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THE BOOK OF PURE LIFE

THE BOOK OF PURE LIFE - PART III
- THE BRIDGE TO CHINA

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THE BOOK OF PURE LIFE III

纯粹生活之书 · 第三部

The Bridge to China · 通往中国之桥

First Edition · 2026

APANI AS PURE AS NATURE INTENDED AG · Wilen bei Wollerau · Switzerland

To Tien Mai, With deep gratitude for your invaluable guidance, vision, and unwavering support in building The Bridge to China. This book would not have been possible without you.

致 教授：谨以至深的感激，感谢您以弥足珍贵的指引、远见与始终如一的支持，与我们共同筑就「The Bridge to China」。若没有您，这本书便不可能问世。

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Prologue — From My Bank of the River

I have built things all my life. Loudspeakers first, in a student room, because I wanted to hear a singer's breath and not a circuit's opinion of it. Then fabrics, wines, houses — always the same stubborn project in different materials: to remove everything that stands between a person and what is true. I wrote two books about this way of living, and I believed I had said what I had to say.

Then a letter arrived from the other side of the world. My friend Tien May had read the books the way I have always tried to build: completely, honestly, without flattery. She told me the philosophy was true — and that truth alone does not cross rivers. In China, she wrote, people do not follow systems; they follow people. They do not adopt frameworks; they adopt stories.

I am an engineer. When someone shows me a better construction, I do not defend the old one; I reach for my tools. So this third book is built her way. The convictions are the same ones I have held for fifty years — nothing softened, nothing added. But here they arrive as she said they must: as people. A grandmother with three dishes and a pot of rice. A tea master with two cups. A cleaning lady with a mandarin orange. A father with one sentence, thirty years late.

The stories in this book stand in Tien May's words, not mine. I gave her the bones; she made them stand the way Chinese bones stand — those are her words, and they are better than any I could find for what a true translation is. What remains in my voice is only the frame: this prologue, a few words before each pillar, a short reflection after each story, and a farewell at the end. The frame is the European bank of the river. The stories are the Chinese bank. The book is the bridge.

Read it slowly. Everything I have ever made that was worth making was made slowly.

— The Professor

序 — 来自我这一岸

我一生都在造物。最早是在学生宿舍制作扬声器，我只想听见歌手真实的呼吸，而不是电路对它的意见。之后我制作织物、酿酒、建造房屋。载体虽各不相同，但我始终坚持同一件事：清除横亘在人与真相之间的一切阻碍。围绕这套生活理念，我写过两本书，我本以为该表达的内容都已经说完。

后来，我收到一封来自世界另一端的信件。我的朋友天梅读完了我的著作。她阅读的方式，正如我造物秉持的原则：完整、坦诚，不带奉承。她认可书中的理念，同时点出一个现实：单凭道理，无法跨越江河。她写道，在中国，人们追随的不是理论体系，而是活生生的人；接纳的不是教条框架，而是真实发生的故事。

我是一名工程师。如果有人拿出更合理的构造方案，我不会固守旧思路，只会拿起工具动手调整。所以这第三本书，就按照她的思路完成。书中坚守的依旧是我五十年来不变的信念，没有弱化，也没有额外增添。只是如她所言，这些思想全部依托人物来呈现：一位端出三碟小菜一锅米饭的祖母，一位手持两只茶杯的茶师，一位揣着橘子的保洁女工，一位迟了三十年才说出心里话的父亲。

书中故事，立于天梅的中文，而非我的英文。我提供思想骨架，由她按照中国人的叙事方式，把骨架填充完整。这些是她的文字，在何为真正的转译这件事上，她的表达远胜于我。我只负责搭建框架：本篇序言、每一部分开篇引言、故事后的评述，以及文末结语。框架代表河流的欧洲此岸，故事代表中国彼岸，这本书，就是架在两岸之间的桥。

请慢读。我所有真正有价值的作品，无一不是慢工完成。

——教授

A Note from the Other Bank

I am not a scholar, and I am not a writer. I am a businesswoman — and, because of one deal, a friend of the Professor.

We met over a contract. He had what the Chinese outdoor world wanted — the XBionic technology — and Sanfo wanted it. I helped carry that agreement across. I thought that would be the end of it: a deal signed, a hand shaken, two people on opposite banks who had, for one season, business with each other. It was not the end. Some bridges, once begun, do not stop in the middle.

The Professor is the most creative person I have ever worked with, and the hardest working — a mind that looks ten years ahead, and a man who still answers his own messages at midnight. The world uses the word genius too easily. In his case it is simply true.

He had written two books about how to build things honestly, and he sent them to me. I read them the way I read business: completely, and without flattery. I told him the philosophy was true — and that in China it would not travel as philosophy. In my country, people do not follow systems; they follow people, and stories. He is an engineer. When he saw a better construction, he reached for his tools, and asked me to build the Chinese side of this third book.

It has been my great honor. I am not learned enough to argue with him, and I would not try. What I could do was carry the stories he wrote across into a Chinese a grandmother would recognise — and turn his English frame into Chinese in his own voice. The stories are his. The Chinese voice is mine. The bridge is ours.

My name and my words stand on the other bank, and that is enough. If you have read this far, you have already met me — at the table.

Humbly, and with respect,

Tien May

来自彼岸的几句话

我不是学者，也不是作家。我是个做生意的人——因为一桩生意，成了教授的朋友。

我们相识于一份合同。他手里有中国户外圈想要的东西——XBionic 的技术——而三夫想要它。我帮着把这份中国区的授权，接了过去。我原以为，签了字、握过手，两个隔着河的人，做完这一季的生意，也就各自回去了。可有些桥，一旦起头，就不会停在正中央。

教授是我合作过的人里，最有创造力、也最勤奋的一个。他的脑子总在往前看十年，而他自己，半夜还会亲自回邮件。“天才”这个词，世人用得太过轻易；唯有用在他身上，是名副其实。

他写了两本书，谈怎样老实地造物。他把书寄给我。我读它们，和做生意一样：完整地读，不奉承。我告诉他，他的理念是对的——但在中国，理念本身走不远。在我的国家，人们追随的不是体系，是人；信的不是框架，是故事。他是工程师，看见更好的造法，便拿起工具重新来过。他请我把这第三部的中文，从彼岸这一头搭起来。

这是我的荣幸。我没有足够的学问去和他辩论，也不需要。我能做的，是把他写的故事，接过河来，写成一种连祖母都认得出的中文——以及把他的英文框架，译成与他同一种口气的中文，故事是他的，这本书里的中文声音是我的。桥，是我们俩的。

我的名字、我的文字，立在彼岸那一头，就够了。读到这里的你，其实早已见过我——在餐桌边。

谦敬地，

刘天梅

The First Pillar — Connection (缘)

I learned connection at a table before I could name it. My mother's kitchen was not large and our means were not great, but the table was set every evening, and whoever sat at it was, for that hour, family. Fifty years later I have eaten at tables on four continents, and I can tell you the finding of a lifetime of research: the quality of a life can be read from the quality of its tables.

