



Home story (part 2): Preventing typhoon during wedding night

In 2000-2, DWF - with the collaboration of amateur artists from Phu Da – has written and performed a short play *Home story (part 1)* in various communes of Thua Thien Hue Province.

In 2003, DWF composed a new play *Home story (part 2)*, as part of a popular show (songs, poems, dances...) about cyclone prevention. The play is performed by a professional group in the communes with an audience of several hundred people.

Writers: Mr. Le Van Dau (DWF), Mr. Nguyen Minh Dung

Direction : Mr. Thai Dung

Performance: Hue Traditional Art Group (Mrs. La Cam Van)

Characters

- Mr. Doi (carpenter): 45 years old
- Mrs. Doi: 40 years old
- Miss Huong - daughter, student, 20 years old
- Architect Thang - DW technician

Scenery

One simple house as carpenter pavilion, small table, 4 chairs, tea pot and cups, typhoon preventing documents from DW 2000-2001, Mr.Thang's business card.

Costumes

Husband: shirt/ T-shirt cover pants; Wife: normal dress (at home); Daughter: shirt, western style pants (or jeans); Mr. Thang: formal costume

Summary

Mr and Mrs Doi are waiting in their shack for their daughter to return home. It is evening. Mrs Doi asks her husband a bit crossly when he is going to rebuild their destroyed home (destroyed in an earlier DW play "At home 1"). Their last house collapsed in a storm when Mr Doi was too drunk to take preventive action to save the roof and walls. Since then, he no longer drinks, but there is also no new home! But Mr Doi has heard of the DW project to help poor families achieve a secure home, but they don't know any more than that. As their daughter does not come back, he tries to get amorous with his wife but she refuses him.

The daughter returns. She has seen the new DW – Dipecho play "Preventing the typhoon on the wedding night". She explains about the new DW project, but Mr Doi gets confused over what the wedding night has to do with typhoons. Miss Doi says someone will visit them from the project.

Mr Thang, DW architect, arrives. The parents are anxious to know if they can participate to have their house strengthened. Thang explains what is required. There is more confusion about weddings and typhoons, and some suggestion about Thang and Miss Doi. In the end, Thang agrees to visit them again, and he and Mr Doi set off to the DW beneficiary selection meeting.

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Scene I

At night, Mr. and Mrs. Doi, while waiting for their daughter, discuss of housing.

- Mrs. Doi: (seems to wait for her daughter) Hmm, it's close to 10:00 p.m. but she hasn't come back home. Where does she go?
- Mr. Doi: I've heard that there is an art show at the yard of the People's Committee, maybe...
- Mrs. Doi: (interrupt her husband) It's ok to view the show but she must come home early. She's girl, why she come back late? She makes her parents worried a lot. Well, Doi, when do you intend to build a house? We can't stay in this tent for all our life.
- Mr. Doi: (look thoughtful and regretful) Do you know how many years I've stopped drinking?
- Mrs. Doi: (speak loud) Hey, I am asking about housing, why do you talk about drinking?
- Mr. Doi: (soften the tone) I don't talk about drinking. I remember that our house was collapsed just because I so much liked drinking... They gave information about the typhoon and urged us to anchor and prop the house but I didn't. I only rely on three or four ballasts on the roof and laughed at Mr. Lam for his providence. That's why that typhoon destroyed our house and I swore that I would never drink. Do you remember?
- Mrs. Doi: (soften the voice) Well, if you could be aware of this three years ago ... What do you intend to do?
- Mr. Doi: (firm the voice) We for sure will build our house this year. With little money, let's think how we can build a solid house. I don't want to build some thing just to cover from the rain or sun.
- Mrs. Doi: (agree) Yes, I don't like that we have to reconstruct every few years and worry a lot once typhoon comes and then we have a collapsed house. Poor creates poorer.
- Mr. Doi: I've heard that the DW project said that to build preventive house is a way of poor...poverty alleviation.
- Mrs. Doi: (pour out water and give to husband) Of course. Well, do you know if that program is still available? Can we ask them for a support?
- Mr. Doi: Before, I know that it is ok to ask for reinforcement, not for rebuilding. But it seems that they stopped working at our commune, remains at Phu Da and Thuy Thanh only.
- Mrs. Doi: (regretful, look out) What a pity! What a daughter! Why she hasn't come home?
- Mr. Doi: Let her come back late. One night without daughter – it's ... good.
- Mrs. Doi: Good? What's good? Old...
- Mr. Doi: Old? (get nearer to Mrs. Doi)
- Mrs. Doi: (smile) not old...not old... but I'm...on period.
- Mr. Doi: Alas! The house is opened like a tent. There's a night without child but wife is on period. How annoying! (shake head)

The daughter, Miss Huong, comes.

