

Heartstrings

Written by Joyce Zhu

A beautiful female voice was coming from the radio. Dancing quietly with the rhythm and looking for books - I was lost in thought. Oops, I collided with someone. I walked back a few steps, and nodded my forehead. I looked at the man in front of me.

His face looked very familiar, someone I had known. I concentrated on trying to remember his name. He mouthed my name with uncertainty.

"Joyce?" he asked a little unsure.

I finally remembered that he was Tim, my best friend in junior high school and also my neighbor before I moved to America. I thought I was never going to see him again because I had lost his phone number.

'It's so great to see you again!' I screamed when we were hugging each other.

We decided to have lunch at a restaurant. The restaurant was my favorite place to go after I returned to Taiwan. Reserving some seats on the square where you can enjoy the scenery and delicious pastas at the same time, we started to chat about how things we were both going through recently. He really shocked me .

" I will get married next Saturday." Pardon me?" I choked myself with the spaghetti.

"I am going to get married."He cried out loudly. Suddenly, all the people on the square looked at us.

"Wow, That's great Tim! Really really great."I had to pretend to be happy.

I didn't know why I wasn't feeling pleased but I was supposed to be. After all, he was my best friend.

After I went home I tried to figure out the reason hidden behind my confusion. Something arose in my my mind.

"Damn, I was in love with Tim, who is going to get married next week, and this is the stupidest thing I've ever done." I yelled to myself in my bedroom where I was alone.

My cellphone rang. It' was Tim. I didn't have enough courage to pick it up and I was also too tired to answer, so I let it keep ringing to remind me the fact that I was in love with the wrong person. Closing my eyes and thinking about Tim all the time, I didn't have a nice sleep that night.

Tim ran toward me calling "Joyce! Joyce!" Before I could answer, someone's voice replied him *but no matter how loud I was, he couldn't hear me. They went away, to somewhere I could never go.*

I woke up and realized that It was just a dream which was so real that it even scared me. I checked the time on my cellphone and saw there was a message from Tim. "

Dear Joyce : Why didn't you answer the phone? I suppose you were too busy! Never mind. Let's meet on *this Wednesday 10:00 at the Green bar. I have someone to introduce to you.*"the message said.

I couldn't decide whether to go or not, unless I had a cup of coffee first. I had felt better after I had some coffee. I should go because Tim is my best friend and I was really interested in that person he was going to show me.

I took a walk to the bar. On the way to the Green bar, I kept telling myself that I have a boyfriend and Tim has a fiancée, each step I took I told myself again and again. After I arrived at the bar, I saw Tim chatting to a beautiful blond-haired woman happily. Her voice was as sweet as the one I heard in my dream. I knew who she was at once, his fiancée.

"Here you are." said Tim with a charming smile on his face.

"Well, now I am here. Who are you going to introduce to me?" I tried not to look at his smile and sound like I was interested in the woman.

"This is my Fiancée, Maggie. And Maggie, this is Joyce my best friend." Tim looked at us and said.

We shook hands and she went dancing. I asked the bartender for some drink. Having too much alcoholic drink makes me dizzy, but my mind was still clear.

"I love you!" I said.

There was a silence for a moment, and he just said I was drunk.

"No, I am not." I tried to answer him back.

"Come, I will take you home." he didn't look at me and started his car.

"Tim, have you ever love me? Even just once." I whispered beside him.

The car suddenly stopped driving, right in the middle of the street. Without a word, he kissed me and turned back to drive again in just a few seconds. That was his answer.

He carried me to my bed and then he was about to leave. I didn't want him to .go.

"Please, just stay for one night. It's my last wish." I looked straight into his eyes, waiting for his response.

He didn't say anything but he sat down beside me. I nestled my head on his shoulder and dropped asleep. I

woke up because I felt some hot water dropping on my face. I could tell they were sorrowful tears, really

sorrowful. I didn't opened my eyes but I knew Tim seemed to hug me softly. I heard foot steps moving away. I

opened my eyes until I was sure he had gone. I woke up and found the tears on face were still sorrowful but no

longer hot. I saw a piece of paper on the table so I began to read it.

"Dear Joyce : I am really sorry that I wasn't able to love you, so why not we all forget these wrong affections like they've never exist. Please come to my wedding even just for our friendships. Your friend Tim. May 20th"

How a weird letter! It was May 30th, not 20th. Did that mean anything special? Nobody answered me, the room is still quiet. I went to the church but on one was there except Tim. He was crying because I noticed his shoulder

was shaking. I sat down beside him in the corner of the church. I didn't say anything, either. I just comforted him by patting his shoulder. He told me Maggie was very ill, and she went to America to have better treatment.

Maggie wanted us can be together and lived happily. That night, she heard me tell Tim that I loved him so she

prefer to leave. She must love Tim as much as I do. After listening to the story, I cried, too. Two sad persons

walked home together. I finally figured out the meaning of May 20th. "520" meas "I love you" in Chinese. It was

all too late. We didn't know what to do? Get married as Maggie's hope or ours? Never contact each other again?

The only response is silence.