



**BOOKS FROM TAIWAN**





## BOOKS FROM TAIWAN

<http://booksfromtaiwan.tw/>

### **Published by Taiwan Creative Content Agency (TAICCA)**

**Chairperson** | Kevin Peng

**Chief Executive Officer** | Izero Lee

**Organizers** | Zoe Wang, Ming-Fang Cheng

**Address** | 5F., No. 158, Section 3, Minsheng East Road, Shongshan District, Taipei City, 105, Taiwan

**Website** | <http://en.taicca.tw/>

**Telephone** | +886-2-2745-8186

**Email** | [service@taicca.tw](mailto:service@taicca.tw)

### **Editorial Team of Books from Taiwan**

**Managing Director** | Gray Tan

**Editor-in-Chief** | Joshua Dyer

**Copyeditor** | Ping Chang

**Production Manager** | Catrina Liu

**Editorial Consultants** | Aho Huang, Bo-Syuan Wu, Chi-An Weng, Chun-Ya Wen, Rishiazao, Tanya Po

**Cover Design** | Hikaruketsu Li

**Cover Illustration** | © Pam Pam Liu (Published originally under the title *Super Supermarket* by Slowork Publishing, 2022)

**Design and Layout** | Wei-Jie Hong

**Issue** | Comic Books, 2022

**Publication Date** | December 31, 2022

**ISSN** | 2410-0781

© Books from Taiwan, Winter 2022

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without prior permission in writing of Books from Taiwan, or as expressly permitted by the law. Enquiries concerning reproduction should be sent to TAICCA (+886-2-2745-8186).

<b>About TAICCA &amp; Books from Taiwan</b> .....	5
---	---

<b>Grant for the Publication of Taiwanese Works in Translation</b> .....	6
--	---

## **Books from Taiwan (From Right to Left)**

CLINICLOWNS .....	10
story by Feng Shi • comic by Cory Ko • translated by Joshua Dyer • published by Sharp Point/MirrorFiction	
DONG HUA CHUN BARBERSHOP .....	20
by Ruan Guang-Min • translated by Joshua Dyer • published by Yuan-Liou	
FOUR CLEAR DAYS IN EARLY SUMMER .....	28
by Chen Xiao-Ya • translated by Joshua Dyer • published by Halftone	
BEAST OF CLOUDS .....	38
by Hambuck • translated by Joshua Dyer • published by Gaea Books	
MISS T'S SEXCAPADES IN JAPAN .....	48
by RiceDumpling • translated by Joshua Dyer • published by Locus	
PRICELESS .....	58
by HOM • translated by Joshua Dyer • published by Gaea Books	

## **Books from Taiwan (From Left to Right)**

FEAR AND CARTOONING IN PARIS .....	79
by Fshrimp • translated by Joshua Dyer • published by Titan	
LOCAL HEROES .....	89
by Sean Chuang • translated by Joshua Dyer • published by Dala	
RAINBOW APARTMENT .....	99
by Moriku, Chen Pei-Hsiu, Elaine, Nin, Weien Lee, Lucas Paixão • translated by Joshua Dyer • published by Dala	
SUPER SUPERMARKET .....	109
by Pam Pam Liu • translated by Joshua Dyer • published by Slowork	

# About Taiwan Creative Content Agency

With a diverse, open-minded culture, and freedom of speech, Taiwan encourages and inspires creators to develop innovative content. Taiwan also possesses an all-embracing culture, boasting a uniquely diverse history and a multicultural heritage, fostering a liberal, progressive, and stable society. As a global leader in the semiconductor industry, Taiwan has a mature, government-supported technological ecosystem that incubates innovative future content and allows local businesses to better connect with the globe. Balancing distinct cultural traditions and cutting-edge technology, Taiwan is ideal for innovators seeking to unleash their creativity.

Established in 2019 by the Ministry of Culture, the Taiwan Creative Content Agency (TAICCA) supports the development of Taiwan's creative content industry (CCI) such as film and television, future content, publishing, pop music, animation, gaming, performing arts, and visual arts by engaging in production, distribution, overseas market expansion, branding, talent cultivation, industrial research, and more. We promote innovative growth in the creative content economy.

# About Books from Taiwan

Books from Taiwan is an initiative funded by TAICCA (Taiwan Creative Content Agency) to introduce a select list of Taiwan publishing titles, ranging from fiction, non-fiction, children's books, and comic books, to foreign publishers and readers alike.

You can find information about authors and books, along with who to contact in order to license translation rights, and the related resources about the Grant for the Publication of Taiwanese Works in Translation (GPT), sponsored by the Ministry of Culture of Taiwan.

**Grant for the  
Publication of  
Taiwanese Works in  
Translation (GPT)**

**Ministry of Culture, Republic  
of China (Taiwan)**

**G**PT is set up by The Ministry of Culture to encourage the publication of Taiwanese works in translation overseas, to raise the international visibility of Taiwanese cultural content, and to help Taiwan's publishing industry expand into non-Chinese international markets.

- Applicant Eligibility: Foreign publishing houses (legal persons) legally registered in accordance with the laws and regulations of their respective countries.
- Conditions:
  1. The so-called Taiwanese works must meet the following requirements:
    - A. Use traditional characters;
    - B. Written by a natural person holding an R.O.C. identity card;
    - C. Has been assigned an ISBN in Taiwan.  
i.e., the author is a native of Taiwan, and the first 6 digits of the book's ISBN are 978-957-XXX-XXX-X, 978-986-XXX-XXX-X, or 978-626-XXX-XXX-X.
  2. Applications must include documents certifying that the copyright holder of the Taiwanese works consents to its translation and foreign publication (no restriction on its format).
  3. A translation sample of the Taiwanese work is required (no restriction on its format and length).
  4. The translated work must be published within two years, after the first day of the relevant application period.
- Grant Items:
  1. The maximum grant available for each project is NT\$600,000, which covers:
    - A. Licensing fees (going to the copyright holder of the Taiwanese works);
    - B. Translation fees;
    - C. Marketing and promotion fees (limited to economy class air tickets for the R.O.C. writer to participate in overseas promotional activities related to the project);
    - D. Book production-oriented fees;
    - E. Tax (20% of the total award amount);
    - F. Remittance-related handling fees.
  2. Priority consideration is given to books that have received the Golden Tripod Award, the Golden Comic Award, or the Taiwan Literature Award.
- Application Period: Twice every year, from April 1 to April 30, and from October 1 to October 31. The MOC reserves the right to change the application periods, and will announce said changes separately.
- Announcement of successful applications: Winners will be announced within three months of the end of the application period.
- Application Method: Please visit the Ministry's official website ([https://grants.moc.gov.tw/Web\\_ENG/](https://grants.moc.gov.tw/Web_ENG/)), and use the online application system.

For full details, please visit: [https://grants.moc.gov.tw/Web\\_ENG/](https://grants.moc.gov.tw/Web_ENG/)

Or contact: [books@moc.gov.tw](mailto:books@moc.gov.tw)

# COMIC BOOKS

(From Right to Left)



**BOOKS FROM TAIWAN**

# CLINICLOWNS: LAST GOODBYE

## 小丑醫生： 最後一次說再見



- **Publisher:** Sharp Point / MirrorFiction
- **Date:** 1/2020
- **Rights contact:**  
booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 144
- **Volume:** 1 (END)
- **Rights sold:** French (Nazca)

*A young woman who was too afraid to bid a final farewell to her terminally ill sister is given the opportunity to make amends by performing as a CliniClown at a children's hospital.*

17-year-old high school student Hsiao-han's fear of hospitals prevented her from saying goodbye to her terminally ill little sister. Her regrets consume her until a chance encounter with a "CliniClown" who performs for young patients at the children's hospital presents her with a new opportunity.

Determined to overcome her fears and make amends for failing her sister, Hsiao-han joins a CliniClown training program. Through the course of the class work, practice performances, and collaboration with fellow trainees, Hsiao-han finds that not only can she bring smiles to faces of sick children, she can also gradually relinquish the burden of her own guilt.

A collaboration between author Feng Shi and Golden Comic award winner Cory Ko, *CliniClowns* is adapted from the real-life experiences of CliniClowns from Dr. Rednose Association. With warmth and charm, Cory Ko's art gently guides readers into a tale rich with both laughter and tears.



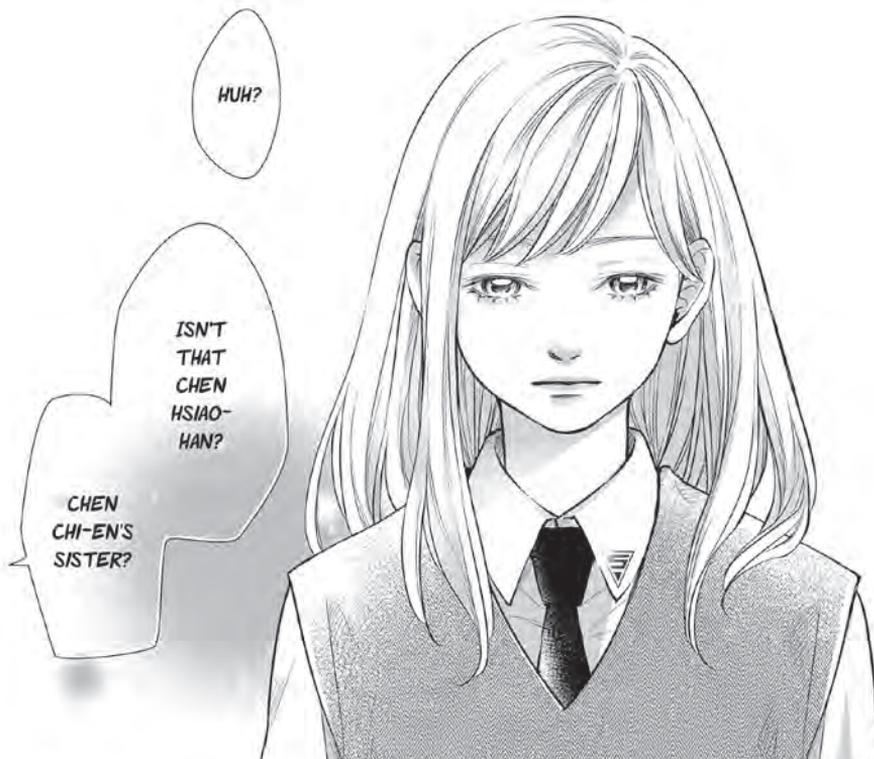
## Story by Feng Shi 逢時

Light novelist Feng Shi lives in Tainan, Taiwan with her four cats. Her writing blends the romance, fantasy, and thriller genres. Her previous novels include *My Boyfriend is Not a Zombie*, *Monster Cafeteria*, and *I Willingly Let Him Kill Me*.



## Comic by Cory Ko 柯宥希 (顆粒)

Cory always knew she was good at drawing, but only gradually built up the confidence to publish her work. Beginning with illustrations for short stories and covers for novels, Cory eventually started publishing four panel comics in shojo magazines. Her first long-form comic, *Love is Everywhere*, was serialized in *Shojo Monthly*. Cory's clear style of drawing and exceptional storytelling quickly captured the hearts of readers, transforming her into an award-winning comic artist. Her previous manga series *Make a Wish, Dashi!* and *Why Not?* have been translated into Korean and French.



# Bringing Smiles with CliniClowns' Magic

Written by Cory Ko & Feng Shi

Translated by Joshua Dyer

---

## Returning a Smile to Every Face (Cory Ko)

In order to better understand the work of CliniClowns, Feng Shi, myself, and our editor at Mirror Fiction went to a children's hospital to follow two CliniClowns on their early morning rounds. Since we weren't allowed in the patients' rooms, we had to quietly listen from outside as the CliniClowns played with the children. For each patient they created a unique performance tailored to the child and whatever level of interaction their condition permitted. Every single performance required overcoming seemingly impossible challenges. This wasn't simply horsing around with kids!

I had only observed from the wings, but after two hours I was exhausted in body and spirit. The two CliniClowns, however, continued their mentally and physically demanding work on into the afternoon.

A video interview with the mother of a former patient also left a deep impression. From the smile on this mother's face, you would guess her child had made a full recovery, though, in fact, her child had already passed on. She described how the CliniClowns gave her son a chance to be a kid again, to feel like a prince among boys. Still smiling, she said his fear of death had diminished, and that she had found comfort in the midst of her grief. I feel certain her son had passed that smile on to her, and that the son had only found his smile again with the help of the CliniClowns.

In fact, that is the mission of the CliniClowns: returning a smile to every face.

And thank heaven!

Though I could never be a CliniClown myself, I am delighted to have had the opportunity to create the art for this graphic novel and help people to better understand and appreciate their work. This has given me the chance to put something positive back into society, insignificant though it may be.

Everyone should to give this graphic novel a proper read! (waving goodbye!)

## The Magic of CliniClowns (Feng Shi)

As a child I was devastated when my grandfather was diagnosed with leukemia and went into treatment at the veteran's hospital. My mother became his primary caregiver, but she often brought me to the hospital with her. My family was afraid that my stubborn grandfather would refuse treatment, so we had to put on a ruse: we told him he only had a minor illness, and he would soon return to live at home. But with the gloomy atmosphere at the hospital and all of the cancer patients

living together in one ward, we feared my grandfather would soon discover the truth. In the end, however, my grandfather was far more obliging than we had imagined. Even as he lay dying of late-stage leukemia he never asked his children why he was staying at the hospital instead of returning home.

He endured his treatments, constantly vomiting and slowly wasting away until he was finally brought home to die. I think my grandfather must have known the truth, but being the man that he was, he remained the pillar of our family to the very end.

Unfortunately, the memories of that time gave me nightmares for years to come. I dreamed of endless corridors lined with empty hospital rooms and blood-splattered washrooms. Our memories of those last days with my grandfather became something no one in the family cared to revisit.

Of course medicine at the time did not place a priority on palliative care and the psychological well-being of the patient. It was only thanks to the CliniClowns of Dr. Rednose Association that my perspective on those times began to change. On my first visit to the children's hospital to observe them in action, I found, to my surprise, that the stitches of those early memories were being pruned apart, and color and song began to enter in.

As the CliniClowns performed room by room, many of the children became excited, laughing and running around no different than healthy children. No matter how sick they were, they still had imagination, laughter, and the capacity to play. When the CliniClowns appeared, the hospital was instantly transformed as if by magic. Gloomy hospital rooms became amusement parks where children could play with their parents. The children clearly wanted them to stay as long as possible; it was heartbreaking to see them finally wave goodbye. These children obviously needed these brief periods of joy and laughter.

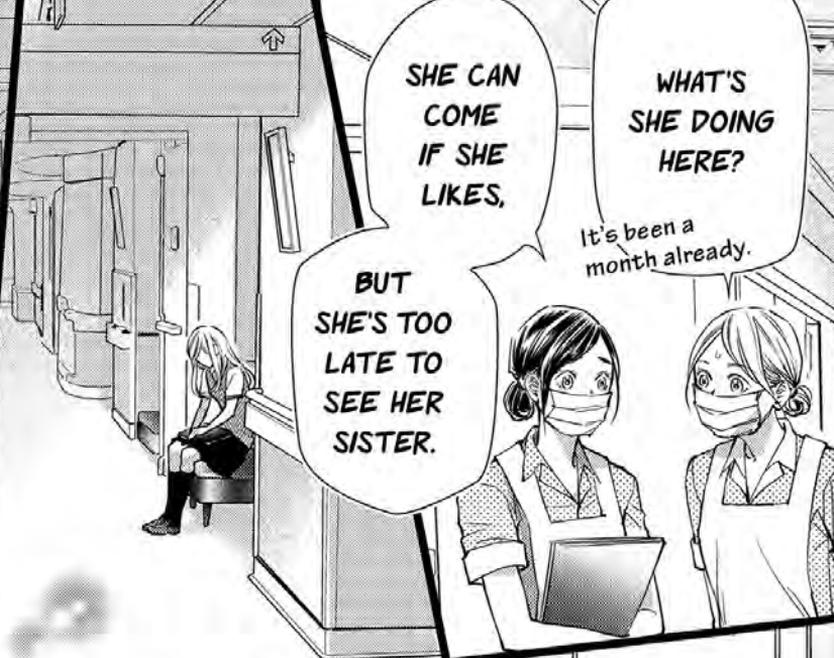
As difficult as the body is to treat, healing the heart can be even more challenging. In the process of writing this story, I observed CliniClown trainings and performances, and I interviewed each CliniClown to learn what had motivated them to take on this work. All of this gave me the opportunity to go back and face my own memories. Hospitals have always been a place of healing, but the colorful presence of the CliniClowns is needed to transform the atmosphere. They also transform the memories of patients and their families, giving them happier hospital experiences to reflect on in years to come, much as this story aims to do.

May we all avail ourselves of every opportunity to say farewell, even if we fear it might be our last.



Let's go!

Oops!



SHE CAN COME IF SHE LIKES,

WHAT'S SHE DOING HERE?

It's been a month already.

BUT SHE'S TOO LATE TO SEE HER SISTER.

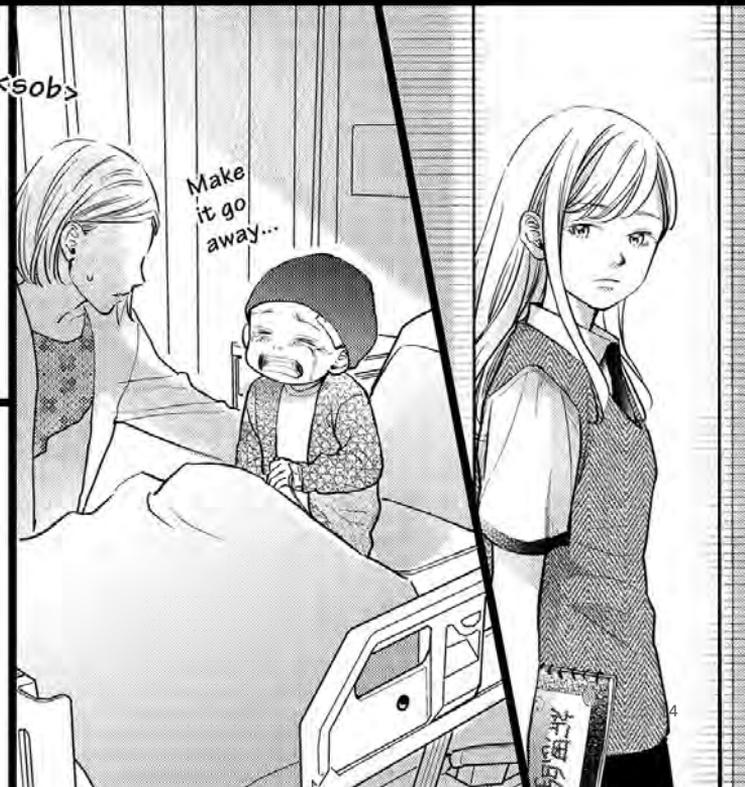


Ooooh...

plod, plod, plod



Ooooh... <sob>



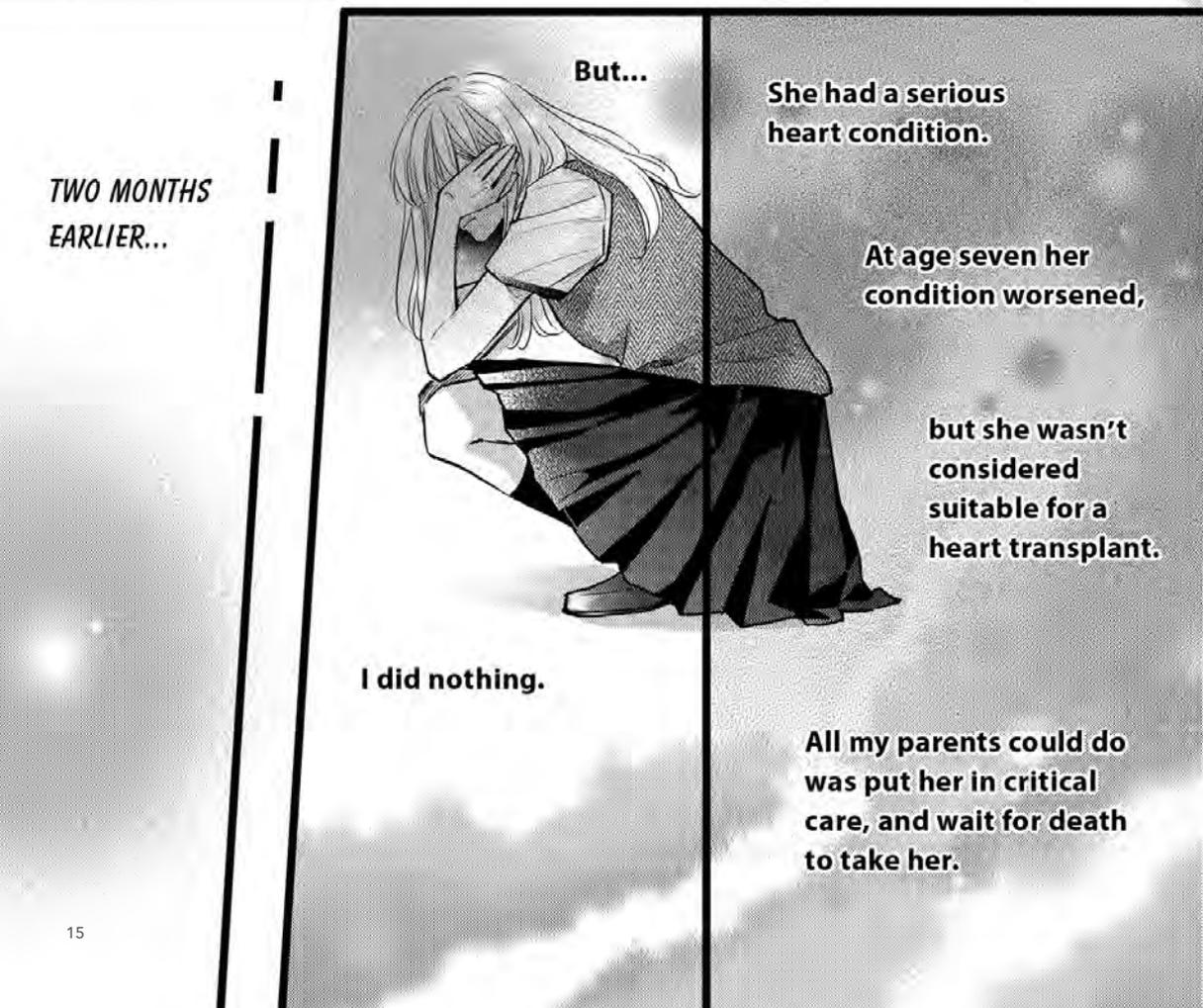
Make it go away...

本田白



**... died one month ago.**

**My little sister Chi-en...**



**TWO MONTHS EARLIER...**

**But...**

**She had a serious heart condition.**

**At age seven her condition worsened,**

**but she wasn't considered suitable for a heart transplant.**

**I did nothing.**

**All my parents could do was put her in critical care, and wait for death to take her.**



I ONLY HOPE THAT SHE CAN PASS PEACEFULLY.

THE WARD HAS CLINICLONS TO HELP LIFT HER SPIRITS.

THEY'RE JUST TRYING TO KEEP HER COMFORTABLE NOW.

...



WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME LEFT WITH CHI-EN.



HSIAO-HAN...



IF YOU CAN BE HERE AT HOSPITAL TO KEEP HER COMPANY,

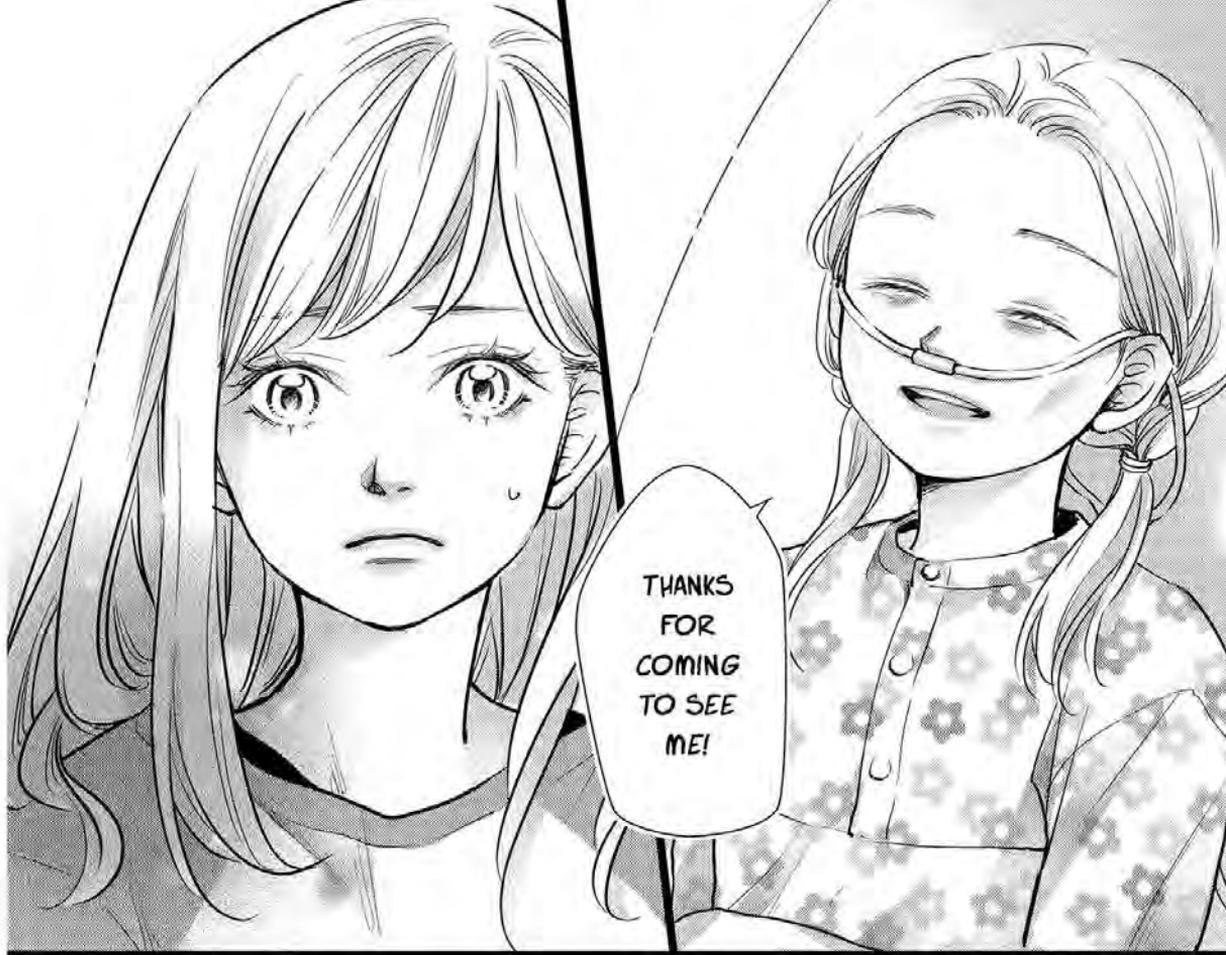
BUT MOST OF ALL, SHE WANTS TO SPEND TIME WITH HER BIG SISTER.

