

**INSIDE**

1. Biography of a Teacher.
2. Portrayal of Luck.
3. Tang – The Gift
4. Interview with BCSE toppers.
5. My experience as a teenager.
6. Common Errors in English.
7. Japanese Education Mamas.
8. Time and Tide wait for none.
9. Preamble to the constitution of UNESCO.
10. Kindly tell me Why.
11. My First Day in UA.
12. Education Empowers.
13. Teachers
14. The hidden lie.  
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Dolma Yangdon  
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**Biography of a teacher**

(Mr. Norbu Gyaltshen, Principal, Ugyen Academy)

***He's experimental; he's meticulous; and he's shrewd! Read on about how Ugyen Academy evolves from the vision of one man set to do the feat never been done before.***

Namgay Choden and Jigme Tobgay, class X A

As the rising bell at 5 AM rings, the day begins in Ugyen Academy. Of course, the students moan, groan, cuss and somehow drag themselves up as the rest. But as 'he' struts down the pavements, everybody gets into business. He calls himself the jack of all trades as he knows a little bit of everything whether it is electronics, watches, carpentry and incredibly tailoring, cobbling and well it must be architecture because he had even built a hut once.

Mr. Norbu Gyaltshen was born on 7<sup>th</sup> September in the snake year of 1965 in Haa. He had his primary education in Bhutan and most of his high school years were spent in India. "I remember one of the most cherishable moments being the class monitor in class three", he stated with twinkling eyes. He graduated high school from Sherubtse. Mr. Gyaltshen had always wanted to become a doctor but for simple tweak of marks, thus he chose to become a teacher of all the other options he had. Mr. Gyaltshen worked as a royal tutor for twelve years, making him the longest serving royal tutor till date. It would be attention grabbing to know that Mr. Gyaltshen was the person to initiate career educations in high schools of Bhutan. He had also drafted the constitutions for the scouts of Bhutan. He had his master's degree in Science from Australia. Even today, we notice that he cannot hold back the glow on his face when he told us that he worked as a part time research assistant in public health during his stay in Australia, 2001. It was a job that not just another Bhutanese could get.

It was in 2002 when Mr. Gyaltshen was attending the Annual Education Conference that he came across his Excellency Lyonpo Sangay Ngedup who led him into becoming the principal of the newly built Ugyen Academy. Ugyen Academy never looked back since then as it started creating history. We will be honest- There was a time when private schools were a disgrace. A place where a person's thought was filled with dumb students who were good for nothing. Under the guidance of Mr. Gyaltshen, we believe, Ugyen Academy revolutionized all the stereotype of private schools when it turned out to evolve students of a whole new potential in terms of topping national exams to sports to creative arts, you name it. Ugyen Academy is a league school now!

Mr. Gyaltshen says that the best thing about being a principal is to be able to implement whatever you want in others. As for the challenges we asked, "Nah! I don't have any challenges as in finding difficulties because they are not challenges for me. In fact, I love them and I seek opportunities from them and most importantly because what I am doing as an educator is what I love doing," he said. Mr. Gyaltshen believes that being an example is one of the greatest assets to be called an achievement. When the school as a family looks up to you and seeks you to be a part of their way, which is something he is proud of and is a principle upon which he lives his life. Mr. Gyaltshen always tells his students and fellow colleagues, "If you believe, you achieve," because he has always known that believe makes the impossible possible. "Believe that you can do it, you can; believe that you cannot do it and then you are a loser!"

So here's to the man who raised a school from dust and now is a pride to even name it. Here's to a man who gave us an experience of the best school years being the fatherly figure in a principal and that was his story.

# *Portrayal of Luck*

Ms.Jambay

*I*t was time for the trees to shed their leaves. The grass had changed its colour. Everything around seemed dry without any life. Yet the echo of the playing children still continues. As the school gets over, the students rush out of the school gate to seek some freedom from the class room. This is the picture taken eight years ago when I didn't have much idea about the world around me. It seems funny though that I was once one of those kids who used to rush after fluttering leaves of the trees. Yes we used to believe the falling leaves to be 'lucky leaves'. We didn't have any idea whether it brought luck or not. If ever I got one I would press it neatly inside my notebook. It's a wonder that childhood days are full of laughter for we are filled with ignorance and innocence.

