

# 金山

GOLD  
MOUNTAIN  
BLUES

张翎·著

北京出版集团公司  
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JINSHAN

张翎著

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张翎，浙江温州人。1983年毕业于复旦大学外文系。1986年赴加拿大留学，分别在加拿大的卡尔加利大学及美国的辛辛那提大学获得英国文学硕士和听力康复学硕士。现定居于多伦多市，在一家医院的听力诊所任主管听力康复师。

20世纪90年代中后期开始在海外写作并发表作品。主要作品有长篇小说《邮购新娘》（台湾版名《温州女人》）、《交错的彼岸》、《望月》（海外版名《上海小姐》），中短篇小说集《雁过藻溪》、《盲约》、《尘世》等。曾获第七届十月文学奖（2000），第二届世界华文文学优秀散文奖（2003），首届加拿大袁惠松文学奖（2005），第四届人民文学奖（2006），第八届十月文学奖（2007），《中篇小说选刊》双年度优秀小说奖（2008）。其小说多次入选各种转载本和年度精选本。中篇小说《羊》、《雁过藻溪》和《余震》曾分别进入中国小说学会2003年度、2005年度和2007年度排行榜。

# 序

与我先前的大部分作品不同，《金山》并不是心血来潮之作。《金山》的最初一丝灵感，其实萌动在二十多年前。只是当时我并不知道，这丝灵感需要在岁月的土壤里埋藏潜伏如此之久，才最终破土长出第一片绿叶。

那是在1986年。

那年夏天我离开渐渐热闹起来的京城，忐忑不安地踏上了加拿大的留学之旅。至今尚清晰地记得那年九月的一个下午，青天如洗，树叶色彩斑斓，同学开着一辆轰隆作响的破车，带我去卡尔加里城外赏秋。行走在铺满落叶的路径上，几乎不忍听见脚下那些辉煌生命的最后裂响。习惯了江南绵长秋季的人，很难想象在洛基山高寒地带，秋和冬的交接常常就是在一场雨中完成的。骄阳是一种假象，其实冬天已经浅浅地伏在每一片落叶之下，随时准备狙击不知乡情的外来客。

许多年后我想起那次郊游，烙在我脑子里的鲜明印记，竟不是关于秋景的。那天行到半路的时候，我们的车胎爆裂了。在等待救援的百无聊赖之中，我开始不安分地四下走动起来。就是这时，我发现了那些三三两两地埋在野草之中，裹着鸟粪和青苔的墓碑。我拨开没膝的野草，有些费劲地认出了墓碑上被岁月侵蚀得渐渐模糊起来的字迹。虽然是英文，从拼法上可以看出是广东话发音的中国名字。有几块墓碑上尚存留着边角残缺的照片，是一张张被南中国的太阳磨砺得黧黑粗糙的脸，高颧骨，深眼窝，看不出悲喜，也看不出年龄。年龄是推算出来的。墓碑上的日期零零散散地分布在19世纪的后半叶和20世纪初——他们死的时候都还年青。

我突然明白了，他们是被近代史教科书称为先侨、猪仔华工或苦力的那群人。

在大洋那头以芭蕉为背景的村落里，他们曾经有过什么样的日子？在决

定背井离乡走向也许永远没有归程的旅途时，他们和年迈的母亲，年青的妻子，或许还有年幼的孩子，有过什么样刻骨铭心的诀别？当经历了“浮动地狱”之称的海上航程，终于踏上被淘金客叫做“金山”的洛基山脉时，他们看到的是怎样一片陌生的蛮荒？

疑惑一个又一个地浮涌上来。被秋阳熨拂得十分妥帖平整的心情，突然间生出了一些皱褶。

其实，我是可以写一本书的，一本关于这些在墓碑底下躺了将近一个世纪的人的书。

在回家的路上，我对自己说。

可是最初的这丝感动很快被应接不暇的生活需要所吞噬，无声无息地销蚀在日复一日为安身立命所做的种种烦琐的努力之中。在这之后的十几年里，我完成了两个相互毫无关联的学位，尝试过包括热狗销售员、翻译、教师、行政秘书以及听力康复医师在内的多种职业，在多个城市居住过，搬过近二十次家。记忆中似乎永远是手提着两只裹着跨省尘土的箱子，行色匆匆地行走在路上。然后停下步子，把两个箱子的行装，拓展成一个屋子的杂乱。然后再把一个屋子的杂乱，削减成两个箱子的容量，再次上路。关于华工小说的书写计划，偶尔也会浮上心头，尤其是当我在电视上看到温哥华1907年排亚大暴乱周年纪念活动，或是在报纸上读到国会讨论人头税赔偿方案的新闻时。可是这样的感动如同被风泛起的一片叶子，在水面轻轻地翻过一个身，就重新沉落在水底。