We are told the modern problem is loneliness, as if it were weather. It is not weather. Connection is a craft, like any I have practised: it has materials — food, time, attention; it has technique — the question asked and the answer heard to its end; and it has one law that admits no compromise, the same law as in my workshops: presence cannot be outsourced. No device attends on your behalf.

Tien May chose two stories for this pillar. One is about a grandmother who could not read. One is about a man who carried a pot of soup ten metres. Between them they contain everything I tried to say in two books, and they say it better.

第一根柱子 — 联结(缘)

我还没有读懂“联结”这个词的时候,就已经从餐桌体会到它。我母亲的厨房不大,家境普通,但每晚都会摆好餐桌。无论什么人坐下来,在那一小时里,便是家人。五十年间,我在四大洲无数的餐桌上吃过无数顿饭,毕生观察得出一个结论:一个人的生活品质,可以从他的餐桌看出来。

人们说现代社会的困境是孤独,仿佛孤独是一种天气。但孤独并不是天气。联结是一门手艺,和我做过的所有手艺一样:它需要素材——食物、时间、专注;需要方法——问一句家常,再静静听完整个回答。还有一条不容妥协的铁则,和我的工坊准则相同:陪伴无法外包,没有任何设备可以代替人亲自在场。

天梅为本章选取两个故事:一位不识字的祖母,还有一位让一锅汤跋涉了十米的男人。这两个故事,把我前两本书想要表达的全部内容,讲得比我本人更好。

Story One — The Grandmother's Kitchen

My grandmother could not read. But she held a university in her kitchen. Every evening of my childhood, the family table filled — parents, uncles, a neighbour's child, whoever the day had washed up — and she fed everyone from three dishes and a pot of rice, and asked each person one question and listened to the whole answer. The neighbour's boy, whose own house was silent, ate with us for eleven years. Decades later, at her funeral, he stood at the back — a grown man now, successful, a stranger to me — and wept longer than anyone. I asked him afterwards why. He said: "Your grandmother is the reason I know what a family sounds like."

She never taught a lesson in her life. She set a table, every evening, without exception, and the table did the teaching. In China we do not greet each other with "how are you." We say 你吃了嗎 — have you eaten? For five thousand years, that question has meant: are you cared for, do you belong, is someone watching over you. My grandmother asked it every day of her life, and answered it herself, with three dishes and a pot of rice.

After "The Grandmother's Kitchen" — a word from the other bank

I never met this grandmother, and I recognise her completely. In my language we would say she had *Herzensbildung* — an education of the heart, the only degree that cannot be purchased. Notice what she never did: she never taught, never preached, never once used the word family. She built an instrument — a table, set daily, without exception — and let the instrument do the work. That is exactly how a great loudspeaker functions: it says nothing of its own; it makes it possible for what is true to be heard. The boy who wept at her funeral had been listening to that instrument for eleven years. Build the table. The table will do the rest.

一、祖母的厨房

祖母不识一字，可她的厨房里，藏着一所大学。

我的童年，每到傍晚，家中餐桌总会坐满人——父母、叔伯、邻家孩童，还有所有因缘际会，在这一日相聚而来的过客。她只用三碟小菜、一锅米饭，款待每一个人。她会向每个人问一句家常，然后静静听完对方完整的回答。

邻居家的男孩，家中向来冷清，在我们家一同吃饭，整整十一年。数十年后，祖母的葬礼上，我看见他站在后排，已是事业有成的成年人，于我而言形同陌路，却哭得比谁都久。事后我问他缘由，他答道：“是你的祖母，让我懂得，一个家本该是什么声响。”

祖母这一生，从未刻意说教。她只是日复一日，备好一桌晚饭，从未间断，而这一桌饭菜，自有育人的力量。

多年以后，我在中国学到，人们见面问候，不说“你好吗”，而是问：吃了吗？那一刻我怔住了。五千年来，这句问话真正的含义是：是否有人惦念你？你是否有所归依？是否有人将你放在心上？祖母穷尽一生，日日以这句问候待人，又凭着三碟小菜、一锅热饭，亲手兑现这份关怀。

「祖母的厨房」之后 — 来自彼岸的话

我从未见过这位祖母，却完全理解她。我们语言里有个词 *Herzensbildung*，指心灵的教养，这是唯一买不到的学位。请注意她的做法：她不说教，不宣讲道理，甚至从未提及“家庭”。她搭建出一个载体——一张每日备好的餐桌，由载体本身发挥作用。这和优质扬声器原理一致：扬声器本身不输出观点，只负责让真实的声音被听见。葬礼上落泪的男孩，已经聆听了这张餐桌十一年。把餐桌搭建好，剩下的交给餐桌即可。

Story Two — The Fourteenth Floor

Old Chen had lived on the fourteenth floor of his Shanghai tower for nine years and knew none of his neighbours. Six hundred families in the building; the elevator was a box of lowered eyes. Then came the summer typhoon that cut the power for two days, and the elevator died, and the fourteenth floor became a mountain. On the first evening, Old Chen — a widower who cooked too much from forty years of habit — carried his extra pot of soup down the dark corridor and knocked, for the first time, on the door opposite. A young mother opened it, a baby on her hip, ice melting in her dead freezer. He held out the pot and said the oldest sentence in China: “Have you eaten?”

By the second evening, the corridor had become a village. Someone’s camping stove, someone’s candles, someone’s guitar; the retired teacher from 1403 telling stories to children whose names Old Chen learned that night after nine years. When the power returned, the lights came on and everyone blinked at each other, slightly embarrassed, like people waking from a good dream. But the following week, a note appeared in the elevator, in the young mother’s handwriting: “Corridor dinner, Saturday, bring one dish.” Nine years of electricity had kept them strangers. Two days of darkness — and one pot of soup, carried ten metres — made them neighbours. The thread of 缘 does not need much. It needs one person willing to knock.

After “The Fourteenth Floor” — a word from the other bank

Nine years of electricity made six hundred families strangers; two days of darkness made them neighbours. I have thought about this story for a long time, because I have spent my life on the side of the engineers, and it is we who built the tower, the elevator, the perfect systems that remove every occasion for knocking on a door. The lesson is not that the systems are wrong. The lesson is that convenience is a solvent: it dissolves friction, and most of what we call community was friction — the borrowed ladder, the shared stove, the favour asked. Old Chen understood what must be done when the systems work too well: create the occasion yourself. A pot of soup, carried ten metres, is a technology five thousand years old, and it has never once failed.

