

A Report on C-E Translation of Children's Literature: A Case Study of *Gen Niao* (Excerpts)

Ying Zhong *

School of Advanced Translation and Interpretation, Dalian University of Foreign Languages, Dalian, China

* Corresponding author Email: 139917163@qq.com

Abstract: *Gen Niao* is a short story crafted by Cao Wenxuan, a distinguished contemporary writer in the realm of children's literature. This story chronicles the maturation journey of a young protagonist named Gen Niao. Currently, there is no published translated edition of this book. This paper takes *Gen Niao* as an example to primarily explore the English translation of Chinese children's literature. As international cultural exchanges deepen, English translation of contemporary Chinese children's literature assumes paramount significance in facilitating cultural outreach. Due to the cultural and linguistic disparities between Chinese and English, translators often find it challenging to accurately and vividly convey the precise connotations of the source text, especially when the target audience is children. Hence, in order to convey the meaning of the source language as faithfully as possible, the author tackles the translation process from two aspects: lexical choices and syntactic structures. Based on the strategies of domestication and foreignization proposed by Venuti, the author primarily employs a strategy of domestication, supplemented by occasional foreignization to translate the selected passages, aiming to maintain fidelity to the original while ensuring readability for the target audience. By exploring strategies for translating Chinese children's literature into English, this research encapsulates reflections and analyses concerning the practice of translating children's literature, aiming to discover methods that can enhance the international impact of translated works and propel Chinese children's literature towards global recognition.

Keywords: Children's Literature; Domestication; Foreignization; Text Analysis.

1. Task Description

In this part, the author will present an overview of the author Cao Wenxuan, and a brief summary of his work *Gen Niao*. Subsequently, the author will elucidate the reasons behind selecting this particular book for translation practice and the significance it brings forth.

1.1. Introduction of the Author and the Source Text

Cao Wenxuan, a renowned children's literature writer, Vice Chairman of the Beijing Writers Association, Professor at Peking University, is an active advocate and promoter of youth writing in China. His notable works include novels such as *Cao Fang Zi (The Straw House, 1997)*, *Qing Tong Kui Hua (Bronze and Sunflower, 2005)*. In 2016, he received the prestigious Hans Christian Andersen Award, and then he became the first Chinese writer to achieve this honor. He focuses on the physical and mental development of young children, with his works primarily depicting youth development.

The source text is chosen from the book *Gen Niao*. It is one of Cao Wenxuan's works, imbued with a strong romantic hue. It primarily narrates the coming-of-age story of a young boy named Gen Niao, presenting a profound and captivating spiritual fairytale that allows readers to wander in dreams and experience humanity in reality (Cao Wenxuan, 2016). The novel consists of five chapters, each showcasing distinctly different settings, including deserts, grasslands, mountains, villages, canyons, and towns. These peculiar and mystical scenes serve as the backdrop for the protagonist, Gen Niao, as he navigates and matures within this dreamlike environment, creating a mesmerizing and alluring beauty.

1.2. Reasons and Significance

Children's literature, as an integral part of literature, plays a significant role in shaping children's values. In recent years, with the deepening of world multipolarity, economic globalization, and cultural diversity, more attention has been given to children's literature in the process of children's growth. However, when examining the market of Chinese children's literature, a large number of foreign children's literary works have been translated into Chinese and imported into the country. Due to the numerous cultural barriers between China and other countries, the development of excellent English translations of Chinese children's literature has been slow, hindering their global dissemination compared to English-language children's literary works. The path for Chinese indigenous works to "go global" has been arduous. Consequently, traditional research on children's literary translation has long been marginalized domestically. One of the reasons for this is the scarcity of individuals translating Chinese children's literature into English, let alone those who can do it well. Translation research has also focused primarily on English-to-Chinese translation, with very few studies on Chinese-to-English translation. Therefore, to expand the international influence of Chinese children's literature and enable more accomplished works by Chinese authors to reach the world, high-quality translation undoubtedly stands as the most crucial factor among all.

Fortunately, in recent years, China has also begun to attach importance to the overseas promotion of outstanding Chinese children's literary works. *Gen Niao* is a children's novel that holds significant research value in terms of both language and meaning. In this paper, I chose this book as the translation subject and translated a portion of its content. Based on this, a detailed analysis of the entire translation process has been

conducted.