直到2003年夏天。

那个夏天我受邀参加海外作家回国采风团，来到了著名的侨乡，四邑之一的广东开平。就在那里，我第一次看到了后来成为联合国世界文化遗产的碉楼。这些集碉堡和住宅为一体的特殊建筑群，是清末民初出洋捞生活的男人们将一个铜板省出水来寄回家盖的，为了使他们留在乡里的女人和孩子们免受绑匪和洪涝之苦。出洋的男人散布在世界的各个角落，盖出来的碉楼也就不可避免地带了他们歇脚的那个国家的特色。罗马式的窗楣里，镶嵌着岭南特色的灰雕。巴洛克式复杂纷繁的门框边上，放置的是广东人世世代代焚香祭拜的祖先神龛。哥特式的尖顶被当地的泥瓦匠削平了，只留下一串低矮滑稽的廊柱，中间有一些黑色的圆孔——是用来放置枪支的洞眼。抹

去后人加给它们的种种传奇浪漫色彩，这些楼宇不过是一个动荡多灾颠沛流离的时代留在南中国土地上的荒诞印记。

当我看见那些楼宇被粉饰一新地拿出来招徕观光客时，我依稀听见了历史在层层新漆的重压之下发出无声的抗议。短暂的新奇感很快过去，接踵而来的是一种深深的失望。就在我正要决定回旅馆的时候，我们的领队通过关系找到了一把进入一座尚未被后人的油漆刷和水泥刀碰触过的旧碉楼的钥匙。听到这个消息我的心凶猛地跳了起来，跳得一街都听得见。我似乎预见到我将与一样我尚无法叫出名字的东西发生一次重要的碰撞。

那天在八月尾，无比炎热，穿过由厚厚的芭蕉败叶铺就的荒地时，蚊子开始了暮色之前的第一轮进攻，我裸露在夏装之外的胳膊和腿上很快爬满了粉红色的叮痕。这不过是一次小小的预演——碉楼里的蚊子比它们野外的同胞们凶猛百倍。楼很旧了，不住人，只有几样残留的家具，样式和颜色都属于另一个朝代。墙上挂着一些泛黄的字画，据说是女主人在等候出洋丈夫的漫长岁月里所作。走上三楼时，我看见了一个深红色的梨木大衣柜——红在这里只是一种由习惯而衍生出来的想象，其实最初的颜色早已褪失在岁月的流水之中，只留下一片混混沌沌的黄褐。我并没有期待它藏有玄机，因为这座楼早已被它最后一拨主人废弃几十年了。可是当我被好奇的天性驱使打开那扇吱呀作响的柜门时，我却怔住了。

里边有一件衣服，一件女人的衣服。

是夹袄。长袖，斜襟，宽滚边，依稀看得出是粉红色，袖口襟边和下摆用金线绣了些大朵大朵的花——也许是牡丹，也许是芍药。衣衫挂得歪歪斜斜，一只袖子胡乱地塞在衣兜里，仿佛女主人是在一片仓促之中脱下锦衣换上便装出走的。我把袖子从衣兜里扯出来，却意想不到地扯出了另一片惊异——原来这件夹袄的袖筒里藏着一双长筒玻璃丝袜。袜子大约洗过多水，早已失却了经纬交织的劲道，后跟上有一个洞眼，一路挂丝到裆下。我用食指抚着那个洞眼，突然感觉有一股酥麻，如微弱的电流从指尖颤颤地传到头顶。

