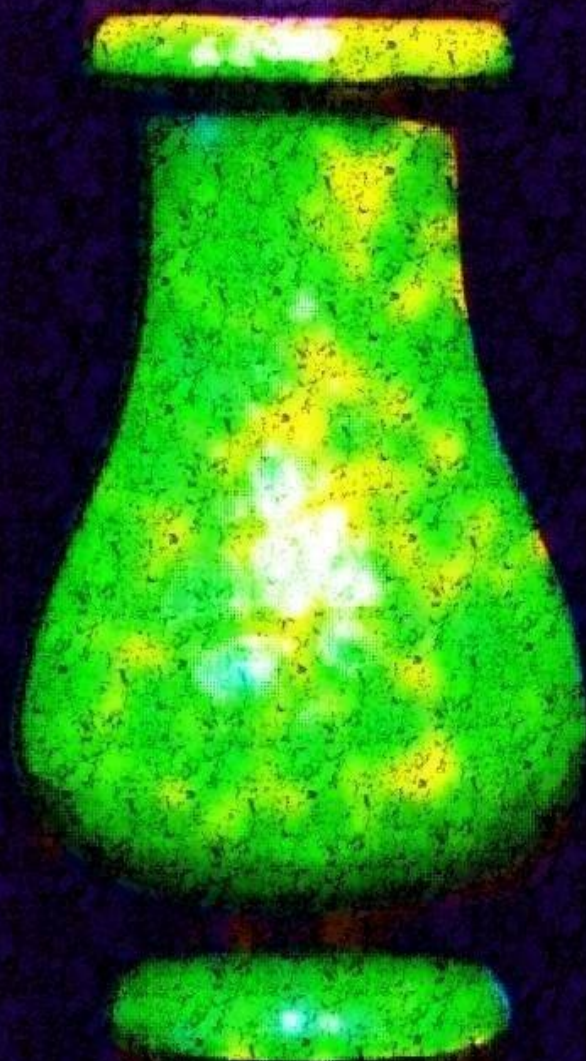


The Chinese Vase

中国花瓶



An adult tale.

Peter

The Chinese Vase

by

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1 Preparation

That is the thing about burglary, you can break into a crib, for instance a suburban home and net a television and a DVD player and for all your trouble you will net perhaps a hundred pounds or even less. Every day you have the same risk as a professional but the mathematics of chance will see you answering for your crimes in front of the magistrates in short order.

The alternative is to spend time researching and seeking the perfect target and net a few hundred thousand. Twice a year I place myself in danger as I cut the maths of risk to the bare bones, for the maximum profit.

I proudly belong to that second group who shun the small time opportunistic crimes and head for the large rewards of well planned and executed theft.

You have all seen the popular Hollywood films of thieves dressed like demented Ninjas who weave through laser alarm systems seeking the diamond of their dreams.

Well, for me, it's not like that at all. Most of the time is spent leafing through catalogues of auction houses and museums looking for items that, for a few moments, will be poorly protected and vulnerable to attack.

Finding the buyer before the theft is another of the most important considerations, the same conscientious effort is expended in this direction as well.

Thus begins the preparation, the research and the waiting. Then there is the motion, the short burst of activity followed by the delicate matter of the money passing hands, before the theft is complete and the next bout of groundwork begins.

I would like to feel that I am an exemplar of my rather dubious trade. I am in and out like lightning but with months of hard planning work. That every mistake costs more than anticipated, could be the thread running through my story. The devil is always in the detail!

To cut a long story short I should perhaps bore you all with some background so that you understand what it is that I do for a living. You see, I am proud of my competence, but that skill mainly is in the organisation and I am always eager to boast of my strengths. This is the story of someone who found out my weakness and exploited it to the full.

The prize that I was after was a small Hu southern Song Dynasty vase. Not much to look at I suppose but to some collectors, priceless, or at least a price of hundreds of thousands of pounds. About eight inches in height, cracked glaze green-azure finish, one of the few existing without a chip or scratch. Value between a hundred thousand and two hundred thousand. In other words, two hundred grams of pottery worth a thousand pounds a gram.