二、十四楼

老陈在上海高层公寓的十四楼住了九年，却从不认识任何一位邻居。大楼里住着六百户人家，电梯之内，人人垂目，互不言语。直到一年夏天，台风来袭，全城断电两日，电梯停摆，十四楼仿佛化作一座高山。

断电第一晚，丧偶多年的老陈，因四十年的习惯，总会多煮一锅汤。他端着这锅多出来的汤，穿过漆黑的走廊，第一次敲响了对门的房门。开门的是一位年轻母亲，怀里抱着婴儿，冰箱断电，里面的冰块正在消融。老陈递出锅，说出了中国流传千年的那句问候：“你吃了吗？”

待到第二个傍晚，整条走廊已然像一处村落：有人搬出露营炉具，有人点起蜡烛，还有人带来吉他；1403室的退休教师，给孩子们讲故事，九年未曾相识的邻居，那一晚，老陈记住了孩子们的名字。

电力恢复的那一刻，灯光亮起，众人彼此相视，略带局促，仿佛从一场温柔的大梦中醒来。可在一周之后，电梯里出现一张字条，出自那位年轻母亲的手笔：“周六走廊聚餐，请自带一道菜。”

九年稳定供电，让邻里形同陌路；短短两日黑暗，加上一锅跋涉十米送出的热汤，让众人成为街坊。缘分这根丝线，本不需太多铺垫，只需要有一个人，愿意抬手敲门。

「十四楼」之后 — 来自彼岸的话

九年电力供给，让六百户人家形同陌路；两天停电，促成邻里往来。我长久思考这个故事。我一辈子从事工程，正是我们造出高楼与电梯，完善的系统，把每一次敲门的由头都消除了。这个故事不是否定系统，而是说明：便利会磨掉生活摩擦，而社群关系很多时候恰恰诞生于这类摩擦——借梯子、共用炉灶、开口求助。当系统过于完备，人就要主动创造交往契机。一锅跋涉十米的汤，是一门五千年的技术，从未失手。

The Second Pillar — Growth (长)

Everything I have ever made that was worth making grew slower than I wanted. The first loudspeaker that told the truth took years of evenings. The vines I planted as a younger man gave their finest harvest to a man with white hair. For a long time I believed patience was the price of quality. I was wrong. Patience is not the price. Patience is the ingredient.

Our age has organised itself around the opposite belief. It measures growth quarterly, photographs it daily, and cannot understand why everything it raises so quickly falls at the first wind. The answer stands in every bamboo grove and every wine cellar: what rises without roots is not growth; it is only height.

Tien May chose one story for this pillar — a young man who came to a mountain for a shortcut and stayed eleven years. I have employed many hundreds of people in my life. I would hire that man without an interview.

第二根柱子 — 成长(长)

我所有真正有价值的作品，成型都比我预想的慢。第一台还原真实声音的扬声器，耗费无数夜晚打磨。我年轻时种下的藤蔓，等到我满头白发，才结出最好果实。从前我以为耐心是换取品质要付出的代价。后来我明白：耐心不是代价，耐心本身就是原料。

我们这个时代持有相反认知：按季度评判成长，追逐肉眼可见的短期变化。很多快速催生的事物，遇到一点冲击就崩塌。竹林、酒窖都在告诉我们：没有扎根的拔高，不算成长，只是徒有高度。

天梅选了一则故事：一个年轻人上山想走捷径，最终留了十一年。我一生聘用过数百员工，如果遇到这个年轻人，不用面试就愿意录用。

Story Three — The Apprentice Who Wanted to Skip

A young man came to a tea master in Wuyi to learn the craft, because he had seen on his phone that master-grade rock tea sells for the price of a car. For the first month, the master let him do one thing: carry water and watch the fire. The second month: smell the leaves at every stage, and say nothing. By the third month the young man rebelled. “Master, there are courses online. Three weeks, certificate included. Why do you waste my time?” The master nodded, as if this were a fair question, and handed him two cups of tea. “Tell me the difference.” The young man tasted both. “They are the same.” The master drank, and said: “One was fired by my teacher, forty years ago, and rested since. One I fired last spring, and I am still ashamed of it. The day you can taste the difference is the day your training has begun — and no certificate can be printed for a tongue.”

The young man stayed. It is now eleven years. Last autumn, for the first time, the master let one batch go to market under both their names. Asked by a journalist whether eleven years was not too high a price, the young man said something the journalist did not print, because it made a bad headline: “I did not spend eleven years learning tea. I spent eleven years becoming someone who can taste. The tea was just the teacher who never lost patience with me.”

After “The Apprentice” — a word from the other bank

“A tongue cannot be printed a certificate.” I would carve that sentence over the door of every school I know. We have built a civilisation of credentials — three weeks, certificate included — and wonder why mastery is disappearing. The tea master’s method is the method of every workshop I have ever respected: first the hands, then the senses, then the judgement, and only at the very end, the name. Eleven years to become someone who can taste. That is not slow. Consider what was actually built: not a skill but a person — an instrument of perception that will now improve for fifty more years. The certificate depreciates from the day of printing. The tongue compounds.

三、急于求成的学徒

一名年轻人前往武夷山，拜一位茶师学艺。他在网上看到，大师级岩茶，售价堪比一辆汽车，慕名而来。

第一个月，师父只安排他做一件事：挑水、看火。第二个月：品鉴每一个制茶阶段的茶叶，只闻，不语。到第三个月，年轻人心生抵触。“师父，网上有课程，三周结业，还发证书，您为何白白耗费我的时光？”

师父轻轻颌首，仿佛这疑问合情合理，随后递给他两杯茶汤：“尝尝，说说差别。”年轻人品过两杯：“喝起来并无不同。”师父举杯饮下，缓缓说道：“其中一杯，是我的恩师四十年前所焙，之后静静存放至今；另一杯，是我去年春日亲手焙制，时至今日，仍让我羞愧。等到你能品出二者之别，才算正式开启修行——而舌头这东西，没人能给证书的。”

年轻人留了下来，一晃十一载。去年秋日，师父第一次同意，一批茶叶上市，同时署上师徒二人的名字。有记者问他，耗费十一年，代价是否太高。年轻人说了一句记者后来没有刊登的话，只因它不是博人眼球的标题：“我并非花十一年学习制茶。我用十一年，修炼出懂得品鉴的本心。而茶叶，只是那位始终耐心相待我的良师。”

「急于求成的学徒」之后 — 来自彼岸的话

“舌头这东西，没人能给证书的。”我真想把这句话刻在每一所学校门上。我们身处证书泛滥的时代——三周结业，还发证书——却疑惑真正技艺日渐稀少。我所敬重的工坊，都遵循这套顺序：先练双手，再练感官，而后建立判断，最后才轮到署名。十一年打磨感知，不算慢。他造就的不只是一项技能，而是完整的人，一套往后数十年还会持续提升的感知能力。证书自打印之日起贬值；舌头自启用之日起生息。

The Third Pillar — Recognition (知音)

The most expensive thing I ever learned cost me nothing to buy and decades to understand: people do not leave companies, marriages, or families because they are underpaid. They leave because they are unseen. I have watched brilliant engineers stay through hard years for the sake of one director who knew exactly what their work contained — and I have watched them walk away from fortunes offered by men who could not name what they did.

