

青海湖，海拔三千多米，当其他的鹤类都在更低的地方筑巢安家时，我们的祖先把目光投向了这片神奇的土地。

Qinghai Lake is more than 3,000 meters above sea level. While other cranes build their nests elsewhere, our ancestors cast their eyes towards the magic land.





这里是鸟儿的乐园:头顶着“两道杠”的“中队长”斑头雁,身穿着黑色大衣的捕鱼者鸬鹚,涂抹着口红爱美的赤嘴潜鸭,蒙着黑巾耍帅的侠盗渔鸥,当然,还有我们,高原上的舞者——黑颈鹤。

It's a paradise for birds□ bar-headed geese with two on-head-bands, cormorants with black clothes, red-crested pochards with lipsticks, *Larus ichthyaetus* with black heads, and, of course, dancers on the plateau——we black-necked cranes.



对了，说了这么多，都忘了自我介绍了。我叫尼玛，是一只4个多月大的黑颈鹤，生活在青海湖泉湾湿地。我总是戴着一顶小红帽，围着一条黑围脖，所以被叫做“黑颈鹤”。藏民们还给我取了一个高贵的名字“拉杂仲仲噶莫”，意思是白色的神鸟。

Well, time to introduce myself. I am Nima, a 4-month-old black-necked crane, living in Quanwan Wetlands near Qinghai Lake. Always in a black scarf, I am called black-necked crane. Tibetans also call me “Lazazhongzhonggamo”, meaning the white divine birds.





别看我的年龄小，我的身份可不简单哦。我是国家一级保护动物，还是青海省的省鸟，同时，还和大熊猫、金丝猴一起占据着中国三大国宝的宝座。

Despite the fact that I am young , I am superordinate. I am among the first class national protected animals, and at the same time the province bird of Qinghai Province. And, together with giant pandas and golden monkeys, we are one of the Three National Treasures.


我们的故事要从很久很久以前说起。1876年，一个名叫普热尔瓦尔斯基的俄国探险家来到青海湖，发现了我的先辈们的踪迹。

现在，全世界只剩下8000多只黑颈鹤，而在青海湖这里就有一百多只。除了我居住的泉湾湿地，我的族人们还分布在沙岛、黑马河湿地、尕日拉湿地等青海湖周边湿地。此外，在中国的西藏、新疆、四川、甘肃、云南、贵州几个省区以及印度、不丹也能看到我的同类们的身影。

Our story dates back long ago. In 1876, a Russian explorer named Przewalski came to Qinghai Lake and found my ancestors.

Now, there are only more than 8,000 black-necked cranes all over the world, and more than 100 are here in Qinghai Lake. Apart from Quanwan Wetlands where I stay, my Clansmans also live in other wetlands around Qinghai Lake, Shadao Island, Heimahe Wetlands, Nairila Wetlands and so on. Besides, you can also find us in Tibet, Xinjiang, Sichuan, Gansu, Yunnan and Guizhou province in China. Some of us live in India and Bhutan, too.



A black-necked crane stands in a lush green field. The crane has a black head and neck with a white patch on its forehead, a long red beak, and white body feathers with black wings and tail. In the background, a calm blue lake stretches across the horizon under a clear sky.

这边走过来的英姿飒爽玉树临风的帅哥就是我的爸爸，他的故事要从今年四月说起。

Here comes my dad, bold and brave, tall and handsome. His story goes back to April this year.



三月还未结束，爸爸和族人们便离开了越冬的雅鲁藏布江河谷和云贵高原，开始了向青藏高原中、北部的迁徙之旅。

In the end of March, my dad and clansman left Yarlung Zangbo valley and Yungui plateau where they stayed for the whole winter, heading for the center and the north of Qinghai-Tibet Plateau.