Well, I saw it in the Huntford collection art and design exhibition in Manchester where it was under glass and alarms that are simply impossible to bypass. But I knew that the owner of the collection was going to split it and sell.

You see the Chinese are getting rich and they are buying up all the Chinese items that went astray when the French, British and Germans forced the emperor into submission a couple of hundred years ago. Believe me when I say that prices are going up and the sky is the limit.

So I photographed the vase, posing as a collector and had a superb replica made in Derby. It might seem a simple thing to do but there are very few artists in pottery and glaze that can copy this kind of thing, using original methods and materials. That undertaking took weeks of impatient waiting as the Huntford collection finally came up for sale. For a few days I thought that I would end up as the proud owner of a copy that had cost me two thousand pounds.

But my artisan came up trumps and I collected the vase the day of the first auction. It is generally not a good thing to attend in person at your victim's auction because cameras and memory can catch you out. But I had to risk it to see who bought the vase and I like to work alone. The chain needed all of its links.

Well the bidding was fierce and fluid and the vase went for three hundred and fifty thousand pounds to Meijin Xia Hu who was clearly buying for another party in China.

An hour on the Internet and a walk round Portland Place on the West End of London and I was ready. Meijin was a woman in her thirties who was acting as an aide to the Chinese cultural attaché. She had a small apartment in the back of the Chinese Embassy. This was going to be the first time that my business was taking me abroad. At least in a legal sense, as an Embassy is the lawful ground of the owning country by international law!

This was looking pretty good. The vase was picked up in the afternoon and would leave in the diplomatic bag to China in the next few days. All I had to do was to break in, switch the vase for my fake and meet the seller to pick up my two hundred thousand.

2. Break In

I always think that jeans and leather jacket are a much better uniform than some crazy black spandex suit. Anyone wearing that sort of gear will be picked up by a policeman in short order. My tools are my brain and natural ability to improvise plus a few basics. I like to think that I blend into the background at average height. As the police like to say 'he has no distinguishing marks'.

The roof of the adjoining school and doctor's surgery is easy to enter. I just shimmied up a couple of pipes, no fuss, no tools needed. I have a pretty good head for heights, which stands me in good stead. There was, I will admit, a moment of tension, when the drain pipe separated from the gutter. I really pisses me off when owners don't bother to maintain the glorious buildings that are the proud heritage of this country.

At any rate, a slightly wind-blown two minutes later and I was looking at the security fence between embassy and the building that I was on. Looking down into the darkened street I could see the public moving around, four stories below, going about their business.

Even better I could see the windows of Meijin's rooms. At just seven in the evening it was already dusk and the work of the city was done, now was the time when the good citizens of London come out to play.

I waited.

Patience is a virtue. Actually it is another one of my strong suits. I can sit and focus on nothing but my target for hours at a time without weariness.

I waited some more.

The lights in the rooms went out so I looked into the street, hoping that Meijin was leaving for the dubious delights of the West End. Sure enough, just twenty minutes later she left the building with a couple of big guys and headed off up Weymouth Street.

I still waited.

The best sign is thirty minutes of inactivity. It is so easy to be caught by someone who returns for a small item or forgotten handbag. That short half an hour is enough to show that the victim is well clear. I knew that Meijin was single so there was not likely to be any other person in the rooms.

The climb was routine. I daresay that it would look like a stunt to you but shimmying up and down the inside corners of these rough stone built buildings is easy if you have nerve and the skill. It just takes time. I'm not exactly Jackie Chan but give me a handhold and I can climb a wall with ease.

Then there was the jump. A good long jump athlete can jump seven metres or more, I can jump almost the same! There are no rules and often I am jumping to a lower platform. This one was just five metres, a hop and over. I cracked my shin but the football shin pads that I always wear saved me from a fall.

