



The Betty Letters

My Dear Grandchild,

I don't know if I should consider Mr Alan Leong Kah Kit () as a fool or an intelligent man, or, perhaps, a bit of each. On the one hand, he must be somewhat intelligent because he is a barrister by training, but, on the other hand, he is a fool if he thinks that he has the slightest chance of dislodging Chief Executive Donald Tsang Yam Kuen () in the next 'election' in Hongkong for the top job. I have read that the Civic Party () has nominated Mr Alan Leong Kah Kit as a challenge to the incumbent Chief Executive. Mr Donald Tsang Yam Kuen was appointed by Beijing to fill the slot, left vacant by Mr Tung Chee Hwa (), who resigned from the post of Chief Executive, on the spot, so to speak. Mr Alan Leong Kah Kit, as far as I know, has not been officially endorsed by Beijing, although he may know a few people in the Capital City of China, so how can he possibly think that he has a ghost of a chance of giving Mr Donald Tsang Yam Kuen any kind of a political battle for the post of Chief Executive of these 416 square miles? Of course, Beijing must love the idea of having the appearance of a democratic election in Hongkong for the Chief Executive's office in 2007 because, then, Beijing can say, without fear of contradiction, that the people of the territory have spoken – when 'electing' Chief Executive Donald Tsang Yam Kuen to serve a second term. But what a sheer waste of time! What a sham! I wrote a poem about just such an idea, some years ago, and I think it says everything about old, romantic men, roaming the countryside in search of knight-errantry, tilting at windmills, thinking them to be giants, and attacking a flock of sheep, thinking the flock to be to an army. In the words of Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra: 'In the nests of yesteryear, there are no birds, today'. While Mr Alan Leong Kah Kit must know that he is on a fool's errand, at the same time, one must admire his pluck. It is a step forward, I suppose, because it would be terrible if a felon, sitting in the Legislative Council Chamber, were to try his luck for the job of Chief Executive of Hongkong, wouldn't it? Money may be able to buy goods, services and sycophancy, but it is rare that it can buy respect. As far as I know, Mr Alan Leong Kah Kit is well respected and has never been found wanting by his profession. I cannot say that for all of the barristers and solicitors of Hongkong.

Here is the poem that I composed about such a situation:

The Robin And The Rabbit

She lay silent and still on her back,
Legs outstretched, as though she had expired.
The curious rabbit, passing by, wondered
Why a little robin would stay so fixed,
With legs in such a strange direction,
Almost as though she had given up all hope,
As though, from this life, she had retired.

'Oh, no! No, no, no!' The little robin exclaimed.
'I'm not giving up so easily. Definitely not!
'I've been told that the sky will fall down,
'And so I'm lying here, waiting, in the hope
'That I can help to hold it up.'

With that, the little robin braced herself,
By using her wings as a type of prop.

'That's silly!' the furry rabbit said.
'What earthly use are you? Such unmitigated gall!'
'I know I'm not so strong,' the robin said, remorsefully,
'But we, all, must try to do our bit.'
'This is just not plausible!' the rabbit said, rudely,
'Your efforts will be futile in the end, surely,
'That is, if the sky should really come to fall.'

The little robin turned her head, pensively,
And, looking straight into the eyes of the Leporidae,
Maintaining her determined, fighting stance, of course,
Asked: *'What is the alternative, then?*
'We can't just let the sky cave in
'And let that be the end to that,
'We must all try to do our bit. Now, what do you say?'

The rabbit felt ashamed at having mocked, so harshly,
His little friend whose spindly legs still pointed to the sky.
'I think you may be right,' he said at last.
'We all must help in times of need.'
The robin smiled: *'Why don't you join me, then,*
'Because six legs are always better than two?'
And so the rabbit decided he, too, would try.

The crocus, pushing through the snow,
Was refreshed to meet the warming sun.
'It's such a lovely day!' the flower thought,
'It's good to be alive, to breathe the air,
'To note God's work as the season change,
'There's so much love in me these days!'
And, then, she smelt the air and said: *'This is really fun!'*

She puzzled at the lifeless forms
Of the robin and the rabbit, lying in a row.
'Poor little fools!' the crocus said to a passing fly.
'They thought their puny efforts would help
'To keep the sky from falling down,
'And now they're both dead, and gone, and forgotten,
'And their bones are casting funny shadows in the snow.'

The fly was not a very clever chap,
But wondered why the flower, so meanly expressed
Such sentiments about two lives, now gone,
Two lives that had died for others, never seen.
'You may be right,' he said, without stopping long.
'But they died for something which they thought
'Was really worth their while. I feel very impressed.'

Talk to you next week (perhaps with another poem),

Chief Lady

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