

Stories with a hole in it: Tales from Xanadu -----1. The kite

by Julie O'Yang

U-R, UltraReads is my new concept, an experiment designed to suit contemporary need and taste.

The handy tablet-size reads can be easily done from your phone anytime, anywhere in the world. Each one comes together with a visual to make the reading experience more complete. Reading is more fun, more available and accessible than ever before.

YOU READ, THEREFORE U-R

For a better concept presentation, visit
<http://www.julieoyang.com/u-r.html>

1. The Kite

How many kites did we make in total?

I think that's how my brother and I learned to count.

I remember our first kite was white and light and sheer as wings. It floated like a summer dress. Such a kite is bound to fly. Fly far, farther and farthest. It's made for a future.

But the kite didn't even take off.

My brother and I leaned out the narrow window of our kitchen, next to the labyrinthine water pipes. We held onto the chord that connected us with the kite as if we feared it would abandon us, leaving us behind without a future at all. The kite lay among summer grass, motionless and pale, like a dove taken down by the hunter's eyeless gunshot. We imagined its pain — we didn't know it's the same pain we will learn to feel in life many years later. Pain and those eyeless

bullets. We had no idea that our mother saw our pain. She saw our life passing by in a flash of a second. The smile on her face made me weep.

Mamma didn't see our second kite. It trembled a few times before it soared, higher and higher, a white dove, sprightlier than the mountain gales. It saw our city with hundreds of thousand windows, just like the window of our small kitchen, polluted by cooking fumes, muted, silent eyes. My brother and I thought: "What is glass? What are the facts and certainty?"

Behind our kite, the skyline was shiny like glass on that day, so bright that we could hear it speaking to us in an articulate voice, an expression too alone. That's why it wanted to tell us stories about this place we lived. And so Xanadu took shape. And suddenly our life had a meaning and consequences.

