Growth is a process of creating new memories for the future.

It’s so lucky that we are living in an era which every family are affordable for photo or video recording devices. When photos and videos join the texts together as tools to keep memories, these memories become more vivid while recalling them some time later.

I think I am lucky. My family began using cameras since my birth to record the growth of me and the family. Honestly, I can’t remember most of my childhood experience, however, the photos and videos which were taken by my mom and dad usually reminds me of details along my route of growth.

Except my family members and my friends, another significant member during my last nineteen years was painting and drawing. I began drawing since my hands could hold pens. Every piece of my work is a mark in my journey called growing up. I’m so glad that I turned the childhood hobby into my college major, and maybe even the job several years later.

I believe that none of my work is only a piece of paper. Memories about love, sadness, and togetherness, farewell are hidden behind every piece of drawing or painting. Then I decided to create this page in order to share some of my growing experience with you. Maybe you are my close friend, my family member, or a stranger, however, no matter who you are, I really hope you can enjoy my stories.

When you are old and grey and full of sleep,

And nodding by the fire, take down this book,

And slowly read, and dream of the soft look

…

William Butler Yeats

College:

College is still a new and novel concept for me right now. I come to a new country and speaks my second language. I meet new friends from different countries. I learn to use new computer software to finish assignment. Everything in college is new.

My parents told me that college is like a transition station for young adults to exchange the train running ahead to career life where is full of mature adults. However, I think college is more similar to kindergarten. We young adults become children in kindergarten again.

College allow me to do whatever we want to do, and I am allowed to own unique, independent personal thoughts and ideas on everything, which were not very encouraged when I was in Chinese middle school five years ago. Different from teachers in middle school and primary school, professors and instructors in college leave more free space and time for me to explore new knowledge by myself.

I’m still on my way of exploration, and fortunately, the unknown future is still attractive to me.

Colloge1&2(弯铁丝)

It was not the first time work with iron wires. Last time I played with wire was in middle school. Lucky! Both two pieces of my wire work were placed on the display shelf to show.

College3(plaster)

Playing with plaster was the first time. Wendy and I went to buy the plaster for five classmates and it was really heavy, but we held the heavy bag by hands and walked back to school from the store. Our arms both felt sore the day after.

College4(故宫图案)

The inspirations of this pattern design work was The Palace Museum. I was totally obsessed by the museum after I visited there twice. I was always wondering why and how could our ancestors create such delicate art pieces when I looked at them. Xingyuan commented me as a fangirl of Palace Museum. I admitted. There are too much I can learn from the collections and architectures in the museum.

College5(刺绣)

Embroidery was an experience full of both my passions and worries. I spent at least two weekends for this piece of work. Needles and threads can do everything, but they work too slow! This embroidery piece was created as a bag strap. The topic or the inspiration was a traditional Chinese mythology called “Nezha Conquers the Dragon King”. The story talked about how a boy called Nezha and owned super power defeated the evil Dragon King and saved the village. I don’t think Nezha is a hero, he was just a naughty boy.

College6(建筑展海报)

This poster was my first poster designed mainly with the layout of texts. I created the “New York City” pattern by myself.

College7(Victo Ngai)

Who is she? She is my favorite illustrator. She is Victo Ngai.

High School:

I took high school in my hometown: Nanjing, China. It’s one of the best high schools in the city. I was in the international department which was especially for students who were going to study aboard for college.

From the first day step into the high school classroom, I began the preparations for applying college. Papers after papers, exams after exams, and endless vocabulary and grammar to recite. These papers, exams and vocabulary recitation occupied 80% of my high school life. The three years in high school was so busy and full of good and bad memories that I can absolutely write a long novel based on them.

I have a lot to say about my high school years. I want to say nothing about my high school years.

High1(板报)

This was a collage for my club. It was the Visual Art Club. There were about ten members in this club, and five of us went to the design schools in colleges. It was so happy to meet with friends who have similar hobby and taste with me.

High2(yearbook)

There are tooooooo many stories behind this cover for Yearbook, but I really don’t know where to start. I really enjoyed the process of designing this cover with help from Emma who is both my teacher and my good friend. I was not good at using Ps and Ai when the department principle asked me to design the cover for our yearbook. I asked Emma for help since she was graduated from design school in Paris. Emma was busy with her work, but she was very willing to help me. Thank you, Emma!

Unfortunately, the final outcome of the yearbook was not my design. This was another story full of sadness and betrayal.

High3(首饰)

Alexa owned her own studio two years ago, in 2015. The first public workshop the studio held was an accessory making workshop. Alexa invited me to join the workshop and it became my first experience of trying to design and make accessories. I made two earrings and a ring, although they can’t really be worn.

