

玉霞的一生 The Life of Yuh-Shya

一九二一年二月 20 日，玉霞出生於台北大橋頭。父親郭和約長老原是鰥夫，在鐵路局當技工，有四個孩子；母親陳甜原是寡婦，有三個女兒。兩人婚後又生六個孩子，玉霞是 13 個孩子中的第九個。鄰居有一對夫婦常吵架，卻很喜歡乖巧可愛的玉霞，就頻頻要求收養她。玉霞的父母以為這對夫婦有了玉霞就會恩愛了，遂答應他們。不料，他們終究還是離婚，那女人後來又改嫁，玉霞就一直跟養母過著貧困的生活。念小學時，別人每天帶便當吃午餐，她常只能喝井水充飢，卻不說一句怨言，凡事逆來順受。

她聰穎過人，沒錢上中學，就自修考上護士學校。當時的護校是半工半讀，每當發薪的日子，她的養父就來學校，把錢拿走。那時郭家的經濟情況已好轉，玉霞常回雙連去看生父母，卻從不把冤屈困苦說出來，恐怕他們難過。（四五十年後，她還很幽默地說：「我那時還以為我是『現代約瑟』，神的意思原是好的…。」）

她在台北帝大醫院（前臺大醫院）工作時，一位日本歐巴桑特別欣賞她，常告訴同醫院一位姓蕭的實習醫生：「玉霞真是個好女孩，做事伶俐勤勞，待人熱忱親切。」華銓對玉霞早已有好感，就積極找機會更認識她。兩人的感情論及婚嫁時，遭華銓父母反對——門不當、戶不對，玉霞還是基督徒。為了不要破壞華銓和他父母的感情，玉霞遠避日本；華銓則非她不娶，勸她回台灣，同時努力遊說父親，父親終於同意來台北看一看。

Yuhshya Guo was born at Taipei, Taiwan on Feb. 20th, 1921. Her father was a widower with four children and her mother was a widow with three children. Together they had another six children, and Yuhshya was the ninth of these thirteen.

Her father was a low-income railroad technician, and he had incurred a large debt paying for his ex-wife's medical expenses. His new but large family made him even poorer. In their neighborhood,

there was a couple who fought frequently. They were very fond of baby Yuhshya and wanted to adopt her. Believing that the couple's marriage would improve if they had a child, her parents approved of Yuhshya's adoption. Unfortunately, the baby could not save the marriage and the couple still got divorced. Yuhshya's step-mother remarried a poor man, and Yuhshya rarely had good food as a child. In her elementary school years, she often only had water to drink while her classmates were eating lunch. However, she never complained.

Although she had no money to go to a middle school, she diligently studied on her own and passed the entrance exam for nursing school. At that time, nursing school students could earn money by working at the hospitals while studying. On every payday, her step-father would come and take away all of her wages. In the meantime, the financial status of her birth family improved. However, she never told her birth parents of her hardships whenever she visited them because she did not want them to feel bad. (When she told her children about her childhood forty years later, she humorously said, 'I thought God purposely made me as a modern-day Joseph.')



一天，父親從高雄坐夜車來到台北，再坐三輪車到大家約定見面的雙連教會。途中，他看見一女子在候車站看書，就讚嘆：「多麼勤學的女子呀！」等他到了雙連教會，才知道那女子就是玉霞。他越認識玉霞，就越喜歡她。1940年11月17日，華銓和玉霞終於在郭家舉行婚禮，由陳溪圳牧師證婚，但男方只有華銓的父親、弟弟和一姐夫來參加婚禮。



婚後，婆婆聽信一親人的讒言，對玉霞很不友善，這親人也常來騷擾迫害，華銓遂放棄龐大家產的繼承權，於1942年太平洋戰爭中冒險移居日本。長女百合和長男奕仁相繼在戰火中出生，他們常受燒夷彈的攻擊，但神保守平安，在1946戰爭結束後才回台灣。剛回來時，他們什麼都沒有，只好向玉霞的姊姊借兩萬元，在台北租個房子，樓下開診所，樓上當住家。玉霞背著剛出生

