

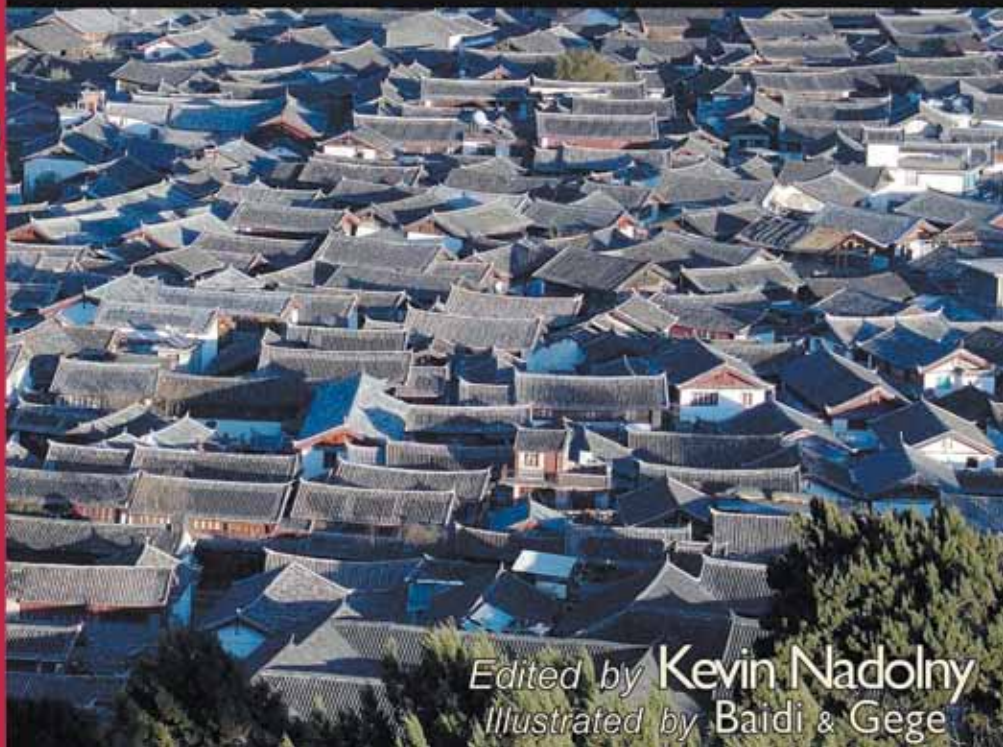
Capturing Chinese



中文

Short Stories From
Lǚ Xùn's Nàhǎn

魯迅
吶喊



Edited by Kevin Nadolny
Illustrated by Baidi & Gege

Capturing Chinese: Short Stories from Lǚ Xùn's Nàhǎn

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Reviews and Praise

“The book [Capturing Chinese] is a great aid for readers who want to learn about the father of modern Chinese literature and his works.”

* Carolyn Lee, Director of the Chinese Language Program at Duke University

“As reading material for the students who are learning Chinese and interested in Chinese literature and culture, your book is amazing and special!”

* Liu Liping, Chinese Professor at Columbia University

“Your book [Capturing Chinese Short Stories From Lu Xun’s Nahan] will offer teachers of the Chinese language an effective tool of accessing Lu Xun’s difficult texts.”

* Nanxiu Qian, associate professor of Chinese literature at Rice University

To be a part of the course reading in Qiuyun Teng’s Advanced Chinese Reading Class at Cornell University in the Fall of 2010!



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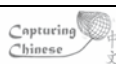
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Preface

Lǚ Xùn (1881-1936) is one of the most influential and famous writers of modern Chinese literature. His stories have been read over and over by young Chinese students, and translated into English a variety of times, most notably *Selected Stories of Lu Xun* translated by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang and *Diary of a Madman and Other Stories* translated by William A. Lyell. While these translations are excellent, the true meaning and spirit of Lǚ Xùn's stories are best understood by reading the stories in the original Chinese. Some Chinese words and phrases don't lend themselves to translation into English, while some English words lack the historical significance of the original Chinese.

However, due to its complex writing system Chinese is also one of the most difficult languages in the world. Full literacy of Chinese requires a working knowledge of three to four thousand Chinese characters. Breaking into reading real Chinese literature is a daunting task and many students give up after just few pages.

