



The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

Time flies, doesn't it? You, probably, don't realise it, but even during your short lifetime, there have been a great number of changes that have taken place. You, no doubt, did not realise it, however. When your children go to school, the number of things that they carry with them in their little knapsacks is vastly different from the things that you used to carry to school. And, the things that you used to carry to school were, again, very different from the things that I used to carry when I was going to school. The requirements of one generation are, all too often, so different from the next generation's requirements. It was said that Aristotle was the first universal genius, but, in those days, there was not that much to learn. Anyway, Aristotle talked more than anything else. I recall that when I was young, I used to have a pencil-and-pen box, a rubber, a ruler, a small abacus, a small dictionary, books that would be required for a particular day, my lunch in a box, and, of course, my homework of the previous evening. Today, when a child goes to school, he or she carries a pen, an electronic calculator, a laptop computer (which has a dictionary, built into it), the latest model of mobile telephone, and, of course, some money so that the child may buy his or her lunch either in the cafeteria or in a restaurant. As for the homework of the previous evening, that is, often, sent, electronically, over the Internet to the school, these days. Of course, the child of today would have a Walkman in order to hear his or her favourite songs while walking from one class to another and to wear away that time, during that boring ride on the bus for the return journey home. Yes, my dear, times have changed, haven't they? But there are some things that do not change, no matter how far science may advance. All of us, still, do all those bodily functions that our children did, and those things that were done by the children of the children. Some things never change, regardless. And thank God for that! Man, for instance, still requires to have his leaders because we are not, all, built the same. We are not, all, of the same intellectual capacity: Some of us are more brainy than others. In order to understand who is outstanding among us, we have to compare the values of one person with the values of another person. Only by comparison may we know which individual is intellectually superior and, therefore, worthy of leading the masses. When Grandpa was selected by Beijing, it was well known that he had been endowed with attributes that other people of Hongkong lacked. I am not certain what were those attributes, but it is clear that he had that which others did not possess. Otherwise, for what other reason would he have been selected by his bosses in Beijing? Therefore, Grandpa is the great leader of Hongkong; and, the other Hongkong people are his followers. I sometimes think that he should be entitled to the same dignity that was afforded to the late Mao Ze Dong, the father of our great country. Then, Grandpa would be referred to as 'Chairman' Grandpa. Some people are born to lead, you know. There is an old Chinese poem, which states that water does not need to be deep in order to contain dragons; and, mountains do not have to be high in order to possess fairies. So it is with Grandpa: You may not appreciate him by a quick glance at his profile, but he is deep (thinking, that is) and he stands tall (up there in the clouds). In fact, he is the personification of that old Chinese poem. Strangely, however, Grandpa never learnt to use a computer, and he is not very hot with numbers even with the help of an electronic calculator. So you see, my dear, while 'things' may change, the character of man does not change, appreciably, for that which went before us comes back in the course of time. The tapestries of today are but embellishments, for the truth continues to be just that: The confirmation of that which is fact or actual.

With regard to truths and falsities, it comes to mind that the truth to one may not be truth to another. I don't know whether you realise this, but all forms of government are anarchistic by their very nature. One person, at the end of a governmental line of dignitaries, makes the final determination – and he or she will be held responsible for that decision. Yes, the Doctrine of Anarchism is often misunderstood by modern youth, who seem to feel that all answers may be found in the Internet; and, that truth may be determined by consulting authority. Inward meditation, however, as is advocated by modern philosophy, led by that 17th Century French mathematician, M. Rene Descartes, is only too often discounted in favour of a materialistic philosophy that judges ideas in accordance with proof of acquisitiveness, advertised by the baubles of office, which adorn the persons who advocate such a philosophy. Chinese politicians do not display their wealth, but, instead, maintain outward humility, knowing full well that they are the servants of the people and, as such, they must be one with the people that they serve. Their children may be educated (at great cost to the State) in the West, but Chinese politicians' duty of fidelity is to the East. I am, exactly, that way, you know. I do not dress up like a popinjay, but, inwardly, I keep my daintiness. Grandpa – of course, at his age, he is hardly dainty – thinks the same way as I, and inward meditation takes on a special meaning to him: He is more often than not in a daze, thinking about this and that ... up in the clouds. Grandpa knows that from him and his thinking, the world turns. He perceives the world in truth, devoid of that which is not real. Take all of the modern thingamajigs and try as one might, but, at the end of the day, one realises that these modern things can only assist one in making a decision and, in and of themselves, they can do no more than assist man in his quest for knowledge. With those important thoughts, I leave you for today.

The Chief Lady of Hongkong

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