Origami has always been a friend to me when I grow up. I think it’s time I should write a few word about it.

I was obsessed in origami since I was only a six years old child. I can still remember the first origami book my dad bought me, which he helped me, together we finished all the paper works in that book, since than I received more and more origami books as gift or prize from my parents, and I worked every day to fold all the papers, sometimes I would even refuse to have dinner until I finish my origami. I can’t remember why I was doing that, I wasn’t intended to show off, it’s just I’m so into it. I just enjoy the process of folding them, the challenge bring to me from each of those origami and completing them with a sense of achievement. That’s why I never used colored paper, and each of my products ended up in a big paper bag, never taken out until some guests came and my mother starts showing off how talented I was. And it drive me crazy when I was in primary school; I used up a lot of my free time doing those origami project, and even cut my reward paper’s into square pieces when I run out of papers. However my childhood origami all stopped gradually till I moved on to higher grades and started to get endless homework from the pedantic Chinese education system. And also those origamis were no longer challenging for me. But, anyway it still contributed a lot to my life and study; I get the spirit of never giving up and finishing a job at once, and later I noticed that I had a distinctive sense of dimension, geometry and especially 3D. And also not to mention I was always the first to finish my art project in class and the best among my classmates, they used to call me the king of origami, how juvenile is that, but I was very proud of that title.

If it just ended like this, origami would have been one of my most unforgettable memories from my childhood, and may be only a memory. However it didn’t just ended like this, there are much more stories for me and my beloved origami. Time went on and I grew up, when I was 16, I went into an international high school, where there is not much Chinese GaoKao education, and I had more free time to spend on my hobbies. And that’s when my high school origami story begins.

I remember it was a very coincident night (may be it wasn’t). I was looking through my RenRen(kind of like a Chinese Tweeter), and just as I was about to close the page, I happened to saw a album of pictures, they were origami instructions of a fiction jet fighter. It was like something I have never seen before, it had so many steps and each one was so complicated, and with my friend’s sharing quote “finishing that would take me for a whole life time”. At first I was astonished, and suddenly a brave thought came into my mind: why don’t I have a try, this is the challenge I’ve being looking for. So immediately I got a piece of newspaper, and started to fold according to the instructions. After nearly an hour I finished it, I have to say it was really hard, some steps was so sophisticated that would even take me a long time to work them out right now. However it didn’t take me a whole life. But certainly it changed my perspective toward origami, it is no longer a children game for babies, it can be so elaborate like a piece of art. And then I started to look this kind of thing on the internet, and found they are the Modern Origami, also called Japanese Origami. Although we Chinese always possessed an intentional hostility toward the Japanese, but I have to admit that their origami art are so outstanding. Everything they fold is just so vivid, like a fine art sculpture, my origami project are like cartoon toys compared with it. Looking at all those art masterpieces, another great thought came into my mind: I will finish all the origami I can on this website. Starting from today, one for every week. So be it, I’m taking this challenge.

And the following months were the time I made my baggiest progress in origami; I even started inventing a few of my own Chinese origami. I select my origami instructions on weekdays and fold them on weekends. I always believe that the selecting is worth a time, insomuch that ever since I decided, it would be the one that will take me a few hours to complete, so it must be a “most wanted” one. And on every Fridays, as soon as a return from my dorm, I would start my work, Oh wait, first I have to wash my hand(which I usually don’t do) and dry them and adjust the light and…Get everything well prepared before the sacred folding moment. After the ablution it would be the night of origami sometimes even the morning of origami on Saturday. I found that the process of folding those papers is just so fascinating. The most intrinsic and hardest part is that you have to put the plain instruction paper into a three dimensional structure in your mind, and apply this step on the paper holding in your hand, and then you will surprisingly find that the shape of that paper have completely transformed over this last single step. It changed into something exactly the same with the structure you imagined in your mind, only it’s real and you can feel it with your hands. Sometime it would take a pile of steps just to fold the assist lines for one super intricate step. And sometime even if you are already an expert in origami you might still have chance to fail in doing some simplest steps, because folding an origami has a lot to do with aspiration and luck. You may work on a single step till midnight and still can’t figure it out, but the next day when you get up just a single glance will solve this magic trick. Every step you finished will bring you a strong joy of achievement especially those which took you decades of minutes to finish, and the harder it is the more joy you get from it. And it is that sense of achievement that impels you to do another one and after with another. And until all those step starts to linger around in your mind, like different flavors floating in the finest restaurant in French. And when they combine, the new creations come out, just get a piece of paper when you are free and fold it into any shapes you want. Enjoy yourself in the wonderful paper land.

