

## A Lifelong Companion

A lot of us are blessed with the best of companions. They never judge. They expect nothing from us. Their conversation with us lasts as long as we wish. They are always there for us, even in the small hours. And they stand by us through thick and thin until the very end of life. These are but a few of their many virtues. Sounds too good to be true? Wait till you get acquainted with these lovely friends—books.

When was your first encounter with books? Some have acquired a taste for reading from a tender age. Others fall in love with the written word later in life. Carl Sagan, the renowned American astronomer and writer, extolled books as “proof that humans are capable of working magic”. The magical moments we spent with a book—the solitary hours of reading one under a quilt with a torch in the dead of night, the defiant delight in hiding a novel inside a textbook to read in stealth under the nose of the teacher and the thrill of visiting the library for the first time—are among the fondest memories of our younger days. The excitement and wonderment we felt as a child in those little black marks on paper are not lost on us; we continue to experience the same irrepressible pleasure every time we disappear into a book.

As we leave school and step out into the real world, challenges come in all shapes and sizes. It could be a troubled relationship, the loss of a job, a financial predicament, a health crisis, or a mission impossible. At times you feel like no one understands your pain and turmoil and you are the most unfortunate being in the whole universe, but then you read. You realise that you are not alone; someone has gone through the same plight and survived, or maybe not. Either way you can learn from their victories or defeats. Whether it is through the comfort of an old favourite or through an empathetic connection to the characters, books offer a tireless source of companionship and a sense of camaraderie during the times when you feel abandoned by the entire world.

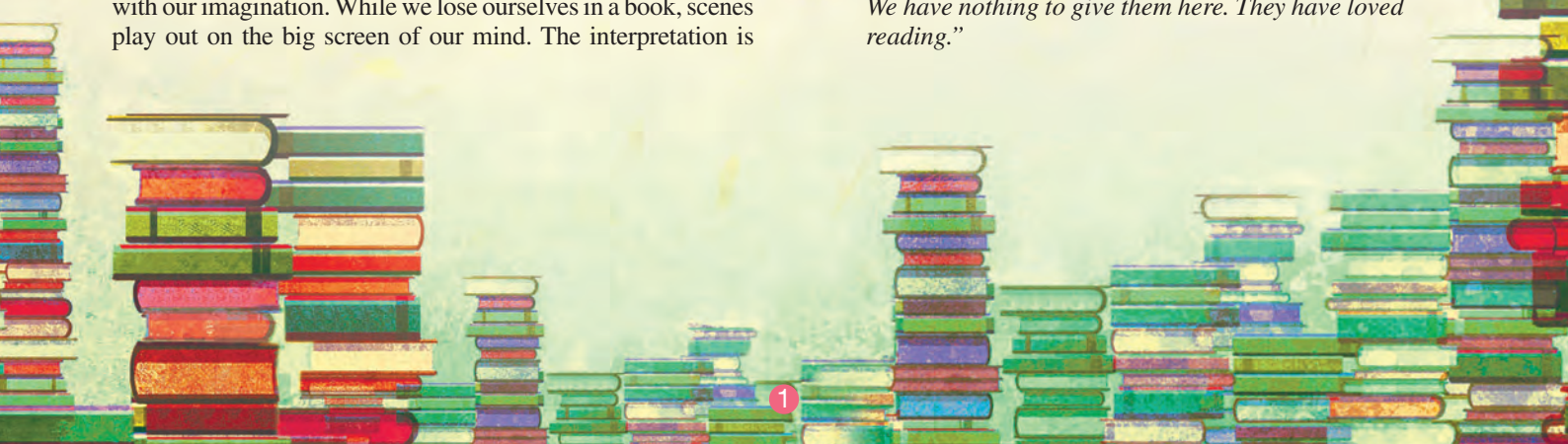
Besides being our life counsellor, books are our muses. An unread book, literature in particular, is a work of art half finished. Writers create the stories and we, as a reader, bring them to life with our imagination. While we lose ourselves in a book, scenes play out on the big screen of our mind. The interpretation is

contingent on our personal experience, mood, academic and cultural knowledge. It is unique and individual to every reader. Sometimes the imagery that a reader conjures up in his head is so vivid and powerful or the reading experience is so profound that it demands to be shown and shared with everyone, hence the endless literary adaptations. Few of them live up to the expectations of people who have read the book though. The readers have, after all, created a distinct piece of work based on the book, even if only in their minds.

