

- 1 For two years I have not seen my father, yet the memory of his view from behind is very much still with me. In that winter my grandmother passed away, and my father left his job. It was those days that misfortunate events seemed never come alone. I came home from Beijing to meet my father, and join him in Xuzhou for the funeral. At home I saw dad, and the courtyard being left with messy things. At that moment my thought of my grandmother came through and I couldn't hold back my tear. "What happened had happened," Dad said. "Don't be so sad. There are always some ways out."
- 2 Back to home we sold valuables to pay back old debt, then borrowed more for the funeral. Financially the prospect didn't look good, partly because of the funeral, and partly because my dad had become redundant. To look for jobs my father wanted to move to Nanjing. I needed to return to my study in Beijing. Together we started out the journey.
- 3 We arrived at Nanjing and stayed to joined my friends for a tour. Next morning we crossed the river to Pukou to catch up an afternoon train travelling north to Beijing. Dad already told me he was busy and would not able to see me off. He got hold of staff in the guesthouse whom he knew well and let them help me to the journey. He gave instructions to assure himself in every details. But he hesitated, worrying that the staff may not done the job good enough. Actually it was not a great deal to me, for already at the age of 20 I have been travelling to and fro Beijing twice or more. Still my father, after a while of hesitation, finally decided that he better go with me. I tried to convince him, for several times, that he didn't need to see me off himself. "It really doesn't matter to me," he explained. "They won't do good!"
- 4 We crossed the river and arrived the train station. While I went out to purchase the train ticket, my father was busy working on the luggages. Because there are plenty of luggages we need to hire porters. My father negotiated the fee with the porters. But I was then so full of myself, immediately felt his clumsiness in the conversation, and would like to intervene myself. Finally dad had agreed a fee and he sent me off to the train. He picked a seat near the train door, and I set over the seat chair the purple overcoat that he made for me. Dad told me to take care along the journey, be aware at night time and not catching the cold. He also gave instructions to the guesthouse staff to look after me. Inside me I actually teased him of his naivity. What the guesthouse staff would only know was money, it was a waste to put a trust on them! Afterall I was already a grown up. Can I not look after myself? Well, now thinking back, I was then being too clever.