

Document 10.7: Excerpts from *Family* by Ba Jin, 1931

Set in the 1920s, Family tells the semi-autobiographical story of the upper-class Gao family that lives by strict Confucian traditions. Ba Jin's original name was Li Yaotang. He was born on November 25, 1904 in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, into an official's family. He received a good education with private tutors, and studied in Shanghai and France. It was in France that he took his pen name, Ba Jin, chosen from the Chinese transliterations of the first syllable of the name Bakunin and the last syllable of the name Kropotkin, two Russian anarchists. Heavily influenced by the May Fourth Movement in 1919 and the New Culture Movement, Ba Jin wrote in the vernacular language, which had only just replaced classical Chinese as the country's official written language. His novel Family portrays serious and difficult personal choices faced by millions of young people at the time. As Bonnie McDougall and Kam Louie write in The Literature of China in the Twentieth Century (1997): "Many of Ba Jin's readers, both male and female, were inspired by these stories in making choices in their own lives. It is in this sense that Ba Jin was the most influential writer of his time."

After the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Ba Jin enjoyed celebrity as a writer, but also carefully edited out all references to anarchism from his novels and short stories. He was heavily persecuted during the Cultural Revolution, yet he was rehabilitated and elected chairman of the Chinese Writers' Association in 1981. He died in 2005, one month shy of his 101st birthday.

Main characters:

Ye-ye: grandfather and patriarch of the Gao family

Juexin: eldest brother in the third generation of the Gao family

Juemin: middle brother in the third generation of the Gao family

Juehui: youngest brother in the third generation of the Gao family

Qin: female cousin; her mother is Ye-ye's daughter

Mingfeng: bondservant in the Gao family

Excerpt 1

“Aren’t you also going to be one of the gentry?”

“No, I’m not!” Juehui cried hotly. “Just because our grandfather and father are members of the gentry, does that mean we, also, have to become gentry?” He clamped his lips and waited for his brother to reply.

Juemin had only been joking at first, but now, seeing that Juehui was really angry, he tried to find words to calm him. For the moment, however, he could think of nothing appropriate, and could only stare at Juehui in stupefaction. Qin, seated off to one side, was observing the two brothers, but she did not speak.

“I’ve had enough of this kind of life!” Juehui could contain himself no longer. “Why does Juexin sigh all day long? Isn’t it because he can’t stand being one of the gentry, because he can’t stand the oppressive atmosphere of this gentry household? You know it is.... We’ve got four generations under one roof, only one generation less than the ‘ideal’ family, but never a day goes by without open quarrels and secret wrangles. They’re all trying to grab a bit more of the family property....”

Juehui was almost choking with rage. He had a lot more to say but he couldn’t get the words out. What was infuriating him in fact was not his eldest brother’s fate, but that of the girl whose expression was so docile. He felt that he was being cut off from her by an invisible high wall, and this wall was his gentry family. It prevented him from attaining the object of his desire; therefore he hated it.

Juemin looked at his brother’s red face and flashing eyes. He came up and grasped Juehui’s hand, then patted him on the shoulder.

“I shouldn’t have teased you,” he said in an agitated voice. “You’re right. Your unhappiness is my unhappiness.... We two always stand side by side....” He still didn’t know about the girl in Juehui’s heart. Juehui, quickly mollified, mutely nodded his head.

Qin stood up and walked over to them. She addressed Juehui in a voice that trembled. “I shouldn’t have laughed at you either. I want to stick together with both of you, always. I have to fight too. My condition is even worse than yours.”

They looked at her. There was a melancholy light in her lovely eyes; her usual vivaciousness was gone. A troubled expression bespoke her inner struggle. The boys had never seen her like this before, but they knew at once what was disturbing her. She had spoken correctly—her condition was much worse than theirs. They were touched by this melancholy, so rare in her. They were ready to sacrifice themselves completely, if only it would bring this girl’s wishes to an earlier fulfillment. This was just an idle hope, for there was nothing specific they could do, but they felt it was their duty to help her. The boys immediately forgot their own problems and thought only of Qin.

“Don’t worry,” Juemin assured her, “we’ll figure something out for you. I’m a firm believer in ‘where there’s a will, there’s a way.’ Remember when we first wanted to go to a public school? *Ye-ye*¹ was dead set against it. But in the end we won out.”

Qin steadied herself with one hand on the desk. She gazed at them as if out of a dream.

“Juemin is right. Don’t worry about a thing,” Juehui earnestly beseeched Qin. “Just concentrate on reviewing your lessons. Put a lot of time in on English. As long as you can pass the Foreign Languages School entrance exams, solving the other problems won’t be so hard.”

With deft fingers, Qin adjusted her hair. She smiled, but there was a note of concern in her voice. “I hope so. There’s no question about Mama; she’s sure to let me transfer. But I’m afraid my grandmother won’t agree, and there’s bound to be a lot of talk among our relatives. Take your family—except for you two, everyone else will probably be opposed.”

“What have they got to do with you? Going to school is your own affair. Besides, you’re not a member of our family!” Juehui was a little surprised that Qin should have mentioned his family. Although Qin’s mother was a daughter of the Venerable Master Gao, when she married she came under the jurisdiction of her husband’s family, according to custom, and she no longer had any say in the affairs of her original home.

¹ Grandfather

“You don’t know what Mama had to put up with when I entered the provincial Normal School for Girls. Our relatives said—A big girl like her, out on the street every day; what will people think! What well-brought-up young lady would ever act like that? ... Mama is very old-fashioned. She’s more enlightened than most of them, but she has her limits. She’s willing to take the brunt on her shoulders, no matter how our relatives sneer, because she loves me. Not that she thinks it right for me to go to school—it wasn’t easy for her to let me do even that. Now I’m going to ask to enter a boys’ school, to sit in the same classroom with male students! Can you think of one of our relatives who would dare approve of such a thing!”

The more she talked the more excited Qin became. She was standing very straight, her shining eyes fixed on Juemin’s face, as if seeking the answer from him.

“Our Big Brother wouldn’t oppose it,” Juemin remarked.

“If Juexin were the only one, what use would it be?” said Qin. “Aunt Zhou will be against it, and it will only be material for more gossip for Aunt Wang and Aunt Shen.”

“Let them talk!” Juehui interjected. “They’ve nothing to do but stuff themselves all day. Naturally, they’re full of gossip. Even if you never did anything wrong, they’d invent something to criticize. Since they’re going to sneer anyhow, let them.”

“Qin, there’s something in what he says. Make up your mind,” Juemin encouraged.