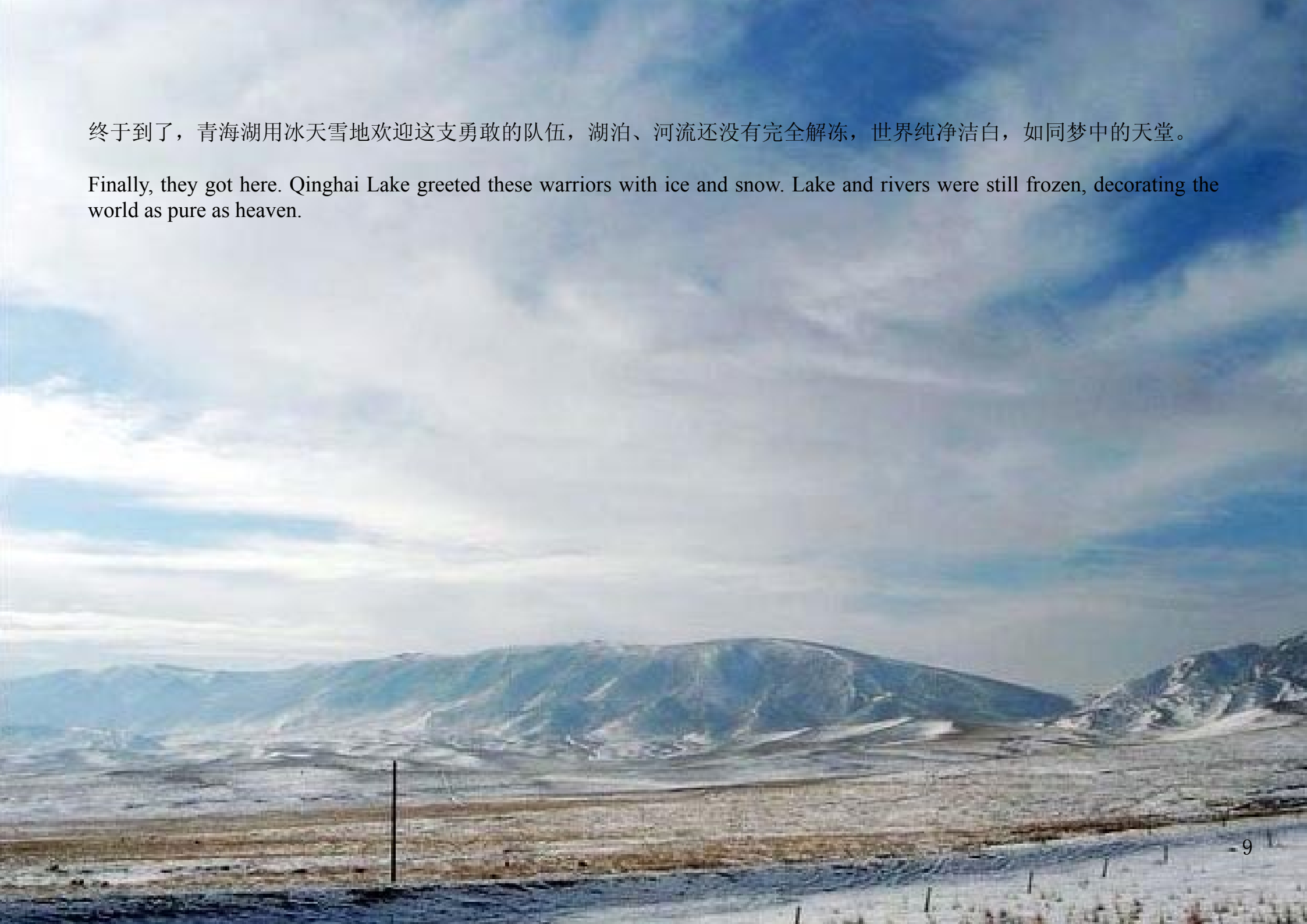
旅途永远是艰辛的，高原的寒意还没有退去，风雨和疲惫总是试图阻止它们的脚步，然而就是最弱小的黑颈鹤也没有退缩，大家摆开“一”字纵队或“V”字队形，共同飞向青海湖宽广的怀抱。

The travel was difficult, with the coldness of plateau. Wind, rain, and tiredness kept trying to stop them. But even the weakest crane didn't give up. They flew in a line or in "V" formation, to the embrace of Qinghai Lake.



终于到了，青海湖用冰天雪地欢迎这支勇敢的队伍，湖泊、河流还没有完全解冻，世界纯净洁白，如同梦中的天堂。

Finally, they got here. Qinghai Lake greeted these warriors with ice and snow. Lake and rivers were still frozen, decorating the world as pure as heaven.



刚到新家的黑颈鹤们需要彼此的帮助，去年新生的小鹤也需要群体的保护，于是大家聚集在一起，过着结群生活。有时5到6只黑颈鹤便可组成一个小群体，数目多的时候，也会有30多只的大帮派。大家在一起，为寻找食物基地、新家地址和未来的伴侣作准备。