They say you only live once. Not for readers. Through books a reader can live a myriad of lives and learn something new from each one of them. We have travelled to distant galaxies and explored whole new worlds; dived 20 000 leagues under the sea; reached the peak of Mount Everest; and escaped unscathed from tsunamis and avalanches. We have been an assassin’s apprentice and a welterweight boxer; at other times a hacker with a dragon tattoo and a forensic consultant, a galaxy hitchhiker and a gunslinger searching for the Dark Tower. We have traversed medieval Europe and ancient China; roamed the barren post-apocalyptic wasteland; lived through the building of a cathedral and the Great Wall; spent nights in taverns and lurked in the shadow of darkness. All these and more while we curl up on the couch with a book and a cup of hot chocolate.

Books are our faithful companions as we make our way through this voyage we call life. They carve our inner landscape, giving us perspectives and advice at the twists and turns along the way. Life is infinitely more interesting and rewarding with them. No one has articulated the joy of reading more eloquently and beautifully than Virginia Woolf:

*I have sometimes dreamt, at least, that when the Day of Judgment dawns and the great conquerors and lawyers and statesmen come to receive their rewards—their crowns, their laurels, their names carved indelibly upon imperishable marble—the Almighty will turn to Peter and will say, not without a certain envy when He sees us coming with our books under our arms, “Look, these need no reward. We have nothing to give them here. They have loved reading.”*





# 失去影子的人

夜深了，他拖着疲憊的身軀在街上踽踽獨行，昏黃的街燈在他身後拉出了一道長長的影子。在萬籟寂寥中，他至少還有影子作伴。可是，萬一連影子也悄然而別，那會怎樣？以下三部文學作品，講述的正是人失去影子後的遭遇。

## 《失去影子的人：彼得·施雷米爾的奇幻故事》(1813)

“請容許我以取之不盡的財富，交換你的影子。”

似乎無所不能的神秘灰衣人向施雷米爾提出了這樣的交易。所謂影子，不就是和頭髮一樣，就算放棄了也無所謂的東西嗎？施雷米爾想必是抱着這樣的想法，接受了這宗交易。他得到一個常滿錢包，裏面的金幣用之不竭，代價是永遠失去自己的影子。

沒想到，施雷米爾一走出大街，就立即後悔了。街上的行人發現他沒有影子，有的好意提醒他，有的冷言嘲諷，有的向他投擲糞土。施雷米爾雖然擁有無窮無盡的財富，卻從此惶惶不可終日。他晝伏夜出，謹小慎微，最終仍然被揭穿沒有影子的事實，結果被惡僕搶走了一切，連心愛的姑娘也捨他而去。施雷米爾雖然與魔鬼做了交易，但沒有為非作歹，而且慷慨大方、樂善好施，只因為沒有影子，便被世人視作異類，慘遭唾棄。

《失去影子的人》一書被譽為德國文學史上最迷人的作品之一。作者夏米索是法國貴族，法國大革命期間舉家逃亡到普魯士，十五歲才學會德文。他撰寫這部自傳式奇幻小說時，普魯士正與法國交戰。這位生在法國卻寄寓普魯士的作家，或許欲藉施雷米爾的悲慘遭遇，一抒“獨在異鄉為異客”的疏離鬱結吧。書中施雷米爾做了一個夢，在夢中所有人都沒有影子，“處處是鮮花和歌聲、愛意與歡樂”。可是，這個夢中世界與現實有什麼分別呢？最理想的世界，其實是不論有沒有影子，人人都能融洽共處。

施雷米爾的影子與本體分離後，混得不怎麼樣，只是被灰衣人捲起，作為引誘施雷米爾出賣靈魂的籌碼。同樣是影子，安徒生筆下一個角色，才是影子界的“人生勝利組”。

## 《影子》(1847)

一位北國學者前往熱帶國度旅行時，出於一時好奇，竟讓影子偷窺對面一戶神秘人家，結果影子一去不返。多年後，一位衣冠楚楚的紳士來訪，竟然就是學者當年的影子。影子得意洋洋地吹噓自己當年如何在對面詩神的起居室裏變成了人類，如何憑着掌握別人最醜陋的陰私，飛黃騰達、名利雙收。