The windows were standard sash windows, ten feet up, with a wide windowsill is not so very far if you have strong arms. Funny how owners don't bother with the most basic defence, plastic frames are murder to open from the outside! I carry a few basic tools that I normally throw away immediately after my exit. One is the flat jimmy hook. This got me in. Bloody window had been painted shut, but the use of a putty knife and the window rolled up with a smooth swish.

I remember now that there was a distinct smell to the room, a sort of sweet but sickly smell but at the time I thought that it was incense or some such. I

waited to hear if there was a reaction but the lack of alarms was patent and the building was still.

I entered and closed the door behind me. The only light was the gas fire that had been left to burn on low and my small torch. Amazing how LED torches have helped the burglary business, last for hours, bright as a hundred watt light bulb!

Now came the part that I hate, the search. If there was a safe in the room I was doomed. Despite the legends of safe crackers entering any safe with a few twists of the dial as they listen to the tumblers fall, a modern safe is uncrackable to casual assault. If the fools have noted their numbers nearby you are in luck. Otherwise leave by the nearest exit!

Since I was trying a substitute I had to leave no trace of my visit. Under these conditions a search is difficult. It took me half an hour to cover two sides of the room before I decided to check out the bedroom. I was feeling a little under the weather but the air in the bedroom was almost fresh so that revived my spirits.

The search here was simple as bedrooms are pretty uncomplicated. No luck, so I went back into the living room and checked out each piece of furniture carefully. This was starting to look like one of those times where I was going to come away empty handed. It happens about every second time!

I was feeling pretty woozy by the time that I found the small crate in an unpretentious antique chest. I took my time and prised it open, leaving no marks on the way. Each nail was a struggle to remove but at last I had it open. I took my fake and compared it with the original. Amazing job that guy had done for me in Derby.

Every crack was there, even though the glaze on the original had cracked at random. Even the slight lift on the rim of the foot was perfect. If the piece had been going up for auction again it would have been spotted for the fake that it was but this was heading for a collector's cabinet in China. Modern British craftsmanship at its very best!

I placed both vases side by side, the fake was perhaps slightly taller but even to my discerning eye they were the almost identical.

I felt myself losing consciousness. I went to lift the real vase but my hand grasped air as I fell backwards to the carpet. My last thought was that the maintenance of gas fires should be carried out every two years, especially in older buildings as the carbon monoxide carried me off.

3. Awkward Questions

I came to in the bedroom that I had searched just a few short hours earlier. Naked as a baby, I was stretched out on the bed with my hands and feet bound to the posts.

Meijin was sitting by my side playing with a wicked looking knife whilst she eyed me with a tight smile.

"I have a little problem now, because of you," she said when she saw my eyes open. With the knife she gestured at the dressing table by the bed where I saw the two small vases side by side.

I realised that the problem was one of distinguishing the original from the fake. It was my only advantage, my only realistic chance of escape.

"Will you let me go if I tell you which is which?" I asked as I eyed her slightly plump form.

Meijin was dressed in a red silk gown with dragons twisting across the fabric in gold embroidery. As she leant over me I saw a flash of her breasts as the fabric briefly opened. Her face came over mine so close that I could smell her sweet perfume and her dangling earrings almost touched my face.

"You will certainly tell me which is the fake! But how will I know that you are telling the truth?" she mused. "The problem is that tomorrow a man is coming to pick up the vase and courier it to the buyer in Shanghai. If I give him the fake, I shall be in deep trouble with a woman who does not take kindly to being swindled."

I wondered how I could convince her of my honesty. How could I buy my way out of this predicament? This was going to be a game of poker between us.

"On another subject, you are not an unattractive man!" she said as she sat back. Her eyes took in my restrained form and one of her hands moved over my chest.

Without boasting I can say that I am pretty fit. You cannot climb and jump without working out and I am able to climb a rope using only my hands. I had already surreptitiously pulled at my restraints and found them to be tight and secure but I had not looked at them yet. Better not to give her cause to distrust me.