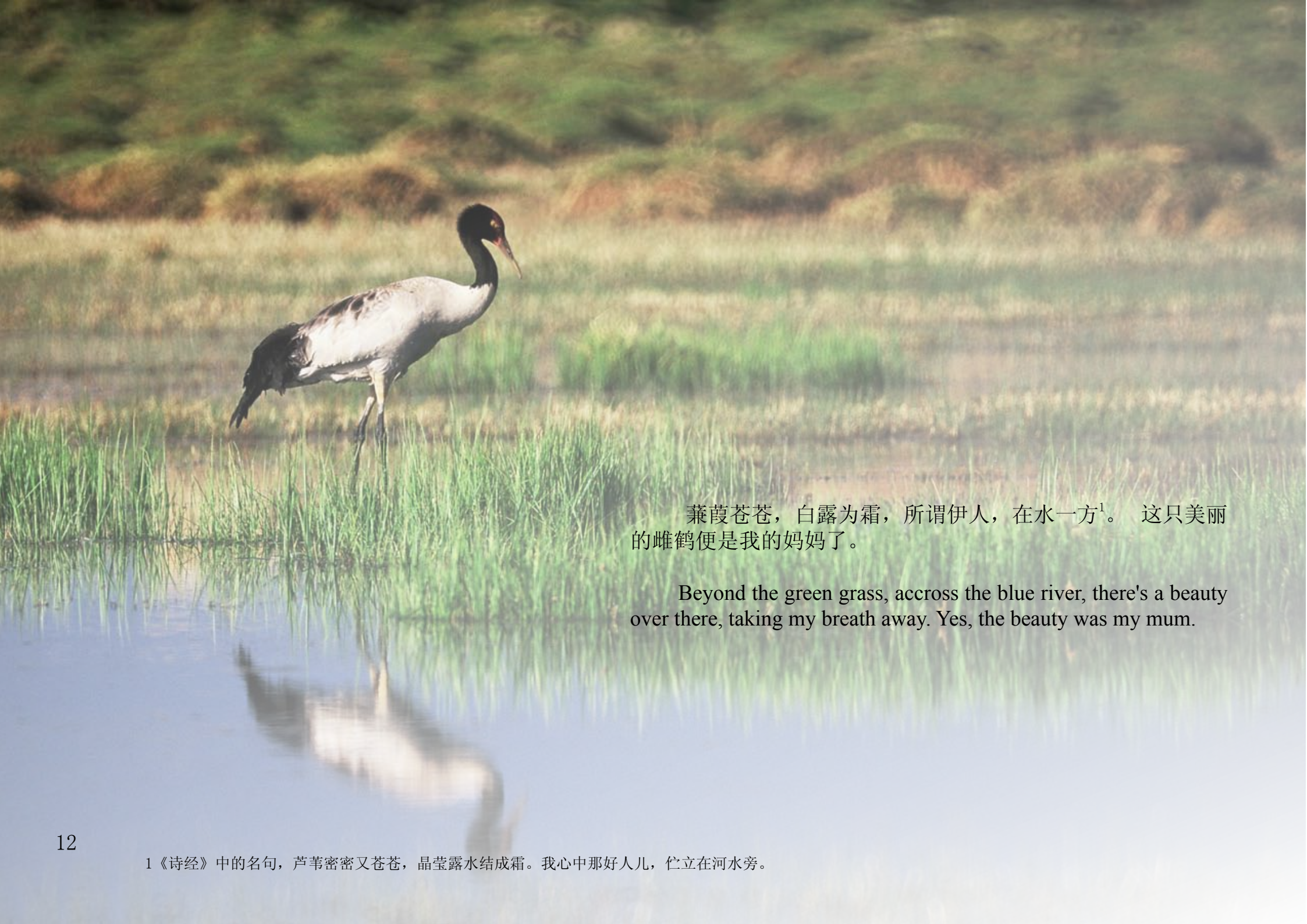
Upon arrival, black-necked cranes needed help from each other. What's more, little cranes who were born last year needed protection from the group. So they stayed in flocks, looking for food-source, new home site and future-mates. The size of a crane group varies from 5 or 6 to 30.



爸爸便在这样一个群体中，初来乍到的他正扭转着细长灵活的脖子，打量着新的家园。忽然，一抹倩影闯入了他的视线，似有闪电击中了爸爸的心脏，自此以后，他的目光再也无法挪开。


Dad was in such a group. At that moment, he was turning his tall narrow neck, looking at the new homeland. Suddenly into his eyesight staggered a beautiful image, like a lightning striking his heart. From then on, dad could never move his eyes away.





蒹葭苍苍，白露为霜，所谓伊人，在水一方¹。 这只美丽的雌鹤便是我的妈妈了。

Beyond the green grass, across the blue river, there's a beauty over there, taking my breath away. Yes, the beauty was my mum.

A crane with a black head and neck and white body is standing in a field of tall, golden-brown grass. In the background, there is a body of water. The crane is facing right.

妈妈当时正在湖中散步，忽然感觉到身后有灼灼的目光，蓦然回首，一个谦谦君子正优雅地朝自己走来。

Wandering in the lake, mum felt an ardent gaze on herself. Turning back, she saw a handsome gentleman walking up.

爱情让繁殖期的黑颈鹤格外漂亮，额上的红冠鲜亮如火，全身的羽毛丰满光洁，此刻的爸爸便是如此。一见钟情后，爸爸便对妈妈展开了热烈的追求。

Love makes a black-necked crane in breeding season extremely beautiful, with a hat in bright red and white clothes of full length. Just as how my dad looked like at that moment. Losing his heart at the first sight, dad began burning for the love of mum.



爸爸首先采取了舞蹈攻势，想用优美的舞姿俘获妈妈的芳心。爸爸的舞技在家族里数一数二，一旁的妈妈看得怦然心动，额头上那黑颈鹤动情时所特有的红晕愈发鲜亮。

Dad started his courtship with a dance, which he was good at. As Mum's heart leaped, the blush on her head, which is a sign of falling in love for black-necked cranes, got brighter and brighter.



待一曲舞蹈结束，爸爸又亮出他嘹亮的歌喉，穿云裂石的歌声在青海湖畔响起，向妈妈发出求婚的宣言：“于千万鸟之中，遇见你要遇见的鸟。于千万年之中，时间无涯的荒野里，没有早一步，也没有迟一步，遇上了你，我只想轻轻地问一句：‘你愿意嫁给我吗？’”妈妈早已对爸爸芳心暗许，于是应声伴唱，答应了爸爸的求婚。

Immediately after the dance, dad began to show his singing voice. A love-song resounded around the lake, loud and sonorous. Dad proposed marriage to mum. “Would you like to marry me?” All over father, mother answered, “I do.”



美丽的青海湖便是它们的证婚人，湖畔的棕头鸥见证了它们不朽的爱情。婚礼马上开始举行，这对小夫妻双双起舞高歌，用音乐和舞蹈完成了这一神圣的仪式。

Qinghai Lake witnessed their grand wedding. The brown-headed gulls witnessed their immortal love. The wedding ceremony was held in dance and music, blessed by the melody.