However high schools are not wonder land, homework falls in the 11th grade, GPA, AP course, SAT, TOEFL. They all squeezed my time for origami. Instead of once a week, it might become once a month or even less for me to do an origami. What’s most devastating was that my interest starts to diminish. Hard to find out what happened. At that time I feel I was becoming like an artist, with all my friends praising my products, and I started to develop some strange rules like other famous artist do, for example never give my product away, never fold the same origami twice, never post them on the internet. Some are with reasons but some are just strange rules, anyhow they are all naive to me right now. And what’s worse is that I’m started to seek for compliment, in the same token I started to show off, which is something I really hated in the first place, I think origami should be all about my interest, pure art and fun. Probably because I had very few other talents in music or sport, so this is a way to make me seems unusual and spectacular. I try to make origami sophisticated and mysterious to other people so that they would think me as very talented. So when I was doing my origami I always thought about how other people would reflect when they saw my product, and when I chose the instructions I started to think which is more attractive to the others. And this all made it hard for me to concentrate on my paper work. And from the website I saw more people that are much more talented than me in origami; they can fold the things I can’t, I’m just a nameless player among them. I tried to challenge them, but when it’s too hard, I just get irritated, lost patient. Origami became less fascinating to me. I was the “king of origami” at school but a nameless player among the real origami fans. Conflict, busyness, difficulties, I dropped origami again, but this time I was defeated.

NO, wait. I can’t just be defeated like this; how come they are all better than me, what’s wrong. I made friend with one of those superiors, than I found why. Most of them are over 20, a lot older than me, and most of them spent their time not study but playing around, they spent huge amount of time on origami, which I can’t right now. Sure I venerate them, but what’s more is that I realized I can be as intelligent as they are, it’s just the time has not come. If I have time to build up my origami skills step by step, it won’t be hard for me to reach their level, cause I got all I needed to become ace like them. So when I’m free, probably after the application is done I will take another challenge toward origami I can’t wait till that time comes.

And while I’m busy study at this time right now, I can’t stop meditating that is the charm of origami lie only in its challenging steps and sense of achievement. No, it might not be. It can be just as joyful as it is when I share my love of origami with other people, make them fall in love with the enchanted origami and bring them happiness with my paper works. I started to notice this when I was doing decorations in my group for the holiday posters, it wasn’t very difficult to fold, but it sure made our poster looks very lovely. On the display day everyone was attracted by our poster and my teammates were so happy with it. Since then I started to do a lot of origami for my friends and teachers, I fold decorations for my literature teacher in her classroom, I helped my best friend to make paper rose on her girl friends birthday, and gave out origami bookmarks during the club fair for my newspaper club to attract new club members. What is more mentionable is my origami teaching at the migrant kids’ school. Last summer I became a founder of our Hop-E club, we taught art like music, dancing, handcraft in a Beijing migrant kids’ school. Kids came from poor families, and have poor conditions to get in touch with art. So we went there and introduce art to them. I even made a very detailed teaching plan for every class hour; I aimed to teach them not just specific origami works, but also how to fold origami by themselves through the instructions, kind of like teach a man how to fish instead of giving a man a fish. Although the study plan didn’t went so well as I expected, it did work on most of them, and to my amazement some of them were even deeply attracted to it, asking me to teach them another one. Looking at them working so hard on their papers, a view came into my mind, a little boy sitting in front of a desk with a folded paper, thinking of nothing but the paper holding in his hand. The little boy was me, and there is my childhood filled with origami. Looking back at now, I’m just like the book my dad bought me when I was young, showing them there is something so charming in the world called origami, and some day when they grow up they will become an origami fan like me, and taste the fun of origami in their life. However none of this would ever happen if I’m not standing right here teaching them. This is the biggest achievement I’ve ever made, I was so proud of myself.

I have always lived with origami when I grew up, no matter they are easy or hard, they have always brought me and joy happiness. It had changed so much of my life and had become a part of my life. I’m sure my life will be brighter in the future with origami by my side.