

獨幕劇 醒

劇中人

馮君 馮僕

陸君 馮君之妹

林君

地點

北京

時候

民國四年秋令

此劇於一九一五年冬在美國紐約城
會由英文演作今著者復同本校新劇
團諸君編為漢文付印裝冊以就正於
熱心新劇者

著者識

民國五年

天津南開學校英文開印行

(醒)

佈景

馮宅待客室

室之後壁有窗護以綠紗窗外有竹數竿月光穿射室之左右各一門室中置圓式桌圍以兩椅桌上置小鐘一架雪茄煙紙煙各一盒右壁下置几一椅二左壁下裏置軟榻外爲寫字臺

(馮在寫字桌作書寫狀少頃僕從右門入)

僕 晚飯已經預備好了。請先生吃飯罷。(馮領之僕將行)

馮 告訴車夫。把車預備好了。吾吃完飯。要到車站接朋友去。

僕 喳(僕又欲行)

馮 方纔吾派的那個送信的人。現在已經回來了麼。

僕 還沒有回來。

馮 他回來的時候。叫他把東西快拿到這裏來。

僕 是(自左門出)

(馮將所寫之件及帳簿等物收在抽屜內加鎖後自右門出少頃陸同僕自左門入僕携皮包)

陸 你們主人沒出門嗎。

僕 現在正吃飯呢。說飯後還要到車站接您去。不想您來得這麼快。吾現在就去回一聲。

陸 你告訴別忙。(僕從右門出陸畧視屋內陳設坐軟榻上少頃馮自右門入)

馮 吾真沒想到你這麼早來。你不說九點鐘來嗎。

陸 吾是早二點車來的。

(二)

馮 一向怎麼樣好。(吩咐僕人)把陸先生皮包拿到房裏去。(僕携皮包從右門出)請坐請坐。(陸坐床上馮坐對面椅上)你回家有多少日子了。

陸 已經有一個月了。

馮 伯父伯母身體可康健。

陸 托福托福。還好還好。

馮 你出洋十年之久。今日回來。老人家必非常快樂。

陸 吾沒回來的時候。父母盼望吾回來的狼急。吾回來了。父母看吾作的事。一定有許多不合他老人家的意思。吾恐怕他老人家未必十分的滿意。

馮 吾們離國多年。一定有許多地方不合老年人心理。這亦是我們中國、新舊不能融洽一個大問題。你看北京近來怎麼樣。

陸 吾看這一切的繁華。真像不知道我們要亡國的神氣。

馮 你是剛來。還沒看見甚麼啦。那個奇奇怪怪的事還多的很啦。

(馮君之妹自右門入兩人起立)

馮 舍妹來啦。你們一定還認識。

陸 (陸與妹鞠躬)一向可好。

妹 托福托福。你來的很早。吾本來要同家兄到車站接你去。

陸 不敢當。

妹 (對馮說)你已經問陸先生用過飯了麼。

馮 咳。吾真不周到。(對陸說)你吃過了沒有。

陸 吾已經用過了。吾在車上吃的。

妹 吾去預備一點茶去。

馮 陸 馮 陸 馮 陸 馮 陸 馮 陸 馮 陸 馮 陸

好戲。好極啦。

你是新從美國來。吾有許多的事要問你。

回來咱們談。(妹從右門出。陸步至室右作思狀)令妹現在作點甚麼事。

今天在蒙養院任點功課。其餘的時候就是自己看點書。

也覺著有點趣嗎。有常常不高興的樣子嗎。

不高興的時候人人全有。(作怏怏)看你這個樣子。一定有不高興的地方。

咳。在今日的中國。那有叫人高興的事。怎麼能够高興。(兩人就中桌坐)

吾初回國的事。也是覺著這麼樣。然而這三年的工夫……

吾過三年。也許跟你一樣。可是吾們作事。不能隨風轉移。

你別誤會吾的意思。吾絕不是莫有主見。不過吾們作事。不可太激烈。前者給你寫信的

時候。就想你初一回國。必是多不愜意。所以吾請你來。一來咱可以見面。二來吾現在

這裏有兩三件事。你可以挑一樣作。依吾的意思。你有點事作。你的精神就該好點。你

以為怎麼樣。(陸未及答。媽妹入。僕持茶盤隨入)

(對僕說)倒茶。(茶倒畢。僕從左門出)

近來可好。(三人皆就坐)吾聽說你現在在蒙養院任點功課。

每日得同小孩們一同遊戲。倒是很有趣味。吾一看小孩們。就特別的高興。特別的讓吾

有希望。

那倒是很不錯。吾看現在長成的人。真是處處黑暗。

對妹說。陸先生現在是新回國。不高興的地方很多。

吾倒看不出陸先生有不高興的樣子。

對陸說。你自從回國後。在家裏住了一個月。一舉一動。大概是懂的你的人很少。你既與

(四)

陸 社會沒有同情。焉能不處處著急呢。

你的話也有道理。可是叫我最高興的地方，就是中國的現在。中國的將來。我們全國上那一個方向去走。現在我們所作的是甚麼事。內有內患。外有外侮。這一切的事。還不能從大夢裏把我們叫醒。請看這一般人。自私自利。無知無識。還乘着國將亡的時候。有機會得錢。人人全要發財。就是我們國有萬一不亡的盼望。弄這樣的人來作事。那有不亡的道理。