High4(学农)

Farming Trip was one of the most important field trip in my high school. All the 10th grade students should go to the countryside to learn how to farm. We stay there for a whole week. It was one of my happiest week during high school. We got up 8:30 every morning, then go to the farmland and learn how to grow grains. We also went fishing and catching lobsters. Everything we did during that week was the activities that we would never have the opportunity to experience in the city. Other than farming and fishing, I was responsible for the daily poster of my class.

High5(中美说)

The Student Senate held an online channel called “ZMB Talk”. Every month, ZMB Talk would invite a teacher to discuss a topic with students. I painted the poster for the third episode. My high school used iPads in daily teaching and learning, and many students developed the skill of painting and drawing in the note taking app. This poster was painted using the note taking app on my iPad.

High6(长跑板报)

This was a board collage on running race. Almost every middle school and high school in Nanjing holds running race at the end of the year. My high school held the race in Xuanwu Lake Park, which is really large and contains a lake inside. Students ran around the lake for the race. In my thought, running race equals to new year.

Middle School:

All my memories about middle school were good and happy memories. Everyone in middle school was nice. All I remember about middle school were the laughing faces of my classmates and teachers.

Middle1(桌上画)

The white tables became the canvas and the draft pad for us. Pencils could easily write on the table, and it was also easy to erase them using the eraser. I usually began drawing on table when I felt the class was boring, and the table functioned as draft pad when I took math exams. Everyone should ever write something on the tables in the middle schools’ classrooms.

Middle2(加油海报)

The sports game in my middle school was different from that of other schools. My middle school was one of schools of a group. The group includes one high school and four middle schools. Every year, all the five schools would hold sports games together in a large stadium. The game would last for three days since there were too much students.

I drew this cheer poster for Angel. Angel was the girl who ran fastest in my class, even in the whole grade. We were best friends, and we are still best friends now.

Middle3(小人书)

I think Sarah began drawing comics on a notebook from 8th grade. She had drawn may pages when we became desk mates. Then she invited me to join her and draw this comic notebook together. All the stories included in the comic were inspired by the daily conversations among our classmates.

Middle4(黑板报)

I was responsible for the blackboard posters during the middle school. The large blackboard in our classroom was an old style blackboard which was black instead of the new style which is dark green. The surface of the blackboard was rough, and chalks didn’t work that well on it. The board was so large that it usually took me one week or more to finish the writing and drawing.

Middle5(铁丝)

We took studio class in middle school. The teacher was an old man who was good at hand making furniture using wood. We were too young to cut woods, so he taught us how to play with wires. He drew the patterns for us, and we used pliers to make the wires match the patterns he drew. He actually taught us more than using pliers. He also taught us what was “craftsman spirit”, which is a prevalent topic people are discussing recent years in China. We heard that his class was canceled by school since the school thought students should use the time for study.

Elementary school:

Elementary school was the period that children grow up dramatically. It was the period that I really began learning. I began learning how to live with other children. I began learning how to create a schedule for my life and study by myself. I lived at school, so I had to learn to do everything by myself. I couldn’t rely on parents and adults.

Elementary1(美术课)

The elementary school had parents’ day every semester. Our parents were invited to school and watch how their children took classes. My whole class were transfer students; thus our first parents’ day was on 3rd grade. My mom came to see me and she joined our art class. Every time my mom came to school, she always brought me strawberries.

Elementary2(参赛)

I joined a drawing club in elementary school. I went there to draw in the noon when most children went to the dorm to sleep.

2008 was the Olympic year in China. Beijing held the Olympic Game in that year. Many teenager competitions in that year chose the topic relate to Olympic. My club teacher recommended me to take part in a drawing competition. This work won me a gold medal.

X

The first time I went to Mr. Bai’s studio was in 2nd grade. After that, I went there every week to practice drawing painting. The weekly meet with Mr. Bai and his family at the studio last for over ten years until I came to New York City. Mr. Bai is not only my teacher, but also a good friend.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten? Well, I almost forget most of the memory of kindergarten.

However, I still remember my last birthday in kindergarten. The teacher drew a beautiful poster on the movable blackboard for me, and my mom brought a birthday cake to the kindergarten. All the other children sang the birthday song around me. I also remember one children’s day, when all the classrooms were turned to game room and each room was a different game. Children went to the room they want and played the game then won gifts.

When writing down my memories, I realized that actually I still remember a lot about that time.

Kindergarten(两幅画)

These two works were protected in frames and put on my desk since I had memory. I think they were sent to display in a park when the park held an exhibition of children’s drawings.