許多年又過去了，學者宣揚的真善美學說不受歡迎，鬱鬱不得志，而影子卻混得風生水起。影子建議一起去旅行，由它負擔旅費，條件是由學者當它的影子。他倆在溫泉遇到一位美麗的公主。影子巧舌如簧，利用了學者的學識，令公主誤以為它是見識廣博的智者而為之傾慕，最後更和它訂下婚約。

根據童話中邪不勝正的定律，接下來應該由主角揭穿反派真面目：

“我的影子、徹底發瘋了！它自認為人，而把我——它竟把我當作它的影子！”

想不到作出上述控訴的，竟是影子。最後與公主舉行盛大婚禮，並在陽台上接受人民歡呼的，也是影子。學者呢？“學者他什麼都沒有聽見，因為他已經被處決了。”故事至此戛然而止。

安徒生筆下的影子，既傲慢狡詐，又陰險毒辣，可它的主人卻為世上的真善美著書立說。這個安排是出於偶然嗎？安徒生或許想提醒我們，真善美的另一面可能存有黑暗、邪惡、慾望……學者未能接受自己也有陰暗面，更遑論將之駕御，最終走向虛無與毀滅。反觀施雷米爾，他雖然受魔鬼誘惑，出售了影子，但他拒絕以靈魂換回影子的提議，毅然把常滿錢包拋下深淵，並接納了自己沒有影子的“缺陷”，結果在大自然中找到慰藉，靈魂最終得到救贖。

讀完施雷米爾和學者的故事，我們不禁要問：到底是虛？什麼是實？沒有影子的施雷米爾被社會拒諸門外。學說不為人接納的學者日漸枯槁，被人們揶揄：“您真像個影子似的”。相反，獲舉世景仰、稱頌與讚美的影子卻長出血肉來，“看起來像是個高貴的紳士”。有多少人能不受社會主流意見影響，找到自我存在的意義與價值？

學者的影子雖然是贏家，但在解答公主的難題時，還得借助學者的智慧過關。村上春樹《世界末日與冷酷異境》裏主人翁的影子，可是比本體還要聰明呢！

## 《世界末日與冷酷異境》(1994)

故事由“世界末日”與“冷酷異境”兩條敘事線交織而成，而影子的戲份集中在世界末日這條線。

在世界末日中，“我”不知怎的來到一個叫“街”的地方，那裏被城牆圍繞，出入口由門房看守，街裏住着獨角獸。但凡進入街的人，都被剝離了影子，甚至喪失了記憶。影子離開了人，不能久活；當影子死去，人就會徹底失去自己的心。

影子比主人更早洞悉街的本質；它擬定了逃亡計劃，一方面指示主人繪製街的地圖，一方面扮虛弱騙過門房。可是，到了最後一刻，主人卻放棄與影子逃走，而選擇留在街這個地方。

有人說，失憶等於死亡。心臟仍在跳動，但那些快樂、苦澀、痛苦的記憶全部消失，所有愛慕、討厭、嫉妒的人一一遺忘。你展開了新的人生，認識了新的朋友，走上了新的道路，擁有了新的記憶。可是，這樣的你，還是從前的那一個你嗎？影子既是記憶，也是慾望。街的居民失去了影子，便丟棄了記憶和慾望。因此，這裏沒有憎恨、沒有煩惱、沒有競爭、沒有傷害，似乎是理想中的桃花源，連主人也開始懷疑真實的世界是否值得回去。睿智的影子卻毫不留情地戳破這個完美世界的虛幻，它說：“所謂完美性在這世界上是不存在的……有幻滅、有悲哀，才能夠產生喜悅樂趣。沒有絕望的至福是不存在的……沒有心的人只不過是會走路的幻影而已。”

《失去影子的人》、《影子》和《世界末日與冷酷異境》告訴我們：光明與黑暗共舞，痛苦與快樂並存。除了這具皮囊和人格，我們還背負着社會賦予我們的各種無形標籤。我們有自私的念頭、不能啓齒的慾望，也有記憶和心。這些都是我們無法擺脫的影子。西方心理學大師榮格說：“人生之幸，莫過於成為真正的自己。”無論是好是壞，只有正視並擁抱這樣的自己，才有可能獲得幸福。

# Words That Go Together Well

“Fish and chips”, “back and forth”, “give and take”, etc. These are words that go together well, actually so much so that they are inseparable from each other and the order is irreversible. In other words, we do not say “chips and fish”, nor do we utter “forth and back”, both of which would sound awkward to the native ear. These immutable idiomatic expressions are called binomials or linguistic Siamese twins. They always come in the same order and are often linked by “and”, “or”, or a preposition.