- Huong : (their daughter) (Entering the house, dancing, looking at Mr. Thang's business card, and singing following the melody of the song Ngau Nhen with changed words : house was reinforced, typhoon – you come for what ? Although you come, we won't get problem for we finished reinforcing) Dad, mummy !
- Mrs. Doi : (look shy) Alas ! You come home quite early. It is anxious to wait for you.
- Mr. Doi : (pour water into tea-cup and drink)

Huong : I went to the People's Committee to see the art show celebrated for 19 May and introducing DIPECHO project implemented by DW tour commune. Because we will rebuild the house so when I heard about the project I couldn't leave to go home though I knew that you were waiting for me.

Mr. Doi : I knew about DW long time ago. But what is the bottom of Miss ? (Dipecho pronounced in Vietnamese – not so correct)

Huong : (coddle herself) No, that's DIPECHO, dad, ECHO stands for European Commission Humanitarian Office)

Mr. Doi : ECHO (pronounced in Vietnamese : hey Miss), yeah, good...I like this word. (Looking at Mrs. Doi) Miss, I like Miss.

Huong : Well, dad, in the show, they performed a play : preventing typhoon during the wedding night. It's very funny and moving.

Mr. Doi : Wedding night ? Prevent what ? Prop...prop the bed not to be collapsed – it's reasonable. ("prop" is a homonym of "prevent" in Vietnamese)

Mrs. Doi : Your mind always flies to somewhere. That's wedding night but if the typhoon comes we have to do something to prevent it.

Mr. Doi : I myself manage to prop the bed and the house so that they can't be collapsed. That's first night of marriage !

Huong : Yes, dad, prop the house, violently. tour s heavily but the groom sweats.

Mrs. Doi : Right, once the enemy reaches home, women also have to fight. Typhoon is similar to enemy. Cancel kisses !

Mr. Doi : Cancel ? The wedding night is important. Preventing typhoon but can't postpone this important night. Both finishing all tasks and defeating all enemies. We must have clear standpoint !

Mrs. Doi : (impatient) Tell me, what is project ? They support us to build house ?

Mr. Doi : Yeah, they prevent typhoon. Everyone knows our house was collapsed by typhoon, so they will support us for sure.

Huong : No, dad. I heard clearly they propagate that beneficiaries are selected from one or two groups of families close together. If we don't belong to the group, then it's impossible for us to be supported.

Mr. Doi : (impatient, vexed) Impossible ? Our house was destroyed by typhoon... Let me go to the People's Committee. (going)

Huong : It's 10 :00 p.m., no PC now. We belong to the village, and the village will discuss to select families to be supported. ECHO asks for democracy strictly.

Mr. Doi : (disagree, Mrs. Doi nods her head for agreeing) Strictly...we have connections and everything can be asked through connections. Are you with me ? (Mrs. Doi agrees). For example, I couldn't able to get married with your mother and you couldn't be born if I didn't establish connections with your mother's brothers first.

Huong : Well ! Dad, that's family matters but this is...

Mr. Doi : This is not family matter ? Family prevents typhoon.

Huong : (show the business card) I won't tell with you more about this. See, I know this man from DW. He said he would come to see us when he had meetings with families.

Mr. Doi : (look at the card, surprising) What ? Architect ? How can an architect come to our tent ?

Mrs. Doi : (interrupt) How can you know him ? When ? (look worried) Hey, be aware to save yourself !

Huong : I told already that I went to see the show and knew him. Ok, mammy and dad should go to bed now. When they come, they will explain carefully to you.

(Move to bed. Mrs. And Mr. Doi look at their daughter and feel worried, both happy and worried.)