是她在呼唤我吗，这件衣服的主人？

裹在这件年代久远的绣花夹袄里的，是一个什么样的灵魂呢？这些被金山伯留在故乡的女人们，过的是什么样的日子呢？在日复一日年复一年的隔

洋守候中，她们心里，有过什么样的期盼和哀怨呢？

一件褪了色的旧衣，一双挂了丝的袜子，又一次拨动了我为小说家那根灵感的弦。我强烈感觉到，我写《金山》的时候快要到了。

我被这种感觉又追了两年。我对这个题材又爱又恨，爱是因为它给了我前所未有的感动，恨是因为我知道这是一项扒人一层皮的巨大工程，无论是在时间还是在精力上，几乎都不是我这个作为听力康复医师的兼职作家能够驾驭的。这本书和现代都市小说的书写方式有着极大的不同，它所涵盖的故事发生在一个巨大的历史框架里，而且它牵涉到的每一个细节都很难从现代生活里简单地找到依据。必须把屁股牢牢地黏在椅子上，把脚实实在在地踩在地上，把心静静地放在腔子里，把头稳稳地缩在脖子中，准备着久久不吭一声地做足案头研究——极有可能会在这样长久的寂寞中被健忘的文坛彻底忘却。

我被这个前景吓住了，于是便把这个庞大的写作计划往后推了又推。在这中间，我发表了第三部长篇小说《邮购新娘》和《雁过藻溪》《余震》等几部中短篇小说，并获得了一系列的文学奖。可是，那些墓碑下锦衣里的灵魂，在我每一部小说完成之后的短暂歇息空当里，在我端着奖杯脚步开始有了云里雾里的感觉时，一次又一次地猝然出手，把我的安宁撕搅得千疮百孔。

终于有一天，我被那些灵魂驱赶得无处藏身，只好忍无可忍百般不情愿地迈出了研究考察之旅的第一步。

在这样一段尘封多年且被人遮掩涂抹过的历史里寻找突破口，如同在坚硬的岩石表层凿开一个洞眼般困难。由于当年的华工大都是文盲，修筑太平洋铁路这样一次人和大自然的壮烈肉搏，几乎完全没有当事人留下的文字记载。铁路以后的先侨历史开始有了一些零散的口述资料，然而系统的历史回顾却必须借助于大量的书籍查考。除了两次去开平、温哥华和维多利亚实地考察之外，我的绝大部分研究，是通过几所大学东亚图书馆的藏书及加拿大联邦和省市档案馆的存档文献和照片展开的。同样一段历史，中西两个版本的回溯中却有着一些意味深长的碰撞和对应。当我一头扎进深潭般的史料里时，我惊奇地发现，我对这段历史的一些固有概念被不知不觉地动摇和颠覆了。我突然意识到一个几世纪前就被航海家们证明了的真理：地球原来是圆



的。于是，我决定摒弃某些熟稔而舒适的概念和口号，进入一种客观平实的人生书写。我不再打算叙述一段弘大的历史，而把关注点转入一个人和他的家族命运上。在这个枝节庞大的家族故事里，淘金和太平洋铁路只是背景，种族冲突也是背景（我在这里小心地回避了“种族歧视”这个字眼，因为我觉得这是一个把复杂的历史社会现象概念化简单化了的字眼，正如西方现代医学爱把许多找不到答案的症状笼统简单地归类为忧郁症一样），人头税和排华法也是背景，二战和土改当然更是背景，真正的前景只是一个在贫穷和无奈的坚硬生存状态中抵力钻出一条活路的方姓家族。

在收集资料的过程里，我发现了一张抵埠华人的合影。那张照片的背景是在维多利亚市的轮船码头，时间大约是19世纪末。这样的照片在我手头有很多张，没有确切的日期，也没有摄像人的名字，只有一些后人加上去的模模糊糊语焉不详的文字说明。可是这张照片却突然吸引了我的眼球，因为我注意到在众多神情疲惫的过埠客里，有一个戴着眼镜的年青人。这副眼镜如引信，瞬间点燃了我的灵感，想象力如炸药爆响，飞出了灿烂的火星。那个在我心目中孕育了多年的小说主人公方得法，就在即将出世的那一刻里改变了他的属性。除了坚忍刚烈忠义这些预定的人物特质之外，我决定剥除他的无知，赋予他知识，或者说，赋予他对知识的向往。一个在乱世中背井离乡的男人，当他用知识打开的眼睛来巡视故土和他乡时，那会是一种何等的疮痍。

