

The Art of Forgetting

Memories are elusive. We have no control over which yesterdays to keep and which ones to erase. There are certainly moments we want to hold on to, and some we'd rather forget—that mean comment from a co-worker, that moment of excruciating embarrassment, or worse, that betrayal by a friend. Unfortunately, it is often those memories causing us anguish and pain that we retain and replay in our minds over and over, and in so doing, make it ever more difficult to let them go.

In the last years of his life, the German philosopher Immanuel Kant dismissed Martin Lampe, his faithful servant of 40 years. However, keeping Lampe out of sight proved far easier than keeping him out of mind. The ageing philosopher was so frustrated that he wrote himself a note: "Remember, from now on the name of Lampe must be completely forgotten." Kant would have known this was a futile exercise had he heard of the famous "don't think of a white bear" psychological experiment. The harder you try not to think of something, the more likely it is to come up in your mind. The reminder about forgetting Lampe paradoxically attests to our impotence of controlling our memory.

While there are numerous techniques for remembering, there is no comparable strategy for forgetting. Are we doomed to be haunted by unwanted memories? Ajahn Brahm, a Buddhist monk and author of many popular books, provides a simple way to delete bad memories. In his book *Good? Bad? Who knows?*, Ajahn Brahm advises:

Write out all the bad memories on a piece of paper as before. They need to be brought to the surface before they can be deleted. Only this time use a special type of paper, the most appropriate material for shitty memories. Write them out on a roll of toilet paper. When you have finished with the writing, take it to your bathroom, place the paper with the stinky writing in the toilet bowl where it belongs, and then...flush.

This sounds easy and achievable, although sometimes the most painful memories refuse to be obliterated. Amy Tan, the author of *The Joy Luck Club* and other best-sellers, knows this well. Tan's novels, which often feature mother-daughter relationships, are a reflection of her personal experiences. Tan writes about her mother in her memoir, *The Opposite of Fate*:

She criticised me, humiliated me in front of others, forbade me to do this or that without even listening to one good reason why it should be the other way. I swore to myself I would never forget these injustices. I would store them, harden my heart, make myself as impenetrable as she was.

When Tan was 16, she said the most hateful words to her mother, "I hate you. I wish I were dead..." Thirty-one years later, Tan received a call from her mother who had descended into Alzheimer's. "Amy-ah," she said quickly in Chinese, "I feel like I can't remember many things. I can't remember what I did yesterday. I can't remember what happened a long time ago, what I did to you...I know I did something to hurt you...I did terrible things. But now I can't remember what...And I just want to tell you...I hope you can forget, just as I've forgotten."

Her mother died six months later. The reconciliation with her mother ultimately sets Tan free. She writes, "Together we knew in our hearts what we should remember, what we can forget."

Thanks to her mother's healing words in the last days of her life, Tan can forget about her wounds and move on. Forgetting, however, is difficult for those who receive no explanation or apologies for past injustices. Here is where the old adage "forgive and forget" comes into play. To forget, one must first forgive. And forgiveness begins with remembering. Recall the situation and look at it from a more objective perspective. Remember what you have learned from the experience. Recall a time when you were forgiven for something you did wrong. Remember how you felt then and consider offering the same gift to others. If you can remember all of these, then those agonising memories may lose some of their sting and finally fade away.

Research has revealed that the act of forgiveness not only enables us to forget details of an offence, but also has a huge benefit to our health. Dr VanderWeele, a Harvard professor of epidemiology, says, "Our research indicates that forgiving an offender over time leads to lower levels of depression and anxiety and higher levels of hope, happiness, life satisfaction, and self-esteem." If the urge to retaliate persists, you might want to heed the advice of Oscar Wilde: "Always forgive your enemies; nothing annoys them so much."

Mastering the art of forgetting does not mean you go on with your life without ever thinking again about what has happened. It just means that when we see or hear things that remind us of unpleasant experiences, they do not bother us any more. By choosing to forgive and forget, you stand the chance of restoring your own peace of mind, and that allows you to put your past behind you and move on.



博士熱愛的算式

每天都是嶄新的一天，無論今天多麼痛苦，翌日便忘得一乾二淨，這是祝福，還是詛咒？醫學上，這種狀況名為“順向失憶症”，患者能保留患病前的記憶，卻無法形成新記憶。雖然忘記了悲傷，但也無法留住快樂。每天碰到的事、遇見的人，在腦海裏不復存在，這樣的人生有什麼意義？或許我們可以在日本作家小川洋子的作品《博士熱愛的算式》中找到答案。