黑颈鹤对爱情的承诺是一生的，假如一方先行而去，另一只黑颈鹤便会孤独一生，甚至悲伤绝食，忧郁死去，或冲向长空，然后收翅坠地自戕。一生一世，一鹤相伴，生死不离。

Black-necked cranes hold the promise of love for the whole life. If one dies, the other will live on alone. Some even fast to death, or commit suicide by crashing towards the land from the high sky. One life, one lover. The two will never, ever depart.





群居的日子只有短短二十来天，大家便要分道扬镳。父母会赶走自己的孩子，让他们学会独立生活。起初被赶走的小鹤会聚集在一起，直到四月中、下旬它们才离开父母的领地，漂泊到别的沼泽和湖泊地带。此时青海湖畔的黑颈鹤们，不管是蜜月夫妻、独居浪子，还是离家的小鹤、丧偶的孤鹤，都会开始寻找自己的领地。

After living together for about 20 days, the groups would break up. Parents would drive away their children, leaving them alone to learn to live on their own. At first, these little cranes would gather around. They are not getting far from the parents' territories or wandering to other swamps or wetlands until the middle or late April. At that time, all the cranes, new couples, the lone rangers, kids away from home and the widowed, would seek for their own territory.



新婚后的父母也迅速占领了一块理想的领地，开始了为期七八十天的蜜月。五月的春风消融了青海湖的冰雪，小草返青，春光和煦，此时，妈妈的肚子里已经孕育着两个生命了，这就是我和哥哥。

After the wedding, dad and mum occupied a perfect territory and began to enjoy their honey moon which last for 70 to 80 days. With the first wisp of sunshine of May warmed the air, ice thawed and grass turned green again. At that time, my brother and I were already on the way to embrace the world.



爸爸妈妈开始为我们的到来做准备。首先要挑一块风水宝地，离水面不能太低，至少得20厘米；面积不能太小，至少得有1平方米；还需处在安静偏僻、人畜无法打扰的地段。千挑万选后，爸爸妈妈选定了淡水沼泽中离岸不远的的一个草墩。

Dad and mum were busy preparing for our coming. The first thing is to find a good place. It must be at least 20cm higher above the surface, larger than 1m² and free from being bothered by humans and other animals. At last, they picked up a hillock of grass near the shore in the fresh water marsh.

挑选好地址，剩下的工作就是筑巢了，聪明的爸爸妈妈就地取材，用草墩上原有的杂草和其他干枯的水草编织新房。新修的巢结构简单，也不够完整，远看像个大盘子摆在草墩之上。

After site selection, it was time to build the nest. Dad and mum used local materials——weeds right on the hillock and dry grass nearby. The structure of our new home was rather simple. It was even not complete, like a big disk.



五月快结束的时候，我和哥哥躲在蛋里，在父母的期待下来到了这个世界，我们还要耐心地等待三十多天，才能和这个美丽的世界正式见面。

When May was close to its end, my brother and I came to the world as two eggs. We must wait patiently for more than 30 days to see this wonderful world.



简单的新房显然无法担负起保护我和哥哥的重任，于是爸爸妈妈一边孵蛋一边继续修饰新家。爸爸在离巢2米的地方用嘴叼住杂草，甩向巢边，妈妈则把爸爸找来的杂草填进巢内。夫妻分工合作，三天过后，我们的新房终于有模有样了。以后整个孵蛋的日子里，爸爸妈妈都会为我们的新房添砖加瓦，今天一根苔草，明天一根灯蕊草，把小屋装修得温暖坚固。

Obviously, the simple nest can't take the task of protecting the two of us. So dad and mum went on building the nest while incubating. Dad would throw the weeds from 2 meters away back to the nest with his beak while. Mum picked them up and put in the new home. After 3 days' hard work, the new home looked like a real home. During the whole period of incubating, dad and mum would keep decorating our nest, assuring its warmth and stability.





等待我们出壳的日子，爸爸和妈妈总是轮流孵蛋。当然，孵蛋工作主要还是落在妈妈身上。魁梧的爸爸有着更重要的任务，他要站岗放哨，守卫家园。爸爸的气管发达，如同高音部的管乐器，入侵的敌人在他的鸣叫中都会惊惧而逃。

On expecting, dad and mum took turns to sit on the eggs. Certainly, mum did most of this job as dad had another important task—to keep guard. Dad has a trachea which resembles a pipe, and invaders will run away on heard of his hoot.



妈妈很聪明，起风的时候，她会改变姿势，头朝着来风的方向，这样她的羽毛就不会被风吹乱了，还可以保持体温和孵化温度。她总是细心地翻动巢里的蛋，让蛋能更好地透气并接受阳光。孵化期间，她很少出去找吃的，生怕自己一离开，我和哥哥会出什么意外。即使妈妈需要短暂的离开，她也会轻轻地挪动我们，使蛋壳的尖端对准风向，这样子，我们就很难被大风吹出巢穴了。

Mum was rather clever. On windy days, she would change the posture with her head straight against the wind, so that her feathers wouldn't be ruffled and the temperature of both her body and eggs could stay stable. She always turned the eggs over to make them breathe better and receive more sunshine. During incubating, she seldom went out for food, for fear that brother and I would meet trouble. When she had to leave us for a short time, mum would move the sharper end of the eggs against the wind gently, in order to prevent us from being blown out of the nest.