CHI-EN WILL BE SO HAPPY.



YOU NEED TO CHERISH THE TIME YOU HAVE LEFT WITH YOUR SISTER.





THANKS  
FOR  
COMING  
TO SEE  
ME!



嗚呼

I HAVE TO  
STUDY  
FOR MY  
EXAMS!

I'M A  
SENIOR!

HSIAO-  
HAN!

HSIAO-  
HAN?

CAN'T  
YOU  
SPARE A  
LITTLE  
TIME  
FOR  
HER?

CHI-EN  
WON'T  
BE WITH  
US MUCH  
LONGER.

YOU'RE  
LEAVING  
SO  
SOON?



ISN'T  
THAT  
ENOUGH?

EVER  
SINCE  
SHE WAS  
BORN!

ALL OF  
YOUR TIME  
HAS ONLY  
BEEN FOR  
CHI-EN,

my parents  
no longer  
pressured  
me to go  
to the  
hospital.



From  
that  
day on,



It was like I was avoiding something.

Every day after class I rushed off to the library

and crammed until I felt sick to my stomach.

# DONG HUA CHUN BARBERSHOP

## 東華春理髮廳



- **Publisher:** Yuan-Liou
- **Date:** 6/2021
- **Rights contact:**  
booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 220 / 220
- **Volume:** 2 (END)
- **Rights sold:** German (Chinabooks)

- \* **Winner of the 2009 Government Information Office Comic Award**
- \* **The first comic book from Taiwan to be adapted for television**

*The proprietor of a small-town barbershop comes to grips with his past when a teenage girl appears at his doorstep bringing news of the father who abandoned him nearly three decades ago.*

Just shy of middle age, Hua is the second-generation proprietor of a small-town barbershop. His only employee is a young assistant who has just been released from prison on parole. The name of the barbershop, Dong Hua Chun, brings together the names of Hua and his parents, but, ironically, his family is not so whole as the name would imply – on Hua's tenth birthday, his father abandoned him and his mother without even saying goodbye.

Now, nearly 30 years later, Hua receives an apologetic letter from his father. In the letter he explains that he is dying, and begs Hua to look after his teenage daughter after he is gone. By coincidence, the half-sister Hua never knew existed arrives at the barbershop the same day, initiating profound changes for Hua and his understanding of his past.

*Dong Hua Chun Barbershop* is the seminal work from comic book maestro Ruan Guang-Min. The first volume was published in 2010 to widespread critical acclaim, and was later followed by a television adaptation. Now, twelve years later, the second one has been published, continuing the emotional authenticity, warmth, and humor of the original.



## Ruan Guang-Min 阮光民

Ruan Guang-Min studied advertising and interior decorating in school. After a stint in the military, he worked as an assistant to comic book artist Lai Yu-Hsien. His first work to receive recognition was a comic book adaptation of the TV show *Friends*, which told a moving story about a group of young people from the countryside struggling to make a living in Taipei. Conversely, his comic books *Dong Hua Chun Barbershop* and *The Corner Store* have both been adapted for television. *The Corner Store* has been translated into Japanese and Arabic, and the English rights have been sold for his graphic novel adaptation of Wu Ming-Yi's *The Illusionist on the Skywalk*.

# The Seasonal Changes of Dong Hua Chun

Written by Ruan Guang-Min

Translated by Joshua Dyer

---

The bus slowed as it turned the corner into the alleyway, giving me more than a few seconds to notice the store front of the Dong Hua Chun Barbershop. Standing in a row of three-story townhomes with commercial storefronts on the first floor, it caught my eye not only for its name, but also for the way the sea foam green lintel and frame contrasted with its dreary metal roll up door.

It all began with just a few scattered plot points, but as the images in my mind accumulated day by day, the outline of a story took shape. I can still remember the excitement that overtook me when, still seated on the bus, I imagined that the name of the shop was created by combining elements of each family member's name. From then on, I thought about that family's story day in and day out. Three years later, that story became the *Dong Hua Chun Barbershop* graphic novel. In the end, this made-up family exerted a remarkable influence over the way I told stories. With the printed graphic novel in hand, I went back to the barbershop to thank the proprietor, but the roll up door was pulled shut. I lifted the mail flap to peak inside, but the barbershop chairs and the wooden towel rack were no longer there. Two doors down there was a hair salon. The owner said the family now lived up on the hillside, and only occasionally came into town to do shopping and visit with old neighbors. I wrote a small thank-you note inside the cover and left the book with the salon owner.

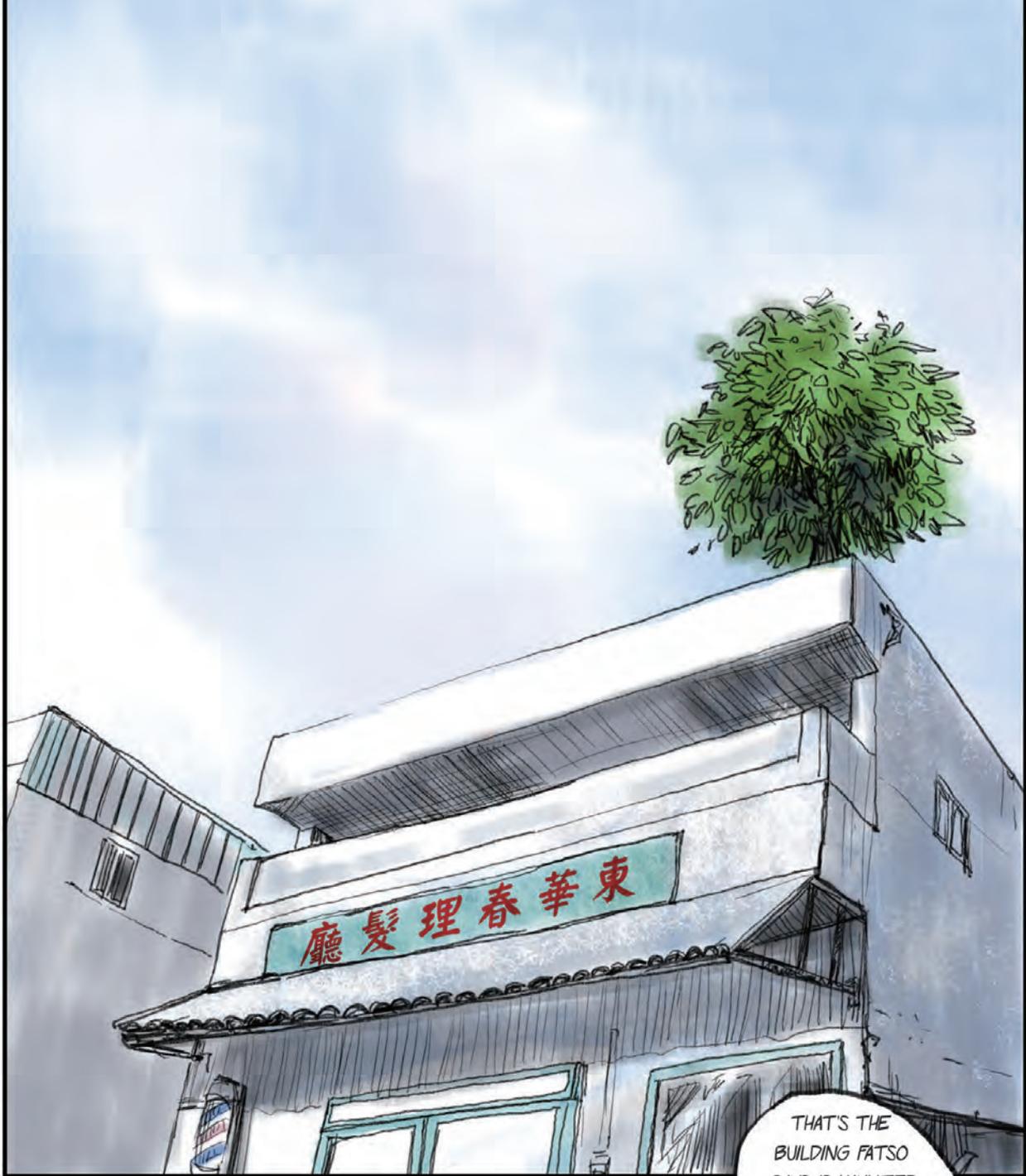
This graphic novel has given me many wonderful gifts. Not only was I cheeky enough to suggest to my editor that he invite renowned director Wu Nien-jen to write a blurb to promote it, Wu made a call of his own, and suddenly a television adaptation was in the works. After further midwifing from A-Mo, I ended up drawing the graphic novel adaptation of Wu's stage play, *Human Conditions 4*. Precisely because I so deeply cherish all of the gifts of *Dong Hua Chun Barbershop*, I've avoided working on the many follow-up stories I have in mind. Far too

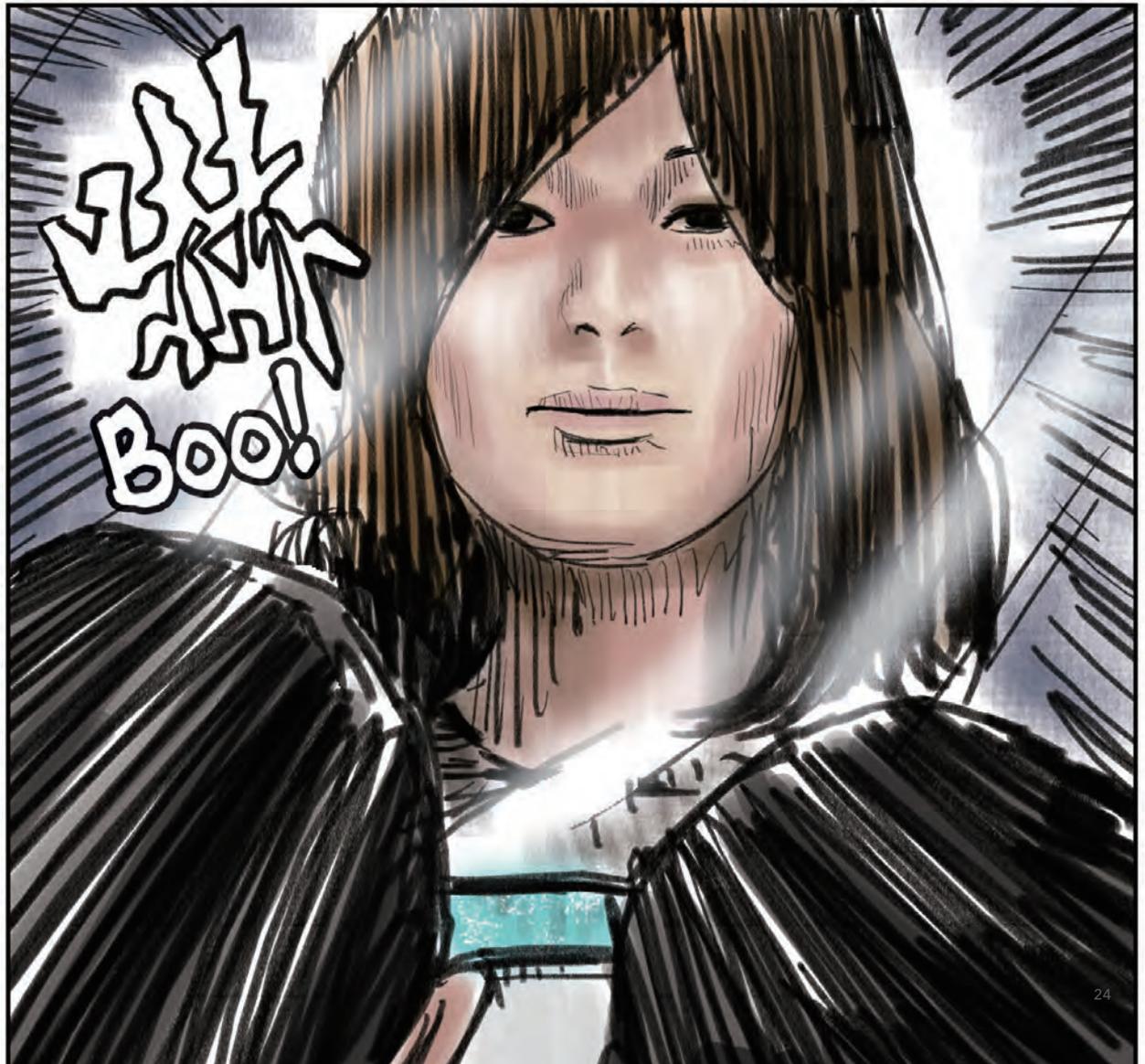
often readers are disappointed by a much-anticipated sequel, and I would be disappointed as well. Nonetheless, I've felt this unresolved tension in my heart ever since the book's publication in 2010, much like the knot of tension that formed in Hua's heart on his tenth birthday, when his father left him without so much as a goodbye.

The television adaptation was released in 2012, giving the characters the warmth of flesh and blood, and giving readers new experiences not found in the book, owing to the addition of new characters and storylines. Common sense might dictate that I strike while the iron was hot by re-issuing the original graphic novel and following up with a sequel. But common sense issued opposing counsel: to let the fields lie fallow and allow something else to grow there.

Storytelling is something you practice for a lifetime. Although ten-odd years ago I told a different story with similar emotional considerations, I wouldn't dare to say that has given me sufficient practice. I can only say I have a somewhat better grasp of the essentials. But just because I believe I have acquired some understanding doesn't mean I have truly understood. Honestly speaking, I feel like I am visiting friends that I lost touch with over a decade ago, and I am trying to reintroduce them into my life. Time passes, circumstances change. Each of us has changed in ways we may not be aware of. The same goes for our friends. All of those memories we share, and the people I thought they were, are now just impressions of the past. Using these old impressions to engage the present is about as impractical as capturing fire in a cardboard box. And if I screw up, it might easily end with everyone feeling hurt. For this reason, I feel I need to tread carefully when reviewing the past. But I can never be clear what my counterparts are willing to accept. We can never be certain that a renewed friendship will be the same as it once was.

Nonetheless, I mustered the courage to once again stand at the door of the Dong Hua Chun Barbershop, though it flusters me that I don't know whether the occupants of the shop can accept the story that I want to tell. I feel like the best thing would be to enter and talk it over with them first. So I reach out my hand to press the door buzzer, the one with the word "Detonate" printed beneath it.









BREAKFAST IS  
READY BOSS.

OK, GO TELL  
YU-LAN.



IT'S BIKINI  
SEASON AGAIN. I  
GOTTA FIND SOME  
TIME TO TAKE LI  
TO THE BEACH.



LOOK, THE WHITE SANDALWOOD ON THE ROOF HAS BLOSSOMED.

HUA, LET'S PICK A FEW AND TAKE THEM TO FATHER'S GRAVE.



YES, FOR REAL.

FOR REAL?

OH YEAH, HE SPOKE TO ME IN A DREAM THE OTHER NIGHT. HE SAYS BUSINESS IS GOOD IN THE AFTERLIFE, SO GOOD HE NEEDS AN ASSISTANT.



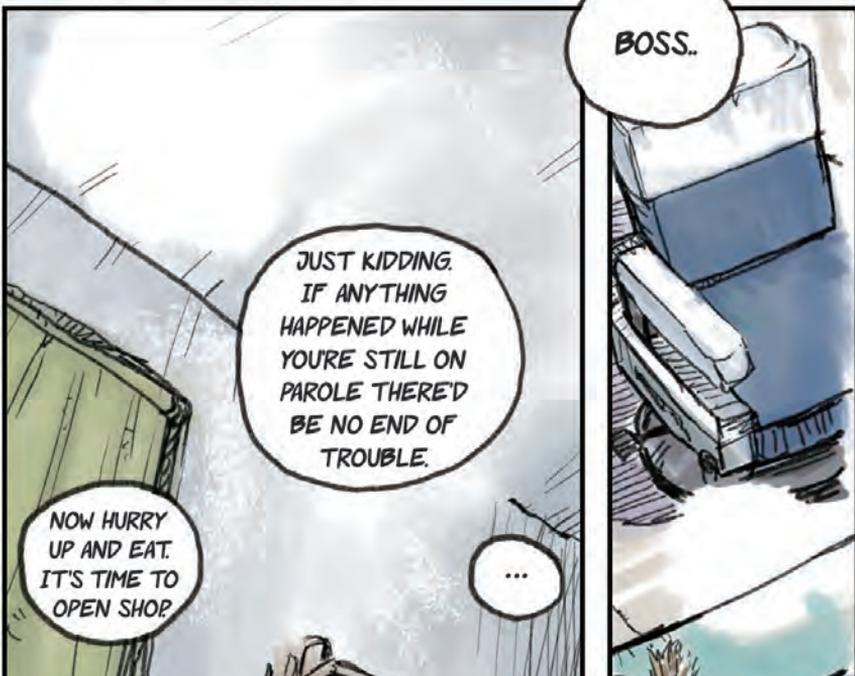
LI COULD DO IT. WE'LL JUST BURN HIM UP AND SEND HIM TO DAD.

<COUGH>! <COUGH>!

YOU SPRAYED ALL OVER ME! DISGUSTING!



SOUNDS GOOD.



BOSS..

JUST KIDDING. IF ANYTHING HAPPENED WHILE YOU'RE STILL ON PAROLE THERE'D BE NO END OF TROUBLE.

NOW HURRY UP AND EAT. IT'S TIME TO OPEN SHOP.

...

# FOUR CLEAR DAYS IN EARLY SUMMER

## 四個初夏的藍天：虎尾眷村今生



- **Publisher:** Halftone
- **Date:** 10/2021
- **Rights contact:**  
booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 208
- **Volume:** 1 (END)

*In Huwei, central Taiwan, a military family settlement sees successive waves of residents arrive, hoping to find a place to call home. What none suspect is that their dreams are intimately tied to the ghosts of WWII and martial law that still haunt the area.*

Constructed on the site of a former Japanese air force base, the Huwei military family settlement housed Nationalist soldiers and their dependents who retreated to Taiwan in 1949. The four tales in this graphic novel move through various periods of time, weaving together the lives of the residents of Huwei with the voices of ghosts from the past, thereby addressing the complex history of the Americans, Japanese, mainland Chinese, and local Taiwanese who have all left their mark there.

A young mainland soldier forced to live at the abandoned Japanese air base encounters the ghost of an American pilot who refuses to depart until he can thank the one person who showed him kindness while he was a prisoner of war. The final diary entry of a Japanese pilot records the simple pleasures of tasting local foods while stationed at Huwei. In the post-war period of martial law, a drowning incident in a pool formed from an old bomb crater reveals the reasons a mute boy refuses to speak. Many years and many disappointments later, a couple that originally fled to Taiwan in the panic of wartime finally learns to see the Huwei settlement as home.

Over the ten years that this project was fermenting in her mind, comic book artist Chen Xiao-Ya visited the Huwei settlement multiple times in the company of local historical scholars. The product of her labors is this moving graphic novel based on true incidents and accounts, which sheds a hopeful light on Taiwan's conflicted multi-ethnic past.



### Chen Xiao-Ya 陳小雅

A native of Huwei, comic book artist Chen Xiao-Ya brings refreshingly crisp art and a humanist sensibility to her stories. Her most representative works include *KANO* and *Black Nightshade on the Wind*.

# *Documenting Place, Understanding History, and Wishing for a Peaceful Future*

Written by Lee Yi-Ni (Historical Consultant of *Four Clear Days in Eearly Summer*)

Translated by Joshua Dyer

---

## **Home: A Common Ground for People of Different Backgrounds and Viewpoints**

“Home” is a story informed by multiple historical viewpoints. Taking the land of Taiwan as common setting, it knits together the lives of American, Japanese, ROC soldiers, and a local Taiwanese woman and her son. For the most part, the stories of these characters are pieced together from historical persons with the addition of material from local folk-tales.

The character of the American pilot is based on Charles V. August, a prisoner of war incarcerated at the Huwei military airfield during World War II. On January 4, 1945, August was shot down as he strafed the airfield with his Grumman F6F Hellcat. His plane was seized by the Japanese and studied to learn more about American military aircraft.

The character of the Taiwanese woman in Japanese clothing is derived from stories about local comfort woman employed by the Japanese soldiers. It is said that the chambers used by the comfort women can still be seen in the remains of the barracks, but it is likely that this is merely local legend.

The character of the ROC airman is based upon research into the lives of the soldiers in charge of equipment maintenance at the Huwei airfield after the Japanese surrender, and the story of an ROC soldier who was forced to camp in a Japanese-built water tower because there was insufficient room in the other buildings.

## **Final Entry: The Life of a Japanese Pilot Stationed in Taiwan**

The character Fuji Takahashi was modeled on the Japanese naval airmen assigned to the Huwei airfield. Many details from the story were drawn from veterans' memories as recorded in *A Squadron of Joy and Pain: Youth at 17*, including the feelings of the young pilots towards Taiwan, the local snacks that reminded them of fried rice cakes from Japan, their love of tropical fruits, and the joy they felt upon learning they would be able to eat rice and meat in Taiwan.

In the later stages of World War II, Huwei airfield was used by the Japanese military to train pilots for the war in the Pacific. The primary purpose of the airfield was basic flight training, and many Japanese and Taiwanese recruits had their first experiences of flight while based there. The recollections of these trainees often make note of that first time soaring up into the sky and the excitement of breaking through into the open expanses above the cloud layer. "It's so wonderful! Is this what Heaven is like?" one of them exclaimed. The experiences of the pilots in the story are an accurate representation of the feelings of the naval airmen of the Huwei airfield.

## **Class Dismissed: Interactions Between Local Taiwanese and Recently Arrived Mainlanders**

The story "Class Dismissed" is concerned with the interactions between local Taiwanese and the recent arrivals from the mainland in the wake of the 1949 ROC retreat to Taiwan, set within the context of the military family housing settlement that was established near the airfield. The crisscrossing pools behind Jianguo First Village were the result of American bombing during World War II. After filling with rainwater, the craters formed deep pools that were used as swimming holes by the children of the village, sometimes leading to incidents of drowning.

The school attended by the children in the story began as the Huwei Air Force Dependents Elementary School, which only accepted the children of those serving in the ROC air force. In 1966 the name was changed to Zheng-Min Elementary School and the school began to accept children of all backgrounds. This led to the situation depicted in the story, in which local children were fined for speaking their native language of Taiwanese, as opposed to the national language of Mandarin. The National Language Movement of the 1960s and the experience of being fined for speaking Taiwanese left deep impressions in the collective memory of the people of the era.

## **Handkerchief in Hand: Marital Relations Through Rootless Times**

After the release of new guidelines for the renovation of outdated military family housing settlements in 1996, many residents of older facilities were forced to move out, and Jianguo First Village in Huwei was no exception. After relocations were carried out between 2004 and 2006, Jianguo First Village ceased to exist as anything but a historical side note. Only after a successful campaign by local preservationists did the village return to use in a new form.

"Handkerchief in Hand" reflects the decades of changes experienced by the residents of Taiwan's military family housing settlements. The anxieties of the loving couple in the story were

commonplace in the midst of the ROC retreat to Taiwan. The technical skills possessed by air force and naval personnel gave them an advantage when securing the resources required to relocate their families during the retreat. Army personnel, on the other hand, often came over to Taiwan alone, leaving their spouses and dependents behind. From the endless waiting and homesickness in the early years in Taiwan, to the disappointments experienced when travel to China was once again permitted, to the final relocation out of the outdated settlements, the story illustrates the struggles of these military families. Like colonies of duckweed, they lived a rootless existence, transplanted from one body of water to another, only to be scooped up again and carried away by the passage of time. Helpless to decide their own fate and bitter from broken promises, the suffering and futility they endured are woven into the history of military settlements all across Taiwan.

