

## APPENDIX 1

### SYNOPSIS

The story is opened by the main character's ('you') journey to go a place named Lingshan or Soul Mountain. He just know this place while he was on a train, and a stranger told him a place, ancient forest that he had never heard. It was strange for 'you' who was an expert in history and frequent traveller. Yet, he was attracted to go to that place and decided to visit it. Unfortunately, he did not have enough and specific information about the place. The information about the place he got from the stranger and from local habitant was very obscure. Still, he insisted to go to Lingshan. During on the journey, he met 'she', whom he got interested with. 'You' tried to approach her, and finally he could persuade her to go to Lingshan with him.

'She' was in depressed condition. She had unpleasant background, being forced to marry soon by her family (being expelled from the family), and falling in love with her own father but being raped by him. She was in escape and had a wish to die. As 'you' and 'she' were walking through, their relationship deepened and her background was clearer. She admitted that she had many sexual experiences with some men. Yet, she also got frantic. She was afraid of many things, darkness, loneliness, snake, shaman, ghost, and wrinkle. She once forced 'you' not to leave her and threatened to kill her. Finally, the relationship could not last. 'She' decided to leave 'you', and she just disappeared. 'You' felt lost but also relieved.

During the journey, especially with 'she', 'you' told so many stories. Most of them were frightening stories about the calamities and violent revenge. 'You' told about a persecuted seductress who got leprosy and somehow all the persecutors got leprosy, at last. Other story was a betrothed young girl who changed to be a shaman. Another was an old Confucian scholar who punished his licentious own daughter to death. Then, how a Buddhist temple was destroyed and hundreds of Buddhist monk and lay people died at the near-to-death ceremony of a master because of fire from a stick of candle fallen down by accident.

‘You’ went on his journey, and encountered some other people, including another ‘she’ and ‘he’. ‘You’ finally was at an ice mountain and he underwent such mystical and dreamlike atmosphere. However, the story was ended by the fact that the red lights of you’s tape recorder was flashing in the corner of the room.

I’s story was begun by his witness of ancient human civilization, a worship of fire. ‘I’, in fact, was looking for such ancient culture. He said that it was the authentic life he was longing for. Apparently, he wanted to give meaning to his life after he was freed from false diagnose of having lung cancer. As if he got the second chance of life, he insisted to have uncommon journey, encountering what nowadays people reluctantly see.

‘I’ then tried to recollect the past historical proofs. He attempted to find Grandpa Stone, an old hunter who mastered incantation used by ancient people for hunting. He also pretended to ask an old shaman help for running away from bad luck, although he just would like to witness the spiritual practice. He interacted with a traditional Yi singer and old man, who could perform Daoist ritual. Besides, ‘I’ investigated some ancient remnants, i.e.: traditional wooden carved mask and Han dynasty brick. Unfortunately, some proofs were disappeared deliberately or not. Therefore, ‘I’ angrily said that the race was without soul.

Then, ‘I’ also got into primeval nature. He stayed at giant panda observation compound. He travelled with an old botanist to virgin forest and explored Caohai Lake. During the travelling, ‘I’ was stunned with the originality of primitive nature. However, he wondered whether that uniqueness and loneliness he was searching for. He also complained the destruction of nature he had seen, the deserted lake, almost-extinct fish species, and the increasingly bare forest. Next, he encountered a ranger station who lived alone and far from the noisy of human world. He praised the ranger as living like an immortal. ‘I’ apparently sought for such life. He tried to meet some Buddhist monks and Daoist who lived in recluse. He went also to some temples on desolate mountain and felt the spiritual atmosphere there. Nonetheless, somehow, ‘I’ was not comfortable to live there. He decided to go back to “human world”.

During the journey, some childhood memories sometime suddenly came out, and ‘I’ remembered the bitterness but longed for the warmth of his past. Besides, ‘I’ had experienced with some government officers. Some were too bossy and oppressive, and

made him get out of bus at highway and continue the journey on foot. On the other hand, Some were anxious toward him since he pretended to be a representative from Beijing. They served him so well that he was as if a king.

The story of 'I' was ended in his room while he was looking out window. He found a frog and felt that the frog is simply God. A moment later, he somehow experienced the realm of Heaven, tranquil and peace atmosphere but no joy. At last, he stated that he understood nothing. He might pretend that he had understood. Still, the fact was that he comprehended nothing.