For non-native English speakers, these word pairs can be challenging to grasp, as they can be quite unpredictable. For example, why put on your “shoes and socks” when a normal person on a normal day usually puts on socks before shoes? Or why is it “born and bred” when the logic of it is “bred and born”? Interestingly, Cantonese has these seemingly preposterous binomials too, e.g. drinking oneself full and eating oneself drunk (飲飽食醉). One of the more plausible explanations for these illogically ordered phrases might be that the tongue seeks the easier path. Fortunately, there is logic behind a lot of other Siamese twins, e.g. cause and effect, crime and punishment. Learning binomial expressions makes one sound more natural and expressive in English. Let’s take a look at some of the most common binomial pairs.

## By and large

Meaning: mostly, generally  
e.g. It was, **by and large**, a good presentation.

## An arm and a leg

Meaning: extremely expensive  
e.g. It cost us **an arm and a leg** to buy a new car.

## Part and parcel

Meaning: an integral or essential piece  
e.g. Rude customers and long hours are **part and parcel** of the job.

## High and dry

Meaning: without resources or help  
e.g. Travellers were left **high and dry** waiting at the airport.

## Cut and dried

Meaning: clear and definite or unchangeable  
e.g. There are no **cut and dried** answers to this problem.

## Done and dusted

Meaning: completely finished  
e.g. The project is all **done and dusted**, so let’s go celebrate.

Now, a quick quiz. Can you fill in the missing word pairs? Check the answers within this issue of *Word Power*.

1. I can’t believe that Mary and Sara are sisters. They’re like c\_\_\_\_\_ and c\_\_\_\_\_.
2. I have accepted the job offer. Now it is s\_\_\_\_\_ or s\_\_\_\_\_.
3. I’ve got a few o\_\_\_\_\_ and e\_\_\_\_\_ to do here.
4. Time is running out, so I made a q\_\_\_\_\_ and d\_\_\_\_\_ version that will suffice for now.
5. Our hosts w\_\_\_\_\_ and d\_\_\_\_\_ us splendidly.

The best thing to hold onto in life is each other.

Audrey Hepburn



# HOW TO READ LITERATURE LIKE A PROFESSOR

You love to read and enjoy such things as well-written characters, an interesting story arc, and a distinctive style of writing. As you read, a pattern or image that appears repeatedly in an otherwise straightforward story catches your eye—for example, periodic flooding, images of birds, feathers or flying—and there is a lingering sense that something more profound keeps eluding you. For those who want to uncover the secret meaning behind the written word, *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster would be the perfect companion on an analytical journey to the land of literature.

Having taught literature for 27 years at the University of Michigan-Flint, Foster observes that memory, symbol and pattern “are the three items that, more than any other, separate the professorial reader from the rest of the crowd”. When the professorial reader reads, he will ponder such questions as “Where have I seen that before?” or “Whom does this character resemble?” Foster notes that works in the literary canon are inherently connected, and that writers consciously or subconsciously draw on what they have read, a phenomenon known as “intertextuality”. It is therefore inevitable that imagery, symbolism and allusions to Shakespeare, the Bible, Greek mythology and fairy tales are ubiquitous in the realm of Western literature. Writers from other cultural backgrounds may similarly tap into their own master list of works. For example, Foster himself admits that many readers wrongly assume the flying people in Toni Morrison’s *Song of Solomon* are based on the myth of Icarus in Greek mythology, whereas what the author really has in mind is the “flying African” myth. While his book would be more aptly titled “How to Read Western Literature Like a Professor”, Foster is correct that the only way to identify any of these intertextual references is to be conversant with the sources.

Then there are symbols, and what they might mean. Foster introduces the reader to a world where every trip is a quest that leads to self-discovery; shared meals may symbolise communion; flying is related to the concept of freedom; and a protagonist being drenched, in a river or by a sudden rain shower, may signify baptism and life beginning anew. He emphasises that almost everything that pops up again and again, even events and actions, can be symbolic, but what is being symbolised does not usually have a definitive answer. Once readers develop a “symbolic imagination”, their reading experience will be much more gratifying and rewarding.