“I’m deciding right now.” Qin’s face suddenly grew radiant, and her usual vivacity and firmness flooded back. “I know that a high price must be paid for any reform to be put through, that many sacrifices must be made. I’m ready to be the victim.”

“If you’re determined as all that, you’re sure to succeed,” said Juemin soothingly.

Smiling, Qin said with her old stubbornness, “Whether I succeed or not doesn’t matter very much. But I’m going to make a try.” The brothers gazed at her admiringly....

A while later, Qin is with her mother.

“Here’s your tea, Ma,” she said. Qin stood awkwardly. She felt her chance to speak had come, but she couldn’t get the words out.

“You’re tired too, Qin. Go to sleep.”

Qin hesitated. Finally she screwed up her courage. “Ma,” she began. Her voice trembled a bit with excitement.

“What is it?”

“Ma,” Qin said again. Head down, she toyed with the edge of her jacket. She spoke slowly. “Jueimin says next year their school will be accepting girl students. I’d like to take the entrance exam.”

“What are you saying? Girl students in a boys’ school? You want to go there?” Mrs. Zhang couldn’t believe her ears.

“Yes,” Qin replied timidly. She explained, “There’s nothing wrong with it. Peking University² already has three girl students. Co-ed schools have been started in Nanjing and Shanghai.”

“What is the world coming to? It isn’t enough to have schools for girls, now they want to have co-ed schools too!” Mrs. Zhang sighed. “When I was a girl, I never dreamed there’d be such things!”

These words struck Qin like a gourd ladleful of cold water. Chilled and dazed, she stood in silence. But she refused to give up hope. Slowly, her courage returned. She said: “Ma, times have changed. After all, it’s more than twenty years since you were my age; something new comes into the world every day. Girls are human beings the same as boys. Why shouldn’t they study in the same classroom?”

Mrs. Zhang interrupted with a laugh: “I won’t try to argue the merits of the case; I’d never be able to outtalk you. I’m sure you can find lots of reasons in those new books of yours to use against me. You probably think I’m a reactionary old mossback.”

² Founded in 1898, Peking University (or National University of Peking) is one of the greatest modern Chinese institutions of higher learning. It played a great part in the New Culture Movement and in the revolutionary and nationalist movements of the later period. It is currently known as Beijing University.

Qin laughed too, then she pleaded, "Let me go, Ma. You usually trust me. You've never refused me anything!"

Mrs. Zhang weakened a little. "And I've taken a good deal of abuse for that very reason," she sighed. "But I'm not afraid of gossip, and I do trust you. No matter what it's been, I've always done what you wanted.... But this thing is too special. Your grandmother will be the first to oppose. Surely you don't want me to fall out with her because of this? And of course all our relatives will be sure to talk."

"Didn't you just say you're not afraid of gossip?" Qin retorted. "Grandma is in a nunnery. At most she visits us once a month, and then only stays two to three days. The last few months she hasn't come home at all. Besides, who cares what she says? Since she usually doesn't concern herself with family affairs, you can decide—like the time you let me enter the girls' normal school. Our relatives won't have any reason to oppose. If they want to gossip, we'll just ignore them."

After a silence, Mrs. Zhang said in a deflated voice, "I used to be brave, but I'm old now. I don't want to be the butt of any more idle chatter by our relatives. I want to live in peace another few years, without any trouble. You know I've been a devoted mother to you. Your father died when you were very young, leaving me with the full burden of bringing you up. I never bound your feet like the other young girls. I let you study with your cousins' private tutor at your grandfather Gao's house. Later, in spite of everything, I sent you to a girls' school. Your cousin Shuzhen has tiny bound feet, and she can barely read. Even your cousin Shuhua had very little schooling! On the whole, you must admit I've treated you pretty well."

Mrs. Zhang was too weary to go on. But when she first saw that Qin was on the point of tears, her heart went out to the girl and she said kindly:

"Go to sleep, Qin dear. It's late. We can talk again about what will happen next autumn some other time. I'll do my best for you."

With a murmur of assent, the disappointed Qin walked out, crossed a small hall and went to her own room. Although downcast, she did not blame her mother, in fact she was grateful for her mother's affection.

Qin's room was dreary, as if devoid of all hope. Even her dead father's picture, hanging on the wall, seemed to be weeping. Qin felt her eyes grow damp. She took off her skirt and laid it on the bed, then walked over to the desk, turned up the wick of the pewter lamp and sat down. Picking up a *New Youth* magazine, she idly thumbed through a few pages. The following words caught her eye:

"I believe that before all else I am a human being, just as much as you are—or at least that I should try to become one.... I can't be satisfied with what most people say.... I must think things out for myself, and try to get clear about them...."

Lines from Ibsen's play *A Doll's House*....

To her they were a revelation, and her eyes grew bright. She saw clearly that her desire was not hopeless, that it all depended on her own efforts. In other words, there was still hope, and the fulfillment of that hope rested with her, not with others. With this realization, her despair melted away, and she cheerfully picked up her pen and wrote this letter to Jianru, one of the girls in her class:

Today, my cousins told me that the Foreign Languages School has decided to accept girl students commencing next autumn. I am determined to take the entrance exam. What about you? Would you like to go with me? I hope you're willing to take the plunge. We have to fight, no matter what the cost, to open a road for sisters who come after us.

Please come and see me if you have time. I have a lot to tell you. My mother will be glad to see you, too.

Qin

Qin read through the finished letter, wrote in the date, then painstakingly added punctuation marks, which had only recently come into vogue. Her mother despised letters written in colloquial. She said they were "...much longer than the classical style, and unbearably vulgar!" But Qin liked them, and she studied the colloquial letters in the "To the Editor" column of *New Youth* as a means of improving her own style....

Excerpt 2

To Juemin and Juehui, Juexin was “Big Brother.” Though born of the same mother and living in the same house, his position was entirely different from theirs. In the large Gao family, he was the eldest son of an eldest son, and for that reason his destiny was fixed from the moment he came into the world.

Handsome and intelligent, he was his father’s favourite. His private tutor also spoke highly of him. People predicted that he would do big things, and his parents considered themselves fortunate to be blessed with such a son.

Brought up with loving care, after studying with a private tutor for a number of years, Juexin entered middle school. One of the school’s best students, he graduated four years later at the top of his class. He was very interested in physics and chemistry and hoped to go on to a university in Shanghai or Beijing, or perhaps study abroad, in Germany. His mind was full of beautiful dreams. At that time he was the envy of his classmates.

