

## Above the Absurd, There Should Be Compassion

### -- Comment on Mai Jia's The Sea of Life

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#### Abstract

**The Sea of Life is another long story after Mai Jia was dormant for eight years, but this time Mai Jia got rid of the shadow of writing spy war novels in the past, and he turned his attention to the homeland where his love and hatred were intertwined. In this work, many deep themes such as love and hate, good and evil, sin and punishment, betrayal and forgiveness, suffering and salvation are involved. This is Mai Jia facing the sufferings of childhood, a mature work of self-reconciliation, self-salvation, and self-transcendence.**

#### Keywords

**Childhood trauma; Mai family; colonel; salvation.**

### 1. INTRODUCTION

There was an alley in the place where Mai Jia grew up and lived in childhood. The alley is dilapidated and cramped, and on both sides are tall and dilapidated houses, making this alley narrow and dark. Mai Jia once mentioned that when he was writing *The Sea of Life*, his mind was full of this alley. This is a lingering scene in his memory. From birth to running away from home, Mai Jia has always lived in this alley. He has been wandering in it from "The Wind", "Deciphered", and "Hidden Calculations", but in *The Sea of Life* he began to slowly walk out of this narrow and dark alley, or the alley has gradually become open and bright. Up.

### 2. THE CHILDHOOD "ALLEY" THAT CANNOT BE WALKED OUT

The mist and rain in the south of the Yangtze River, the people who grew up here are delicate and sensitive after being nourished by the humanities and customs of the geographical environment, and Mai Jia is a writer who has painful memories in his childhood, even more so. When Makkah was a child, because his father was criticized as "four types of elements" and "counter-revolutionaries", he was naturally rejected and ridiculed by his companions. Therefore, in his memory, this narrow and dark alley is always full of short and long, humiliating and forbearing voices. These voices have been surrounding him, following him, and confining him. This is why he has his own unique comprehension and writing of spy war novels, and he can easily come and go freely in it. But it is precisely because of his familiarity that he has a deep memory. While the suffering he has experienced for his purpose has achieved him, it has also hurt him again and made it difficult for him to calm down. As he wrote in *The Sea of Life*: "A person has to go through a lot of things in life. Some things are like the air, which drifts away in the wind without leaving a trace, and some things are like watermarks, which last for a while. . . And some things are like woodcuts, which can't be lost. I feel that some of the things I have experienced are like a scar from a muscle that has been pierced by a soldering iron. Not only will it not disappear, but it will also faintly hurt on a rainy day."

Leda once talked about Mai Jia's creation like this: What kind of writer Mai Jia has portrayed himself as, where his typified writing will eventually go, and gave two paths, one is to continue the path of special love novels, and the other is It is to "the road of pure literature master". After dormant for eight years, Mai Jia's *The Sea of Life* gave the answer, and he chose the latter. He once said frankly that when he wrote this work, he had no readers in his heart, and if there were, there were only a few familiar people around him. *The Sea of Life* is actually Mai Jia's self-reconciliation, self-salvation, and self-transcendence work facing the alley in his memory. In his memory, he had never been able to go out of this alley. It was not until the release of *The Sea of Life* that he finally walked through that alley to a wider world. He himself said in an interview: "If you remember that hatred is a force, then letting go of hatred is a greater force."

In *The Sea of Life* Mai Jia also used the narrator "I" to view his past. He said: "I don't want to be his adult, let alone thank him. But I didn't expect that I actually thanked myself. Come, this inadvertent so-called charity has left me with lasting comfort. This is my victory. I spared him and spared myself. I have defeated myself that I have not defeated for decades, as if After a fierce battle, the enemies are all dead and there is no one left. I feel both glorious and lonely. Solitude is my garden. I started to walk in the garden and enjoy the peace that loneliness left me."

Perhaps at a certain age, having a child of his own also realized the responsibility and love that he shoulders as a father, so he bravely took this step and presented the past that he didn't want to mention and touch. Then analyze yourself deeply, use rational and tender eyes to look back at that painful memory, go to war against the absurdity of life, and walk firmly in the direction of redemption and love.

### 3. LOOKING BACK AT HOME, FACING THE PAST

What kind of emotion does the writer have towards his hometown? Perhaps for every writer who has a painful memory in his hometown and loves the earth, as Mo Yan said: "The Gaomi Dongbei Township is undoubtedly the most beautiful and ugly, the most detached and most mundane, the most holy, the most dirty, the most The place where heroes are the most bitch, the best to drink and love." I also have emotions like Mo Yan for my hometown of Mai Jia. The theme of my hometown, Mai Jia, has never been touched in my works before, but after time has been processed When he looked back and forth at his hometown, his mind became more sensible. For Mai Jia, his hometown is a place where love and hatred are intertwined. Once dreamed of eager to escape but now had to return, so this time he focused on the place where he grew up. *The Sea of Life* is a mature work of Mai Jia that combines past artistic experience and life experience. The article tells the legendary story of a hero's life ups and downs from the perspective of "I". At the same time, the legend of the "colonel" also caused other characters to slowly emerge, thus connecting more people and things. This involves many deep topics about human nature and philosophy, such as love and hate, good and evil, sin and punishment, betrayal and forgiveness, suffering and salvation, existence and destiny.