博士六十四歲，十七年前一場車禍，令他的記憶容量只有八十分鐘，像錄影帶一樣，新的內容不斷蓋過以往儲存的影像。意外發生後，博士失去了大學教職，生活靠寡嫂接濟。雖然足不出戶，但他每天都穿西裝打領帶。西裝上密密麻麻夾滿了紙條，提醒自己重要的事情，最殘舊的那張紙條上寫着：“我的記憶容量只有八十分鐘”。他的時間永遠停留在一九七五年，那時他還在大學裏研究數學論，西裝上沒有夾着紙條，而他心愛的投手江夏豐還是阪神虎隊的王牌，球衣背號是28，數學上難得的完全數。

當博士掉進時間深淵，在失去記憶的混沌中徬徨之際，他能夠緊緊抓住的只有數學。數學是他連結過去、現在與未來的唯一紐帶，也是他與別人溝通的工具。春去秋來，他日復一日埋首思考數學問題，過着與世隔絕的生活。直到一天，女管家來到博士家裏幫傭——

博士見到女管家的第一句話是：“你穿幾號鞋子？”

“24號。”

“哇，多純潔的數字，是四的連乘。”

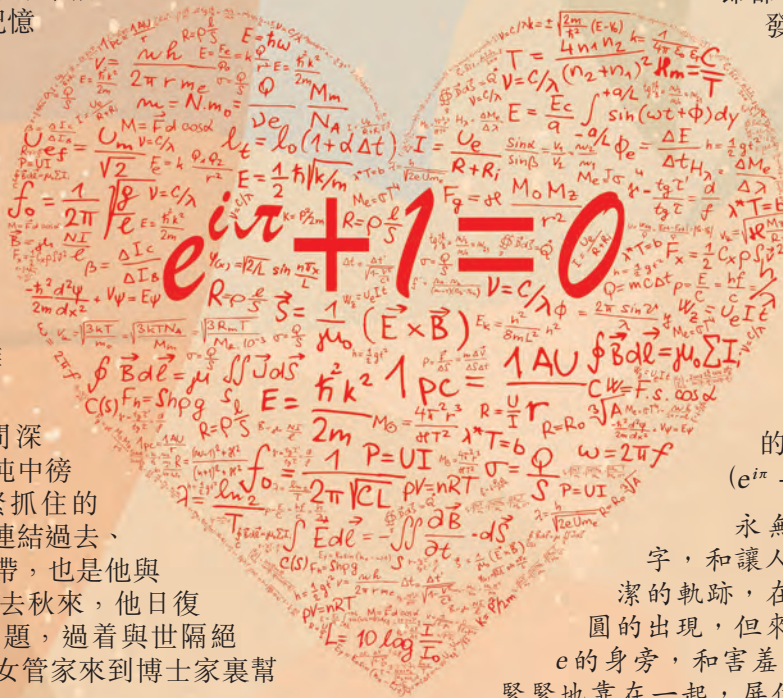
每天清晨，博士都會在玄關與“初次見面”的女管家展開與數字有關的對話。除了鞋子尺寸，他還問過郵遞區號、生日日期、體重、名字筆劃等數字。博士總是能隨口說出數字之間隱秘的聯繫。比如管家的電話號碼5761455是一億以下的質數總和；管家的生日220與博士腕錶背面刻着的號碼284是天造地設的友誼數。在博士眼中，數字之美無處不在。

雖然博士的記憶只有八十分鐘，但他天生對小孩溫柔的本性一點未變。第一次跟管家獨力撫養的十歲兒子見面，博士便很自然把孩子擁入懷裏，撫摸着他略為平坦的頭頂，親暱地說：“你是根號。這是一個面對任何數字，都不會有絲毫為難之色，以寬大的胸懷加以包容的符號，是根號。”從此，博士的袖口多了一張紙條：“新管家和他十歲的兒子√”。

博士對根號的愛，從沒有因為“新相識”而短少半分。博士以前很厭惡思緒被打斷，但現在每當聽到根號回來，都會立刻走出書房迎接他。根號會主動脫下帽子，讓博士摸頭，等待博士再一次告訴他根號的偉大。研究高等數學的博士，熱心指導根號做小學數學學習題。無論根號的答案多麼不着邊際，博士總是能夠發掘出他的優點，讓根號充滿自信，並體會到數學的趣味和意義。博士無私單純的愛，也得到女管家和根號真誠的回報，三個人成為彼此生命之光。

故事既無跌宕起伏的劇情，也欠驚心動魄的場面，只由一個個生活零碎片段拼合而成：做功課、準備晚飯、看棒球比賽、看病、開生日會等。大部分情節都在博士那所破舊的房子裏發生，故事裏的角色連名字也欠奉。然而，這個簡單溫馨的故事卻打動了無數人心。

在小川洋子筆下，理性的數學成為優美動人的旋律，數學公式是上帝編織的蕾絲花紋，美得令人讚歎。書中這樣描寫備受博士熱愛，同時也是數學界公認最美麗的算式——歐拉恆等式（ $e^{i\pi} + 1 = 0$ ）：



