

**A NOTE ON CHAPTER 59 OF THE WEN-MING
HSIAO-SHIH
(A BRIEF HISTORY OF ENLIGHTENMENT)**

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It was common among writers of pre-modern fiction in China, when creating new works, to draw upon material from earlier fiction and other written sources, and the writers of what has come to be classified as late-Ch'ing fiction proved no exception.

An example from this period of "borrowing" from others is to be found in chapter 59 of Li Pao-chia's (1867-1906) *Wen-ming hsiao-shih* (A Brief History of Enlightenment). In this instance, however, the circumstances of the "borrowing" appear to involve rather more than the mere reworking of someone else's material useful to the writer's purposes and conveniently at hand.

The material Li Pao-chia incorporated into his chapter is taken from chapter 11 of Liu E's (1857-1909) *Lao Ts'an yu-chi* (The Travels of Lao Ts'an) and is an exposition of the dangers of rebellion and revolution. Li Pao-chia and Liu E, like many other novelists of their time, espoused reform, but were opposed both to rebellion and to revolution. Thus, they both castigated the leaders of the Boxer Uprising and censured the instigators of the growing movement for revolution.

The earlier chapters of Liu E's novel and the whole of Li Pao-chia's novel first appeared in serial form in the *Hsiu-hsiang hsiao-shuo* (Illustrated Stories), a magazine published by the Commercial Press from 1903-1906 under the editorship of Li Pao-chia. The strangeness surrounding Li Pao-chia's "borrowing" of Liu E's material arises from the fact that the chapter in which the passage dealing with rebellion and revolution are found was deleted from Liu E's novel when it was due to be printed towards the end of 1903, whereas the passages on rebellion and revolution appear, almost exactly as Liu E worded them, in their new context (i.e., in chapter 59 of Li Pao-chia's novel) in No. 55 of *Illustrated Stories* towards the end of 1905. The fact that Liu E had no further chapters of his novel printed in the magazine after the appearance of chapter 14 suggests that the excisions had not pleased him and that, annoyed, he refused to allow the remaining chapters of his novel to be published in that journal. That a portion of the excised material should appear in a chapter of Li Pao-chia's own novel some two years later, and, moreover, in the journal of which he was editor when Liu E's work was rejected, certainly seems peculiar. Although they do not say that Liu E's material reappears in Li Pao-chia's novel, both Harold Shadick and C. T. Hsia have noted the

fact that the text of *The Travels of Lao Ts'an* was mutilated in its first printing. Their accounts of what happened differ, and it will be helpful, therefore, to summarize them separately.¹ On pages xiii and xiv of his Introduction to his translation of the novel, Shadick states that Liu E started to write his novel, during his stay in Shanghai in 1904, to help a friend called Lien Meng-ch'ing, who was trying to establish himself as a writer; that the first eight chapters were printed in *Illustrated Stories*; that the changes made to the text so angered Lien Meng-ching that he refused to allow the magazine to publish further chapters, and that the remaining chapters were printed between 1904 and 1907 as supplements to the *Tientsin Jih-jih hsin-wen* (The Tientsin Daily News).

Professor Hsia's account is contained in a bibliographical note appended to his article, "The Travels of Lao Ts'an: An Exploration of its Art and Meaning" published in 1969. Hsia asserts that thirteen chapters (chuan) of the novel were first serialized in Nos. 9-18 of *Illustrated Stories* from the sixth month of the year *kuei-mao* (1903) to the fifteenth of the twelfth month (January 1904); that the material thus published corresponded to chapters 1-14 "of the standard version except for the deletion of Chap. 11, which contains the . . . condemnation of the Boxers and revolutionaries;" that "the unauthorized removal of that chapter must have decided Liu E against serializing his novel in the magazine after Chapter 14;" and that Li Pao-chia, the editor, or the Commercial Press itself, "must have suppressed Chapter 11 because of its unpalatable content" ²

It is not our purpose in this brief note to investigate and resolve the differences in the details of the accounts given by Shadick and Hsia with regard to the writing and printing of *The Travels of Lao Ts'an*. We shall simply confine ourselves (a) to suggestions as to why Liu E's material was originally suppressed, but later published as part of Li Pao-chia's novel, and (b) to the presentation, in synoptic form, of the relevant text as it appears in the two novels.