Then there are patterns, the simple word for archetypes. Archetypes are figures, actions or situations which are imprinted on our cultural memory. Authors present their personal understanding of the world by tapping into patterns that the reader is familiar with

and can connect and relate to. Foster explores a host of archetypes, including the vampire pattern—the elderly who suck life out of the young and innocent, the hero pattern and the Christ figure. Identification of patterns enriches our reading experience of literary texts, bringing new perspectives to the narrative.

Foster deftly guides you through all these important components of literature, with a variety of examples from literary works to demonstrate how they add to a piece’s complexity and depth. The sceptic in you, however, may refuse to be coaxed and ask, “How do you know that is what the writer meant?” Obviously you are not the first one to ask this question and Foster has an answer ready. He admits that there is no author-approved answer key, “so the only basis of authority must reside in the text itself. Trust the words and the words only.” He stresses that readers have an important role to play in the creation of literary meaning. Different readers could have varying interpretations of a single piece of literature. Towards the end of his book, he encourages the reader to put what they have learnt so far into practice with an exquisite short story “The Garden Party” (1922) by Katherine Mansfield. Foster provides a response that is based on a surface reading and one that is more in-depth. Finally, he offers his own convincing interpretation, demonstrating what it means to read a work of literature critically. It is enlightening and by far the most interesting part of the book.

As its subtitle promises, Foster’s book is a “lively and entertaining guide to reading between the lines”. His tone is conversational and warm, with some personal quips along the way. For example, he comments that Shakespeare quotes “are like eligible persons of the other sex: all the good ones are taken”. His keen sense of humour is evident in the punchy and memorable chapter headings. We have, for instance, the wonderful chapter duo of “Nice to Eat with You: Acts of Communion” followed by “Nice to Eat You: Acts of Vampires”. If there were more literature professors like him, maybe more students would have studied for a literature degree.

No matter how we take pleasure in getting lost in the excitement of sensational horrors, thrillers and mysteries, at times we would crave for books that shake us to the core and stir the soul. Franz Kafka believed that “a book must be the axe for the frozen sea within us”. But if we fail to penetrate the superficial and decipher the text, literary works will lose much of their meaning and the axe will not be half as sharp as it should be. By following the breadcrumbs left behind by great minds and unravelling the hidden messages between the lines, hopefully we would find the right axe to crack the frozen sea inside us.

No man is an island entire of itself.

John Donne



# 下輩子，我們再一起度過吧

塵世間最痛苦的事，莫過於摯愛漸漸步向死亡，而自己卻無能為力。遇到如斯情況，怎麼辦才好呢？努力實現對方的夙願？還是一起周遊列國，留下美好回憶？日本科幻作家眉村卓在得悉愛妻患癌，剩下不足一年壽命時，苦苦思索：“難道沒有什麼事情，是我能夠為妻子做的嗎？”

眉村卓與悦子是高中同學，大學畢業後結婚。那時候，兩人薪金微薄，住在到處漏雨的員工宿舍，早上起來會發現最喜歡的外套被老鼠咬得破破爛爛。即使生活艱難，眉村卓仍堅持追逐夢想：成為全職科幻作家。悦子是個妙人。丈夫為了公司的工作晚歸，她只會冷淡地說：“我明天要早起，先睡了。”但當丈夫埋首寫稿時，不管多晚，她都會為他泡茶或奉上點心。當眉村卓提出辭職專心寫作時，即使當時悦子懷了孕，也有離職的打算，她也毫不猶豫地同意了。

悦子愛好古典文學和言情作品，雖然對丈夫的科幻小說不太感興趣，但仍十分支持他寫作，為他買書桌，幫忙寄送原稿，代他出席典禮儀式，處理稅務。眉村卓寫了新書，悦子總是第一個讀者，不光是糾正錯別字，有時候也會發表感想，比如：“女人才不會這麼想呢！”或是“你居然能想到這麼白痴的事呢！”然後哈哈大笑。

悦子不但守護丈夫的夢想，還充當他的良朋酒友。一有閒暇，眉村卓夫婦倆就會出門。到了目的地，隨意漫步，然後找個地方休息，細語喁喁。他們第一次去巴黎，就在聖母院前的廣場閒看放紙飛機的小孩和聊天的人們，坐了近三個小時。他們還不時一起到酒吧喝酒，直到破曉才回家。不到酒吧的日子，就在家舉杯閒聊至夜深，後來連女兒也受不了他們，才沒有繼續下去。