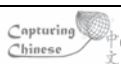
Capturing Chinese: Short Stories From Lǚ Xùn's Nàhǎn helps readers to enjoy Chinese fiction without the frustration of spending countless hours looking up difficult characters in the dictionary or needing a teacher's assistance to get through the text. Currently, one common method of reading Chinese stories is to buy a book, sit down with a dictionary in hand, and spend hours looking up characters by radical while slowly gaining an understanding of the text. Besides the drudgery of this approach, dictionaries lack many of the difficult words, lack historical explanations, and don't list important historical figures and places. Also, since many Chinese characters have multiple meanings, knowing which meaning is appropriate in the given context is an additional obstacle. Therefore, even the most diligent student can get bogged down on a few difficult characters and phrases.

Capturing Chinese: Short Stories From Lǚ Xùn's Nàhǎn is a tool to help students break into reading original Chinese literature. Each of Lǚ Xùn's stories from his compilation, *Nàhǎn*, is included and is accompanied with a short historical introduction for each story. With a better understanding of the historical context, the reader will have a greater appreciation of the significance of Lǚ Xùn's short stories. Only his story, *The Real Story of Ah Q*, (阿Q正传) is not included due to its length. We thought it best to keep this book to a reasonable size. *The Real Story of Ah Q* will be published separately.

All stories in *Capturing Chinese: Short Stories From Lǚ Xùn's Nàhǎn* have *pinyin* below each paragraph in the story. The *pinyin* is provided to help refresh one's memory of certain characters and to help with looking up difficult characters, and is not intended to be read along with the characters. Therefore, the *pinyin* does not follow the characters, character by character, but instead only paragraph by paragraph. In this way, the reader's eyes do not drift to the *pinyin* every time he or she is stuck on a character.

Difficult words and phrases are footnoted and accompanied by a definition. If the reader encounters an unfamiliar character not defined, he can use the *pinyin* that is listed below each paragraph to immediately look up the difficult words or phrases. Instead of using the complex method of looking up characters (recognizing the radical, counting strokes, finding the character's pronunciation, and then looking up the definition), the reader will be able to directly use the *pinyin* to find the definition for the unfamiliar character. Students will save countless hours of flipping through a dictionary and instead be able to focus on learning new characters while enjoying Chinese literature.

Each story defines each word or phrase once. In that way the student is encouraged to learn the characters as they read, but this rule resets for each story. Therefore, the student can begin reading any story that he or she desires in any order.



Capturing Chinese: Short Stories From Lǚ Xùn's Nàhǎn is a bridge for students to break away from fabricated textbook stories and into real substantial Chinese literature. The goal of this book is not to translate the story into English for the reader, or have the reader read *pinyin* instead of the characters, but only to provide him with tools so that he can read the text on his own, come up with his own translations, and master reading Lǚ Xùn's stories in the original Chinese.

How to use this book

Each story is ranked to help the reader choose to start with the easier stories and slowly progress to the more difficult ones. Level I stories are easiest while Level V are hardest. Some of the best stories in the collection are written at a more advanced level so start with the easier stories and work your way up.

Each paragraph of characters is followed by their corresponding *pinyin*. Due to the length of some paragraphs and in order to keep the *pinyin* and the characters on the same page, some paragraphs have been broken up. "****" indicates when the paragraph has been split up. All necessary information to read the characters are on one page with no need to flip back and forth.

It is suggested that the student improve her language skills by using different phrases from the stories in everyday life. One of my favorites is from *Kong Yiji* (孔己己), when Kǒng Yǐjǐ tells the little kids who are looking for more fennel flavored beans, "多乎哉? 不多也" (duō hū zāi, bù duō yě - How much can it be? Not much. See page 71 for this phrase in context.) Using this phrase in daily life has helped me remember the phrase and has kept my Chinese friends thoroughly amused.

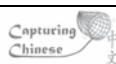
Remember, Lǚ Xùn was not writing these short stories for foreign students of Chinese, but rather for Chinese in revolutionary China. He frequently refers to current events of the time which readers of the day would pick up on quickly. For this reason a short historical explanations has been added to each story. If you find the short

historical summaries too short, ask your Chinese friends about the mentioned historical figures and places. Most likely they will know them quite well and will be able to add some more details.

To get the most out of this book, tackle each short story slowly. First, using only the Chinese portion, read each paragraph slowly. On your second time through use the *pinyin* below. On your third time, begin using the definitions at the bottom. Learning languages is all about repetition so reread a story until you thoroughly understand it.

Enjoy these masterpieces of Chinese fiction and 加油!

Kevin Nadolny



一件小事



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A Small Incident

一件小事

Yí Jiàn Xiǎoshì

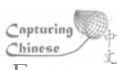
一件小事 was published in November of 1919 in Beijing's *Morning Post* – *Anniversary Commemorative Edition* (晨报·周年纪念增刊 Chénbào·Zhōunián Jiniàn Zēngkān).