(a) *The suppression of Liu E's material*. If, as C. T. Hsia asserts elsewhere³ in his "Note", Liu E wrote the bulk of his novel in Shanghai during 1903, the concept of the novel must have formed itself in his mind while the Boxer Rebellion and its aftermath were still fresh in his memory and he still felt sufficiently angered by the affair to make the Boxers a target for his attacks. We can assume, also, that the Boxer affair was still a sensitive issue in the minds of both supporters of the Boxers' aims and their opponents among the nation's administrators towards the end of 1903 when the editor or proprietors of *Illustrated*

1. See Liu T'ieh-yun (Liu E), *The Travels of Lao Tsan* translated by Harold Shadick (Cornell University Press, 1952) and C. T. Hsia, "The Travels of Lao Tsan: An Exploration of its Art and Meaning" in *Tsing Hua Journal of Chinese Studies*, New Series VII, 2 (Taipei, August 1969), pp. 40-66.

2. Hsia, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-8.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

Stories had finally to decide whether or not to publish material containing anti-Boxer sentiment. It could be argued, then, that it may well have seemed to those responsible for the magazine that late 1903 was not the most auspicious time for *Illustrated Stories* to put Liu's strictures into print. This argument loses its cogency, however, when the material interpolated by the editor of *Illustrated Stories* to bridge the gap left by the excised chapter is examined. What this interpolated material in fact does is to restate, briefly, Liu E's criticisms of both Boxers and revolutionaries before proceeding to provide a short, and seemingly innocuous, account of a dream.⁴ Clearly, then, it must have been other material in chapter 11 which was the cause for its deletion.

There are two segments of this other material which might well have been regarded as questionable, and even dangerous, by Li Pao-chia and the Commercial Press. In the first, Liu E uses the novel *Hsi-yu chi* (Record of a Journey to the West) to comment on the current unsatisfactory state of the nation and, if we understand him aright, to suggest that the Emperor, who had been confined to the palace and deprived of real power by the Empress Dowager following the abortive Hundred Days of Reform to which he had lent his support in 1898, be given his rightful place once again. In the second segment Liu E puts a series of prophecies into the mouth of his character Yellow Dragon. In these prophecies it is asserted that the upheavals which had afflicted China from the 1860s onwards, and the last of which had occurred in 1900 in the shape of the Boxer Uprising, would continue at specific intervals until 1924. Li Pao-chia was to make use of the first segment along with the material directed against rebellion and revolution; but he refrained from using the prophetic material. This, we believe, shows that Li Pao-chia had strong reservations regarding its appropriateness. In our view, then, it was the prophecies which were of chief concern to Li Pao-chia and the proprietors of the Commercial Press in 1903, although at that time prudence would have dictated, at least to Li Pao-chia's superiors, that the whole chapter should be omitted.

Whether Liu E approved, or even had any knowledge of, Li Pao-chia's appropriation two years later of the material removed from his novel, we have not been able to determine. What can be affirmed is that by late 1905 events and circumstances in the intervening period, both inside and outside China, warranted a greater degree of boldness on the part of the publishers of *Illustrated Stories*. The events of the Boxer Uprising had been overshadowed and political passions were now being channelled in fresh directions. The Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5, fought in the Three Eastern Provinces and therefore on Chinese soil, brought it home once and for all to all Chinese that China could no longer take refuge in the status quo and that radical

4. C. T. Hsia reproduces the entire text of this interpolated material on p. 58 of his article.

change either through the introduction of a constitutional monarchy or by means of a revolution, was the country's only choice.

Between 1902 and 1905 revolution-minded Chinese grew increasingly active both in China and overseas, and on 9 September 1905, the Tung-meng Hui, the forerunner of the Kuomintang and vehicle for Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary activities, was established.

But the fact that Japan which had only recently transformed itself into a constitutional monarchy won a resounding victory over Russia electrified the constitutional monarchists in China. Li Pao-chia reflects the excitement in Chinese society at the time in chapter 60 of his novel in which he draws his book to a close with a fictionalized account of the preparations made by the fact-finding mission commissioned by the Chinese government in 1905 to investigate constitutional administrations overseas.