Sometimes simple things can make you smile. We would collect four clover leaves to have luck with us. We would design book marks out of it. Later I came to know that a four clover leaf signifies health, wealth, love and fame. In order to let the luck remain with you, it's best to keep it for one self and not give it away.

A horse shoe usually nailed above someone's door with the points facing up is for luck. More the number of nails in the horseshoe, greater are the chances of luck. A person is said to be ill if the turquoise worn by that person grows pale in colour.

Never try to kill a chirping cricket in your house. It is a sign of good luck and if you happen to kill, it signifies bad luck. After all what you are trying to do is destroy the ecosystem or it might have mistakenly entered your room in search of a prey. The elephant being the largest mammal on land denotes memory, intelligence, strength and longevity. We would be glad to adopt the way it poses itself, "Don't walk as if you rule the world. Walk as if you don't care of who rules it. This is what I call 'Attitude'."

Gazing into the night sky; I had once waited for a shooting star to make a wish. But that rarely happened. As shooting stars occurred only once in a blue moon and the same thing happen to our wishes.

During spring time when the flowers are in full bloom; I would just lose myself into the colourful butterflies. It didn't take much long for me to realize that seeing **three butterflies** fluttering around you signify the reception of good luck. However silly it may seem but some do believe that it is a good luck sign for a **lady bird** to land on you. If you count the spots and found out to be around 28; then you are going to have 28 days of good luck. Your good luck will come from the direction in which the lady bird flies off.

*Whether you believe in luck or not; if you happen to meet a person telling you to keep your fingers crossed, it means they are wishing you luck.*

Here are some tips to change bad luck into good luck-

- a. Catch a falling leaf and keep it.
- b. Look at the new moon holding silver spoon in your hand.
- c. Tie a string in a circle and put it in your purse.
- d. Catch bubbles from your coffee cup or tea with a spoon and drink them before they break.
- e. Hide a lucky bean and don't let anyone know where it is.
- f. Trim your fingernails on Monday morning before breakfast.
- g. Give a poor person a new pair of shoes.
- h. Before sleeping, place your shoes with the toes pointing under the bed.

## **GLOBAL DAYS (April)**

7 April : World Health Day

23 April : World Book and Copyright Day

### **Why take an interest in World Heritage**

Heritage is what we have received from our ancestors. Our duty is to preserve it for transmission to future generations.

Our identity is the result of our past and our environment. In the same way as we inherit the genes of our parents. we are also made up of 'genes' of our cultural and natural environment.

# Tang-The Gift

Ms.Tshering Denka

It seemed to be mocking him. The oily red meat lying grandly on the white grains of rice was laughing. He bit his lower lip as he tried not to let his thoughts meander away from the village gossip.

It was a week since he had arrived in village. Nothing had changed much really, the houses still had stones lying precariously on the shingles and red chillies adorned them. The kids still played around the paddy fields in grey clothes. The plantations still looked the same. The air still smelt of local *ara* mingled with wood smoke. The only thing that had changed was the amount of money he had brought home.

He had managed to sell the pork for more, thanks to the *losar* that was coming up. He had been able to save more of his rations. His wife had worked hard at saving. She had put less *dalda* and cheese in the curry. Even the children had tried by eating only a plate of food at a time. Meat had been out of question. And tea was a luxury.

It had been worth it when he arrived in the village. The villagers flocked around him like he was a visiting dignitary. They called him *Lopen* and prepared for him village delicacies. Everyone

appreciated the wads of fresh currency he had brought and the saved up rations. They 'zaied' their admiration as he handed out the gifts and envelopes of Nu.20 notes.

He stared at the piece of pork in the plate. It reminded him of the pig he had slaughtered for money. His daughter who had fed it regularly had cried a lot, not to mention the emotional racket caused by his five year old son who had lost his *charo*.

But it was worth it, wasn't it?

The village people were his own, it was obvious from the princely treatment they showered on him.

"Here is pork treated with maize powder, and butter for you and your family, a little token of gratitude" said his sister as she dragged a dirt smeared white sack and a tiny bamboo casket towards him. He was snapped out of his reverie. "Oh no, no," he argued, his politeness kicking in. After a five minute moment of pushing the sack to and fro with comments like, "No, please have it," "no, please keep it", he finally accepted the sack.

He realized that there was an expectant look in his sister's eyes. He dug into his sinking pouch for a *saera* and gave

her a 100 ngultrum note which took another five minutes of banter.