六月的天，像娃娃的脸，说变就变。刚刚还晴空万里，一转眼，倾盆大雨就从天而降。此时蛋里的我们却是如此的脆弱，一点受凉就可能危及生命。妈妈用自己的身体紧紧地护住巢穴，冰凉的雨水狠狠地打在她的身上，她却一动不动，为我们守护一方温暖的天地。危险还没有结束，雨越下越大，水位涨了起来，威胁到低矮的巢穴。看着上涨的水面，爸爸来回踱着步子，焦虑万分。生命的梦想就在风雨的飘摇中摇摇欲坠。忽然，他灵光一闪，计从心来。他从周围衔来泥土和植物，把巢穴一层层垫高，水涨一分，巢高一分。风停了，雨停了，危机也解除了，满身泥水的爸爸妈妈终于松了一口气。

The weather of June changes as the emotion of a baby. It was still sunny a minute ago before it rained cats and dogs. Cranes in the eggs were so weak that a tiny fall of temperature would threaten our lives. Mum sheltered the nest with her own body, keeping us warm. As the rain got heavier and heavier, the water level went up and our nest was in danger. Dad walked up and down worriedly, puzzling his brain. Suddenly, he came up with an idea. He picked soil and grass, putting them under the nest to make it higher and higher. Eventually, the crisis was over as the rain stopped. Dad and mum let out a high of relief, both drabbled.



当太阳和月亮轮回交替了三十多次，爸爸妈妈的辛苦等待终于过去了。我感觉到全身的力量在涌动，破壳而出的冲动越来越强烈。

我要出去！我用嘴啄着头顶的蛋壳，一下，两下，三下……“咔嚓”一声，随着一声脆响，清新怡人的气息扑面而来。我听到爸爸妈妈兴奋的“咕咕”声，这歌声隔着蛋壳已听到多次，却从未如此动听，让初见阳光有些惊慌的我顿时安静下来。

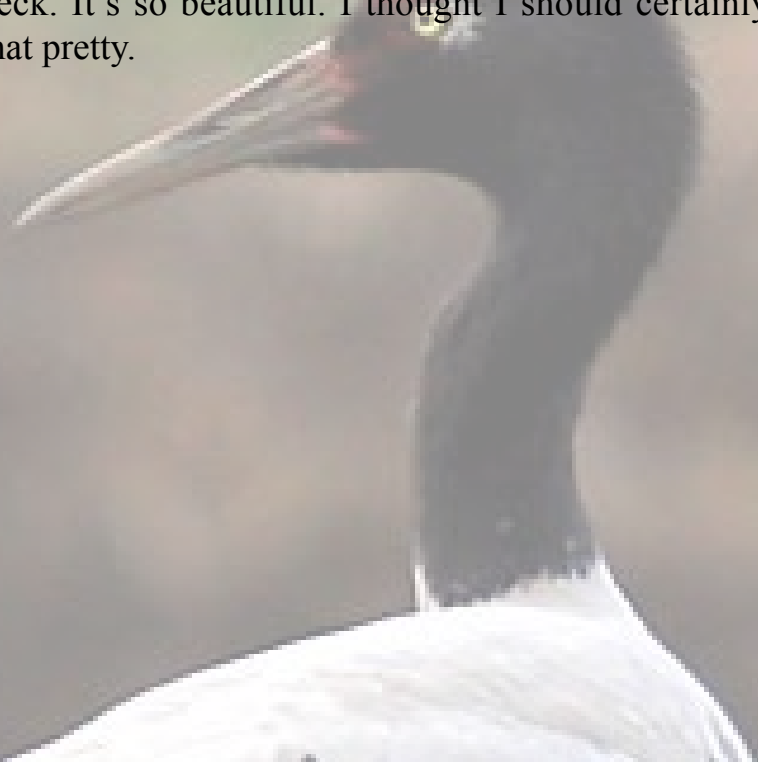
When the sun and the moon ran more than 30 turns, dad and mum's toilful waiting had finally passed away. I felt a power surging in my body as the impulse of pipping became stronger and stronger.

I wanna get out. I cracked the eggshell with my beak, once, twice, and more. Clickly, along with this sound, fresh air blew against my face. I heard my parents' aquiver cooing. This song had been repeated many times, but never had I heard such a beautiful one in the egg. The song made me calm, who was scared at the first view of sunshine.



我奋力把蛋壳啄开了更大的洞，小小的身体奋力地往外挤。刚刚出生的我看不到更远的世界，眼里只有妈妈的影子。妈妈全身的羽毛洁白得像遗落凡间的天使，翅膀末梢则是墨样的黑色，呼应着曲线柔美的黑颈，宛如一个美丽的芭蕾舞者。我想我应该也和妈妈一样漂亮吧？

I tried to make a bigger hole on the shell, through which I pushed myself out. On breaking off, I couldn't see too far and all in my eye was mum's figure. Like an elegant ballet dancer, mum has snowy feathers like a strayed angel. The tips of her wings were embellished with ink black, which matched the color of the graceful neck. It's so beautiful. I thought I should certainly be that pretty.