我原来以为一旦做好案头考察，动笔的过程大约是行云流水的——一如我从前的小说创作。可我却又一次落入了自己设置的圈套之中。我对重塑历史真实的艰难有了充分的设想和准备，可是我并没有意识到细节重塑的艰难。我向来认为好细节不一定保证产生好小说，可是好小说却是绝对离不开好细节的。我无法说服自己将就地使用没有经过考察根基薄弱的细节。

四十多万字的写作有无数的细节，每一个都像刘翔脚下的百米栏一样让人既兴奋又胆战心惊。我需要知道电是什么时候在北美广泛使用的，我需要了解粤剧历史中男全班和女全班的背景，我需要知道肥皂是什么时候来到广东寻常百姓家的，我需要知道唱机是什么时候问世的，最早的唱片公司叫什么名字，我需要了解1910年前后的照相机是什么样子的，一次可以照多少张照片；我需要明白20世纪初的广东碉楼里使用的是什么枪支，可以连发多少

颗子弹，等等等等。这些惊人数量的细节，使得我的写作变得磕磕绊绊起来。有时为一个三五行字的叙述，我必须在网上书本里和电话上消耗几个晚上的时间。筋疲力尽的我开始诅咒自己，为什么要踩进这样深的一潭烂泥淖。改变心境的妙方常常是一场热水澡或一部好莱坞轻松烂片。之后我又继续坐到电脑前，将一个个丰润的夜晚渐渐熬瘦。

写完《金山》最后一个字的时候，是2008年12月中旬，离圣诞只有一周了。我像猫一样伸了一个巨大的懒腰，心里却没有以往小说杀青时特有的兴奋。那是一个极为寒冷的周六下午，肥硕的雪花伸出冰冷的舌头，在我的窗玻璃上舔出一个又一个多角的唇印，街上的圣诞音乐磨去了寒风的尖锐棱角，一片从未有过的安宁如水涌上心头：那些长眠在洛基山下的孤独灵魂，已经搭乘着我的笔生出的长风，完成了一趟回乡的旅途——尽管是在一个世纪之后。

愿这些灵魂安息。

近年来，海归已经成了不独属于科技界和商界的时髦名词。我的海外文友中，已有数位决定常住国内。每次听到他们在国内文坛上云起风生的动静，我便抱怨自己为何选择久居在这个遥远而多雪的他乡，以致错过了大洋那头的热闹和精彩。放下《金山》书稿的那天，我突然意识到，上帝把我放置在这块安静到几乎寂寞的土地上，也许另有目的。他让我在回望历史和故土的时候，有一个合宜的距离。这个距离给了我一种新的站姿和视角，让我看见了一些我原先不曾发觉的东西，我的世界因此而丰富。这个距离让我丢失了许多，却也得着了一些。

我想借此书一角感谢维多利亚大学地理系教授和加拿大勋章获得者黎全恩博士，他对唐人街及华人历史的深入研究使我在书写《金山》的过程中深深得益。也感谢关宗耀医生，在香茗的氤氲暖气中我曾出神地听他讲述过他在开平村落里度过的童年故事。那些故事给了我好奇的天性以无比欢愉的享受——但愿我喋喋不休的问题没有让他腻烦。约克大学的徐学清教授和多伦多大学的吴小燕博士，在我的写作过程中给予了许多帮助，使我可以安然地享受这两所名校的图书馆资源，来构建华工历史研究的框架。暨南大学文学院院长王列耀教授和他可爱的研究生们，曾两次陪同我到开平考察，并为我安排了一切生活上的便利。我的文友少君先生，曾像一个真正的绅士一

