

你好, 米饭,

Hello Rice, I'm Hamburger!

我是汉堡!



以一个美国人的眼光来看中国。
China, through the eyes of an American.

[美] 阿文 (Kevin Smith) 著



ZHEJIANG UNIVERSITY PRESS

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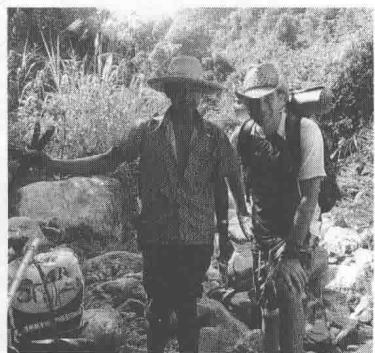
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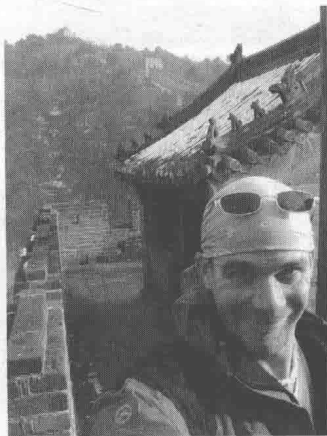
阿文在成都体验掏耳朵



阿文和老万，一个浙江森林的看森林人



阿文在北海市过春节



阿文爬长城，当好汉



阿文在长江三峡

前言 Preface

因为小时候听说可以挖洞穿过地球，所以我开始挖洞。美国小孩儿都知道世界另一头有什么，那个“什么”就是我的目的地：中国。当时的我缺乏耐心，没继续挖。但是，我从没放弃过我的梦想。或者说，从那一天起，我就在一条想象中的龙背上坐着，直到终于到达那个遥远的地方——中国。

When I was young I believed people could dig straight through the Earth, so I began to dig. And every American boy and girl knew what was on the other side of the world, and that “what” was my destination: China. At the time I lacked patience, and didn't continue to dig. But I never gave up my dream. And you could say, from that day onward, I rode on the back of an imaginary dragon until I finally made my way to that faraway land—China.

在中国的第一个星期，我跟老板坐在出租车里，我看见了一头水牛在我们前面横过马路。

In my first week: riding in a taxi with my boss, I saw a water buffalo cross the road in front of us.

“它去哪里？”我问老板。

"Where's it going?" I asked her.

“我怎么知道，我又不是牛。”她回答。

"How would I know, I'm not a water buffalo," she answered.

很合理的答案。

What a fitting answer.

从那天起，我开始了我的冒险……

And from that day on my adventure began...

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成都挑战

The Chengdu Challenge

老外能吃辣椒？

Can foreigners handle chili peppers?

在中国吃饭的时候，我常常听到别人问：“他能用筷子？”当我吃任何辣的菜，比如川菜或湘菜，我就会被别人问：“外国人能吃辣啊？”我选了“能”这个字是因为问题不是会不会吃，因为所有的人都会把辣椒放在嘴里，而是外国人“能不能”承受辣椒的辣！如果我很饿，就不会再解释，我只会点点头表示：“能吃。”但是，有时我说好多国家也常吃辣：印度、韩国、墨西哥，不一而足，那里都有本地的辣椒。而且，不管在哪里，都是有的人能吃，有的人不能吃。在英文里有句话说的是：“If you can't take the heat, get out of the kitchen.”意思是，如

果你受不了热，那就离开厨房吧！这个俗语基本上跟承受压力有关，但是因为辣椒与热同义，我认为用在这里也是很适合的。

When eating in China, I often hear, "Can he use chopsticks?" And when I'm eating anything that contains chili peppers, for example spicy Sichuan or hot Hunan cuisine, I'm asked directly or I overhear, "Can foreigners handle chili peppers?" And I chose the word "handle" because the question isn't as much about the simple act of eating chilies, but rather, can foreigners "handle" the spice that comes with it? If I'm really hungry, and have no desire to explain, I just nod my head, "Yes." But, sometimes I bring up the fact that many countries often use peppers: India, Korea and Mexico, to name a few, each using its own local fiery peppers. And of course, no matter where you are from, some people can handle some spice, some cannot. In English we have a saying, "If you can't take the heat, get out of the kitchen." This saying is often used in situations dealing with stress and difficult situations, but as spicy peppers are synonymous with heat, I believe it works here just as well.

于是我就给自己来了一场个人挑战：任何时候去四川成都，我都想给自己一场辣的考验：一大碗水煮牛肉、一碗米饭和两瓶冰镇啤酒。

This brings me to my own personal challenge: anytime I visit Sichuan's capital, Chengdu, I give myself a trial by fire: One bowl of Sichuan's famous Poached Slice Beef Cooked in Hot Chili Oil, one bowl of rice and two cold bottles of beer.