Thereby, this translation practice contributes to delve into the realm of translating Chinese children's literature into English, examining various strategies and techniques. It synthesizes introspective reflections and in-depth analyses of the translation process in the context of children's literature. The ultimate goal is to uncover effective methods that can amplify the global influence of translated works and propel Chinese children's literature towards attaining widespread recognition on the international stage.

2. Translation Process

To successfully finish the translation task, the author conducted an extensive research on materials related to the characteristics of children's literature prior to translation. Children's literature, as an essential branch of literature, possesses both fundamental literary characteristics and unique attributes. Precisely, it is mainly characterized by strong appeal, vivid and lively descriptions. Besides, according to Eugene A. Nida in the book *Language, Culture, and Translating*, the target audience always constitutes a major factor in determining the translation procedures and the level of language to be employed (Nida, 1993: 139). In this aspect, Children's psychological and intellectual development is not yet mature, with limited vocabulary and comprehension abilities. They have not yet formed correct outlooks on life, the world, and values. Therefore, translators of Chinese children's literature should focus on enhancing the readability of the text (Xiu Wenqiao, 2020). Last but not least, Children's literature is produced and translated by adults, but its target audience is children. Thus, the overall approach to translating children's literature should involve a combination of domestication and foreignization and other methods of translation, creating translations that are more accessible to children readers.

During the translation process, the author employed both online and offline methods to aid in the translation process. These methods included resources such as the *Oxford Advanced Learner's English-Chinese Dictionary (7th Edition)*, DeepL Translator, Youdao Dictionary, among others. In addition, the translator also applied relevant translation theories and techniques learned during the research. Some challenges were encountered during the translation process, which were consciously integrated for subsequent analysis.

Upon completion of the translation, the author enlisted the assistance of classmates and teachers to proofread the work.

3. Case Study

Children's literature is a collective term for literary works specifically created for children and tailored to their reading comprehension. The most prominent characteristic of children's literature is its simplicity and vividness. Hence, it is common to observe authors employing imagery-rich language that appeals to children's senses, allowing them to immerse themselves in the narrative and experience the genuine emotions conveyed by the work. Furthermore, the language of children's literature is straightforward, emphasizing the use of vivid and imagery-laden words such as nouns, verbs, onomatopoeia, etc., in accordance with the developmental characteristics of children's language. In terms of sentence structures, they are predominantly short and concise.

3.1. Translation Strategies on the Lexical Choices

The source text contains numerous cultural elements deeply rooted in the native culture, along with a significant number of words closely tied to the country's cultural context. For example, there are a large number of words with Chinese characteristics, which can be classified as culture-loaded terms. Culture-loaded terms are words, phrases and idioms that indicate something specific to a culture (Zheng Dehu, 2016). These lexical choices mirror the distinctive lifestyle of a specific nationality, evolving gradually over an extensive historical continuum, thereby distinguishing it from other cultural entities. (Liao Qiyi, 2000: 232). This kind of expression difference poses a significant challenge and requires special attention during the translation process.

Due to the influence of cultural factors, in order to facilitate the transmission of information across different cultural contexts, translators may appropriately employ domestication and foreignization methods during the translation process. The domestication and foreignization translation strategies were proposed by translation scholar Lawrence Venuti in his work *The Translator's Invisibility*. Domestication translation refers to translators' necessity to embrace the target language's expression conventions in order to improve text readability. On the other hand, foreignization translation aims to maintain fidelity to the source language, requiring translators to adopt the expression conventions corresponding to those used by the author (Venuti, 1995). The following is some typical cases.

3.1.1. Chinese Expression of Time

ST: 大约是五更天了, 根鸟在朦胧中似乎又听到了马的嘶鸣。

TT: It was nearly at dawn when Gen Niao seemed to vaguely hear the neighing of the horse again.

Analysis: “五更天” is a unique timekeeping method derived from traditional Chinese culture. It refers to the period from three to five in the early morning, just before dawn. Some translators may opt for a transliteration approach, translating “五更天” as “wugengtian” accompanied by annotations, in order to preserve its cultural significance. However, since “五更天” serves as supplementary information within the sentence and does not constitute the focal point emphasized by the author, it is unnecessary to employ such approach.

Considering the characteristics of children's language abilities, cognitive levels, and immature psychological development, the domestication translation strategy is more suitable for translating children's literature (Yuan Yi, 2010). It reduces cognitive barriers for young readers and enables them to read the translated text smoothly, which is one of the advantages of domestication translation. In this case, given the young age of children readers, who may not have a precise understanding of the time frame from three to five in the early morning, translating “五更天” as “three to five in the early morning” would be meaningless. Instead, the translator's objective is to convey to readers that it's getting light, hence here translating “五更天” as “at dawn” suffices.