In his fourth year at middle school, he lost his mother. His father later married again, this time to a younger woman who had been his mother’s cousin. Juexin was aware of this loss, for he knew full well that nothing could replace the love of a mother. But her death left no irreparable wound in his heart; he was able to console himself with rosy dreams of his future. Moreover, he had someone who understood him and could comfort him—his pretty cousin Mei, “mei” for “plum blossom.”

But then, one day, his dreams were shattered, cruelly and bitterly shattered. The evening he returned home carrying his diploma, the plaudits of his teachers and friends still ringing in his ears, his father called him into his room and said:

“Now that you’ve graduated, I want to arrange your marriage. Your grandfather is looking forward to having a great-grandson, and I, too, would like to be able to hold a grandson in my arms. You’re old enough to be married; I won’t feel easy until I fulfill my obligation to find you a wife. Although I didn’t accumulate much money in my years away from home as an official, still I’ve put by enough for us to get along on. My health isn’t what it used to be; I’m thinking of spending my time at home and having you help me run the household affairs. All the more reason

you'll be needing a wife. I've already arranged a match with the Li family. The thirteenth of next month is a good day. We'll announce the engagement then. You can be married within the year...."

The blow was too sudden. Although he understood everything his father said, somehow the meaning didn't fully register. Juexin only nodded his head. He didn't dare look his father in the eye, although the old man was gazing at him kindly.

Juexin did not utter a word of protest, nor did such a thought ever occur to him. He merely nodded to indicate his compliance with his father's wishes. But after he returned to his own room, and shut the door, he threw himself down on his bed, covered his head with the quilt and wept. He wept for his broken dreams.

He had heard something about a match with a daughter of the Li family. But he had never been permitted to learn the whole story, and so he didn't place much credence in it. A number of gentlemen with unmarried daughters, impressed by his good looks and his success in his studies, had become interested in him; there was a steady stream of matchmakers to his family's door. His father weeded out the applicants until only two remained under consideration. It was difficult for Mr. Gao to make a choice; both of the persons serving as matchmakers were of equal prestige and importance. Finally, he decided to resort to divination. He wrote each of the girls' names on a slip of red paper, rolled the slips into balls, then, after praying for guidance before the family ancestral tablets, picked one.

Thus the match with the Li family was decided. But it was only now that Juexin was informed of the result.

Yes, he had dreamed of romance. The one in his heart was the girl who understood him and who could comfort him—his cousin Mei. At one time he was sure she would be his future mate, and he had congratulated himself that this would be so, since in his family marriage between cousins was quite common.

He was deeply in love with Mei, but now his father had chosen another, a girl he had never seen, and said that he must marry within the year. What's more, his hopes of continuing his studies had

burst like a bubble. It was a terrible shock to Juexin. His future was finished, his beautiful dreams shattered.

He cried his disappointment and bitterness. But the door was closed and Juexin's head was beneath the bedding. No one knew. He did not fight back, he never thought of resisting. He only bemoaned his fate. But he accepted it. He complied with his father's will without a trace of resentment. But in his heart he wept for himself, wept for the girl he adored—Mei, his “plum blossom.”

The day of his engagement he was teased and pulled about like a puppet, while at the same time being shown off as a treasure of rare worth. He was neither happy nor sad. Whatever people told him to do, he did, as if these acts were duties which he was obliged to perform. In the evening, when the comedy had ended and the guests had departed, Juexin was exhausted. He went to bed and slept soundly.

After the engagement, he drifted aimlessly from day to day. He stacked his books neatly in the bookcase and didn't look at them again. He played mahjong, went to the opera, drank, and went about making the necessary preparations for his marriage, in accordance with his father's instructions. Juexin thought very little. He calmly awaited the advent of his bride.

In less than six months, she arrived. To celebrate the marriage, Juexin's father and grandfather had a stage specially built for the performance of theatricals in the compound.

The marriage ceremony turned out to be not as simple as Juexin had anticipated. He too, in effect, became an actor, and he had to perform for three days before he was able to obtain his bride. Again he was manipulated like a puppet, again he was displayed as a treasure of rare worth. He was neither happy nor sad—he was only tired, though roused a bit by the general excitement.

This time, however, after his performance was over and the guests departed, he was not able to forget everything and sleep. Because lying in bed beside him was a strange girl. He still had to continue playing a role.

Juexin was married. His grandfather had obtained a grand-daughter-in-law, his father had obtained a daughter-in-law, and others had enjoyed a brief period of merry-making. The marriage

was by no means a total loss for Juexin either. He had joined in wedlock a tender, sympathetic girl, just as pretty as the one he adored. He was satisfied. For a time he revelled in pleasures he had not believed possible, for a time he forgot his beautiful dreams, forgot the other girl, forgot his lost future. He was sated, he was intoxicated, intoxicated with the tenderness and love of a girl who was his bride. Constantly smiling, he hung about her room all day. People envied him his happiness, and he considered himself very lucky.

Thus one month passed.

One evening his father called him into his room and said:

“Now that you’re married you should be earning your own living, or people will talk. I’ve raised you to manhood and found you a wife. I think we can say that I’ve fulfilled my duties as a father. From now on you must take care of yourself. We have enough money to send you to a university, down-river, to study, but in the first place you already have a wife; secondly the family property has not yet been shared out among me and my brothers, and I am in charge of the accounts. It would look like favoritism if I advanced money from the family funds for your university education. Besides, your grandfather might not agree. So I’ve found you a position in the West Sichuan Mercantile Corporation. The salary’s not very large, but it will give you and your wife a little spending money. Moreover, if you do your work diligently, you’re sure to advance. You start tomorrow. I’ll take you down myself. Our family owns some shares in the company and several of the directors are my friends. They’ll look after you.”

Juexin’s father spoke in an even voice, as if discussing something quite commonplace. Juexin listened, and assented. He didn’t say whether he was willing or unwilling. There was only one thought in his mind—“Everything is finished.” Though he had many words in his heart, he spoke not a one.

The following day after the midday meal his father told him something of how a man going out in the world should behave, and Juexin made careful mental notes. Sedan-chairs brought him and his father to the door of the West Sichuan Mercantile Corporation. Entering, he first met Manager Huang, a man of about forty with a moustache and a stooped back; Chen, the accountant, who had a face like an old woman; Wang, the tall, emaciated bill-collector; and two or three other ordinary-looking members of the office staff. The manager asked him a few questions; he answered simply, as if by rote. Although they all addressed him very politely, he could tell from

their actions and the way they spoke that they were not the same as he. It occurred to him with some surprise that he had seldom met people of this sort before.