Clearly on the side of the constitutional monarchists, Li Pao-chia employs the previous chapter, chapter 59, to attack those elements in society and government which posed the greatest threats to the successful introduction of a constitutional monarchy: opponents of constitutional reform; the ignorant and superstitious citizenry who resorted to old-fashioned rebellion, and at the moment in question, the even more dangerous revolutionaries. Undoubtedly believing that Liu E's earlier condemnations articulated exactly what he wished to say, Li Pao-chia incorporated them into this chapter of his novel. If there had been reluctance on his part or on the part of his superiors in the Commercial Press to publish such material in 1903,⁵ time and events had dispelled it.

The foregoing does not, of course, answer all our questions satisfactorily. Was there ill feeling between Liu E and Li Pao-chia or the Commercial Press over the initial tampering with the text of Liu E's novel in 1903? Did Liu E approve Li Pao-chia's use of his material in 1905? Does not the fact that Li Pao-chia published in 1902 an account of the Boxer Uprising in which he dealt harshly with the supporters of the Rebellion signify that he, whatever his superiors may have felt, was bound to agree with Liu E in his opinion of the Boxer movement? Is it possible that Li Pao-chia felt less inclined in 1903 to accept criticism of the Empress Dowager, however veiled, than he was in 1905? In his introduction to the 1955 edition of Li Pao-chia's *A Brief History of Enlightenment*, A Ying, who was better placed than any student of late-Ch'ing literature to answer such questions, makes a special reference to chapter 59, but says nothing about Li Pao-chia's "borrowing", and will commit himself to no more than the following comment: "[Li Pao-chia] was like Liu T'ieh-yiin [Liu E] in his opposition to the 'northern Boxers and the southern revolutionaries' . . ."⁶

⁵ *Ibid*

⁶ See p. 4 of A Ying's "Introduction" in the 1955 edition of *Wen-ming hsiao-shih* (*A Brief History of Enlightenment*), (T'ung-su wen-i ch'u-pan she, Peking, 1955)

If the original affair represented the perpetration of an injustice, perhaps that injustice has now been put to rights, since later editions of Liu E's novel give the author's text in its entirety, whereas the 1955 edition of Li Pao-chia's novel, published in China, appears with the passage in contention, amounting to approximately 1,500 characters, removed. On this occasion we can be fairly certain that the excision was made for political reasons.

(b) *The text "borrowed" by Li Pao-chia from Liu E.*

Ideally, the texts presented here should appear in the original characters. Li Pao-chia made a number of minor adjustments for reasons of style, but since these make little if any difference to the meaning of the text, such changes do not come out in the English translation. The translations presented here, however, offer a fair indication of the extent to which Li Pao-chia relied on Liu E's text and of the changes he effected.

Harold Shadick's translation has served as the basic text of the presented passages and Li Pao-chia's additions or changes are provided from our own unpublished translation of his *A Brief History of Enlightenment*. (Note: This translation was published in 1996 by The Chinese University of Hong Kong as a *Renditions* book with the title *Modern Times*.)

Liu E's Version

[Yellow Dragon said:] "But enough of this talk. I will now proceed to discourse on the northern Boxers and southern revolutionaries. These Boxers are like a man's fist. He strikes, and if he succeeds, he succeeds; if he doesn't succeed, he stops, and nothing serious happens. Of course, a blow well delivered can end an opponent's life, but if he escapes, then nothing more happens. That blow of the northern Boxers will go near to smashing the country and will be very terrifying. Yet, since it will be only a single blow the country will get over it easily.

Then there is the revolution (*ke*). The character *ke* means a hide, like a horse's hide or ox's hide. It covers the body from head to foot. However don't think that what we are talking about is merely a mild disease of the skin, for you must know that if eruptions appear all over the body, they can be fatal. The one good thing about it is that such a disease proceeds slowly and if you take pains to cure it, it doesn't cause serious harm. Now this character *ke* can be traced back to one of the hexagrams of the *Book of Changes*, and therefore must not be neglected. Fear and avoid revolution, both of you! If you get drawn into that party, later you will rot away with them and lose your life!