Based on the above analysis, hence, every language possesses its unique syntactical, grammatical, and discourse characteristics. To enhance the quality of translation and align it with the conventions of the target language, it is necessary to appropriately adjust the structure of the source text

according to the linguistic preferences of the intended audience, so as to maximize comprehension and appreciation among the target audience. The aim is not solely to convey information, but also to create a translation that resonates with the target language's conventions and enhances its value.

3.1.2. Chinese Idioms

ST: 根鸟被风吹醒后, 去做的第一件事就是去客店收拾了自己的行囊, 然后骑着白马, 来到了戏班子住的客店。

TT: After being awakened by the wind, Gen Niao's first action was to pack his belongings at the inn. He then mounted a white horse and arrived at the inn where Chinese opera actors stayed.

Analysis: “戏班子” is an old term referring to a theatrical troupe in Chinese culture, specifically a group formed for the purpose of performing in the theater. It emerged during the period when the Chinese theater was prevalent and falls under the category of culturally specific words related to Chinese spiritual culture, which is a unique opera culture exclusive to China.

Chinese readers are acquainted with the notion of “戏班子” as a group of people singing Chinese opera, yet such a cultural concept lacks a direct counterpart in the target linguistic domain. To bridge this gap, the author considered adopting Venuti's proposed foreignization translation. Translators should prioritize readers as their target audience, but maintaining the original meaning intact is also important. Hence, the term “戏班子” can be translated as “Chinese opera actors”.

3.1.3. Chinese Literary Quotation

ST: 他在赌场时, 就觉得有神灵在他背后支使着他——真是鬼使神差。

TT: When he was at the gambling table, he felt as if a divine force was guiding him.

Analysis: The Chinese idiom “鬼使神差” originates from the work *Bitao* by the Song Dynasty poet Fang Hui. It means as if being guided by ghosts or deities, unconsciously doing something that was not originally intended. This idiom metaphorically describes unexpected events or actions that occur involuntarily.

Because the term “鬼使神差” in the original text does not emphasize what drives the protagonist, but rather implies an unknown force compelling him to engage in gambling, translating it directly as “driving by the God or Heaven” would be inappropriate. Furthermore, considering the simplified and more vivid language used in children's literature compared to adult literature, a more suitable translation is needed. Translating “鬼使神差” as “spirit-carried out” may not evoke a relatable feeling for children, thus hindering their comprehension. Instead, we can opt for “a divine force,” which would facilitate easier understanding for young readers.

Based on the comparison and analysis provided, it is evident that the key aspect of translating Chinese Characteristic words into English lies in comprehending their underlying and pragmatic meanings. It involves transcending the constraints of word structure and integrating them with the target language context and the reading preferences of the target audience. Thus enabling the translation to be conveyed, using suitable and idiomatic English expressions.

3.2. Translation Strategies on the Syntactic Structures

According to the American linguist Nida(1982:16), the distinguishing feature between eastern and western languages lies in the difference between hypotaxis and parataxis. The term “hypotaxis” refers to the use of formal means in language, such as morphological changes of words, vocabulary and articulation, to express the meaning and logical relationships within sentences. On the other hand, “parataxis” is a linguistic organizational approach in which a language establishes connections between words or clauses based on semantic relevance, emphasizing the inherent logic and correlation of meanings. Regarding hypotaxis and parataxis, English and Chinese stand out as notable representatives. English predominantly employs hypotaxis, while Chinese leans towards parataxis. In light of this, translators should prioritize conveying the core essence of the original text during the translation process, rather than rigidly adhering to a literal rendition of the source material.

When translating between languages, particularly Chinese and English, translators often encounter the need for flexibility in adjusting sentence length due to differences in language conventions. In Chinese, it is common to have multiple smaller sub-sentences combined into one lengthy sentence with a single subject. However, a direct translation into English with the same structure and length would result in a sentence with suboptimal structure. At times, it may even contribute to grammatical inaccuracies. When dealing with a children's novel as the source text, translators often encounter an abundance of lengthy sentences composed of smaller sub-sentences. In such instances, adjusting the length of target language sentences and, when necessary, reorganizing the logical sequence can aid translators in faithfully expressing the essence of the original text. Just as Nida proposes, in the process of translation, emphasis should be placed on capturing the essence and intended meaning of the source text, rather than rigidly adhering to its linguistic form and structural composition. There is a variety of strategies to cope with translation difficulties. The following is some typical cases.

