第八章 香港篇

1 香港·梦幻之城

1999 年 7 月，阿碧终于拿到了盼望已久的香港单程证。

几年来，她经常往返于深圳罗湖口岸，看着来来往往的人群，总觉得香港就在眼前，却又隔着一道无法跨越的边界。如今，这道边界终于向她打开了。

办理离境手续比想象中繁琐。工作人员反复核对证件，又交代了许多注意事项。离开时，入境处职员认真地对她说：“你要拿到签证身份书后，才能返回大陆。”

阿碧愣了一下。这短短一句话，让她意识到，自己不再只是来香港探亲、旅游或短暂停留。从这一刻起，她成了一名新移民。

走出关口时，她的心情十分复杂。有兴奋，也有不安。更多的是一种说不出的恍惚。

那个曾经出现在电影和电视剧里的香港，竟然真的成为了自己未来生活的地方。

她忍不住对自己说：“以后，这里就是我的家了。”那天，阿文带着她走过铜锣湾。街道两旁高楼林立，商店一家连着一家。时代广场门前人来人往，穿着时尚的年轻人匆匆而过。眼前的一切，与深圳截然不同。这里繁华、现代、充满活力。

阿碧一边走，一边默默观察周围的一切。这就是无数人向往的东方之珠。然而，当他们离开热闹的大街，走进一栋旧楼，穿过狭窄的走廊，推开一道小门时，她愣住了。

这就是她和阿文现在的家。房间不到十平方米。放下一张床和一张小桌子后，几乎没有多余的空间。站在房间中央，伸开双臂，就能碰到两边的墙壁。

这是阿碧见过最小的房间。她沉默了一会儿，没有说话。心里虽然有些失落，却很快安慰自己："总算有个地方落脚。比起那些露宿街头的人，我已经很幸运了。"

深圳漂泊的几年，让她学会了接受现实。她知道抱怨解决不了问题。与其感叹房间太小，不如尽快开始新的生活。

第二天一早，她便开始找工作。来香港之前，她常听人说："香港遍地都是机会，只要肯做，不怕找不到工作。"她对此深信不疑。几天后，她果然找到了一份工作。

那是一家自称投资公司的机构。办公室不大，只有几个人。所有人都坐在电话机前，不停地拨打电话，向客户推销各种投资项目。负责人安排了一位打扮时髦、说话爽朗的女职员带她熟悉工作。

第一天上班，阿碧认真观察公司的运作情况。越看越觉得不对劲。那些所谓的投资顾问，对产品了解不多，却不断催促客户投资。不少说法听起来夸张得近乎不真实。

回家后，她把当天的见闻告诉阿文。阿文听完，立刻提醒她："在香港找工作一定要小心，有些公司专门利用年轻人和新移民。"

第二天，阿碧便没有再去上班。初到异乡，总喜欢尝试各种可能，但这次经历也让她明白，繁华的背后，隐藏着各种陷阱。她想起学生时代书本里关于资本主义社会的种种描述。

眼前的经历，让阿碧学会用自己的眼睛观察这个社会，而不只是停留在书本里的描述。要真正认识一个地方，不能只靠书本。必须亲自去看，亲自去经历。刚到香港的她，对一切都充满好奇。

她喜欢尝试找不同的工作，接触不同的人，也渴望了解这个陌生城市的真实模样。然而，现实并不像想象中那样友善。有时，当她开口说话，身边的人便会投来异样的目光。偶尔还能听见压低声音的议论：“大陆妹。”那几个字并不大声，却清晰地传进耳里。

起初，她心里很不是滋味。有一次，有人问她：“你是哪里人？”“台湾人。” 阿碧顺口回答。奇怪的是，对方的态度立刻亲切了许多。那一刻，她第一次感受到身份标签带来的差异。但她没有辩解，也没有因此退缩。相反，她开始努力学习粤语，了解香港的文化和生活习惯。她希望有一天，别人认识她时，看见的不只是 “大陆妹” 这个标签，而是真实的阿碧。

