

神狗少年



島山嶼海的青春 神狗少年

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BFT2.0 Translator: David Knight

Five tales. One island. Endless imagination. This vibrant collection showcases five of Taiwan's most celebrated authors, blending fantasy, mystery, and folklore with local culture and teenage adventure.

In Che Chang Lin's "The Little Warriors of Formosa," humans battle demons using magical tools inspired by real Taiwanese artifacts and legends, grounding the fantasy in cultural heritage.

Yi Fen Chen's "The Sacred Dog-headed Boy" draws from Austronesian traditions. When a boy's reflection turns into a dog, he embarks on a journey that reveals ancient secrets in his bloodline, emphasizing the bond between humans and nature.

Yuju Chen's "The Dream Seer's Prophecy" explores how dreams reflect one's emotional state. A troubled teen must team up with a Dream Seer to escape his nightmares and reconcile with his past.

Wei Ko Lin's "I Know You Didn't Lie" follows a student who seems to read minds. Fact and illusion blend as he questions the nature of his mysterious power.

Leading Lee's "The Place Where Worries are Forgotten" tells of Indigenous youth leaving their homeland for the city. Through their story, it asks: how can we reconnect with our roots and find true peace?

These stories follow young protagonists as they wrestle with the struggles, confusion, and longings of adolescence. Along the way, readers journey through epic landscapes and intimate memories, uncovering how to restore beauty to a beloved island.

Youth of the Island, the Mountain, and the Sea: The Sacred Dog- headed Boy

This Book does not have a full translation.



Author Che Chang Lin

A celebrated children's literature author, Che Chang Lin is best known in Taiwan for his popular works including *Super Butt Man* and the *Snack School* series. He has received numerous prestigious honors, such as the Mu Di Award and the Wu Chuo-liu Literary Award.



Author Yi Fen Chen

Yi Fen Chen is a fantasy fiction writer known for her imaginative storytelling. She enjoys painting, hiking, and photography. She has a passion for traditional stories and culture. Her works include *Granny Tilapia* and *The Sea of Malaria: Mataba*.



Author Yuju Chen

Yuju Chen is a renowned literary author best known for the *Xiulian* series, *Cultivation Prequel*, and *Legends of Spirits and Artifacts* series. Her other works include *Zero Degrees Fahrenheit* and *The Guardians of the Stone of Immortality*.



Author Wei Ko Lin

Wei Ko Lin is a mystery novelist whose debut *The Radiated Man* received the Kaohsiung Literature Award for Fiction and the Kaohsiung Award. He dedicated to crafting stories centered on logical puzzle-solving, with a strong passion for promoting honkaku-style mystery fiction.



Author Leading Lee

Leading Lee is an acclaimed director and cross-disciplinary writer. He has received multiple honors, among them the New York Festivals TV & Film Awards, as well as numerous international film and advertising awards. His literary works have won eight major book awards.



Illustrator Hui

Graduated from the Department of Sculpture at the National Taiwan University of Arts. Currently works as a freelance illustrator. Specializes in character illustration and situational sketching, and enjoys discovering hidden delights through a variety of creative themes.

The Youth of the Island, the Mountain, and the Sea: A Note from the Author

by Yi Fen Chen

This book presents five stories, each exploring a distinct challenge of adolescence. It accompanies readers on their journey toward adulthood, exploring how to restore beauty to a beloved island, discover one's true self, heal childhood wounds, release pain, and let go of sorrow.

One of the stories, "The Sacred Dog-headed Boy" draws inspiration from Austronesian cultures — communities that believe in an ancient kinship between humans and nature. The Austronesian world stretches from Taiwan in the north to New Zealand in the south, and from Madagascar on Africa's east coast to Easter Island off the coast of South America. Shaped by both natural environments and cultural pressures,

these societies developed traditions of movement—migrating within and between islands. When conflicts arose and connections between tribes were severed, the lives of their ancestors gradually faded into legend, becoming mysterious stories passed down like secrets.