His father departed, leaving Juexin behind. He felt frightened and lonely, a castaway on a desert island. He was not given any work. He just sat in the manager's office and listened to the manager discuss things with various people. After two full hours of this, the manager suddenly noticed him again and said courteously, "There's nothing for you to do today, Brother. Please come back tomorrow."

Like a pardoned prisoner, Juexin happily called a sedan-chair and gave his address. He kept urging the carriers to walk faster. It seemed to him that in all the world there was no place more wonderful than the Gao family compound.

On arriving home, he first reported to his grandfather, who gave him some instructions. Then he went to see his father, who gave him some more instructions. Finally, he returned to his own apartment. Only here, with his wife questioning him solicitously and at great length, did he find peace and relaxation.

The next day after breakfast he again went to the corporation and did not return home until five in the afternoon. That day he was given his own office. Under the guidance of the manager and his colleagues, he commenced to work.

Thus, this nineteen-year-old youth took his first big step into the world of business. Gradually, he grew accustomed to his environment and learned a new way of life. Gradually, he forgot all the knowledge he had acquired in his four years of middle school. He began to feel at home in his work. The first time he received his salary of twenty-four *yuan*³, he was torn between joy and sorrow. It was the first time he had ever earned any money, yet the pay was also the first fruits of the sale of his career. But as the months went by, the regular installments of twenty-four *yuan* no longer aroused in him any special emotions.

³ *Yuan* is the basic Chinese monetary unit. Its exchange rate has varied. Twenty-four *yuan* was not considered a high salary in 1917-18.

Life was bearable, without happiness, without grief. Although he saw the same faces every day, heard the same uninteresting talk, did the same dull work, all was peaceful and secure. None of the family came to bother him at home; he and his wife were permitted to live quietly.

Less than six months later, another big change occurred in his life. An epidemic struck his father down; all the tears of Juexin and his brothers and sisters were unable to save him. After his father died, the family burdens were placed on Juexin's shoulders. In addition to looking after his stepmother, he also became responsible for his two younger sisters and his two young student brothers. Juexin was then only twenty years of age.

Sorrowfully, he wept for his departed father. He had not thought that fate could be so tragic. But gradually his grief dissipated. After his father was buried, Juexin virtually forgot him. Not only did he forget his father, he forgot everything that had passed, he forgot his own springtime. Calmly he placed the family burdens on his own young shoulders.

For the first few months that didn't seem very heavy; he was not conscious of any strain. But in a very short time, many arrows, tangible and intangible, began flying in his direction. Some he was able to dodge, but several struck home. He discovered something new, he began to see another side of life in a gentry household. Beneath the surface of peace and affection, hatred and strife were lurking; he also had become a target of attack. Although his surroundings made him forget his springtime, the fires of youth still burned in his heart. He grew angry, he struggled, because he considered himself to be in the right. But his struggles only brought him more troubles and more enemies.

The Gao family was divided into four households. Originally Juexin's grandfather had five sons, but the second son had died many years ago. Uncle Geming and his Third Household were on fairly good terms with the First Household, which Juexin now headed. But the Fourth and Fifth Households were very unfriendly to Juexin; the wives of both secretly waged a relentless battle against him and his First Household, and spread countless rumors about him.

Struggling didn't do the least bit of good, and he was exhausted. What's the use of this endless strife? he wondered. Those women would never change and he couldn't make them give in. Why waste energy looking for trouble? Juexin evolved a new way of managing affairs—or perhaps it would be better to say of managing the family. He ended his battle with the women. He pretended

to go along with their wishes whenever he could. Treating them with deference, he joined them in mahjong, he helped them with their shopping.... In brief, he sacrificed a portion of his time to win his way into their good graces. All he wanted was peace and quiet.

Not long after, the elder of his two young sisters died of tuberculosis. Although he mourned for her, his heart felt somewhat eased, for her death lightened his burden considerably.

Not long after, his first child was born—a boy. Juexin felt an immense gratitude towards his wife. The coming of this son into the world brought him great happiness. He himself was a man without hope; he would never have the chance to fulfill his beautiful dreams. His only function in life was to bear a load on his shoulders, to maintain the family his father had left behind. But now he had a son, his own flesh and blood. He would raise the child lovingly, and see in him the realization of the career he had lost. The boy was part of him and the boy's happiness would be his own. Juexin found consolation in this thought. He felt his sacrifices were not in vain.

Two years later, in 1919, the May Fourth Movement began. Fiery, bitter newspaper articles awakened in Juexin memories of his youth. Like his two younger brothers, he avidly read the Peking dispatches carried in the local press, and news of the big strike in Shanghai on June 3rd, which followed. When the local paper reprinted articles from the *New Youth* and *Weekly Review* magazines, he hurried to the only bookstore in town that was selling these journals, and bought the latest issue of the first, and two or three issues of the second. Their words were like sparks, setting off a conflagration in the brothers' hearts. Aroused by the fresh approach and the ardent phrases, the brothers found themselves in complete agreement with the writers' sentiments.

Therefore they brought up all the progressive periodicals they could lay their hands on, including back numbers. These included the *New Youth*, *New Tide*, *Weekly Critic*, *Weekly Review*; even old issues of the *Youth Magazine*, the predecessor of *New Youth*, were searched out from under his old piles by the dealer and handed to them. Every night he and his two brothers would take turns reading every one of these, without skipping even the letters to the editor. Sometimes they had lively discussions on subjects raised in the periodicals. Juexin's brothers were more radical than he was, for he was only a follower of Hu Shi, whose "On Ibsenism" even seemed a little too extreme to him. He was an admirer of Liu Bannong's "philosophy of compliant bows," and he liked Tolstoy's "principle of non-resistance," although he had read none of Tolstoy's own writings on the subject beside the story of *Ivan the Fool*.

Indeed, Juexin found the “compliant bow” philosophy and the “policy of non-resistance” most useful. It was thanks to them that he was able to reconcile, with no difficulty at all, the theories expressed in *New Youth* with the realities of his big family. They were a solace to him, permitting him to believe in the new theories while still conforming to the old feudal concepts. He saw no inconsistency.

Juexin became a man with a split personality. In the old society, in the midst of his old-fashioned family, he was a spineless, supine Young Master; in the company of his brothers, he was a youth of the new order.

Naturally, this way of life was something the younger boys could not understand. They berated Juexin for it frequently, and he placidly accepted their criticism. But he continued to read new books and periodicals, and continued to live in the same old-fashioned manner.