永無止境地循環下去的數字，和讓人難以捉摸的虛數畫出簡潔的軌跡，在某一點落地。雖然沒有圓的出現，但來自宇宙的 π 飄然地來到 e 的身旁，和害羞的 i 握着手。他們的身體緊緊地靠在一起，屏住呼吸，但有人加了1以後，世界就毫無預警地發生了巨大的變化。一切都歸於0。

這項公式把數學中最重要的幾個常數完美地聯繫起來。在上帝的記事本裏，每個人都獨一無二，但總有一項公式讓彼此相連。

博士說：“永恆的真實是肉眼看不到的，也不會受到物質、自然現象和感情的影響，但數學可以解開真實的奧秘，也可以用來表現真實，任何東西都無法阻擋。”與數學公式一樣，愛也恆久真實。八十分鐘、八十年，都不過是天地一瞬。當我們消失後，證明我們來過的，只有別人腦海裏的記憶。這些記憶閃閃發光，能夠在寒冬裏溫暖人心。下雨天和根號一起做算術題的博士；看球賽時用身體為根號擋開界外球的博士；收到管家和根號送的江夏豐限量超級棒球卡時感動得閉上雙眼的博士……都成為管家和根號永不磨滅的回憶。

博士身上掛着江夏豐棒球卡，與長大了的根號在海邊快樂地投球。明年春天，根號就要當數學教師了。



Forget Me Not: *Still Alice*

Alice Howland lives an enviable life. She has a successful career as a distinguished professor of cognitive psychology at Harvard. She is physically fit and happily married with three grown children. When she finds herself experiencing some minor but nagging memory lapses such as forgetting words in lectures and conversation and asking the same question repeatedly, she attributes them to too much multitasking and the approach of the menopause. But when she gets utterly lost a few blocks from home during a morning jog, she is alarmed and finally goes to see a neurologist. On 19 January, the day when her mother and sister died in a car accident 32 years ago, she learns that she has an early onset of Alzheimer's. She is only 50.

Alice is the principal character in Lisa Genova's debut novel *Still Alice*, which tells an agonising but engrossing story of a woman's descent into the netherworld of Alzheimer's. Although fictional, the book gives a realistic portrayal of how the illness affects its victims, so much so that it has been endorsed by the Alzheimer's Association as an accurate depiction of the disease. The book was adapted into a film of the same name in 2014 starring Julianne Moore, who won numerous accolades for her role as Alice, including a Golden Globe and an Oscar.

Written from Alice's point of view, *Still Alice* takes the reader into Alice's head to witness those moments when things are obviously not quite right, for example, going to the office in the middle of the night in her nightgown, or walking into her neighbour's kitchen to make tea. Alice, as well as the reader, begins to realise that her perspective on things is not to be trusted. As the disease progresses, we witness the devastating symptoms of Alzheimer's grow in frequency, such as when she tries to call her husband with a television remote control and when she forgets the name of her own children. Slowly losing her mind, Alice is shown drifting in an ocean of frustration, confusion, isolation, and paranoia. And we are there, right along with her.

In portraying Alice's personal struggle with Alzheimer's, Genova examines the unpredictable effects of the illness on the people around the afflicted person. After Alice is diagnosed with the disease, her colleagues avoid her as if she is infectious. Alice's husband, John, a cancer cell biologist, resorts to denial. He accepts a job out of state since he can't bear to watch his "beautiful and brilliant wife" deteriorate into a shell of her former self. Her daughters, Anna and Lydia, set aside their sibling rivalry in their mother's time of need. Lydia, an aspiring actress who is viewed as the least competent in the family, proves to be the most loving, unafraid to step closer to her mother's abyss. When Alice can no longer recognise her family—her husband becomes "the man", Anna becomes "the

mother", Lydia becomes "the actress"—her children choose to cherish their relationship even as it disintegrates, offering to act as her anchor to the world.

While Alice's family bonds are stronger than ever, every facet of her personal identity is lost in the throes of dementia, beginning with her hard-won achievements as a tenured Harvard professor and research scientist. Her roles as a supportive wife, mother and grandmother, and, ultimately, her self-awareness are also lost to the disease. "Is the part of my brain that's responsible for my unique 'me-ness' vulnerable to this disease?" she asks. "Or is my identity something that transcends neurons, proteins, and defective molecules of DNA? Is my soul and spirit immune to the ravages of Alzheimer's?" These haunting questions must have run through the minds of many patients with the disease when they are still *compos mentis*. How many neurons can Alice lose and still be Alice? The question is no less paradoxical than the ship of Theseus.