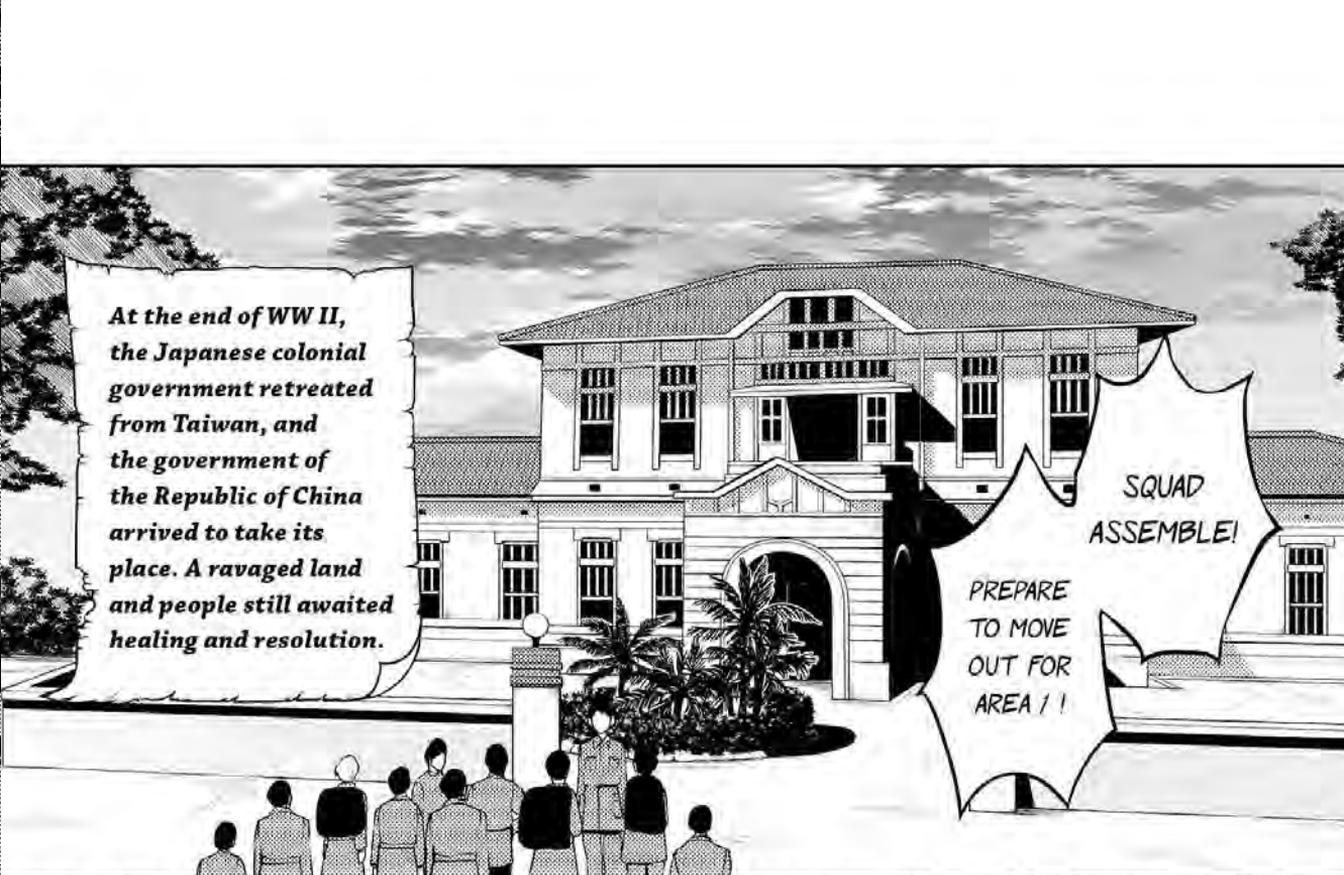
### **Summary:**

#### **Documenting Place, Understanding History, and Wishing for a Peaceful Future**

These four stories adopt various historical and ethnic perspectives on Jianguo First Village, bringing to life a rich array of memories regarding the ethnic tensions and conflicts produced by war. Though some of these groups saw each other as enemies or adversaries, in the end each lived out their lives on this same patch of land.

Viewing the land itself as the common denominator helps to illustrate that each character's story is but one small piece of history, each with roots in the events of World War II. Moving beyond the conflicting worldviews and ethical debates, we discover each character's suffering is real, and the resolution of their suffering only comes through mutual understanding.

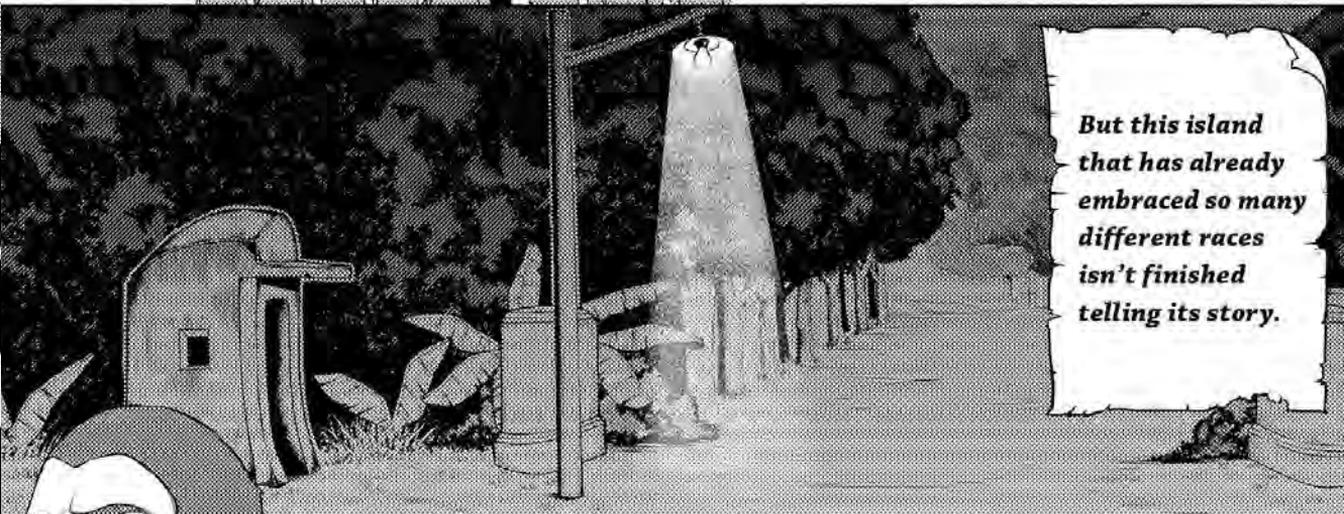
*Four Clear Days in Early Summer* not only documents the memory of place, it also expresses a wish: that we can better understand the rich diversity of our history through the lives of these distinct characters. Even more, it is a wish for world peace and the end of all wars.



*At the end of WW II, the Japanese colonial government retreated from Taiwan, and the government of the Republic of China arrived to take its place. A ravaged land and people still awaited healing and resolution.*

SQUAD ASSEMBLE!

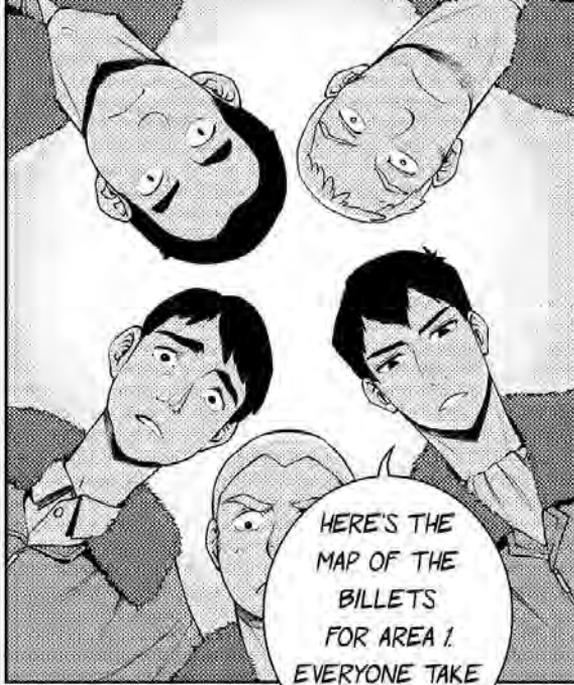
PREPARE TO MOVE OUT FOR AREA 1!



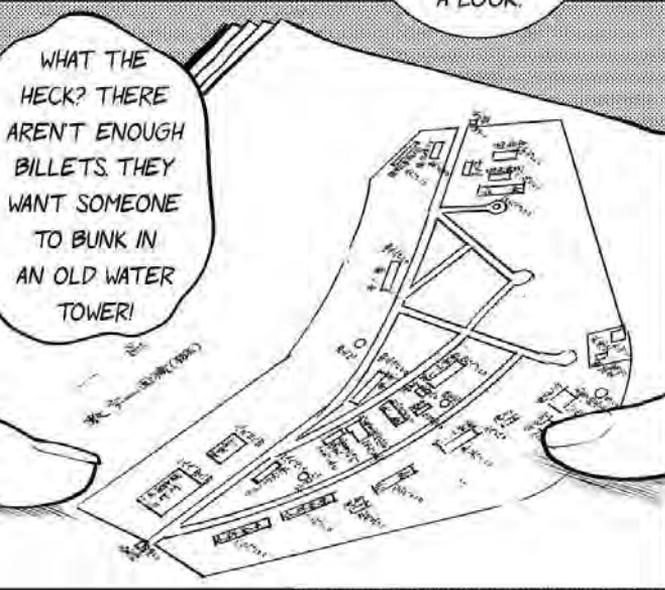
*But this island that has already embraced so many different races isn't finished telling its story.*



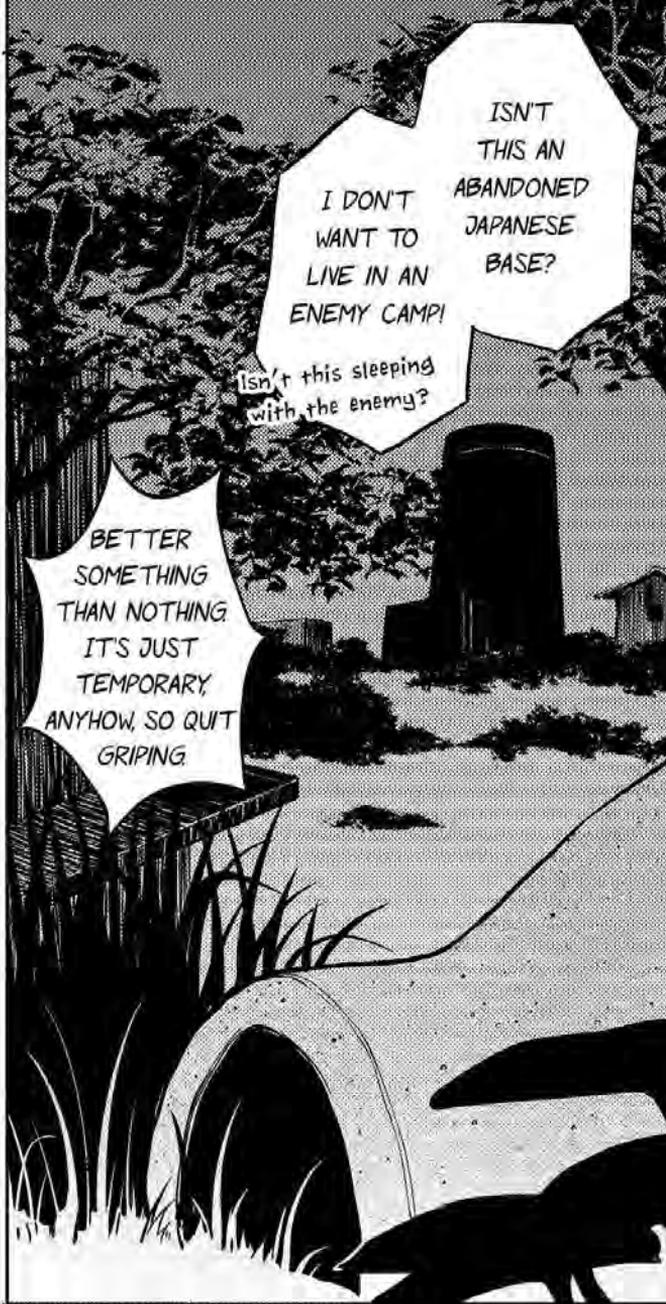
TODAY WE'RE HERE TO DIVVY UP OUR ALLOTTED BILLETS.



HERE'S THE MAP OF THE BILLETTS FOR AREA 1. EVERYONE TAKE A LOOK.

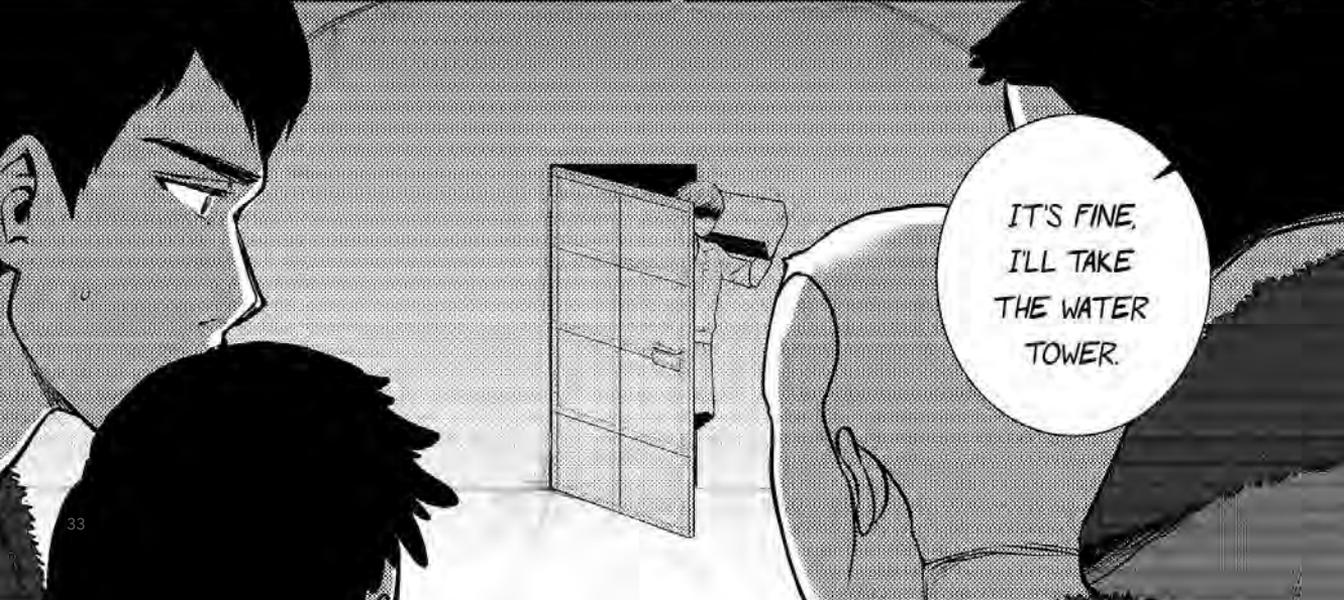


WHAT THE HECK? THERE AREN'T ENOUGH BILLETTS. THEY WANT SOMEONE TO BUNK IN AN OLD WATER TOWER!



ISN'T THIS AN ABANDONED JAPANESE BASE?  
I DON'T WANT TO LIVE IN AN ENEMY CAMP!  
Isn't this sleeping with the enemy?

BETTER SOMETHING THAN NOTHING. IT'S JUST TEMPORARY, ANYHOW, SO QUIT GRIPING.



IT'S FINE, I'LL TAKE THE WATER TOWER.



THAT WATER TOWER OVER THERE? I'LL GO TAKE A LOOK.

HSU TSUNG-LIANG?!

IT'S GOING TO BE COLD AND DAMP IN THERE.



WE'LL SEND YOUR RATIONS IN A MINUTE!

NO HURRY



I'M ON MY OWN. I'LL BE FINE.

YOU GUYS ALL HAVE FAMILIES WITH YOU.



PLEASE  
DON'T  
LOOK AT  
ME.  
PLEASE  
DON'T  
LOOK AT  
ME.

...IS FILLED  
WITH THE  
GHOSTS  
OF WAR.

EVERY  
CORNER OF  
AREA 1...

IT DOESN'T  
MATTER  
WHERE I  
STAY. IT'S ALL  
THE SAME.



HERE IT  
IS. THE  
MIDDLE OF  
NOWHERE

I JUST WANT TO GO HOME...

轟轟轟轟

AIR RAID!  
AIR RAID!  
EVERYONE  
FALL BACK!

AHHHHH!

GRAB  
THOSE  
AMMO  
BOXES AND  
GET OUT  
OF HERE!





JUST A  
LITTLE  
FURTHER



KEEP  
MOVING!  
THERE'S  
SHELTER  
JUST  
AHEAD!



Tsung-  
liang...

Help  
me...

呼！呼！

# BEAST OF CLOUDS: THE GUARDIAN OF ANCIENT TIMES

## 雲之獸：來自遠古的守護者



\* 2021 Golden Comic Award

*The clouded leopards that once roamed the mountain forests of Taiwan are extinct, but in this creative blend of zoological fact and comic book fantasy, the spirit of the clouded leopard lives on as the guardian of a natural history museum.*

The legendary Formosan clouded leopard, a fierce apex predator, once inhabited the remote reaches of Taiwan's mountain forests. Under pressure from the gradual expansion of human settlements, the clouded leopard eventually went extinct on Taiwan, leaving behind only museum specimens. But in this creative collaboration between comic book artist Hambuck and the National Taiwan Museum, the clouded leopard lives on as the spiritual protector of a museum.

- **Publisher:** Gaea Books
- **Date:** 11/2020
- **Rights contact:**  
booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 200
- **Volume:** 1 (END)

The four stories contained within this graphic novel strike a delicate balance between zoological fact and creative fiction, tracing a family of clouded leopards through multiple generations as they navigate various challenges. Readers begin in the primeval forest, where they observe Jumper defend his territory, court a female leopard, and father offspring. In the next generation, Scarface detects the presence of a new creature within his forest kingdom. In his doomed attempts to defend his territory from this new threat, he inadvertently forms a mysterious bond with Muni, a human child on the way to becoming a powerful shamaness. As she matures, Muni realizes her ability to see the future is enhanced whenever she is in the presence of a clouded leopard. Using her powers, Muni foretells the grim blow that industrial society will eventually deal to the clouded leopard and her own people, but also manages to help a descendent of Jumper and Scarface fulfill his destiny and become the protector spirit of a natural history museum.

Blending the precision of a naturalist with the humor and appeal of comics, Hambuck's art summons the majestic spirit of an extinct predator to the page, while lending warmth to the subtle relationships between humans and animals that form the core of the story.



## Hambuck 漢寶包

A native of Taipei, Hambuck was the resident artist for the Taiwan pavilion at the 2016 Angoulême International Comics Festival. Foreign language rights to his previous works have been sold in Japan, Thailand, France, and Russia.

---

# Beyond Extinction

Written by Gaea Books

Translated by Joshua Dyer

---

For many years, scholars attempted to find evidence of clouded leopards surviving in Taiwan, but no matter how many forest paths they stalked, no trace of the creature was ever found. Thus, in spring of 2015, a Taiwanese ecologist's article in *Oryx Conservation Journal* declared the Formosan clouded leopard extinct. Nonetheless, historical records, the folk songs of the Rukai people, and even specimens from the hoards of Paiwan tribal chiefs unequivocally declare that the clouded leopard once roamed Taiwan's high-mountain forests.

What was Taiwan like before the disappearance of the last clouded leopard? In his latest graphic novel *Beast of Clouds: The Guardian of Ancient Times* artist Hambuck has attempted to re-envision the life of the clouded leopard. The four chapters of the book cover the leopard's battle for survival in the primeval forests, the establishment of the first human villages in the mountains, the impact of societal advancement on the natural world, and finally the leopard's transformation into the spiritual protector of a natural history museum. Throughout the book, Hambuck displays a firm grasp of the interactions between humanity and the natural world and deftly weaves them into his narrative.

The concept for the graphic novel has its origins in the National Taiwan Museum. Museum director Hung Shih-Yu had been searching for new ways to creatively utilize the museum's resources for community outreach across a range of media, with the goal of more effectively presenting the museum's collections and research to the public. Founded during the Japanese colonial period, the National Taiwan Museum began as a natural history museum dedicated to the fields of botany, zoology, geology, and anthropology. As such, Director Hung feels the museum bears a great responsibility to address the many issues impacting the natural world.

Hung is also quick to point out that the museum is but one of 25,000 in the world, and that museum visitors have decreased dramatically in recent years due to competition from digital media, to say nothing of the impact of the pandemic. "At International Museum Day the question was raised, how do we use new media and methods to get people back into museums? We've been trying out multidisciplinary approaches such as graphic novels to represent the immense diversity

of life, and help people better appreciate rare and endangered animals.”

In keeping with these goals, the National Taiwan Museum, in collaboration with Gaea Books, invited comic book artist Hambuck to produce a graphic novel on the subject of the Formosan clouded leopard. The combined background research, writing, and illustration took Hambuck one year to complete, with the museum operating in a supervisory role to “professionally approve” every spot on every leopard. “Nearly every drawing underwent some kind of adjustment,” Hambuck remarked, “altering a spot to make it more hooked, or changing the distribution of spots...” At the beginning Hambuck didn’t know that leopards have patterns of spots on their bellies as well, only adding them after being informed by museum staff.

*Beast of Clouds* follows multiple generations of clouded leopards living in the mountain forests of Taiwan, noting the unique challenges faced by each generation. The stories of these anthropomorphic leopards help make complex issues more easily understood, whether it be extinction, the relationship of humanity and the natural world, or the tension between the advancement of human society and the exploitation of resources. In addition to the ever-present clouded leopard, the character of Muni, a native shamaness, also serves to connect the stories, cleverly illustrating themes of the affectionate bonds between humans and animals, and the appreciation of cultural heritage.

As the project was getting underway, Hambuck and his editor were allowed to visit the museum’s storerooms, not normally open to the public. There, they could closely examine specimens of the Formosan clouded leopard to learn more about its physiology, appearance, and behavior. Hambuck recalled the sense of curiosity that filled him as he gazed at one specimen: “Although it was just a preserved specimen in a museum, it made me think about all of the things this animal must have experienced in life. It had its own family, going back generation after generation. And eventually, after many years, it made its way into the museum’s collection.”

These musings quickly became the foundation of the plot. “I imagined four stories. First, the leopard in its natural habitat, then the leopard’s early interactions with humans, then an encounter between a museum scholar and the leopard, and finally a special relationship between the leopard spirit and the museum.” A flood of ideas came out of viewing that single specimen. “I really wanted to know all the roads that individual travelled to end up here in the museum’s collection.” In the story, the shamaness Muni has the ability to see the future, and if she is in close proximity to the leopard, her ability is magnified. But this means that ultimately she is able to see the destruction of the forest, and the extinction of the leopard on Taiwan.

However, the clouded leopard lives on as the guardian spirit of the museum. At night, the specimens all come to life, and under the guidance of the leopard, they make contact with a museum curator, I-jou, who has the ability to see the spirits of animals. The most moving scene appears in the last story when another character tells I-jou, “If you speak poorly of her (indicating I-jou herself), I will be very angry.” Hearing these words, I-jou breaks down crying. Hambuck recalls that while storyboarding the scene he also began to cry. There, under the faint yellow lights of the café where he works, he cried with I-jou for some time.

“I felt like that line was for myself to hear. It was also as if the character was there to speak to everyone. Don’t you feel that people are too hard on themselves? That we often reserve our harshest words for ourselves? I thought of speaking those words to my wife, and to myself, and

I was quite moved. I wanted to tell everyone in the world, 'You've already worked so hard. Why not go a little easier on yourself?' There is already enough suffering in the world. So why not let ourselves off the hook, and start treating ourselves better?"