He watched his first son learning to crawl, then to walk, then to speak a few simple words. The child was adorable, intelligent, and Juexin lavished nearly all his affection on him. “He’s going to do all the things I couldn’t,” thought Juexin. He refused to hire a wet-nurse, insisting that his wife suckle the child herself. Fortunately, she had enough milk. Such goings-on were virtually unprecedented in a wealthy family, and they led to a great deal of gossip. But Juexin bore it all, convinced that he was acting in the child’s best interests.

Every night, after his wife and child had retired, he would sit beside them, feasting his eyes on the baby sleeping in its mother’s arms. Looking at the child’s face, he was able to forget about himself completely. Juexin couldn’t resist planting a kiss on the baby’s satiny cheek. He softly breathed words of thanks and hope and love, rather vague words, but they gushed naturally from his lips like water from a fountain. Juexin didn’t know that his parents had loved him with the same fervour when he was an infant. They too had breathed words of thanks and hope and love....

Excerpt 3

“In time we will all break up and each go his own way. The same with you, you will get married when you grow up, and you will go away with your young master consort, you will be in his company every day, and you will forget all of us,” said Juexin, half sarcastic and half emotional.

Why must a girl be married into some other family, forsaking those she loves to be in the company of somebody else? Shuzhen had asked her mother this question several times, but she never had a comprehensible answer. Now that the term young master consort was mentioned, she blushed instinctively and felt bashful for something that she did not even comprehend.

“I will not marry, I will not be married to anybody,” she gave a straight answer.

“Are you then to remain at home to be an old maid?” remarked Juexin who sat diagonally across from her, while Juehui quickly added, “If you don’t want to get married, why do you let Aunt bind your feet?”

Shuzhen was not able to find an answer to this one. She pouted and bowed her head, silently touching her bound feet, which still ached somewhat, and her mother’s words came back to her in quick response. Certainly Mother did tell her that when Big Sister-in-law first came to the family, she was ridiculed behind her back because of her unbound natural-sized feet. It went so far that on her first entrance into the wedding chamber, as she walked in and sat on the wedding couch, someone willfully came across the room to raise her skirt to take a look at her large feet. In this way from Mother’s words she learned of the misfortunes of those with unbound feet, and at the same time from under Mother’s whip she acquired the fortunes of those with bound feet. After many whippings, a long period of excruciating pain, countless days in which tears washed her face, and endless nights which aching rendered sleepless, she had succeeded in mauling her feet into a pair of such odd shaped things. And what did she gain from it? On the one hand she became the object that Mother could show off with pride, but on the other she became the target of brothers’ and sisters’ ridicule. The praise and glory promised by Mother did not come true, but ridicule and pity, which Mother least expected were heaped upon her. She was only thirteen, so young, so tender, yet she was already a victim, an object of sacrifice. With such a pair of crippled feet, aching all the time, she had fallen behind in all aspects compared to her cousins. The

crippled body even made her a weaker person, thinking that her only hope of vindication and revenge would lie in her hour of wedding. Touching and caressing her traumatized feet, did she still have the courage to say that she did not want to marry? Yet hope in the future is uncertain and vague, while reality of the present has rendered things different now. Right here in this tiny boat there were unmistakably three pairs of unbound natural feet, how could she then be sure of the successful realization of her moment of revenge?...

Excerpt 4

In this new atmosphere, the students came to life and put out three new periodicals. Juemin, Juehui, and some of their classmates published a weekly magazine, which they called *Dawn*, containing news of the new cultural movement, introducing new ideas and attacking all that was unreasonable of the old.

Juehui enthusiastically took part. He wrote many articles for the magazine. Of course most of his material came from the new periodicals in places like Shanghai and Beijing. He had not yet made either a really thorough study of the new theories or a careful analysis of society. All he had was a little experience in life, some knowledge derived from books, and the ardor of youth.

As to Juemin, he was busy with his classes at school all day; in the evening he went to tutor Qin. That left him little time for anything else. Except for writing a short article once in a while, he wasn't of much help to the magazine.

The magazine was very well received by the young people. Its first issue of a thousand copies sold out in less than a week. The second did the same. By the time the third issue was published, the magazine already had nearly three hundred subscribers. The backbone of the magazine's staff were three of Juehui's best friends, and their fine work earned his deepest admiration.

With the advent of the magazine Juehui's life became more interesting and active. For the first time he found an outlet for his pent-up energies. His ideas were put into print and a thousand copies were distributed at a time. People everywhere knew what he was thinking; some of them even wrote in expressing agreement. In his ardent eyes the fanciful, lofty joy he experienced was something precious to the extreme. But although he was more than willing to devote his free hours to the magazine, he was afraid his grandfather would find out, or that his participation would get his Big Brother into trouble. And so he was compelled to conceal his connection with it.

Excerpt 5

“Jianru, I didn’t know myself until this moment. I am indeed a girl without courage. I created a hope for my future, and resolved to proceed towards this goal in spite of all difficulties. Yet when I got close to it, I became disheartened, my worries and concerns grew, and I lost my courage to go on.”

“Qin, don’t you realize that this will lead you to misfortune and disaster?”

“Jianru, I have fallen into it already. I love my future, but I love my mother too. I love light, but for the sake of my mother, I would remain in darkness to keep her company. Ideas like co-education and short hair for women are unacceptable to her. Some time ago I made up my mind that I should do what I want, irrespective of mother’s opposition and relatives’ condemnation. But when the time comes when I can do what I want by a single movement of my hand, my thoughts turn to my mother, to what a blow it would be to her, and my courage wanes, my resolve is shaken. I think of her toiling through miserable years of widowhood to bring me up, all the while loving me, caring for me, and it is now my turn to make her happy. Yet instead I would be bringing her heavier miseries, the collapse of her hopes, the mockery of society, the reproaches of relatives—it is indeed too heavy a blow for her to take. For her I will have to sacrifice my own future.”

“Qin, don’t you know that such sacrifice is meaningless? If we are to sacrifice, we should not sacrifice for one person. We should sacrifice for our multitudes of sisters of the future. If we sacrifice so that they will have happiness in the future, such sacrifice would be worthwhile and meaningful.” Here the penmanship turned into the cursive style, done with running hand and high speed, indicating that Jianru was quite emotionally upset and intense. To this Qin replied:

“Jianru, this is where the two of us differ. Your reason can conquer your feeling, but my reason is often conquered by feeling. I can’t say that in theory your words are wrong. But in practice I am unable to follow your words. Once I think of my mother, my mind becomes pliant. In reality, as I see it, to sacrifice for our sister whom we will never even meet is far less realistic than to sacrifice for the mother who loves me and whom I love.”