几天后，她在报纸上看到一则招聘广告。位于铜锣湾的香港传艺学院正在招聘美术教师。学院主要开设绘画、电脑设计和语言课程，为年轻人及爱好者提供职业培训。

看到招聘启事后，她决定亲自去试试。学校就在时代广场附近。她带着简历来到学院，将资料递给前台。没想到，当天下午便接到了面试通知。

面试那天，她带着作品集准时来到学校。校长接过作品，一页一页认真翻阅。从素描、油画到设计作品，都看得十分仔细。

阿碧坐在旁边，心里十分紧张。来到香港后，她四处求职，也碰过壁，因此格外珍惜这次机会。翻完最后一页，校长抬起头。

“你什么时候可以上班？” 阿碧愣了一下。“随时都可以。”

校长点点头。“那下星期来吧。”

走出校门时，阿碧带着十分兴奋的心情，四处打量着学校周围的一切。阳光洒在时代广场的玻璃幕墙上，闪闪发亮。来到香港不过十多天，就找到了一份与自己专业相关的工作。那一刻，她心里踏实了许多。

这是阿碧在香港的第一份正式工作。工资并不高。作为刚来的新移民，她得到的待遇并不理想，但她不在意。因为这里有绘画，有设计，还有普通话课程，都是她熟悉而热爱的领域。对阿碧来说，这不仅是一份工作，更是一个让自己继续成长的平台。

来到香港的第三个星期，她正式开始上班。每天下班后，她都会经过时代广场。有好长一段时间，她都觉得这一切像梦一样。几年前，她还在贵州的大山里教书。后来在深圳四处漂泊，为生存奔波。如今，却走在香港最繁华的街道上，走上香港学校的讲台。

看着熙熙攘攘的人群和璀璨的灯光，她常常停下脚步，在心里轻轻自问：“这真的是我的生活吗？”

眼前的一切真实得触手可及，却又像梦境一般虚幻。贵州的梦，把她带到了深圳。深圳的梦，又把她带到了香港。

至于未来会走向哪里，她并不知道。她唯一知道的是，路仍在脚下，梦想仍在前方。而在这座梦幻之城里，阿碧的故事，才刚刚开始。

Chapter 8: Hong Kong

1. Hong Kong: The City of Dreams

In July 1999, Abi finally received the one-way permit to Hong Kong she had been waiting for.

For years, she had often walked through the Shenzhen Lo Wu border crossing, watching the endless stream of people arriving from and departing for Hong Kong. The city always seemed so close yet separated by a boundary she could not cross. Now, that boundary finally had opened to her.

The departure procedures were more complicated than she expected. Officers carefully checked her documents and explained several regulations. Before she left, an immigration officer said to her:

"You cannot return to Mainland until you obtain your Hong Kong Document of Identity."

Abi paused.

Those few words made her realize that she was no longer visiting Hong Kong as a tourist or a short-term traveller. From that moment on, she was a new immigrant.

As she walked through the checkpoint and got on the train, her emotions were mixed. She felt excited, nervous, and strangely unreal.

The Hong Kong she had seen for years in movies and television dramas was no longer just a distant dream. It was now the place where she would build her future.

Silently, she said to herself: *"This is my home now."*

That day, Aman took her through Causeway Bay. Tall buildings lined the streets, shops stood shoulder to shoulder, and fashionable young people hurried past Times Square. Everything felt different from Shenzhen.

The city was vibrant, modern, and full of energy.

As she walked, Abi quietly observed her surroundings. This was the famous Pearl of the Orient that so many people dreamed of.

Yet when they left the bustling streets, entered an old building, walked through a narrow corridor, and opened a small door, she stopped in surprise.

This was their home.

The room was less than ten square metres. Once a bed and a small table were placed inside, there was barely any space left. Standing in the middle of the room, she felt she could almost touch both walls with her outstretched arms. It was the smallest room she had ever seen.

For a moment, she said nothing. Although disappointed, she quickly comforted herself. *"At least I have a place to live. Compared with those sleeping on the streets, I am already fortunate."*

The years she had spent struggling in Shenzhen had taught her to accept reality. Complaining would change nothing. Instead of focusing on how small the room was, she decided to focus on building a new life.

