

A Drive to the Sky

"Beneath the sky there are many places where I must go, and where I can certainly go sooner or later. I can't get rid of the temptation of wandering in the mind, and wandering in the destiny of vagrancy."

-- Yu Chunshun

My head was buried in a mountain of exam papers and books when I first read the story of Yu Chunshun, a trekking explorer who had covered more than 40,000 kilometers on his feet. He lost his life during an expedition in Xinjiang("Chinese"). Putting down my book, I looked out the window and saw a lone wild goose waving its wings as it flew to the north. I stared at it until it disappeared from my view. In that one moment, I don't know why, but a strong desire came to my mind. I wanted to go to Xinjiang. To see if this place was so fascinating that it was worth giving one's life for.



I have been to many places and seen many unforgettable landscapes, but from the first day I entered Xinjiang, I realized how the scenery I had admired before was not worth mentioning. I was driving the car and my friend who was sitting in the passenger seat took this photo. We were driving through the vast untouched grasslands of Xinjiang. The land here is so wide and the roads are so straight. As far as I could see, there were no people or other vehicles in any direction. We were like a spaceship sailing in the vastness of the universe. Compared to the greatness of the universe, we looked inconspicuous. But this was not frustrating, because the universe had already given us its most beautiful scenery. As the sky darkened, the earth slowly put on a layer of a black veil. The mountains in the distance were also gradually hidden by clouds. Amazingly, as the sun went down, it met up with the end of the road. As time passed, the light was drawn from our vision, and the only light left in front of us was the sun in front of us. It was as if we were being guided by it; it was as if the highway had become a drive to the sun. At this moment, the car speaker just played a song from my favorite singer ---- "Sunset Boulevard" by Liang Bo. With the beautiful music, I had the best driving experience so far 🌟



Then, I found out that it is too early to say “best”. Looking at such a view, I realized: the particularity of the sun is that when its light shines on anything, it imparts a sense of sacredness that transcends reality to things. Although I know that the camera cannot fully duplicate the the magnificent scenery I saw at that time, I believe that anyone can imagine the scene just based on this photo. I have never seen such a view before. In my hometown, the towering mountains and winding rivers are hidden by dense urban buildings.

That evening sky was the most amazing sky I have ever seen. Once again I felt the greatness of nature. When we finally emerged from the rough mountain road, we were greeted by purples and reds that filled the world. We all couldn't help but stop the car and run across the wilderness, roaring loudly. Although the sun has been hidden by the mountains, it has painted this boundless drawing board with colors that no artist can imagine. The fuchsia-colored mountains, the rouge clouds, and even the wind seemed to be dyed a touch of pink. In the middle of the wilderness stood a power pole. It stands alone but strong. The wire connects to the distant hills and continues its mission in a place that is almost invisible to the naked eye. The temperature gradually dropped; by the time I recovered from the shock of the beauty, a friend had already run a hundred meters. As visibility dwindled, the howling winds on the prairie also began to calm. When our friend shouted to us, the whole world was filled with his voice. As I walked east, a little distance from my mates, all I could hear came from within me; I never noticed my breathing and heartbeats so loud. I lay down casually, staring straight at the sky, letting purple occupy my entire line of sight.

In Xinjiang, the sky at any given time can be used as a computer wallpaper. The sky in the wilderness seems to have a myriad of different colors. The similar colors naturally combine to form a stunning painting. As the sun sets almost completely, the clouds become darker. Before the sun disappeared, I briefly sighed at why beautiful things always vanish. But none of my friends seemed to be affected by my negative emotions. Once again, we couldn't help but stop the car. As I happened to get my camera out of the car, my friends started



dancing on the grass. Thus, this resulted in one of my most satisfying photographs. Our friends were singing loudly, without any regard for others. (Because the nearest stranger was probably a dozen miles away.) They sang and did a joyous dance at the same time. Everyone else was

infected by their passion. One by one, we joined in. In this moment, I felt more free than ever. A theory that I once read about came to my mind: everything is in a process of entropy increase. That is to say: everything tends to go from order to disorder, from simple to complex. Yes, the more things you go through, the more you grow. But at the same time, the things that you carried pile up. When we are taken away from the bulky complexity of daily life, the most primitive emotions that have been suppressed for a long time are instantly released. Living in a society made up of people, we are taught to hide our emotions. But here, we no longer need to disguise ourselves in order to gain the approval of others. Because the sky and the meadow don't care about how we act.



Despite unleashing our passions in the boundlessness of nature, contained in our car, we remained in awe of the surroundings, and continued to drive toward the sky. When darkness completely envelops this land, the sky is not occupied by nothingness. Almost every time we went out at night, we could look up and see a gorgeous but hazy moon. The spider web of stars on the prairie wove the brightness of the moon into a pale halo. When the moon was completely hidden, hundreds of millions

of stars dotted the entire sky. Even in the town where we stayed at night, the sky was exaggeratedly bright. I always feel that the temperament of different kinds of nights often gives people different emotions. The gentle evening breeze brushed the camphor trees along the roadside, and the leaves were carved out of the layers. All the stars were just quietly nestled in the night sky, not saying a word. Staring at such deep darkness, I didn't really want to talk either. Because at this point, I didn't know what to say. I found that some times words looks so pale in comparison to the ultimate beauty. I couldn't help but think how different someone's life would be if they never got to see a view like this in their lifetime. If I never have the opportunity to visit Xinjiang again, what would be missing in my world? I began to understand Yu Chunshun, and his "wondering in the mind" can only truly occur when we are "wandering" across the earth in the awe. One's life cannot be repeated. When our lives are filled with repetitive, meaningless movements through urban, human-made environments, we can no longer see the openness and freshness behind the mountains. We will never be able to gather the courage to walk on the land. At least once, we should travel without a purpose, to free our hearts, whether by foot, or car. If we have to plan a destination, maybe we can write in the title of our travel planner "A drive to the sky" .

Work Cited:

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