

December 22, 1931

I have arrived in Hangchow, the press of the crowd is maddening. After so many weeks in relative isolation in the Yellow Mountains and in the pleasant company of Father Walter the hustle of the city and the muttering of the mirror drive me to distraction, it seems more frequent now. I need to make arrangements to get to Shanghai, but I do not think that I can stay here for long.

December 24, 1931

I booked passage yesterday on a coastal steamer for Shanghai, but the moment I boarded, I knew that I could not manage the trip. The press of humanity on board was too much, the body heat and smells, I managed to flee before the ship departed. I have set out for Shanghai on foot. I wont make the happy compound of the Mission by Christmas. I could use a pleasant fireside chat with Father Henri. He is always the most welcoming presence. Unlike my current companion. The mirror laughs at me like a small child, tittering away in my mind at all hours. It drives me to distraction. I haven't slept well since leaving Shanghai.

December 29, 1931

Yesterday the most horrible thing happened. I do not think that I shall be able to atone for this sin. I was beset on the road outside a small village, Yoo Tsin, I think. The men were probably starving peasants, desperate for food or money. I had little of either. I tried explaining this to them. Oh, God how I tried. I tried to tell them to leave me alone for the sake of their eternal souls. I don't think the believed me. I pray to Mary that they had. One became impatient with my talking and struck at me with his antique rifle. I raised my arm in defense and the next thing I knew, the tittering of the mirror grew and a foul, charnel, ammonia smell permeated the area. The men fled, all except the one right in front of me. The blood, oh Christ forgive me the blood. That poor man, he only wanted to feed his family. Now he has fed something else, something that giggles as it feeds. I am beyond redemption. The mirror is quiet now. I can only guess why. I should have let him strike me, followed the Lord's example and turned the other cheek. Offered up my body to save others. Isn't that what my quest has always been about? I have failed.