Alice wears a butterfly necklace passed down by her mother, who once said that butterflies had short yet beautiful lives. "Butterfly" is also the name of a file on her computer that she instructs her future self to open should she ever fail to correctly answer any of the five simple questions: What month is it? Where do you live? Where is your office? When is Anna's birthday? How many children do you have? The file will provide a step-by-step guide to committing suicide. One year after she sets up the plan, the daily test has totally slipped her mind, but it seems her husband has somehow found out about it. He takes her to an ice cream shop and leads her through the questions in the butterfly test while Alice is licking her chocolate ice cream. When Alice fails to answer any of them, John asks, "Alice, do you still want to be here?" The clueless Alice answers, "Yes. I like sitting here with you. And I'm not done yet," pleased with herself that she finally has a confident answer.

Alice considers that life is not worth living when the ordeal of her disease exceeds the enjoyment of such pleasures as ice cream. In the final pages of the book, Genova leaves readers a glimpse of light in the darkness. Alice still experiences happiness as she plays with her first grandchild without really knowing who the baby is. She still senses love from Lydia's acting without understanding a word of her monologue. Memories fade, but the moments of simple joy remain. Clouded by the past, untethered from the present and devoid of any future, Alice is literally living in the moment. If there is any solace to be found, it may lie in the words of the English poet William Blake, "To see a world in a grain of sand and a heaven in a wild flower, hold infinity in the palm of your hand and eternity in an hour."

The stupid neither forgive nor forget; the naive forgive and forget; the wise forgive but do not forget.

Thomas Szasz

今晚食乜餸

豉油撈飯

鹹蛋滾湯

生骨大頭菜

蒸生瓜

波羅雞

有道是“食在廣州”，粵菜是中國八大菜系之一。廣府人愛吃，自然衍生出許多與食物有關的俗語。“炒魷魚”、“燉冬菇”、“牛肉乾”這些俗語相信大家都耳熟能詳，但隨着社會變遷，一些生動有趣的廣東俗語和歇後語漸漸被人遺忘。現略備薄酌，與大家重溫舊時滋味。

波羅雞

【意思】：形容人愛佔小便宜，蹭吃蹭喝蹭用

【解釋】：相傳廣州南海神廟前曾植有波羅蜜樹，故又稱波羅廟。農曆二月十三日是波羅誕，清代番禺舉人崔弼《波羅外紀》記載了波羅誕的盛況：“糊紙作雞，塗以金翠或為青鸞彩鳳，大小不一，謂之波羅雞。凡謁神者、遊覽者必買符及雞以歸，饋贈鄰里，謂雞比符尤靈。”人們以紙糊或泥塑公雞作為祈福物，引申歇後語“一味靠雞”，諷刺人愛佔別人便宜。“波羅雞”也有寫作“菠蘿雞”。

【例子】：次次一叫佢夾錢就走人，正一波羅雞。

蒸生瓜

【意思】：形容人長不大，傻裏傻氣

【解釋】：粵語“熟”與“淑”同音，瓜沒有蒸熟，即“熟(淑)唔透”，用以取笑女孩子不夠成熟，不成淑女。根據《廣州話俗語詞典》，“蒸生瓜”的歇後語是“佢佢(粵音“腎”)地”，並云：“佢：良，像蘿蔔不脆、芋頭不麪等。也用來形容人愚鈍，相當於‘二百五’。”

【例子】：咁大個女，仲係成隻蒸生瓜咁。

生骨大頭菜

【意思】：慣壞了的孩子

【解釋】：大頭菜即大頭沖菜，人們一般把莖部醃製成鹹菜。大頭菜種得不好，纖維會又粗又硬，吃得滿嘴是渣，像有骨頭一樣。在粵語裏，“種”與“縱”同音，所以那些因父母溺愛而頑劣難教的孩子，就稱為“生骨大頭菜”，意思是“縱(種)壞了”。一九三九年

出品的香港電影《生骨大頭菜》中五個兒子無一成材，全部都是“生骨大頭菜”。內地流行語稱這種孩子為“熊孩子”。

【例子】：你樣樣都就晒佢，因住縱到佢生骨大頭菜咁。

鹹蛋滾湯

【意思】：形容心灰意冷

【解釋】：鹹蛋下湯後，蛋黃會變硬，所以“鹹蛋滾湯”這句歇後語的下半句是“心都實埋”，表示失望透頂的意思，用普通話來說就是“心冷了半截”。

【例子】：見到佢咁樣對啲兄弟，真係鹹蛋滾湯，心都實埋。

豉油撈飯

【意思】：形容搞門面功夫、糊弄別人

【解釋】：一碗熱氣騰騰的白米飯淋上醬油，原本單調乏味的白飯頓時增添鮮味和顏色，如果再加上豬油或蔥油拌勻，味道更佳，這也是很多人的童年回憶。可是，白飯始終還是白飯。因此，“豉油撈飯”這句歇後語的後半句是“整色整水”，諷刺人裝模作樣，故弄玄虛。