He pulled the sack and gave away his last hundred notes to his parents and siblings telling them to take care. It was going to be another long year of saving before he came home again.

The sack felt heavy on his shoulders as he waited at the bus stop. He wondered if his family would like the pork, his son had sworn never to eat pork after his *charo* had been slaughtered. But hunger would probably make him forget promises.

It was worth it, wasn't it?

He wished the question would stop making a niggling sensation in his heart. Ever since he had seen the village give a cold shoulder to the retired army officer, the niggling had increased. He remembered, as a kid, the grand treatment of the army officer. Everyone had been in awe of him. But now, with no savings and no *saeras* to bring home, the retired man had no place to go.

He thought of his own disappearing bank balance. Was his fate going to be the same?

## Birthday Wishes

☺ Dearest Keltsho (Yeshiy Lhamo, XA; Birthday on March 29th), many, many happy returns of the day in advance. Hope it will be a great year for you and always be the way you are. We love you. Best friends forever. From : Namgay Choden A, Kuenzang Dechen, Pema Tshogyel, Yitho Choden.

☺ Happy Birthday Suyesh! (29<sup>th</sup> March)  
Classmates (XB)

**INTERVIEW WITH BCSE TOPPERS**  
Namgay Choden, B Maya Subba & Singay Zam, XB

*Karma Tenzin born on 7<sup>th</sup> October, 1993 topped the BCSE examination of 2009. He is from Gomtu and is living with his father who is working in Penden Cement Factory and mother who is a house wife. His ambition is to become a doctor.*

*Govinda Adikari, born on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1991 studied in Thinleygang Middle Secondary School and stood whole Bhutan third. He is from Gelephu and his parents are farmers. He dreams of becoming an architect.*

**What kind of expectations do you have from life?**

Karma Tenzin: I want to succeed in any profession I choose.

Govinda Adikari: I want my life to be happy and peaceful.

**While preparing for Class-X BCSE, did you ever wish that you were not in Class-X?**

K.T: No, I didn't. Even though it was bit tiring I never wished of not being in class X.

G.A: I had a burning desire inside me to achieve my dreams. So I never wished to not to be in class X..

**Was topping the BCSE exam your own dream or your parents' dream?**

K.T: My teachers and parents believed that I could top the BCSE. I never dreamt of topping the BCSE. It was in fact, my parents' and teachers' dream.

G.A: It was mine as well as my parents' and teachers' dream. They encouraged me and I am happy I could fulfill their expectations.

**After setting the vision of topping the BCSE examination, did you take part in co-curricular activities?**

K.T: Yes, I took part in other co-curricular activities except sports.

G.A: Yes, I participated in all the co-curricular activities and once even fractured my leg while playing.

**Did co-curricular activities hamper your studies?**

K.T: No, it didn't.

G.A: No, in fact playing games refreshed my mind and helped me in concentrating on my studies.

**Are you happy with the marks you got or were your expectations even higher than what you got?**

K.T: I had scored 93% in trial exam, so my expectation was quite high. I thought that I would get 93% or higher than what I got in trial but I got only 91%.

G.A: Yes, I am happy with my marks. I got only 88% in trial and scored 90% in BCSE Exam. I am happy with my performance.

**What motivated you to come to U.A?**

K.T: I heard my friends and teachers' talking about Ugyen Academy as a very good school. They suggested me to join this school. So it was both mine and my parents' decision.

G.A: I heard a lot about Ugyen Academy and had an aim of joining it. There are lots of facilities available. Therefore I decided to come here.

**Have you made up your mind to top BHSEC in 2011?**

K.T: Not as such. But I should work hard to top BHSEC. I topped BCSE and therefore I should not let myself down.

G.A: Not sure because we cannot predict what will happen but I will try my best.

**Which one would you give more importance- teacher's teaching or your own hard work to top the exam?**

K.T: I would give more importance to teacher's teaching. If we concentrate and listen to our teachers in the class, about 70% of our hard work is done. We will have to do the next 30% on our own. Thus, it becomes easy.

G.A: Like we need two hands to clap, both are equally important. Without teachers' teaching we are no one. And also only teacher's teaching will not help us if we don't work hard.

**What kind of books do you read; which just entertain you or which contains some values and are related to academics?**

K.T: I read all kind of books.

G.A: I read those books which give meaning to life and those which entertain us.

**Do you make study timetable?**

K.T: I never studied with a time table. Whenever I get some free time I study. I don't keep specific time for studying.