"I will now say something about the *tse huo ke* hexagram. First take the character *tse* (water). Mountains and water communicate with each other. Water (*tse*) therefore means a mountain stream. There is water in a mountain stream, isn't there? Now the *Kuan Tzu* says, 'If rain water (*tse*) sinks in a foot, plants will rise up a foot.' Also a common saying is 'The stream (*tse*) of mercy descends to the people'. Isn't it quite clear from all this that the character *tse* is a character with good implications? Why then should the *tse huo* hexagram be an inauspicious hexagram? Mustn't there be an auspicious water and fire hexagram of completion hidden there? Isn't it exasperating? "If you want to know the difference between these two hexagrams you must find it in the distinction of Yin and Yang (the male and female principles). The *k'an* water (trigram) is male water, and therefore produces a *shui huo chi-chi* hexagram (water and fire of completion, *chi-chi*) - an auspicious hexagram. The *tui* (trigram) is female water, and therefore makes a *tse huo ke* (water and fire of change and revolution, *ke*) - an inauspicious hexagram. The male virtue of *k'an* water arises from a compassionate heaven pitying the people, and therefore produces an emblem of completion. The female virtue of *tui* water arises from frustration and jealousy and therefore produces an emblem of change.

"Just look! In the *Treatise on the Definitions* it says, 'The *tse huo ke* (water and fire of change) is like "two women living together, whose wills do not harmonize". Now if a man's family contains a wife and a concubine who are jealous of each other, how can that family prosper? It all comes from their both wanting to monopolize one husband. When they can't do is, the spirit of destruction is loosed. Because they love the husband, they fight. When they have once begun to fight, they don't care if they destroy the husband's household. Again continuing to fight, they don't mind if they end their own lives. This is the nature of a jealous woman. The Sage simply uses these two phrases 'two women living together, whose wills do not harmonize' to show forth the wretched character of the leaders of the southern revolution. He shows them much clearer than a photograph could.

"The southern revolutionary leaders will all be official and commercial people; they will all be clever men who have risen above their fellows.

But being in the grip of a female-water nature like that of a jealous woman, they will only consider themselves and not consider others; for this reason they will not make their way very successfully in the world. Frustration gives birth to jealousy; jealousy gives birth to general destruction. Can this destruction be brought about by one man alone? No! but men of the same kind always seek each other out. Water goes where it is wet, fire goes where it is dry. Gradually they will flock together more and more, drag in the dissolute youth and finally burst into action like a 'military display'. Those who have already attained the rank of *Chu-Jen*, *Chin-shih*, Member of the Hanlin Academy, or President of a Board will begin to talk about a dynastic revolution. Those who are unable to read and have no occupation will learn a little A,B,C,D,E or ah, ee, oo, e, oh and then talk about a revolution in the family. If you claim to believe in revolution you don't need to submit to the control of justice, national law, or social custom. What a great satisfaction that is! You must know that to be too satisfied is not a good thing. To eat to satisfaction is to be surfeited. To drink to satisfaction is to be cloyed. The men of today do not follow justice, do not fear national law, do not keep to social custom, but act without restraint. This sort of indulgence is

Li Pao-chia's Version

Tsou Shao-yen continued measuredly: "Let me explain things as simply as possible. These Boxers are like a man's fist. He strikes, and if he succeeds, he succeeds; if he doesn't succeed, he stops, and nothing serious happens. Of course, a blow well delivered can end an opponent's life, but if he escapes, then nothing more happens. That blow of the northern Boxers will go near to smashing the country and will be very terrifying

"Then there is the revolution (*ke*). The character *ke* means a hide, like a horse's hide or ox's hide. It covers the body from head to tail. Even if only a tiny area of this hide becomes infected the animal can lose its life, let alone if eruptions. The one good thing about it is that such a disease proceeds slowly and if you take pains to cure it, it doesn't cause serious harm.

"Let me prove my point by referring to the symbols in the *Book of Changes*.

"In the *Book of Changes* there is the *tse huo ke* hexagram. First take the character *tse* (water). Mountains and water communicate with each other. Water (*tse*) therefore means a mountain stream. There is water in a mountain stream, isn't there? Now the *Kuan Tzu* says, 'If rain water (*tse*) sinks in a foot, plants will rise up a foot'. Also a common saying is 'The stream (*tse*) of mercy descends to the people'. Isn't it quite clear from all this that the character *tse* is a character with good implications? Why then should the *tse huo* hexagram be an inauspicious hexagram? Mustn't there be an auspicious water and fire hexagram of completion hidden there? Isn't it exasperating? "If you want to know the difference between these two hexagrams you must find it in the distinction of Yin and Yang (the male and female principles). The *k'an* water (trigram) is male water, and therefore produces a *shui huo chi-chi* hexagram (water and fire of completion, *chi-chi*) - an auspicious hexagram. The *tui* (trigram) is female water, and therefore makes a *tse huo ke* (water and fire of change and revolution, *ke*) - an inauspicious hexagram. The male virtue of *k'an* water arises from a compassionate heaven pitying the people, and therefore produces an emblem of completion. The female virtue of *tui* water arises from frustration and jealousy and therefore produces an emblem of change.