正在猜测着自己的样子，忽然，旁边似乎有什么东西挤了我一下。回头一看，一个毛茸茸的小东西正用橘黄色的小嘴轻轻地啄我。它的翅膀小小的，收拢在身体两侧，全身的绒毛黄黄的还带着棕色斑点，一看就不像是我们这一家子的。我机警地瞪着他，问：“丑八怪，你是谁？”那个小东西反问道：“虽然我不知道我是谁，可是，小孩儿，你又是谁呢？”在一旁看闹剧的爸爸妈妈早已笑得前俯后仰，妈妈轻轻用嘴把我们拨开，先对他柔声说：“扎西，你是哥哥。”接着又笑吟吟地转向我：“小家伙，以后别叫哥哥丑八怪了，你是弟弟，尼玛。你们都是我和爸爸最心爱的宝贝。”

Upon drawing my portrait, I sensed being pushed by something. I turned around and found a hairy little thing pecking me with his orange beak. His folded wings were small and held close to his yellow-haired body with some brown spots scattered. I couldn't imagine that he was a member of our family. I stared at him vigilantly, said, "Little fright, who are you?" He replied, "I don't know who I am. But who on earth are you, tiny?" Mum and dad couldn't help laughing when they saw this farce. Mum separated us and said to that boy softly, "Zhaxi, you are the elder one." Then she turned to me smiling, "Tiny, don't ever call your brother a fright any more. You are the younger brother, Nima. You both are our honey."





原来，我口口声声叫着丑八怪的小不点儿是我唯一的哥哥，没想到我和自己只有着短暂缘分的哥哥竟然以这种方式相识。记得初生后的好些天，我都为自己的相貌平平而伤心，甚至缠着妈妈问我们到底是不是她和爸爸的孩子。妈妈总是说：“孩子，不要小看这身棕色的衣服，它可是你的保护色哦，有了它，遇到危险时，你往草丛里一躲，敌人就看不到你了。等你长大后，经受过自然的考验，你就会和妈妈一样拥有一身美丽光滑的羽毛了。”对于妈妈的话，我从不怀疑，但她所说的自然的考验，却残酷得让小小的我无法承受。

The fact is that the tiny who is not pretty is my only brother. A brother only had little lot with me. I couldn't foresee that we would actually meet in this way. I remembered that after many days, I was still upset for my poor looking. I even asked mum that whether I was her baby. Mum told me, "Baby, don't overlook your brown hair. It's your protective covering. When you are in danger, just hide in the grass and enemies won't be able to find you. When you grow up and go through the test of nature, you will be rewarded by the beautiful and smooth feather as mine." I never doubted mum's words, and never expected that the nature's test was so heavy for me to bear.

我们黑颈鹤是勇敢而坚强的，出生后不久即可站立，十小时后便可行走。阳光刚刚蒸干绒羽上的水分，我们便迫不及待地开始蹒跚学步。在爸爸妈妈欣喜的注视下，我们踏出自己的第一个步伐，摇摇晃晃却又坚定无比，一次次的摔倒和爬起为生命翻开了崭新的一页。看，这是我的第一次走路。虽然每迈出一大步都有些硌脚，不过好有趣，我爱上了这个光亮的世界，还有离开蛋壳后行动自如的感觉。我是独立的小小男子汉。

We black-necked cranes are brave and strong. We can stand minutes after we are born. Within 10 hours, we can walk. Just as our hair got dry, we couldn't wait to begin walking. Watched by parents with joy, we walked out our first step, wobblingly but steadily. We fell down, and we got up, again and again, turning the life into a new page. Look! This was my first walking. It was so interesting even though my feet hurt. I fell in love with this bright world and loved the feeling of freedom after I left the shell. I am a little independent man.





出生后的前两天，我们都还不能吃东西。两天后，爸爸妈妈叼来美味的小鱼小虾，喂给我们吃。有时候，他们也会把食物放在我们面前，让我们自己啄食。

The first two days after birth, we couldn't eat anything. Two days later, dad and mum would get small fish and shrimp to feed us. Sometimes they put the food down to encourage us to peck them on our own.

十天后，妈妈告诉我：我们要学会自己找吃的了。于是，觅食探险准备开始了。一大早，我们一家四口便出发了。爸爸负责保护、在前面领路，妈妈负责照顾我们、讲解各种食物。爸爸总是在前方“咯~”地长叫，妈妈则在后方“咕！”一声简短回应。

Ten days later, mum told us that we were to learn to find food by ourselves. Thus, the adventure of prowling began. In the morning, our family set out. Dad was responsible for the safety and guiding the route in front. Mum's job was to tell us everything about different kinds of food. The cackle of dad was always responded by mum's coo from behind.





我和哥哥则摇摇晃晃地走在爸爸妈妈之间，小心翼翼地模仿他们的动作，记住哪些东西可以吃，哪些东西不能吃。我们黑颈鹤从不挑食，鱼虾昆虫，水生植物，甚至草根都可以成为我们的美食。


My brother and I were between them with wobbly steps. We followed their behaviors carefully and tried to remember what we could eat and what we couldn't. We black-necked cranes are never particular about food. Fish, shrimp, insects and even the roots can be delicious food.



我曾经问过妈妈，为什么我们要离开爸爸妈妈辛苦建筑的房子，在湿地内流浪。妈妈说，因为旅途中我们会得到更加充足和美味的食物，而我和哥哥，也需要对这个世界有多一些的认识。于是，在我们出生后，我们走到哪里，哪里就是我们的家。

I asked mum once why we left our house on which she and dad had spent so much energy to wander in the marsh. Mum said that we would get more delicious food when we were travelling. And brother and I need to learn more about this world. Then, since the time we were born, where we were, where our home was.