Scene II

- Mr. Thang :Hello, is this Ms. Huong's home ? Ms. Huong studies at Hue Agricultural Economic University.
- Mr. Doi : Yes, yes. Economy...is to calculate. Calculation but nothing be calculated yet... do you have some things to ask her ?
- Huong : (run out) Ah ! Mr. Thang ! Dad, he is Mr. Thang – architect from DW.
- Mr. Doi : (look pleased, bustle for pouring tea and offer a seat) Well, sorry. That's project of E...CHO, right ?
- Mr. Thang :Yes, I'm a technician from DW implementing the project on house reinforcement tour commune, funded by DIPECHO.
- Mr. Doi : (anxious) Please, drink ! Drink ! How about our house – it can be reinforced ?
- Huong : (interrupt) Dad, I told you already...
- Mr. Doi : I just ask. But if I beg him, it's ok. We are poor, our house looks like a tent why you always save your face.
- Mr. Thang :(embarrassed) Well, this afternoon, families here will have a meeting to select beneficiaries. You should attend the meeting, please. To be or not to be, that depends on the people. I have no right.
(Mrs. Doi comes back home, says hello to Mr. Thang embarrassedly and surprised. Huong introduces Thang to her (through her ear.) Feeling happy, Mrs. Doi officiously pours and offers tea to Mr. Thang)
- Mrs. Doi : Knowing you from our daughter, we really look forward to you. Well, you are young but very talent. Our daughter, Huong, can do nothing, you see. (make the comparison)
- Huong : (feel not easy) Mammy, what are you speaking ?
- Mr. Thang :Well, different people do different work. Maybe, after graduation, Ms. Huong will do good business that we will be afraid of making friend with her.
- Huong : (give a sharp look to Thang)
- Mr. Doi : The sky will fall down... It's impossible !
- Mr. Thang :Yeah, I intend to say then you come. If you want your house to be reinforced, it should be at least a semi-solid one. So, your house should have walls and roof first. That's conditions for being reinforced. Also, this project is a little bit different from the previous one : the project just supports 50%. For the rest 50%, the family can get a loan from the credit program – that means you get a loan from the project.
- Mrs. Doi : We have to get a loan ? They don't support all ?
- Mr. Doi : Hey, it's quite good to have a loan.
- Mr. Thang :Have loans so that the number of beneficiaries can be more. Families will return money to group of families so that other families can get loans also for reinforcement.
- Mr. Doi : Not to return to project ?
- Mrs. Doi : Not to commune, also ?
- Mr. Thang :No, return to village !
- Mr. Doi : Good, so good. Good village relationships ! Why they are in Europe but they think a lot for Vietnam ?
- Mrs. Doi : (look at everybody) To have a loan, I think it's very good because we will always remember the debt, and when we remember the debt we will remember reinforcement, remember to safe money to repair the house, is it right, Mr. Thang ?
- Mr. Thang :Yes, I...I also... I just tell you about the project and the way the project works. Moreover, if you are not selected by the group and if you want to repair the house, we will give you technical consultation because you are also a member of the village.
- Mr. Doi : Well, that's quite good ! I support the project with my both hands. It doesn't go that we support the project only if we can be provided with money. Are you with me ? We are not funded but our neighbours are. I agree and support the project.
- Mrs. Doi : That's true.
- Huong : I support Mr. Thang.
- Mr. Thang :Maybe it's time for meeting now. Sorry, I have to...

Mr. Doi : Too kind of you ! Even having a meeting, you still save time to drop your house. Thank you, thank the project. I'll also come to attend the meeting with the village now.
Well, Mr. Thang, last day Huong told me about your play : preventing typhoon during the wedding night. I can't understand. How ? Please make it clear for me, groom prevents or bride prevents ? Where are parents, brothers and sisters ? Why they let bride and groom stop such an important thing to prevent typhoon ?

Mr. Thang : (look at Huong and smile) Who prevent, Ms. Huong ?

Huong : (shy) Who know ? Both prevent.

Mr. Thang : (smile, some thing untrue in words) Groom props and bride parries. One props and one parries.

Mr. Doi : That's right, that's right. (makes the art of gesture : propping and parrying, move up and back, up and back.)

Mrs. Doi : Damn you ! Your head is full of wrong things !

Mr. Thang : It's late now, I have to go. Good-bye.

Mr. Doi : Ok, let's go.

THE END