The Chinese language holds the highest word I know for this: 知音 — the one who knows my sound. It comes from a musician and a woodcutter, and Tien May has set their melody, “Flowing Water,” as this book’s interlude, where it belongs: at the end, before the farewell.

She chose two stories for this pillar. In one, recognition costs a mandarin orange. In the other, it is delivered thirty years too late, in a single sentence, and still rearranges a life. Read them and then answer honestly the question they ask: who in your life is doing true work in the dark — and have you said so, out loud, by name?

第三根柱子 — 看见(知音)

我学到最珍贵的道理,不需要花钱,却耗费我几十年才读懂:人离开公司、婚姻、家庭,不是物质报酬不足,而是不被看见。我见过才华出众的工程师,处境艰难也愿意追随懂得其工作价值的主管;也见过他们拒绝高薪,离开看不懂自己工作价值的管理者。

中文里有一个极高的词描述这种理解:知音,懂得我心声的人。典故来自伯牙与樵夫钟子期,高山流水遇知音。天梅把琴曲《流水》设为本书间章,放在篇末、告别之前,位置恰到好处。

天梅选取两个故事:其一,看见他人,只需要一颗橘子;其二,一句迟了三十年的话,依旧改变人的一生。读完可以诚实自问:你的生活里,有谁是默默做事?你是否当面肯定过他,叫出过他的名字?

Story Four — The Name of the Cleaning Lady

In a glass tower in Shenzhen, on the thirty-first floor, a young product manager named Deng worked most nights past ten. So did someone else: the cleaning lady who moved through the empty office with her cart, as visible to the staff as the carpet. For a year they shared the floor without a word. Then one night Deng's project failed — publicly, brutally, in an email to two hundred people — and he sat at his desk unable to stand up and go home. The cleaning lady stopped her cart beside him, set down a mandarin orange from her own bag, and said: "You stay later than all of them. And you are the only one whose desk is never left in disorder for me. Whatever they wrote in that email, they did not write about the person. I see the person."

Deng ate the mandarin, and did not cry, quite, and went home able to sleep. The next evening he asked her name — Auntie Rong — and from then on greeted her with it, and learned that her son was studying engineering in Wuhan, and began leaving the good tea bags where she would find them. Nothing in the company changed; his review that year still carried the failure. But Deng says now that his real education in management began that night, with a mandarin orange: the discovery that being seen — accurately, kindly, by name — can hold a person up when nothing else does, and costs the seer nothing at all. He runs a team of forty today. He knows all forty names, and the names of the cleaners.

After "The Name of the Cleaning Lady" — a word from the other bank

Auntie Rong saw two things nobody else on the thirty-first floor could see: that the man stayed latest, and that his desk was never left in disorder for her. Note what this means — she was reading his character from evidence invisible to his own colleagues, because attention was her instrument and she kept it in tune. And note the asymmetry, because it is the whole economics of recognition: her mandarin orange cost nothing. His whole company, with its salaries and its bonuses, could not produce that night what she produced with it. I have signed many compensation plans in my life. I never signed one that could hold a person up at the moment they could not stand. Only a witness can do that. Be the witness.

四、保洁阿姨的名字

在深圳一栋玻璃写字楼的三十一层，产品经理小邓，几乎每晚加班至十点。还有一个人亦是如此：保洁阿姨推着清洁车，穿梭于空荡荡的办公室，在员工眼中，她如同脚下地毯一般，近乎透明。整整一年，二人共处一层，未曾交谈一语。

直到一晚，小邓负责的项目公开失利，一封抄送两百人的邮件，将挫败摊开在所有人面前。他僵坐在工位，无力起身回家。保洁阿姨停下推车，从随身袋子里拿出一颗橘子放在他桌边，说道：“你每天走得最晚，也是唯一一个，永远保持桌面整洁的人。邮件里写下的，只是工作得失，并不是完整的你。我看见了真正的你。”

小邓吃下橘子，强忍泪水，当晚得以安睡。次日傍晚，他主动询问阿姨的姓名——容姨。自此之后，他总会唤她名字问好，慢慢得知，她的儿子正在武汉攻读工程专业，他也时常留下品质上好的茶包，给容姨取用。公司内部一切照旧，当年的绩效考评，依旧记录着那次项目失败。但小邓后来说，他真正学到管理之道，始于那晚的一颗橘子：被人真切、善意地看见，被唤出名字，这份力量，可以支撑人熬过最难的时刻，而付出善意的人，无需任何成本。如今他管理四十人的团队，记得每一位组员的名字，也记得大楼里所有保洁人员的名字。

「保洁阿姨的名字」之后 — 来自彼岸的话

三十一层其他同事都没有留意，容姨却看见两件事：他总是最晚下班，桌面从不会为她留下凌乱。她依靠观察，从旁人忽略的细节读懂他的品性。这里存在一种不对等，也是“看见”的本质：一颗橘子几乎没有成本。公司提供薪资奖金，却做不到一颗橘子所能做到的事。我签过无数薪酬方案，但没有一份薪酬，可以在人崩溃的时刻托住他。只有真正看见你的人才能做到。去做那个看见别人的人。

Story Five — The Father Who Spoke Once

Her whole childhood, Xiaoyan's father praised nothing. Report cards were received with a nod; the provincial piano prize with the sentence "the second movement was rushed." He was not cruel — he worked double shifts for her lessons and drove her through winter dark to every examination — but the words never came, and a child cannot eat sacrifices; a child needs words. Xiaoyan grew up successful and hungry, collecting achievements the way the starving hoard bread, and every trophy was a letter to her father that he never seemed to open.

At her wedding, custom obliged him to speak. He stood, a man visibly in pain before a microphone, unfolded a paper, folded it again, and abandoned it. Then he said: "I am a person who cannot say things. My daughter knows this and has paid for it. So I will say only one." He looked at her. "Every day of your life, I saw you. When you were rushed in the second movement, I saw how hard the first had been. I did not know that seeing must be spoken aloud. I know it now, thirty years too late, and I am telling this young man" — he turned to the groom — "do not make my mistake. Tell her what you see. Every day. It is the whole work of loving someone."

Xiaoyan says the sentence rearranged her life — backwards, like a light switched on at the end of a long corridor she had walked in the dark. But she made one decision at that table, and has kept it: in her own family, recognition would never be an inheritance, saved and delivered once. It would be small coins, spent daily. Her father gave her that, too. Some men teach the pillar by holding it up. Some teach it by showing, once, honestly, what it cost to let it fall.