The story is about Lǚ Xùn traveling to work by rickshaw one morning in Beijing. While he has been working in Beijing for six years already, no important official affairs comes readily to mind. Instead he remembers clearly the morning his rickshaw driver hits a pedestrian causing her to fall and hurt herself. Lǚ Xùn doesn't think the woman is seriously hurt and in any case no one saw it happen, so he thinks it best for the rickshaw man to just keep going. Otherwise, Lǚ Xùn might be late. Instead, the rickshaw driver gets out and helps the old woman find help at a police station. Seeing the generosity of the rickshaw driver to a complete stranger, Lǚ Xùn is dumbfounded and waits in the carriage until a police officer tells him he better get going.

Lǚ Xùn first moved to Beijing in 1912, during the first year of the republic. Like many people at the time, he held high hopes for the newly established republic founded by Sun Yat-sen (孙中山 Sūn Zhōngshān), but quickly became disillusioned as Yuán Shìkǎi (袁世凯), a man with military authority, usurped power and formed the republic in ways not much different from the Qing dynasty before him. The foreign powers of Japan and western Europe continued to encroach upon China's sovereignty and Yuán Shìkǎi actually declared himself emperor near the end of his life. During this time, Lǚ Xùn served as an official in the Ministry of Education and was rather depressed about the state of affairs. This story takes place in 1917, six years after Lǚ Xùn moved from Nanjing to Beijing.



“你怎么啦？”
“我摔坏了。”



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一件小事
Yí Jiàn Xiǎoshì

我从乡下¹跑到京城里，一转眼²已经六年了。其间³耳闻目睹⁴的所谓⁵国家大事，算起来也很不少；但在我心里，都不留什么痕迹⁶，倘⁷要我寻⁸出这些事的影响来说，便只是增长⁹了我的坏脾气，——老实说¹⁰，便是教我一天比一天的看不起¹¹人。

Wǒ cóng xiāngxià pǎodào jīngchéng lǐ, yì zhuǎnyǎn yǐjīng liù nián le. Qíjiān ěrwén-mùdǔ de suǒwèi guójiā dàshì, suànrqǐlái yě hěn bù shǎo; dàn zài wǒ xīnlǐ, dōu bù liú shénme hénjì, tǎng yào wǒ xúnchū zhèxiē shì de yǐngxiǎng lái shuō, biàn zhǐshì zēngzhǎng le wǒ de huài píqì, —— lǎoshí shuō, biàn shì jiāo wǒ yì tiān bǐ yì tiān de kànbùqǐ rén.

但有一件小事，却¹²于¹³我有意义¹⁴，将¹⁵我从坏脾气里拖开¹⁶，使我至今¹⁷忘记不得。

Dàn yǒu yí jiàn xiǎoshì, què yú wǒ yǒu yì yì, jiāng wǒ cóng huài píqì lǐ tuōkāi, shǐ wǒ zhìjīn wàngjì bùdé.

¹ 乡下 - xiāngxià - village; country; native place; countryside

² 一转眼 - yì zhuǎnyǎn - in the blink of an eye; quickly

³ 其间 - qíjiān - time; period; course

⁴ 耳闻目睹 - ěrwén-mùdǔ - (成语) what one sees and hears; witness first hand

⁵ 所谓 - suǒwèi - so-called

⁶ 痕迹 - hénjì - mark; trace; vestige

⁷ 倘 - tǎng - if; supposing; in case

⁸ 寻 - xún - seek; search

⁹ 增长 - zēngzhǎng - increase; rise; grow

¹⁰ 老实说 - lǎoshí shuō - to be frank; frankly; honestly

¹¹ 看不起 - kànbùqǐ - look down on

¹² 却 - què - but; yet; however

¹³ 于 - yú - to; for

¹⁴ 意义 - yìyì - meaning; sense; significance

¹⁵ 将 - jiāng - written form of 把

¹⁶ 拖开 - tuōkāi - pull; drag; haul

¹⁷ 至今 - zhìjīn - so far; up to now

这是民国六年¹⁸的冬天，大北风刮¹⁹得正猛²⁰，我因为生计²¹关系，不得不一早在路上走。一路几乎遇不见人，好容易²²才雇定²³了一辆人力车²⁴，教他拉到S门²⁵去。不一会，北风小了，路上浮尘²⁶早已刮净²⁷，剩下一条洁白²⁸的大道来，车夫也跑得更快。刚近S门，忽而²⁹车把³⁰上带着一个人，慢慢地倒了。