One hand played over me for a few moments, almost reaching my prick before she stopped and passed the knife over my face.

"I keep this blade so very sharp," she said as she allowed the blade to rest on my chest for a moment before it wandered down to the base of my manhood. "Just a flick of my wrist and you will..." She allowed the sentence to drift, unfinished, but the implication was clear.

Irrationally the touch of the blade on my flesh aroused me. I could feel an erection starting to grow.

Meijin smiled and cupped my balls with her other hand. "So what is it to be? Either you tell me what I need to know or I will leave you with a short stump."

"Let me go and I will tell you."

"I really do not think that you are in such a very good bargaining position," she replied as I felt her sharp nails dig into me. The pain made me arch on the bed as she slowly clenched her hand to a fist and twisted just a little as she did so.

I got the feeling that she was enjoying tormenting me. The sly smile on her face and the tip of her tongue on her lips spoke volumes.

"Of course you will tell me my little captured *qíng rén*," she laughed as she let go of my balls and allowed her finger to trace a path from thigh to throat. "If I call security you will not find them as tolerant as I am. After all, you are now in Chinese sovereign territory."

I felt that I still had some room for manoeuvre so I stayed silent. If she called someone else Meijin would have to explain my naked presence on her bed and she would *still* have to find out which of the two vases was the real one.

With a theatrical sigh she stood up and walked round the bed to the two small vases perched on top of the bedside cabinet. With delicate touch she picked each of them up and inspected them carefully inside and out. For a moment I saw her hesitate and she seemed to repress a smile.

“Just think,” she said. “One of these is a fake and the other is a hundred thousand pounds’ worth of art. One was made in the last few weeks and the other is eight hundred years old. One was made here in your little island and a Chinese Song dynasty master-potter made the other.”

Carefully she placed both back onto the surface and compared them.

“Just let me free and I will show you which is Chinese and which is British,” I ventured.

“That is where we have the crux of the problem,” she said. “If I untie you may well tell me a lie or else you may escape. I have to be certain of the truth and you have to be sure that I will let you escape!”

4. Used Captive.

With a shrug she allowed the gown to slip from her shoulders to the floor. I could not help but admire her naked body. I would be lying if I described her as beautiful but even with short legs and wide hips she was an attractive woman. I found her more sexually stimulating than a great beauty.

"It would be a shame to damage such a virile man as you," she said as she returned to my side.

One of her hands wandered over my flesh, scratching me lightly with her nails as it approached my straining erection. When it finally arrived it grasped me firmly and pulled down to expose the sensitive tip of my prick.

"I think that we should continue this conversation in a little while," said Meijin as she climbed onto the bed. "I have another use for you in mind."

She kneeled over my torso and looked down at me with a smile. One hand reached behind her and stroked my cock while the other wandered over her body, lingering to caress her breasts and then heading down to part the lips of her pussy.

A look of satisfaction passed over her pretty features as her finger strummed the bud of her clitoris. Her breasts were small and rounded with the nipples standing rigidly to attention but all I could think of was the way that her other hand played my prick like a musical instrument.

Moving fast and then slow she built me up and then let me down in a broken rhythm that made my body thrust up involuntarily and then relax. Meijin rode my chest as I writhed, allowing my struggles to press her hand into herself. The tip of her tongue touched her lips for a few moments, and her fingers grew ever more frantic as they played over the lips of her sex.

"Don't stop," I cried out. I could feel the gathering forces as I thrust myself into her hand, seeking to increase the friction and bring my own orgasm to completion.

Suddenly she released me. Had she sensed the brink of my coming? Her nails scratched the length of my shaft dropping me from the clouds to the ground with a thump.

"You will come later," she whispered. "Maybe! If I decide that you can."

Her own orgasm took her with the force of a storm as both her hands ploughed between her thighs with violent strokes. I felt her heels dig into my thighs as her legs quivered and she struggled to stay upright.

