



STUDIO OCHENTA ORIGINAL TRANSCRIPT

MIJA (ESPAÑOL) – 206: Pao Kong and the golden horse

[00:07]

Hi, I'm Mija and this podcast is about my family, those who are alive, those who are long gone, and those who are still dreaming. Here's what you need to know about Pao Kong: he's a bit of a dreamer, he's not very talkative. He loves to draw and he would do anything for his family.

[00:28]

Pao Kong is my grandfather. Oh, and if you like the show, don't forget to leave us five stars on Apple podcasts. It helps people to find our show.

[00:37]

So here we go. Ten minutes to tell his story.

[00:44]

You see that kid hiding behind a tree? That's my grandfather, Pao Kong (Nong's father). He is 10 years old and he watches his classmates enter the school yard and line up in tight rows.

[00:57]

But Pao Kong, sneaks away before anyone notices he's gone. Today, he's decided to skip school.

[01:06]

He runs through the village streets laughing. He hears the cooks cutting vegetables at the market. He jumps over many muddy puddles. When all of a sudden he hears there's a horse, a few yards from him stuck in the mud. But what's he doing there alone?

[01:33]

Pao Kong reacts quickly. He jumps into the mud and pushes the animal so it can get out. When he comes out, Pao Kong sees it's a black horse with a golden mane shining in the sun.

[01:46]

He is majestic. Pao Kong approaches to pet it, but the horse runs away at a gallop. The next days he only thinks about the horse. He throws it all in the dirt in front of the house so that he doesn't forget it. And since that day, he dreams of owning a horse as beautiful and majestic as that one.

[02:16]

Years go by, and Pao Kong is a young man now. But he hasn't found his calling yet. He helps his parents in the field and spends his evenings drawing.

[02:29]

Until he meets his future wife for the first time, Sao Yeng.

[02:33]

Sao Yeng is the most beautiful woman in the neighborhood and the most intelligent too. All the young men dreamed of marrying her, but she was already promised to a rich heir. Pao Kong also fell under her spell, but he was too shy to talk to her, so he would just draw her, dreaming of an impossible love.

[03:03]

But one day on his way to the fields, he drops his sketchbook by chance or maybe because of karma, Sao Yeng stumbles on it. She discovers the drawings and falls in love with the young man who drew her with great tenderness.

[03:18]

She thinks of this love as almost impossible... until one day, her father discovers that Pao Kong is the child who saved his beloved horse all those years ago.

[03:30]

Sao Yeng's father was the owner of the Golden Horse. Pao Kong and Sao Yeng must have been made to find each other. So Sao Yeng's father changed his mind about the rich heir, and that is how my grandfather and my grandmother got married.

[04:03]

A few years later, Pao Kong is crossing the fields on his horse, his father in law was a dentist, so he learned the trade. Pao Kong is a dreamer. What he really wanted to do was to travel the world, talk to the locals, enjoy the scenery and see the country.

[04:28]

Sao Yeng's father thought he was very unusual. But after all, if he made a living and they were happy like that, why not?

[04:36]

That's how Pao Kong became the first travelling dentist in the region.

[04:48]

Sao Yeng was a merchant, so she traveled with him. Together, they would ride through the villages in a cart pulled by a beautiful golden horse. In between their travels, Pao Kong and Sao Yeng built a house in the prettiest village they passed through near Canton. Together, they had 10 children, including my father.

[05:21]

It's a beautiful morning, Pao Kong goes for a walk and like every week, he goes to see his horse. When he arrives in front of him, he says, it's time, my boy, come on, you and I, we are going to work.

[05:37]

But the horse doesn't move. Usually when Pao Kong talks to him, he reacts, but this time nothing touches his flank. It's hard as a rock.

[05:55]

Behind him, Nong says "dad, what are you doing?" Pao Kong wonders who this man is, who is talking to him, but he says: " the horse doesn't want to move this morning,". Nong takes Pao Kong by the arm.

[06:09]

"Come on, Dad. Let's leave. Let's go home." Pao Kong doesn't understand. " It's not a real horse that it's a statue. This is Place de la Republique in Paris." You're in France, don't you remember?

[06:25]

Nong takes Pao Kong's arm and puts him in his taxi

[06:35]

Pao Kong arrived in France in 1976 with Sao Yeng and his children. When he arrived in Paris, he liked to walk along the streets, especially at night. He loved to see the Eiffel Tower glittering just before midnight. His new life suited him, even if it was very different from his adventures in the Chinese countryside.

[06:57]

In his building in the 13th district of Paris. He runs into neighbors from back home. As he passes them in the elevator he smiles happily: What a wonderful coincidence!

[07:10]

They like to get together to play mahjong, but they avoid doing it too often for fear of getting their ears pulled when they come back home. Empty pockets.

[07:22]

He continued to work as a dentist, and on Sundays he drew tourists on the Place du Tetre in Montmartre. He's proud of his family, but today he has almost forgotten everything.

[07:49]

This morning, Pao Kong gets out of bed. He gets dressed and makes himself a cup of tea. He puts the tea in a teapot, he puts the hot water in a teapot, he pours the tea into the cup and with a small spoon, he turns it.

[08:09]

He drinks the tea silently puts the cup down, he likes a cigarette and makes circles with the smoke. He looks out the window and says nothing.

[08:26]

Nong sits across from him, but Pao Kong doesn't recognize him. He gets up, put on his hat and coat and goes outside.

[08:46]

Nong says to me, come on, Akong wants to go back to his horse. We'll go wait for him there. Nong turns on the radio in his taxi, smiles at me and says: Come on, sing with me!

[09:25]

In our culture, grandparents have a very important role, they often live in the same house with their children and spend a lot of time with their grandchildren.

[09:36]

But Julien and I couldn't understand Pao Kong and Sao Yeng's stories because we didn't speak their language as children. But that doesn't mean we can bond. We often gather together as a family around a delicious meal and listened to music together because food and culture are universal languages, don't you think?

[10:06]

This episode was produced by Studio Ochenta. Our Executive Producer is Lory Martinez. Our Associate Producer is Melanie Hong. Story by Melanie Hong. Sound design by Lory Martinez. Artist: Tiffanie Delune. Theme: Gabriel Dalmasso Follow us on twitter and instagram @mijapodcast, m-i-j-a podcast. If you liked the show, you should tell a friend about it and leave us a few stars on apple podcasts in the meantime. See you next time!

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