

老兰走了!
Len Has Left Us!

2020年六月三日，收到小平的邮件，老兰走了。刹那间，所有的邮件离我远去。在那寂静中，一个西装革履风度翩翩的身影浮现。还是在婚礼上幸福微笑的样子，那笑容，映红了小平的脸颊。

On June 3, 2020, I received Shaoping's email, informing me that Len had passed away. All of sudden, the words on the screen disappeared. In a moment of stillness, the only image that appeared in front of me was that graceful gentleman in a well-fit suit, who smiled delightfully at Shaoping at their wedding, and Shaoping smiled happily back at him.

几十年真是很长，孩子都拿到博士学位成了家，小平退休了，进入晚期中年人的大军。几十年又好短，好像一切发生在昨天。小平是我几十年的老友，在北京相识，在美国相互加油打气。懂得，是我们之间永远的默契。共同经历了生命的长和短，我们都格外珍惜生命中夫妻这个缘分。有了小平，老兰的一生是人间值得。可是，老兰走得还是太早了！

The three-plus decades they had together were long and full! During that lengthy period of time their son obtained his PhD and got married; Shaoping left the work place, joining the retirement trend of the baby boomers. Those decades also seemed short! So many things seemed to occur just yesterday. Shaoping has been my old friend; we met in Beijing, and cheered each other up in America. We have shared an unspoken understanding ever since. After experiencing so many things together in life, we each deeply treasure the rare chance for the other to find marriage and happiness. Marrying Shaoping made Len's life worth living. Nevertheless, it's still too soon for Len to leave us.

生命是什么？是我们自己记住的东西，也是朋友们共同经历共同记住的东西。最难忘的是青春，奋斗，爱情，理想。老兰走了，带走了一小块我们的记忆，我们的一部分也随着消失。人生就是这么一个不断失去的过程吧。

What's life? Life is the accumulation of our memories that experienced and shared among friends. The most unforgettable things are youth, struggle, love, and ideals. Len's departure has taken away a piece of our memories; we have also lost part of ourselves. Perhaps life is a progression of such continual disappearance.

我和老兰接触不多，对他的钦佩都是从小平那里折射过来。小平和我都有自知之明，以为是心高手快不好惹的现代女性。可是小平这样的烈性女子，硬是被老兰收了，还收的满心钦佩

满心欢喜。老兰是一个学者，终身孜孜不倦动脑动笔。说是学者，家里家外样样入心，家务事很讲求公平二字。老兰温和委婉，把夫妻间的交流视为夫妻关系第一要务，每天必问小平感觉怎样。有一次聊天老兰告诉我小平在工作单位受到的委屈，非常肯定地说“全是他们的错”！这种“护妻大法”常常让我想起来就笑。老兰常说，“Happy wife, happy life.”老兰的人生是宠妻妻宠的快乐人生。

I didn't have too much direct contact with Len. My admiration for him came mainly from what Shaoping told me. Shaoping and I have self-knowledge, seeing ourselves as strong, ambitious and independent modern women, who don't want to be controlled by men. But Len had the strength of character to accept the strong-willed Shaoping as his wife with delight and admiration.

Len was a scholar, writing tirelessly for many decades. At the same time he did his part in the home equally well, paying attention to all the details. He was gentle and soft-spoken, believing that keeping a good communication between the husband and wife was the most important matter in their relationship. Everyday he would ask Shaoping about her feelings and thoughts.

Once when I chatted with Len he told me that Shaoping was mistreated in her workplace. Then he firmly declared, "It's all her boss' faults." I couldn't help laughing whenever I thought of the way he tried to protect his wife. Len often said, "Happy wife, happy life." Len led a happy life by spoiling his wife and also being spoiled by his wife.

老兰和小平一样，喜欢聊点政治，对和平，气候，经济等等有着浓厚的兴趣。最令我们感叹的是人类本性几千年没有进步，杀戮贪婪愈演愈烈。感叹的同时，老兰和小平也在实实在在做着自己有兴趣的文字工作，笔耕不怠。每次和他们相聚，都知道老兰的新书付印了，小平的网站有了什么新的消息。红尘滚滚杂音喧嚣的人间，进了他们的家，就知道有一小块安静的绿洲，平安喜乐。

Both Len and Shaoping showed great interest in discussing politics, climate change, war and peace, economics, etc. However, what made us sigh with resignation was that human nature has not changed much in the past few thousands of years—greediness and killing have only become more pervasive. But even as we were moaning about the dark realities in the world, Len and Shaoping were concentrated on the work that interested them, always writing diligently with no distraction. Whenever we got together they would tell us that one of Len's new books was just published, and some new content was added to their family website. Whenever we entered their home we immediately sensed that there was a peaceful oasis inside, despite of the hustle and bustle of the busy world outside.

老兰走了，我们会想念你！我们的人生有你和小平这样的朋友，真好。我们的余生有你在我们的回忆里，真好。

Now Len has passed away. We will deeply miss him! It's marvelous to have friends like Len and

Shaoping in our lives. And even with his passing, it's wonderful to have Len in our memory for the rest of our lives.

张云宜，2020年6月于波士顿
Yuyi Zhang, Boston, June, 2020