

蛇口的周末 A Weekend in Shekou

Winnie Mo

日子渐渐安稳下来，阿碧在深圳结识了更多的朋友。生活不再只是奔忙与彷徨，到了周末，她也尽量参加一些有意义的活动，与不同背景的人交往，在陌生的城市里，寻找那些尚未认识的新奇。

Annie 是其中一个。她刚从武汉大学外文系毕业，在深圳大学当代课英文老师。虽然已经站在讲台上，可身上却还带着明显的学生气。说话轻快，神情轻松，很快就和班上的同学打成一片。她既是老师，又像同伴，也许正因为这样，她的英语听起来格外自然，不带居高临下的规范，也不显怯场。

课外的接触中，她们发现彼此有不少相同的兴趣，很快成了朋友。阿碧想多练口语，多接触真实的语言环境。于是到了周末，Annie 常带着她去蛇口。那里外国人多，咖啡馆、酒吧、码头一带，总能听到不同的口音交织在一起。语言从课本里走出来，成了一种必须被使用的交流方式。人们常说，语言如果不用，便会慢慢生疏。

Annie 英语好，经常有外国游客请去做向导。她从不推辞，反而乐在其中。阿碧也跟着一起，有时帮不上什么忙，只是站在一旁听着、看着。听力在那样的场合里被一步步推着往前走。没完全听懂的地方，只能借助表情、语气和场景去猜。猜对了，便松了一口气；猜错了，也只能笑笑，再来一次。

有一次，她们遇到两位美国游客，计划在深圳游玩一天。游客对这座城市充满好奇，从高楼到街市，从街边小摊到人群密集的路口，一路拍照。看到不明白的地方，便停下来询问。Annie 用英文解释得清楚而从容，顺着话题讲起相关的生活背景。阿碧有时插不上话，便在一旁用随身的本子画下街景、摊位，或简单勾勒方向和场景，给游客提供更直观的补充。图画展开时，语言的不足反而不那么重要了。那天，大家心情都很好，一路走走停停，说说笑笑，时间过得很快。

晚上，他们提议一起吃饭。Annie 想了想，带他们去了一家四川餐馆。她用英文介绍四川菜的特色，说到“夫妻肺片”时，两位游客先是一愣，随即笑得前仰后合，立刻点了一份。接着又听到“水煮鱼”，这名字听起来很清淡，味道或许温和，也要了一份。菜端上来时，红油翻滚，花椒和辣椒铺满表面，香气逼人。两位游客兴致高涨，吃得十分尽兴，盘子里几乎没有留下什么，连汤也喝得一干二净。

阿碧和 Annie 对视了一眼，一时分不清，是不是菜点少了，还是他们觉得味道太好。没过多久，两位游客开始显出不适，脸色发白，额头冒汗。他们以为食物出了问题，神情渐渐紧张，甚至提到是否需要去医院。她们不敢耽搁，急忙拦了车，把两人送回酒店。

他们住在蛇口的南海酒店，一家临海的五星级酒店。出于对夜里可能再生变数的担心，两位游客替 Annie 和阿碧订了一间房，说这样若有需要，也方便随时求助。

那是阿碧第一次住进五星级酒店。房间宽敞，地毯柔软，灯光柔和，连空气似乎都安静下来。推开阳台的门，眼前是一片展开的大海，视线几乎没有尽头。阿碧和 Annie 都显得有些拘谨，不敢随意走动，像是误入了一个并不属于自己的空间。她们对周围的一切感到新奇，却也在心里反复提醒自己，这只是一场偶然的停留。

那一夜，并没有发生什么事。

第二天清晨，窗帘缝隙里透进来一线光。阿碧醒来时，房间也十分安静，夜里的紧张仿佛已被潮水带走，只剩一种未被打扰的清晨感。她和 Annie 简单洗漱后下楼，两位游客已经恢复如常，精神看起来比前一晚轻松得多。那场不适，像是旅途中短暂的一段插曲。

临走时，他们把联系方式留给了 Annie，说如果她有机会去美国，一定要联系他们。Annie 笑着答应，那是她一直以来的梦想。

阿碧站在一旁，看着这一幕，心里生出一种说不清的感觉。

那个周末之后，她记住的，并不只是那顿饭，也不只是那一晚。许多细小的片段留了下来——被喝光的水煮鱼，让人发笑的菜名“夫妻肺片”，还有借住一夜的五星级酒店房间。语言在其中反复被使用、被误解，又被重新理解，不同文化的人，在这样的交流中慢慢靠近。

A Weekend in Shekou

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As life gradually settled into a steadier rhythm, Abi made more friends in Shenzhen. Her days were no longer consumed by constant rushing and uncertainty. On weekends, she tried to take part in activities that felt meaningful—meeting people from different backgrounds and seeking out unfamiliar experiences in a city that was still new to her.