G.A: Yes, I make it necessary. If we have a time table we can follow it and have time for study. But if we don't have one, we will not be able to study on time.

**Were you surprised when you heard your name being announced on the T.V. as the country topper?**

K.T: I was very happy but was not surprised because I heard the results from my teachers before the results were declared.

G.A: I was not surprised because I was sure that I would get one position.

**Do you think that the competition with the students in UA is going to be tougher than what you experienced in your previous school?**

K.T: Yes, because all the students are carrying very good marks especially in the science subjects.

G.A: Yes, it is going to be tough because I have to compete with the country topper.

**What is your advice to the other students to do their best?**

K.T: Don't be so confident.

Work hard.

Be the best of yourself and not the best of your class or group.

Make best use of time and resources.

There are three factors with which you can do your best:

You have the ability in you. Make best use of it.

Be positively motivated.

Must have positive attitude towards life.

G.A: Believe in good.

Work hard and compete with yourself.

Don't cheat.

Don't be jealous of others.

**Tell us about some of the study techniques you use?**

K.T: i) Study everything from the class.

ii) Make small notes.

iii) Always write and study.

G.A: i) Concentrate in the class

ii) Write home works at night.

iii) Study in the morning as you will feel fresh.

**Do you think that staying as a boarder will affect your studies?**

K.T: No, in fact I will be able to study more because there are studies done at specific time on everyday basis.

G.A: I think it will have some affect. I have the habit of studying in a very quiet place but here there are other students who will make noise and even my friends might disturb me.

## *My experience as a teenager*

Dolma YAngdon, IX

Life isn't very easy when you face the reality. I was very excited for my 13<sup>th</sup> birthday as I was going to be a teenager but when I look back, my life proved to be fun and very childish. The teens of my age felt really strange and people usually say Teen age is the best age in your life. I was really excited so I couldn't even sleep. It was really exciting for me as I wanted to know how it felt to be a teenager but when I woke up the next day, I realized that I was 13 and still I still felt the same. I thought being a teenager would feel different, make me popular, pretty, etc. Each and everyone would feel changes but I didn't feel anything. I still didn't lose hope and went to school and again it was still the same.

I thought environment would change and every thing would be different. Then I lost hope. I continued my life normally but before I realized I changed a lot, I started to dress up nicely. I started to talk to boys

more. Everything was changing and I even noticed a change in my likes and dislikes.

I was 14 when I finally noticed the change when my friends told me. I felt really happy and even realized I didn't cry once also after the age of 12. Teen life changes really quickly and suddenly. People don't realize it themselves but it changes really slowly, sometimes in a good way and sometimes in a bad way.

I know that I have not changed in a bad way but still this TEEN age gave me one bad habit. I started talking a lot when I didn't understand something. However, I feel I can change it in my teen age. Being a teenager is very difficult. It sometimes breaks your heart into pieces. Teen life is hurtful but still it is the best age of your life when we can do whatever we feel like so we have to enjoy every bit of teen life.

# common errors in English

Compiled by: M.R. Subba

The correct preposition to use after **care** is **of**. Don't say *take care about/for something*, say, *take care of something*.

Incorrect: *Please take care about my plants while I am on holiday.*

Correct: *Please take care of my plants while I am on holiday.*

A formal letter should end with *Yours faithfully* or *Yours sincerely*. If the letter is addressed to a particular person, don't write *Yours faithfully*, write *Yours sincerely*.

When **enter** has a direct object, it is not followed by a preposition. Don't say *enter in/into a place*, say *enter a place*.

Incorrect: *As you enter into the station, the shop is on the right.*

Correct: *As you enter the station, the shop is on the right.*

Do not use **especially** at the beginning of a sentence. When it refers to the subject of the sentence, *especially* usually comes directly after the subject.

Incorrect: *Especially I enjoyed the boat trip on the Thames.*

Correct: *I especially enjoyed the boat trip on the Thames.*

At the beginning of a sentence, don't say *Especially*, say *In particular*.

*In particular, I enjoyed the boat trip on the Thames.*

The plural of **person** is **people**.