When she worked at Taiwan University Hospital, a Japanese worker took notice of her and made nice comments about her to an intern Hwachyuan. Unbeknownst to him, Hwachyuan had already been attracted by Yuhshya's beauty and character. From that time on, he seized every opportunity to get close to her, even volunteering to be her English tutor. When Hwachyuan told his parents about Yuhshya, they strongly disapproved of the match because she was poor and a Christian. To avoid the conflict, Yuhshya departed to Japan for a while. Hwachyuan kept insisting that Yuhshya was the only girl for him to his parents. He eventually persuaded his father, and his father agreed to see her.

On that momentous day, Hwachyuan's father took an eight-hour train from Kaohsiung to Taipei. When he took a connecting three-wheel carriage from the train station to the church where they had planned to meet, he noticed a young lady reading a book at a bus station. "What a diligent woman!" he thought. Later he learned that the woman he saw was Yuhshya herself. The more he got to know her, the more he liked her. Finally two lovers were married by a pastor at her birth parents' house on Nov. 17th, 1940. However, only Hwachyuan's father, his brother, and a brother-in-law attended the wedding.

Hwachyuan's mother never showed any affection toward Yuhshya. The in-law relationship was further worsened by a certain relative's gossip and slander. This relative irritated and persecuted the newlywed couple so much that Hwachyuan renounced his large inheritance and moved his family to Japan in 1942. This happened during the dangerous and hard years of WWII, but God took care of them and gave them two lovely children, Lily and Luke.

The family returned to Taiwan in 1946 after the war ended. They had to start life from scratch again, so they borrowed twenty thousand dollars from Yuhshya's sister to rent a house and clinic space. While Hwachyuan was seeing patients, Yuhshya carried their third child on her back, mixed and wrapped medicine, gave the patients shots, and watched over Lily and Luke simultaneously. Life was busy and difficult, but happy. Then God blessed

的老三，一邊為病人配藥打針，一邊照顧老大、老二；日子雖艱辛勞苦，一家和樂勤儉。幾年後，神的祝福更是滿滿，再給他們三個健康乖巧的孩子。

華銓的父親晚年得了重病，那時華銓剛白手起家，經濟很緊，玉霞還是每月從收入中抽一大筆，到銀行換成新鈔票，再夾張問候及報告近況的信，寄到高雄給公婆。寄了六七年，婆婆對玉霞還是不理不睬。婆婆臨終前，玉霞到高雄照顧她一段日子，常見她閉眼流淚，卻不知為何。信佛的婆婆去世時，華銓的妹妹叫人做了一個華麗的紙屋，屋前有一郵差和郵筒，她說：「媽媽生前最快樂的事，是每月初收到玉霞寄來的信和錢，她總是看了又看...。」玉霞聽了就大哭，悔恨自己不知此情，否則她會更常寫信給婆婆。

華銓的母親去世時，那位曾逼迫他們的親人終於在眾親友面前說：「玉霞實在是位有才德的女子，過去我很對不起她，現在如果她要我跪下來道歉，我也甘願。」幾年後，這親人就英年早逝。在華銓和玉霞的幫助下，他的孩子中有幾位完成大學教育，後來也信了基督。

在蕭家六個孩子成長的二十多年裡，玉霞在「相夫」和「教子」都得甲等成績。每個病人都知道有問題時，一定要找「蕭醫師娘」。（她的孩子小時最怕和媽媽上街，因為每走幾步路，就有人要和「蕭醫師娘」講話。）每學期第一天，玉霞必親自用月曆紙把孩子的每本新課本包好，一邊包，一邊禱告求神幫助孩子用功讀書。孩子做完功課後，她就幫孩子削鉛筆，並拿起孩子的「國語課本」大聲唸，要孩子矯正她的發音。在那時代，很少人能像蕭家父母那樣注重孩子的德、智、體和音樂教

the family with three more healthy children, Bernice, Martha and Peggy.

