

Edward
林仕樺

Reminder

As usual, I am the last one to wake up in the morning. It has been two months since I graduated from the annoying high school and I still haven't found any appropriate job I like. I mean, short distance from my place, less than eight hours a day, and most important, at least fifty thousand dollars a month. But I know that I am always a daydreamer. There is no need for me to use an alarm clock because my mom would do the same thing as a clock. Besides, if there is no hurry before nine A.M., I can wait for my mother as a human alarm.

But today, I have just been frightened in the dream and wake up by my father's howls, which are not clear for me when I am in my cozy shelter, my bed. When I come out, I see my father rush out of the front door, take away a few pages of newspapers, and leave behind the quiet morning. Things I can remember are that when he comes across me in front of my room, he shouts, "When can you become a man? My poor son!" I am totally confused about this scene and I see my mom crying and talking with somebody on the phone. I guess it might be my aunt or any relatives. All I can recognize are some words, like "Ran out of budget" and "Cut down the corn price." I remember that Bob and Dave have been in charge of the corn affairs in our village since couple of years ago. Ashamed and frustrated, a horrible idea rushes into my stunned brain.

When I walk pass the doorway of the Corn Trade Union, Bob and Dave are chatting about my family, the Horgonsteine. Bob stops me and tries to comfort me with some false sympathetic words and those words make me sick of them. Meanwhile, I want to kill not only myself but them, too. I wish I were not a member of the Horgonsteine family. As I wander around my father's cornfield, the sun light is firing me with its enthusiasm, though I am not sweating but sobbing. What I wish is that my tears could fertilize the land and grow something that can help my father. With my bare feet into the soil wet by my teardrops, facing the hill behind our place, Crown Hill, I realize that I am a useless bug. I can help my old man if I am not wasting my life anymore. Moreover, my little sis is still growing up to be a perfect woman, even if she is just a fifteen-year-old girl. She is doing great in school and also has good characters.

I follow the hunter's path toward the unfamiliar forest. At first, the road is made by concrete and with a few dark gravels on it. A mile later, the mud path is covered by weeds. Bushes with strong and thick roots occupy the only line. The track begins to curve without order. I find that the line between trees is just like a valley floor in the mountain area. Roots covered by fallen leaves look like waves in storm. But when I get on the join between stems and roots, I am protected from any attack by unfamiliar insects or snakes. Although it is a dilemma, I choose to run all the way to the end of this road. Branches and leaves block the sun light. However, linear lights shoot into the fallen leaves by the blowing wind and bring away the humidity in this forest. The green tunnel lightens whenever the wind blows and darkens when the breeze stops, making everything back to tranquility. It seems like thousands of eyes are peeking at every movement or even thinking of mine. Angles and devils are fighting between dark and bright. Finally, I get on the top and have a rest by lying down beside a flat root. There are few trees on the peak. I can see the sun clearly when cool winds blow away those feather-like clouds. Sparrows stop on my boots and look like teachers speaking behind the desk. I close my eyes and see through my eyelids. I see a blurry picture, branches and leaves and a big object swinging with the wind. Whenever the wind blows, the object produces some sounds, like wind-bells. When I open my eyes, a set of white, dry human bone is hanging beneath the thickest branch. I try to bounce away from where I just lie, but I slip because of a rag, which seems like a uniform with name on it. I pick it up and read it in my mind, "Ervin Cassel, Crown Hill High School." It was my friend's! My poor childhood friend. It's been five years since we lost his information in our village. "Rest in peace! Ervin." He ended his life after his father's death. And his father died of overwork.

It is about three in the afternoon and shower pours down on me. I am still holding Ervin's shirt in my right hand and I am really starving. Supported by trees along the route, I walk and run with misty sight because rains stream down into my eyes. Whenever I slip, I think of my mom's face with tears, view of my sister's back, and my father's motorcycle. I stand up, feeling like a nail being pushed into my heart. Finally, I approach the concrete road and sit beside the road with tears and smile and burst into laughter. Ervin has saved me! With arms wild open, I lie down on the roadside and look to the direction of my right hand. I find that I am holding nothing but with my palms full of blood, both of them are still bleeding.

Maybe the shirt has hung on one of those branches or perhaps the truth is that I did not even remember to bring it down.