【例子】：明明係平嘢，包到咁靚，真係豉油撈飯，整色整水。

粵語果然博大精深，單單幾道小菜名，就能表達鄙視、失望、恨鐵不成鋼等諸般情緒，生動傳神。話說回來，有一道菜千萬別請人吃——“冬瓜豆腐”。冬瓜和豆腐都是喪席上的食物，寓意不祥，大家都不想“有乜冬瓜豆腐”，對吧？現在再考考你，你知道以下五個歇後語的下半句是什麼嗎？（答案在本期找）

1. 深海石斑
2. 年晚煎堆
3. 老火炆鴨
4. 倒掛臘鴨
5. 鯪魚骨炒飯

人之有德於我也，不可忘也；
吾有德於人也，不可不忘也。

《戰國策·魏策四》



Lest We Forget

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I still vividly remember my childhood days when I would gaze at the barracks on the top of a ridge in pitch darkness from the window of my room. The sight of heavy army trucks entering the barracks gate always brought to my mind soldiers in transit with their missions accomplished. Such scenes ignited my curiosity about the Edwardian buildings on the hillside and, subsequently, my interest in that almost forgotten battle.

Now renamed Lei Yue Mun Park and Holiday Village, this exotic place was known to me as the Lyemun Barracks in my teens. Built and then expanded during the period between 1890 and 1939, the complex of the whitewashed buildings played a vital role in coastal defence in those early years. Alongside the Shing Mun Redoubt and the Wong Nai Chung Gap Bunkers, the complex is one of a few surviving monuments to the Battle of Hong Kong. As veterans passed away and monuments were razed, the battle has sadly sunk into oblivion in a matter of decades.

It was December 1941. A storm was brewing in the Pacific Ocean while wars were raging on mainland China and the distant European continent. Supported by fleets of bombers, more than 25,000 battle-hardened Japanese soldiers were deployed along the border of Hong Kong, ready to pour into the British enclave. The defenders, a garrison of no more than 11,000 British, Indian and Canadian soldiers, were hastily assembled not long before the war, with virtually no aerial or naval support. The odds were obviously against the defenders from the onset of the war.

The invaders crossed the border in the small hours of 8 December. After a brief fight at the Shing Mun Redoubt, the Gin Drinker's Line, an 18-kilometre defensive line running through the mountains to the north of the Kowloon Peninsula, was breached. The Scots fought back heroically, but failed to turn the tide of the battle in their favour. To familiarise themselves with the hilly terrain during their pre-war preparation, the Scots ingeniously named the tunnels after some of the London landmarks, like Regent Street, Piccadilly Circus and Shaftesbury Avenue. Such names are still recognisable at the entrances of the tunnels even today, evoking nostalgia for the thirties in the lush green field.

The Kowloon Peninsula, subsequent to the New Territories, fell into Japanese hands after barely four days. The invaders made a ferocious attempt to cross the Victoria Harbour. At the Sai Wan Battery of the Lyemun Barracks, dozens of members of the Volunteer Defence Corps put up resistance bravely despite their inferiority in number. Upon capitulation, there were horrendous reports of on-the-spot execution of wounded prisoners of war at the Salesian Mission House nearby. Still standing intact in Chai Wan Road, the monastery was once said to be a haunted place in the neighbourhood, a vivid testimony to the atrocities committed by the invaders.

Strolling along the tree-lined paths in the Lei Yue Mun Park and Holiday Village, one will not find anything left from the war, not even a trace of the spilled blood or marks left by shrapnel on stonework. The billowing smoke clouds, gleaming helmets and shiny bayonets are long gone. What remains is nothing but an

exquisitely mixed sense of tranquility and poetry. There lie the barracks, once quarters for married officers, where the names of English poets like John Milton, William Wordsworth and Alfred Tennyson can be found on the facades, creating a poetic and harmonious atmosphere against the emerald valley behind.

As William Wordsworth puts it, "death is the quiet haven of us all". Death is the destination we all share, and war heroes are, regrettably, no exception. Brigadier John Lawson was the highest ranking Canadian officer killed in action during the Second World War. In October 1941, he shipped out to Hong Kong with two ill-trained battalions of nearly 2,000 new recruits under his command in a futile effort to reinforce the small garrison. A sizeable force of these soldiers was assigned to defend Mount Butler and Wong Nai Chung Gap. Despite their gallantry, the defensive line was broken by the overwhelming force of the enemy, and Lawson's headquarters bunker in Wong Nai Chung Gap was cut off. With Japanese soldiers firing at point blank range, he was reported to have made his final transmission, saying "I am going outside to fight it out." He was tragically shot down not far away from his bunker.