Zhè shì Mínguó liù nián de dōngtiān, dà běi fēng guā de zhèng měng, wǒ yīnwèi shēngjì guānxì, bùdébù yì zǎo zài lù shàng zǒu. Yī lù jīhū yù bú jiàn rén, hǎo róngyì cái gùdìng le yī liǎng rénlichē, jiào tā lādào "S" mén qù. Bù yí huì, běi fēng xiǎo le, lù shàng fú chén zǎoyǐ guājìng, shèngxià yì tiáo jiébái de dàdào lái, chēfū yě pǎo de gèng kuài. Gāng jìn "S" mén, hū'ér chēbǎ shàng dài zhe yí gè rén, màn màn de dǎo le.

跌倒³¹的是一个女人，花白头发，衣服都很破烂³²。伊³³从马路上突然向车前横截³⁴过来；车夫已经让开道³⁵，***

Diēdǎo de shì yí gè nǚrén, huābái tóufà, yīfú dōu hěn pòlàn. Yī cóng mǎlù shàng tūrán xiàng chē qián héngjié guòlái; chēfū yǐjīng ràng kāidào, ***

¹⁸ 民国六年 - Mínguó liù nián - 1917, the sixth year of the Republic of China founded during the revolution by Sun Yat-sen (孙中山 Sūn Zhōngshān) in 1912.

¹⁹ 刮 - guā - blow

²⁰ 猛 - měng - fierce; violent; vigorous

²¹ 生计 - shēngjì - livelihood; means of livelihood

²² 好容易 - hǎo róngyì - not easy at all (equivalent to 好不容易)

²³ 雇定 - gùdìng - hire; employ

²⁴ 人力车 - rénlichē - rickshaw

²⁵ S门 - "S" mén - probably referring to 宣武门 (Xuānwǔ Mén), a gate in Beijing

²⁶ 浮尘 - fú chén - surface dust; dirt (尘) on the surface (浮)

²⁷ 刮净 - guājìng - blown clean

²⁸ 洁白 - jiébái - spotlessly white; pure

²⁹ 忽而 - hū'ér - suddenly; all of a sudden

³⁰ 车把 - chēbǎ - shaft (of the rickshaw)

³¹ 跌倒 - diēdǎo - fall; tumble

³² 破烂 - pòlàn - tattered; ragged; worn out

³³ 伊 - yī - he or she (usually and in this case she)

³⁴ 横截 - héngjié - cut across

³⁵ 让开道 - ràng kāidào - give the right of way; let someone go ahead

*** 但伊的破棉³⁶背心³⁷没有上扣³⁸，微风³⁹吹着，向外展开⁴⁰，所以终于兜⁴¹着车把。幸而⁴²车夫早有点停步，否则伊定要栽⁴³一个大斤斗⁴⁴，跌到头破血出⁴⁵了。

*** dàn yī de pòmían bèixīn méiyǒu shàngkòu, wēifēng chuīzhe, xiàngwài zhǎnkāi, suǒyǐ zhōngyú dōuzhe chēbà. Xìng'ér chēfū zǎo yǒu diǎn tíngbù, fǒuzé yī dìng yào zāi yí gè dà jīndǒu, diēdào tóupò-xuèchū le.

伊伏⁴⁶在地上；车夫便也立住脚。我料定这老女人并没有伤，又没有别人看见，便很怪他多事⁴⁷，要自己惹出是非⁴⁸，也误⁴⁹了我的路。

Yī fú zài dì shàng; chēfū biàn yě lìzhù jiǎo. Wǒ liào dìng zhè lǎo nǚrén bìng méiyǒu shāng, yòu méiyǒu biérén kànjiàn, biàn hěn guài tā duōshì, yào zìjǐ rěchū shìfēi, yě wù le wǒ de lù.

我便对他说，“没有什么的。走你的罢！”

Wǒ biàn duì tā shuō, "méiyǒu shénme de. Zǒu nǐ de bà!"