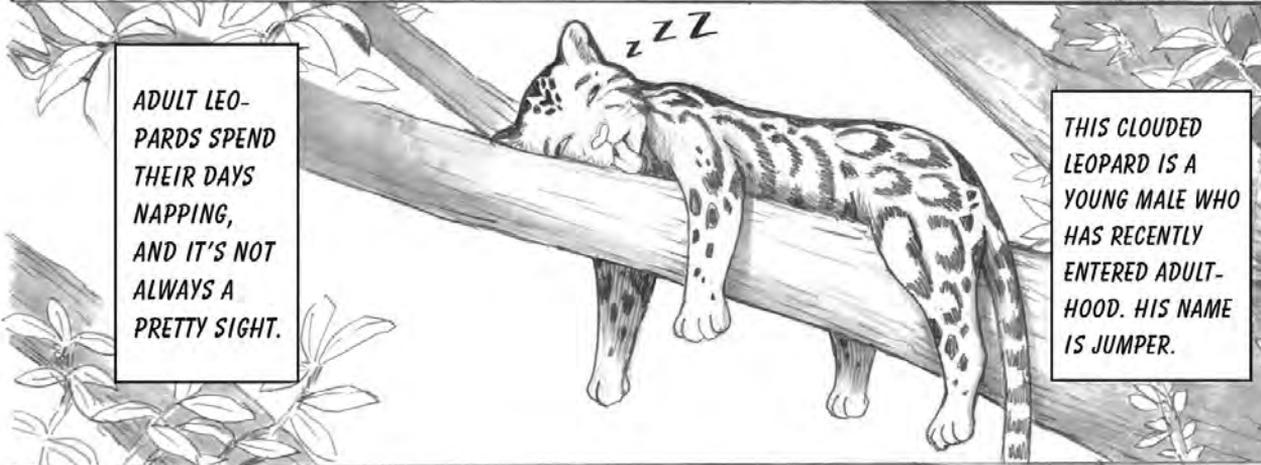
With warmth, humor, touches of action, and stirring emotion, *Beast of Clouds* effortlessly carries readers on a journey to a magical place. In order to better suit the atmosphere of the work, Hambuck chose to use pencils as his primary medium. "I needed to draw scenes from nature and patterned fur. If I had used the same techniques I've used in the past, there would have been sharp distinctions between black and white. I wanted something softer, fuzzier." After experimenting with pencil, he decided it would be the most suitable medium. "It's also a very fast to work in pencil. It was a real joy to draw!"

There were unique challenges to creating a fictional work that nonetheless has a strong basis in reality. Laughing, Hambuck describes his initial plan for the graphic novel: "The narration was full-on Discovery Channel!" But even the scholars at the museum had trouble accepting it. "When you're trying to shake up the traditional ways of doing things, there is a lot of back and forth." Hung also laughed, describing his role a bridge between the artist and the museum researchers. "If it was too straightforward, too academic, it would never attract a readership. After a lot of discussion, we agreed that there were some things about the clouded leopard and native culture that could not be altered. But when it came to the plot and the development of the story, we hoped the Hambuck would freely exercise his creativity."

Hung is delighted with the result. "Hambuck brought in so many creative ideas. The clouded leopards he drew are very appealing. They have a lot of humanity in them, which helps to erase the general impression that they were these fierce and terrifying creatures. The most moving parts of the story are the interactions between the leopards and the human characters. I really love this part."

Ecologically speaking, the clouded leopard is already extinct in Taiwan, but the National Taiwan Museum retains seven preserved specimens in their collection, documenting the full lifespan of the leopard from fetus, to juvenile, to near adult, to fully grown adult. The fetal specimen is likely to be the only one of its kind in the world. The museum has ranked the specimens as part of its first-tier collection, meaning they are among the most important artifacts in the collection, and are placed on permanent display on the third floor of the museum. The ecological diversity of our planet may be under threat, but the museum is planning to map the genome of its specimens to provide undeniable proof of these unique creatures that once roamed the high mountain forests of Taiwan.

# The Clouded Leopard



ADULT LEOPARDS SPEND THEIR DAYS NAPPING, AND IT'S NOT ALWAYS A PRETTY SIGHT.

THIS CLOUDED LEOPARD IS A YOUNG MALE WHO HAS RECENTLY ENTERED ADULTHOOD. HIS NAME IS JUMPER.



THIS IS A PRECIOUS MOMENT DURING WHICH HE CAN CATCH UP ON SLEEP.

BUT FOR JUMPER,



**TIME  
TO GET  
TO  
WORK!**

... CLOUDED  
LEOPARDS  
WERE BORN  
TO WORK  
THE NIGHT  
SHIFT.



JUST BECAUSE  
HE'S AT THE  
TOP OF THE  
FOOD CHAIN  
DOESN'T MEAN  
LIFE IS EASY.

THAT'S HOW  
JUMPER'S  
BIG BROTHER  
MET HIS  
DEMISE.



OR, PERHAPS HE  
MIGHT GET INJURED  
WHILE HUNTING.  
HE MIGHT SPRAIN  
AN ANKLE, FOR  
EXAMPLE.

THAT WILL ALSO  
MAKE IT HARDER TO  
HUNT, INITIATING  
ANOTHER DEATH  
SPIRAL.

THAT'S  
EXACTLY  
WHAT  
HAPPENED  
TO  
JUMPER'S  
FATHER.



BECAUSE IF HE CAN'T  
HUNT DOWN ENOUGH  
PREY TO KEEP HIM-  
SELF FED, HIS BODY  
WILL WEAKEN.

AND ONCE HE STARTS  
TO WEAKEN, HUNTING  
BECOMES EVEN MORE  
DIFFICULT, AND THE  
DEATH SPIRAL BEGINS.

THE  
EVERYDAY  
LIFE OF A  
CLOUDED  
LEOPARD  
IS A  
BATTLE FOR  
SURVIVAL.

TO HOW MUCH  
SLEEP IS NEEDED  
TO RESTORE HIS  
ENERGY – NO  
MATTER BIG OR  
SMALL – IS A  
MATTER OF LIFE  
AND DEATH.

EVERY LITTLE  
DECISION –  
FROM THE  
PRECISE  
MOVEMENTS  
REQUIRED TO  
JUMP OUT OF  
A TREE,



CONGRATU-  
LATIONS!  
JUMPER HAS  
ONCE AGAIN  
INCREASED  
HIS CHANCES  
OF SURVIVAL.

!?



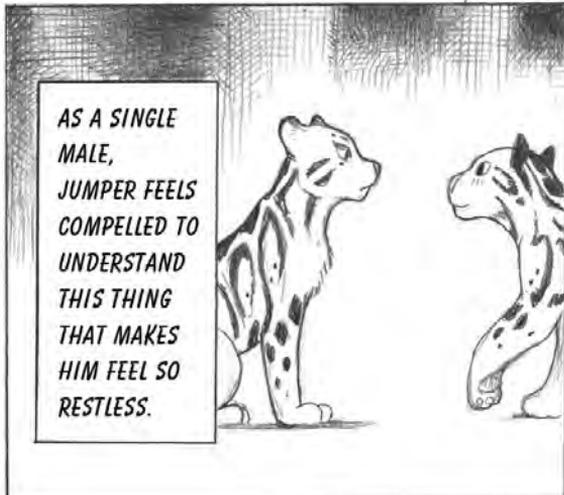


BUT THERE'S SOMETHING IN THE AIR TONIGHT THAT MAKES JUMPER FEEL RESTLESS.

sniff, sniff



**A RARE SIGHT**



AS A SINGLE MALE, JUMPER FEELS COMPELLED TO UNDERSTAND THIS THING THAT MAKES HIM FEEL SO RESTLESS.

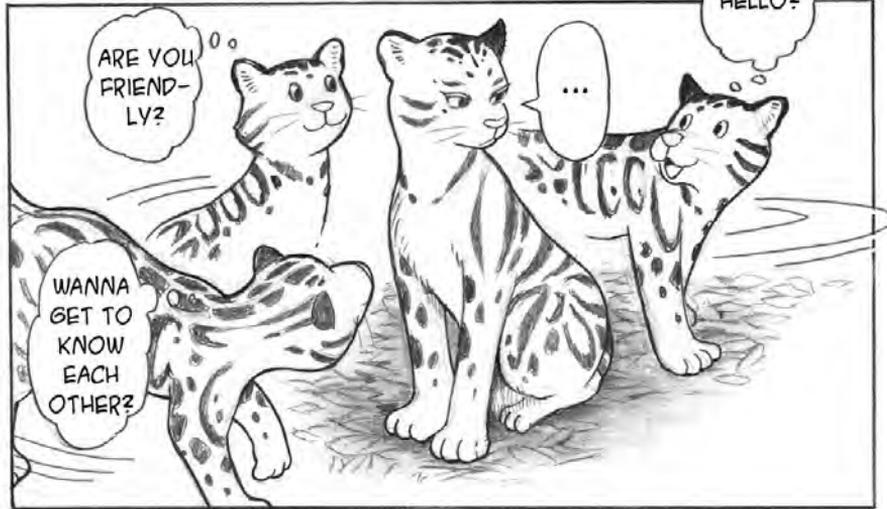


SHE JUST SO HAPPENS TO BE IN HEAT, AND IS EMITTING POWERFUL PHEROMONES.

A FEMALE CLOUDED LEOPARD, HAS APPEARED IN JUMPER'S TERRITORY. MOREOVER, THIS IS NO ORDINARY FEMALE LEOPARD.



IT APPEARS THAT JUMPER IS NOT MAKING GOOD PROGRESS.



ARE YOU FRIENDLY?

...

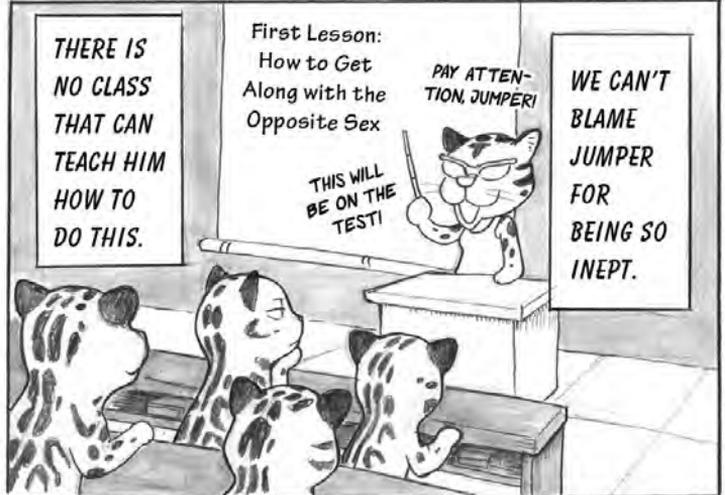
HELLO?

WANNA GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER?



GO FOR IT, SON!

HE CAN ONLY DEPEND ON ANCIENT IMPULSES AND ANIMAL INSTINCTS TO MAKE SENSE OF THIS SITUATION.



THERE IS NO CLASS THAT CAN TEACH HIM HOW TO DO THIS.

First Lesson: How to Get Along with the Opposite Sex

PAY ATTENTION, JUMPER!

THIS WILL BE ON THE TEST!

WE CAN'T BLAME JUMPER FOR BEING SO INEPT.



HE ALSO DETECTS THE SCENT OF ANOTHER MALE LEOPARD IN HIS TERRITORY.



BUT PHEROMONES AREN'T THE ONLY SOURCE OF JUMPER'S RESTLESSNESS.

# MISS T'S SEXCAPADES IN JAPAN

## T子%%走



- **Publisher:** Locus
- **Date:** 10/2021
- **Rights contact:**  
booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 224
- **Volume:** 1 (ongoing)
- **Rights sold:** Japanese (Shodensha)

*While other visitors to Japan consult travel websites for the best sushi restaurants, Miss T consults dating apps in her quest for the perfect lay in this refreshingly honest take on one-night stands and female desire.*

Driven by her desire to bed a hot guy, Miss T takes her first solo journey abroad: a dating-app fueled smorgasbord of one-night stands in Japan. While other travelers consult their guidebooks for the best sushi restaurants, Miss T's swipes right, right, right on her quest for the perfect lay.

As soon as Miss T initiates Operation Boy Toy, a cavalcade of hot young Japanese men begins rotating through her life: the shy student from a top-ranked university, the creepy cat-lover, the sensitive guy, the corporate party boy.... More to the point, Miss T finds she must face a disappointing range of challenges in the bedroom: one pump chumps, dedicated cuddlers (boring!), post-coital bolters (rude!), and even a jerk who suggests he'd perform better without a condom (spoiler: it's the party boy). Faced with these unforeseen setbacks, Miss T begins to wonder, what exactly does a girl need to do to maximize her pleasure these days?

*Miss T's Sexcapades in Japan* is a wildly controversial comic that approaches the taboo topic of female sexuality and desire with light-hearted humor and refreshing candor. By depicting Miss T as a young woman willing to take charge of her own sex life, creator RiceDumpling is helping to break new ground for female protagonists, as well as stimulate open discussions concerning dating, casual sex, and the human need to find sexual fulfillment.



## RiceDumpling 穀子

RiceDumpling began publishing her irreverently sexy comics online in 2019. Her distinctive characters, breezy stories, and outrageous gags have kept her comic strips perennially atop the leader boards at Creative Comic Collection (creative-comic.tw). Her full-length graphic novel addressing female sexuality in the world of online dating, *Miss T's Sexcapades in Japan*, was an instant hit with fans, and quickly sold translation rights in the Japanese language market.

# *I Wanted to Draw a Story About the Joy of Being a Young Woman*

Written by Anting Lu

Translated by Joshua Dyer

---

The first time I saw the cover of *Miss T's Sexcapades in Japan*, I thought it might be another typical shojo manga. To be sure, it has plenty about young ladies and their youthful misadventures, but once I took a serious look inside, I discovered so much more than I had imagined. In addition to the above, it is also (and excuse me for spoiling the surprise) a bold and visually explicit exploration of a young woman's sexual journey. In other words, this is no ordinary comic book!

Books from Taiwan invited RiceDumpling, the creator of *Miss T's Sexcapades in Japan*, to have a chat about the development of the book. On the morning that I conducted this phone interview with RiceDumpling, I discovered her voice was as full of energy and enthusiasm as her comics, and the conversation got off to a roaring start.

## **When the Girl Next Door Meets Prince Charming(s): Miss T and Her Bevy of Beaus**

Miss T from the comics gives readers the same refreshing feeling as RiceDumpling herself. She defies the shy and gentle stereotype of Asian women, instead reminding me of that favorite gal-pal many of us have: easy-going, clear about what she wants, unafraid to go out and get it. If she sometimes comes across as rash, it's always in an endearing way. "If there really was a Miss T in this world, she wouldn't be all that strange," is how RiceDumpling describes her. RiceDumpling intended Miss T's full-contact, no-harm-no-foul approach to life to convey the idea that life is a game - even if you fall down, you can always get up and try again. Miss T's unflappable attitude in even the most unfortunate and awkward of circumstances helps readers to adopt a more tolerant and relaxed attitude to the book's often racy content.

And what about Miss T's various hookups? While most are as dashing and well-heeled as the

male love interests in a TV drama, none of them can further Miss T's mission to maximize pleasure in the sack. "I wanted to work in that gray area between love and hate. That's what gives the story tension." RiceDumpling notes that there are a range of reactions to the male characters in the story, according to each reader's preferences and tastes. In this way, the online fan discussions of the perceived flaws and virtues of these characters has helped to expand the the range of issues addressed in the comics.

## **Authentic, Bold, and Uproariously Sexy: An Original and Unlikely Combination**

In addition to its easy-going narrative style and well-defined cast of characters, one aspect of *Miss T's Sexcapades in Japan* that continually intrigues readers is its bold choice of subject matter: online hookups. It's not just RiceDumpling's frank approach to writing about one night stands, it's the fact that she chose to not to sensationalize them, instead writing about sexual exploration as a normal part of adolescence and young adulthood. When asked how she brought realism and humor to hookup culture, a still-controversial topic often associated with content warnings, she responded, "Even with the typical high-school drama there are two sides to the coin: there's the puppy love and there's the bullying. The writer can always choose to focus on what's wonderful about a topic, or they can choose to focus on the darker side of things." In order to deal with society's often negative reactions to explicit portrayals of sex, RiceDumpling chose to push in the opposite direction, innovating a new approach that emphasized humor and compelling narrative.

As fresh and outstanding as her work is, RiceDumpling admits that at first she only shared it with close friends. Later she published the first three chapters online, and only after a flood of enthusiastic responses was she finally approached by a publisher. Now her comics is not only selling well in Taiwan, but also in the country where the story is set - Japan!

## **When a Comic Book Crosses the Line, or The Many Uses of *Miss T's Sexcapades in Japan***

A devoted reader of online forums, RiceDumpling has continued to seek out reader feedback even after the publication of her book. To RiceDumpling's surprise, and through no intention of her own, *Miss T's Sexcapades in Japan* has become a sort of aphrodisiac for many couples. One reader claimed that she and her boyfriend had averaged one love-making session per chapter. A complete read-through took the couple two whole days! Readers in the early stages of a romance shared the graphic novel with their partners, and found that it helped them take their relationships to the next level. "I never imagined the book would become an intimacy aid!" RiceDumpling joked.

In addition to improving relationships, RiceDumpling feels that the book also serves a valuable purpose by opening up discussion on difficult subjects. The entire story revolves around sex and hookups, two topics still considered sensitive if not downright controversial in Taiwan. Readers often post about their reading experiences as they progress through the book, creating the opportunity to exchange viewpoints with others. Since the sex comes packaged in a humorous narrative, it helps dispel the awkwardness of broaching a taboo topic. You might even say the book is a conversational lubricant!

## Go on an Adventure with Miss T and Discover the Joy of Being a Young Woman

When asked what she hoped Miss T's journey would mean to readers, RiceDumpling referenced an online discussion the topic of the benefits of being a young woman. The vast majority of participants were of the opinion there were no benefits - the posters didn't like being women. Reflecting on her own experiences growing up - dealing with negative stereotypes, the pain of menstruation - RiceDumpling found she was sympathetic to their complaints.

"Reading those comments I found I wanted to draw a story about the joys of being a young woman," RiceDumpling said. She hoped her readers, in addition to enjoying the story, would feel inspired to go on their own adventures, just like Miss T., RiceDumpling also hoped that by reading the comics, overseas readers can gain a better understanding of Taiwan and the young women who live here.

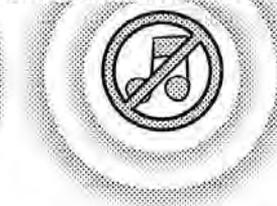




private room

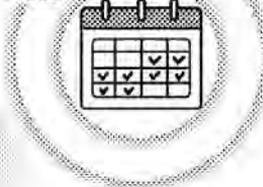


quiet environment



Searching...

available now



private bath



I MIGHT AS WELL RAISE MY STANDARDS A BIT. LESS LIKELY TO HAVE ANOTHER FREAK RUIN MY VACATION THAT WAY.





Search results  
meeting your criteria:

0

(Try increasing your budget, or  
adjusting the dates of your stay.)

OR, TRY  
EXCHANGING  
SEX FOR A  
PLACE TO  
STAY!



Masaki, Age 20

University of Tokyo  
Naka-Meguro District

Tokyo Tech  
Minato District



Ryosuke, Age 21

Keio University  
Setagaya District



Hiro, Age 19

Waseda Un  
Shinjuku D

Let's GO!

來去你家  
住一晚!

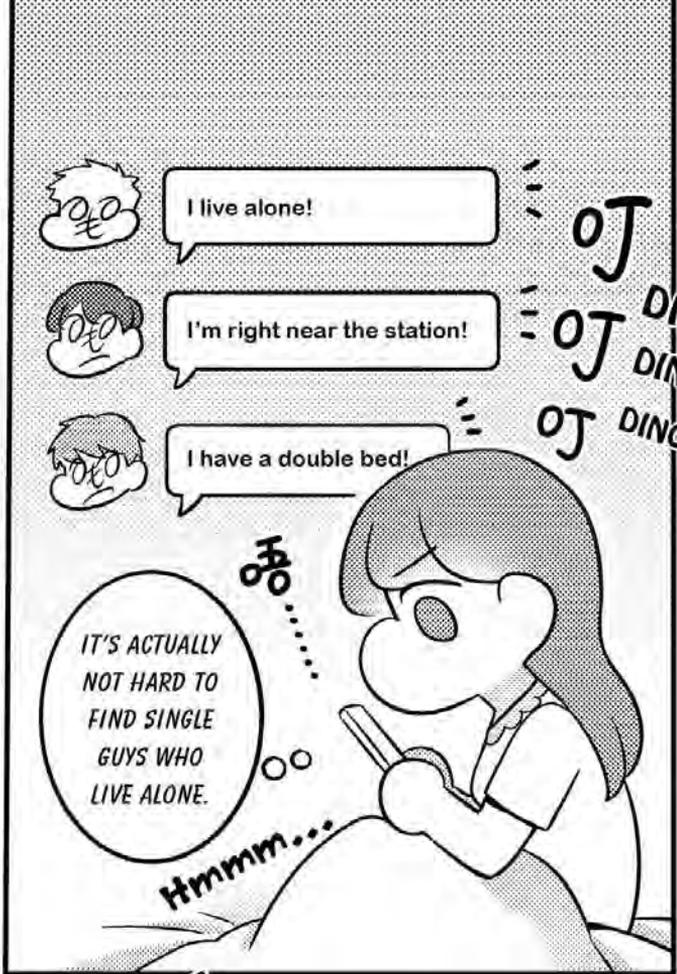
Let's Stay  
the Night at  
Your Place

提供

Brought to you by



Miss T's  
Sexcapades in Japan  
Production Co Ltd.





Arrrrgh!

I CAN'T GO BACK, EVEN IF IT KILLS ME.



拍拍 pat, pat

WANT TO MAKE LOVE TO ME? BEG FOR IT!



MAYBE I SHOULD SWIPE ON SOME TYPES I WOULDN'T NORMALLY TRY.



I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THESE TOP-OF-THE-CLASS TYPES.



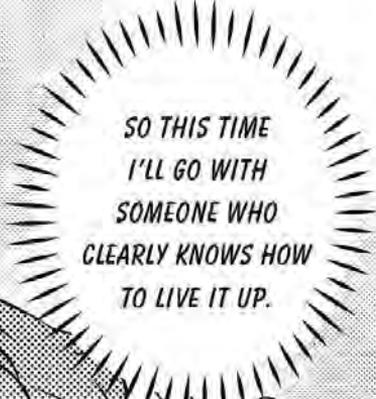
共通：名校生

Similarity: Top-of-the-Class

I JUST WANNA HAVE SOME FUN!



THIS GUY  
LOOKS  
LIKE A  
CAREFREE  
PARTY BOY!



SO THIS TIME  
I'LL GO WITH  
SOMEONE WHO  
CLEARLY KNOWS HOW  
TO LIVE IT UP.



stylishly  
scrunched  
hair

likes to  
have a  
drink  
after  
work

And he's  
employed  
(for the  
moment)!

Mr. D, Age 26, office worker



- Regional university graduate
- Lives alone (apartment)
- Looking for something casual
- As long as there are no strings attached, I'm game.
- Hoping to find someone I click with for conversation and drinks at the bar.

YUP, EXACTLY  
WHAT YOU'D EXPECT  
A PARTY BOY TO  
WRITE. BUT IS HE  
REALLY GOING TO  
SUIT ME?

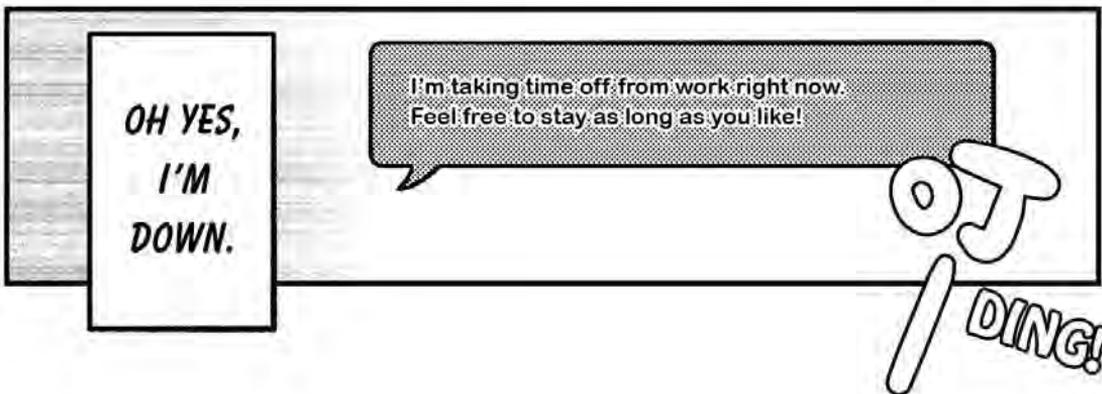
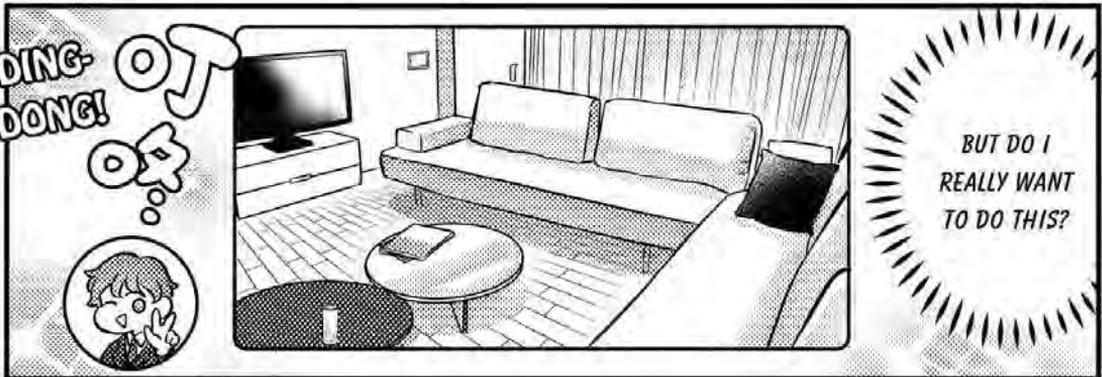
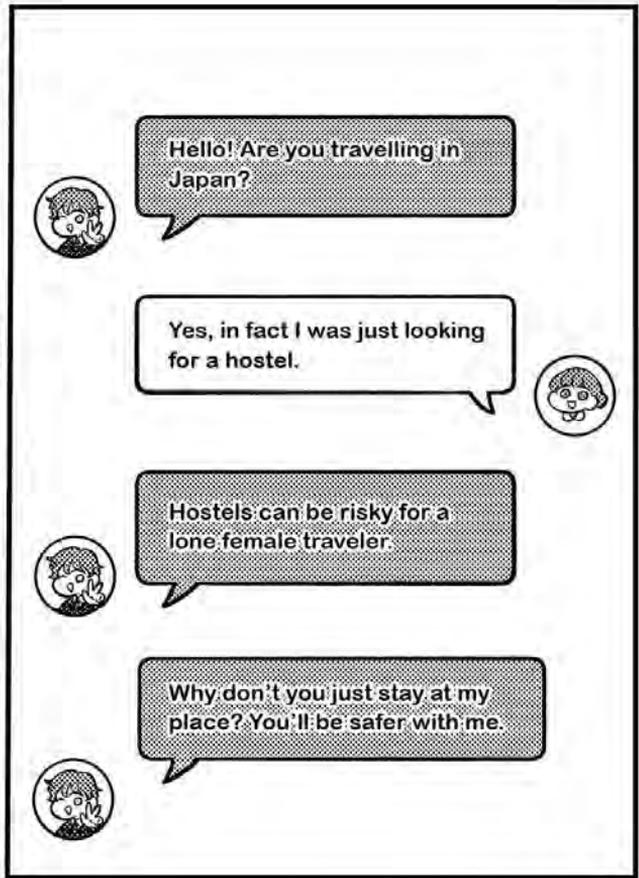
CAREFULLY READING  
(AND GOOGLING)  
PROFILE, FOR ONCE



- Dog lover



ALL RIGHT,  
SOUNDS  
GOOD!



