

The 31th MCU Literary and Arts Awards English Creative Writing 2nd Prize

第 31 屆銘傳文藝獎 英文創作組貳獎

We're Grateful

As if it was only yesterday, every time I reminisce of my first foot connection with the soils of this beautiful Island of Taiwan.

A young boy aged 20 recipient of the Taiwan Ministry of Foreign affairs scholarship bid farewell to his family and flew over oceans and lands to a foreign land many miles away to study. He had a clear understanding of how life would go, he has seen movies and read books of what it would be like to live in a foreign land.

He did a year of Mandarin at Fu Jen University and applied to join a university that offered the program that he has always dreamt of studying for his Undergraduate degree.

Without realizing back home, while he was applying for the new university, he came upon the worse nightmare anybody could get, his passport was soon to be expired in a couple of months. With fast but well presided discussions, he was advised to fly home and renew his passport on the summer of 2017.

He arrived back home to a beautiful welcoming party with a broken heart of a disappointed father, was this the end of his dream as he hears of his friends back in Taiwan has heard of their acceptance in their various applied universities. Days became years as he was working on his passport renewal and continuously checking his emails for an update by the university he applied to.

There was no reason for me to buy a return ticket back to Taiwan anymore because the last advise I got from the applied university was fix your passport as soon as possible and re submit but my passport was still being processed and time was running out.

As seconds got to hours and hours turned it to days, after 2 weeks he collected the passport.

I wasn't going to let a mini second went by, I scanned my passport and uploaded the scanned image on to my uploaded application and prayed it got the attention of a father in the morning listening for a newspaper landing on the house porch.

That afternoon went into the evening with no appetite for dinner and while everyone else was holding spoons and chewing their dinner away, he sat there with his phone in his hands tapping the reload button on his email inbox with sweat drying on his face with each buffer.

I started hearing plates being seated in the sink when my right pointer clicked the reload button again to that beautifully but scariest number 1, I've ever seen on my notifications. As I opened it.

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He went straight into dreamworld, his mind froze but his eyes were moving in a right to left motion for a couple of seconds then his lips began to open. It was so silent; you could hear the lips breaking apart as the words were about to be read out.

On behalf of Ming Chuan University, we are glad to inform you that you have been accepted to study in the department of journalism and mass communication at Ming Chuan University.

Just like that, he booked a flight the next day and off he went back to Taiwan to continue his study.

He got off the plane again in Taiwan in mid-July 2017 with a more prepared mindset ready to battle whatever obstacles coming his way. As September crept in, he was all set, moved into the dormitory he has applied for and all settled down in a room with other 3 students.

I was energized and armored mentally as I was waiting for the week to begin because I had orientation coming up, the dormitory arrangements went smoothly without any complication so far. Monday morning showed up in a flash, but I wasn't going to surprise me I was already up before the elderly's head out to the parks for their morning exercise. All required documents by the University placed in my black folder inside of my camouflage colored backpack and off school.

There I was a staring contest with the infamous Ming Chuan Staircase, knowing I'd be walking up these stairs for the next 4 years of my life. As I walked on to the campus, a tunnel leading to the first staircase. It was a busy tunnel, people going in and out every second. Ming Chuan University surprised me first with a wave and greeting from the security officer with a big smile on his face, I fell for Ming Chuan at that point.

I took the second staircase to meet a group of students sitting behind a desk stood up greeted me with so much kindness and asked for my name, they looked on a sheet of paper on their desk and wrote my name on a tag and helped me to my seat for the orientation.

He was young, he thought that the first best impression surprise was the security, but Ming Chuan was already helping him from his country. As he walked into the class, he was so amazed by how the class was so diverse. It was like a small world in Taiwan, he sat down and off the orientation speeches began.

After we were done with the orientation, you won't believe what happened. It was registration time, Ming Chuan had all stations prepared with all the beautiful and kind faculty of Ming Chuan University. Ming Chan made a day that can

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kill someone so easy and fun. By evening teatime in the UK, I was already done with my last station which was the medical check and I was not even exhausted or frustrated as I've experienced in other schools.

He went back to the dormitory that evening with eyes wide open and dropped jaw, Ming Chuan showed a whole new level of hospitality for him. Taiwan treated him with love already, but Ming Chuan coated it with the family feel with all arms wide open.

Freshmen year flew by like a shooting star; I was already prepping for the sophomore year I realized. So many things happened in freshmen year, I moved out of the dormitory with the help of Ming Chuan University. I met a lot of new friends and learned from the some of the greatest lecturers have had the chance to be in their class.

He was settling down in a family, but his eyes were still closed because he feared always finding support from people and ending up disappointed, he wanted to go survival of the fittest on this journey.

Sophomore began with a big hit; his social life got the best of him.

I was stupid, I had a lot to drink and ended up below hell itself. I was at the cross-roads; my parents were miles away and all my friends were busy with their lives. I didn't know what to do. Out of no where people from Ming Chuan called, asking how they can help, I was ashamed but they came and met with me.

They pulled him out of a grave he dug by himself, I won't lie that that was a young me who was blinded by a lot of stuff and not realizing the hours he has taken away from people that had families just because he was drunk and stupid.

That is why we are writing this, because we are grateful for all that Ming Chuan has done for us until now.

So sophomore came to an end, I began to show up in the picture as he slowly shadowed me and kept reminding me that he did this and it was wrong and he tried this and no good came out of it.

I thought I was ready for the Junior year, a new me. Freshmen and Sophomore me is no more so no more problems. But who would've thought, Junior year started with the end of my scholarship award program because my country broke relation ties with Taiwan.

We both were crashed, we had deep conversations in our room about the future. We decided to continue the last semester given to us by Taiwan Ministry of Foreign affairs, our hope was fading out of sight as January 2020 came.

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We are heading home.

But then Ming Chuan University again came and saved the day, with flight tickets and tuition payment agreements.

There is no word in any printed dictionary today can express the feeling we felt when Ming Chuan managed to make everything fitted in a complicated puzzle.

We are so grateful for all the help Ming Chuan University has helped us with. We still have one year and a semester to go and that is why we will do our very best to show Ming Chuan University with love every chance we get. Maybe by the last year we both won't be here because we know that Ming Chuan has the power to mold someone into becoming a better person in life.

There are so many names that we both can name, but they've all know who they are and we will make a place especially for them in our hearts when a better person gets here.

We're grateful.