Lawson's sacrifice was far from an isolated case of heroic deeds. Over 500 of his soldiers never returned home. Among them was Sergeant Major John Osborn, whose final act was the most remarkable. During an attack on Mount Butler, he saved his comrades by throwing himself on a Japanese grenade, which exploded and killed him instantly. Posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for his exemplary valour and selflessness, Osborn was the only recipient of that honour in the Battle of Hong Kong.

With colossal losses of men and shortage of equipment and supplies, Sir Mark Young, the then Hong Kong Governor, submitted his surrender on Christmas Day in 1941, and the rest is history. In a war perceived by Winston Churchill to be without "the slightest chance of holding Hong Kong or relieving it", the Hong Kong garrison fearlessly fought against all odds to defend the besieged city for 18 brutal days, displaying the highest degree of gallantry, endurance and self-sacrifice.

Lawson's headquarters bunker, like many war structures in Hong Kong, has now become decrepit and dilapidated, with some parts having crumbled into fragments. Yet amid the ruins, it is only fitting that a minute of silence and mourning should be observed for the fallen, those valiant souls who fought to the last and proudly sacrificed themselves in defence of our city. They shall never grow old.



Photo by: Baycrest

True reconciliation does not consist in merely forgetting the past.

Nelson Mandela

永恆的陽光

為了子女出人頭地，很多父母不惜一擲千金為孩子報讀增強記憶的課程，同時嘗試種種聲稱能提升記憶力的方法，務求令子女過目不忘，考試測驗輕鬆過關。然而，隨着人生閱歷增多，嘗過生活的甜酸苦辣，記憶中有太多遺憾和悔恨，這時很多人或許更想學習如何忘記。假如世上有一家專門替人消除記憶的診所，你會光顧嗎？

法國導演米高哥治執導的電影《無痛失戀》中恰恰有這麼一家診所。電影中占基利飾演的男主角阿祖羞怯內向，而琦溫斯莉飾演的女主角嘉雯則熱情開朗，兩個性格大相徑庭的人偏偏互生情愫，成為戀人。可是，相戀短短兩年，二人的關係便由你儂我儂轉為兩相生厭。一次爭吵後，嘉雯氣忿難平，決定放棄這段感情，便跑到那家忘情診所，把她與阿祖交往的一點一滴刪除得一乾二淨，然後展開新生活。

阿祖去找嘉雯求和，卻赫然發現嘉雯完全不認得自己，還交了新男友。阿祖得悉她早已把二人的回憶一筆勾銷後，又痛又恨，決定以其人之道，還治其人之身。情人節前夕，他拿着兩大袋載滿二人回憶的舊物，走進那家診所。

我們或許也有類似嘉雯和阿祖的經歷：愛上一個人，日子久了，愛情在大大小小的矛盾和磨擦中消失殆盡，心上人最終變成陌路人。說不定我們也希望有一家忘情診所，讓我們無痛失戀，不但清除感情的記憶，最好還能把人生中所有不如意事和錯誤決定等也通通刪掉。然而，這樣做真的能使心靈回復恬靜、一塵不染嗎？

在電影中，醫生告訴阿祖：“今晚消除記憶後，明天你一醒來，就像什麼都沒有發生過，嶄新的人生在等着你。”技術員操作着儀器，阿祖躺在牀上，開始做一個長長的夢。回溯往事，除了那些雞毛蒜皮的爭吵，他們原來曾共度那麼多美好的時光：在街頭看大象巡遊、在汽車戲院一起為主角配音、在被窩裏談心、躺在冰封的河面上看星星……這時，他才發現，忘記她等於忘掉了一切。他拉着嘉雯在記憶碎片裏拼

命奔跑，希望能逃脫背後漸漸瓦解的世界，但有關她的記憶仍然由近至遠一幕幕被抹掉。終於到了他們初遇那一天，在兩人相識的蒙托克海灘上，別墅開始崩塌，他深愛的女孩逐漸從他的記憶中消失。在忘記前那一刻，他說：“我愛你。”然後聽到她低語：“來蒙托克找我。”

記憶洗掉後，阿祖重新開始自己的人生。情人節那天，一臉頹唐的阿祖上班途中，突然心血來潮，翹班坐火車去了蒙托克海邊，一個染了一頭藍灰色頭髮的女子主動跟他搭訕。他想：“為什麼每個我遇見的女人只要對我有些微注意，我就會愛上她？”她說：“我覺得我會嫁給你。”正如電影《一代宗師》裏的對白：“世間所有的相遇，都是久別重逢。”即使抹走了記憶，但個人的喜好、性格或許註定了在重遇對方之際，依然會一見傾心。就像截肢的人依然感覺到失去的肢體，曾闖進你生命中的人即使離開了，也總會留下一些東西，成為你人生中不可磨滅的一部分。

電影英文片名“Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind”來自十八世紀英國詩人Alexander Pope的詩句註。電影中幾位主角的遭遇告訴我們：世上既沒有無瑕的心靈，也沒有永恆的陽光。日暖風和固然教人欣喜，夜雨連綿卻也可堪回味。台灣作家楊小雲寫過：“每個人的一生，都是一長串的人際關係所組成，其中當然有好有不好，重點不在於好壞，而在於只有經歷這許多互動和經驗，才使我們脫離幼稚，走過青澀而邁向成熟。”再次相遇的阿祖和嘉雯會有怎樣的未來？大家自己找答案吧。

註：節錄自 Alexander Pope 長詩 *Eloisa to Abelard*：

How happy is the blameless vestal's lot!
The world forgetting, by the world forgot:
Eternal sunshine of the spotless mind!
Each pray'r accepted, and each wish resign'd...