Incorrect: *There are twenty persons in English class.*

Correct: *There are twenty people in English class.*

**Persons** is usually used in official language, especially in public notices or legal documents.

*Attention: This taxi is licensed to carry a maximum of 4 persons.*

**Phone** is never followed by **to**. Don't say *phone to someone* say *phone someone*.

Incorrect: *Phone to me if you have any more questions.*

Correct: *Phone me if you have any more questions.*

When **worth** is followed by a verb, that verb cannot be in the infinitive with **to**. Do not say *be worth to do something*.

Incorrect: *Do you think it's worth to ask Patrick first?*

Correct: *Do you think it's worth asking Patrick first?*

The most usual preposition to use with the **world** is **in**. Don't say *of the world* or *on the world*, say *in the world*.

Incorrect: *I live in the biggest city of the world.*

Correct: *I live in the biggest city in the world.*

**Equipment** does not have a plural form and cannot be used with **a** or **an**. To talk about an amount of equipment, do not say *equipments*, say *equipment*, *some equipment* or *a lot of equipment*.

Incorrect: *We need to order more up to date office equipments.*

Correct: *We need to order more up to date office equipment.*

To refer politely to a person who is old, don't say **elder**, say **elderly**.

Incorrect: *Loneliness is a big problem for elder people.*

Correct: *Loneliness is a big problem for elderly people.*

When **enough** is used with an adjective, it always goes directly after the adjective. Don't say *enough kind/healthy/brave, etc*, say *kind/healthy/brave, etc. enough*.

*I hope my instructions are clear enough.*

# Japanese Education Mamas

An extract from LANDS AND PEOPLES, 2, Page. 456, GROLIER EDUCATIONAL  
Compiled by : M.R.Subba

Japan's ardent pursuit of education puts a good deal of pressure on mothers, who hold themselves responsible for their children's performance in school. If a mother's children do well, she will be praised by teachers, friends, and neighbours. If they do poorly, her image suffers. As a result, mothers become what the Japanese call "education mamas" – assistant teachers and hard taskmasters, ambitious for their children's academic success.

Starting with the first grade, children are given homework that is often too difficult for them to do without help. Sometimes the homework is not easy for the mother, either, because many changes have taken place in teaching since she went to school. To prepare herself, she studies at home and often consults with her children's teachers. Keeping one step ahead of their children is a challenge that the Japanese mother takes seriously.

A mother's reputation as a tutor is likely to be well-known in the community. At group meetings of parents and teachers, for example, she may hear teachers praise or criticize her, in the mild Japanese manner, depending on how well her children are doing in school. On certain days, she and other mothers are required to observe their children in the classroom. Teachers evaluate each child's performance aloud, directing their comments to the mother. It will be clear to all whether or not the mother has succeeded in her role as an assistant teacher.

A typical Japanese mother pushes her children hard to do well in school, but she also pushes herself hard. At exam time, she shares their anxiety and excitement. Their success will be her greatest reward; their failure, her greatest sorrow.

## *Time and Tide Wait for none*

Bijay Kr.Sapkota  
Teacher, Faculty of English

**C**hildren are said to be naughty,  
Turning on everything crazy.  
Creativity is a talent,  
They never remain silent

**T**ime comes and goes,  
Busy in their own way.  
Never bothered of the passing time,  
Playing and devouring like lime.

**R**ecalling those childhood memories,  
Feeling guilty of time unconsciousness.  
Have I been mad,  
Feeling today so sad.

**O**ne is never conscious of time,  
Until it leaves us far behind.  
Time changes everything,  
Time is never ending.

**N**othing is impossible,  
Just turn it into I'm possible.  
It's never too late to start  
Determination is a must.

## **Preamble of the constitution of the UNESCO**

That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed. That ignorance of each other's ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war; That the great and terrible war which has now ended was a war made possible by the denial of democratic principles of dignity, equality and mutual respect of men, and by the propagation, in their place, through ignorance and prejudice, of the doctrine of the inequality of men and races: That the wide diffusion of culture, and the education of humanity for justice and liberty and peace are indispensable to the dignity of man and constitute a sacred duty which all the nations must fulfill in a spirit of mutual assistance and concern; That a peace based exclusively upon the political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind

# Kindly tell me why

Sir/Madam,

Why can boys play in school sports complex during Sundays whereas girls cannot go a little further from their hostels?

Yours Faithfully,  
Dolma Yangdon, IX.

.....

It is a good question if it is a concern of all the girls. But please note that the whole sports complex was to be used by girls on Sundays (from morning till 10 AM). This issue had been discussed and resolved during staff meeting sometimes in the beginning of 2009 academic session. However, since there was no coordinated programme for girls and they did not show much interest in playing any games during Sundays, boys are found to be using the facilities.

