

Love'un Christian

Written by

Jiming Lindal

BLACK

SOUND of a Shanghai street in the morning

FADE IN.

EXT. SHANGHAI STREET - MORNING

A small stand is at the corner of a street, with a twisted line trailing in front of the stand.

Braided dough dipped into the boiling oil in a deep pan.

MICHELLE (35), tall and long hair, attractive but worn from the jet lag, inches forward from the end of the line with CAITYLN (5), cute and innocent.

She gets to the stand and takes out her purse, excited. She searches the purse and stares at it.

VENDOR (30), a short man, waves his hand, getting impatient.

VENDOR (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
Hey, quick, we all are waiting for
you here, hurry up!

Michelle fishes out two dollar bills and hands them to the vendor.

VENDOR (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT) (CONT'D)
What's that?

MICHELLE (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
U.S. dollars, I don't have Ren-min-
bi.

The vendor points at a paperboard with a QR code.

VENDOR (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
Ali-pay.

MICHELLE (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
Sorry...do you take credit card?

Michelle takes out a credit card.

VENDOR (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
It's no use here. Ali-pay, haven't
heard of Ali-pay?

MICHELLE (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
Please...my daughter never tastes
You-tiao.

VENDOR (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
No pay, no food.

MICHELLE (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
Can you just take the U.S. dollars?

The vendor pushes Michelle over.

VENDOR (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
Next!

Cell phone rings. Michelle pulls out the phone and sees a message.

MICHELLE
Caitlyn, we'll see your grand uncle
now.

EXT. HUAI-HAI ROAD - MORNING

The road is busy with pedestrians. A small jewelry store, diamond rings and necklaces on display, a photography studio, showing bridal shots and wedding photos in large format in the window, a bakery, displaying chocolate mousse cake among other things, a boutique clothing store, featuring upcoming season's style...

Michelle searches for the numbers and stops by an alley.

She walks in.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

Dust and Hammers, a construction site.

MICHELLE (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
Sorry, shi-fu, I'm looking for the
number eight building.

OLD MAN (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
Who are you looking for?

MICHELLE (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
Mr. Chen.

The OLD MAN (70) points to a building behind him.

MICHELLE (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT) (CONT'D)
Thank you.

EXT./INT. Building - Day

A broken sign on the building. Walls are worn.

Narrow staircases, dark inside.

Caitlyn steps forward. SQUEAK. A few more stairs. A turn. A shirtless man comes down without looking at Caitlyn. Michelle takes Caitlyn in, avoiding a collision.

Second floor.

An open shared room with a bath tub and a toilet. Urine stains around the toilet. Bath tub has a dark ring around it.

Michelle walks across the open room with Caitlyn and knocks on a door.

INT. UNCLE AH-SI ROOM - DAY

Door opens

UNCLE AH-SI (65), a worn man with some grey hair, looks at Michelle.

UNCLE AH-SI (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
Is that Coco?

MICHELLE (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
It's me, Uncle Ah-si.

UNCLE AH-SI (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
I can't recognize you any more.
How long has it been?

Uncle Ah-si looks at Caitlyn and bends down.

UNCLE AH-SI (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT) (CONT'D)
This must be Xiao-mei. Hi, I'm
uncle Ah-si.

Caitlyn looks at Uncle Ah-si, not speaking a word.

Uncle Ah-si looks at Michelle.

UNCLE AH-SI (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT) (CONT'D)
She doesn't speak Shanghainese?

Michelle is embarrassed.

MICHELLE (IN SHANGHAI DIALECT)
Only English, sorry, Uncle Ah-si.