Annie was one of those friends.

She had just graduated from the Foreign Languages Department of Wuhan University and was teaching English as a part-time instructor at Shenzhen University. Although she stood at the front of the classroom, she still carried the unmistakable air of a student. She spoke lightly, moved with ease, and quickly blended in with her students. She was both teacher and peer. Perhaps because of that, her English sounded especially natural—confident without being formal or intimidating.

Outside of class, the two discovered they shared many interests, and soon became friends. Abi wanted more opportunities to practice speaking English, to experience the language. So, on weekends, Annie often took her to Shekou. There were many foreigners there, and around the cafés, bars, and ferry pier, different accents overlapped and mingled. Language stepped out of textbooks and into real life, becoming something that had to be used. People often say that if you don't use a language, it gradually slips away.

Because Annie spoke English so well, foreign visitors often asked her to guide them. She never refused and seemed to enjoy the role. Abi usually tagged along. She wasn't much help and mostly stood aside listening and watching. In those moments,

her listening skills were quietly pushed forward. When she didn't fully understand, she relied on facial expressions, tone, and context to guess. If she guessed right, she relaxed; if not, she smiled and tried again.

One day, they met two American tourists who planned to spend the day exploring Shenzhen. The visitors were curious about everything—from skyscrapers to street markets, from roadside stalls to crowded intersections. They took photos everywhere, stopping often to ask questions about what they saw. Annie explained things clearly and calmly in English, weaving in detail about daily life and local customs. When Abi couldn't quite find the words, she pulled out a small notebook and sketched street scenes, food stalls, or simple maps, offering a more visual explanation. Once the drawings appeared, the gaps in language seemed less important. Everyone was enjoyed that day so much, walking, stopping, talking, laughing. Time passed quickly.

That evening, the visitors suggested dinner together. After giving it some thought, Annie took them to a Sichuan restaurant. She introduced the cuisine in English. When she explained the dish "*Husband and Wife Lung Slices*," the two visitors paused for a moment, then burst out laughing and ordered it immediately. When they heard "*Boiled Fish*," the name sounded mild enough, so they ordered that as well. When the dishes arrived, red chili oil shimmered on the surface, covered with Sichuan peppercorns and dried chilies, the aroma filling the air. The two visitors were delighted, eating enthusiastically. By the end, there was almost nothing left— they even finished all the broth.

Abi and Annie exchanged a glance, unsure whether they had ordered too little, or whether the food had simply been that good. Not long afterward, the visitors began to feel unwell. Their faces grew pale, beads of sweat forming on their

foreheads. Thinking something might be wrong with the food, they became increasingly anxious and even mentioned going to the hospital. Not wanting to take any chances, Abi and Annie hurriedly hailed a taxi and took them back to their hotel.

The visitors were staying at the Nanhai Hotel in Shekou, a five-star hotel by the sea. Worried that something might happen during the night, they booked a room there for Annie and Abi as well, saying it would be easier to ask for help if needed.

It was Abi's first time staying in a five-star hotel. The room was spacious, the carpet soft, the lighting gentle— even the air seemed quieter. She opened the door to the balcony, and the sea unfolded before her, stretching out as far as the eye could see. Both she and Annie felt slightly restrained, careful not to move around too freely, as if they had wandered into a place that didn't quite belong to them. Everything felt new, yet they kept reminding themselves that this was only a brief, accidental stop.

That night, nothing happened.

Early the next morning, a thin line of light slipped through the curtains. When Abi woke up, the room was still. The tension from the night before seemed to have been carried away by the tide, leaving only the calm of an undisturbed morning. After washing up, she and Annie went downstairs, where the two visitors already looked well again, far more relaxed than the night before. The earlier discomfort felt like nothing more than a brief episode during a trip.

Before parting, the visitors gave Annie their contact information, telling her to be sure to get in touch if she ever had the chance to visit the United States. Annie smiled and agreed—it had always been her dream.

Abi stood nearby, watching the scene, feeling something she couldn't quite describe.

After that weekend, what stayed with her wasn't just the meal, nor just the night. Small moments lingered—the pot of boiled fish emptied to the last drop, the dish name that had sparked laughter, *“Husband and Wife Lung Slices,”* and the borrowed room in a five-star hotel. Language had been used and misused, misunderstood and re-understood. Through such exchanges, people from different cultures slowly drew closer to one another.