We would still consider if girls come up with some programmes coordinated by games in charge, games captains and matrons. We will make sure that boys do not interfere during this time.

Help us to help you all.

D R Kharga  
Asst. Principal

# My First Day In UA

Tashi Choden, VII

On my first day in UA, I was very sad. I didn't have friends. My uncles came to drop me to the school. I didn't feel like going to the hostel. I felt like crying but I held back my tear. After doing the admission, we proceeded towards the hostel and met the Matron. She said that we needed bucket and a jug which I hadn't brought. Then one of my uncles went to buy a bucket and a jug from the market.

There was a small canopy beside the hostel. I and my other uncle stayed there waiting for the bucket and the jug. My uncle advised me to study hard, find good friends and to inform him if I had any problem. I kept controlling myself from breaking into tears.

Finally, I had to go to my cubicle as it was getting late. My cubicle number was 1 and my bed number 21. In the cubicle, I arranged my entire things. I put them in the cupboard some of my things and others in the suitcase. On the top of my cupboard, I kept my suitcase.

Some of the students and senior sisters asked me my name and where I had come from. I felt a bit happy but I was worried because I had forgotten my school socks at home. I shared my problem with one of those sisters and she let me borrow one pair from her. I felt very happy. As we were asked to prepare for bed and the lights were switched off, I missed my parents and my brother. I cried at night quietly so that no one would know that I was crying. In the morning, I got a friend in the same cubicle and the best news was that we were in the same class. I was very happy. Now I have many friends and sisters.

Everybody in this world has to face problems. We can face them by being strong and keeping hope in ourselves. God will never let us stay alone.

# Education Empowers

**When you educate a girl in Africa, everything changes. She'll be three times less likely to get HIV/AIDS, earns 25 percent more income and have a smaller, healthier family.**

**Ms. Talent**

**Chikomba District, Zimbabwe**

When Talent was 8 years old, her father died. When she was 10, her mother left her and her two siblings in their rural village to look for work. She never returned.

Talent's aunt took the children in, but she struggled to earn enough money as a shopkeeper to send them all to elementary school. When Talent graduated from middle school, her aunt told her she couldn't afford to send her to high school. "She tried to comfort me," says Talent, "and suggested that I work for a year to save money so I could pay my own way the following year."

But Talent knew this was a temporary solution. What would she do after her first year of school when her money ran out?

She was devastated. "I wanted to change my life through education. I didn't want to continue to struggle, being poor all the time," she says.

One week before classes started, the principal at Talent's school told her she'd been chosen to be supported by Camfed. All her fees, from her soap to her bus fare, would be covered. "The next day, I didn't speak to a soul," she says. "I spent the whole day praying and thanking God for this amazing news."

With Camfed's support, Talent graduated from high school and was accepted into medical school at the University of Zimbabwe. She's now in her second year and doing well.

"I don't want to disappoint those who are supporting me," she says. "Now that I'm in medical school, I have faith the gates to success are wide open. I just have to walk through them."

## Teachers

*Jamyang Chuki Choden, VII '08*

Teachers, teachers, teachers,  
You lead us to our future.  
You never take rest  
Because you want us to give the best.  
For us the knowledge is treasure,  
Which you give us with pleasure.  
Doctors, engineers, scientists,  
None greater than you all teachers.  
You give us wisdom,  
At the cost of your freedom.  
You are our home  
To lead our dream  
Which is as sweet as cream.  
You are the angel sky  
Who give us wings to fly.

*Travelling back into her past memory and using the diary of Kelden that she found after one year since he left, Zhizang presents the last words of Kelden in this story.*

## The Hidden Lie

**Tshencho Wangdi, XII Arts E, 2009**

It had been raining for more than a week. So much rain it made that everyday seemed restless and gloomy. She called me and said she was coming up. It was the third time she came up to see me that week. I carried her excuse of why she came all the way here and went to meet her at the bus station. She was standing there alone, carrying a red umbrella. It was raining heavily and she was shivering. She looked weak and fragile in the harsh rain, wearing not enough to keep herself warm.

I walked up to her and said, "You should not have come to see me anymore," and stuff like how we should not be together. She said, "I miss you."