样，在我的乡野考察途中陪伴关照我。江门五邑大学的侨史研究专家张国雄、谭金花教授，在百忙之中带我参观了当地的华侨华人博物馆——那些藏品使我再次意识到，历史是存活在许多人重叠交错的记忆中的。我多年的老友张雁女士和她手下的名报《环球华报》，以及加华作协的一群作家朋友们，为我在温哥华和维多利亚的考察提供了诸多方便。不列颠哥伦比亚大学的 Henry Yu 教授在印第安土著文化与华人文化的交融研究上，给了我很多的启迪和灵感。我所尊敬的长辈曾昭俨先生和黄经华女士，为小说的初稿作过仔细的校对。温哥华文坛大姐刘慧琴女士的先辈曾是早期来加拿大的华工，她对家族往事的追忆丰富了我小说中的一些细节。还有许多我无法一一列名的朋友们，慷慨地为我提供了碉楼的照片和相关信息。

我更是深深感激我的家人在我写作《金山》的过程中给予我精神上的支持和时间上的慷慨付出，没有他们我很难孤独地走完那些漫长的似乎永远也走不到头的黑隧道。

# PREFACE

The idea did not occur just last year. Nor the year before.

The idea came to me in the very first fall when I arrived in Calgary, Canada, from Beijing, China – September of 1986, to be more exact.

It was a sunny afternoon. Leaves were turning a prism of colors for a final desperate show of life before winter killed them. We, my friends and I, were driving around the outskirts of the city to catch a last glimpse of autumn when we had a flat tire. While waiting for assistance, I started to explore the surroundings. It was then that I noticed them, the tomb stones, scattered among the knee-high grass and covered by moss and bird droppings. Most of them had Chinese names carved on them, some with fading pictures revealing a portion of the faces, young but weathered, with harsh cheekbones, hardly any smiles. Dates on the stones, ranging from the second part of 19th century to the first part of 20th century, quickly led to the conclusion that these people died very young, possibly of unnatural causes. It didn't take long for me to realize that they were the early Chinese settlers, or rather, the coolies, as they had once been called.

What kind of lives did they lead in villages of southern China? Whom did they leave behind when they decided to come to the "Gold Mountain", a term they used to describe the wilderness of North America where gold deposits were discovered? What kind of dreams did they hold when they embarked on the harsh journey across the Pacific, not knowing whether they would ever return? What did they see when they first set their feet on the Rockies?

These questions started to form in my mind, dense and heavy. Of course I did not know that they would haunt me for many long years to come.

A book. I could write a book about these people. I should. I told myself on my way home that day.

For the next seventeen years I flirted with the idea of such a book which time and again failed to materialize. I was too busy. There were too many things deserving my immediate attention – two academic degrees, a career as an audiologist, a right man to marry, a house I could call my own, a comfortable life in Canada, just to name a few. The idea of a Gold Mountain book got pushed down to the bottom of my things-to-do list. Every now and then, it would re-surface, especially when I read in the news about the anniversary of the Vancouver riot in 1907, or the "Head Tax" compensation debate in the parliament, but I suppressed it as quickly as it appeared.

Then in the fall of 2003, an unexpected opportunity presented itself to me. I was invited, together with a group of Chinese writers residing overseas, to tour one of the villages in Kaiping County, Canton, China, known for its unique residential dwellings called "*Diao Lou*", literally translated as "fortress homes". These houses were built, with the money the coolies sent home from overseas, to protect the women and children they left behind from harm of nature, as well as harm of men, as this area was susceptible to flooding and bandits in those days. Since the coolies were scattered all around the world, the style of the fortress homes bore clear marks of the country where the money came from. One could easily detect baroque, Roman and Victorian characteristics weirdly moulded into southern Chinese architectural expression, not exactly a piece of eye candy.

Through the help of a smart local resident, we were able to slip into a fortress home not yet remodelled for public display. On the third floor of the house, we found an old wooden closet. Little did we expect to see anything inside, as the house had been abandoned for decades. To my great surprise, I found a woman's dress in a vague resemblance of pink, embroidered with golden peonies half faded in color, full of moth holes. Taking out a sleeve tucked into the pocket, I uncovered yet another surprise – a pair of pantyhose was hidden in the sleeve. They

looked thread thin from repeated washing, with a huge run spreading from the heel all the way up to where the legs part. While my fingers were tracing the run, I was struck with a sudden surge of energy, much like electrical current. I could hear my heart pumping in my chest, loud as thunder, as I stood there, quivering with awe.

