

## Slack Conversation

I think his living area was also unsafe to some degree, or at least his mother felt that way. He said that his mother was very anxious about visitors and that they had many locks on their front door to prevent people from breaking in

Also, because it was war-time, he recalled that most of the time, his mother had black curtains blocking out the sunlight and cars drove around very slow with their lights dimmed. [@Ben S](#) I think you're right when you say the living arrangement wasn't very comfortable, it seemed like his mom at least was anxious a lot of the time

During the war, his mother had blocked out the sunlight with black curtains and the cars would go around with low beams on due to war time regulations. The living conditions weren't very comfortable to live in and his mother was constantly anxious about visitors and that they had many locks on their front door to prevent people from breaking in

One last thing about the industrial part you mentioned [@Leeum](#).

I believe later on he said he would play with other kids on the street, or in vacant lots outside factories with oil puddles on the ground, so it definitely seems like he lives in a very industrial part of the city.

I vaguely recall that he mentioned about playing with street kids in vacant lots or streets where there were a lot of oil spills. This might indicate that he must have lived around an industrial zone, as in there might be a lot of machinery use within that area.

to add on to the point about the poverty, she said she met some people during stays in 24-hour coffee shops. one of them I think was a guy who talked to her for something like 40 minutes straight, and she remarked that she didn't think anyone usually paid much attention to him, so he was probably not doing very well

Another point on poverty is that during her stays at the 24hr coffee shop, there was a guy that spoke to her for 40mins, she remarked that she didn't think anyone usually paid much attention to him, so he was probably not doing very well

another one she found was a guy who was passed out on the street, who seemed like he was in a bad place and swore at her. I don't even think he was able to form sentences together and she had to call an ambulance for him

On another instance was when she found a guy who was passed out on the street, who seemed like he was in a bad shape and swore at her. I don't even think he was doing well and might have been drunk to an extent that he was not able to form sentences together and she had to call an ambulance for him

So it definitely seems like she was living in a very poor part of the city, or at least frequented it a lot

yeah, and Lau seemed to describe the area she was living in as very poverty-ridden, seemed like there were a lot of people who abused alcohol and drugs as well. So even though they lived in similar areas, their views of the areas seemed much different

[@Leeum](#) actually to add on to what you said, when he's in the present at his mom's funeral, he says something like how he understood why he was so speechless or in shock when he thought he saw his mother not breathing during that second haunting. I think he maybe realizes as an adult the strange silence or unknown that comes with death and that could be what scared him that time

There was also that other "ghost" that he mentions. later that takes over his father

They called it a Bak Kewi, a ghost of a white man who was killed in front of their house. I think that his mother and their neighbours blamed the banging they heard at night a lot on the ghost

Choy mentions that later in life he realizes that the noises he heard were likely tremors from underground movement, but his mom seemed to refuse to accept that

I think he also blamed the ghost when his mother and him came home one night and his father was very drunk and angry with them

he said that "the bak kwei, I knew, had tricked father, driven him mad", and seemed to suggest his father's violent outburst was the work of the ghost, so you could say that was another way he was "haunted"

[@Ben S](#) one of those men that appear to constantly haunt her throughout the memoir is Micheal, the social service worker. She constantly compares all the other men to him and wishes they would be more like him. She seems to simultaneously love and hate him, due to the love he seemed to provide, but also because she realizes that he likely only cared about her because he was paid for it

also because of the fact that she can't seem to form a relationship with any other man without comparing them to him, so this could be an example of how he "haunts" her

For Lau's memoir, I'd say she's pretty heavily influenced by her social and economic contexts. A lot of the time in the memoir, she is driven by needed to prove to the government that she can live in her own place on her own, so she constantly feels like she needs to keep sober and avoid conflict

However, I think this causes her a lot of inner conflict, because she also needs money to afford her own apartment, which she feels is easier to do through prostitution. but she feels the need to take drugs before working the streets to numb herself, which creates a negative cycle

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I would say a lot of her inner conflict stems from the fact that she feels the need to prove herself to the government to achieve the independence she wants, but needs to violate a lot of her own morals to do so

you could say this context is what drives her to do a lot of the things she does. If she had a lot of money, or was comfortable living with other people, she may not have had to do what she did

I think we've pretty much decided that Lau is heavily influenced by her social, economic and psychological contexts in her memoir. Under constant surveillance from the government, she feels the need to prove that she can live on her own, but this only fills her with constant anxiety.

She then turns to drugs and alcohol, which further cloud her judgement. She also needs to work jobs that she doesn't want to earn enough money to afford independent living.

Choy 's family is driven by social and economic contexts. Being in the 1940s, there was likely a lot of racism directed towards Chinese people, which made Choy's mother anxious about being attacked. Also, being immigrants during war-time, his family likely didn't have a lot of money, which meant that his father was out most of the time, which likely caused some of the marital issues briefly discussed in the memoir