同學、戀人、夫婦，眉村卓和悦子由青絲走到白頭。眉村卓的作品先後獲得泉鏡花文學獎和日本科幻小說最高獎項星雲獎，在文學界站穩了腳。踏入知命之年，貪杯的他被醫生勒令禁酒，只能無奈地看着妻子一邊說“抱歉”一邊喝個不停。到了漸近花甲之

年，他建議妻子玩玩圍棋，預防老人痴呆。誰知原來妻子早已在上圍棋教室了。

如果沒有那一通電話，這種平淡而幸福的日子應該會這樣一直下去吧。

一九九七年六月十二日，眉村卓收到醫院電話，說他妻子須做緊急手術。後來，她被確診患上晚期大腸癌，只剩不到一年壽命，能活五年的機率為零。人生無常，無法抵抗，但人總希望有所作為，讓自己沒那麼無助。眉村卓自忖唯一能做的，就是每天為愛妻創作一個令她哈哈大笑的故事。他不奢望可以感動上天，只希望能讓她愉快地度過每一天。於是，在妻子完成手術一個多月後，眉村卓開始了一天一故事的寫作計劃。

他寫了三個月後，悦子說：“如果你覺得累的話，就算停下來也沒關係唷！”眉村卓回答：“這就跟為了向神祈求願望能夠實現，而反覆參拜神社一百次是一樣的啊！”他總覺得，若貿然中斷，妻子的病情便會惡化，何況他從不以此為苦。

雖然是為了妻子而寫的故事，動筆時甚至還考慮了對方心理，可是妻子的反應有時候卻和預期有落差。原本期待她哈哈大笑的文章，換來的卻是苦澀的微笑，或是出乎眉村卓意料之外的想法。眉村卓意識到，雖說結婚四十年，但自己並不完全了解妻子。

每天往來醫院、購買食物，在照顧妻子之餘抽空寫一篇故事，這就是眉村卓的日常生活。“那是慢慢走下坡的，或者說有如陀螺倒下前，那靜默迴轉中的，以一天為單位的日常。”——妻子的生命已開始倒數了。

悦子最後一次入院時，表示希望在葬禮上用“作家眉村卓夫人・村上悦子”這個稱謂，以免來弔唁的人不知道她是誰。然而，眉村卓清楚知道，妻子的真正用意是想說明“她就是一直跟着自己一起度過人生，並且長久以來一直都是他助手的人”。悦子也許還想藉此告訴丈夫，自己是多麼以他為榮！

眉村卓為妻子日復一日、年復一年地創作故事。這份堅持或許真的感動了上蒼，妻子多活了差不多五年！可是，無論多麼不捨，如何拼命挽留，最終一刻還是來臨了。妻子的遺體就在樓下，眉村卓在二樓的書桌前，寫下了第1778個故事：

終於到最後一篇故事了。我一定給你添了不少麻煩吧。今天，我要用現在的你可以閱讀的方式來寫。(下面大段空白)好看嗎？謝謝你長久以來的照應。下輩子，我們再一起度過吧。

註：文中引文出自眉村卓《獻給愛妻的1778篇故事》。

死生契闊，與子成說。執子之手，與子偕老。

《詩經·邶風·擊鼓》

- Answers to page 3:  
1. chalk and cheese  
2. sink or swim  
3. odds and ends  
4. quick and dirty  
5. win and dine



# 一棵老榆樹

村口那棵枝幹虬曲的老榆樹，不知長了多少個年頭，村裏的老人只依稀記得，從爺爺的爺爺那時候起它就已經在那裏了。老榆樹的樹幹非常粗壯，兩人也合抱不來。樹高逾十米，枝繁葉茂，為鄉人撐起一片藍天，默默地庇蔭這片土地，見證着小村的春夏秋冬、村民的喜怒哀樂。