A black-necked crane stands on a sandy beach, its head turned to the right. The crane has a white body, black neck, and a prominent red patch on its head. In the background, a large flock of similar cranes is gathered on the beach and in the shallow water. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. The overall scene is peaceful and serene.

我们不需要温暖的床铺，夜里，单腿一站便可睡觉，把头埋在羽毛里便可进入香甜的梦境。睡觉前，我和哥哥总是缠着妈妈讲故事，我最喜欢的故事是格萨尔王的牧马者。传说英雄格萨尔王有一个忠实的牧马者，他去世后便变成了我们黑颈鹤，现在牧民还亲切地称我们“格萨尔达孜”，就是牧马者的意思。

We didn't need a warm bed. At night, we can sleep on one foot with head being buried in the feather. Before we went to sleep, brother and I always asked mum for stories. My favorite one was that of King Gesar's wrangler. It is said that the hero, King Gesar, has a faithful wrangler, who becomes black-necked crane after his death. Even today herdsmen call us Gesar Dazi, which means wranglers.

妈妈还跟我们讲过去的青海湖。那个时候湿地比现在还多，大片大片的湿地是黑颈鹤的乐园，可是由于人类对湿地的破坏，我们的家园也变小了。所幸的是，人类已经意识到自己的错误，加强了对湿地的保护。

Mum also mentioned Qinghai Lake in the past. At that time, there was more marsh, which is fairyland of us. Due to the destruction of human beings to the marsh, our homeland becomes smaller and smaller.





一天又一天的游荡生活让我和哥哥变得越来越强壮。
妈妈欣慰地注视着我们，不禁感叹：像太阳一样，我的孩子们越来越强壮。

Mum looked at us gladly, said with motion, “Just as the sun, my kids become stronger and stronger.”
Day of travelling made brother and me stronger and stronger.

我以为，我和哥哥会一直快快乐乐地在父母身边长大，嬉戏打架，直到10月，那时所有的黑颈鹤都会加入到南迁越冬队伍中。然而，大自然往往是残酷的。在弱肉强食的自然法则下，青海湖这美丽的天堂亦是危机四伏。

I thought that brother and I would be with parents happily, playing and fighting with each other to October, when we all black-necked cranes will join the team of heading south for the winter. However, nature is always cruel. Under the law of jungle, in Qinghai Lake, a place that is as beautiful as heaven, dangers hid everywhere.



又是一个晴朗的日子，我和哥哥在湿地中玩耍。忽然，天空中出现了一个黑影，闪电般向我们俯冲过来。后来我才知道那是大鵟，而我们，尚未长大的黑颈鹤，便是他中意的猎物。突然的袭击让我们措手不及，爸爸妈妈在远处无法及时救援。时间仿佛在那一刻凝固了，我看到哥哥弱小的身躯在大鵟的爪下无力地挣扎，耳畔是爸爸妈妈愤怒而悲伤的鸣叫和哥哥最后的嘶喊……我跌跌撞撞跑回爸爸妈妈身边，而哥哥却再也回不来了。

It was just another sunny day, when brother and I were playing games in the wetlands. Suddenly, a shadow appeared in the sky, which swooped down to us at lightning speed. I knew that he was an Upland Buzzard afterwards. We, young black-necked cranes are food at his fancy. Unexpected attack caught us on the wrong foot. Dad and mum were too far away for timely rescue. The world froze for a moment, when I saw Zhaxi's little body struggling in the claws. My ears were full of dad and mum's angry sad screaming along with my brother's last yelling. I blundered to dad and mum, but Zhaxi could never come back any longer.






孕育生命的所有的努力都在大鷲的一声长啸中粉碎，留下的唯有爸爸妈妈那划破长空的哀鸣，还有我不住的啜泣。

All the effort for a new life broke into pieces in the whistle of the Upland Buzzard, leaving behind the heart-broken hooting of dad and mum and my unceasing sobbing.



A photograph of two swans standing in a field of tall, thin grasses. The swan on the left is white with a black neck and head, while the swan on the right is grey. They are both looking towards the right. In the background, there is a body of water with several other swans swimming. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

一向很少说话的爸爸走了过来，拍了拍我，语重心长地说：“自然规律就是这样，为我们生命烙上的不仅仅是欢乐的，也有悲伤的印记。而你，尼玛，只有不断地接受历练，快快长大，才能摆脱早亡的厄运，成为高原上的舞者，白云中的天使。记着现在的痛，珍惜生命给予你的一切美好。”

Dad came up, patted me lightly and said: "It's the rule. What will be carved on our life is not only happiness, but also sorrow. And you, Nima, only by experiencing and tempering can you avoid the doom of death at a early age and become a dancer of the plateau and an angel in the clouds. Remember the pain you are suffering, and treasure all the beauty life gives you."



伤心与彷徨让我好怀念妈妈的温暖，好想依偎在她宽大的翅膀下度过这个难以入睡的夜晚。可我更希望自己可以成为爸爸一样的强壮的男子汉，独自战胜悲痛，只有那样，我才能保护自己，保护我的家人。我知道，那个贪玩的尼玛已经离去了，我会成为像太阳一般强大的男子。既然无法逃避这个世界的苦难，那就勇敢地面对。只有真正了解这个世界的黑暗，却从未放弃对光明的追寻，依然微笑着，坚定前行的鹤，才是真正的勇者。

Sad and lost, I missed the warmth of mum's breast. But more than this, I wanted to be a hero like dad, facing all the pains and sorrow. Only at that time can I protect myself and my family. I knew, the playful Nima had gone, and I would become a man as strong as the sun. Now that I can't escape the hardship in the world, I'd like to face it. Only those who still keep smiling and going forward seeking for the light though fully aware of the darkness, can be called the true hero.

