



FOR THE TURTLE; FOR YOU

By Lexin Zhang

I didn't mean to, but I ended up staring at the involuntary twitching of my hand. And I did nothing to try and stop it.

“Relax” my grandmother reprimanded in Mandarin; her words dipped thickly in dialect.

She lightly swatted my arm. It was her morse code for ‘pay attention to how you are holding yourself.’ I grumbled, and did my best to iron out the hook and curve of my right hand.

Holding my tongue between my teeth, in place of the words ‘Grandma – *Lǎolao*, let it go,’ I planted my swinging in-turned feet flat on the gum-spotted floor of the TTC.

Shifting the bulking bags of groceries in my lap, I sat up straighter. Still, I was cradling the bags like tree branches that managed to snag a flyby birdie; so precarious that a confident rustle would free the contents to the ground. Though, the persimmons that nestled at the top looked like they had already fallen; pockets of bruises interrupted their uniformly orange skin.