每逢暮春時節，老榆樹便掛滿一串串銅錢狀的果實，碧油油的枝條迎風飄揚，煞是好看。孩子們可不管什麼好看不好看的，只知道又可大飽口福了。他們挑着帶鈎的長杆子，踮起腳，盡力鈎住最鮮嫩的枝條，然後手腕一轉，便把碩果累累的枝條擰了下來。有的頑猴兒自恃身手了得，腰間繫個小竹籃，爬上杆子夠不着的樹枝，先捋下一把榆錢塞進口裏，吃得心滿意足，再把榆錢放進籃子裏，直至再也盛不下了，才戀戀不捨地爬下來，帶着收穫回家。榆錢生吃甜甜黏黏的，別有一股淡淡清香。淘洗乾淨，和麩清蒸做成榆錢饅頭，吃得滿嘴都是春天的味道。

樹下放着幾塊平整的大石頭，到了盛夏，鄉親們都愛坐在這裏納涼消暑，說說里短家長。孩子在旁邊奔跑嬉戲，玩累了，就聚到老人跟前，細聽以榆樹皮充飢的往事。榆樹灰褐色的樹皮粗糙極了，滿是裂痕，老人卻說這皺巴巴的樹皮當年可是大家的救命糧：剝去外面那層皸裂的表皮，內裏白色部分曬乾後磨成細粉，可與高粱麩粉或粟米粉摻在一起做麩條。在食物匱乏的歲月，榆錢、榆樹皮和榆樹葉都是鄉民賴以生存的食糧。說到這裏，老人總會滿懷感激地輕拍老榆樹。孩子們對這番話已是耳熟能詳，這時候便調皮地模仿老人的腔調說：“這可是咱們的救命樹哇！”然後一哄而散。

老榆樹秉性堅強隱忍，即使外皮被剝去，葉子被採光，但一有喘息機會，便發揮堅韌本色，再次生枝發芽，無畏無懼地守護村民。風雲不測，某個雨夜，老榆樹被雷電擊中，主幹霎時四分五裂，人人都以為老榆樹沒救了，不料幾個月後老榆樹斷裂之處又抽出嫩枝。村裏人讚歎老榆樹生命力頑強的當兒，想起雷

公劈過的大樹據說可辟邪驅鬼，於是把劈斷的樹枝做成護身符，給小孩戴在手腕上或者掛在脖子上。那場風雨後，有些樹根裸露地面，向四周延伸，孩子們愛在這些樹根上走平衡木，看誰能走到盡頭而不掉下來，玩累了就坐在樹根上休息。老榆樹不光是孩子的樂園，也是鳥兒的天堂。麻雀、喜鵲，還有不知名的小鳥在上面棲息，每到晨曦和黃昏，吱吱喳喳叫個不停。

時光在鶯歌鳥語中悄然流逝。打榆錢的孩子長大了，講故事的老人作古了。老榆樹還是老模樣，年復年地開花結果，沉默地守望着這條村。雖然老榆樹堅韌依舊，但也敵不過時代洪流。為了發展建設，村子要修路，而老榆樹正處於規劃路線上，它的命運就此成了定局。

伐樹那天，正是春光老去，榆錢“漫天作雪飛”的時節。這時候，榆錢已呈黃白色，中間的種子已乾透，不堪食用了。風起時，榆錢不知母樹即將面臨厄運，只顧展開翅膀紛紛揚揚地向四方飄散，尋覓自己的歸宿。飛吧！飛到那無何有之鄉，廣莫之野，做一棵無用之樹，放肆自在地伸展枝椏，應時而生，順理而去。

老榆樹沒有翅膀，只能巍然挺立在那裏迎接自己的宿命。伐樹工人來了，兩個人，一把鏈鋸，不到半天，老榆樹歷經百年滄桑的高大軀幹便轟然倒下。老榆樹至死不發一言，它有它的尊嚴。榆木木質堅硬，紋理優美，是做家具的上好材料，村裏幾家人早已配好了。眼看往日傲然聳立的榆樹倒塌地上，有圍觀的村人面露難過之色，也許是想起小時候在老榆樹下玩耍的歡樂時光；有的卻難掩興奮神情，大概是對村子通路後的光明前景滿懷憧憬。

又過了好多年。村口如今開了一家小商店，孩子們每天放學後，在店外成羣結隊，蹲在一塊兒玩手機。他們哪裏知道，這裏曾經佇立過一棵老榆樹。

德不孤，必有鄰。

《論語·里仁》





# 伴你同行

世間幸有良伴，比如《文訊》與讀者以文字結緣；比如父母與子女彼此守護；比如各種生物之間唇齒相依。時光無價，不論相伴長短，都彌足珍貴。大家對以下關於相伴的軼聞趣事知道多少？請選出正確答案。