## APPENDIX 2

### BIOGRAPHY

Gao was born on 4 January 1940 in Ganzhou - Jiangxi Province, eastern China. It was soon after the early invasion of the Japanese to China. His father was a bank official and his mother was an amateur actress who stimulated his interest in art particularly in the theatre and writing. He completed secondary and tertiary studies in China that but could be started after the civil war between the Communist against the Nationalist ended in 1949. Then, he went on to the Beijing Foreign Language Institute with a major in French and graduated in 1962. The young Gao had shown a great interest in writing. He wrote many manuscripts. Unfortunately, during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) he had to burn a suitcase full of his documents since all intellectual and creative activities were limited strictly. Not until 1979 could he publish his work again after the more liberal policies were implemented. Then, he belonged to a member of two writers' delegation had a great chance to travel abroad. He went to France in 1979 and to Italy in 1980.

Afterwards, he became a quite productive writer. During the period 1980 – 1987, he published critical essays, short stories, novellas, and dramas in various literary journals in China. He also wrote four books: *A Preliminary Discussion of the Art of Modern Fiction* (1981) which rise a polemic on 'modernism', the narrative *A Pigeon Called Read Bleak* (1985), *Collected Plays of Gao Xing Jian* (1985), and *In Search of a Modern Form of Dramatic Representation* (1987). Besides, some of his plays – inspired part by Brecht, Artaud, and Beckett - were staged at the Beijing People's Art Theatre. His debut was an absurd drama *Absolute Signal* (1982) that brought him a success and established reputation. Yet, the second *Bus Stop* (1983) intrigued an eminent member of the party to condemn that the play was the most evil writing since the foundation of the People's Republic. The third *Wild Man* (1985) also gave rise to domestic polemic and international attention.

Around 1983 he was sentenced with lung cancer, the very disease which had killed his father twenty years ago. He had resigned himself to death until the second x-ray revealed that there was no cancer. He who now was a raise-again-from-death man, found a new life. There was also a rumour that he was going to be sent to a prison farm in Qinghai due to his rebellious plays. Those facts made him get out from Beijing and make a journey. He explored the remote forest regions of Sichuan Province (in the central China) and then traced along the course of Yangtze River from its source to the east coast. By this over-fifteen-thousand-kilometre and ten-month journey, he had passed through eight provinces and seven nature reserves. Later, this event is proved that it influences much Gao's masterpiece, *Soul Mountain* and becomes the main substance of it.

In 1986 the other work, *The Other Shore* was banned. Since then, all of his plays have been completely prohibited to be performed. In 1987, he left China to take up a D.A.A.D fellowship in Germany and moved to France a year later instead of going back to China. He settled down there as a political refugee. In contrast, his works were indeed highly appreciated by international audience and his plays became more and more staged in many parts of the world such as: Paris, Bordeaux, Avignon, Stockholm, Hamburg, New York, Taipei, Hong Kong, Vienna, Kobe, Sydney, Edinburgh, and Benin. Two of his plays (*Summer Rain in Peking* and *Fugitives*) have been translated into Swedish and performed at the Royal Dramatic Theatre in Stockholm.

The massacre of Tiananmen Square in 1989 made him openly state leaving the Chinese Communist Party and publish a harsh critique toward the government, *Fugitive*. On the other hand, the Party decided to add Gao's name among one of the country's 'black-listed' and 'most-wanted' persons. Luckily, Gao had saved the most precious document he had started writing in Beijing in 1982, the *Soul Mountain*. While he was living in Paris, he finished it; and the book was published and soon translated into different languages. Having published firstly in Taiwan, the book was published in Swedish as *Andarnas berg* in 1992 by Goran Malmqvist. Noel and Liliane Dutrait did it in French version, *La Montagne de l'ame*, in 1995. Then, Mabel Lee translated it into English in 2000. In the same year, *Asiaweek* magazine noted that this book blew up Gao's name by awarding him the Literature Nobel Prize.

Now, he is also appreciated as a talented painter in which he depends more to support his life in Paris. He has held thirty solo exhibitions in many galleries throughout Europe and many his paintings are collected by several galleries in Europe and America.