五、寡言的父亲

自小到大，晓燕从未听过父亲的夸赞。成绩单递上去，只换来一声点头；拿下省级钢琴赛事奖项，父亲只说一句：“第二乐章，节奏赶了。”

他并非严苛无情：为了支付她的课时费，他身兼两份工作，寒冬凌晨，驱车送她奔赴每一场考试。可赞美之言，他始终说不出口。孩子无法依靠默默的牺牲成长，孩童需要直白的肯定。长大之后，晓燕事业有成，内心却始终渴求认可，不停追逐各项成就，如同饥寒之人囤积面包，每一座奖杯，都像是寄给父亲的信，可他仿佛从未读懂。

婚礼之上，按照习俗，父亲需要致辞。他站在麦克风前，局促不安，展开发言稿，又反复折起，最终放下纸张，开口说道：“我本不善言辞。女儿深知这点，也为此承受了许多遗憾。今天，我只说一句话。”他望向女儿：“你的人生里，每一刻，我都看在眼里。当你第二乐章弹得仓促，我看见第一乐章里，你付出的全部努力。我从前不懂，看见与懂得，需要亲口诉说。时隔三十年，我才明白这件事。”他转向新郎：“我想叮嘱你，不要重蹈我的覆辙。看见她的美好，一定要时常说与她听。这，便是爱一个人毕生的功课。”

晓燕说，这段话，重塑了她往后的人生，仿佛漫长幽暗的走廊尽头，终于亮起一盏灯。宴席之上，她定下一条准则，坚守至今：在自己的小家庭里，认可与赞美，不该长久积攒，等到某一个重要时刻才郑重交付。它该像细碎零钱，日日分享。这份领悟，同样来自她的父亲。

有些人，亲身扛起梁柱，教会后人何为担当；也有些人，坦诚道出自己未能守住的遗憾，让后人看清，这份遗憾背后沉重的代价。

After “The Father Who Spoke Once” — a word from the other bank

This story is the hardest one in the book for me, because I have known this father. In my generation, in my country too, men believed that providing was speaking — that the double shifts and the winter drives said what needed saying. They did not. A child cannot eat sacrifices; the sentence is exact. What moves me is the honesty of the ending: he does not pretend the thirty years can be repaid. He does the only thing that remains — he turns the debt into an inheritance, hands the lesson to the young man, and lets his failure become the next generation’s instruction. There is a form of greatness in that. But do not aspire to it. Aspire to the daily coins. Say what you see, today, out loud. It is, as he discovered, the whole work of loving someone.

The Fourth Pillar — Loyalty (信)

Every fortune I have seen built honestly was built on the same invisible foundation: promises kept when no one was checking. Contracts bind us where we can be audited. Loyalty is what governs the other territory — the larger one — and everything of value lives there: the supplier who does not raise the price in your desperate year, the partner who tells you the truth when a lie would be cheaper, the friend who returns after the quarrel.

The modern economy calls loyalty inefficient. I have run companies for fifty years, and I can report the actual arithmetic: loyalty is the most profitable strategy ever devised. It merely refuses to pay within the quarter. It pays in the tenth year — and the tenth year always comes.

Tien May chose one story for this pillar, about ugly chillies bought at a fair price. It should be taught in every business school on earth. It will not be, which is why it must be told at every table instead.

「寡言的父亲」之后 — 来自彼岸的话

这是全书里最难的一篇，因为我认识这样一位父亲。在我的祖国，我这一代人也曾认为：拼命养家，就等于表达爱——身兼的两份工作、寒冬凌晨的车，会替他们把该说的话说完。可它们没有。“孩子无法依靠默默牺牲成长”这句话十分确切。令人动容的是，父亲没有妄想弥补三十年的亏欠，他只做可行的事：把这笔亏欠变成遗产，交付下一代，让自己的遗憾成为后辈警示。这自有其伟大，但不要向往那种伟大。要向往的，是细碎零钱，日日分享。今天就把你看见的美好，当面说出来。正如他领悟的：这就是爱一个人全部的功课。

第四根柱子 — 忠诚(信)

我见过所有踏实建立起来的事业，都依托同一个看不见的根基：即便无人监督，依旧信守承诺。契约约束可以被核查的行为；忠诚管辖更广、没有监督的领域，一切珍贵事物都生长于此：行情恶劣时不抬价的供应商，谎言更省事却依旧对你讲真话的伙伴，争吵过后依旧愿意回归的朋友。

现代经济学认为忠诚缺乏效率。我经营企业五十年，得到不一样的现实结论：忠诚是回报最高的策略，只是回报不会体现在季度报表，它会出现在第十年，而第十年总会到来。

天梅选了一则故事：按公道价格收购品相不佳的辣椒。这个故事理应进入全世界商学院教材，但现实不会，所以它只能在一张张餐桌上传下去。

Story Six — The Harvest That Failed

Boss Zhou ran a mid-sized food company in Chengdu, and for nine years he had bought his chillies from the same farming cooperative in the hills — the Luo family and their neighbours, whose harvest he had built his best-selling sauce on. In the tenth year, unseasonal rain destroyed the crop. The chillies that survived were fewer, uglier, and — his procurement manager laid the spreadsheet before him — forty percent more expensive than perfect ones available, immediately, from a broker two provinces away. “One year,” said the manager. “We switch for one year. They will understand. It is only business.”

Zhou looked at the spreadsheet for a long time. Then he said: “For nine years, when the harvest was fat, did the Luos ever sell our contracted share to a higher bidder? They had offers. I know they had offers.” The manager admitted they never had. “Then they were loyal in their strong year,” said Zhou, “and you are asking me to be disloyal in their weak one. Buy the ugly chillies. All of them. And send the agronomist to help them replant.” The sauce was thinner that year; a food blogger noticed; it cost them. Three years later, when a giant competitor came to the hills waving contracts at triple volume, the entire cooperative refused without a meeting. Old Luo’s answer travelled the whole province: “Boss Zhou bought our worst harvest at a fair price. You are offering to buy our best. Come back when you have bought a worst one.” Zhou has never lacked chillies since — nor, he says, slept badly. The spreadsheet, he tells his young managers, can calculate everything except the tenth year.