你說的話很對。吾亦常常作這樣想。吾真不明白這一羣人爲甚麼睡的這樣死。(僕從左門入手持信件一包馮立)

馮 這是那裏來的。(略看)呀。送信的人還帶回別的東西來沒有。

僕 好了好了。(馮急到寫字台旁回首對陸說)吾現在有一件極要緊的事。請坐一坐。(作檢視狀)

妹 快收拾好了。(從右門出)

陸 吾這躺來多承你的照應。

妹 沒有甚麼。吾盼望你在這兒多休息幾天。

(妹起立向馮處走陸轉向窗間外望)

馮 妹 (對馮說)這就是你所要得的嗎。

妹 是呀。明日一切的事。全都有了把握了。

馮 那是讓吾很痛快的事。麼。這樣可怕的事。吾盼望你下次別再干涉。這一個沒有甚麼要緊。也是吾們應該作的事。

(五)

馮 妹 可是你別忘了這裏險處。你曉得這就許關係你的性命。不出吾所料。果然吾們在這地方，得了吾們必需的証據。

(妹作放心狀僕入)

(對妹說)小姐曉得毯子在甚麼地方。

吾給你拿去罷。

叨擾的很。

不用客氣請坐罷。(妹從右門出僕隨出)

稍等一等。吾這兒就完。(陸就坐)

不要忙。不要忙。(路遲馮寫完作得意狀所寫之件放在衣袋內起立)

明日你要聽一件很有趣的事。(陸不答作懸想狀)你這幾天看報了麼。

有甚麼要緊的事麼。

就是鐵路吞款的那件事。

這是實事不是謠言。

(點頭)現在正有人在此調查。明天就要審判。可是這事非常的秘密。

這就是你現在所辦的事麼。現在政府有個很嚴的命令。凡吞款過五百塊錢的槍斃。

(馮點頭就坐)

吾聽說這回鐵路的案子，不敷的款有五百多萬。

呀，果然他們要是知道吾在暗地裏調查。他們對待吾的方法可想而知。

這又是吞款的事。(起立)

馮 陸 (起立)在中國可愁的事太多。現在咱們談一談吾給你找的那幾件事。你只要有事情作。你就可以知道社會上的情形。不至于這樣的悶悶了。

(六)

馮 陸 這全是甚麼事。

馮 有一個交通銀行分行行長的缺。一個月三百塊錢的薪水。這也不算少。有許多留學回來的學生。每月也不過賺一百多塊錢。

馮 吾銀行上的知識一點也沒有。並且作事上也沒有經驗。

馮 這倒用不着甚麼特別的知識。也用不着甚麼經驗。

馮 這是吾們作事的法子麼。

馮 果然那件事不合式。交通部還有一個差使。不曉得你的意思怎麼樣。(僕持名片入)你瞧吾剛要跟你說交通部的事。現在這個人就來了。

馮 僕 林先生坐馬車來的。現在門口候着。

馮 請到這屋坐。把馬褂擎來。(僕從左門出)這位林先生也是一個留學回國的。現在在部內當差是最活潑的。(妹從右門入)

馮 是有人來麼。吾看見門口有馬車。

馮 來的是交通部林先生。

馮 你實在知道他于案子裏一點關係沒有麼。

馮 不用揪心。他跟吾很好。吾想他來是爲給陸先生找事的事。

馮 這幾天事事讓吾不放心。(僕持馬褂入馮穿着僕旁立)

馮 吾盼望部裏還有這個缺。你願意作麼。

陸 吾看過再定。

馮 吾們現在到書房去坐一坐。

馮 大概他坐不多時候。你陪一陪。(馮出迎)

馮 等到明天吾就放心了。他已經告訴你這案子的情形了麼。

陸 妹 已經告訴吾個大概。真是危險。不知那個時候、大禍就許來到了。(陸妹從右門出僕收拾桌上物亦從右門出少頃馮陪林入讓坐于中央桌左馮坐桌右)

馮 林 你不脫馬褂麼。

馮 林 可以不必。吾坐不久。

馮 林 吾今天運氣很不好。

馮 林 怎麼樣不好。你輸的很多麼。

馮 林 沒輸很多錢。你沒看見近日總統的命令、禁止作官的賭錢麼。

馮 林 也不過是表面文章。(對視一笑)吾前幾天對你談過的那件事、爲吾新從美國回來的

馮 林 那個朋友。你還記得不得。

馮 林 呀、他現在在北京麼。

馮 林 他今天剛來。你不是說你部裏還有一個缺麼。

馮 林 呀、呀、不錯。可是那個缺已經補上人了。

馮 林 吾真沒想到。可惜的很。

馮 林 真是可惜。但是這麼多留學回來的人在 Beijing 找事。真是事多人少。可是現在部裏還有一個書記的缺。可以謀一謀。每月不過一百塊錢也沒甚麼專責。吾恐怕你這個朋友絕不願意作這個事。

馮 林 吾想他不願意。(僕入持兩杯茶放在桌上)你不喫煙麼

馮 林 不喫。謝謝。吾已經用得很多了。(僕出兩人飲茶)吾有一點小事跟你談談。不是甚麼甚要緊的事。不過吾打聽打聽。(馮作思狀林注意馮舉動)今天你看報了麼(馮作微驚狀看過。吾草草一看。有甚麼特別的事麼)

(八)