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"The revolutionary leaders will all be official and commercial people; they will all be clever men who have risen above their fellows. But being in the grip of a nature like that of a jealous woman, they will only consider themselves and not consider others; for this reason they will not make their way very successfully in the world.

Frustration gives birth to jealousy; jealousy gives birth to general destruction. Can this destruction be brought about by one man alone? Thus these practitioners of destruction seek out the like-minded in the manner described in the *Book of Changes*-notes of the same key respond to one another; water goes where it is wet, fire goes where it is dry'. Gradually they will flock together more and more, and drag in others' dissolute youth. Their influence will spread ever further afield. Those who have already attained the rank of *Chu-Jen*, *Chin-Shih*, Member of the Hanlin Academy, or President of a Board will begin to talk about a dynastic revolution. Those incompetent in both civil and military studies turn to learning A,B,C,D, and A,E,I,O,U, and then talk about a revolution in the family. If you claim to believe in revolution you don't need to submit to the control of justice, national law, or social custom. What a great satisfaction that is! You must know that to be too satisfied is not a good thing. To eat to satisfaction is to be surfeited. To drink to satisfaction is to be cloyed. The men of today do not follow justice, do not fear national law, do not keep to social custom, but act without restraint.

bound to result either in disaster caused by men or calamity caused by devils. How long will it last?

Shen Tzu-p'ing was puzzled. "Since the southern revolution destroys heavenly justice, national law, and social custom, how is it there are still people who believe in it?" Yellow Dragon replied, "Do you consider that heavenly justice, national law, and social custom will only be destroyed at the time of the southern revolution? They were overthrown long ago! The *Journey to the West* is really a sort of sermon, every page an allegory. It says that the king who was on the throne in the Black Chicken Country was a false king. The true king was imprisoned in the Octagonal Glazed Well. Thus the truth, law, and custom of today are the false king on the throne in the Golden Imperial Hall of the Black Chicken Country, so that the strength of the southern revolution must be used to kill the false king. Then the true king can be rescued from the Octagonal Glazed Well. When true justice, law and custom appear, the whole empire will enjoy peace."

Tzu-p'ing further asked, "What sort of a distinction is this between true and false?" Yellow Dragon said, "In the *Journey to the West* it says 'Tell the Crown Prince to ask the Queen Mother - then you will know!' The Queen Mother said, 'Three years ago it was mild and warm. Three years from now it will be cold as ice.' 'Cold' and 'warm' here simply represent true and false. Those who consider the common good are of one heart in loving other men and therefore breathe out warmth. Those who teach private interest are of one mind in hating other men, and they breathe out coldness."

"There is another secret I want to tell you about in some detail. Please remember it well so that when the time comes you won't be drawn into the Boxer and revolutionary conflagration. The Boxers will use belief in spirits. The revolutionaries use disbelief in spirits. If you say there are spirits, you can pretend to be spirits yourselves. practise magic, and mislead simple rustic fools. This is the value of teaching people to believe in spirits. If you say there are no spirits, the uses of it are even greater. First, if there are no spirits, then you don't need to respect your ancestors: this is the prime source of revolution in the family. If you say there are no spirits, then there is no retribution from Hell, no punishment from Heaven, and you can act in any way, defying Heaven's laws, and so arouse the unholy joy of dissolute youths. They will live in concessions or foreign countries in order to practise their illegal acts; they will abuse those who say there are spirits in order to practise their blasphemous tricks. They will say that rebels and traitors are noble heroes and that loyal and good officials have a slave-like nature. In these several ways they will practise their tricks against morality. Most of them are eloquent and embroider everything they say. Like those jealous women who destroy the whole house, they preach what seems like a reasonable sounding doctrine, but anyone can see that the house will be destroyed by them. In short, the arguments of the southern revolutionaries have such surprisingly brilliant and attractive features that it is clear all morality will be twisted and destroyed by them."