I told her coldly, "Let's go. I'll take you home."  
She did not open up her umbrella. I knew she wanted to share mine.  
I said, "Open up your umbrella. Let's go."

Unwillingly, she opened up her umbrella and walked with me to the car. She said she did not eat lunch and asked if we could stop at some place to eat. Right away I answered with a stoned heart, "No."

Disappointed, she asked me to take her to the bus station so that she could take the bus back home. May be it was the rain; all the buses were full of people with umbrella and suitcases who were eager to get home, not caring about who just passed by. We kept waiting, she looked at me innocently. Being together for so long, of course, I knew what she meant. I understand how she must have felt when I treat her like this. After all, she has taken the pain to come all this way in such harsh weather. With her soft eyes staring at me, I felt the guilt hidden inside me; I wanted her to stay for the night.

But reality struck again, I said to her coldly, "Let's try the taxi stand."

We were living in the same apartment building, on the same floor. Back then, there were four of us, and we got along well. We would always eat dinner together, watch movies and often go for camping. We were more like family. But I never knew that I would end up falling in love with one of the girls among us four. May be it was during the last year of college, having lived together for two years, we developed deep feelings for each other. After she graduated she went back home, and stayed for one more year to finish school. During that year I was only able to take the bus down to see her on holidays, but never for long. That was how we kept the treasured relationship.

We were walking along the side of the road. She was in front of me and I was right behind her. Her umbrella had a broken spoke. She looked like a wounded soldier, carrying her rusted rifle walking weakly. Many times she was lost into her deep thoughts, drifting off the road. She almost got hit by the passing cars. The constant pain in my stomach, I did nothing. On the way, we passed by the park where we once had our joyous moments together. She begged and said, "Let's go in the park just for a little while please. I promise I'll go home right after this."

With her begging, my cold heart softened, but I still put up an annoyed face and walked to the park. I was just sitting on the bench carrying a facial expression that said, "I want to leave." She went to the big oak tree and was looking for something. I knew she was looking for what we wrote on that tree half a year ago. If I remember it right, it said, "Kelden and Zhizang forever." She was looking around for quite a while and then she came back slowly with tears on her face.

She said, "Kelden, I can't find it. It's not there anymore."

I felt so sour inside. There was stream of pain flowing into my heart, the kind of pain I've never felt before. But all I could do was pretend I didn't care, and said, "Can we go now?" I opened up my big black umbrella. She was standing there wanting to stay back for a while and hoping to get a chance. She said, "You made up the story of you and that other girl, didn't you? I know I frustrate you sometimes but I'll change. Can't we start over?" I didn't say a word, just looked down and shook my head.

Four years ago, the doctor said I had cancer. As it was detected early, he said it was curable. Thinking it was OK, I started living my normal life again and even forgot about the cancer. I didn't bother about the cancer and didn't go back to the doctor as well; until a month ago my stomach was hurting for almost two weeks. First I thought the pain would go away, but it grew stronger until to the point that I couldn't take it anymore. I went to the doctor and took an x-ray. The report came out and there was a big black spot, which proved the truth that I didn't want to believe. I was at the most glittering part of my life, but I knew it was coming to an end. I wanted myself and the people around me to go through the least pain possible. So I decided to commit suicide. However I could not let people find out my intention, especially Zhizang, the person I loved the most in this whole world, who was still ignorant of the truth. So I made up some stories and lied to her. It was the cruelest thing to do. It broke her heart. But it was the fastest way to wipe out three years feelings. Now I am close to succeeding; this drama would soon be over. I called a taxi for her. We were just standing there, waiting, losing our last moments in silence. I saw the taxi from afar. I held my tears and said to her, "Take good care of yourself."

She didn't talk, just nodded lightly. Then she opened up her misshaped umbrella and stepped out on the street. Out in the rain, we became two single life forms, one red, one black, so far apart from each other. I opened the door for her and she got in. then I closed the gate that would separate me from her forever. I stood by the car, staring in the dark window, at the first love of my life and also the last one walking out of my life.

Finally, I couldn't hold my sorrow and twist in my heart any longer; I was waving my arms rapidly chasing after the taxi. This I knew that it would be the last time I see her. I wanted to tell her I still love her, I wanted to tell her to stay; I wanted to tell her so much but couldn't get rid of my fate.

She left and I didn't get anymore of her phone calls even until today. I know she didn't see my tears, because they were washed away by the rain. I left without regret.