When Hwachyuan's father became terminally ill, Yuhshya mailed money and letters about their family life to cheer him up every month. Although their income was limited, she faithfully took money from their savings, exchanged the old bills for new crisp ones from the bank, and mailed them out. Even after his death, she continued to do the same for Hwachyuan's mom for seven or eight years. However, Hwachyuan's mom never responded in any way. When Hwachyuan's mom was dying, Yuhshya left her six children behind and went to Kaohsiung to take care of her for a few weeks. She did not understand why Hwachyuan's mom often closed her eyes in tears. After she died, Hwachyuan's sister ordered a custom-made paper house with a postman and postbox for the Buddhist funeral. When asked the reason for the postman, his sister said, "The happiest moments for Mom in her later years were receiving mail from you every month." Yuhshya cried and said, "If only I had known that, I would have written to her more often."

After Hwachyuan's mom's death, the slandering relative finally confessed to the whole family, "Yuhshya is a nice person with excellent character. I did something very mean to her. If she wants me to kneel down to show my apology, I would do it." This relative died several years later in middle age. With the financial aids and care from Hwachyuan and Yuhshya, some of his children were able to complete their college education and to become Christians.

Yuhshya did a wonderful job in raising six kids and helping her husband. All the patients knew that she was exactly the right person to whom they could bring their problems and questions. (Her children did not like walking around the neighborhood with her because everyone wanted to talk to her and they could rarely get to their destination on time.) On the first day of each semester, she would cover the kids' textbooks with used calendar paper and pray that God would help her kids to understand the contents of the books. When the children finished with their homework, she would sharpen their

育，他們更以身作則，時時為孩子設立好榜樣。

孩子還小時，玉霞就把他們帶到教會，從兒童主日學、少年團契到青年團契，孩子可說是在教會長大的。她還常常開放家庭，請中南部來台北唸書的青少年來吃飯和作家庭禮拜。那時台北和平長老教會每年母親節都有抽「乾媽媽」的活動，大家都以抽到蕭媽媽為大獎。三十多年後，多位散居台灣和美國的乾兒子和乾女兒仍常和蕭媽媽保持聯絡。

玉霞自幼勤儉成性，即使婚後生活寬裕了，她仍喜歡很有創意地利用廢物，一張日曆紙、一個有缺口的茶壺、一把破藤椅，她都有辦法改變用途。她對別人卻很慷慨，教會和孩子的學校需要錢時，她一定馬上解囊。親友那麼多，她都以愛接待；大家都知道玉霞是有智慧的才德婦人，有問題、有心事，找她最好了。若有親戚考上大學卻付不起學費的，她一定設獎學金幫助他們。

一九七三年玉霞來洛杉磯，藉經營 Motel 辦移民。在適應語言、文化、社會的種種困難中，她曾流淚和怨嘆，但為了丈夫和三個還在台灣唸書的孩子，她堅強地工作，直到拿到綠卡。這段艱辛日子的經歷，使她以後知道如何安慰鼓勵新移民；她總是能幫助他人在負面的境遇中，找出正面的意義來。

來美國定居後，玉霞對縫紉越來越有興趣。她一面向會縫紉的朋友請教學習，一面自己揣摩創作。每次女兒要回娘家，她就興奮地等著要修補女兒帶回來的衣服，為要證明自己還是「英雄有用武之地」。她的十五個孫子，每人都有 Ama 編織的毛衣和毛毯，也都穿過她縫製或修補的衣褲。她還會很創意地

pencils, take their books to read aloud and asked them to correct her pronunciation. (She never learned Mandarin Chinese formally.)

In that generation, parents rarely paid as much attention to the children's education and discipline as the Hsiao. They also made sure that they set good examples for the children. Yuhshya took all the kids to the church so that they could grow both spiritually and socially. She also opened up their home to the church youth, especially those from central and southern parts of Taiwan and were far from home. They all called her "Mama Hsiao," and some of these people kept in touch with her after thirty or forty years.

