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Yeung Kun Shoe Repair

.....

Alleyway, Kweilin / Ki Lung Streets,
Sham Shui Po

.....

Established 1970s



開業

一九七零年代

地址

深水埗桂林街、基隆街
的後巷

掌蒙

楊權

Left: Yeung Kun
左圖：楊權



Maybe it's about time to retire. I have
worked long enough.

—— Yeung Kun

權伯自小在內地學師，五十年代到了澳門發展，幹了二十年，儲夠了錢便遷往當時發展前景較好的香港，扎根深水埗。補鞋檔起初設於街隅一角，後因樓宇拆卸，便搬往後巷。因此，那些年間在深水埗桂林街、基隆街一帶縱橫交錯的後巷，總會看到一道風景——角落一爿鐵皮攤檔，二十平方呎不到，一位補鞋匠坐在小木凳上，於縫紉機與鞋模間低着頭，專心一致，一針一線地默默縫補。手中針線來回穿梭，一晃眼，便六十多年。

那天，走進小巷，見到了權伯，我把一雙替換用的高跟鞋交他修補。他一面忙着幹活，一面和我聊天。

權伯是深水埗一位名人，權記補鞋檔更是街坊熟悉的老字號。「你都唔知，有幾多警察專登帶佢哋着嚟行必行到爛嘅鞋畀我補，補完又會好似新買嘅一樣！」帶着幾分驕傲的權伯如此說。

經歷半個世紀的變遷，看着四周由新樓變舊樓，新人變舊人，



I took a pair of shoes along with me the first time I went to meet Uncle Kun, as I felt uncomfortable arriving empty-handed and expecting him to give up time to talk with a stranger. As I introduced myself, however, I could quickly see that he was absolutely delighted to chat. He proudly showed me his tradesman's licence from the government which costs HK\$7,000 a year. That is around US\$1,000, just to be given the right to ply his trade from a tiny alleyway under a corrugated tin roof. Customers would bring in leather shoes, bags and belts, and he charged a few dollars for the repair. Police officers were regulars, bringing their black boots all worn-out from walking the beat.

Uncle Kun told me he would soon retire. He thought he had worked long enough, and could no longer afford the licence fee. Showing no anger,

just disappointment, he said someone had recently stolen his heavy iron sewing machine in the middle of the night. He had had that sewing machine for over 30 years, and now that it was gone, he had made his mind up to quit.

This kind man who had worked his entire life to earn around HK\$200-300 a day was about to stop working, but had no pension or provident fund, and no savings to last him throughout his old age. All his earnings had gone to support his daughter in China and to pay the rent for his small, subdivided room in Sham Shui Po.

I wanted to do something for him, to show him that there are folks out there who care, and so with help of a few friends, collected a small red 'laissee' packet of cash as a gesture to thank him for his contribution to the local community over the years.

Over the next few months we became friends. I visited him every so often for a chat, eventually persuading him

我都到時候啦，做到今年五月，可能都會退休喇。
——楊權

權伯一步一腳印走到現在；但一甲子的歲月，留下的，只有慨嘆。

價廉物美，永久保用，是舊時代產品的承諾，對於現代人來說，則可能是永遠也理解不到的堅持。權伯說以前的鞋質量很高，非常耐穿，近年生產的鞋大不如前，即使閒置不理，三年左右便壞掉。每天為不便宜的皮鞋、手袋和皮帶拆拆縫縫、修修補補，收費卻不高，我有點擔心權伯的生活。

「一日有時幾十蚊，有時二百零三百，睇情況啦，時多時少。」
「夠唔夠使？」
「有啲畀個女，佢喺大陸，加埋劏房租金同食飯，有幾多剩㗎喇。」我不禁沉默。

「我都到時候啦，做到今年五月，可能都會退休喇。」權伯忽然說。細問之下，原來他持有的「靠牆攤檔」牌照即將到期，每年續牌費高達七千元；再加上前些日子伴了他三十多年的縫紉機被偷去，令他覺得，是時候了。

沒有多少積蓄，也沒有申領綜援，而即將面對沒有收入的權

伯，眼裏沒有憤怒，只有失望。我應該為他做點事。

幾天後，我和幾位朋友合籌了少許錢，送了給權伯。我告訴他，很多人知道他的情況後，都很關心他，這是我們的一點心意。他拿着紅封包，感動得流下了眼淚。從此，我們成為了朋友。接下來的幾個月，我不時會到權伯的補鞋檔「吹水」。

有次權伯提及不知怎樣申領綜援，又不好意思向社工求助，掙扎良久後問我可否幫忙。我便



to apply for the social welfare that he was entitled to. He had no idea how to go about it, and neither did I, but after a few failures and problems with the paperwork, we succeeded. He could not really believe that the government was willing to give him money every month to help towards rent and food. Perhaps there is something that the government and social workers can do to raise awareness among elderly people: making sure that they all know about their entitlement. It is not much money, but even a few dollars can make a difference. Anyway, once he

began to receive the monthly payments, Uncle Kun would telephone to say he had received that month's cheque and would like to take me out for a cup of tea at his local tea house. I looked forward to those chats.

The last time I heard his voice was the day before we were due to meet up at our usual teahouse. I telephoned him the next day to confirm our plan, but he never answered the phone. It was his daughter who told me Uncle Kun had passed away the night before while playing mahjong with his friends.

This lovely friend had only just started to enjoy a less demanding

life away from work, with a few extra dollars in his pocket, and suddenly he was gone. I was so upset and disheartened. His life of a little bit more leisure was cut short, but maybe it was not such a bad way to go for someone who had dedicated his life to his trade.

Uncle Kun, I think of you every time I wear the shoes that you repaired, and I still miss our cups of tea.



帶他到社署辦理手續，遞交了一大疊文件，闖過重重關卡，終於成功了。權伯知道結果後，喜出望外。錢，雖然不多，但對老人家基本的租金和飲食，總算有點保障。也許我們的政府 and 社工需要多走一步，至少讓區內的長者知道他們可以得到怎樣的保障，並在申請社會福利的過程中多加支援。

往後，權伯每月都會打電話給我，說錢收到了，要請我飲茶。最後一次聽到權伯的聲音，是約了他見面的前一天。見面當天早上，致電給他沒人接聽，後來他女兒通知我，說權伯前一晚和朋友打麻雀時忽然倒下，就這樣走了。

權伯的離開，我難掩傷痛，但換個角度想，這樣子離開，對勞碌了一生的權伯來說，可能是個不錯的結局。

永別，就是永遠不能相見，然而那些逝去的，總會保留在回憶的某個角落：後巷一片鐵皮攤檔裏，坐着一位親切的老伯伯，他親手縫補我的高跟鞋，一釘一線的，用心用力的。慶幸，我的鞋交在這巧匠手裏；緬懷，我們曾有過的美好時光。

謝謝，權伯！



Small Shops, Big Hearts
尋·常情

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