The story begins with a secret: Wang Chia-nuo, the main character, may look human but was born with the spirit of a dog. Through this strange yet symbolic curse, the narrative explores the idea that everyone carries hidden truths. Can we reveal our secrets to others? And if we do, what might it cost us—shame, misunderstanding, or even isolation?

Fearing that his secret will be discovered, Chia-nuo keeps to himself

at school. Meanwhile, Jen Ch'uan-lin, burdened by her own unspoken secrets, becomes the target of ridicule; and, an old man tells his own tales. As the story unfolds, the search for the origin of Chia-nuo's dog head leads to deeper questions: Can we truly see ourselves as we are? How different is the "me" seen by others from the "me" I see? And, in the end, which self do we choose to become?

The quest to lift the dog-head curse is filled with difficult choices. Why does Chia-nuo want to break the curse? Can he adapt to life afterward? Why does Ch'uan-lin choose to help him—does she truly believe in the old man's legends? The old man, too, carries many secrets. Is he telling the truth, or deceiving them all? In the story, the old man finally finds the courage to face his own true self.

As Chia-nuo struggles to define his own path, Jen Ch'uan-lin—drawn into this magical journey—begins to question her dreams and reevaluate her life. In Austronesian belief systems, humans

are often spiritually linked to a specific creature in nature, as if they were siblings. This creature is said to protect and guide its human counterpart, helping them uncover the world's mysteries.

Youth is a time of hardship, struggle, and uncertainty—a period when we yearn to see the vast world through our own eyes, and just as strongly wish for the world to truly see us. *Youth of the Island, the Mountain, and the Sea* captures the restless search of adolescence while quietly honoring the bond between human beings, their inner selves, and the natural world that shapes them.

This author's note has been edited for the purposes of this booklet.

Yi Fen Chen, who is the author of the story "The Sacred Dog-headed Boy" is a fantasy fiction writer known for her imaginative storytelling. Her works include Granny Tilapia and The Sea of Malaria: Mataba.



1. ◆◆

"Hey, Wang Chia-nuo!" Her hands black with grease, Jen Ch'uan-lin suddenly stood up and called out to her classmate as Wang passed by the entrance to the moped repair shop. Wang Chia-nuo rapidly shifted his gaze upwards and saw the mirror hanging above the doorway. Lowering his head, he tried to scurry by.

"What are you rushing for?" As Jen Ch'uan-lin spoke, she put aside the wrench she had been working with and hurried to catch up with Wang.

Wang shouted behind, "Don't chase me!"

"I don't need to chase you if you don't run!"

"If I run that's my business. What's that got to do with you chasing me?" Wang called as he ran.

"If you're acting so weird, of course I'm gonna chase you!" Jen rejoined.

"Whaddya mean weird?!" As soon as he shouted, Wang ducked and sped recklessly on.

A large rectangle of canvas lay spread beside the sidewalk, thin slices of radish drying in the sun. Heedlessly, Wang Chia-nuo stepped on the cloth, his foot

trampling the orderly rows. As the canvas slid underneath his foot, Wang tumbled down straight on top of the flesh-hued strips. He landed in a heap on his back, all four limbs raised toward the heavens.

Jen Ch'uan-lin hurried over to help her friend up. Seeing Wang sprawled akimbo half-hidden under radish roots, Jen's forehead creased in concern. "Are you turning back into the old wallflower Wang Chia-nuo from school days?"

"Huh?" Wang responded in a fog.

"For a minute just now, you seemed possessed with bravery," Jen said.

"Me?" Wang Chia-nuo blinked and met her gaze, mumbling, "You think that I am brave?"

"Well, as you passed by the shop you certainly seemed full of spirit."

"I..., I..., I was just trying to get away," Wang stammered.

Jen Ch'uan-lin looked over a bewildered Wang Chia-nuo and, seeing a trickle of blood on his left knee, realized he had skinned it in the fall.

"Come on, let's go over to my uncle's home. I'll help you put a little medicine on that."