林 就是近來大家最注意那個鐵路吞款的案子。明天就要在大理院審判。(馮作慌狀頓轉作鎮靜態度)

馮 呀，是明天審判嗎。

林 聽說定案必須的証據調查人已經得着了。明天就要在公堂上宣布。

馮 這事實實在麼。這個事一定是很有趣的。

林 吾很想從內裏頭得點消息。你可以給吾想個法子不可以。

馮 你爲甚麼找吾。吾也是從報上看來的。吾知道的不外乎你所知道的。

林 呀呀，吾想你象是可以給吾想個法子似的。

馮 吾也只于是知道報上所載的。

林 (作凝重狀) 你要知道這是很要緊的事。

馮 要緊是不錯的。

林 這是在生死有關係的事。

馮 現在政府倒是竭力想認真把這個吞款的弊病除一除。

林 我們可是很好的朋友。

馮 那不待言。按吾們的交情。我們沒有不能談的話。

林 吾總想你像知道似的。

馮 對不住的很。吾實在不知道。

林 要是那個樣子，吾總算盡了吾的能力了。(少頃) 你曉得吾素日是好打聽事的人。喜歡知道事情的内容。(林起立) 吾還有點別的事。吾要走了。

馮 (起立) 不再坐一坐嗎。

林 實在不能再坐了。(兩人向左門走) 近來的天氣真好呀。

馮 很好。冷熱適中。(謙遜而去。妹同陸從右門入)

妹 這些事真是讓我們回想吾們當學生的時候。沒有甚麼責任。亦莫有甚麼憂慮。那真是少年的幸福。

陸 我們現在就自認老了麼。

妹 吾倒是老了。大概吾說出來你不信。吾常常想吾已經過五十歲啦。

陸 (笑)那是絕沒有的事。

妹 (笑)按年歲說。吾還不到五十。

陸 那用不著說嘍。

妹 現在吾告訴你。吾爲甚麼常常覺得這樣老。你看吾這一舉一動。隨隨便便的樣子。教年老的人看。一定是大不贊成。所以吾在他們的面前。吾是特別的小心。吾時時得跟我自己說。現在得守規矩。這些人就说嘍。你看他年紀這麼年輕。倒還懂點禮節。上外國去了這些年。一切的新玩藝。還沒把他引壞了。

陸 這倒是誇獎你的話。

妹 但是你還沒聽完嘍。他們還說啦。你看他當個教習還不壞。可是爲甚麼這麼大歲數還說不說個婆婆婆。(兩人相視一笑)現在你明白了。吾爲甚麼常常想吾已經過了五十歲了。

陸 還早嘍。(陸起立。妹亦起)這屋子裏頭的裝飾都很好。想一定是你布置的。

妹 沒有甚麼好。你留神這個窗戶了嗎。(妹向窗間走。陸隨之)窗外這幾竿竹子非常的清雅。很好很好。(兩人在窗窗外望。窗外月光射入。兩人衣襟上)窗外這幾竿竹子非常的清雅。你應當春天來看我們的花園。那真是萬紫千紅。非常的好看。(仰首望月)今晚的月色特別的光明。

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陸 真好呀。你看天這樣闊大。月光這樣清明。真是叫人心胸暢快。(兩人仰視少頃陸離窻轉行)這幾天吾一看見有動人的景象，吾立刻就想到中國可怕的將來。

妹 (妹目視陸之舉動)吾倒有句話勸你(陸回首)依吾看，在中國爲國家憂愁，知道我們將來實在的險處，像你這樣的人真不多。可是吾盼望你要爲自己的身體保重。別愁的太過。

陸 費心。謝謝。(少頃馮從左門入面有愁容)
爲甚麼在外面耽擱這麼許久的工夫。

馮 妹 沒有甚麼事。

馮 妹 你臉上不好看。一定是有要緊的事。(馮脫馬褂)

實，在沒有事。(假作笑容對陸說)方纔吾跟你說的交通部那件差事。現在已經有人了
(陸注意馮之神色點頭不答)

馮 妹 (對馮說)請你告訴我，你實在像有事的樣子。

馮 妹 沒有甚麼要緊的事。

馮 妹 吾也不是迷信。可是吾覺著像有件大事要發現的樣子。
實在沒有。如果有，明天一定告訴你。(看時辰鐘)你看現在已經不早了。陸先生行路一天，一定很勞苦，應當早安息。並且吾們還有兩句話談。你也去休息去罷。

馮 妹 你實在是沒事。

馮 妹 一切的事明天一定完了。

馮 妹 好，吾現在讓你們談話。可是你們別說到天亮。也應當早早休息。(妹從右門出)
怎麼回事。告訴吾。

馮 妹 (向窗間外望看妹去否回到陸旁作凝重狀)他用繞灣的話。讓吾知道這一羣吞歎的

馮陸 馮陸 馮陸 馮陸 馮陸 馮陸

人。現在已經曉得吾是事中人。

他門、居然……你在家裏沒有危險嗎。

這兒跟北京甚麼方、都受一樣的保護。現在天已經到了這個時候。吾一定也飛不出城去。

你爲甚麼不把林留住。交給警察。

擾、吾對于他一點沒有証據。他所說的話。全是有兩個講的。並且他在京裏是頭一個最

精明、最狡猾最有勢力的人。

這種的事吾受不了。

你少經驗。

這種經驗吾不屑于有。(馮緩行坐榻上陸亦就坐)