3.2.1. Repetition

ST: 他们喝得猛, 喝得不留一点余地, 喝得热泪盈眶, 喝得又哭又唱, 还有大打出手的, 甚至动刀子的。

TT: They drank hard with no restraint, crying and singing. Some of them got into fights, and even wielded knives.

Analysis: Repetition is a rhetorical device commonly utilized in Chinese. In this instance, repetition is employed to vividly depict the drinking scene. Repetition can help to reinforce a point, establish a pattern, create parallelism, or evoke certain emotions in the reader. It can also contribute to the overall cohesion and coherence of a text by providing a sense of unity and structure.

The source text utilizes the word “喝” four times, creating a concise and impactful repetition. This repetition also highlights the characteristic of Chinese as a language prone for parataxis that often emphasizes inherent logic and correlation of meanings. To faithfully convey the essence of the repetition, translators can segment this lengthy original sentence, transforming them into separate sentences. Without any adjustments, a literal translation of the original sentence into English would inevitably result in redundant meaning. Therefore, translators need to thoroughly organize the logic of the Chinese sentence and then connect all parts according

to English expression patterns.

By doing so, the description of the drinking scene can be conveyed in a more vivid manner while ensuring that the target language readers do not feel confused. This adjustment ensures a closer alignment with the structure commonly found in English sentences. Simultaneously, it also aligns more closely with the characteristic requirements of children's literature.

3.2.2. Run-on Sentences

ST: 酒是奇妙的, 它能使根鸟变得糊涂, 变得亢奋, 从而就不再觉得无聊与孤独。

TT: Alcohol is marvelous for it has the power to bewilder Gen Niao and excite his senses, thereby alleviating his feelings of boredom and loneliness.

Analysis: In this sentence, it is evident that the original sentence lacks explicit logical connectors and falls into the category of run-on sentence. Through analysis, it can be observed that the original sentence exhibits a causal relationship. The statement "Wine is marvelous" serves as a conclusion, followed by the author's explanation of why it is marvelous - because wine can make the protagonist confused and excited, thereby alleviating his boredom and loneliness. Translators need to grasp this logic during the translation process.

Therefore, we can employ the technique of augmentation to enhance the readability and fluency of the English translation. By adding the logical connector "for" after the first clause, the English translation becomes more aligned with English expression conventions and language style.

3.2.3. Non-subject Sentences

ST: "天凉了, 进屋吧。"

TT: "It's getting chilly. Let's go inside," said Gen Niao's father.

Analysis: While Chinese frequently employs non-subject sentences, such constructions are comparatively uncommon in English, with the exception of imperative sentences and certain idiomatic expressions. This disparity arises from the emphasis on subjects and hypotaxis in English, contrasting with the thematic focus and parataxis prevalent in Chinese (Chen Ju, 2013). Hence, particular attention should be paid to such sentences during the translation process.

In this sentence, there is no explicit subject. A literal translation such as "It's getting chilly. Go inside." would be inadequate, as it fails to specify the speaker, causing confusion for the reader and deviating from the tone of the original text, appearing too abrupt, akin to issuing a command. However, considering the context, it is evident that this sentence is spoken by Gen Niao's father during a conversation between father and son. He suggests they move indoors for their discussion, as the outdoor temperature is dropping. Therefore, the translator may supplement the subject "Gen Niao's father" and translate the sentence as, "It's getting chilly. Let's go inside," said Gen Niao's father.

Therefore, during the translation process from Chinese to English, translators should supplement the subject as necessary based on the context, or modify the sentence structure to better align with the linguistic characteristics of English.

4. Conclusion

In contrast to adults, children exhibit a narrower lexicon and possess limited social experience. Hence, when undertaking translation tasks, a propensity towards

employing simpler vocabulary is advisable. Translators ought to meticulously select vocabulary, taking into account the age-specific attributes of children, discerning their reading habits and preferences, while avoiding intricate terminology. Such an approach facilitates children's comprehension of the source text, thereby enhancing their interest in reading. Similarly, with children's constrained reading proficiency, lengthy and intricate sentences may impede their reading experience. Consequently, when translating children's literature, translators must be aware of the unique reading characteristics of child readers, flexibly handling long and difficult sentences, and using shorter sentences that are conducive to comprehension and fluency in reading.