六、歉收之年

周老板在成都经营一家中等规模食品企业，九年以来，辣椒始终采购自山区同一农业合作社——罗家与邻里农户，他家招牌辣酱的风味，全都依托这片土地出产的辣椒。

第十年，反常的连绵阴雨，摧毁了整片作物。幸存的辣椒，产量稀少，品相不佳。采购经理将报表放在他面前：如果跨省找中间商采购品质完好的辣椒，单价比本地这批高出四成。“只换一年供货而已，”经理劝道，“农户会理解，这只是生意。”

周老板久久凝望着报表，开口问道：“过去九年，丰收之年，罗家有没有手握我们的签约份额，转头卖给出价更高的收购商？我知道，曾经有人开出更高价格找过他们。”经理承认，农户从未违约。“丰收之时，他们守得住信义；如今遭遇歉收，你却劝我背弃约定。”周老板决定，“收购这批品相不好的辣椒，全部收下。再安排农艺师，上山协助他们复种。”

那一年，辣酱风味略逊往常，美食博主也察觉出差别，企业蒙受损失。三年之后，大型竞品企业奔赴山区，开出数倍采购量的合同，整个合作社，没有一户参与洽谈。老罗传出口信，传遍全省：“周老板，在我们收成最差的时候，依旧公道收购我们的辣椒。你们只想收购我们最好的收成。等你们经历过一次歉收之年，再来谈合作。”

自此之后，周老板再也不用为辣椒货源发愁，他说，自己夜里也总能安睡。他时常和年轻管理者说：报表可以核算一切，唯独算不出第十年。

After “The Harvest That Failed” — a word from the other bank

Boss Zhou’s question to his manager is the finest piece of due diligence I have ever heard: were they loyal in their strong year? He understood that the nine fat years were not merely business; they were data — a decade-long test of character that the cooperative had passed silently, offer after refused offer. The spreadsheet could not see this asset, because trust appears on no balance sheet; it only appears in the tenth year, as the difference between a supplier and an ally. When the giant came with triple volume, it discovered what I have watched competitors discover all my life: you cannot outbid a debt of honour. You can only try to buy what someone else was given — and it is never for sale.

The Fifth Pillar — Clarity (明)

I have printed the full measurements of my products since the beginning, including the ones no customer asks about. Colleagues called it commercial naivety. It was the opposite: it was the cheapest quality-control system ever devised, because a company that publishes everything must build everything so that it survives publication. Clarity is not a communications policy. Clarity is a construction method — for products, and for lives.

The character for this pillar is 明: sun and moon side by side, all the light there is, nothing left in shadow. The German word I lived by is simpler: Klarheit. Both mean the same discipline — say what is true, show what is real, and remove everything you would be afraid to be asked about.

Tien May chose two stories. In one, the truth cannot be corrected once written; in the other, it is printed on a menu. Both end in the same place: the discovery that honesty, which looks like a risk, is the only ground that holds.

「歉收之年」之后 — 来自彼岸的话

周老板向经理提出的问题,是我见过最好的尽职调查:丰收之时对方是否坚守信义。九年丰收不只是商业往来,是人格测试,合作社一次次拒绝高价,通过考验。资产负债表不会记录信任,信任只会在第十年显现,区分普通供应商与真正盟友。大公司拿着高额订单上门,终究会明白:情义缔结的关系,金钱无法收买。你可以出钱购买货品,但买不走一份情义。

第五根柱子 — 清明(明)

从我创业之初,我就完整公开产品全部参数,包括很多顾客不会关心的数据。同事说我商业上太过天真。事实恰恰相反:这是成本最低的质量管控手段。企业选择公开全部信息,产品就必须经得起公开审视。透明不是公关话术,透明是一种建造方式,既用于产品,也用于人生。

本章节汉字为明:日月并列,一切摊开,不留阴影。我一直信奉德语词 Klarheit, 含义相近:讲真话,展现真实,清除所有你害怕被别人追问的部分。

天梅选取两个故事:其一落笔即成,无法涂改;其二写在菜单之上。两个故事指向同一个结论:坦诚看似冒险,却是唯一稳固的立足根基。

Story Seven — The Stroke That Cannot Be Corrected

A student came to an old calligraphy master, and his characters were skilful and strangely dead. The master watched him work and saw the trouble at once: at the end of difficult strokes, the student would hesitate, and then — a movement he was not even aware of — touch the brush back to the paper and mend the line. Tiny repairs, nearly invisible. The master said nothing for a month. Then one morning he took away the student's ink and gave him a bowl of plain water and a grey slate. "Write on this."

The student wrote. On the slate, the water strokes shone for a few seconds and evaporated — no record, no audience, no consequence. And with nothing to lose, his hesitation vanished; the strokes came out whole, decisive, alive. The master let him fill the slate for an hour, then quietly returned the ink and paper. "Now write exactly as you just wrote." The student did — and for the first time, his characters breathed. "Understand what happened," said the master. "Your skill was never the problem. Your relationship to being seen was the problem. On paper, you wrote to hide; on water, you wrote to write. Ink on rice paper permits no correction — every hesitation shows, every borrowed movement shows; the stroke is a confession. That is not the cruelty of the art. That is the entire gift of the art: it is one place in life where you cannot pretend, and so it is one place in life where you finally stop." The student became a master himself, and to the end of his days he began every morning with a bowl of water and a slate — not to practise the strokes, he said, but to practise the honesty.

七、不可修改的笔画

一名学子前来拜入老书法家门下，他笔法娴熟，写出的字，却莫名缺少生气。师父观察他练字，很快发现症结：每当写完一笔难度较高的笔画，学子总会迟疑，而后下意识提笔，在纸面修补线条。细微的修改，旁人几乎难以察觉。

师父整整一月，未曾点破。某天清晨，他收走学子墨汁，递上一碗清水，一块灰色石板：“在石板上书写。”

学子提笔落字。石板之上，清水写下的笔画，只能短暂留存，随即蒸发。没有墨迹留存，无人评判优劣，不必担心失误。再无后顾之忧，他不再犹豫，落笔完整、果决，笔墨之间，生出灵动气韵。师父任由他在石板上书写一小时，随后默默归还墨与宣纸：“现在，照着方才的心境书写。”

学子落笔，平生第一次，笔下的字，拥有了呼吸。

“你要明白其中的道理，”师父说道。“你的技法从无缺陷，问题在于，你太过在意他人如何看待你的作品。在宣纸上书写，你总想掩盖瑕疵；以清水练字，你只为书写本身而生。宣纸落墨，落笔无悔，每一处迟疑，每一次刻意修补，都会显露无遗。一笔，就是一份供词。这并非书法严苛的束缚，恰恰是这份技艺赠予人的礼物：人世间，唯有此处，无法伪装。在这里，你终于可以放下掩饰，直面本心。”

这名学子日后也成为一代书家，直至暮年，每日清晨，依旧以清水石板练字。他说，并非练习笔法，而是练习坦诚面对自己。

After “The Stroke” — a word from the other bank

“On paper, you wrote to hide; on water, you wrote to write.” I have watched this exact phenomenon in engineers, in winemakers, in singers in the recording studio: the work goes dead the moment its maker begins performing for the judgement instead of serving the thing itself. Every craft has its rice paper — the medium that permits no retouching, where the hand confesses. My whole career I have sought those media out deliberately, because they are the only honest teachers. The master’s gift was not the slate; it was the diagnosis: your skill was never the problem; your relationship to being seen was the problem. Cure that, and the strokes breathe. This is true of calligraphy. It is true of everything.