妈妈告诉我，我应该小心的不仅仅有大鸷，还有狐狸和狼等有着尖锐牙齿的野兽，当然，还有少数想要抓住我们的坏人。不过，我并不害怕，因为我在长大，我会跑得很快很快，而且，我已经拥有了黑颈鹤所特有的击退敌人的武器——长鸣。


Mum told me, besides Upland Buzzards, I should also look out for beasts with sharp teeth such as foxes and wolves. Also, there are some bad guys who would attempt to catch us. But I am not afraid, because I am growing up and I'm running faster and faster. Besides, I have been equipped with a specific weapon for black-necked crane specific weapon: hooting.





有时候，我们会见到人类，善良的藏民从不伤害我们，听说他们信仰提倡不杀生的藏传佛教，并把 we 当作神鸟来爱护。和我们走得最近的要算守鹤人了，他是泉湾山上一个善良的和尚，保护着我们的安全，有时还能看到他拿着个小本子记录我们的情况。

Sometimes, I can see human beings. Tibetans never hurt us. I heard that they believe in Tibetan Buddhism which opposes killing and protect us as divine birds. A person who gets closest to us is the crane-keeper. He is a kind-hearted Lama living on the hill of Quanwan Wetlands. He keeps us from danger. Sometimes, I can see him taking notes of us.



三个月过去了，我拥有了和大人一样的翅膀，是开始练习飞行的时候了。我必须在十月上旬之前学会飞行，否则家族南迁时，我将不得不独自面对高原冷酷的严寒。爸爸说，对于我们黑颈鹤，生命的规则就是，不停地扇动那美丽的翅膀，快速跑向前方，冲向那片澄明的天空。跌倒后爬起，再累也不停歇，只有这样，自然才会赐予我一双有力的翅膀，它会带我飞向自己的明天。

Three months flies away, I have got a pair of wings just like the adults'. It's time to practice flying. If I can't manage flying before early October, I will have to face the coldness of the plateau alone when all the families migrate to the south. Dad told me, for us black-necked cranes, the rule of life is to keep flapping the wings and run forward to the sky ahead, to get up every time I fall down and never to stop no matter how tired. Only in this way will the nature grant me strong wings, which will take me to my future







湿地中的探险与磨砺已经结束，我变得越发魁梧。受父亲的影响，我亦成为了高原上的翩翩君子，迎着朝阳、披着晚霞翱翔在天空的精灵。现在，我羽毛的颜色还是比父亲的暗褐，等我真正长大后，我就能和父亲一样，拥有最纯粹的黑颈和白羽。十月到来的时候，我会和我的族人一起，告别这见证了我出生和成长的土地，越过高山，迁向遥远的南方。

will leave this land with other black-necked cranes, over the mountains and to the far south.

As the exploration and experiencing in the wetlands have come to an end, I get stronger and stronger. I also become a gentleman in the plateau like my dad, flying in rising and setting sun. Now my feathers are still darker than dad's, but one day I will have the purely black neck and white feathers just like his. When October comes, I

凝望着这片留有自己脚印的土地，我似乎还能在席席微风中嗅出自己的味道，舍不得这宽广的蓝天，低低的白云，赐予我食物的青海湖和湿地，还有这天地间见证了我存在的一切一切。不想离开，可我背负着千百年来黑颈鹤一族流传下来的使命，为了生命的延续，不停地飞翔，不断地迁徙。这是我们对生命的承诺。而我，稚气已然随着一身棕黄绒毛褪去，正如母亲所期冀的，如太阳般，我已足够强壮，足以担负起生命交给我的庄严使命。

Gazing at this land with my trails, I seem to smell myself in the wind. I hate to part with all things here that witnessed my growth—the familiar sky, the low clouds, the lake and wetlands which offered me food. I don't want to leave, but I am to take the fate of the black-necked crane family passed down from generation to generation. For the continuation of life, we must keep flying and migrating. This is our promise to life. As for me, puerility has gone with the brown soft furs. As mum had expected, I have grown up as strong as the sun, strong enough to take over the mission of life.





腾飞吧，尼玛！

Fly, fly high, Nima!



我承诺，美丽的青海湖，明年，又一轮的迁徙，我会回来，续写自己的美丽人生。

I promise, I will be back next year. Again on the edge of this beautiful lake, I will take up my story of life.

编后语:

黑颈鹤在青海湖的数量最多的时候仅有118只，每年新增的小鹤数量也只有十多只，而且它们的栖息环境正在受到人类以及牲畜活动的威胁。小朋友们，请不要让这些可爱的精灵离开我们，成为小小守鹤者，请联系：

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Additional words:

The number of black-necked cranes in Qinghai Lake is only 118 at its most. Every year only a little more than ten young cranes are added. Their habitat is threatened by human and live-stocks. Kids, please don't let these lovely angels go. If you'd like to be a little keeper for them, please contact:

(blabla...)

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