

柴娃娃：懺書

True Confession

By Chai Wawa

Translated by Janice Wickeri

WHEN I DECIDED to break off with you, I pondered your redeeming features long and hard. But I felt that dropping you for someone with more growth potential was a wise choice for a brighter tomorrow.

But wouldn't you know that for all my earnest thought, before two months were out the facts proved that both my thinking and my actions had been wrong. When regret took possession of me, body and soul, I missed your sterling qualities all the more. I couldn't help myself.

In our ten years together, you always came to my rescue loyally and in the nick of time, whatever befell me. When other guys who had been high fliers folded and slunk away, you gave me concrete, not just moral, support. You were a friend in need; that was your virtue.

You were loyal, stable, you provided a sense of security; but people are never satisfied. Familiarity gradually obscured your redeeming features, sowing seeds of doubt in my heart, until your faults stood out like craters on the moon.

What are your faults? You're like the tortoise in its shell—a stick-in-the-mud. Others who started at the same time you did have already taken off and far surpassed you, while those who came later have overtaken you. Everybody else was reaching for the moon and stars, competing for yet greater growth—you were still plodding along in your sluggish way. How could I not be anxious and impatient? And another thing, I couldn't possibly stick with you over the long term. Not only

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By Ah Wu

is your progress miniscule, your days are numbered. A person has to plan for the future. Suppose your value fell so low that your very existence were threatened. If I stubbornly stuck by you, true, it would show that the ties that bind are strong, but who would make up the substantive loss?

So when the idolized Hutchison-Whampoa,* a real mover and shaker, plummeted suddenly, I took advantage of it. Weighing his actual strength against his temporary reverses, and given his initiative and the way he'd kept right on forging ahead, I felt a comeback was assured. I gave it a lot of thought and decided it wasn't enough just to sacrifice you, I had to invest even more of myself to breathe life into him. How could I have known that being sold out would be the very stimulus that sent you soaring? Others rose on the strength of your upswing—but not Hutchison-Whampoa, he was still bleeding from his wounds. Not only was he stopped in his tracks, he actually declined. Comparing his appearance—pale and wan—with your intrepid vigour, I was plunged into gloom and despondency. I couldn't help wanting you back, Cross Harbour Tunnel.* But oh, Cross Harbour Tunnel, it's too late! ☐

*Listed companies in the Hong Kong stock exchange.