「不可修改的笔画」之后 — 来自彼岸的话

“在宣纸上书写，你总想掩盖瑕疵；以清水练字，你只为书写本身而生。”工程师、酿酒师、录音棚歌手身上，我都见过同样现象：创作者一旦开始为外界评价表演，作品就失去生命力。每一门手艺，都有属于自己的“宣纸”媒介，落笔无法回改，直接暴露创作者真实状态。我刻意寻找这类媒介，它们是最诚实的老师。石板不是核心，核心在于看清症结：技艺没问题，问题在于你如何看待他人审视。想通这点，笔画便有了呼吸。书法如此，世间万事皆是如此。

Story Eight — The Menu That Told the Truth

Sister Fang's small restaurant in Kunming had eleven tables and a menu like everyone's menu: "wild mushrooms" that were farmed, "today's fish" that was yesterday's, "grandmother's recipe" invented in 2019. Everyone did it; the customers assumed it; the fog was the industry standard. Then came the bad spring when a supplier's mislabelled oil made the news, nobody trusted any menu in the city, and Sister Fang, sitting in her empty restaurant, made a decision her brother called commercial suicide. She rewrote the menu to say only what was true. "Farmed shiitake, from the Li farm in Chenggong, delivered Tuesdays." "Fish: whatever was alive in the tank this morning — ask, and I will show you the tank." "The braised pork is my own recipe. My grandmother, honestly, was a terrible cook."

For two weeks, nothing. Then a food blogger, weary of being lied to elegantly all over the city, ate there and posted one line: "I have found a menu that would survive a police interrogation." The eleven tables have been full ever since, with a queue on weekends, and Sister Fang has never once been asked for a discount — because, as she puts it, people bargain when they suspect the price is a story, and her prices had stopped being stories. Her brother asked her what the secret was, so he could copy it in his own shop. She said: "There is no secret. That is the secret. A house that fears the question has already answered it. I removed everything I was afraid to be asked."

八、说真话的菜单

芳姐在昆明经营一家小餐馆，店内只有十一张餐桌，菜单和同行大同小异：标注“野生菌”，实则人工培育；写着“今日鲜鱼”，却是前日存货；标榜“祖母秘方”，其实是2019年自创的菜式。整个行业皆是如此，食客也早已心照不宣，模糊修饰，是业内常态。

直到一年春天，供应商油品标注造假的新闻曝光，全城食客不再信任各家菜单。芳姐望着空荡荡的店面，做出一个决定，弟弟直言这无异于自断生路。她重写菜单，只记录真实信息：

“人工种植香菇，产自呈贡李家农场，每周二配送。”

“鲜鱼：今日水箱活鱼，欢迎查看鱼池。”

“红烧肉，是我自创配方。坦白说，我的祖母并不擅长做菜。”

最初两周，店内依旧冷清。后来一位厌倦了各式美化谎言的美食博主到此用餐，留下一行分享：“我找到了一份，经得起警察审讯的菜单。”

自此，十一张餐桌日日满座，周末大排长队。从来没有客人和芳姐议价。正如她所言：当人们怀疑价格是个故事，才会讨价还价；而她的价格，已经不再是故事。弟弟前来请教秘诀，想要照搬这套模式经营自己的店铺。芳姐答道：“没有秘诀。这就是秘诀。一间店要是害怕客人追问，其实答案已很明显。我把我害怕回答的问题先给出答案，问题便不存在了。”

After “The Menu” — a word from the other bank

Sister Fang discovered in one bad spring what I spent decades proving in laboratories: transparency is not a virtue you add to a business; it is a filter you pass the business through. Look at what her rewritten menu actually forced: real farms, named and scheduled; a fish tank that could be inspected; a claim about grandmother that was simply, disarmingly, true. She did not merely change the words. The words changed the restaurant — because everything that could not survive being written honestly had to go. That is why no one bargains with her: a price stops being negotiable the moment it stops being a story. “I removed everything I was afraid to be asked.” Fifty years of my own quality philosophy, in eleven words, from a small kitchen in Kunming.

「说真话的菜单」之后 — 来自彼岸的话

那个艰难的春天，芳姐印证了我几十年实验室得出的道理：透明不是企业额外增添的美德，而是筛选企业的过滤器。看看她重写的菜单实际逼出了什么：有名有姓、标注配送日期的农场；一口随时可以查看的鱼池；还有一句关于祖母的话——坦白得让人卸下防备，却句句属实。改写菜单不只是修改文字，文字反过来改造餐馆：所有经不起如实写出来的东西，都必须舍弃。这就是没人跟她议价的原因，价格不再是包装出来的故事。“我只是删掉了所有不敢被人询问的东西。”昆明一间小餐馆的这句话，浓缩了我五十年关于品质的全部思考。

Interlude — Flowing Water

In 1977, when humanity launched the two Voyager spacecraft toward the edge of the solar system, it fastened to each of them a golden record: sounds of Earth, chosen to represent us to anyone, or anything, that might one day find it. Among the greetings and the birdsong and Bach, the committee placed one Chinese piece, and their choice was more perfect than perhaps they knew: “Flowing Water,” played on the guqin — the very melody by which, twenty-five centuries earlier, the woodcutter Zhong Ziqi had recognised the soul of Bo Ya. The tune of the first 知音, the first person who ever truly heard another.

Think of what that means. Bo Ya broke his qin because his one listener died, believing that a sound without its knower is not worth making. And humanity, launching its message into the dark, reached for that exact melody — as if to say to the universe what Bo Ya said to the riverbank: here is our sound; is anyone out there who knows it? The record is beyond Pluto now, travelling forty thousand years to the nearest star, the most patient piece of listening equipment ever built. It may never be heard. It was sent anyway. And that is the final teaching of the pillar of silence, the one this whole book has been circling: to make something true and send it toward a listener you cannot see — a bottle laid down for a decade, a bell followed to its end, a song played whole for a father — is not a gamble. It is the oldest act of faith there is. Somewhere, someone is listening. Play as if they are.

间章 — 流水

1977年，人类发射两艘旅行者探测器，向着太阳系边缘远航。每一艘探测器上，都搭载一张镀金唱片，收录地球的万千声响，倘若某天，外星生灵发现它，便可借此认识人类。唱片之中，收录问候、鸟鸣、巴赫乐曲，委员会特意挑选了一首中国古曲，这份选择，蕴藏着远超众人认知的深意：古琴曲《流水》。两千五百年前，正是这首乐曲，让樵夫钟子期，读懂了伯牙心中的山河意境。这便是世间第一位知音——第一个真正听懂他人心声的人。

不妨细想这份寓意：伯牙在知音逝去之后，破琴绝弦，认为乐曲无人懂得，便失去演奏的意义。而人类，向着茫茫深空送出讯息，偏偏选择这首曲子，仿佛向着宇宙，复述伯牙立于河岸的心声：这是我们的乐曲，远方，是否有人能够听懂？

如今唱片早已越过冥王星，飞向距离太阳系最近的恒星，全程需要四万年。它是人类打造出，最有耐心的聆听载体。或许永远不会被任何生命听见，可人类依旧选择送出。

这，便是本书反复探讨，关于静默之道最后的启示：创作一份真诚的作品，传递给素未谋面的聆听者——好比投入海中的漂流瓶，一记被跟到尽头的钟声，一首为父亲完整演奏的乐曲。这并非一场赌注，而是人类最古老的信念之举。总有一处，有人在听。就当有人在听那样，去造。

On the Interlude — a word from the other bank

Tien May has set one story apart from the pillars, and she is right to. “Flowing Water” is not an example of the philosophy; it is the philosophy, complete, in a single image: a piece of music, chosen by humanity as its message to the universe — the very melody by which one man first truly heard another.