What kind of woman was she who owned this pair of pantyhose almost a century ago? Had she been the mistress of the household? On what occasion would she wear this elaborate dress? Was she lonely, with her husband away toiling in the Gold Mountain trying to make enough money so that she could afford such expensive things?

Once again I felt the urge to find out the answers to my questions.

Another two years would pass before I finally committed myself to writing this Gold Mountain book, an interval allowing me to complete my third novel "Mail-Order Bride" and several novellas.

It was a consuming journey digging into the rock-hard crust of history. I traveled to Victoria, Vancouver and villages in Kaiping, China, trying to find any people with knowledge, direct or indirect, of the era of my book. I frequented archives at all levels, both in person and through internet, as well as university and public libraries. I found myself shaken with anticipation whenever I spotted a special collection on this subject, or heard a friend mention someone who was the offspring of a Pacific Railway builder. I spent many a sleepless night thinking about a better way to find the answers to my questions haunting me for so long. However, I never really found the answers. Instead, I found stories. From endless pages of books and many a conversation with descendants of Chinese coolies, stories started to surface, stories of people who braved the ocean to come to a wild land called British Columbia, leaving their aging parents, newly wed wives or young children behind, to pursue dreams of wealth and prosperity that quickly eluded them; stories of parties filled with champagne and cheers to celebrate the last railroad spike driven in while the builders, the Chinese coolies, were not even once mentioned; stories of husbands and wives separated by Head Tax, Chinese Exclusion Act as well as a vast span of ocean, yet keeping their marriages alive for decades because of a strong common will to build a future for their children; and stories of a lengthy

journey of two races finally becoming reconciled after a century of distrust and rejection.

The actual writing was not any easier. My train of thoughts was constantly interrupted and distracted by my addiction to accuracy, accuracy of historical fact, and accuracy of detail. To find out a particular style of camera used in 1910's, for example, I would surf the net for nights in a roll which yielded just a brief mention of two sentences in my book. For information about pistols popular at the turn of century, I would engage my friends with military background in endless discussions until they absolutely dreaded my phone calls. I finally came to the realization that I was a hopeless perfectionist – something my friends had told me long before.

It was a cold December afternoon in 2008, a week before Christmas, when I stood up from my computer desk, stretching out my fatigued body with a sigh of relief – I finally had completed my book entitled "Gold Mountain Blues". Snow started falling. With Christmas music permeating the air, and juicy white snowflakes kissing my windowpanes with a gentle laziness, I felt the kind of peace that I had not known for a long while. I knew that I had accomplished a mission – I had given voice to a group of people buried in the dark abyss of ambiguity for more than a century, silent and forgotten.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank professor David Lai of University of Victoria, a member of Order of Canada for his outstanding achievements in investigative work on the history of Chinatowns, who generously let me share his research on early Chinese immigrants in Canada; Dr. James Kwan whose fascinating childhood tales in Kaiping village have given my inquisitive mind great pleasure – I hope I did not bore him to death with my endless questions; professor Xueqing Xu at York University and Dr. Helen Wu at University of Toronto for letting me share their access to university libraries which helped to build the frame work of my research; professor Lieyao Wang at Jinan University and his lovely graduate students for taking me to tour the villages in Kaiping and arranging for my accommodation there; my writer friend Shao Jun for accompanying me, like a true gentleman, on the above tour; professor Guoxiong Zhang and professor Selia Tan of Wuyi University for sharing with me their in-depth knowledge of the contents of

the Museum of Overseas Chinese; my long-term friend Yan Zhang and her well-known newspaper "The Global Chinese Press" as well as Chinese Canadian Writers' Association for facilitating my research in Vancouver and Victoria; professor Henry Yu of University of British Columbia for sharing his knowledge in native Indian subjects; Mr. Ian Zeng and Mrs. Jinghua Huang for proofreading my first draft; Ms. Lily Liu, a well-published author herself, for sharing with me stories of her coolie ancestors; and many other friends who kindly offered me photos and information on related subjects. Last but definitely not least, I'd like to thank my family for constant emotional support without which I could not have endured the difficult and sometimes despairing journey of writing such an expansive book.

God bless you all!

Ling Zhang



喜鹊喜，贺新年，  
阿爸金山去赚钱；  
赚得金银千万两，  
返来买房又买田。

——广东童谣