

Peach Blossom Origin (桃花源记)

晋太元中,武陵人捕鱼为业。缘溪行,忘路之远近。忽逢桃花林,夹岸数百步,中无杂树,芳草鲜美,落英缤纷。渔人甚异之,复前行,欲穷其林。

During the reign of Taiyuan of Jin, there was a sherman from Wuling. He was rowing along the river for so long, he couldn't remember. He suddenly found himself in a forest of peach owers stretching a hundred paces between the river banks. There were no other trees, just the peach blossoms with their fragrant scent and vibrant appearance as they scattered through the air. The fisherman found this strange, and decided to continue forward in search of the end of the forest.

林尽水源,便得一山,山有小口,仿佛若有光。便舍船,从口入。初极狭,才通人。复行数十步,豁然开朗。土地平旷,屋舍俨然,有良田、美池、桑竹之属。阡陌交通,鸡犬相闻。其中往来种作,男女衣着,悉如外人。黄发垂髫,并怡然自乐。

Following the forest brought him to the source of the river, ahead of which was a mountain with two caves, which appeared to emit some shining light. The fisherman stepped out from his boat, and entered the cave. The path quickly drew narrow, barely wide enough to fit through. After a while, he came out into the light again. Ahead of him was even ground, orderly rows of houses, fertile farmland, glimmering springs, mulberry and bamboo forests. The paths through the land were interconnected, and the sounds of chickens and dogs could be heard. People went about their work in clothes just the same as those outside. Old and young, they got along cheerful and carefree.

见渔人,乃大惊,问所从来。具答之。便要还家,设酒杀鸡作食。村中闻有此人,咸来问讯。自云先世避秦时乱,率妻子邑人来此绝境,不复出焉,遂与外人间隔。问今是何世,乃不知有汉,无论魏晋。此人一一为具言所闻,皆叹惋。余人各复延至其家,皆出酒食。停数日,辞去。此中人语云:“不足为外人道也。”(间隔一作:隔绝)

Seeing the fisherman, they were startled. They asked where he came from, and he told them. They invited him inside for wine and fresh meat. The other villagers, upon hearing about this strange man, came to visit. They said that, in order to escape the chaos of battle in the Qin era, their ancestors had taken shelter in this secluded place. They asked about the world outside, but they hadn't heard of the Han, much less the courts of Wei and Jin. The fisherman told them all he knew, and they all sighed. What a pity. Others invited him to their homes for food and drink. After a few days, the fisherman decided to leave. The villagers said: "There's no point in telling others about us."

既出,得其船,便扶向路,处处志之。及郡下,诣太守,说如此。太守即遣人随其往,寻向所志,遂迷,不复得路。

Coming out, the fisherman found his boat, and rowed back the way he had come. When he arrived in town, he went to see the governor and told him everything. The governor immediately sent people to find the spring, but they always got lost and never made it.

南阳刘子骥,高尚士也,闻之,欣然规往。未果,寻病终。后遂无问津者。

Liu Ziji of Nanyang was a refined scholar. When he heard the story, he excitedly prepared for his journey. In the end, he died of sickness before he could find it. No one has been to the peach blossom spring since.



Before Sunset
by Ria Clores