有一次，在成都办事的时候，我从旅馆出门想寻找挑战。顺着迷宫般的小巷走着走着，我就迷路了。我发现自己在一条很普通的马路上，

就是那种让人记不住的路，四周建筑都一样。路旁住着那种黑白分明的人，他们怀疑陌生人，不太喜欢改变。在那条路上我找到了我的深红色，那辣椒色的挑战。那家饭馆的装潢与外面街道的风格非常一致：装修很普通，白桌布、木椅子和不太干净的粉刷墙。我走进的时候，正如经常发生的那样：筷子都停止了咯喇咯喇的碰撞声，嘴巴都停止了咕嘟咕嘟的吃菜声，眼睛都向我这边看了过来。

On one such occasion, when I was in Chengdu taking care of some business, I left my hostel to find my challenge. After a short time, I was lost within a labyrinth of alleys, where every street resembled the last: forgettable, functional architecture, all squares and rectangles, the kind of street where residents preferred a world that is black and white, were suspicious of strangers, and didn't welcome change. And on this unimpressible street, where drab was the color of preference, I'd found my crimson challenge, the color of the spicy pepper. The restaurant's interior reflected the street: simple, white tablecloth, wooden chairs and whitewashed walls that weren't especially clean. And when I walked in, what was expected to happen happened: the chopsticks stopped their clicking and the mouths stopped their slurping as all eyes looked up at me.

过了一会儿，等他们对我这个陌生人的兴趣减退了以后，我点了我的挑战。那里的服务员和其他许多服务员的样子一样：年轻，有点胖，不招呼人，看得出来是真的不喜欢打工。当我一说出“一份水煮牛肉”，她没有表情地问道：“是辣的。你能吃辣？”

After a short time, once the diners lost interest in this stranger who had entered their small world, I ordered my challenge. And, as soon as I said, "One order of Poached Slice Beef Cooked in Chili Oil," the waitress, young, slightly pudgy, expressionless, obviously not enjoying her work, asked flatly: "It's spicy. Can you handle spice?"

这时，饭馆的气氛又安静了下来。当其他客人都小声地说“外国人不能吃辣”的时候，我感觉我似乎站在一个很大的岩洞里，回声传到了各个角落：“外国人不能吃辣。”

And just as fast, the atmosphere in the restaurant had again quieted down. And when the other customers started to whisper, "Foreigners can't handle chilies," it was as if I was standing in a big cave as their words were echoed from every corner of the room: foreigners can't handle chilies.

回声消退以后，我有点骄傲地说：“没问题！”

Once the echoes dissipated, with a little too much pride I said, "No problem!"

用小拇指挖了挖耳朵，她问：“微辣？”

Using her pinky to pick her ear, she asked, "Mildly spicy?"

我坚持说：“不用，地道就好。”

"No, keep it authentic," I insisted.

我绝对不能把我最初的挑战改为“微辣挑战”！

I certainly couldn't change the challenge to "the mildly spicy challenge"!

她耸耸肩说：“好。”

Shrugging her shoulders, she said, "Okay."

那个服务员慢慢地走向厨房说：“老外点了水煮牛肉。”

The waitress walked slowly back into the kitchen saying, "The foreigner wants poached beef in chili oil."

我能听到厨子在厨房里不相信地说：“老外能吃辣？”

I could hear the cook say from the kitchen with disbelief, "Foreigners can handle chilies?"

有些客人把头摇了摇。有可能他们认为我点错了，或是小看了那里的四川辣椒。一个嘴里叼着烟的秃顶胖男人坐在我前面。因为他在数着一叠发票，我估计他是老板。他透过眼镜，看了我一眼，然后按了按计算器。他模仿我的话，喃喃地说：“不用，地道就好……”

Some of the customers shook their heads, perhaps believing I ordered incorrectly or that I didn't respect the Sichuan chili pepper. Sitting in front of me was a balding fat man smoking a cigarette. Because he was counting receipts, I guessed he was the boss. Through his bifocals he took a look at me, than while tapping away at his calculator, mimicking my words, he mumbled, "No, keep it authentic..."

十分钟后，服务员把一个白色大碗放在我面前。在油亮发光的川红色汤面上，刚刚被油炒过的辣椒还翻滚着，发出嘶嘶的响声。一层用辣椒、花椒和白蒜蓉做的调料浮在最上面，一点香菜漂在汤上。我很想用筷子捞几片汤面下的牛肉片。