“Qin, are these words coming from deep down in yourself? Let me ask you, if your mother arranged for you to marry an illiterate vulgar businessman, or a middle-aged bureaucratic government man, or a good for nothing wealthy playboy, would you not resist it? Would you sacrifice for her sake and accept that too? Answer me. Don’t be evasive!” more cursive speed writing, to which the answer was:

“Jianru, don’t ask me this, I beg of you, do not bring up this question.” The paper bearing these words also bore a tear-drop.

“Qin, let me ask you then: I know that you are very friendly with your cousin. Suppose your cousin were from a poor family, and another young man from a house of wealth and position proposed to your mother for your hand. If you then insisted on marrying your cousin, your mother would say to you in great earnest and sincerity: ‘I brought you up through all kinds of difficulties with the hope that you would marry into a rich family to live a happy life, so I would be able to feel satisfied and rest assured. If you do not take my advice, and insist on marrying into a poor family to lead a life of suffering, you are not a worthy daughter of mine.’ What would you do then? Would you give up the man you love and offer yourself to someone else to be the entertainer of his sex life? Sure, I know, every mother at the time of selecting a son-in-law would ask her daughter the question: ‘Do you wish to marry for a happy life, or for suffering?’ the mother’s choice is invariably for enjoying a happy life. As to marriage without love, prostitution for life, and spiritual punishment and suffering—the mother does not take these into consideration at all. Does the mother indeed have the right to ask such a sacrifice? No, she does not have the right....

“Jianru, don’t... I beg you, my mind is in complete disarray, let me have time to think.”

“Qin, what a time this is, will you still not open your eyes wide? Don’t procrastinate any more. I can see that you have lived in the traditional family for too long a time, and have been too deeply contaminated by old ways. If you do not make up your mind soon enough to shake off all of these, you will quite possibly end up being the second Cousin Mei....”

Her note got no reply from Qin, so Jianru turned to look at her. She found that Qin’s eyes were filled with glistening tears. Her heart immediately softened. Her anger and indignation also gradually melted away. She extended her hand to hold Qin’s hand that was resting on her thigh.

She felt Qin's hand trembling, and tightened her grasp. If they had not been in class, she would have taken Qin in her arms... "Qin, maybe I have been hammering at it too hard, but I love you and care for you, I want you to be a courageous modern girl, I don't want you to follow Cousin Mei's lot. I strongly persuade you to brace up your spirit and fight on. Those who can march on with the times will eventually be rewarded. Only those falling behind will drink the potion of bitterness the rest of their lives, and that is the real tragedy...."

Excerpt 6

“Mingfeng, you’ve been with us for several years. I think you’ve worked long enough,” Madam Zhou began.... “I’m sure you also are quite willing to leave,” she continued. “Today, Venerable Master Gao instructed me to send you to the Feng family. You are going to be the concubine of the Venerable Master Feng.... After you get there, be sure to take good care of the old man and the old lady. They say he’s rather strange; his wife’s temper is none too good either. Don’t be stubborn; it’s best to go along with their whims. They also have sons and daughters-in-law and grandchildren living together with them. You must respect them too.

“You’ve been a bondmaid in our family for several years, but you haven’t gained anything from it. To tell you the truth I don’t think we’ve treated you very well. Now that we’ve arranged this marriage for you I feel much better. The Feng family is very rich. As long as you remember to act according to your station, you’ll never want for food or clothing.”...

Although every word cut the girl’s heart like a knife, she could only let them stab. She had no weapon with which to defend herself. Her hopes were completely shattered. They even wanted to take away the love she depended upon to live, to present her verdant spring to a crabbed old man. Life as a concubine in a family like the Feng’s could bring only one reward: tears, blows, abuse, the same as before. The only difference would be that now, in addition, she would have to give her body to be despoiled by a peculiar old man whom she had never met.

To become a concubine—what a disgrace. Among the bondmaids “concubine!” was one of the worst imprecations they would think of. Ever since she was very small Mingfeng felt that it was a terrible thing to be a concubine. Yet after eight years of hard work and faithful service that was her only reward.... Suddenly she seemed to hear a voice say, “Everything is decided by Fate. There is nothing you can do about it.” An irresistible disappointment took possession of her, and she wept broken-heartedly....

“Madam, I’m willing to starve—anything but become a concubine.” As Mingfeng blurted these words, the strength drained from her body, and she fell to her knees. Embracing Madam Zhou’s legs, she begged, “Please don’t send me away. Let me stay here as a bondmaid. I’ll serve you all

my life. Madam, have pity, I'm still so young⁴. Pity me. You can scold me, beat me, anything—only don't send me to the Feng family. I'm afraid I couldn't bear that kind of life. Madam, be merciful, pity me. Madam, I've always been obedient, but this—I can't do it!”

Madam Zhou is sympathetic but insists that the arrangements made by the patriarch of the family are final. Mingfeng tries to find Juehui, and when she finally does, he's unaware of what is being planned. Distracted by his work on the magazine, he asks her to leave.

Juemin came into the room. The first words out of his mouth were, “Wasn't that Mingfeng who just left here?”

“Yes.” Juehui continued writing. He did not look at his brother.

“That girl isn't the least bit like an ordinary bondmaid. She's intelligent, pure, pretty—she can even read a little. It's a shame that grandfather is giving her to that old reprobate for a concubine. It's a real shame!” sighed Juemin.

“What did you say?” Juehui put down his pen. He was shocked.

“Don't you know? Mingfeng is getting married.”

“She's getting married? Who said so? She's too young!”

“Grandfather is giving her to that shameless old scoundrel Feng to be his concubine.”

“I don't believe it! Why, he's one of the main pillars of the Confucian Morals Society. He's nearly sixty. He still wants a concubine?”...

Suddenly a torturing realization dawned upon Juehui. Mingfeng had come to him just now in the utmost anguish, to beg for his help. Because she believed in his love and because she loved him, she had come to ask him to keep his promise and protect her, to rescue her from the clutches of old man Feng. And what had he done? Absolutely nothing. He had given her neither help nor sympathy nor pity—nothing at all. He sent her away without even listening to her pleas. Now she

⁴ Mingfeng is seventeen.

was gone, gone for ever....It was a terrifying thought. Juehui couldn't bear it. He had to find her, he had to atone for his crime....

He searches the servants' quarters and the grounds but cannot find her anywhere.