你們在外邊的人、以爲吾們在政府作事的、全是沒有知識的。沒有勇敢的。沒有良心的。

可是你們不曉得吾們百分之一的難。百分之一的險。你們要是能設想處于我們的

地位。你們一定可以有原亮的地方了。壞人雖多然而還有幾個想要作點事的人。

可是吾真看不出有甚麼前進的盼望。

這又是你經驗少。性情躁的短處。進步是慢、我們也知道。確實的問題。不在表面上。我們

所必須的。是一個社會上的大革命。把人心換一換。竭力去造你的新民族。那是爲我

們中國將來的榮耀。造一個實在的根基。

這話有道理。

我現在想、你還是在社會上作事。較必在政府裏作事。于你的性情合式。咱兩人現在所

見的不同。由于咱兩人境遇不同。吾幼年的時候、先父就故去了一家的責任。全落在

我的身上。吾現在作事的法子。就是從我這些年艱苦裏磨鍊出來的。你跟吾就不同

啦。你從小的時候、家境就好。用不著你出去營業。所以你于世情上沒有十分注意。

馮 陸 是的。不錯。吾承認你這話。
世界上的事，往往責任重，倒是于我們有好處的。你累了罷。咱們明天再談。(起立)明天

早晨含妹可以陪著你出去拜訪幾個朋友。下午的時候，吾就可以回來一切煩瑣的事，也就可以辦完了。(持時晨鐘上絃陸起向窗間外望)

陸 今日晚上真靜。天色真清明

馮 北京最好的天氣就在秋天。(少頃僕從左門入)

僕 電話。

馮 找吾嗎。

僕 是。

馮 你問過是誰。

僕 他沒說是誰。他就請你說話。

馮 (少停)好嘍。就去。

陸 吾同你去好不好。

馮 不要緊。不要緊。請你稍坐一坐。(大步而出陸在窗前站少頃持桌上新聞紙坐榻上看

心馳不入又起立向窗間望月陡聞槍聲木立不能動又聞槍聲急奔出斯時全場燈

皆息一分鐘而後光明係表明一夜之經過早晨情景日光由窗間射入陸在床上半

臥須臾立起望天大聲嘆息)

陸 呀。死。(持手巾拭淚室內徘徊僕持報紙入)你已經把電報全送出去了麼。

僕 送去了。陸先生不喫點心嗎

陸 不用不用(作檢閱新聞狀妹從右門入面色暗淡精神頹敗陸讓坐)今天覺著怎麼樣，好一點嗎。

陸 我倒沒有甚麼。可是你覺著怎麼樣。昨晚若是你不在此地。吾真不曉得怎麼好。

陸 我居然能在這事情發現以先來到。真是幸事。

陸 這群人真是沒有一點人心。作這樣的惡事。那想到家兄落在這群凶徒的手裏。(拭淚)

陸 已經過去的事。不必再想。心裏總要放開一點。你看見今天的報了麼。

陸 沒有。

陸 (持報宣讀) 鐵路吞款案調查人現已知爲馮某某不意馮某某于昨夜十鐘正值打電

話之時被人暗地槍斃聞此案必須之確証同時亦被竊去現時凶手尙未緝護馮君

之死亦可憐矣(妹哭不止陸亦俯首)

陸 吾們的國家呀。吾們的民族呀。吾被這事大受感觸。吾覺著從大夢裏醒來。以前吾看

世界的事。總是責備旁人。現在吾要自問給世界作過甚麼事。昨晚令兄未死以前。他

同我說過這句話。把人心換一換。竭力去造你的新民族。那是爲我們中國將來的榮

耀。造一個實在的根基。吾現在想要從教育上入手。造一般有新身體。新思想。新精神

的男女。用吾全身的氣力。爲我們將來的中國造一個最堅實的根基。

這真是偉大的事業。(作欽佩狀)

閉幕

Lu

What has happened, has happened. Let us not grieve too much. Have you read the report in the Daily News?

No.

Miss Fung

Lu

(Picks up the paper and reads) "Graft Investigator Assassinated! After a heated conversation over the telephone was shot from the dark. Mr. Fung died instantly."

(Miss Fung can not suppress her sobbing at this point. Lu bows his head and is silent.)

Lu

Now we are, the next moment we are no more! Life—Death! Ranks, honours, riches avail nothing. We often deceive ourselves. We trust life too much.

Miss Fung

That is very true. Death can snatch away so suddenly. I can hardly believe it.

Lu

This has stirred the depth of my soul. I feel like waking from a long dream. *(A pause)* From the world I have demanded much, to the world I have given nothing. Among your brother's last words, when he appeared unusually solemn under the shadow of death, I clearly remember these: "Change the mind of the people. Create your New Race. That is the only firm foundation for a glorious future." A small school I shall start. I shall begin with the very infants. I shall raise them up to be men and women with new bodies, new minds, new souls, worthy of our past. To them I shall give myself. In them will be the foundation of the future.

Miss Fung

(Standing) There is indeed a noble task.

(Curtain)

SCENE II.

(The morning sun comes in through the window. Everything in the room remains as it was the evening before. Lu is seen reclining on the settee. After a while, he stands up, and sighs)

LU

Ah! Life—Death!
(Takes out his handkerchief and buries his face in it. Then walks back and forth in his meditative manner. The servant comes in. A morning newspaper is laid on the table.)

LU

Have you sent the telegrams?