Nida once said: "The various language structures have great similarity, and the deep structure is much more common than the surface structure(1964:164)." Thereby, the translation should be translated into the deep body to express the original text. To put it in a more detailed way, firstly, words serve as the fundamental building blocks of sentences and texts (Liao Qiyi, 2000). When translating, it is crucial to handle word translation effectively, as the meaning of sentences and texts can be lost if word translation is not handled properly. Since words can have multiple meanings, it is important to consider the specific context when selecting the most suitable equivalent during the translation process.

Apart from that, through the process of translation, culture is able to spread among different ethnic groups, enabling the interplay, exchange, and integration of diverse cultural expressions, thereby enhancing their growth and significance. Translators should not confine their attention solely to the literal rendition of Chinese children's literature into English. Instead, we should delve into the underlying Chinese cultural context it embodies. In the translation process, it is imperative to employ a comprehensive range of translation techniques, striving to capture and convey these facets of Chinese culture to the fullest extent possible. Only by doing so can the global dissemination of Chinese culture be facilitated, thereby safeguarding the richness and diversity of global cultural heritage.

To sum up, despite the existence of numerous translation strategies, such as the ones that mentioned above, whether be it Nida's functional equivalence translation strategy or be it Lawrence Venuti's domestication and foreignization strategies, it is essential to understand that regardless of the approach taken, the primary objective of the translator is to convey the cultural essence of the source language as effectively as possible to the target language readers. Just as Venuti once said: "Translation is cultural communication." This will enable outstanding Chinese children's literature to reach beyond national borders and be cherished by children from other countries. Simultaneously, it will promote cultural exchange between China and the West, disseminates Chinese culture, and contribute to the realization of a culturally strong nation.

References

- [1] Venuti, Lawrence. *The translator's invisibility: A History of Translation*[M]. New York: Routledge, 1995.
- [2] Nida, Eugene A. *Language, Culture, and Translating* [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 1993.
- [3] Nida, Eugene. *Translating Meaning*[M]. San Dimas: English Language Institute, 1982.
- [4] Nida, Eugene. *Toward a Science of Translating*[M]. Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers, 1964.

- [5] Xiu Wenqiao. Translation, Publication and Dissemination of Contemporary children's Books in China (2000-2019) [J]. Shanghai Translation, 2020(05):89-93+95.
- [6] Cao Wenxuan. Root bird [M]. Jiangsu: Jiangsu Children's Publishing House, 2016.
- [7] Zheng Dehu. Chinese Culture going Global and the translation of culture-loaded words [J]. Shanghai Translation, 2016(02), 53-56.
- [8] Chen Ju. A study on the translation of Chinese sentences without subject matter into English [J]. Journal of Southeast University (Philosophy and Social Sciences), 2013, 15 (S1): 123-125.
- [9] Tong Huiting. A study on Language in Cao Wenxuan's children's novels [D]. Kaifeng: Henan University, 2013:23-29.
- [10] Yuan Yi. Domestication: The Return of Children's Literature Translation [J]. Writers Magazine, 2010 (4) :159-160.
- [11] Liao Qiyi. Exploration of Contemporary Western Translation Theories [M]. Nanjing: Yilin Press, 2000.

Appendix

Source Text

根鸟还真赢了。这是根鸟平生第一回赌博。当他看到掷骰子的将与他的赌注同样多的钱摔过来时，他一方面感到有点歉意，一方面又兴奋得双手发抖。他停了两周之后，到底又憋不住地参加了进来。他当时的感觉像在冬季里走刚刚结冰的河，对冰的结实程度没有把握，心里却又满是走过去的欲望，就将脚一寸一寸地向前挪，当听到咔嚓的冰裂声时，既感到害怕又感到刺激。他就这样战战兢兢地投入了进去。