When Mingfeng had left Juehui's room she knew that this time all hope was gone. She was sure he loved her as much as ever; her lips were still warm with his kiss, her hands still felt his clasp. These proved that he loved her; but they were also symbols of the fact that she was going to lose him and be cast into the arms of a lecherous old man. She would never see him again. In the long years ahead there would be only endless pain and misery. Why should she cling to a life like that? Why should she remain in a world without love?

Mingfeng made up her mind.

She went directly to the garden, groping her way through the darkness with a great effort until she reached her objective—the edge of the lake.... In the seventeen years of her existence she had known nothing but blows, curses, tears, toil in the service of others. That plus a love for which she now must perish. Life had brought her much less happiness to her than to others; but now, despite her youth, she would leave the world first.

Tomorrow, others had their tomorrow. For her there was only a dark empty void. Tomorrow birds would sing in the trees, the rising sun would gild their branches, countless pearls would bubble on the surface of the water. But she would see none of it, for her eyes would be closed for ever.

The world was such an adorable place. She had loved everyone with all the purity of a young girl's heart, wishing them all well. She had served people without pause; she had brought harm to no one. Like other girls she had a pretty face, an intelligent mind, a body of flesh and blood. Why did people want to trample her, hurt her, deny her a friendly glance, a sympathetic heart, even a pitying sigh?

She had never owned nice clothes, nor eaten good food, nor slept in a warm bed. She had accepted all this without complaint. For she had won the love of a fine young man, she had found a hero whom she could worship, and she was satisfied. She found a refuge.

But today, when the crisis came, reality had proved it was all an illusion. His love couldn't save her; it only added to her painful memories. He was not for her. His love had brought her many beautiful dreams, but now it was casting her into a dark abyss. She loved life, she loved everything, but life's door was closing in her face, leaving her only the road to degradation....

Finally, she could not bear to think any longer. Rising tottering to her feet, she cried in a voice laden with tenderness and sorrow, "Juehui, Juehui!"—and she plunged into the lake.

The placid waters stirred violently, and a loud noise broke the stillness. Two or three tragic cries, although they were very low, echoed lingeringly in the night. After a few minutes of wild thrashing, the surface of the lake again became calm. Only the mournful cries still permeated the air, as if the entire garden were weeping softly....

Excerpt 7

“You needn’t feel so cocky, Third Brother. They’ve already picked a bride for Second Brother. Your turn is next,” Shuhua inserted.

“What? Who’s picked him a bride?” Juehui demanded skeptically.

“The Venerable Master Feng. I hear it’s his grandniece. They say she’s got a fierce temper, and she’s not so young either,” said Shuying.

“Why, that old bastard!” Juehui stood up. “I’m going to tell Second Brother!” He cast a final glance at Wan-er, as if bidding her goodbye forever, and hurried from the room. As he passed the main hall, Juehui saw something that depressed him exceedingly. There was Juemin standing before his grandfather and old man Feng. The Venerable master Feng was smilingly questioning him and Juemin was answering respectfully.

“How can you be polite to that old murderer?” Juehui fumed to himself. “Don’t you realize he’s your enemy, that he’s going to drag you and Qin apart!”

Juemin finally heard the news not only from Juehui but also from Big Brother. Juexin, acting under their grandfather’s orders, had approached him to learn his reaction. Inquiring how Juexin felt about the matter was not the old man’s idea—he issued commands and, naturally, they had to be obeyed. Juexin thought so too, although he did not approve of his grandfather’s methods.

While shaken by the blow, Juemin was not afraid. His reply was simple. “I will decide whom I am to marry. Right now, I’m too young. I still have to finish my studies. I don’t want to get married.” There was a good deal more he wanted to say, but he kept it to himself.

“I can’t very well tell *Ye-ye* that you want to make your own decisions. It’s better to stress the youth aspect. But I’m afraid that won’t convince him either. In our family nineteen isn’t considered too young for marriage,” Juexin said doubtfully. It was difficult to tell what he really advocated.

“According to you, it’s hopeless, then!” said Juexin angrily.

“I didn’t mean that,” Juexin said quickly, but he had nothing to add.

Juemin stared at him fixedly, as if trying to read his mind. “Don’t you remember what you said to me this afternoon?” the younger brother demanded. “Do you want me to re-enact your tragedy?”

“But *Ye-ye*...” Juexin agreed with Juemin completely, yet he felt their grandfather’s orders had to be obeyed.

“Don’t talk to me about *Ye-ye*. I’m going to walk my own road,” Juemin snapped. He turned and went into his room.

Juemin and Juehui discussed the problem far into the night. Finally they agreed upon a plan of action: Resist. If that fails, run away. In any event, never give in.

Juehui encouraged him, first because he sympathized with Juemin, and second because he wanted him to set a precedent, to blaze a new trail for other young men like him. Fired with enthusiasm, Juemin immediately wrote a note to Qin, intending to send it to her the following day, secreted between the pages of a book. The note read:

Qin:

No matter what you may have heard, please do not believe a word of it. People are trying to make a match for me, but I have given my heart to you and I will never go back on my pledge. Please have faith in me. You will see how courageously I can give battle, how I will fight for and win you!

Juemin

Juemin read the note over twice. This is an important memento in the annals of our love, he thought. He showed the note to Juehui. “How’s that?” he asked proudly.

“Splendid,” replied Juehui sarcastically. “Straight out of the middle ages!” and to himself he mocked: We’ll soon see how courageously you “give battle”!

Now that the Venerable Master Gao’s birthday celebration was over, old man Feng sent a matchmaker to formally propose the marriage of his grandniece to Juemin. The Venerable Master

of course was entirely in favor. Madam Zhou was only his daughter-in-law and Juemin's stepmother, not his mother; she did not think it proper to express an opinion. Juexin felt the marriage would be a serious mistake, ruining the life of another young couple. But he hadn't the courage to oppose his grandfather. He could only pray that some miracle might occur.

The matchmaking was done secretly, without Juemin's knowledge. Such matters were always conducted in secret; the persons involved were mere puppets. Those who had been puppets in their youth, today were making puppets out of others. That was how it had been in the past, and that was how it always would be—or so people like the Venerable Master Gao thought. But they were mistaken in Juemin's case. He wasn't the type to submit to being a puppet.

In contrast to the older generation, Juemin took active measures concerning his marriage. Without the least shyness, he made inquiries about the proposed match. Juehui became his scout. Together with Qin the two brothers formed a committee of three. They discussed tactics—how to block the match with old man Feng's niece, how to publicize the relationship between Juemin and Qin.