SERVANT

Yes. Do you wish some breakfast, Mr. Lu?

LU

No, not now. *(The servant withdraws)*
(Lu picks up the paper and tries to locate the report of last night's happening. Now he finds it. Miss Fung appears at the door at the right, her face pale, her figure drooping. She comes in quietly.)

MISS FUNG

Good Morning.

LU

(Suddenly notices her presence) Oh, good morning. *(Runs to help her to a chair)* How do you feel now?

MISS FUNG

I am all right, thank you. I am so sorry you have been troubled in this way.

LU

I am glad that I can be of some service.

MISS FUNG

Really I would not know what to do had it not been for you.

LU

I consider it a singular piece of good fortune that I came before it happened.

MISS FUNG

Oh, it was all too horrible, too treacherous, too cruel!

LU

There is something in that, I confess.

FUNG

(Sits straight and pulls out his watch to look at the time) You must be tired. *(Yawns)* I am too. Let us continue our talk to-morrow. I hope to keep you here as long as you can stay. *(Stands up. Lu follows)* To-morrow morning, you can go with my sister in the car to see the city and to call on some friends. I shall join you in the afternoon. By that time, I hope this burden will be off my hands. *(Now comes up to the center table. Takes up the little clock and winds it).*

LU

(Now at the window) Isn't this a beautiful night?

FUNG

Autumn is the most beautiful season in Peking.

LU

Really! *(Silence. The servant comes in)*

SERVANT

Telephone.

FUNG

For me?

SERVANT

Yes.

FUNG

Did you ask who it was?

SERVANT

Yes, but the person wanted to speak to you.

FUNG

(He hesitates a while) All right, I am coming. *(The servant goes out.)*

LU

Don't you think I'd better go with you?

FUNG

No, you wait for me here. *(Steps out briskly)*

(Lu stands at the window and enjoys the silent, serene moonlight night. After a while, he strolls to the desk and picks up a paper to read. Then he stands up and looks at the time. He again goes to the window. From a clear sky, the thunder comes—The report of a revolver! For a moment, he is startled and paralysed. In the meantime one more shot is heard. Lu runs out. Then the darkening of the stage for a moment signifies the passing of the night.)

FUNG

I have no evidence whatsoever against him. And the language he used all had a double meaning. Furthermore, he is a very shrewd and influential man.

LU

I cannot endure such things!

FUNG

That is where you lack experience.

LU

And I don't particularly care to have much experience of this sort.

FUNG

(A pause. Goes to the settee, sits down. Lu sits on a chair. Then solemnly.) You people on the outside seem to think all of us who are in the Government have no wisdom, no courage, no conscience whatsoever. You do not appreciate one hundredth of the dangers and difficulties we have to face. Put yourselves in our places, I am sure you would stop half of your grievances and begin to build up something constructive. With all our shortcomings, we are doing our utmost right here in Peking.

LU

But we do not seem to get anywhere.

FUNG

There again your inexperience—your impatience! Progress is slow. We know it. For the real problem lies deeper. The conviction gradually grows in me: We need a total social reformation. Change the mind of the people. Create your New Race. That is the only firm foundation for a glorious future.

LU

I am glad to know your conviction.

FUNG

And after all, Lu, with your temperament you may find work more congenial in that great social task. *(He leans back in the settee, and indulges in a bit of reminiscence.)* We have been brought up differently. My father died when I was young. Early in life I was forced to support my mother and family. I could not, as many of you do, despise money-making as a mean occupation. And my experiences have taught me how to succeed. But you have had a different life.

LU

Yes, I have never been forced to earn a living—not even for myself.

FUNG

There, my friend, is your weakness. Your irresponsibility has spoiled you for this world of practical objects and practical means.

FUNG

Please take my word. And if there is anything special, I promise I shall let you know to-morrow. (*Looking at the clock on the table*) You see, it's getting late. I think Lu likes to retire early to-night. We shall have a few minutes by ourselves and we shall go to bed.

MISS FUNG

Well, if you so desire. There is really nothing serious?

FUNG

Everything will be all right by to-morrow.

MISS FUNG

Then I'll bid you good-night. (*Walks toward the door at the left. To Lu*) I hope you will rest well to-night.

LU

Thank you.

MISS FUNG

And do not let him keep you up until midnight.

LU

No, we shall retire early.

MISS FUNG

Good night!

LU AND FUNG

Good night!

(*Miss Fung disappears through the door*)

LU

Now tell me what has happened.

FUNG

(*Walks to the window to see if his sister has already gone. Then comes back. Slowly, seriously.*) Couched in the most careful language, this was given me to understand: The grafters had found me out.

LU

Is that possible!

FUNG

Oh, those ingenious scoundrels!

LU

Are you quite safe?

FUNG

I am as well guarded here as anywhere in Peking. And I cannot fly out of the city to-night.

LU

Couldn't you have stopped that man Lin and have him arrested?

MISS FUNG

Yes, the sky is beautiful too.

LU

(After a long silence, turns back) These days when I look at anything beautiful, I morbidly turn to think of the cloudy future.

MISS FUNG

(Looking back) Mr. Lu, may I offer you a little advice?

LU

Yes, if you would be so kind.

MISS FUNG

In all your complaints and ravings, I see you are one of the very few who frankly face the situation and fear its consequences.

LU

Your advice please.