The hardships in her childhood made her very frugal her whole life. She creatively used everything that was broken or lost its primary function. A cracked tea pot would become a flower vase. A piece of paper from a magazine would be folded to a wastebasket tray. A worn bed sheet would be sewed into cover mats. On the other hand, she was always very generous to others, especially to churches and children's schools. She was kind to all friends and relatives.

She came to Los Angeles to apply for citizenship in 1973. She bought and ran a motel for the investment requirement from the immigration office. She had to use limited language skills to deal and fight with the new culture and society. She was lonely, frustrated, and tired, and often cried in dark. For the sake of her husband and three children who were still in Taiwan, she kept working until she got her green card. This experience allowed her to understand how to help many who were new to this country. She thrived at helping people finding positive meaning in negative circumstances.

After settling down at Torrance, Yuhshya started new hobbies of sewing and knitting. She learned by asking her friends, by trial-and-error, and then she created her own style. Whenever her daughters came home, she eagerly anticipated their asking her to fix or mend things. After finishing a project, she would proudly said, "I am still a hero in demand." All of her fifteen grandchildren

做東西，例如椅墊、鋼琴布、麵包機套子、沙發手墊等等。她最喜歡子女送訂單來，沒「生意」時，她會拜託女兒們把墊子破了的椅子送來，讓她敲敲打打好好整容一番。她還喜歡別人把盆景花樹送來「住院」，讓她重溫起死回生的欣悅。

玉霞和華銓一向以關懷牧師為己任，他們決不背後批評牧師。在台灣時，牧師家庭來看病，一定不收錢。孩子年輕時，每逢過年過節，玉霞就派孩子送禮到牧師家，為孩子立下關愛牧師的好榜樣。在洛杉磯定居後，蕭家成為許多牧師過境的休息站。

一九八九年 Torrance 南灣台灣基督長老教會剛成立時，華銓和玉霞開放他們家，讓教會舉行主日崇拜和查經，四個月後，主日崇拜改到 St. Andrew's Church。1995 年教會開始籌備建堂，華銓任第一任建堂委員會主席，率先把自己的養老金奉獻出來，玉霞則和教會的姊妹們積極參與義賣。雖然體力已大不如昔，她還是用心禱告，用腦出點子，用口鼓勵同工和找顧客。兒女們看見父母年高體衰，卻一頭栽進這種任重道遠的事工，實在不忍心，父母卻甘之如飴。2003 年南灣台灣長老教會完成建堂，大家都鬆一口氣。玉霞沒想到她來美國 30 多年裡，竟能參與兩間長老教會的建堂，是欣慰，也是感恩。

一九八二年始，玉霞罹患嚴重的氣喘病，有時她被折磨得很消沉，卻不願讓人知道，即使兒女打電話問候她時，明明聽到她的氣喘聲，她還說：「我很好 …。」1989 年，她曾兩次被 911 送入醫院急救，甚至插呼吸器。經過大女婿光民的精心醫治，及老伴的悉心照料，她一次又一次地戰勝病魔。

have worn the clothes that she has made or fixed and own a sweater and blanket she knit.

She also liked to repair things. When no help was elicited, she would ask her daughters to send their broken chair or cushions for her to fix. She also liked to take care of dying plants. Seeing things or people regain the beauty and purpose of life brought much joy to her.

Hwachyuan and Yuhshya always took care of their pastors. In Taiwan, they never charged the pastors' families anything when they came over for treatment. Every Christmas and Chinese New Year, Yuhshya asked the children to send gifts to their pastors' homes. They also never criticized pastors in the presence of children. They set a good example in respecting God's servants. In Torrance, their home became a hostel for traveling pastors.

