

Miranda's interest in China reawakened

MIRANDA was fascinated by the story of the Chinese-born woman, now living in Palo Alto, who was working as her foot reflexologist.

"I was a medical doctor in China," her new friend Daisy explained. "But here I am a foot reflexologist."

"Why don't you get your medical doctor certification?" asked Miranda.

"My English is not very good," said Daisy; and this was true. "So first I would have to improve my English. And I am not young anymore."

Miranda and Daisy were about the same age.

"My father was a professor of chemistry at the university," Daisy continued. "During the Cultural Revolution, he was put in prison, and I was sent to a collective farm, when I was 13 years old."

"Because I had some education,"

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she continued, "They made me the public address announcer for the farm. So I spoke on the loudspeakers that all the workers would hear during the day and night, giving them instructions."

"At some point they said I could get an education. They asked me if I wanted to become a doctor or a lawyer. I said, 'A doctor.'"

"So I followed the village doctor around, and learned foot reflexology," she continued. "Later I went to a proper medical school in Beijing, and got a proper medical degree."

"Why did you leave the country," Miranda asked.

"Because my husband was not good to me," said Daisy. "When we lived in Suzhou he put up signs around the town telling people that I was a bad woman."

"Suzhou!" said Miranda. "I've been there. On my Stanford Silk Road trip two years ago. What a beautiful city!"



MIRANDA
treating me."

"I was very lucky," Daisy continued. "They gave me permission to leave the country. My parents were already living in the Bay Area."

"What did your husband say when you left?" Miranda asked.

"I planned my exit from China

without telling anyone," Daisy replied, "Because I knew my husband would block my departure, if he knew. One day I just left."

"Do you have family in China?" Miranda asked.

"My son still lives in China," Daisy said. "He works in Shanghai as a hotel manager. But I don't go back. I live in Palo Alto now. I am worried that if I go back, I won't be able to return here. I am here taking care of my parents."

Daisy's story re-stimulated Miranda's interest in China. During her Stanford trip two years earlier, Miranda had been fascinated by the history of the Silk Road, which linked East and West for thousands of years.

She wondered if there was a place in Palo Alto where she could learn Mandarin.

More on Monday.