As the opening stage of the battle, Juemin made his attitude plain to his Big Brother. Juexin replied that it was not up to him. Juemin requested his stepmother to cancel the match. But Juemin couldn't approach the old man directly and he could find no one with influence to help him. In this family, the Venerable Master Gao passed final judgment.

A few days later, Qin's mother requested him to stop calling. Mrs. Zhang was the old man's daughter. Although she sympathized with Juemin, as a member of the Gao family she could not and would not help him. There was already a rumor going around among the Gaos that Juemin was being supported in his actions by his aunt Mrs. Zhang because she wanted her daughter to marry him. Qin was so furious when she heard this, she cried.

After the preliminary skirmish ended in total failure, Juemin began the second phase of his tactics. He spread the story that unless the family respected his wishes, he would take drastic measures. Since this threat was never permitted to reach the old man's ears, it did not produce any results either.

Then Juemin learned that his horoscope and that of his proposed bride were about to be exchanged, after which a date would be set for the engagement. He heard this news only two weeks after the Venerable Master Gao's birthday.

It was then that Juexin had given the old man some indication of Juemin's feelings, but to no avail.

"How dare he disagree?" the patriarch had retorted angrily. "What I say is final!"

Juemin paced the garden for hours that day. His determination wavered a bit. If once he decided to run away from home, there would be no turning back. Sustaining himself alone would be a big problem. He was very comfortable at home; he was well provided with food and clothing. But on the outside, how would he live? He had not made any preparations for such a move. Yet now the problem was upon him; he had to make up his mind.

Seeking out Juexin, he came directly to the point. "Is there any hope of changing *Ye-ye's* mind?"

"I'm afraid not," said Juexin mournfully.

"Have you really tried to think of every possible way?" asked Juemin, disappointed.

"I really have!"

"What do you think I ought to do?"

"I know what's on your mind but, honestly, there's nothing I can do to help you. The best thing is to do what *Ye-ye* wants. In this day and age, we're fit only to be sacrificed," said Juexin sadly. He was almost weeping.

Juemin laughed coldly. "Still the same old policy of non-resistance! A compliant bow philosophy!" he turned on his heel and left.

The following morning when Juexin went to pay his respects to his grandfather, the old man announced triumphantly that the marriage with the Feng family girl was all arranged. The

Venerable Master said it could take place after two months and selected an auspicious day in his almanac. He told Juexin to go ahead with exchanging the horoscopes. Mumbling an assent, Juexin left, just as Juehui was entering, a cryptic smile on his face.

No sooner had Juexin reached his quarters than a servant came after him with a summons from the Venerable Master Gao to return at once. Hurrying to his grandfather's study, he found the old man, seated on a sofa, berating Juehui, while Mistress Chen, dressed in a light green, wide-sleeved blouse in crepe silk, her face heavily powdered and her hair smoothly done, sat perched on the arm of the patriarch's chair, and massaged his back with drumming fists. Juehui stood before the old man not saying a word.

"The rebel! That such a thing could actually happen! You find Juemin and bring him back!" shouted the Venerable master Gao when he saw Juexin enter. Big Brother was mystified. The old man burst into a paroxysm of coughing and Mistress Zhen increased the tempo of her drumming. "Calm yourself, Venerable Master," she pleaded. "At your age you shouldn't get yourself all worked up. They're not worth it!"

"How dare he disobey me? How dare he oppose me?" gasped the old man, red in the face. "Doesn't like the match I made for him, eh? Well, he'll have to! You bring him back here. I'm going to punish him."

Juexin murmured an assent. He was beginning to understand.

"Going to school has ruined him. I wanted you boys to take private tutoring at home, but you wouldn't listen to me. Now look what's happened! Even Juemin has gone bad. He actually dares to rebel. From now on, no son of the Gao family is permitted to attend an outside school! Do you hear that?" The patriarch began to cough again.

Juexin stood flustered, his grandfather's words crashing about his head like thunder.

Juehui, lined up beside his Big Brother, was quite unperturbed. Roar away, he thought, smiling inwardly. You'll soon be exposed as a paper lantern! The old man's coughing finally ceased. Worn out, he lay back and closed his eyes. For a long time he did not speak. He looked as if he

were asleep. The brothers continued standing before him respectfully, waiting. Only when Mistress Zhen signaled for them to go did they tiptoe out of the room.

“Second Brother left a note for you,” Juehui said to Juexin when they got outside. “It’s in my room. Come and read it.”

“What in the world did you say to *Ye-ye*? Why didn’t you tell me first, instead of running to him? How could you be so stupid!”

“I wanted him to know! I wanted him to realize we’re human beings, not lambs that anyone can lead to the slaughter!”

Juexin knew the barb was directed against him. It struck home, but he could only bear the pain in silence. No matter how sincerely he explained, Juehui would never believe him. In Juehui’s room, the boy handed him the letter. It was hard for Juexin to find the courage to read it, but at last he did:

Big Brother,

I’m doing what no one in our family has ever dared to do before—I’m running out on an arranged marriage. No one cares about my fate, so I’ve decided to walk my own road alone. I’m determined to struggle against the old forces to the end. Unless you cancel the match, I’ll never come back. I’ll die first. It’s still not too late to save the situation.

Remember our brotherly love and do your best to help me.

Juemin

Written at 3 in the morning.

Juexin turned pale. The note dropped from his trembling fingers to the floor. “What shall I do?” he stammered. “Doesn’t he understand my position?”

“It has nothing to do with your position,” said Juehui stiffly. “The question is what are you going to do about it?”

Juexin rose quickly, as if he had received a shock. “I’m going to bring him back,” he said simply.

“You’ll never find him,” said Juehui with a cold laugh.

“Never find him?” echoed Juexin, confused.

“No one knows where he’s moved to.”

“But surely you know his address. You must know. Tell me, where is he? Please tell me,” Juexin begged.

“I do know. But I certainly won’t tell you,” said Juehui firmly.

“Don’t you trust me?” Juexin angrily demanded.

“It doesn’t matter whether I trust you or not. Your ‘policy of non-resistance,’ your ‘compliant bow’ philosophy would be sure to bring Second Brother to grief. In a word—you’re too weak!” said Juehui hotly. He paced the floor with large strides.

“I must see him. Tell me his address.”

“No, absolutely no!”

“You’ll have to reveal it. They’ll make you. *Ye-ye* will make you.”

“I won’t tell them! Even in this family, I don’t think they’d resort to torture,” said Juehui coolly. He was aware only that he was achieving some measure of vengeance against his family. He gave no thought to what his Big Brother might be suffering....

Source: Pa Chin. *Family*. Boston: Cheng & Tsui, 1999. 21–259.