凡愛過的，永不遺忘。

余光中《永遠，我等》

〈今晚食乜餸〉參考答案：

1. 好癡（魚）
2. 人有我有
3. 得把嘴硬
4. 油嘴滑舌
5. 唔食餓死，食又哽死



蜀道難

蜀是四川的簡稱，蜀道泛指由四川盆地通往外界的水陸道路，具體則指古代由關中通往蜀地的通道，包括金牛道、褒斜道、陰平道、子午道、荔枝道等。四川羣山環繞，地勢險峻，古蜀道向以驚險著稱。“蜀道之難，難於上青天……上有六龍回日之高標，下有衝波逆折之回川。黃鶴之飛尚不得過，猿猱欲度愁攀援。”李白一首《蜀道難》，把蜀道的艱難險阻生動呈現在讀者眼前。滄桑古老的蜀道，不知走過了多少風雲人物，響起過幾回鼓角爭鳴。

春秋時期，在大、小劍山一帶峭壁處，五力士率領千名民卒，日夜劈山開路，好把秦惠王饋贈蜀王的稀世奇珍——糞金石牛——帶回蜀國。然而，道路開通後，沒有了羣山阻隔，蜀王迎來的不是能日糞千金的石牛，而是所向披靡的秦國鐵騎。葭萌一戰，蜀國軍隊在沒有防備下大敗，古蜀國也隨之滅亡。

楚漢爭霸時代，褒斜棧道燃起了熊熊烈火。劉邦為取信於項羽，以示自己無回關中之心，不惜把棧道付之一炬。然而，短短四個月後，他使用韓信之計，翻山越嶺奇襲陳倉，一舉攻佔關中平原，為日後取天下奠定基礎。

三國末期，一羣魏國將士看着眼前的懸崖峭壁，面露絕望之色。他們跟隨將軍鄧艾走在人跡罕至的崇山峻嶺中，遇水搭橋，逢山開路，已行軍數百里，目的是偷渡陰平，直取成都。此時，魏國另一名大將鍾會統領的十數萬大軍正被蜀將姜維率三萬蜀兵堵在劍門關外，久攻不下。鄧艾這支奇兵成為魏軍攻蜀成敗之關鍵。可是，當鄧艾一行跋山涉水來到摩天嶺，卻發現無路可開，加上兵糧將盡，士氣大挫。年近七十的鄧艾身先士卒，以毛氈裹身，順着山坡滾了下去。士兵為之感動，紛紛仿效。翻越險山後，鄧艾大軍勢如破竹，攻下綿陽，直逼成都。最後蜀主劉禪投降，三國鼎立告終。

四百多年後，一葉扁舟沿江而下，船頭一名廿歲出頭的青年遙望兩岸風光，心情激越，揚聲詠歎：“山隨平野盡，江入大荒流。月下飛天鏡，雲生結海樓。”這名青年正是離開蜀中仗劍遠遊的李白。詩仙隨口一吟，便成千古絕句；“繡口一吐，就半個盛唐”。¹

達達的馬蹄聲由遠而近，子午道的青石板路揚起漫天塵土。此時正是荔枝成熟季節，驛使日夜兼程，把鮮荔枝送到千里外的長安，供三千寵愛在一身的楊貴妃享用。唐代詩人杜牧《過華清宮絕句》詩云：“長安回望繡成堆，山頂千門次第開，一騎紅塵妃子笑，無人知是荔枝來。”玄宗奢靡無道，種下了日後安史之亂的禍根。

天寶十五年，盤曲纏繞的金牛古道上，一隊疲憊不堪的人馬默默走在雨中，為首的正是為博愛妃一笑，修築荔枝道的唐玄宗。“漁陽鼙鼓動地來，驚破霓裳羽衣曲。”²安祿山造反，潼關失守，長安危在旦夕，玄宗帶着楊貴妃倉皇棄城而逃。往日進貢荔枝的僻遠之地，如今竟成避難之所。不知何處傳來斷斷續續的鈴聲，與雨聲相和，玄宗思念起香消玉殞於馬嵬驛的貴妃，無處話淒涼，只得低吟一曲《雨霖鈴》。

