

Eulogy by Jacky Foo, Mingwei's godfather and Ambassador to Germany

Family & Friends of Mingwei

There are no words in this world that can describe how we feel at this moment, as we say farewell to our dearest Mingwei. She has gone ahead and there is this huge void in mine, Auntie Yumian's, Ying's and Cheng's hearts, in our lives. But we remember her as our wonderful goddaughter and godsister.

She was one of the spunkiest girls I have ever known and will probably ever know. Yumian and I have known her since she was a baby, and in our eyes and hearts, she will always be that dearest baby. When Yumian first saw Mingwei, Mingwei was a tiny toddler, but she was wearing the biggest diaper ever, toddling away in a funny way. This brought some laughter to us when we recalled this last week at home in Berlin. Over the years, we saw her get out of that diaper and became a big girl. She was incredibly intelligent, very clear about herself and her views, logical and precise, and most assured. She was brilliant and successful as a student, and I/we were so so proud of her.

As godfather, I could not keep up with her. Whether it was skiing, sailing, to archery, she was game for everything. But the icing on the cake must be Karate. She might be small but she was tenacious. Her Karate friends at Cambridge tell me that Mingwei really loves the sparring sessions. She wasn't just going to do the Kata set-moves. At the memorial gathering in Cambridge, we laughed about her sparring with much bigger Karate partner with all of Mingwei's Karate friends,. For all of us, like her grandma calls her, she was our much loved chilli padi.

As godfather, I follow her triumphs and experiences with pride. But as Tarn How puts it, what really changed Mingwei was the volunteer work she did in Botswana (with the HIV-AIDS clinic) and Nepal (with the neurosurgery team of Mountain Trust). She came back from these community service trips a changed young lady. She was inspired by the community work of Dr Bussman with HIV-AIDs communities in Botswana. She found fulfilment in the community work and wanted to do more.

Mingwei filled our lives with joy and laughter. My daughter Ying recalls how Mingwei would insist to her that she must not shower with overly hot water or else all your hair would drop off. Ying wants to tell Mingwei that when she showers and the water is too hot, she will always remember what you said when you were very young , hot water makes all your hair fall out. Ying also knows how proud Mingwei was of her lemon cake. We also have tried her carrot cakes whenever we gather at her home. Thank you MW for the delicious lemon cakes and carrot cakes, we will not be taking another bite of lemon and carrot cakes without thinking of you.

Mingwei is a girl who speaks her mind. But for those who know her intimately, she was a really kind soul. My driver recalls her being concern about his lunch when he drove us around Germany. Ben tells of how she coaches him on essay writing.....

Even though Mingwei is not with us physically, she will always live on in our hearts. Yumian things of a parallel universe, I think of the stars, and Ying and Cheng also like the stars. We can see spunky Mingwei telling us, and I quote from one of Ying's favourite books, "the Little Prince"

*In one of the stars, I shall be living.
In one of them, I shall be laughing.
And so it will be as if all the stars were laughing,
When you look at the sky at night.....
You....only you....will have stars that can laugh.*

Mingwei left at the happiest moment of her life, finding meaning in the work she did in Botswana and Nepal, finding a wonderful love and great friendships in Peterhouse, and inspiration in Cambridge. She would want of us, but especially Tarn How, Li Chang and MJ, to look for the laughing stars and she would be saying "Be strong Papa, Mummy, Jie Jie, I had not a long life but a good life. And you were the most wonderful papa, mummy and jie jie."

Dearest Mingwei, you will always be right here with me, right here inside me, till the end of my life. I know for sure you would have been a wonderful doctor and you would have saved many lives. I and many of your friends will carry on with your ideas. Please be our guide. We know that Mingwei, you want us to be strong and carry on. In the days ahead, I will remember you, my goddaughter, remember your cheerfulness, your determination, and passion.

At night, I will look at the stars and smile, even laugh. I can't do it now, the tears cannot be held back. But help us, and someday, me, Auntie Yumian, Ying, Cheng, your papa, mummy, jie jie and all family friends will sit out there and laughed with you and the stars.