I spent my youth soldering circuits so that a listener might receive a musician’s breath intact. I did not know then that I was practising for this sentence: to make something true and send it toward a listener you cannot see is not a gamble; it is the oldest act of faith there is. Every builder of anything real — a wine laid down for a decade, a company built for the grandchildren, a book written for a reader not yet born — lives by that faith. The golden record is beyond Pluto now, carrying a woodcutter’s ears and a musician’s heart toward the stars, forty thousand years patient.

Somewhere, someone is listening. Build as if they are.

关于间章 — 来自彼岸的话

天梅把这部分独立于五大支柱之外，处理十分恰当。《流水》不是这套理念的举例，它本身就是理念：人类送往宇宙的乐曲，起源于人与人之间一场真正的懂得。

我年轻的时候焊接电路，只为让听众完整听见演奏者的呼吸。那时我还不懂，我的工作印证一句话：向未知听众交付真诚创作，不是赌博，是古老信念。所有踏实的建造者——存放十年的酒、为后代经营的企业、写给尚未出世读者的书，都依循这份信念。镀金唱片越过冥王星，带着樵夫的耳朵与乐师的心奔赴星辰，静静等待四万年。

总有一处，有人在听。就当有人在听那样，去弹。

Epilogue — The Handshake on the Bridge

A bridge, when it is finished, belongs to no one. The builders on each bank worked from their own side — different tools, different songs, the same drawings — and one day, in the middle, over the deepest water, their hands met. That is what has happened in this book. I brought the convictions of a European workshop: measure everything, hide nothing, let nature set the standard, build for the grandchildren. Tien May brought what I could not bring: the stories, the tables, the grandmothers — the ten thousand quiet Chinese mornings in which these same convictions have been lived for five thousand years without ever needing a book.

If you have read this far, you have walked the whole span, and you know now what we know: there was never a philosophy to export. There was only a family resemblance to recognise — 殊途同归, different roads, the same destination. The proof was never in my arguments. It was in her stories, and in the small shock you felt when one of them turned out to be about you.

So we end, as both our traditions end every good gathering, not with a conclusion but with a meal. Tonight, or as soon as life allows: set the table. Cook something a grandmother would recognise. Pour tea with its full patience, or open an honest bottle, or both. Put on music worth being silent for. Serve the others first. Ask someone — and mean it — have you eaten?

And when the faces around the table begin to open, as they will, look across at whoever helped you build your life, and know what Tien May and I know as we set down our pens on our two banks of the river: the bridge was never the book.

The bridge is the table. It was always the table.

Welcome home. 欢迎回家.

— The Professor

尾声 — 桥上的握手

一座桥完工之后，不属于任何建造者。两岸建造者从各自岸边动工，工具不同，歌声不同，蓝图却是同一张。最终在水流最深的桥中央，双手相接。这本书正是如此。

我带来欧洲工坊的信念：充分测量，不加隐瞒，遵从自然标准，做事要为后代考虑。天梅带来我无法提供的东西：一个个故事，一张张餐桌，一位位祖母。五千年来，中国人就在无数平凡清晨践行这些信念，原本不需要写成书籍。

读到这里，你已经走完这座桥。你会明白：我们并不是向外输出一套哲学，而是看见彼此相通的生命追求——殊途同归。力量不在于我的论述，而在于故事，在于读到某一段时，你看见故事里面也有自己。

按照我们双方文化里聚会结束的传统，结尾不用宏大结论，回归一餐饭。今晚，或者找一个闲暇时刻：摆好餐桌，做一道老一辈会做的菜，耐心沏一壶茶，或是开一瓶好酒。放一段值得静心聆听的音乐。先招待旁人。真诚问一句：“你吃了吗？”

当桌边人的神情慢慢舒展，请看向陪你走过人生的人。我和天梅在河的两岸放下笔，心中清楚：真正的桥，从来不是这本书。

桥，就是餐桌。自始至终，都是餐桌。

欢迎回家。

——教授

Acknowledgments — The Colour of the Living

One small story from the making of this book belongs in it, because it proves the book. When we planned the two portraits that face each other across the fold — mine on one bank, Tien May's on the other — I proposed, with a European designer's instinct, that both photographs be black and white. It seemed elegant: two pictures, taken by different cameras in different countries, made consistent by the discipline of grey.

Tien May wrote back one gentle sentence. In China, she explained, a black-and-white portrait belongs to the dead. It is the 遗像 — the memorial picture that stands at a funeral, before the incense. Print the two of us in black and white, facing each other, and a Chinese reader would open this book of living philosophy to find two authors already mourned.

I had spent a year writing that truth alone does not cross rivers — and there, in my own portrait plan, stood the proof. Everything I intended was correct on my bank and wrong on hers, and I could not have known it, because this is precisely the kind of knowledge that does not live in books or measurements. It lives in people. It is the reason a bridge cannot be built from one side.

So the portraits in this book are in colour — the colour of the living — and I record my mistake here with gratitude rather than embarrassment. If you ever doubt that you need someone from the other bank, remember the grey photographs that were almost printed. Then find your Tien May, and listen to her.

— The Professor

致谢 — 生者的颜色

写书过程有一件小事值得写进书里，它印证本书全部主旨。

本书设计跨页双人肖像：此岸是我，彼岸是天梅。出于欧洲设计师习惯，我提议两张照片都用黑白。来自不同国家两台相机拍摄，黑白灰度可以统一画面，视觉上雅致。

天梅温和回复我：在中国，黑白肖像用于逝者，是葬礼摆放的遗像。如果我们二人隔页相对使用黑白，中文读者翻开这本讲述鲜活人生的书，看见的会是两位逝者的遗照。

我写过：道理本身，跨不过江河。这件事就是活生生的证明。我的想法在我的文化里合理，放到对岸就会出错。这类知识不存在书本与测量数据之中，它存在于人。一座桥，无法只靠一岸单独建成。

于是本书肖像采用彩色照片，属于生者的色彩。我把这次失误记录在此，心中是感激，而非尴尬。如果你怀疑自己是否需要来自对岸的伙伴，请记住这组差点付印的黑白照片。去找到属于你的那位天梅，认真倾听她。

——教授

IMPRINT

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Registered with the Commercial Register
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Registration number: CHE-134.288.704

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