# PRICELESS: A TAIWANESE PAINTER IN PARIS

## 無價之畫：巴黎的追光少年



- **Publisher:** Gaea Books
- **Date:** 3/2021
- **Rights contact:**  
booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 176 / 176
- **Volume:** 2 (END)

\* 2022 Golden Comic Award

*A young man in early twentieth century Taiwan decides to relocate to the mecca of the international art: Paris. Despite the hardships of travel and the challenges of living in a new culture, Yang San-lang refuses to abandon his artistic ambitions.*

Paris at the beginning of the 20th century called to painters from around the world. Van Gogh, Monet, Cézanne, and other European painters had all spent time in Paris absorbing the rich artistic atmosphere of the city. Among those that arrived to follow in their footsteps was a young painter from a small island in the far East who would one day become the most revered oil painter of his homeland.

After graduating from a Japanese art school in Taiwan in the 1930s, Yang San-lang begins entering his works in various art exhibitions in hopes of proving himself to his family. When an untimely rejection forces him to reflect on the artistic limitations imposed by living in Taiwan, Yang San-lang decides to relocate to Paris to further his studies and expand his horizons.

Acclaimed comic book artist HOM teamed up with the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts to produce this two-part graphic novel that tells the story of master oil-painter Yang San-lang's artistic development in Paris. From his initial anxiety and lack of direction, to the hardships of travel, to the shock of living in another country, the story unfolds in parallel with discussions of Yang's artistic vision and profiles of the influential painters of the time. Diligently researched and enchantingly told, this story carries readers right along beside Yang San-lang as he pursues his artistic dreams.



## HOM

Literally a “homegrown” talent, HOM began her manga career as a hobby while she was working in media and game design. Her science fiction manga *The Searcher* won a Golden Comic Award for Best Up-and-Coming Artist in 2011. Meanwhile, HOM had been posting comics about real life and real people on her Facebook page, gradually amassing a fan base. Those comics eventually became *Big City, Little Things*, the series which has come to define her style and artistic acumen.

---

## *In My Next Life I Will Still Want to Paint*

Written by Gaea Books

Translated by Joshua Dyer

---

Comic book artist HOM told us how it all began.

It was her first visit to the Yang San-lang Museum in New Taipei City to do background research. As she perused the works of the Taiwanese master of oil painting, she began to observe the details in his handling of color and light, in the thickness of the paint on the canvas. She began wondering about the course of his creative life. Like Yang San-lang, HOM was also an artist interested in capturing youthful vigor and personal belief on canvas. Like him, she had experienced periods of disillusionment, but resolutely refused to put down her brush. Before leaving the museum, her eyes fell on a quotation from Yang San-lang: “In my next life I will still want to paint.” HOM was shaken. “That was the moment the distance between us closed,” she said.

HOM was already the recipient of two Golden Comic awards: Best Youth Comic for *Magical Moment: The Actor* in 2019, and Best Overall for *Big City, Little Things* in 2020. She had always worked on contemporary stories with characters roughly her own age. *Priceless*, a collaboration with the National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, was her first undertaking involving historical subject matter, her first book done in color from cover to cover (176 pages), and her first time coping with the pressures of publishing serially online.

### **Illustrating the Life of a Painter: A New and Intriguing Challenge**

Was HOM worried at all about this project? “Not at all. I thought it was interesting! It was a huge challenge for me, something completely new. Telling a historical story, talking about painting. I’d

never done anything like it.” A comic book artist illustrating the life of a master of oil paints - the concept alone was enough to intrigue HOM. “Throughout the process I was thinking about how best to express another artist’s ideas on painting, as well as the process of his growth. Even though I’m a painter myself, there were still bound to be many differences between us.”

HOM studied fine arts at university, though she is the first to admit her main concern at the time was passing exams, so she didn’t learn anything about Yang San-lang beyond what was required. On her first visit to the Yang San-lang Museum, when she saw the tools of his trade, including those he used on his trip to France, an idea popped into her head. She would trace his artistic development step by step, from his youth, when he first began painting, on until he became one of Taiwan’s greatest oil painters.

Like a pair of eyes tailing the artist, HOM slowly charted the course of his growth, the changes in his personal vision. “The process of creation allowed my understanding of him to deepen over the course of the project.” It also brought about an artistic breakthrough of her own; in tribute to Yang, she began to utilize changes in light and shadow in her work. “From his paintings I learned he was always chasing the light. Most of the time he was outdoors, painting from life. He enjoyed the way light played across objects. He belonged to the plein air school.”

## Understand the Story of the Land Where You Grow, and Keep Painting

Of course, there were also struggles. HOM recalled that she had developed tendinopathy while working on *Big City, Little Things* Vol. 4 and 5. Her hands hurt every time she lifted them to her keyboard. “Though I was recovering, my hands hurt all the time, even when I wasn’t working. The doctor told me I had to stop, but I felt there was more I wanted to draw! I was hurting in body and spirit. Creative work is so interesting to me, I feel there will always be things I want to draw. I’m past the point of thinking about whether people will like what I do. I’m happy as long as I can keep creating.”

I asked if there was anything she wanted to tell her readers. She answered, “I hope everyone will get to know Taiwan’s artists, and understand the evolution of the fine arts in Taiwan, the history of their development, and the general environment of artistic production. The years of Japanese colonial rule saw vigorous growth in art. In fact, art was flourishing worldwide. Taiwan was absorbing many influences from Japan at the time, so naturally the arts tended towards the official schools of Japanese aesthetics. But there were also artists like Yang San-lang and Tan Teng-pho who leaned more towards Western art.



"This is similar to Taiwan's current situation with regards to comic book art. Japan was a big influence at first, but more recently there are new influences from Europe, North America, and Korea. The problem is how to blend all of these forces together in a way that strengthens the artistic landscape of Taiwan. For the time being there is no solution. This is the common problem that all Taiwanese artists are grappling with. But whatever, we'll just keep drawing. So what I'd really like to tell my readers is to go out and feel the pulse of Taiwanese art. Try to understand the entire context of it. This is the land where we grew up. We need to have our own understanding of this place where we were born and continue to grow."

As an artist herself, and as someone who has adapted the life of Yang San-lang to the comic book medium, I wondered if there were times when HOM felt quite close to the master? HOM answered by going back to the beginning of the project. "It was my first visit to the Yang San-lang Museum. I had already toured all of the exhibits, and just as I was about to leave, I saw this quotation: 'In my next life I will still want to paint.' It made total sense to me. Because he loved painting so much there was no room for doubt. He was so incredibly prolific. There's really no room for doubt. When I saw those words, that was the moment the distance between us closed."





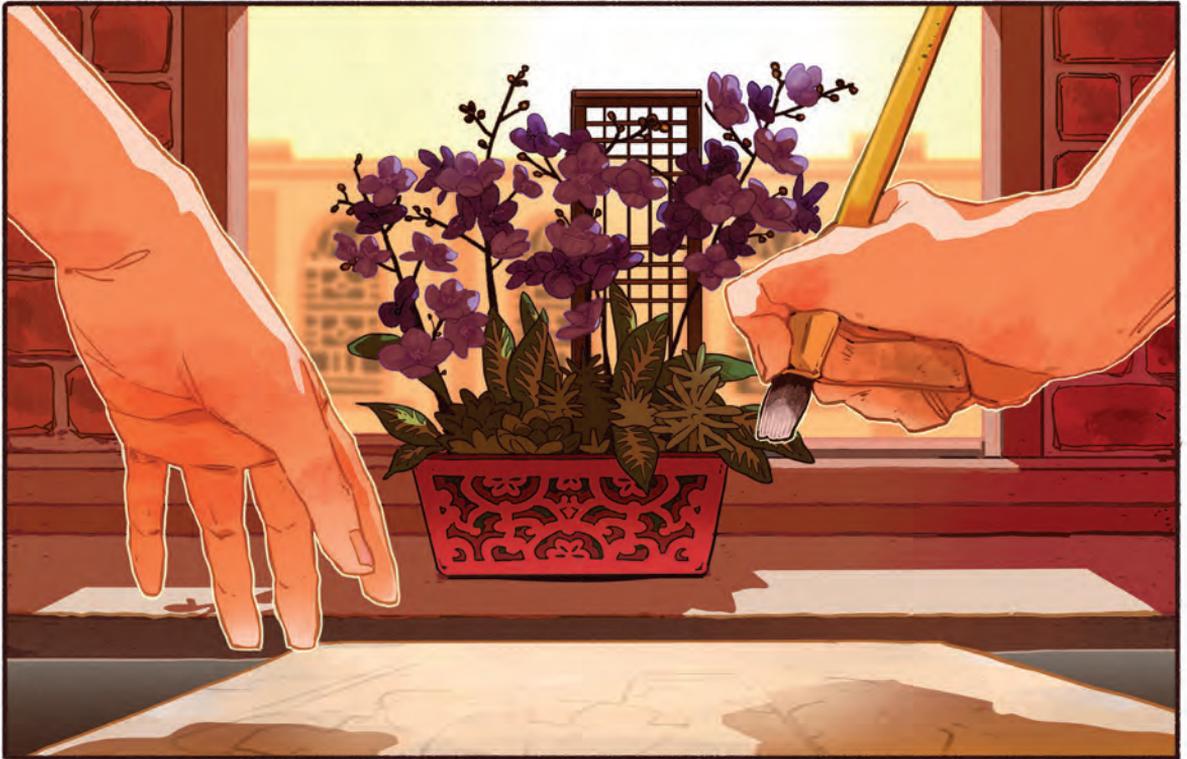
昭和六年

6th Year of the Showa Period

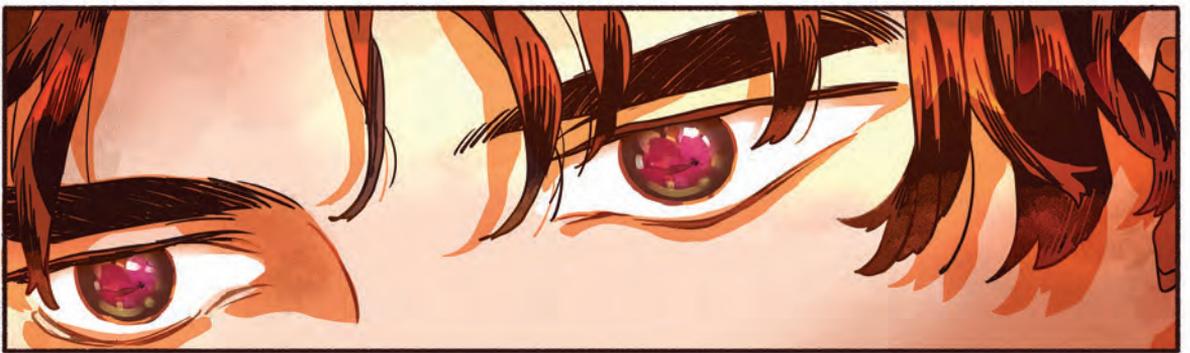
1931

台北大稻埕

Dadaocheng, Taipei



\* Taiwanese oil painter Yang San-lang was born Yo Sasaburo, only changing his name to its current form after Taiwan was returned to the Republic of China at the conclusion of World War II.











**BOOKS FROM TAIWAN**





AFTER I WAS AN ADULT I STARTED TO NOTICE MANY OF MY FAMILY'S MORE UNUSUAL HABITS.

For example, when a floor tile broke, we would simply cover it up with a rug.

To keep the sofa clean we covered it with random fabrics that we never bothered to wash.



We never bought anything expensive, instead cramming our small apartment with an endless array of cheap purchases.

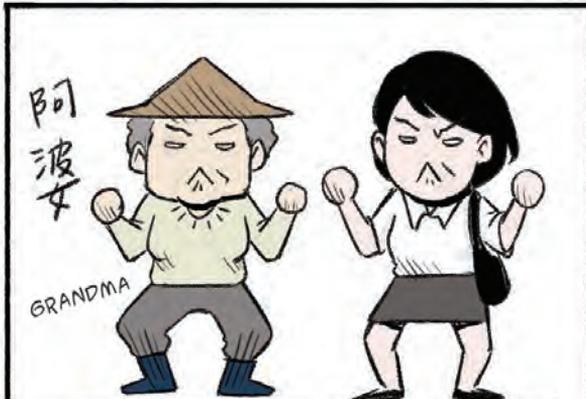
And each object had to have some kind of mat, or pedestal, beneath it.

Our penny-wise habits so reduced our lifestyle that we spent a fortune on health supplements to compensate.



SECRETLY, I SAW MYSELF AS AN AUDREY HEPBURN WHO HAD BEEN BORN INTO THE WRONG FAMILY.

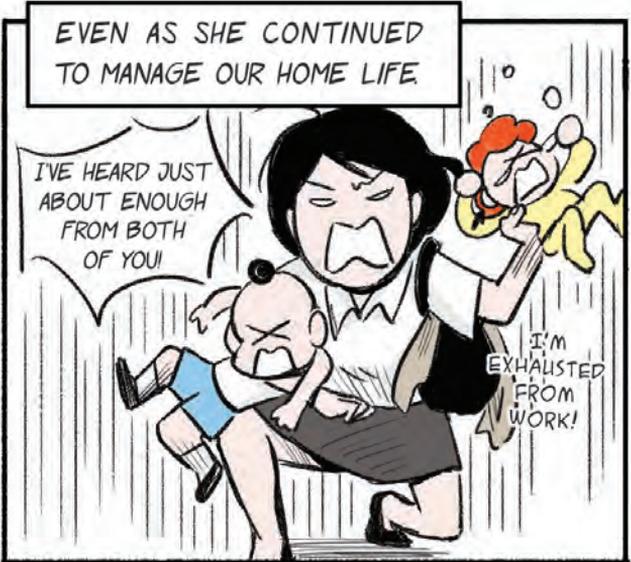




阿波女

GRANDMA

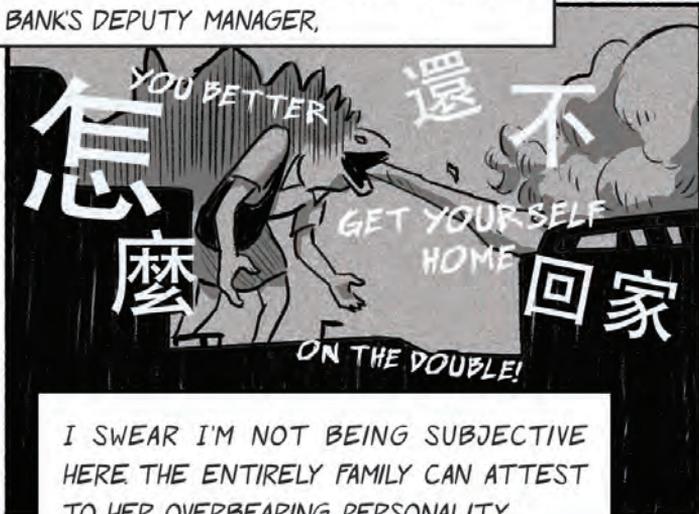
MY MOTHER IS A TRADITIONAL TOUGH-AS-NAILS HAKKA WOMAN. STARTING AS A BANK CLERK, SHE HAS FOUGHT HER WAY UP THE CORPORATE LADDER TO BECOME THE BANK'S DEPUTY MANAGER.



EVEN AS SHE CONTINUED TO MANAGE OUR HOME LIFE

I'VE HEARD JUST ABOUT ENOUGH FROM BOTH OF YOU!

I'M EXHAUSTED FROM WORK!



YOU BETTER

還不

怎麼

GET YOURSELF HOME

回家

ON THE DOUBLE!

I SWEAR I'M NOT BEING SUBJECTIVE HERE. THE ENTIRELY FAMILY CAN ATTEST TO HER OVERBEARING PERSONALITY.



EVEN THOUGH WE KNOW SHE MEANS WELL

MOM MADE YOU SOME TEA!

I DON'T WANT TO TALK RIGHT NOW.



I'VE JUST ABOUT HAD IT WITH YOUR FATHER, THAT USELESS LAYABOUT!

EVERY TIME I ASK HIM TO PAY FOR SOMETHING, THE BEST HE CAN DO IS SCRUNGE UP NT\* 50 OF POCKET CHANGE!

IN SHORT, I NEVER WANTED TO BE LIKE MY PARENTS, AND I WOULD NEVER CHOOSE A LIFE PARTNER LIKE THEM EITHER.

I COME FROM AN ORDINARY, HAPPY HAKKA FAMILY.

OH, I FORGOT THE RICE DUMPLINGS ARE STILL STEAMING IN THE CROCKPOT.

I GET ALONG WITH BOTH OF MY OLDER BROTHERS, EVEN THOUGH THE YOUNGER OF THE TWO SPENT MOST OF HIS CHILDHOOD LIVING WITH OUR AUNT.

MY PARENTS ARE FROM RURAL TAOYUAN, BUT THEY CAME TO TAIPEI TO WORK WHEN THEY WERE YOUNG ADULTS. THEY HOLD FAST TO THE TRADITIONAL VIRTUES OF HARD WORK AND FRUGALITY.

MY FATHER USED TO TEACH CALLIGRAPHY, BUT SLOWLY HE SHIFTED INTO THE ROLE OF HOUSE-HUSBAND

HOT!

HEY, TURN OFF THE TV DAD!

Whoever tells you to short this stock is out of their minds! Is anyone listening?

DADI

HIS HOBBIES ARE STOCK TRADING AND BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY.

HI EVERYONE. YOU CAN CALL ME SHRIMP. I'M AN ANIMATOR FROM TAIPEI.

Call now to become a member and start receiving our latest trading tips...

I NEVER IMAGINED THAT ONE DAY I'D BE STRUGGLING TO COME UP WITH A SUITABLE OPENING FOR A GRAPHIC NOVEL.

The Dow Jones took a tumble...

**YOU DON'T HAVE TO SCREAM. I CAN HEAR JUST FINE!**

**SHRIMP, HURRY UP AND GET READY FOR DINNER!**



FEELING A LIGHT BUZZ FROM THE CHAMPAGNE I'M SHARING WITH A HANDSOME DATE AT THE FOOT OF THE EIFFEL TOWER.

The Taiwan Weighted Index climbed to 10,500 today...

DISCUSSING PHILOSOPHY WHILE SIPPING COFFEE WITH MY BESTIE AT AN OUTDOOR CAFE



Never mind the noobs, they're always late to the foreign investment party...

WRITING POEMS ALONE IN MY MOODILY LIT MONTMARTRE LOFT.



Hold those shares! Everyone is going to wake up and smell the value soon enough...

THIS IS THE FUTURE THAT AWAITS ME

observing him, getting to know what he's like."

If artistic creation is a process of getting to know oneself, then Fshrimp is not only deeply familiar with that process, she has a knack for conveying how it feels in her work. Readers are immersed in the tension and discomfort of her journey of self-discovery. Equally, they are part of the healing that comes when she steps back to have a good laugh at herself.

## Life is a Marathon, the Journey is the Goal

While the world has yet to be graced with a Fried Shrimp Man animated short, Fshrimp's story has only just begun. In addition to continuing this series about her professional development in Paris, she is also pushing her Instagram web-comic *Drinker's Club* into new terrain. Fshrimp also recently took up running marathons, and a story about long-distance running is currently brewing.

To many people, the journey is something you pass by in order to reach a destination. Once you arrive, the journey is over. Through her stories, Fshrimp asserts that the journey itself is the goal. When you get stuck in life, you keep on running, you keep on drawing, you keep on living. As long as you keep going, the story will unfold along the way.



disappear if I don't take the time to record them." Fshrimp has always kept a diary, and she has saved all the work she has produced from her student days to the present. Every once in a while, she likes to go back and review her life. "Sometimes the things I've written make me laugh. At other times I'm surprised I could ever think such a thing."

Each time she looks back she gets to know herself in a new way. She never feels ashamed of her past failings; often they provide the seeds of inspiration. When asked what part of her book she's most proud of, Fshrimp points to the character of the anxious director. "Whenever his anxiety was up it drove me crazy. But once he became a character in a comic book, I could see him as this interesting, three-dimensional person."

Beyond her personal rites of passage, Fshrimp also incorporates the lives of an international cast of colleagues into the story. Some, like her, are just starting out in their careers. Others have been freelancing for over a decade. Each has their own lessons to learn, but they share a common sympathy. Through these various encounters, readers can't help but feel they're following in the footsteps of Fshrimp, making their way through the wide world of Paris, testing their resilience and steeling themselves for the next challenge.

## The Creative Self: Fried Shrimp Man is a Real Fictional Character

She had a character. She had a story. But Fshrimp had no idea how to start from zero and draw a complete graphic novel. "In animation we talk about timing, but you don't have that in comics." To set the visual rhythm of the work, she used a technique she learned as an animator: using the density and complexity of the background to guide the movement of the viewer's gaze. She also set the goal that each frame of the comic should "communicate", allowing the reader to take in all of the basic information in an instant.

There was an upright model of a skeleton called Oscar in the French studio where Fshrimp worked on one of her projects. Whenever she felt her story was becoming overly self-indulgent, she would shift the focus onto the skeleton to symbolically shift the perspective to that of an objective observer and provide a sense of resolution. This kind of introspective shift from subjective to objective can also be seen in the way she defines her relationship to the character Fried Shrimp Man.

"Readers might see him as a fictional character I invented, but to me he has always existed. To tell the truth, even I don't fully understand him. I'm still



# When Inspiration Runs Dry, Just Keep on Living

Written by Ping Chang

Translated by Joshua Dyer

---

If you click open the Instagram account of author/illustrator Fshrimp you'll see a half-naked middle-aged man with a bright orange fried shrimp on his head. For three-seconds the deadpan character dances a goofy dance, during which time the strange magic of the animation is sure to make you do a double-take.

Fshrimp has always loved to draw. While still in elementary school, the young Fshrimp created a character called Fried Shrimp Man. After she became an animator, she hoped to give Fried Shrimp Man his own animated short, but the idea never got off the ground.

Later Fshrimp began drawing her *Worrier* comic, which details the experiences and insights she gained working as a freelancer. Her concerned mother never understood her freelancer lifestyle, and the graphic novel re-imagines their tussles as epic battles between kungfu masters. The realistic and sometimes cutting dialogue attracted 5,000 online fans, and soon publishers came knocking.

For a freelancer who had always worked on other people's ideas, it was finally time to tell her own story. Fshrimp prepared a detailed outline that would place Fried Shrimp Man in a story similar to the Japanese manga *Midnight Diner*, but the publishers didn't bite.

"After returning home I struggled to think of some other way to tell Fried Shrimp Man's story. So I decided I might as well be honest about it and instead write a story about my inability to write." As soon as she stopped working so hard on Fried Shrimp Man, her personal story began to flow. Emerging as a mixture of tears, laughter, struggle, and joy, her autobiographical account of her years working in Paris was born.

## Living in a Foreign Land

Fshrimp says her life in Paris was always one step forward, two steps back. Not only was she adapting to life in a foreign country, she was also plagued by the twin curses of the freelancer: a lack of steady work and an unstable income.

Uncertain about her future, all she could do was redouble her efforts, and keep plodding forward. Her graphic novel details every phase in her pursuit of a career in animation, from tortuous visa applications to the joy of landing a gig with a famous director, not to mention the horrors of living in an apartment so cramped that she had to bathe in the kitchen.

In Fshrimp's drawings, the trials and triumphs of life overseas become important milestones, marking the passing of time and bearing witness to her personal growth.