"In conclusion, when these trouble-making factions are in Shanghai or in Japan they are easy to distinguish; but when they are in Peking, the provincial capitals, and other large cities, it is difficult to distinguish them. But remember carefully: those who ascribe things to spirits are northern Boxers; those who explain things without spirits are southern revolutionaries. If you meet these people, 'respect them but keep away from them' and so avoid the danger of being killed. That is the important thing!"

"When Tzu-p'ing had heard this, he was filled with the deepest admiration. Just as he was about to ask some more, he heard the morning cock already begin to crow outside the window. "It is very late," Yu Ku said. "We really must go to bed."*

*Reprinted from Harold Shadick: *The Travels of Lao Tsan*.
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This sort of indulgence is bound to result either in disaster caused by man or calamity caused by devils. How long will it last?

(Rocket said:) "Dear uncle Tsou, if as you say, revolutionary parties destroy heavenly justice, national law, and social custom, how is it that there are still people who believe in it?"

Deliberately mocking the young man, Tsou Shao-yen said: "Do you consider justice, national law, and social custom will only be destroyed when they fall into the hands of revolutionaries? Let me talk to you about the novel *Journey to the West*."

Rocket frowned and said: "How old-fashioned, how old-fashioned! He's determined to egg people on with talk of ghosts and spirits."

Tsou Shao-yen ignored him and leisurely continued: "The *Journey to the West* is an allegory. It says that the king who was on the throne in the Black Chicken Country was a false king. The true king was imprisoned in the Octagonal Glazed Well. Thus the truth, law, and custom of today are the false king on the throne in the Golden Imperial Hall of the Black Chicken Country, so that the strength of the revolutionaries must be used to kill the false king. Then the true king can be rescued from the Octagonal Glazed Well. When that day dawns the world will be at peace."

"But how is the true to be distinguished from the false?" asked Rocket.

Teasing him once more, Tsou Shao-yen said: "In the *Journey to the West* it says, 'Tell the Crown Prince to ask the Queen Mother - then you will know!' The Queen Mother said, 'Three years ago it was mild and warm. Three years from now it will be cold as ice.' 'Cold' and 'warm' here simply represent true and false. Those who consider the common good are of one heart in loving other men and therefore breathe out warmth. Those who teach private interest are of one mind in hating other men, and they breathe out coldness. "There is another secret I want to tell you about in some detail. The Boxers will use belief in spirits. The revolutionaries use disbelief in spirits. If you say there are spirits, you can pretend to be spirits yourselves, practise magic, and mislead simple rustic fools. This is the value of teaching people to believe in spirits. If you say there are no spirits, the uses of it are even greater. First, if there are no spirits, then you don't need to respect your ancestors: this is the prime source of revolution in the family. If you say there are no spirits, then you can act in way, defying Heaven's laws, and so arouse the impulse to wild and intractable behaviour in young men. They will live in concessions or foreign countries in order to practise their illegal acts; they will abuse those who say there are spirits in order to practise their blasphemous tricks. They will say that rebels and traitors are noble heroes and that loyal and good officials have a slave-like nature. In these several ways they will practise their tricks against morality. Most of them are eloquent and embroider everything they say. Like those jealous women who destroy the whole house, they preach what seems like a reasonable sounding doctrine. In short, the arguments of the revolutionaries have such surprisingly brilliant and attractive features that it is clear all morality will be twisted and destroyed by them."

"In conclusion, when these revolutionaries are in Shanghai or in Japan they are easy to distinguish; but when they are in Peking, the provincial capitals, and other large cities, it is difficult to distinguish them. Young men like yourself cannot yet be reckoned among them, but in the *Four Books* there are the words: 'Although a person may not hit exactly the wants of her child, she will not be far from doing so.'"

When he had finished speaking Tsou Shao-yen laughed heartily. Hearing him come out with such a lot of crazy talk, Rocket was momentarily incapable of refuting him. Just as he was turning things over in his mind he heard someone outside the room ask whether Mister Tsou was inside. A servant replied and said that he was and that he was in conversation with the young master of the household.

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