The next morning, she began looking for a job, reading all the recruit newspapers. Before coming to Hong Kong, she often heard people say:

"Hong Kong is full of opportunities. If you're willing to work, you'll always find a job." She believed it wholeheartedly.

A few days later, she found one. It was a company that claimed to be an investment firm. The office was small, with only a handful of employees, all spending their days making phone calls and promoting investment products.

A stylish and confident young woman was assigned to train her.

On her first day, Abi carefully observed how the company operated. The more she watched, the more uncomfortable she felt. The so-called investment advisers seemed to know little about their products, yet constantly pressured people to invest. Many of their claims sounded exaggerated and unrealistic.

That evening, she told Aman about what she had seen.

After listening, he warned her: *"You must be careful when looking for a job in Hong Kong. Some companies take advantage of young people and new immigrants."*

Abi never returned.

Although she was eager to explore new possibilities, the experience taught her an important lesson. Beneath the city's glittering surface were traps and disappointments as well. She remembered what she had learned from textbooks about capitalism. Yet she was beginning to understand that a place could not be known through books alone. To understand a city, one had to live in it.

Everything in Hong Kong fascinated her. She enjoyed meeting different people, trying look for different jobs, and discovering how the city really worked. Every interview and every conversation taught her something new.

But reality was not always welcoming. Sometimes when she spoke Mandarin, people would give her curious looks. Occasionally, she overheard whispers: *"Mainland girl."* The words were quiet, but clear enough to hear.

At first, they hurt. Once, someone asked her where she was from. *"Taiwan,"* she replied without thinking.

To her surprise, the person's attitude immediately became warmer. For the first time, she felt the weight of a label. Yet she neither argued nor retreated. Instead, she worked harder to learn Cantonese and understand local customs. She hoped that one day people would see not a label, but the person she truly was.

A few days later, she saw a job advertisement in a newspaper. The Hong Kong Academy of Arts, located near Times Square in Causeway Bay, was looking for an art teacher. The school offered courses in painting, design, languages, and vocational training.

Abi decided to apply. She submitted her résumé in person and was surprised to receive an interview invitation that very afternoon.

On the interview day, she arrived with her portfolio. The principal carefully reviewed each piece, from sketches and oil paintings to design projects.

Abi sat quietly beside him, trying to hide her nerves. Since arriving in Hong Kong, she had faced setbacks and disappointments. This opportunity meant a great deal to her.

After turning the final page, the principal looked up. *"When can you start?"* Abi was stunned. *"Any time."*

The principal smiled. *"Then come next week."*

As she stepped out of the building, a quiet sense of joy came over her. She looked around at the streets of Causeway Bay. Sunlight reflected from the glass walls of Times Square, and the city seemed brighter than ever. After days of uncertainty, Hong Kong finally felt a little more welcoming.

She had been in Hong Kong for less than two weeks and had already secured a job related to her professional training.

For the first time since arriving, she felt grounded. This was her first formal job in Hong Kong. The salary was modest, and the pay was far from ideal. But she did not mind. The work involved art, design, and teaching Mandarin, all subjects she loved. More importantly, it gave her room to learn and grow.

In her third week in Hong Kong, Abi officially began teaching. Every day after work, she walked past Times Square.

For a long time, everything felt like a dream.

Only a few years earlier, she had been teaching in the mountains of Guizhou. Later, she struggled to survive in Shenzhen, moving from one opportunity to another. Now she was standing in front of a classroom in Hong Kong and beginning a new chapter of her life.

Watching the crowds and the city lights, she would often stop and quietly ask herself: *"Is this really my life?"*

Everything around her felt both real and dreamlike.

A dream from Guizhou had brought her to Shenzhen.

A dream from Shenzhen had brought her to Hong Kong. She did not know where life would lead her next.

She only knew that the road was still beneath her feet, and new dreams still lay ahead. And in this city of dreams, Abi's story was only just beginning.