When Torrance Taiwanese Presbyterian Church started in 1989, Hwachyuan and Yuhshya opened their house for the Sunday services and Thursday Bible studies. Four months later, the church started renting from St. Andrew's Church for services. In 1995, the church desired to purchase land and build its own church. Hwachyuan became the first chairman of the fundraising committee and donated all his retirement pension. Yuhshya also worked hard with other ladies to plan more fundraising activities. She was already relatively old and fragile, but she did more than what she was required to do. The Hsiao's adult children felt uncomfortable when their parents got involved in such a long-term and heavy task. Yuhshya and Hwachyuan did not seem to mind at all. The church building was completed in 2003, and everyone could finally relax. Yuhshya was very grateful that she was able to participate in building two churches in her first thirty years in the United States.

Since 1982, she had been afflicted by asthma. Sometimes she was depressed, but did not want people to know. Even her daughters could hear her wheezing on the phone, she still said, "I am fine." In 1989, she was sent to the Emergency Room by ambulance twice and was put on a ventilator. Fortunately, her first son-in-law, Daniel, was

1990年11月，子孫及教會的兄弟姐妹為華銓和玉霞舉辦盛大的金婚感恩禮拜，在眾人的祝福中，兩人重新步入鋪紅毯、飾鮮花的禮堂，開始「老夫老妻」的另一里程。

二〇〇〇年夏天，她體重直下，呼吸沉重，終於被迫入院，以為沒法度過結婚六十週年紀念日。然而神再次憐憫醫治她，11月他們慶祝鑽石婚時，十年前和他們一起在同鄉會慶祝金婚的許多對夫妻中，現在只剩玉霞、華銓這一對。在蕭家和郭家的歷史中，甚至他們的朋友中，沒人慶祝鑽石婚的。因此他們常似「福星」被邀請去參加年輕人的婚禮，他們也深以此為榮。

二〇〇七年五月，媳婦純瑛因膽癌去世，玉霞憂傷了一年。次年七月，華銓因腦溢血去世，她再次被打入低谷。為了讓她生活在她熟悉的老家，兒女和孫兒女都排班來陪伴服事她；思念先夫的同時，她為子孫的孝順而感恩滿足。教會的兄弟姐妹也常常打電話來問安，甚至煮可口的台灣小吃來為她加菜，還有人提供隨叫隨到的服務，許多的關愛支撐著她過了六個月。

二〇〇九年元旦，女兒和孫子帶她去看華銓的墓碑，她在墓前深思良久。第二天她就開始咳嗽並氣喘，吃抗生素和 Steroid 無效，住院治療也止不住病情繼續惡化。一月12日下午，在眾人的淚水和呼喚中，她安息主懷。

a pulmonary doctor. With his special skills and Hwachyuan's tender loving care, she overcame the attack again and again. On Nov 17th, 1990, their family and friends celebrated their 50th golden anniversary at church. They dressed up as a groom and bride to enjoy the blessing and beautiful celebration that they were not able to have fifty years ago.

In the summer of 2000, Yuhshya kept losing weight and her health quickly deteriorated. She was hospitalized and thought she would not live to see her 60th wedding anniversary. By God's grace, however, she was healed. In the history of the Hsiao, the Guos, and all their friends, no other couple had been able to pass their diamond anniversary. Therefore, Dr. and Mrs. Hsiao were frequently invited to weddings as a symbol of long and blessed marriage and as good luck for the young couples.

In May 2007, Charlene, Yuhshya's beloved daughter-in-law, died of cancer. Yuhshya was in sorrow for a year. Then Hwachyuan died of subdural hematoma in July 2008. She was hit hard again by losing her companion of 68 year. For keeping her in the surroundings that she was familiar and comfortable, her children and grandchildren all took turns to accompany and take care of her. Although she missed her husband very much, she gave thanks frequently for her loving offspring. Church members also showed their love by calling her and bringing her Taiwanese food often, and offered any kind of service whenever she needed. Abundant love supported her for another 6 months.

On New Year Day 2009, several of her daughters and grandsons took her to visit Hwachyuan's grave. She looked at the grave stone and pondered for a long time. The next day she started to cough and labor in respiration. Taking antibiotics and steroid did not improve her illness. Even hospitalization could not reverse the deterioration of her condition. On Jan. 12, in the tears of the people who love her, she went to rest in the Lord's arms.