大唐盛世化為烏有，在戰火摧殘下，老百姓流離失所，飽受苦難，詩人杜甫也經歷了“三年饑走荒山道”的漂泊日子。乾元二年冬天，杜甫年近半百，帶着一家大小，在入蜀的棧道上蹣跚前行。雨聲瀟瀟，叢林莽莽，依絕壁而建的棧道凌空而起，下臨湍急的嘉陵江，教人望而生畏。“危途中繫盤，仰望垂線縷。滑石歇誰鑿？浮梁裊相拄。”杜甫《龍門閣》一詩道盡棧道的陡峭險惡。經過一番艱險路途，杜甫一家終於在成都西郊浣花溪畔安頓下來，建茅屋而居，暫別顛沛流離的日子。

梁啟超有言：“歷史者，英雄之舞台也；舍英雄幾無歷史。”名留千古的，是君王美人，是公侯將相，是詩詞大家。與鄧艾一同披荊斬棘的士卒、隨玄宗左右的近侍和宮女、修築棧道的工匠等小人物，早已湮沒於歷史的洪流中，泛不起一絲漣漪。小人物在歷史事件中往往只是一個個冰冷的數字，沒有面目，沒有聲音。史冊沒有記下同袍目睹戰友失足墮崖的痛哭聲，也沒有載述長安城百姓一朝醒來，得悉被天子拋棄時的驚惶失措。《舊唐書》記載，唐玄宗車駕抵達成都時，“扈從官吏軍士到者一千三百人，宮女二十四人而已。”這一千多名倖存者倘或有一二人留下其隨帝王入蜀的經歷，未嘗不可於歷史幽微處補苴罅漏。個人命運始終與時代緊緊相連，愈多普通人的經歷和體驗得以記錄、流傳下來，愈能拼湊出更全面真實的歷史。

兩千多年過去了，曾經兵馬雜沓而過，商旅熙攘而行的古蜀道，如今罕有人至。正值黃昏時分，一抹斜陽照在古道關前殘碑之上，正是“儘珠簾畫棟，卷不及暮雨朝雲，便斷碣殘碑，都付與蒼煙落照。”³

¹ 余光中《尋李白》。

² 白居易《長恨歌》。

³ 昆明大觀樓孫髯翁長聯。

圖片來源：
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消失中的傳統習俗

中國自古崇尚禮儀，大至婚喪節慶，小至座位方向，都有約定俗成的儀軌。時移世易，不少傳統習俗已逐漸被人遺忘或變得面目全非。現在就考考大家對以下習俗有多少認識：

1. 過往在廣東地區，每逢年三十晚，父母便會吩咐小朋友拿着紅雞蛋、燈籠走到街頭巷尾，邊走邊高聲叫賣一樣東西，期望他們新一年勤奮好學。他們賣的是什麼？
2. 農曆十月十五是下元節，人們在這天除了祭祖外，還會祭祀哪位神明？
3. 七夕節源自牛郎織女的故事，古代女子在這晚向織女祈求心靈手巧，故又名乞巧節。女子在七夕這天穿針鬥巧，而且還會捉一種動物，視之為“吉祥物”。這種動物是什麼？
4. 每年正月，新界圍村人會舉行什麼儀式讓新生男丁認祖歸宗？

5. 古時家家戶戶都會在廚房供奉灶王爺。相傳每逢歲晚，灶王爺便會返回天庭，向玉皇大帝稟報各家各戶過去一年的善惡。為使灶君口出美言，人們會為其準備灶糖、麥芽糖等甜食。這個儀式稱為什麼？

6. “正是浴蘭時節動，菖蒲酒美清尊共。”詞人歐陽修一邊浸着芬芳的蘭草浴，一邊品嚐着香醇的菖蒲酒，慵懶愜意，叫人羨慕。這首《漁家傲》描述的是哪個節日？

7. 中秋節是闔家團聚的重要節日，除了月餅外，中秋節還有很多應節食品，例如柚子、芋頭、菱角等，各有寓意。其中，菱角寓意什麼？

8. 每年中秋節，薄扶林和大坑居民都會舞動火龍，祈求上天降福解災，最後把火龍拋入海中，及至近年才因環保而改為焚龍。以往把火龍拋進海裏的儀式稱為什麼？

請在二零二一年五月二十七日前，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，名額十個。答案及得獎者名單將於下期公布（答案以《文訊》公布者為準）。

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Not-a-Mindboggler

The following winners will be notified individually by email:

Solution of Issue No. 82

1. False
2. True
3. False
4. False
5. True
6. True
7. False
8. False
9. False
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Issue No. 84 (July 2021) : Waiting

二零二一年七月第八十四期主題：等待

Issue No. 85 (October 2021) : Seeking

二零二一年十月第八十五期主題：追尋

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