MISS FUNG

Well, my little advice is simply this: Try to take care of your health and do not be over-worried.

LU

(A meaningful silence) Thank you so much.

MISS FUNG

Oh, nothing, nothing *(Now Fung walks in the door at the left. The strain is seen on his face)* You look serious. There must be some business troubling you.

FUNG

(Affecting a smile) Nothing of the sort. Lu, I am sorry that position has been filled.

LU

Is that so? *(Not showing much interest)*

MISS FUNG

Please tell me.

FUNG

Honestly there is nothing serious or special.

MISS FUNG

Oh, do tell me — I seem to feel such an ugly foreboding.

MISS FUNG

Let me tell you why I sometimes feel so superannuated.

LU

Yes, please.

MISS FUNG

You see my ways of looking at things, my free manners and all, quite shock the old-fashioned people in our society. So when I am in their midst, I simply have to say to myself "Now behave!" Then they would remark: "Look at that young woman. She is quite *orderly* isn't she? New ideas and new freedom have not spoiled her very much"

LU

That is quite a compliment.

MISS FUNG

True enough. But you haven't heard the other part of the remark. This they continue: "She is doing good work as a teacher. But why in the world does she remain so old without getting married!" (*They laugh*) Now you see, why sometimes I really have fears that I am approaching fifty!

LU

A long ways yet, I can assure you. (*Looking at the window, and the niceties about the room*) I am sure you had a hand in the planning and decoration of this room.

MISS FUNG

I had a little part. How do you like my window?

LU

Yes, it appeals to me very much.

MISS FUNG

Have you noticed my garden? (*She runs to the window. Lu follows. The moon floods in*)

LU

A bush of bamboo right outside the window is extremely attractive.

MISS FUNG

But you ought to have been here in the spring, when the whole garden was blooming. (*She raised her eyes to the moon shining on her face*) Isn't the moon clear to-night?

LU

(*They stand still silently gazing for a moment*) Beautiful! And such crystal blue—and so vast!

FUNG

I am sorry, I do not.

LIN

Oh, well, I have done my best. (*Quickly catches himself*) You see, I am always so very curious, I like to know the inside of things. (*Stands up*) I must be going now.

FUNG

(*Stands up*) Won't you stay a little while longer?

LIN

(*They walk toward the door*) I have another engagement. Don't you think we are having beautiful weather?

FUNG

Yes, wonderful.

(*They now reach the door. They politely offer each other precedence. Then pass out. A pause. Then steps are heard from the door at the right. Presently Miss Fung comes in, followed by Lu.*)

MISS FUNG

Well, these things do remind me so much of the days when we used to be free and young.

LU

We are not so very old, are we?

MISS FUNG

Oh, yes. What do you think—sometimes I imagine to myself, I am an old lady of fifty.

LU

That is impossible!

MISS FUNG

But I do. (*Sits down. So does Lu. They are both quite natural and joyful.*)

LU

I can not believe it.

MISS FUNG

To be sure I am not yet fifty!

LU

I think that is quite clear.

FUNG

(The sense of a cold shower is upon him. His veins swell for a brief moment, then he regains his self-control) Is that so?

LIN

And we heard that conclusive evidences will be produced.

FUNG

Ah, that should be interesting.

LIN

I'd like to know something—if possible, from the inside. Do you think you can give me some information?

FUNG

I am sorry. You know as much as I do.

LIN

Well, I thought perhaps you might.

FUNG

I only read it in the papers.

LIN

(Slowly) Of course, you realize it is a very serious matter.

FUNG

Undoubtedly it is.

LIN

It is a matter of life and death.

FUNG

Yes, the Government is in real earnest to clean up this evil.

LIN

(A brief pause) We are friends.

FUNG

Yes, of course. Everything is frank between us.

LIN

I thought you knew something.

LIN

Ah, yes. Is he now in Peking?

FUNG

Yes. And you mentioned an opening in your Board.

LIN

Oh, oh, yes. But that has been filled.

FUNG

That is unfortunate.

LIN

Very unfortunate. But we have so many returned students, looking for positions in Peking. There is a secretaryship now available. Only a hundred dollars a month. And there is not much responsibility. I am sure your friend doesn't want that.

FUNG

No, I think not.

(In the meanwhile, the servant has come in with two cups of tea. He places them in front of the two men)

FUNG

Won't you smoke?

LIN

No, thank you. I have already had too much.
(The servant withdraws).

LIN

I have a little business I wish to speak to you about. Or rather a little information I like to have from you.

FUNG

(Begins to conjecture) Yes.

LIN

(A pause, during which he watches Fung's movements carefully)
Have you read the papers to-day?

FUNG

Yes, is there anything special? I read very hurriedly. *(Somehow he divines the coming question.)*

LIN

The much talked-of railroad case will be brought to court to-morrow?

LU

That depends.

MISS FUNG

We'll be in the study until you are through.

FUNG

It wouldn't be long. (*Goes out.*)

MISS FUNG

(*They are walking toward the door at the right.*) By to-morrow I shall be greatly relieved. Has he told you about the case?

LU

Yes.

MISS FUNG

You really do not know what may happen. (*They disappear through the door*)

(*The servant takes away the tea things. A brief pause. The curtain at the door at the left is seen lifted and Fung and Lin come in, the guest leading, of course.*)

Mr. Lin is a man of middle height. The most conspicuous feature on his face is the little mustache which, however, does not appear to be very prosperous. His hair is cut short. He speaks very deliberately.