In *The Sea of Life*, almost everyone is trapped by the torrent of time and teased by unknowable fate, such as "colonel", aunt Lin, "me", grandpa, father, old security officer, little blind man, etc. "The Colonel" has made many contributions to the country and the people as a military doctor and secretly lurking special agent. After returning to the village, he has always been an ordinary person in order to keep the secrets in his heart. life. He can tolerate others calling him "eunuch", but he can't tolerate the words written on him and think that he is betraying the country and the people, so when the little blind sees the words on him, he chooses to let the little blind not Talk again, making him dumb. "The Colonel" experienced the War of Resistance Against Japan, the Civil War between the Kuomintang and the Communist Party, and the Korean War. He did not fall under the enemy's bullets and artillery, nor did he fall under dangerous lurking conditions. However, he fell under the influence of the "Cultural Revolution".

In the hands of the blind men, grandpas and other villagers, the colonel eventually turned into a madman with only a child's intelligence. After the "colon" went crazy, the secret that was once the most difficult to tell, has now become his most proud and proud thing.

The fate of the colonel was teased by the heavens back and forth, and his ups and downs in his life are legendary. The absurdity of life and destiny is fully reflected in the "colon", but the colonel's life has always been serious and kind. After he became a madman, he began to learn to paint and raise silkworms, and he raised the silkworms are recognized by the villagers as the best. Perhaps only when the "colon" becomes a madman and becomes like an innocent and happy child is the best compensation for him, the best redemption and the ultimate destination.

Aunt Lin's appearance is a very important and final part of deciphering the past of "colonel", and it is also a demonstration of Aunt Lin's self-salvation. Aunt Lin has a lot of love for "The Colonel", and "The Colonel" is unable to respond to Aunt Lin's love due to her own secrets. Aunt Lin mistakenly thought that the man she was dating was the "Colonel" himself. , So aunt Lin later reported the matter to the "colonel". When Aunt Lin later learned that the man was not a "colonel", she shed sad tears and began the road to self-salvation. Aunt Lin spent the rest of her days taking care of and accompanying the "colon", and helped "the colonel" turn the place he once thought the most humiliation and most want to eliminate into a colorful and profound painting, until finally accompany the "colon" "After the rest of my life, I will lie underground with him. Aunt Lin's passionate love for the "colon" moved everyone. She was guarding the crazy "colon" in her own way, but at the same time she also redeemed herself who had made mistakes.

#### **4. SELF-REDEMPTION AND SELF-TRANSCENDENCE**

In order to seal the little blind man's mouth, his father was suspected of being a "sodomite" by the people in the village. The grandfather reported to the police station an official certificate that the colonel's possession had been exchanged. When later learned by the villagers, this made our family unable to raise their heads in the village, causing the break between father and grandfather, and also forced "I" to flee the village and wander in a foreign country. The reason is still from the little blind man's rumors, but after a few years, "I" and my father chose to forgive the little blind man and wanted to help him sincerely. In his last words, even my father asked "I" to find the master to help the little blind man. Heal your hands. "I" met the ex-wife who was wandering in a foreign country. The ex-wife told "I" with her love and proved to me: life is sea and sea. Dare to die is not called courage, but to live is courage. She gave me the courage to live and also taught me to love. "Years later, age and success have gifted me an open-minded and tolerant heart, allowing me to reach an agreement with destiny and develop sympathy for the little blind man; year after year, sympathy grows like a tree ring, and finally grows into kindness. This move really helped him."

In The Sea of Life, everyone has love in their hearts. The old security chief stood up for him when the "colon" was on trial. The blind old man begged everyone in the village to let the little blind man live, even if he was betrayed. The grandfather who made the mistake of the colonel also wanted to protect the family's face, but the little blind man was enveloped in hatred from beginning to end, without a trace of remorse. Until finally, when the little blind man learned that "I" had helped him, he still said: "Thank you for pitying me~ but I am not going to pity anyone~" Life is like a sea, and everyone's fate is engulfed by the great power of the waves. From one place to another, from the past to the future, in "Life, the Sea", he stayed in the past. The only one who stayed in that narrow and dark place was the little blind man himself. He couldn't get out and didn't want to come out.

A sign of a writer's maturity must be his deep love for the world and the people. Paustovsky wrote about a great writer in the "Golden Rose": "The need for magnificence, A tenacious heart and great love for the people of this country can be nostalgic for these gloomy farmhouses,

lamentations, and the smell of ashes and weeds, and through this extreme scarcity can I see the sickness of Russia surrounded by forests and barren mountains. The beauty of sorrow." Mai Jia's *The Sea of Life* embodies this kind of love. He has learned to forgive and love to people who have hurt himself, to the hometown that has been humiliated and want to escape. Mai Jia also wrote in a letter to his son when he was abroad: "As for love, you must be the master of it. You must love yourself and others, love people you don't like, and love you. Opponents. Loving relatives and friends is human nature, nature, instinct, and ordinary; loving people you don't like, even your enemies, is morality, cultivation, and extraordinary. Son, please remember Love is the passport to cross any barriers, loving others is the greatest love to yourself." Anyone who writes a novel should believe in the power of love, the power of the human heart to save the world, and love the earth. The reason why Mai Jia's work has brought us great appeal is precisely because he has such conditions, and his thinking has become mature.

When a person lives, in the end it is nothing but a heart, a soul, and an attitude towards life and the world. Always maintain a kind and benevolent heart, even after the vicissitudes of life, despite the absurdity of life, but the soul will still be clear and pure. Whatever you live will do to you. You love life and understand and tolerate the world. In fact, you also love yourself, understand and tolerate yourself. It is actually difficult for us to recognize ourselves, but we can illuminate ourselves and recognize ourselves through *The Sea of Life*, so that we must always have a heart of love and tolerance, so that your life will not be dark. So I won't be blinded by the narrow and dark alley.

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