At last the spasms subsided and Meijin fell forward onto her outstretched arms until her face was but a few inches from mine. For a moment she looked into my eyes and I felt myself being sucked into their mahogany depths.

"Mmm. Again? Would you like to watch me come again?" she whispered.

"Of course," I replied. "You are the boss!"

I had meant the comment as irony, but it was the truth! I had little say in the matter, Meijin could do as she wished with me. That is not to say that I was not enjoying the ride, being at a woman's mercy was a new experience.

"I am more than your boss, I am the judge and the jury. If you please me well we shall see what happens next." It was pretty clear that I would not be going anywhere fast.

Once again she sat up and kneeled over me. I could see her breasts rising and falling as she panted after the last bout. Meijin flicked her hair clear of her face and looked down at me with a rather lofty glance.

"Now it is time for me to use you properly," she said as she slowly shuffled back over my quivering prick.

I lifted my head to see the very tip of me touching her moist lips. The arch of her thighs bisected by the rigid cock.

"No movement from you my little *qíng rén*," she said in a serious voice. "I do the fucking and you stay absolutely still."

I was not sure if I could manage to overcome my instincts but I nodded anyway to signal compliance. In reply she spread her knees a little, just a few inches to lower herself, to envelop the head of my cock.

I could feel the warmth of her slick tunnel and a gentle squeeze of muscle as she took me in, enfolded in her body. First her hands smoothed her breasts, lingering to tweak her nipples, then they made their way to her parted sex and framed my cock as it slid into her depths.

With a satisfied sigh she lowered herself onto me as her fingers guided me into her body. I tried so hard not to move, to be a statue, a frozen lover, but my hips could not help but twitch as I felt her enclose me to the very root of my erection.

My eyes were closed so I did not see the blow coming. A small hard hand slapped my face first with the palm and then on the return with a sharp back handed blow.

"No movement at all, was my command!" she hissed as she raised her hand for a second blow. This time I could see that her fist was clenched and that the blow was going to be a punch, not a slap.

"No," was all I said and I saw the smile on her lips as the hand unclenched and lowered to my chest.

"Next time it will not be just a warning," she panted.

The power she had over me was really turning her on. I could see a film of sweat on her pale skin and her nipples were hard and engorged. Now she was right on me, as far as she could go. Meijin moved so slowly up and down that she kept me imprisoned in a state of longing and suspense. Neither coming nor going, neither at the point of orgasm or indifferent to her subtle manipulations.

I could feel myself concentrating on her pleasure. Her hands, that fluttered over her body from clitoris to neck and then to her dark nipples. The way those contractions of her pussy gripped me as she slipped off me and then relaxed as she impaled herself on me. The look in her eyes as she looked down at her captive and spent all her lust on herself without sharing an iota of the passion. It was use and abuse, not passion and love in those almond eyes.

This orgasm was not frantic. When she came it was a slow wave of emotion, lust and power that enveloped her body with little spasms of pure pleasure. I could feel her thighs rub on mine as she continued to slowly lower herself and then lift off me with great self-control. Meijin milked every spasm and ounce of friction in a composed surge of unqualified gratification.

At last she was at rest. A shiny sheen of sweat covered her and caused her long silky hair to mat and tangle over her face. Meijin's breasts heaved with the exertion of self-discipline and stress. Her eyes were closed, her hands cupped under her small breasts and her pussy was filled with my unsatisfied prick to the very limit of its capacity.

6. Confession

I could still feel the sting of her hand on my face and hesitated to spoil her moment of calm after her exquisite pleasure but I was caught between her intense sexual gratification, the need to come and the fear of my precarious position.

"Meijin," I said in a quiet calm voice. "May I ask you..."

Her eyes opened. For a moment I thought I saw strong emotion pass across her features, disdain? arrogance? Then one of her hands stroked my cheek. For a moment it lingered at the spot where she had earlier struck and then it passed over my lips.