Fung offers him a seat at the left of the center table, himself comes to the right.)

FUNG

Won't you remove your jacket?

LIN

No, don't bother. I cannot stay long. I have had very bad luck to-day.

FUNG

How? Did you lose much?

LIN

Very little money involved. Haven't you seen the recent presidential order exhorting all officials not to gamble?

FUNG

Yes. I have noticed the existence of that official document! Do you remember, I talked with you a few days ago, about a friend of mine who recently returned from America?

FUNG

Now if that does not suit you, what do you think of a position in the Board of Finance?

(The servant comes in with a calling card in his hand. He offers the card to Fung.)

FUNG

I was just going to tell you of this position in the Board of Finance. Here this man comes.

SERVANT

Mr. Lin is in his carriage, waiting outside the gate.

FUNG

I shall receive him here. By the way, bring my jacket first.

SERVANT

Yes, Sir. *(Withdraws)*

FUNG

He is a graduate from Japan, now a most promising young man in the Board of Finance.

MISS FUNG

(Comes in) Is some one coming to call? I notice the carriage at the gate.

FUNG

Mr. Lin of the Board of Finance.

MISS FUNG

Are you sure, he is not somehow involved in the case?

FUNG

Do not worry. He is a friend of mine. He comes to tell me about a position I was inquiring for for Lu.

MISS FUNG

I am so afraid these days!

(In the meanwhile the servant has appeared with the jacket. He helps Fung to put it on. Then stands aside.)

FUNG

I hope this position will be more favorable. Will you take it if it's open?

LU

Yes. (*Suddenly realizing*) Oh, are you in charge of the investigation?

FUNG

(*Nods. Sits down*) The Government is in earnest. Any man found guilty of graft of over five hundred dollars is punished by death.

LU

This railroad case involves over five million it is rumored.

FUNG

If the parties knew—well, my existence would not be considered desirable. Now we have the conclusive evidences. I see the end quite near.

LU

(*Stands up and walks to the right. Fung follows*) Well, graft, graft, graft!

FUNG

There is too much to worry about—let us change a subject. Now let me tell you some of the positions I had in mind for you. As soon as you settle down you will understand the practical world and will not worry about so many things.

LU

What kind of positions are they?

FUNG

Well, a director in one of the branch Government banks. Three hundred dollars a month. The position is not bad. Many of the returned students have to be contented with a hundred or a hundred and fifty to start with.

LU

But I know nothing about banking, and have never had any business experience.

FUNG

It does not call for experience nor much technical knowledge.

LU

Is that the way we do our business?

MISS FUNG

You never seem to realize that it may involve something serious—even your life!

FUNG

I knew we could get the last clue *there*. (*Resumes calculating*)
(*A pause. Then the servant appears at the door at the right*)

SERVANT

Miss, where are the blankets!

MISS FUNG

I shall go and get them for you.

LU

Very sorry for the trouble I have caused you.

MISS FUNG

No trouble at all. (*She goes out and the servant follows.*)

FUNG

Please pardon me. This is some urgent business.

LU

Go ahead. Do not let me interfere. (*Sits down*)

FUNG

I'll be through in a minute.
(*A pause. Fung finishes examining the papers. He is apparently satisfied. He gathers the papers together and puts them in the inside pocket of his gown.*)

FUNG

Now it's done. By to-morrow, you will hear something interesting. (*Stands up and walks to Lu.*)

FUNG

Have you read in the papers about the railroad graft case?

LU

Yes. Is there any truth in the rumor?

FUNG

Very much truth. And an investigation is being made. This is all strictly secret, of course.

going? What are we doing? I can not understand. Foes from within, foes from without! These are not enough to wake us up? Look at the gross selfishness and utter short-sightedness! Simply appalling! We are still asleep!

MISS FUNG

I am very much interested in what you just said; it expressed somewhat my own vague feelings. So many seem to be asleep.

(Now the servant appears at the door at the left with a roll of papers in his hand, well wrapped up and sealed.)

FUNG

For me? Oh, yes, yes. *(Takes the papers and goes to the desk)*
Excuse me, please.

MISS FUNG

(To the servant) Have the guest room prepared for Mr. LU.

SERVANT

Yes, Miss. *(Goes out)*

LU

I am in the hands of a very thoughtful hostess.

MISS FUNG

Thank you. *(She now turns her gaze to Fung, who has been absorbed in the papers)* Please excuse me.

LU

Certainly *(Turns toward the window and looks outside)*

MISS FUNG

(Has now come around to Fung's back. In a whisper) Is that what you were expecting?

FUNG

Yes. By to-morrow the whole thing will be off my hands.

MISS FUNG

That will relieve me greatly. Oh, this dreadful business!

FUNG

It will be all right. Do not worry.

FUNG

Please do not misunderstand my meaning. I am not one of those who hold no principles in their action. But we must not be impatient. When I telegraphed for you, I suspected you would be in some such mood. I asked you to come, partly because we wanted to see you, and partly because there are two or three positions I know of open for your choosing. Get settled down. I believe that will help.

(Miss Fung comes in, followed by the servant with tea things. The servant serves tea to Lu and Fung. All three are sitted).

LU

Do you enjoy teaching?

MISS FUNG

Yes, very much. Such fun to play with the little children.

LU

A Kindergarten?