车夫毫不理会，——或者并没有听到，——却放下车子，扶⁵⁰那老女人慢慢起来，***

Chēfū háobù liǐhuì, —— huòzhě bìng méiyǒu tīngdào, —— què fàngxià chēzi, fú nà lǎo nǚrén mànman qǐlái, ***

³⁶ 破棉 - pòmían - torn cotton

³⁷ 背心 - bèixīn - a sleeveless garment

³⁸ 上扣 - shàngkòu - buttoned

³⁹ 微风 - wēifēng - gentle breeze

⁴⁰ 展开 - zhǎnkāi - spread out; unfold; open up

⁴¹ 兜 - dōu - wrap around; get caught on

⁴² 幸而 - xìng'ér - luckily; fortunately

⁴³ 栽 - zāi - tumble; fall

⁴⁴ 斤斗 - jīndǒu - fall down; tumble; somersault

⁴⁵ 头破血出 - tóupò-xuèchū - (成语) head broken and bleeding

⁴⁶ 伏 - fú - lie with one's face downward

⁴⁷ 多事 - duōshì - meddling (equivalent to 多管事情); poke one's nose into other's business

⁴⁸ 惹出是非 - rěchū shìfēi - stir up trouble

⁴⁹ 误 - wù - delay

⁵⁰ 扶 - fú - support with the hand; help; relieve

*** 搀⁵¹着臂膊⁵²立定⁵³，问伊说：

*** chānzhe bibó lìding, wèn yī shuō:

“你怎么啦⁵⁴？”

"Nǐ zěnmē lā?"

“我摔坏了。”

"Wǒ shuāihuài le."

我想，我眼见你慢慢倒地，怎么会摔坏呢，装腔作势⁵⁵罢了，这真可憎恶⁵⁶。车夫多事，也正是自讨苦吃⁵⁷，现在你自己想法去。

Wǒ xiǎng, wǒ yǎn jiàn nǐ mǎnmǎn dǎodì, zěnmē huì shuāihuài ne, zhuāngqiāng-zuòshì bà le, zhè zhēn kězēngwù. Chēfū duōshì, yě zhèng shì zìtǎo-kǔchī, xiànzài nǐ zìjǐ xiǎngfǎ qù.

车夫听了这老女人的话，却毫不踌躇⁵⁸，仍然搀着伊的臂膊，便一步一步的向前走。我有些诧异⁵⁹，忙看前面，是一所巡警⁶⁰分驻所⁶¹，大风之后，外面也不见人。这车夫扶着那老女人，便正是向那大门走去。

Chēfū tīng le zhè lǎo nǚrén de huà, què háobù chóuchú, réngrán chānzhe yī de bibó, biàn yí bù yí bù de xiàngqián zǒu. Wǒ yǒu xiē chàyì, mángkàn qiánmiàn, shì yì suǒ xúnjǐng fēnzhusuǒ, dàfēng zhīhòu, wàimiàn yě bú jiàn rén. Zhè chēfū fúzhe nà lǎo nǚrén, biàn zhèng shì xiàng nà dànmén zǒuqù.

⁵¹ 搀 - chān - support or help somebody

⁵² 臂膊 - bibó - arm

⁵³ 立定 - lìding - stand up straight

⁵⁴ 啦 - lā - a phrase final particle; (the representation of the combined sounds 了 (le) and 啊 (ā), denoting exclamation, interrogation, etc.)

⁵⁵ 装腔作势 - zhuāngqiāng-zuòshì - (成语) put on a pose in order to attract attention

⁵⁶ 可憎恶 - kězēngwù - detestable

⁵⁷ 自讨苦吃 - zìtǎo-kǔchī - (成语) ask for trouble

⁵⁸ 踌躇 - chóuchú - hesitate

⁵⁹ 诧异 - chàyì - surprised; astonished

⁶⁰ 巡警 - xúnjǐng - police

⁶¹ 分驻所 - fēnzhusuǒ - branch station; substation

For the rest of the story

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Short Stories from Lu Xun's Nahan



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Due to its complex writing system, Chinese is one of the most difficult languages in the world. Full literacy of Chinese requires a working knowledge of three to four thousand Chinese characters and breaking into reading Chinese literature is a daunting task.

Capturing Chinese: Short Stories From Lǚ Xùn's Nàhǎn is a comprehensive tool to help students of Chinese read Chinese literature in its original form. Footnotes highlight the more difficult vocabulary and pinyin is provided for the entire text. There is no need to constantly consult a dictionary or look up difficult characters by radical. Historical events, people, and places are explained throughout and illustrations recreate the scenes.

Includes:

- 14 short stories in original Chinese
- Pinyin for entire text
- Definitions for difficult vocabulary
- Historical explanations and summaries
- Illustrations for each story

Lǚ Xùn (1881-1936) is one of the most influential and famous writers of modern Chinese literature. He pioneered writing in the vernacular Chinese and his stories have been read countless times. He has had an enormous influence over modern China and was even called “chief commander of China's cultural revolution” by Máo Zédōng who was a lifelong admirer of his work. Lǚ Xùn wrote short stories, poems, translations, and essays.



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