I could taste her pussy's fragrance on her fingertips as they passed. Then I felt her nails on my chest and a pinch at my nipples. I saw her eyes follow the progress of her hand with almost guileless intent.

"You may ask," she replied in a dreamy voice.

"What now?" I asked.

"You will serve my needs a little longer and then we shall see."

Now she was awake. Her hips undulated and slowly raised and then she paused on the very limit of letting me slip out of her.

"Fuck me now!" she said and lowered her hands to my chest. I felt her nails bite into my skin as she clawed me from neck to belly.

I thrust up forcing myself into her depths and then dropped back to the bed almost taking me out of her sex. I thrust again and again whilst the small tiger on my hips scratched and hewed at me with her claws. As I thrust she sometimes moved up with me, denying sensation. Then she would plunge onto me as I rose almost compressing sensation into pain.

I responded to her claws as she established rhythm and order out of the chaos of my lust. I pumped with all my strength and Meijin slapped and clawed me until blood ran from my chest to the silken sheets.

At last I came. A surge, a peak and a momentary mixture of pain and gratification that mounted and burst from me like a flood. At that very moment she asked me...

"So which is it. Which is Song dynasty and which is English?"

I could not have resisted even if I had not fallen under her spell. I told her. I more than trusted her, she was my painful lover and delectable nemesis.

"The biggest is the fake."

I saw a look of satisfaction and a smile. She kneeled on the bed, over my prone body. Sweat glistened on her skin and the liquids of sex poured from her pussy down her thighs as she triumphantly moved up the bed to offer her sticky pussy to my mouth.

"One last thing before you go," she laughed. "Then I release you."

I had never been so drained. Not one of my girlfriends had ever brought me to such heights and treated me with so much contempt at the same moment. I had given Meijin my body, soul and now I was to be degraded.

But I was in no condition to resist. I tasted the salty blood smeared from my chest, the perfumed honey of her pleasure and my own musty emissions as I brought her to one last orgasm. My lips, against hers.

I think that my flickering tongue on her clitoris gave her the strongest orgasm so far. That she enjoyed not just the physical sex but the power of control, of forcing me to serve her unwillingly after my own excitement had faded.

I have to admit Meijin was the best fuck I have ever had. I could have spent a week serving her needs. Yes, she abused me and used me for her pleasure and no one could have described her as beautiful or even pretty but she was exciting, dangerous and addictive in her certainty and intensity.

7. The Foolish Potter.

So she cut me loose with her knife. You might have thought that she would be worried that I would snatch the vase and head for the window as soon as I had my jeans on but that was not my thought.

Meijin must have had me in her spell because I had no thought of the vase or the window, I was more interested in the small woman who had fucked the daylights out of me.

As I slipped on my shirt and jacket I saw the stripes of blood and raw flesh that she had gouged into me with her claws and wondered what devil had been in me to be able to come as the pleasure and pain mingled in equal parts. But I knew that I was in thrall to a woman that I would never see again.

Forgetting the vase, I climbed out of the window into the night and dropped to the concrete ten feet below. I never even thought of a kiss 'goodbye'. That would have been so out of place, I was escaping and longing for captivity.

I turned to look up at the window to see her holding one of the vases in her hand. She was naked but only her silhouette showed against the light of the apartment. I heard her laugh and then she unexpectedly threw me the vase. For a moment I thought that I would fumble the small object, as it was almost invisible in the darkness.

Then I heard her call out to me before she slammed the window closed. "I knew all along little *qíng rén*, look inside!"

I tucked the vase into my jacket and headed back the way that I had arrived. It was not at all easy with the pain and exhaustion of the last couple

of hours, but possible. At last I was back on the street under the bright lights of Portland Place.

It was then that I ventured a look into the small vase. For a moment I saw nothing inside but shadows, then I turned it to the light to see the word, in English, 'Derby' engraved on the inside, just above the base.

The End

Note: In Mandarin - 'Lover' = *qing ren* 情人