- 楊憲益與戴乃迭，一個是才華洋溢的中國富家公子，一個是慧黠聰穎的英國傳教士之女，兩人鸞鶴情深六十年，攜手翻譯了大量作品。下面哪一部不是他們合譯的作品？  
A.《儒林外史》 B.《紅樓夢》  
C.《魯迅選集》 D.《地心遊記》
- 古代文人雅士以竹為友，以竹為伴。王徽之說：“何可一日無此君？”蘇軾曰：“可使食無肉，不可使居無竹。”以下哪句不是描寫竹的詩句？  
A. 高節人相重，虛心世所知。  
B. 瘦石寒梅共結鄰，亭亭不改四時春。  
C. 咬定青山不放鬆，立根原在破巖中。  
D. 宜煙宜雨又宜風，拂水藏村復間松。
- 生物之間為求生存，會守望相助，各出奇謀。俗稱“吸盤魚”的鮎魚與鯊魚之間屬於以下哪種關係？  
A. 片害共生 B. 片利共生  
C. 互利共生 D. 寄生
- 日本一隻叫阿八的秋田犬，在主人病逝後，十年間每天風雨不改地到車站等待永遠不會歸來的主人。阿八和主人相依相伴了多長時間？  
A. 三年 B. 五年多  
C. 一年多 D. 兩年多
- 徐霞客一生尋幽探勝，與清風明月為伍，以湖光山色為伴，留下奇書《徐霞客遊記》。他的詩句“芙蓉萬仞削中天，搏挐乾坤面面懸”是描寫以下哪座名山？  
A. 太和山 B. 雞足山  
C. 雁宕山 D. 武彝山
- 大發明家愛迪生上學不足三個月，便被老師以智力遲緩為由勸退。母親自此在家親自教育他，成為他最堅強的後盾。這位偉大母親曾經從事什麼職業？  
A. 售貨員 B. 商人  
C. 教師 D. 銀行出納員
- 人有男女之分，樹木也有雌雄之別。不過，有些是雌雄同株，有些是雌雄異株。以下哪種是雌雄同株的樹木？  
A. 樟樹 B. 柳樹  
C. 楊樹 D. 銀杏
- 北宋詩人林逋隱居孤山，一生與梅花、仙鶴作伴，終身未娶，人稱“梅妻鶴子”。以下哪句詩不是出自他的作品？  
A. 鶴來松有客，苔去石無衣。  
B. 鶴閒臨水久，蜂懶採花疏。  
C. 疏影橫斜水清淺，暗香浮動月黃昏。  
D. 雪後園林才半樹，水邊籬落忽橫枝。

請在二零二零年五月二十八日前，把答案連同下列個人資料傳真至 2521 8772 或電郵至 csbolrs@csb.gov.hk。答對問題者可獲書券一張，名額五個。答案及得獎者名單將於下期公布（答案以《文訊》公布者為準）。

姓名：\_\_\_\_\_ 先生／女士（請刪去不適用者）  
 部門：\_\_\_\_\_ 電話：\_\_\_\_\_  
 職位：\_\_\_\_\_ 辦事處地址：\_\_\_\_\_



## Not-a-Mindboggler

### Possible Solution of Issue No. 78

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Aid, Day, Lad, Lid, Dial, Idly, Lady, Daily    | 3. On, To, Con, Net, Ton, Cent, Note, Tonne, Connect                |
| 2. Do, Old, Low, Owl, Row, Rod, Word, Lord, World | 4. Ego, Tree, Hero, Greet, There, Ghetto, Tether, Thereto, Together |

The following winners will be notified individually by post:

Name	Department
Cheng Kin-wah	Civil Service Bureau
Cheung Hon-lam, Gordon	Labour Department
Ip Yau-shing	Department of Health
Shea Hiu-kwan, Maggie	Department of Health
Sin Yuk-ching	Department of Health

Issue No. 80 (June 2020) : Home

二零二零年六月第八十期主題：家

Issue No. 81 (September 2020) : Choices

二零二零年九月第八十一期主題：抉擇

Contributions from colleagues are welcome. Please refer to Issue No. 71 for details. 歡迎同事投稿，細則請參閱第七十一期。

中文顧問 樊善標教授

英語顧問 Prof. Jason Gleckman

Hon Chinese Adviser Prof. Fan Sin-piu

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