MISS FUNG

Yes. To look at children gives us the best of hope and joy.

LU

That's true indeed. I see perfect darkness among the grown-ups.

FUNG

You see, Lu is feeling rather depressed, now that he has just come back.

MISS FUNG

I am sorry.

LU

Oh, just a fit of looking at the dark side of things.

FUNG

For one month you were thrown in the midst of people who neither understood nor appreciated what you thought, or said, or did. You were out of sympathy with your environment, or your environment out of sympathy with you. That was why you felt everything was irritating you.

LU

I suppose the lack of understanding and friends did have something to do. But that was not the chief cause of my depression. I am thinking of our country's present but more particularly of her future. Where are we

MISS FUNG

Your coming reminds me so much of America. I must get you to tell me many things.

LU

I shall be delighted.

MISS FUNG

Excuse me. (*Goes out*)

LU

(*Walks to the right, thinking*) What is your sister doing?

FUNG

Teaching part of the time, and studying part of the time.

LU

Happy? Contented with the outlook?

FUNG

Well, we all have our discouragements once in a while. Really, Lu, you are not at ease.

LU

You are right. I am not at ease. And I do not see how any clearminded man can be at ease in China to-day. O such heavy sleep! We need an earthquake to wake us up!

FUNG

When I first came back, I used to feel as you do. But in three years' time

LU

Yes, in three years' time you have become a practical man of affairs. Who knows! Perhaps in three years I shall feel as you do.

FUNG

It is a matter of adjustment.

LU

Ah! Compromise!

FUNG

Oh yes, I understand. We must have changed in the long time we were abroad. Perhaps we appear to be too radical. There again is the old question, the conflict between the old and the new. How does Peking impress you?

LU

Such luxuries! It seems that people do not realize what condition our country is in to-day!

FUNG

You are right. But I know those things do not interest you. You haven't changed much in the last three years—still an idealist! I am really so happy to see you.

(Now Miss Fung appears at the door at the right. Fung and Lu stand up)

FUNG

You know my sister, of course.

LU

Yes. *(Steps forward and bows)* How have you been!

MISS FUNG

Very well, thank you. You really surprised us. We were planning to go to the station to meet you.

LU

That was very kind of you.

MISS FUNG

(To Fung) Did you ask Mr. Lu whether he had had his supper?

FUNG

O, how stupid! Have you had anything to eat?

LU

Yes, thank you. I had my supper on the train.

MISS FUNG

If you'll excuse me, I think I'll bring you some tea.

FUNG

That's fine.

SERVANT

Yes, Sir.

(The servant goes out by the door at the left. Fung gathers things together, and places them in the desk drawer and locks it. Stands up and leaves by the door at the right.)

After a moment, a young man comes in. From the door at left. The servant follows, carrying a suit case, he puts it by the settee.)

LU

Is your master in?

SERVANT

Yes, Sir. They are not quite through with their supper.

LU

Tell them there is no hurry.

SERVANT

Yes, Sir. *(Goes out)*

(After a moment, Fung rushes in from the door at the right, the servant following)

FUNG

You surprised us greatly. How are you?

LU

Quite well, thank you.

FUNG

(To the servant) Take Mr. Lu's suitcase to the guest room.

SERVANT

Yes. *(Goes out)*.

FUNG

Three years since we saw each other last, isn't it? Well, are your parents well? *(They are sitted)*.

LU

Yes, thank you.

FUNG

They must be very happy in seeing you. Imagine you were away for almost ten years.

LU

I suppose they were looking forward with great anxiety to see me. But now that I have come, I am afraid they are sorely disappointed.

THE AWAKENING.

Scene I.

(The room is lighted. It is evening. A wide window in the middle of the back wall. The curtains are parted, and through the window we see a large bush of bamboo in the garden. The moon shines on the objects outside.)

Two doorways, one on each side of the room, rather narrow and high. Silk curtains hang on the inside of them.

At the right we discover a characteristic Chinese set: the scrolls on the wall, and a square table with two stately chairs one on each side, quite close to the wall.

In the middle a round table on which are a little clock, cigar and cigarette boxes, and two chairs placed about it. These pieces together with the furniture at the right are of Western style.

At the left, a settee to the back, and to the front an office desk with books, papers and things on it.

Fung is seen writing at the desk.

Presently the servant comes in the door at the right)

SERVANT

Supper is ready, Sir.

FUNG

(Nods. The servant is turning to go) Tell the chauffer to get the car ready, we shall go to the railway station after supper.

SERVANT

Yes.

FUNG

By the way, has the messenger come back yet?

SERVANT

Not yet.

FUNG

Bring the things he has gone for to me as soon as he returns.

THE AWAKENING.

Persons in the Play:

Mr. Lu, a recently returned student from America

Mr. Fung

Miss Fung, his sister

Mr. Lin

A Servant

Place: A sitting room in Fung's house in Peking.

Time: Scene I—One evening, September 1915.

Scene II—Early the next morning.

(Darkening of the stage for a moment signifies
the interval between the two scenes.)

Note: This play was written and performances given in New York in the Winter of 1915. But here for the first time it appears in print. In making the Chinese version I must acknowledge the kind assistance rendered by some of the members of the Nankai Drama League and especially that of my friend Mr. Yin Shao Shun.

Nankai, Tientsin,
October, 1916.

P. C. C

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The Awakening
A Play in One Act,
by Peng Chun Chang

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