大约是五更天了，根鸟在朦胧中似乎又听到了马的嘶鸣。

根鸟被风吹醒后，去做的第一件事就是去客店收拾了自己的行囊，然后骑着白马，来到了戏班子住的客店。

从此，根鸟流连于莺店，一住就是许多日子。晚上，他天天去泡戏园子，如痴如迷地看金枝的演出。那些阔人往台上扔钱，他竟然不想自己一共才有多少钱，也学他们的样子，大方得很。若是有一天晚上他没有去戏园子，这一晚他就不知如何打发了。白天，他也想能常看到金枝，但金枝似乎天性孤独，总是一人呆在屋里，很少露面。这样，他就把白天的全部时光，都泡在赌场里。对于赌博，他似乎有天生的灵性。他在赌场时，就觉得有神灵在他背后支使他——真是鬼使神差。他不知道怎么就在那儿下赌注了，也不知道怎么就先住了手。他心里并不清楚他自己为什么会作出那些选择。那些选择，总是让他赢钱，或者说总是让他免于输钱，但同样都无道理。他用这些钱去喝酒，去交客店的房费。莺店的赌徒们都有点不太乐意他出现在赌场，但莺店的人又无话可说。赌徒们必须讲赌博的规矩。

根鸟的酒量越喝越大。他以前从不曾想到过，他在喝酒方面，也有天生的欲望与能耐。酒是奇妙的，它能使根鸟变得糊涂，变得亢奋，从而就不再觉得无聊与孤独。不久，他就有了酒友。那是他在赌场认识的。根鸟喜欢莺店的人喝酒的方式与样子。莺店的人喝酒比起米溪的人喝酒来，更像喝酒。莺店的人喝酒——痛快！他们喝得猛，喝得不留一点余地，喝得热泪盈眶，喝得又哭又唱，还有大打出手的，甚动刀子的。根鸟原是一个怯弱的人，但在莺店，他找到了野气。他学会

草原人的豪爽了。他觉得那种气概，使他变得更像个成熟的男人了。在酒桌上，他力图要表现出比他的实际年龄要大得多的气派与做法。他故意沙哑着喉咙，“哥们儿哥们儿”地叫着，甚至学会了用脏话骂人。

Target Text

Gen Niao actually won. This was Gen Niao's first-ever gambling experience in his life. When he saw the croupier throw the same amount of money he had bet towards him, Gen Niao felt somewhat apologetic while at the same time his

hands trembled with excitement. After hesitating for two rounds, he couldn't resist joining in. At that moment, he felt like walking on a newly frozen river in winter, unsure of the solidity of the ice, but filled with the desire to cross over. He cautiously moved his feet inch by inch, with an eagerness to move forward, despite the fear and excitement that surged through him when he heard the cracking sound of the ice. And so he plunged into gambling with fear and trembling.

It was nearly at dawn when Gen Niao seemed to vaguely hear the neighing of the horse again.

After being awakened by the wind, Gen Niao's first action was to pack his belongings at the inn. He then mounted a white horse and arrived at the inn where Chinese opera actors stayed.

From then on, Gen Niao lingered at the inn, staying there for many days. Every evening, he would go to the theater and immerse himself in Jinzhi's performances, completely captivated. Those rich people threw money on the stage, he did not even think about how much money he had, but also follow their example, very generous. If there was ever an evening when he didn't go to the theater, he didn't know how to pass the time. During the day, he also longed to see Jinzhi, but she seemed naturally solitary, always staying alone in her room and rarely making appearances. As a result, he spent all his daylight hours immersed in the gambling den. He seemed to possess an innate knack for gambling. When he was at the gambling table, he felt as if a divine force was guiding him. He didn't know how he ended up placing bets there, nor how he managed to stop doing that. He had no clear understanding of why he made those choices. Those choices always resulted in him winning money or saving him from losing it, but they made no logical sense. He used that money to drink and pay for his room at the inn. The other gamblers at the inn were somewhat reluctant to see him at the gambling den, but the inn's staff had nothing to say. Gamblers had their own code of conduct to abide by.

Gen Niao's alcohol tolerance increased as he drank more. He had never imagined before that he possessed an innate desire and ability for drinking. Alcohol is marvelous for it has the power to bewilder Gen Niao and excite his senses, thereby alleviating his feelings of boredom and loneliness. Before long, he found drinking companions, whom he met at the gambling den. Gen Niao admired the way people at the inn drank. Compared to the drinkers in Mixi, those at the inn truly knew how to drink. They drank hard with no restraint, crying and singing. Some of them got into fights, and even wielded knives.

Gen Niao was originally a timid person, but at the inn, he went wild. He learned the boldness of the grassland people. He felt that such demeanor made him appear more like a mature man. At the drinking table, he endeavored to present himself as much older than his actual age. He intentionally rasped his throat, calling out, "Hey, buddy, buddy," and even learned to use vulgar language to insult others.