"I have a poor memory, so I'm always afraid that all of these wonderful moments in life will

# FEAR AND CARTOONING IN PARIS: A TAIWANESE GIRL'S INTERNATIONAL FREELANCING ADVENTURE

## 一個人的巴黎江湖：炸蝦人在法國



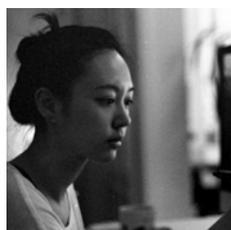
- **Publisher:** Titan
- **Date:** 4/2022
- **Rights contact:**  
booksfromtaiwan.rights  
@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 224
- **Volume:** 1

*The uproarious tale of a stubbornly idealistic Taiwanese animator who moves abroad for what she believes will be an elegant Parisian sojourn. The reality that awaits her is disillusioning to say the least, but Shrimp's determination and taste for the absurd ultimately see her through.*

After graduating from an animation institute, the driven and idealistic Shrimp furiously sends out résumés to overseas employers. Just as her hopes are about to fade, she receives an offer to intern at a French animation studio where she will have the opportunity to work with a well-known director.

Thus begins what Shrimp imagines will be a refined and elegant sojourn in Paris, but instead turns out to be a crash course in dealing with language barriers, culture shock, petty thievery, overwork, and co-worker rivalries. Despite bouts of disillusionment and doubt, the tenacious Shrimp remains determined to make the most of her overseas experiences, and bring her creative vision to life.

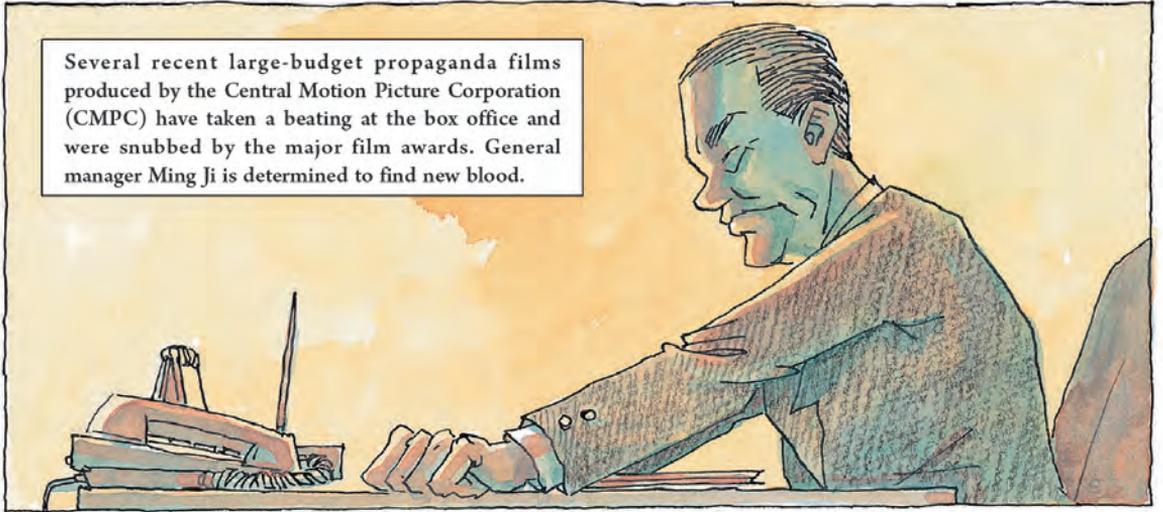
If you were looking for a graphic novel about living the overseas dream, this is not it. But don't worry, Shrimp's self-deprecating humor and taste for the absurd transform her cross-cultural calamities into an international adventure that is by turns inspiring, edifying, and laugh-out-loud funny.

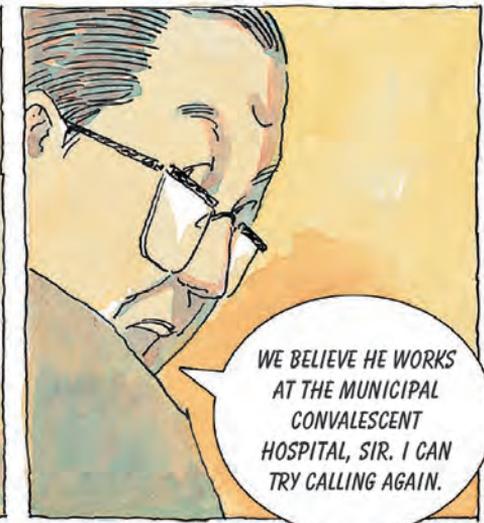
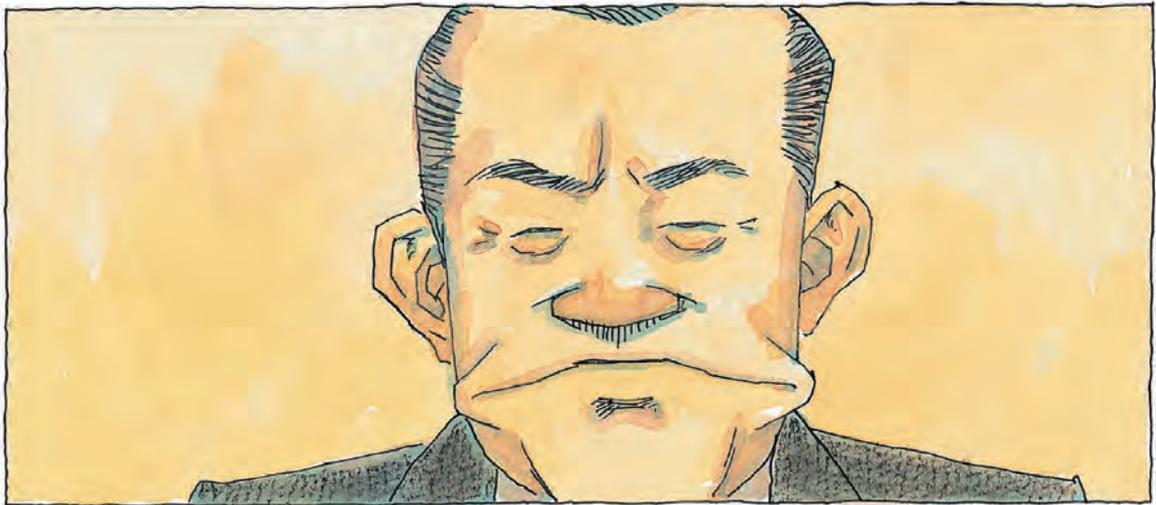


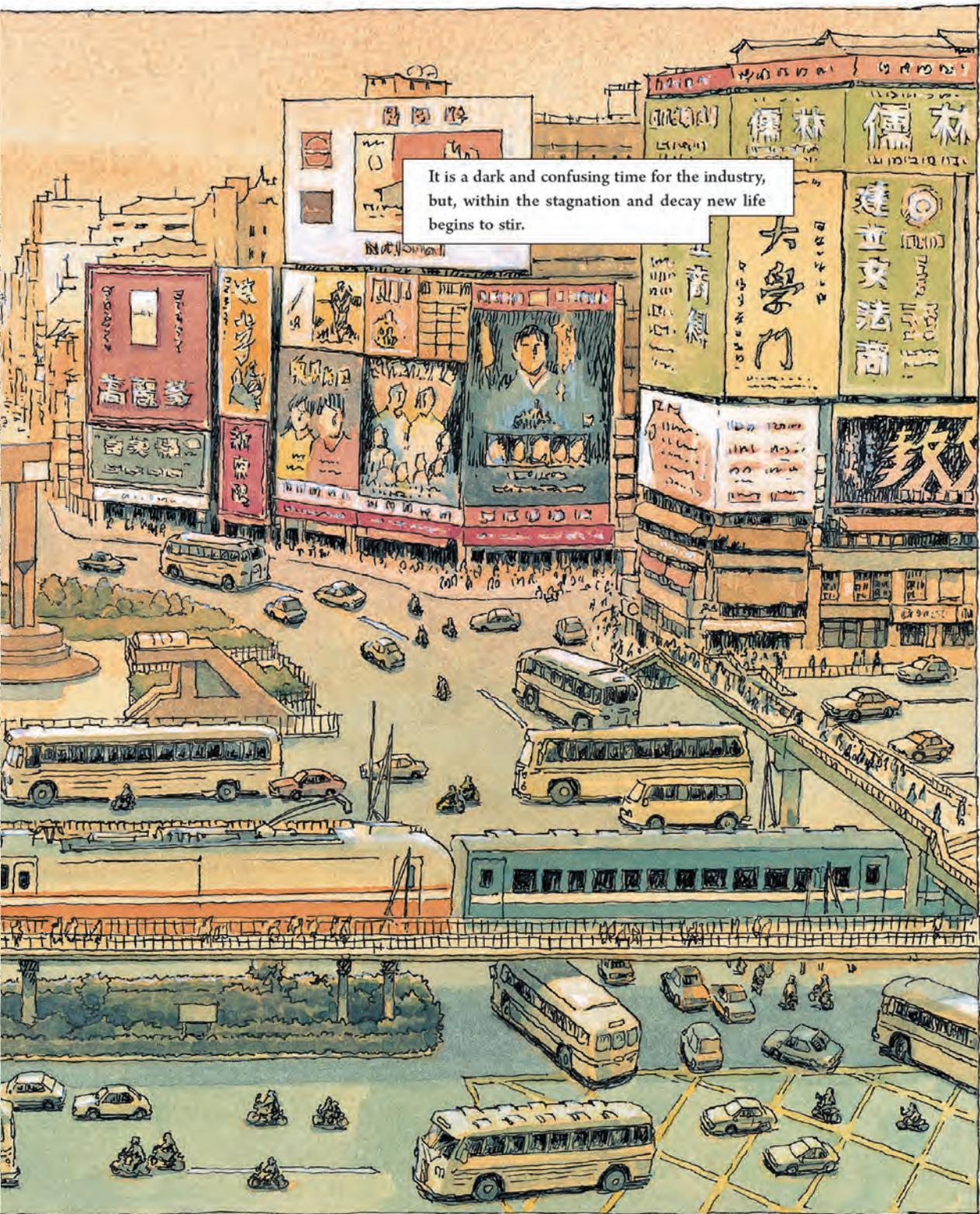
### Fshrimp 炸蝦人

Animator, writer, and comic book artist Fshrimp studied abroad in the USA and Ireland before immigrating to France to pursue a career in animation. Her love affair with drawing comics began in primary school, where she invented the character Fried Shrimp Man. Fshrimp continues to draw Fried Shrimp Man comics to this day.

Several recent large-budget propaganda films produced by the Central Motion Picture Corporation (CMPC) have taken a beating at the box office and were snubbed by the major film awards. General manager Ming Ji is determined to find new blood.







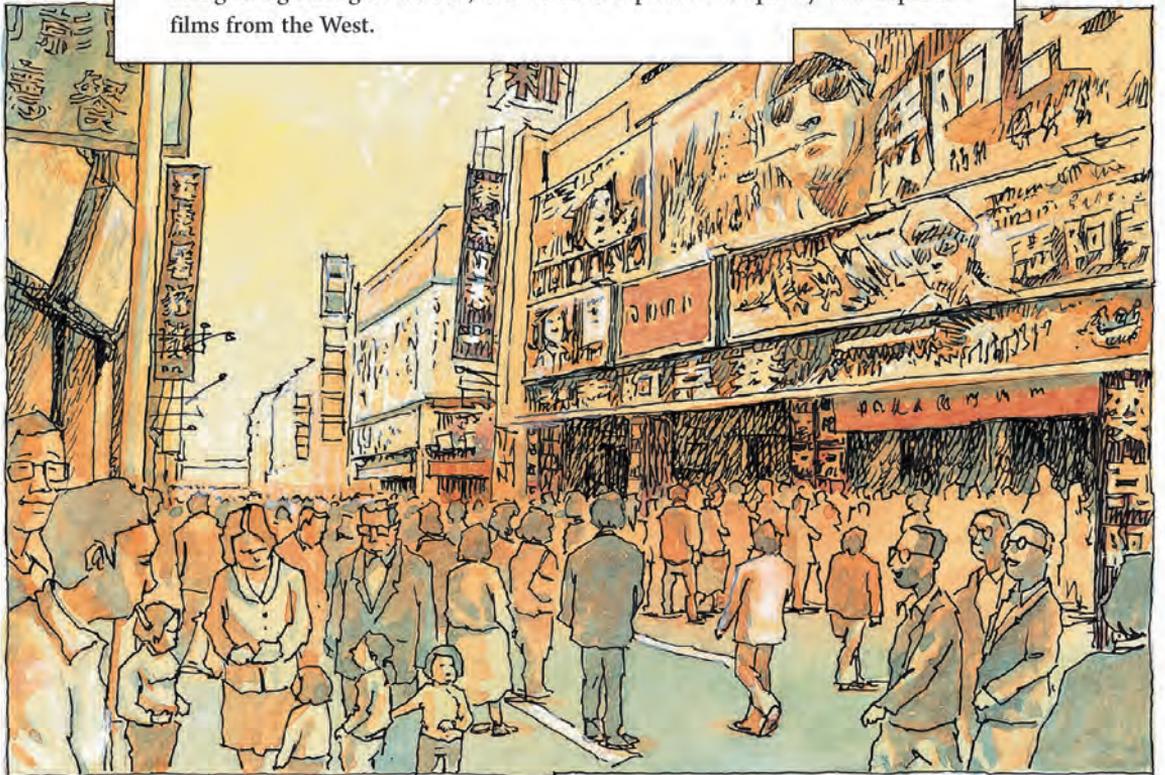
It is a dark and confusing time for the industry, but, within the stagnation and decay new life begins to stir.

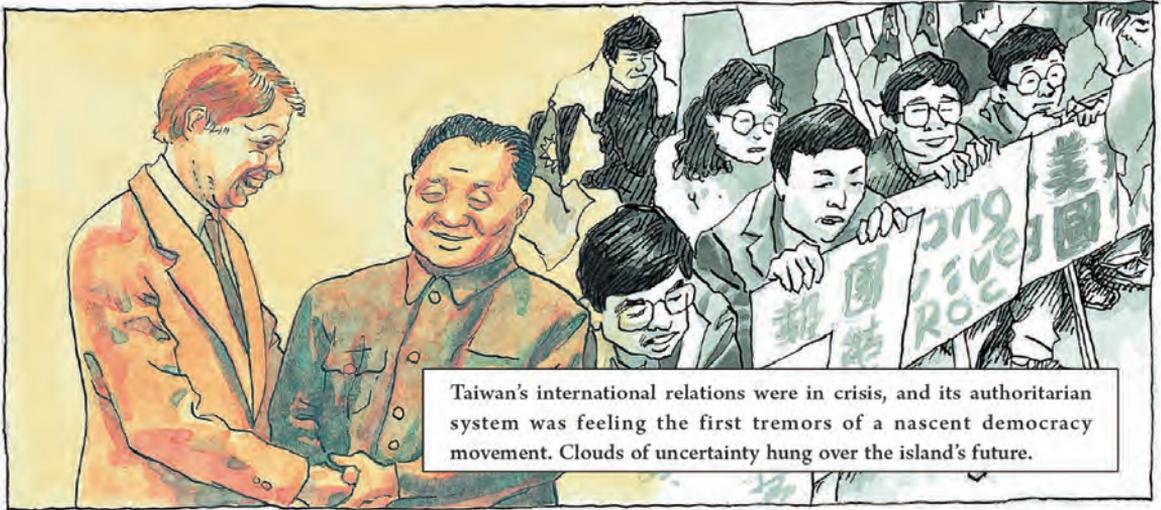
In the prosperous neighborhood of Ximending, cinemas and film studio offices tower over the streets, but in truth, it is an industry in desperate need of revitalization...



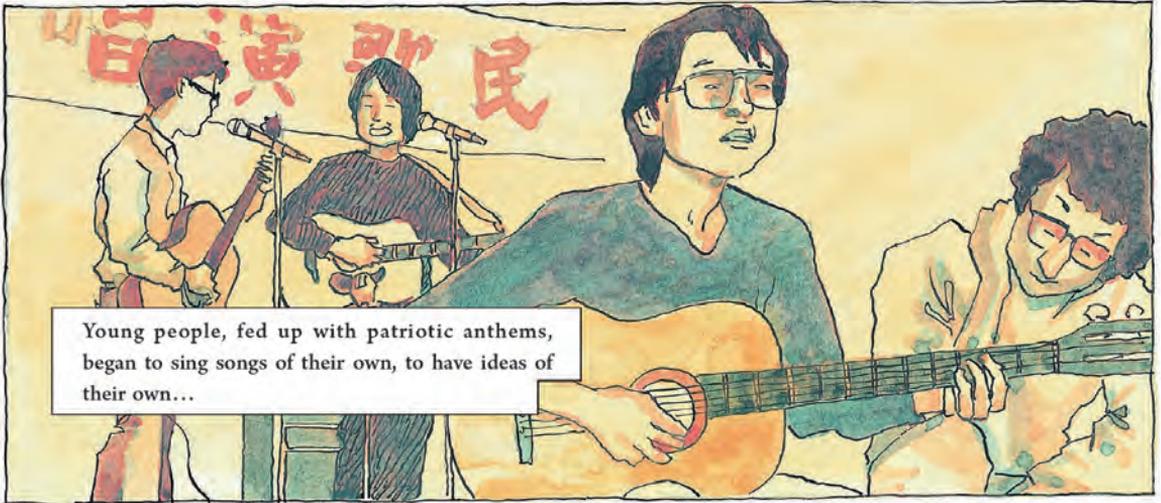


The stodgy state-controlled film industry was no match for the flashy allure of Hong Kong's kung fu movies, nor could it replicate the quality and depth of films from the West.

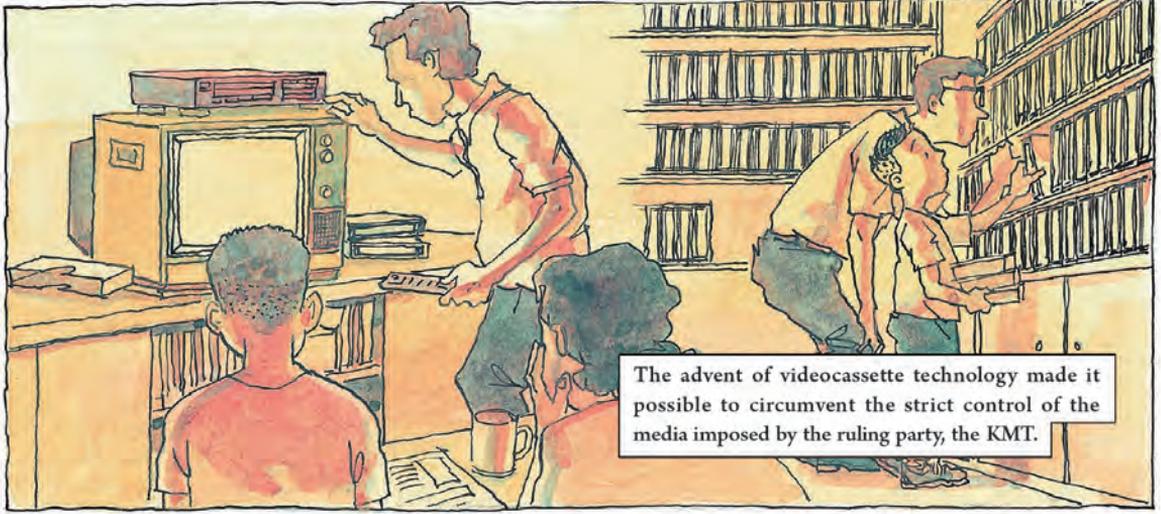




Taiwan's international relations were in crisis, and its authoritarian system was feeling the first tremors of a nascent democracy movement. Clouds of uncertainty hung over the island's future.



Young people, fed up with patriotic anthems, began to sing songs of their own, to have ideas of their own...

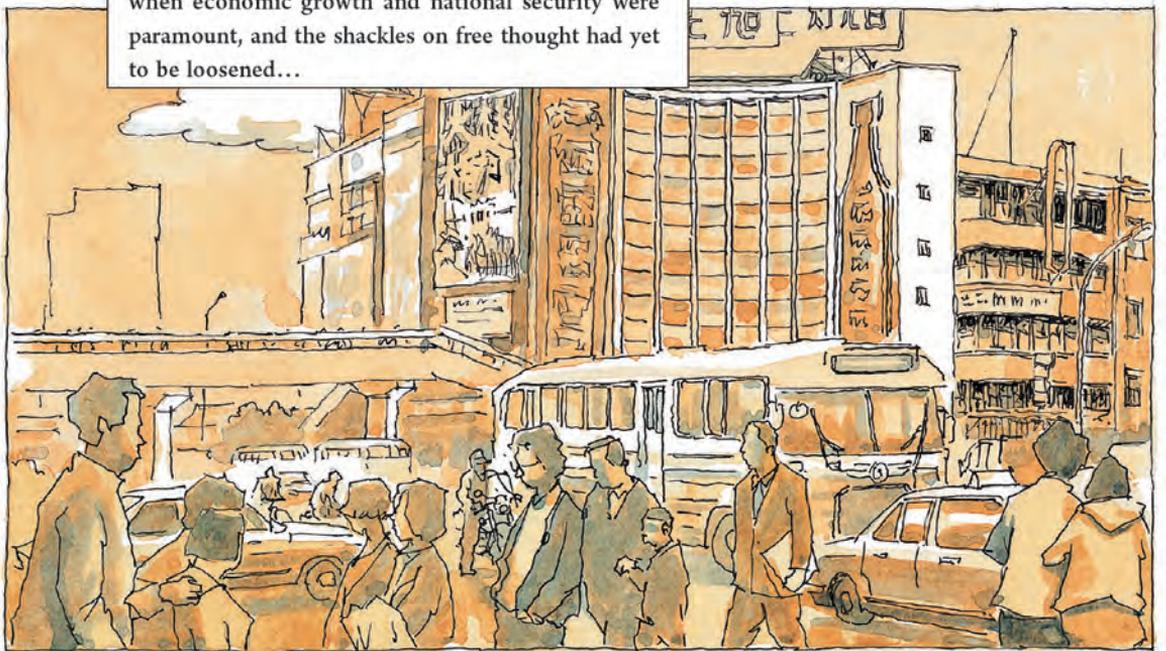


The advent of videocassette technology made it possible to circumvent the strict control of the media imposed by the ruling party, the KMT.

Taiwan, the 1970s,



when economic growth and national security were paramount, and the shackles on free thought had yet to be loosened...



in the domestic film industry, tears streaming down her cheeks, declared, "It's fantastic! It really tugs at the heart strings!"

As far as I can recall, that was the first Taiwanese movie that felt "authentic" to me. The characters, the story, the way they talked... it all seemed like the sort of thing I observed all around me in daily life.

Years later I was working in the film industry, and had the good fortune to have brief but beneficial encounters with directors like Hou Hsiao-hsien, Wu Nien-jen, and Ko I-chen, and the great film editor Liao Ching-Sung. Just observing the passion and intelligence they brought to their work was an education in itself, to say nothing of the stories and anecdotes I eagerly listened in on. I began to develop a deep admiration for that generation of movie makers. They were a community of idealistic risk-takers, always lending a hand in each other's projects. Only then, after my curiosity was finally piqued, did I go back and watch all of those movies I had missed out on before (the same movies my friends had told me were "pretty dull" in my younger days). A vague outline of Taiwan cinema began forming in my mind.

I'm not sure if I had simply matured, or if my experiences had changed me, but those movies we all thought were "pretty dull" now seemed to seethe with a subtle power. Even contemporary film makers would have struggled to match their depth of insight. It defies the imagination that these movies made decades ago, often under difficult circumstances, are still being discussed in international film circles today.

After watching some documentaries and reading about the history of the Taiwan New Wave, I began to understand both the course of its development and its impact. But I was still curious how this group of young movie makers had managed to achieve so much while working within an authoritarian system that discouraged independent thought. With the lifting of martial law still years in the future, many of them had worked directly inside the official media organizations of the KMT, the ruling political party. What were their thoughts in those times? What did they experience?

Years later, as I was flipping through a book by Hsiao Yeh while sitting under a tree waiting for my children's weekend soccer class, I made a discovery. It turned out Hsiao Yeh had recorded many of his experiences of those times in his books! As I read Hsiao Yeh's descriptions of those familiar figures, I began thinking: could I draw a graphic novel to retell these stories? Not for the sake of praising movies that had already received ample recognition. Not for the sake of celebrating the achievements of those who had long since been recognized as masters of their art. What if I drew this graphic novel solely for the sake of learning and sharing what had happened in those times? What were their thoughts? What had they experienced?



## Sean Chuang 小莊

Sean Chuang is a commercial film director. He published the highly acclaimed *A Filmmaker's Notes* in the form of a graphic novel in 1997. In 2009 he finished his second work in the form, *The Window*, a full-color dialogue-free comic that was over a decade in the making. In 2013 he finished his third graphic novel, *80s Diary in Taiwan*, which has been sold in the French, German, and Italian language markets. English language rights have also been sold for his graphic novel adaptation of Wu Ming-Yi's novel *The Illusionist on the Skywalk*. Sean Chuang continues to work both in film and illustration.

---

## *Dedicated to the Movie Makers*

Written by Sean Chuang

Translated by Joshua Dyer

---

I dimly recall in 1982, while I was still in middle school, I once stumbled across a copy of the Taiwanese movie *In Our Time* in a pile of boisterous Hong Kong movies. It only caught my eye because Lo Ta-yu had a song by the same name. My impression of Taiwanese films at the time was a complete mess. They gave free showings of patriotic movies like *Eight Hundred Heroes* and *Everlasting Glory* in the school auditorium, while commercial movies were either about gambling, or they were so-called “social realist dramas”, salacious tales of vengeance populated by gangsters and their molls. Their suggestively eye-catching posters were pasted pell-mell on the blank walls I passed on the way to school. If I mentioned Taiwan films to my elders, they would reply by shaking their heads with derision.

