. "If you truly want something, you'll find a way."

By facing death through her art, Rimui discovered both peace and personal growth. And while *The Funeral Concerto* is complete for now, she hopes to return to its world someday—letting its music continue to play, for both the living and the dead.

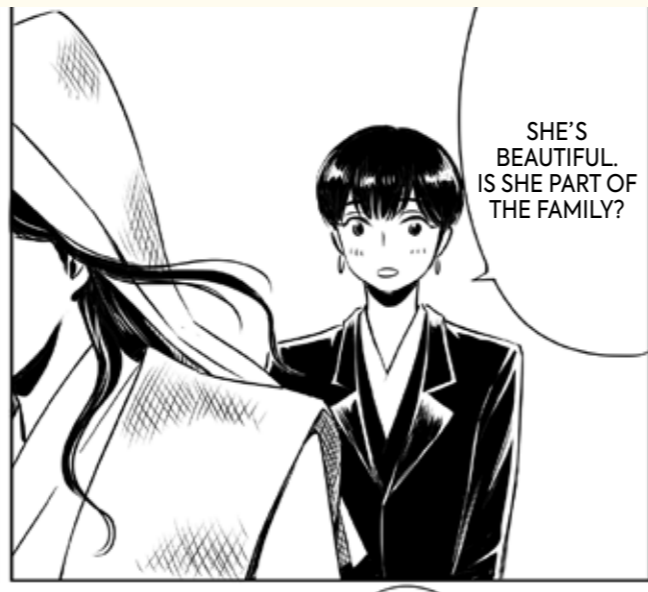
Tomo Tzeng is a journalist and writer dedicated to treating every detail of life with sincerity. A longtime manga enthusiast, she only came to truly appreciate the beauty and uniqueness of Taiwanese comics as she grew older.



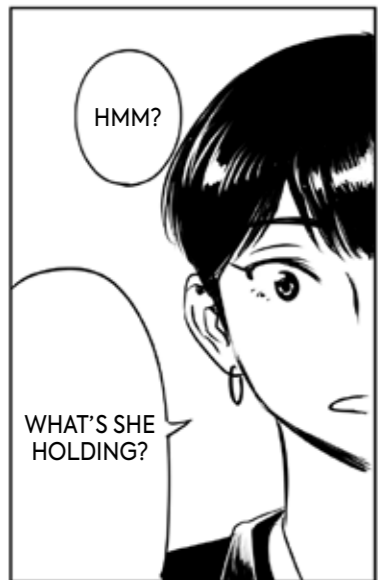


YOU HAVEN'T SEEN THIS SINCE JOINING THE COMPANY, HAVE YOU?

SEEN WHAT?

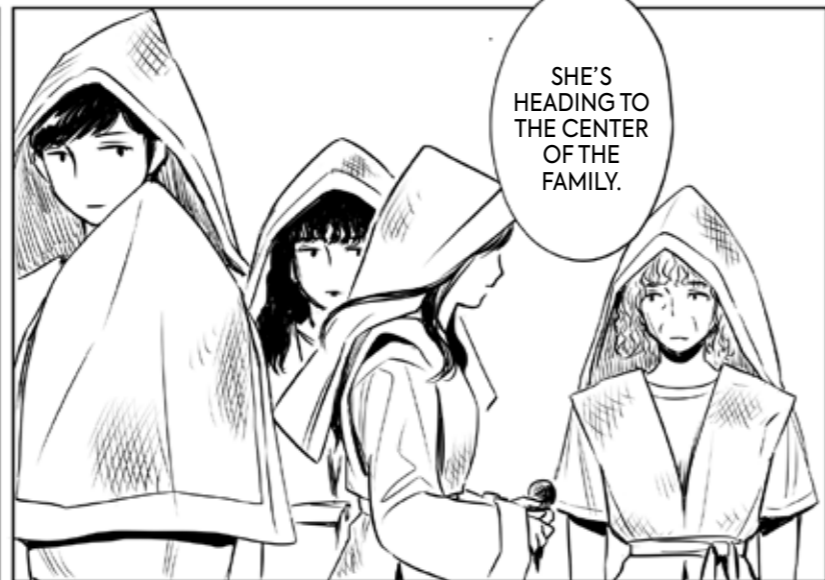


SHE'S BEAUTIFUL. IS SHE PART OF THE FAMILY?

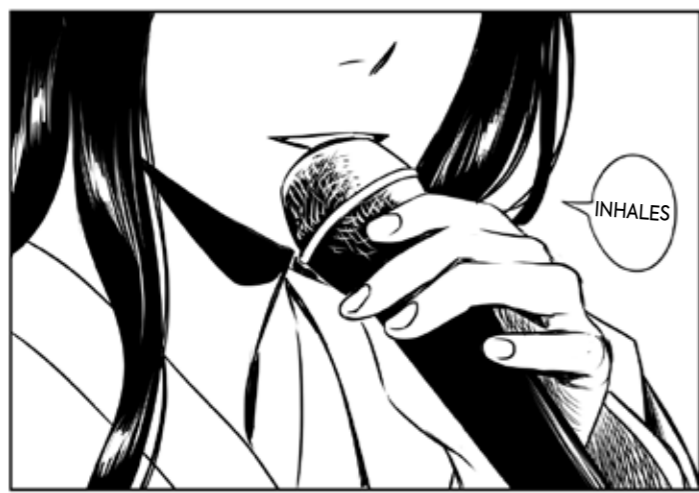


HMM?

WHAT'S SHE HOLDING?



SHE'S HEADING TO THE CENTER OF THE FAMILY.



INHALES



A MICROPHONE !?



SORRY I'M LATE.



THERE'S NO SENSE OF SORROW— SOMETHING DOESN'T FEEL RIGHT.

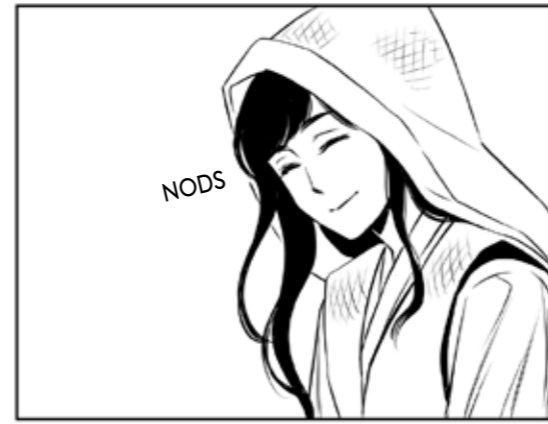


MAYBE SHE GOT STUCK IN TRAFFIC. SHE WILL ARRIVE SOON.

I HAD A PLAN READY FROM THE MOMENT I MET THE FAMILY.



I'LL LEAVE THIS TO YOU THEN.



NODS



A PROFESSIONAL MOURNER PLAYING THE FILIAL DAUGHTER BAIQIN.



THE FILIAL DAUGHTER BAIQIN?



SUCH A MOURNFUL CRY! IT'S GIVING ME GOOSEBUMPS!

WHO IS SHE...?



DADDY!



I'VE CRIED SINCE THE MOMENT YOU DIED.

... OR SOMETIMES THEY WERE TOO OVERWHELMED TO EXPRESS THEIR GRIEF.

THEY'D HIRE PROFESSIONAL FEMALE MOURNERS TO HELP.

IN THE PAST WHEN TRANSPORTATION WAS POOR, CHILDREN OFTEN COULDN'T TRAVEL FAR FOR A PARENT'S FUNERAL...



目屎流甲溼過衫

自從你死哭到擔



MY TEARS FLOWED, SOAKING THROUGH MY CLOTHES.