Wang Chia-nuo glanced down. He had been unaware





of any pain, but now, seeing his knee, a dull throbbing started up. "Ouch!"

"Don't worry, my uncle's place is right here." With that, Jen Ch'uan-lin steadied Wang and started guiding him back down the sidewalk. Wang was staring at his wound, half walking and half trying to blow on his kneecap to stop the pain. Jen Ch'uan-lin gently led him toward the moped shop. Wang was so fixated on his dance routine of hopping, blowing, and grimacing that he didn't realize she had steered him straight in front of the mirror hanging above the doorway.

"Don't keep blowing on it. We can use some boiled water to wash it, or maybe even a little saline to rinse it out, then it'll be right as new." As Jen spoke, she looked up from Wang's knee to his face. In that instant, her vision seemed to blur before her. What on earth was happening? Jen's heart became agitated. Why was a dog's face looking out of the mirror?

She quickly rubbed her eyes and then carefully stared at the mirror.

"What is it?" Wang asked her, still absorbed in his knee.

Jen Ch'uan-lin's head slowly moved from the mirror to Wang Chia-nuo and back. The dog's head mutely

stared out of the mirror at Jen.

Jen's finger seemed to point of its own accord at the mirror as she gasped, "What is *that!*"

Wang's eyes followed Jen's finger up to the mirror with a sense of foreboding. As soon as he saw, he seemed to shrink in upon himself. He hastily ducked his head, and the dog's face vanished from the mirror before Jen's eyes.

Jen Ch'uan-lin felt as if she couldn't think clearly. She tugged Wang Chia-nuo back up and saw the dog's head slowly rise into the mirror again. Jen stared at the dog's head as if stricken dumb.

Wang Chia-nuo whipped his head from side to side, as if desperately searching for something to cover it. In tandem, the dog's head in the mirror spun from left to right.

"The dog is you!" Jen Ch'uan-lin exclaimed.

Wang Chia-nuo took Jen by the hand and quickly pulled her away from the mirror even as she was pointing in astonishment.

"Please, I'm begging you, don't tell anyone else." Wang's face was a picture of earnest entreaty.

Jen Ch'uan-lin was in a state of disbelief. Staring wide-eyed at Wang, she challenged him: "So you admit





I'm right, that *is* you!"

Wang Chia-nuo looked like an animal searching for a bolt-hole to dive into. Seeing how frantic Wang was becoming, Jen decisively grabbed hold of him and guided him to the apartment behind the moped shop. She led him through the living room and then up the stairs.

"What are you doing?" Wang asked in bewilderment.

"It will be alright. You can rest here in my room. You'll be safe," she replied.

Wang walked into the space on the second floor, slowly sank down into a chair, and felt his pounding heart start to slacken to normal. He looked around the room. It was a room made of simple wooden planks nailed together. There were a number of quilts and pillows stacked in a pile. Lying atop the wooden floor was a single mattress. Jen's book bag rested beside her bed.

Wang Chia-nuo suddenly realized that, despite being Jen's classmate, he had probably never spoken more than a few words with her at school.

Wang could hear the echoes of Jen's footfalls, back on the stairs through the passageway. Thump. Thump. Thump. Her tread was measured and unhurried.

Wang Chia-nuo thought to himself, "This classmate of mine, what kind of person is she really?"

Would she actually keep his secret? What could he do if everyone found out?

"I'll be turned into some kind of freak, and then they'll stick me in a laboratory."

The more Wang thought about it, he felt a sense of creeping dread. He started thinking about finding a way out, only to see that all the windows were closed securely. Outside, the banner advertising the repair shop stretched across them. There was no way through there.

Thump. Thump. Thump. Jen Ch'uan-lin's steps were coming closer and closer. Suddenly, Wang had a vivid picture in his mind of a normal day at his school. What stood out clearly to him was the brash and rowdy Peng Feng-hsiung, always full volume, and always in the foreground. But the other students who silently filled the edges of the scene, what were they really like?

Thump. The footfalls abruptly stopped behind him as Jen Ch'uan-lin pushed open the door to her room.