My father would only take me to see foreign films, explaining that they were more “authentic”. On the basis of that single word, I established my cinematic standard. Domestic productions at the time were generally overdubbed in painfully exacting Mandarin, and the image quality was rigid and grainy. The plots were completely disconnected from real life, like watching a stage play. Thus, I readily adopted my father's view that the higher quality foreign films were the luxury goods of the cinema marketplace.

Later, in the VHS era, video stores were buzzing with word-of-mouth recommendations for *Growing Up*. I watched it with my brother and found it moving, so we dragged our mother out to see it. She had the ability to become completely emotionally invested in TV dramas, so I was hoping to see if a Taiwanese film could also get her waterworks going. My mother, a woman with zero faith

# LOCAL HEROES: TAIWAN NEW WAVE CINEMA

## 潮浪群雄



- **Publisher:** Dala
- **Date:** 5/2022
- **Rights contact:**  
booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 172
- **Volume:** 1 (ongoing)

*The story of the film industry outsiders who helped remake one of Taiwan's most conservative film studios into an art-cinema powerhouse, thereby laying the foundation for a cinematic revolution: the Taiwan New Wave.*

In the 1980s Taiwan was taking the first steps towards opening up after decades of authoritarian rule. The economy was booming, consumers had cash to burn, and a flood of Hong Kong movies arrived met the demand for high-quality entertainment. This presented an existential challenge to Taiwan's Central Motion Picture Corporation (CMP), a stodgy film studio under direct control of the ruling KMT political party.

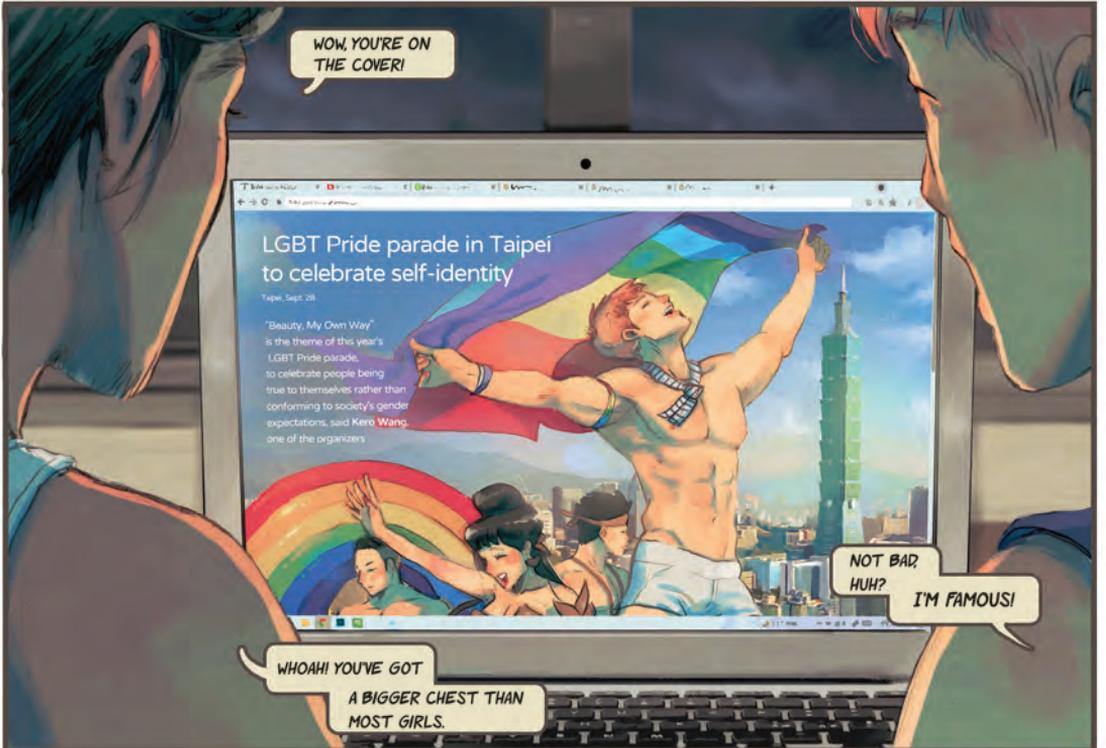
General manager of CMP Ming Ji made the bold decision to hire two fresh-faced industry outsiders to help transform the company culture. Wu Nien-jen was an independent screenwriter who was still finishing an accounting degree in night school. Hsiao Yeh was a part-time novelist who paused his PhD studies in the USA to return to Taiwan and join CMP. The results of this decision are well known - the CMP-produced films of the Taiwan New Wave movement were soon making waves at film festivals and art-house cinemas around the world. But what exactly happened inside CMP during those transformative years? What did the new blood at CMP manage to produce such outstanding work within the confines of a bureaucratic corporate studio, while simultaneously dancing around the restrictions of the KMT's authoritarian censorship system?

This up-close-and-personal account of the birth of the Taiwan New Wave was adapted to graphic novel form by Sean Chuang, a comic book artist/filmmaker who has worked directly with many of the great directors of Taiwan cinema. His work captures the political and social atmosphere of 1980s Taiwan, as well as the spirit and aspirations of the seminal movie makers of the era. *Local Heroes: Taiwan New Wave Cinema* is more than a docu-comic - it is an inspiring tale of the triumph of idealism over ideology, authenticity over propaganda, and artistic freedom over censorship.



OH YEAH!  
SCOOT OVER A SEC.

I ALMOST FORGOT  
TO SHOW YOU. I WAS IN  
THE INTERNATIONAL  
NEWS TODAY!



WOW, YOU'RE ON  
THE COVER!

### LGBT Pride parade in Taipei to celebrate self-identity

Taipei, Sept. 28

"Beauty, My Own Way" is the theme of this year's LGBT Pride parade, to celebrate people being true to themselves rather than conforming to society's gender expectations, said Kero Wang, one of the organizers

NOT BAD  
HUH?  
I'M FAMOUS!

WHOAHI YOU'VE GOT  
A BIGGER CHEST THAN  
MOST GIRLS.



HEY, YI-HAO!

YOU'RE BACK!



WHERE'D YOU RUN OFF TO TODAY?

I WAS PLANNING TO WORK OUT, BUT IN THE END I JUST SLEPT ALL DAY.

YOU LAZY SLUG! I WENT TO JOIN THE PARADE!



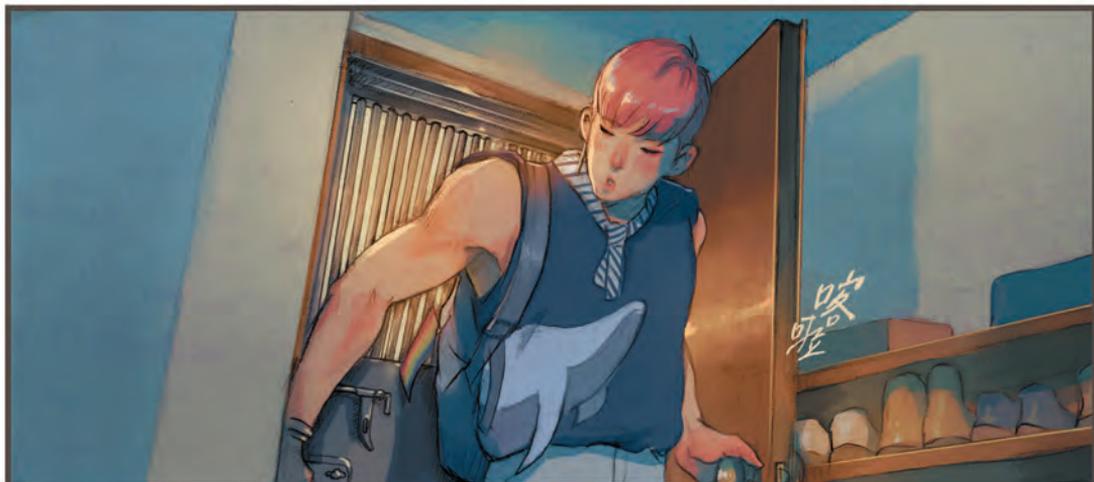
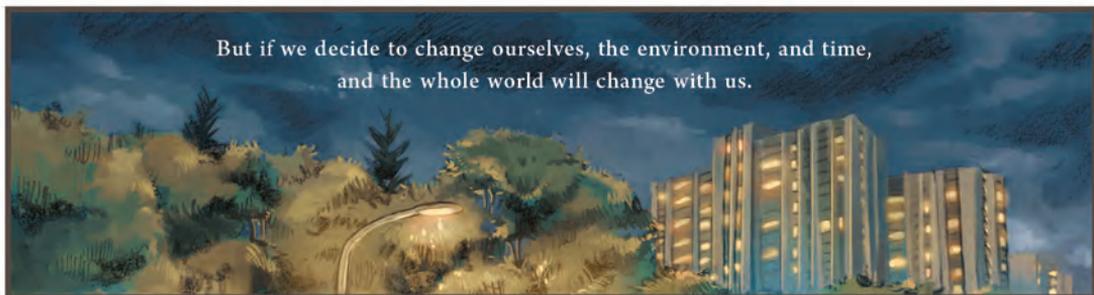
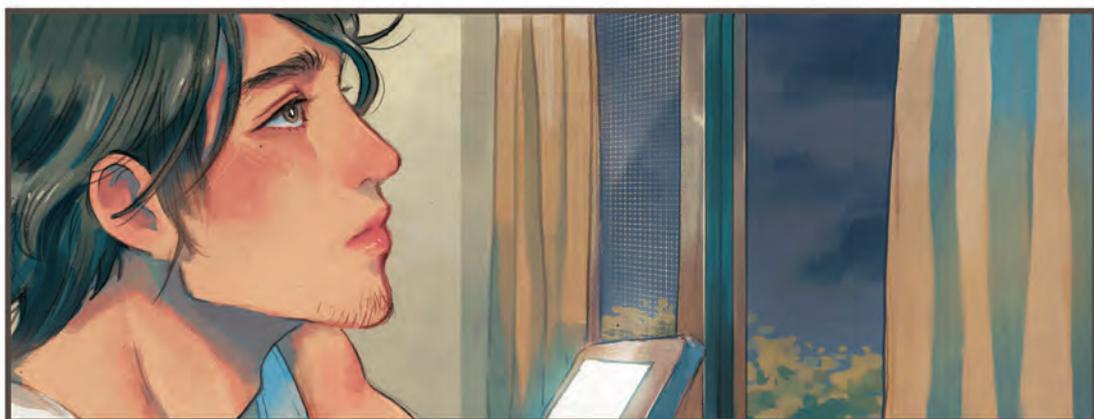
PARADE?

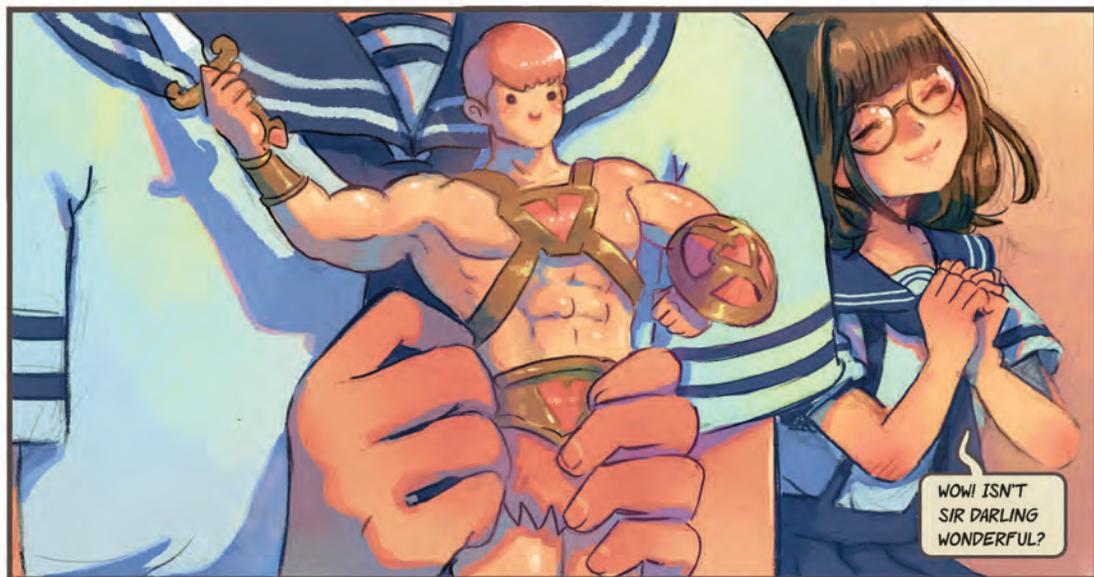
THE PRIDE PARADE! EVERYONE THERE SAW THE STORY I POSTED YESTERDAY. THEY ASSUMED WE WERE A COUPLE.



WHEN I TOLD THEM YOU'RE STRAIGHT, THEY WERE HEARTBROKEN!

HEH...

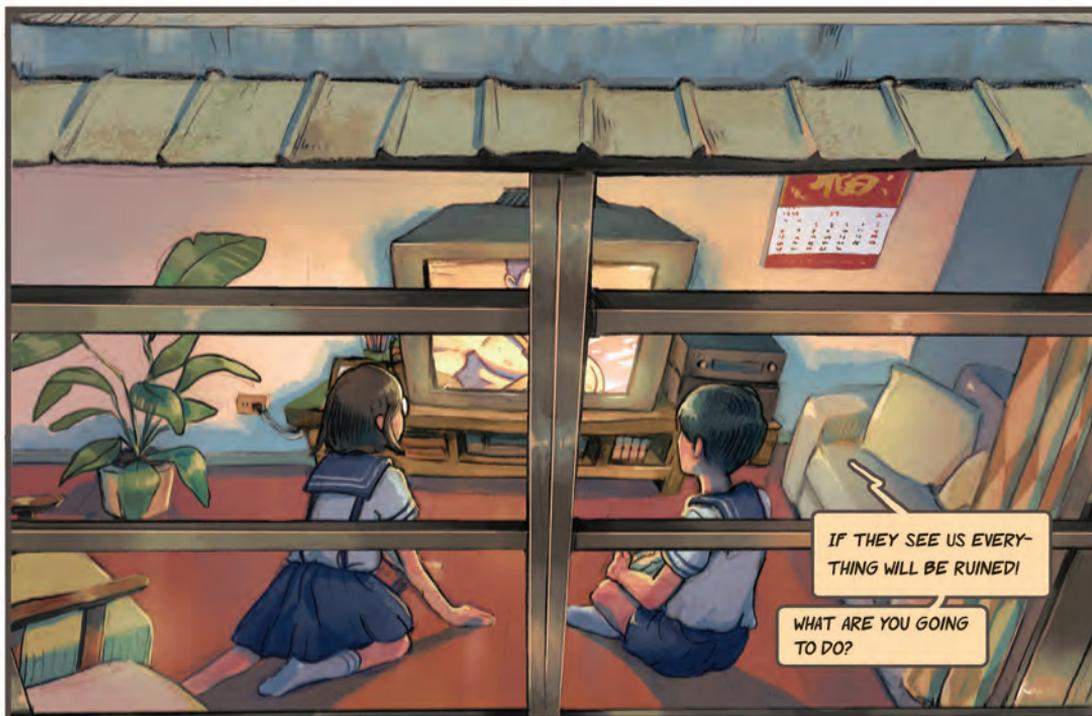




Does time change us?



I don't think so. I think it's our environment that changes us.



IF THEY SEE US EVERY-  
THING WILL BE RUINED!

WHAT ARE YOU GOING  
TO DO?



I WILL BECOME  
INVISIBLE!

THAT WAY I CAN FREELY  
ENTER THEIR VILLAGE  
WITHOUT LEAVING A TRACE.



NO ONE WILL DIS-  
COVER ME! HA HA HAI

LGBTQ community in contemporary Taiwan. Media representations of LGBTQ culture have evolved over multiple decades of recent history. While works of literature, theater, film, and television all speak to the creative energy of the community, comic books are perhaps one of the freshest, most enjoyable, and most effective mediums at its disposal. The six comics collected here can be appreciated on the basis of their stories, art, and the issues each addresses. But taken as a whole, this collection's most affecting attribute is its pervasive sense of familiarity and intimacy. The LGBTQ comics of the past have been sexy, funny, dramatic, satirical... but *Rainbow Apartment* is probably the first complete LGBTQ comic compilation, and the first that does so much to help normalize LGBTQ lifestyles.

There are so many comic books in this world, but that doesn't mean they are easy to create. Just thinking about all of the labor and effort required is enough to make one tired. Let us all appreciate the work that went into this magnificent collection, while also looking forward to the work of the future comic creators who will keep telling these important stories. May their beautiful words and images continue to put the pride and dignity of the LGBTQ community on display.



After feasting our eyes on the male form on the second floor, we make our way to the third floor, "If You Are...". The visual style of this comic adaptation of the Hikaru Lee short story "One Hundred Years, One Hundred Meetings" leaves visual space for the text passages to do their work. Having never had a lover, young, single urbanite Wen is feeling like an old maid before her time. We see her swiping away on a dating app in nearly every corner of her slightly messy apartment, hoping to find simple love in the simplest way possible. While many of us are accustomed to thinking of Taipei as a city with no particular aesthetic appeal, as we follow Wen's searching gaze on her movements through the city, the beauty of urban life takes shape. While the source material deals with the love between two women, one living, one deceased, this adaptation interprets the barrier that separates the living and the dead as a metaphor for the psychological barriers that prevent two people from drawing closer.

The story of the fourth floor, "Playmate", also deals with lesbian subject matter. Drawn in pencil, the free and sturdy lines have a strong tactile feel. This tale of two women coming together highlights the subtle interactions they share. Washes of pink watercolor create a uniformly feminine space; an amusement park, nail polish, cosmetics, a vegetarian restaurant, and scenes of intimate contact are all done in deep rosy tones.

On the fifth floor, "Trust", the palette shifts from dusky rose to a more softly feminine pink. The apartment is simply furnished and cramped, but livable enough when done up with a few touches of personal style. The sense of space created by the comic is familiar - the typical metropolitan apartment. For the two attractive urbanites who live there, it is a world all their own, a refuge in which to cultivate their love for each other - that is until a crisis strikes. In truth, it is a crisis so small as to be almost laughable, but it's enough to reveal the anger, jealousy, and mutual suspicion that so often accompanies love, as well as the sweetness and intimacy that holds the two together.

Climbing to the sixth floor we enter "I Had a Good Dream Tonight", a world of black lines and shades of gray, visually reminiscent of a classic black and white movie. Only the main character's lustrous head of black hair stands out from the dull gray background tones. In the spirit of realist cinema, we follow her through the routines of the day. Only after we see her taking medications and using the men's restroom do we realize she is a trans woman in the process of transitioning. While many images of trans women in the media are of hyper-sexualized drag queens, focusing on glamour, makeup, and fashion, "I Had a Good Dream Tonight" is an honest and unadorned portrait touched by a dull anguish that even the advances of 2024 cannot completely erase.

Finally, we arrive on the seventh floor, the highest floor of the building. In Taiwan, the top floors of buildings are often cheaply constructed additions that can be rented at lower cost. Thus, they are often inhabited by students on a budget. Here, with the story "Darling Knight", we are greeted by full-color images in vigorous, youthful tones. The story is set within the milieu of gay youth culture: workouts at the gym, part-time jobs, pride parades, classes, and social media. Two roommates nurse a budding attraction for each other through good-natured teasing, horsing around, and daily life interactions. Drawn with a touch of prototypical comic book flair, this is a story about dawning self-knowledge and the need to live as one truly is. Throw in a few references to boys love comics, fetishization of the male body, and some humor in the form of a boys-love-obsessed ex-girlfriend, and you have all of the elements needed for a dependable, bread-and-butter LGBTQ comic.

The climb from the first floor to the seventh has taken us on a journey through this many-hued structure of images from the near future, delivering an introspective and thoughtful take on the

# LGBTQ Community in Comics

Written by Tan Tang-Mo

Translated by Joshua Dyer

---

Everyone reads comic books. Even if you stopped reading them after reaching adulthood, you'll have to admit, pretty much anyone who grew up in Taiwan has their personal history of comic book fandom. Which makes one wonder: how much of our attitude towards life, our personal style and tastes, even our core values, do we owe to the influence of the comic books we read growing up? It wouldn't be going too far to suggest, at least for some of us, that comic book were some of the major influences on our spiritual and moral development.

LGBTQ comics have a long history in Taiwan. Sub-genres for gay oriented fan-comics, boys love, *otokonoko*, and gender transformations have tended towards the bottom of the leader boards on comic book websites, but they have always maintained a dedicated following, and the fans of these sub-genres represent a sizeable subculture. The sinuous lines of nude forms and heightened aesthetics of attraction in these comics helped create a common vision of imaginary desire for the gay community. You could even argue that LGBTQ comics are bolder, more radical, and more open than most other expressions of LGBTQ culture, including literature and film.

*Rainbow Apartment* is a collection of six stories by young Taiwanese comic book artists. The stories are spatially structured around an apartment building, the sort of seven-story building we see all over Taipei, perhaps showing its age a bit, located in Yonghe or on Shida Road or some other convenient location where the rents are a bit cheaper and where young workers tend to congregate. Populating this easily imagined space with LGBTQ content brings out a vivid and fresh perspective on the daily lives in the LGBTQ community. Set in 2024, five years after Taiwan's legalization of same-sex marriage, the stories envision a world in a which space has been made for those with nonconforming gender identities and sexual orientations - whether in the city itself, online, in a coffee shop, or on a cell phone that enables connection to a virtual world. The world of 2024 appears ready to embrace all the colors of the spectrum. The struggles and glory of the past are now history, and a new era is about to unfold.

"Apartment of the Future", the ground floor of the collection, is the time machine that transports us to 2024, and deposits us in front of the Rainbow Apartments. On the surface, the world doesn't appear much different, but a new story is about to begin. As we follow the stairs upward, like an invisible visitor from the past, we steal glimpses of six floors of human life.

"Colorful", on the second floor, uses a soft multi-hued palette to tell the typical "boy meets boy" story: a muscular young man is working as a nude model for drawing classes at an art institute when he catches the eye of the institute's director. But first they must navigate a tiny barrier that stands between them - the HIV virus. In the world of the 2020s, however, HIV is not the end of love and sex for the infected. Graced by the sensuous lines of the male body, this seductive HIV love story ultimately comes through with a clean bill of health.



## Chen Pei-Hsiu 陳沛琄

Originally an archaeological illustrator at Academia Sinica, Chen Pei-Hsiu eventually went freelance, publishing work in magazines, newspapers, and books. She has been short-listed twice for the Angoulême Prize for Young Talent, and twice for the 3×3 International Illustration Award. Her comic book *For the Time Being* has been published in French.



## Elainee

An illustrator and artist/writer of graphic novels, Elaine studied occupational therapy at university and worked in hospitals and clinics for three years before realizing her true passion was art. After quitting her day job, she began selling her art from a street stall. In 2017 she obtained an MA from London's Royal College of Art and was awarded a residency in Angoulême, France.



## Nin

Comic book artist Nin graduated from National Taiwan University of Arts with a degree in visual communication. She excels at watercolor, pencil, and expressive ink line work. She was a 2020 artist in residence in Angoulême, France. Her previous works include the graphic novel *Weight-less*.



## Lee Weien 李瑋恩

A graduate of the University for the Creative Arts in the UK, Lee's works tend towards realism, using beautiful interlinked images to explore contemporary social issues. She participated in the 2019 Creative Expo Taiwan, and won a gold medal at the 2018 Taipei Illustration Fair. She was also a finalist for the 2nd Comico Original Comic Book Award.



## Lucas Paixão 盧卡斯

Born in 1990 in Salvador, Brazil, Lucas Paixão graduated with a degree in graphic design from Universidade Salvador. After working as a freelance designer in Brazil, he came to Taiwan in 2014 to study at the Institute of Fine Arts at Taipei National University of the Arts. His previous works include *Binlang Beauty*, *Orange Boy*, *Picasso Compulsive Disorder*, *CURTA! Short Comics by Lucas Paixão*, and *Seven Day Life*.

# RAINBOW APARTMENT

## 彩虹公寓



- **Publisher:** Dala
- **Date:** 12/2021
- **Rights contact:**  
booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 228
- **Volume:** 1 (END)

*Set in 2024, five years after the legalization of same-sex marriage in Taiwan, this LGBTQ comic compilation gathers six humanizing stories that showcase the strength and dignity required to live in a society that has only just begun to acknowledge your basic rights.*

Taipei, 2024, five years after the legalization of same-sex marriage in Taiwan. In a building called the Rainbow Apartments, we find six stories addressing the issues of friendship, love, family, and work that the LGBTQ community must navigate within a society that is still adjusting to the formal acknowledgement of their basic rights.

Moving up through the floors of the building reveals a diverse range of lives in the process of unfolding. Living under the shadow of HIV, an art teacher falls for the nude model who poses for his classes. A young woman who has never been in love begins to have stirrings of affection for a same-sex online friend, but struggles to bridge the gap to real-world romance. Two lesbians who met through a dating app linger in the tentative yet exhilarating exchanges of the first blush of love. Having already cohabited for one year, another lesbian couple struggles with the necessity of living in the closet to avoid upsetting a conservative parent. A transgender woman who has not completely transitioned faces disappointments in life and love. And, a bisexual man falls for his gay roommate, but is forced to come to terms with what it means to live truly as oneself.

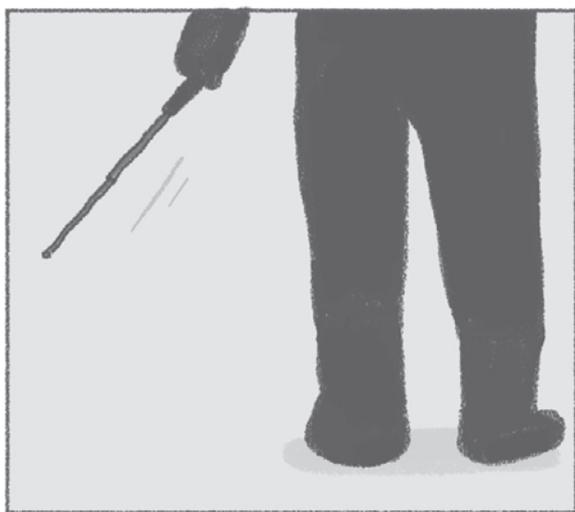
Rainbow Apartment compiles the work of six different comic book artists, each with their own unique style of art and storytelling. Showcasing the diversity of the LGBTQ community, this collection carries us through the full range of human emotions, while also normalizing difference by situating these characters in the most familiar of circumstances: the slightly cramped but wonderfully convenient apartments we all inhabited in our youth.

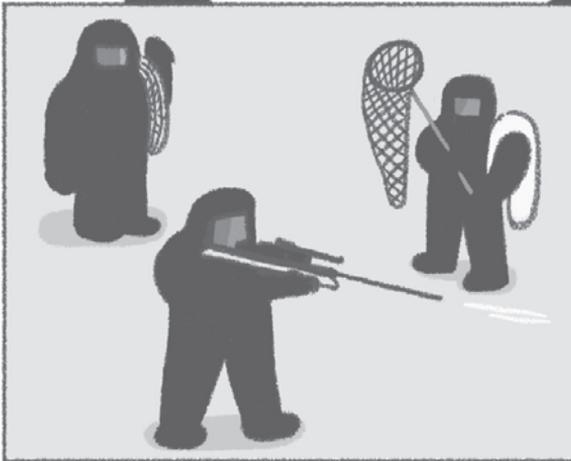
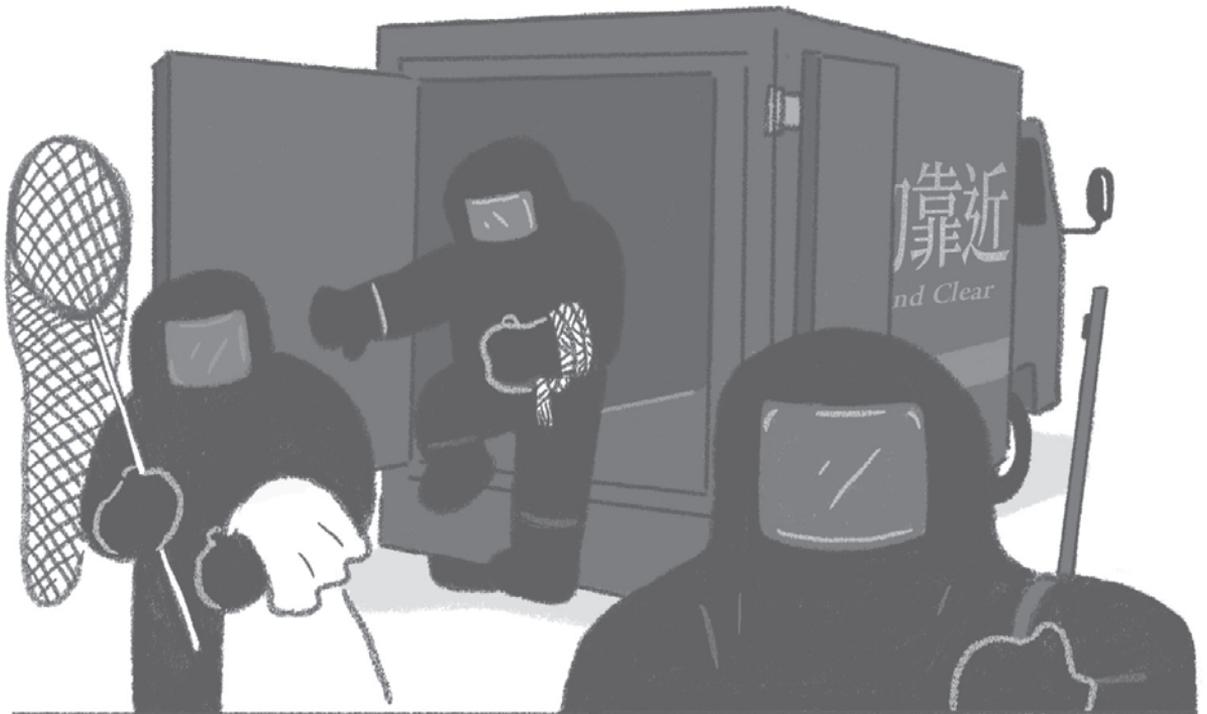


## Moriku 墨里可

Moriku is a comic book artist, illustrator, graphic designer, and lecturer on comic book art. Her most representative work is the boys love manga *My Honey, My Hero*, which has been licensed for re-release on the WEBTOON platform as a full color serial comic strip.









He's dirty!

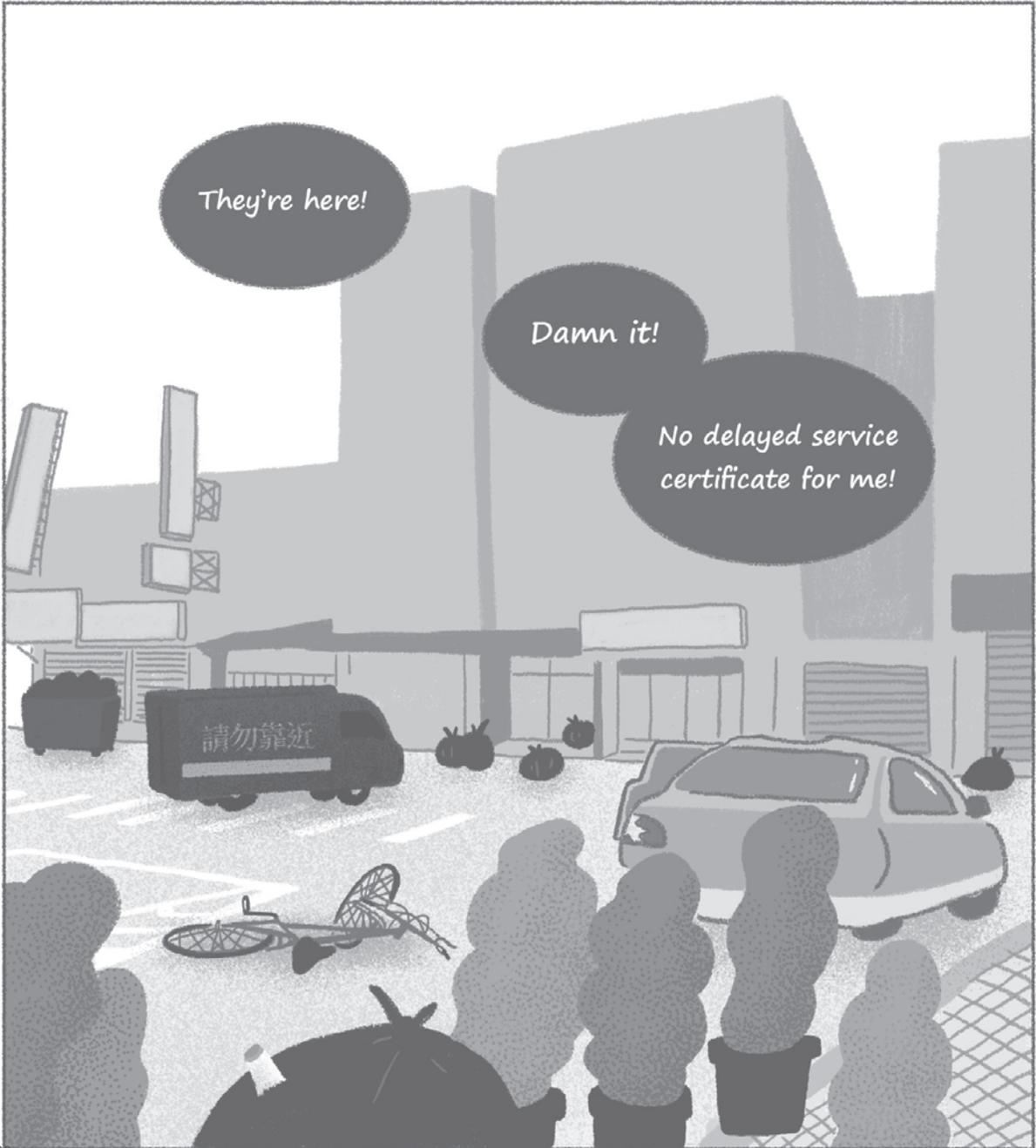


I can practically see the viruses dripping off him!



Oh!

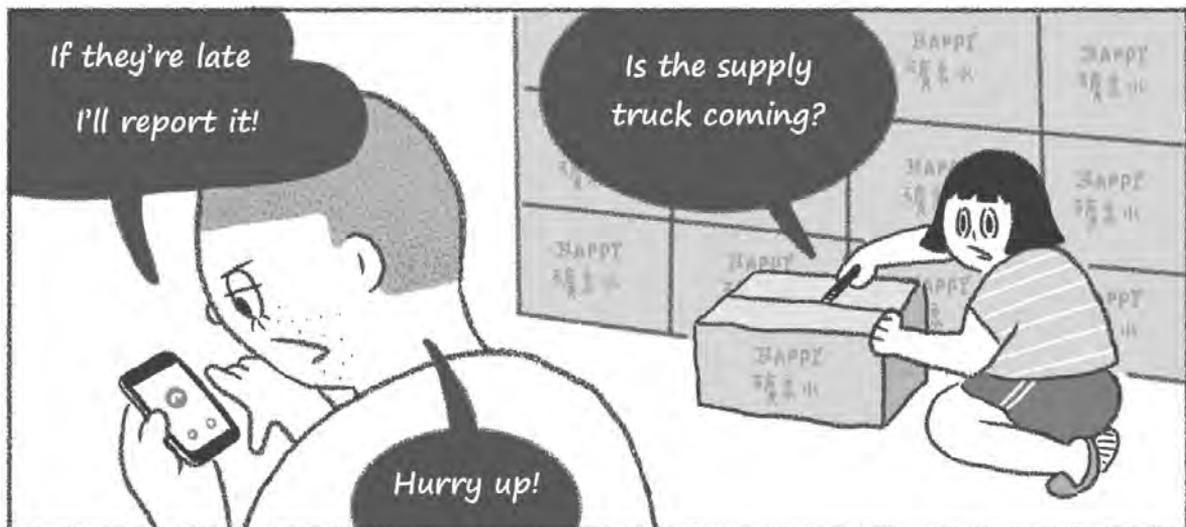
Tsk!



They're here!

Damn it!

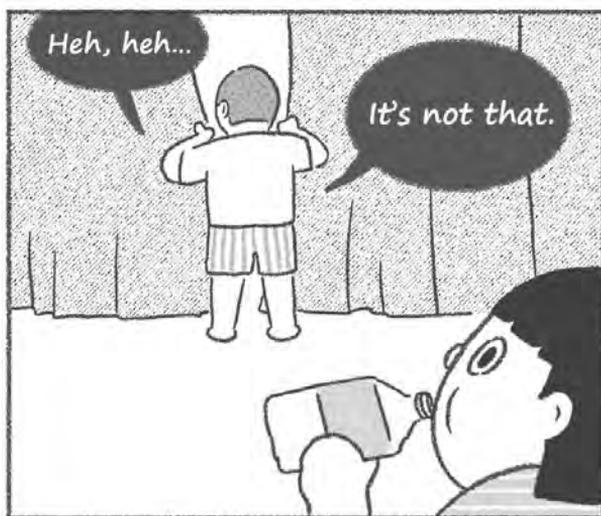
No delayed service certificate for me!



If they're late  
I'll report it!

Is the supply  
truck coming?

Hurry up!



Heh, heh...

It's not that.



There's some  
freak wandering  
around on the  
street.

spurt



Now we've got zombies?!

Quick, make  
a report!

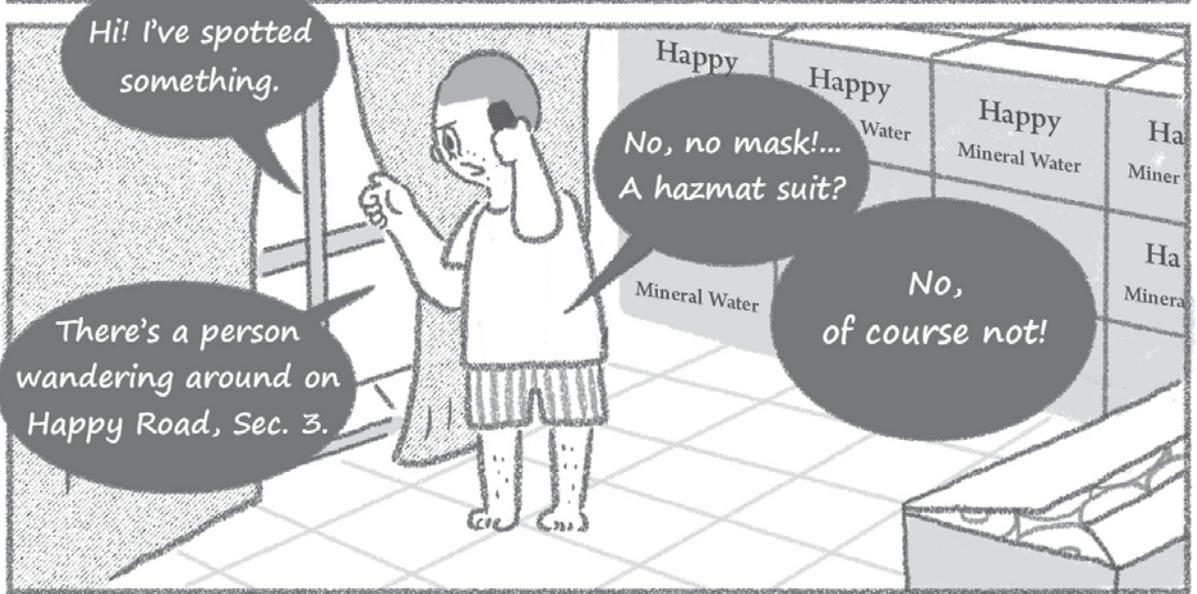
I did!

I'm timing them.

If they're late  
I'm gonna lodge  
a complaint!



Incident Hotline,  
how can I help you?



Hi! I've spotted  
something.

There's a person  
wandering around on  
Happy Road, Sec. 3.

No, no mask!...  
A hazmat suit?

No,  
of course not!



They could  
infect the whole  
neighborhood!

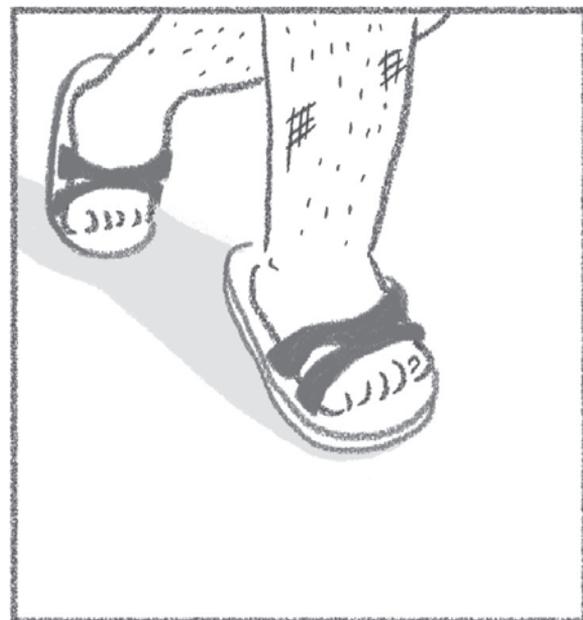
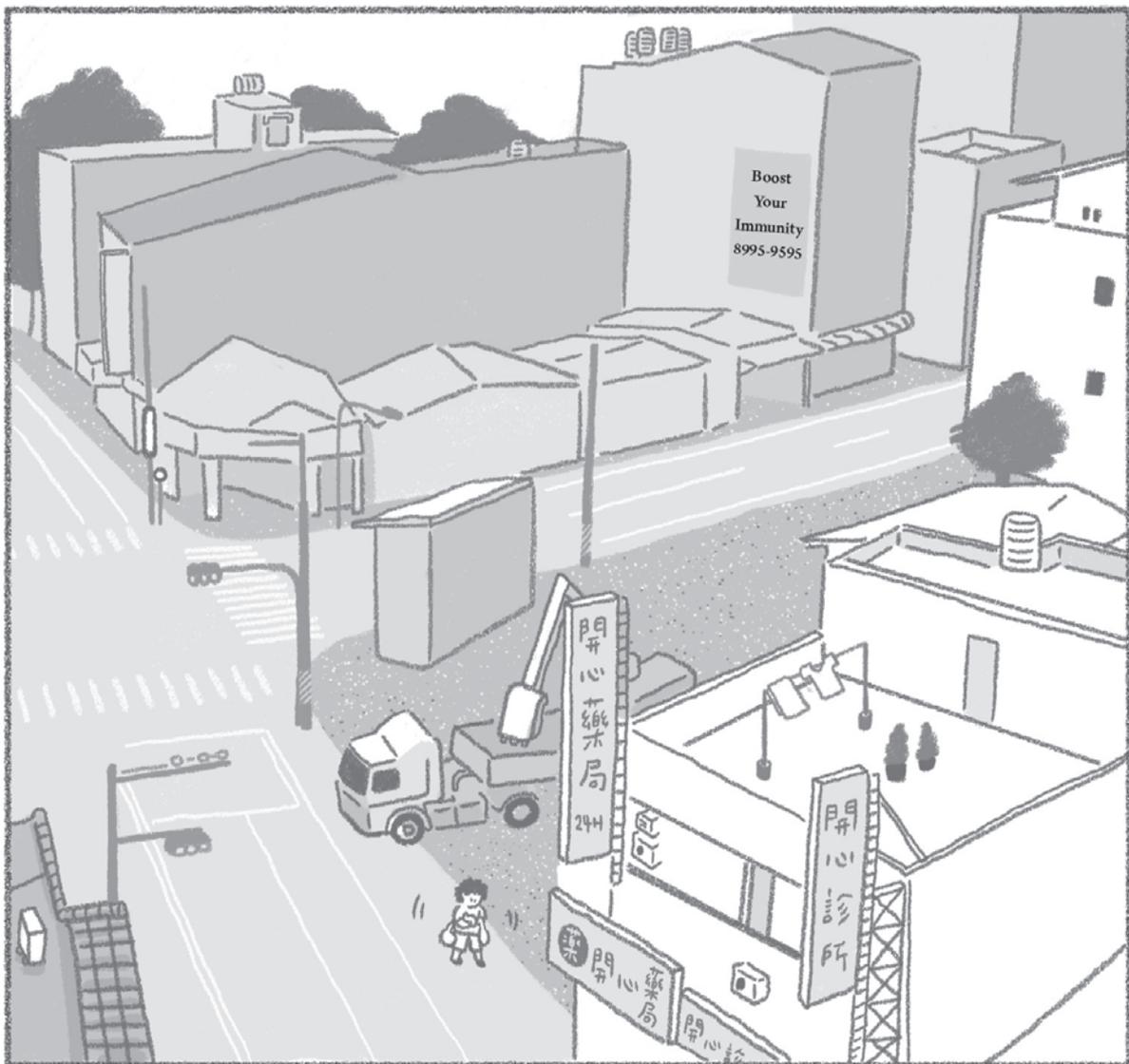
Uhn...



This guy's a  
menace! We're in  
danger here!



Send someone  
to Happy Road,  
Section 3! Quick!



between manic and depressive episodes. Rest assured that many of these issues will continue to appear in Pam Pam's future works.

Speaking about Pam Pam's approach to graphic novels, Huang Pei-Shan, editor-in-chief at Slowork Publishing, says, "For Pam Pam, the plot is just a framework. Once it is in place, she naturally fills it up with the things in life that interest her. It could be her own experiences, or her view of human nature."

After receiving a proposal from Slowork, Pam Pam took one year to complete *Super Supermarket*. Pam Pam reflects that if it weren't for the pandemic, she never would have created a graphic novel like this one. "I can't draw things that are entirely made-up, or that I haven't experienced for myself, so I'm always immersing myself in movies and novels. I want to try out all of the ways of storytelling offered by various media."

Towards the end of the book talk, a reader asks whether the dark humor of the graphic novel was an intentional addition. Pam Pam answers that she loves joking around with her friends, so she is indeed conscious of her desire that readers will enjoy her books. However, she never tries to shoehorn a joke into a story just for the sake of a laugh.



# The Ordinary Life We Will Lose

Written by Li Shang-Chiao

Translated by Joshua Dyer

---

The concept for *Super Supermarket* started coming together over a year ago. During the pandemic, Pam Pam was living alone and seldom went out. She was fixated on daily news reports on the rising numbers of confirmed cases. During this time, she also began having a recurring dream about visiting a department store or other store with a group of strangers. In her dream she followed the strangers around as they shopped, had a meal, and enjoyed themselves. Pam Pam didn't normally enjoy shopping, but it seemed that her mind was using the dream to continue engaging in experiences that weren't available during the pandemic.

Narratives from mainstream media were another source of inspiration for the story. For Pam Pam, the situation of the pandemic brought to mind scenes from zombie movies. Since she was a child, Pam Pam had fantasized about hiding out in a supermarket in the event of a zombie attack. She saw the supermarket as a symbol of safety, a doomsday refuge where one needn't worry about having sufficient food and water. Additionally, since the primary activity in a supermarket is shopping, the meaning symbolically extends to include the comfort provided by retail therapy. In a time of when everything is uncertain, material consumption can help bolster our sense of self. We may not be able to decide our fate, but at least we can decide which brands we want to purchase.

*Super Supermarket* is a story of the future based in the abstract extension of our current reality. Throughout the pandemic Pam Pam listened with interest to the stories of her friends who were raising children. Many talked about their children pointing at picture books and asking why no one was wearing masks. Pam Pam couldn't help but wonder if there would come a day when our current movies, books, and plays would no longer serve to reflect our reality simply because no one in them was wearing masks. She imagined her life if she had given birth to a child a year or two before the pandemic. Would she still tell her child about Santa Claus? What would be the point if there were no other children around to share the experience with? To share in a common belief? To share in the anticipation?

In keeping with Pam Pam's unique approach to storytelling, *Super Supermarket* touches on a range of other issues: broken promises, mental illness, and emotional blackmail. The main female character relies on emotional blackmail to get what she wants, but the results always fall short of her desires. Her mood swings, excessive sleeping, and impulsive behavior all hint at latent bipolar disorder. Pam Pam suggests to her readers that they watch for signs of the character's alternation

# SUPER SUPERMARKET



- **Publisher:** Slowork
- **Date:** 6/2022
- **Rights contact:**  
booksfromtaiwan.rights@gmail.com
- **Pages:** 128
- **Volume:** 1 (END)

*An absurdist vision of a world on permanent lockdown, in which a golden ticket to shop at the Super Supermarket is a luxury so scarce that it draws out the darker side of human nature.*

A projection into the future of current pandemic realities, *Super Supermarket* envisions a world in which no one leaves their home, in which simply walking down the street can get you reported to authorities, and in which everything past the front door begins to provoke reactions of fear and anxiety. Cloistered in their homes, a new generation of children is growing up with no knowledge of the outside world or basic niceties – like wearing pants!

One day our protagonist is reading a picture book to her nephew, only to discover it contains forbidden depictions of playgrounds and supermarkets – things that no child should know about! Her hysterical complaints to customer service are resolved with a free gift of two tickets to the Super Supermarket Experience, an elite in-store shopping simulation intended to alleviate the rampant cabin fever of the near future. However, the tickets only serve to awaken our protagonist's long-suppressed retail desires, leading her down a spiral of temptation that can only end in disaster!

Known for her dark humor and willingness to address troubling topics, graphic novelist Pam Pam turns her unsparing eye to the psychological impact of pandemic restrictions, providing chillingly incisive social commentary while perfectly lampooning the ways in which we all went a little crazy while on lockdown.



## Pam Pam Liu

Active as an illustrator, an independent graphic novelist, and a musician, Pam Pam is also a talented animator. Her works span the range from darkly absurdist fantasies to true-to-life stories like her highly acclaimed *Good Friend*, *Cancer*. Her other works include *A Trip to the Asylum* and *When My Brother Was a Kid*. Starting in 2018, she spent one year as a resident artist at La Maison des Auteurs in Angoulême, France.



**BOOKS FROM TAIWAN**





**BOOKS FROM TAIWAN**