

A ROADSIDE BANQUET

Logline:

An eleven years old Chinese girl turns into a feather duster at her baby brother's first birthday party, soon after learning her parents only ever wanted a boy.

Synopsis (short):

One day in mid-2010s China after the abolishment of the One Child Policy, 11-year-old Mai attends her baby brother's very first birthday party and learns a crushing truth: her parents never really wanted a girl.

What's worse -- soon after learning the news, Mai starts turning into a feather duster.

Synopsis (long):

During her little brother's first birthday party, 11-year-old Mai's light-hearted world is shaken, when she gradually realizes everyone there only has eyes for her baby brother.

Wanting not to be ignored, Mai follows her mother to the main table, but during their chit-chat, Mai's mother reveals casually that the family always only wanted a boy. Mai is devastated, when a strange sensation takes over her, and turns her into a feather duster.

Later, the family gathers to play the game of 'Grab' — the baby picks an object from a pile and predicts his future occupation. The baby grabs the feather duster. Mai reappears, but only the baby can see her. Mai hugs her brother. Everyone else laughs, takes the duster away, and continues with the game.

Director's Bio:

Peiqi Peng is a Chinese writer/director living in Los Angeles, with a BFA in Film & Post-Colonial Studies from Emerson College and an MFA in Directing from the American Film Institute. A child fantasy writer that later studied Sociology, Peiqi does socially conscious female dramas with fantasy, gore, and absurdist elements. Her narrative shorts have been screened at festivals, including Cleveland International Film Festival, Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival, Chinese American Film Festival, and L.A. Shorts. A semi-finalist in the ScreenCraft Film Fund Competition, Peiqi did script development work for FilmNation, Partizan, and Imagine Entertainment.

Director's Statement:

When I was in elementary school, my parents were seriously considering having another child. I was very against it. One day at a restaurant, trying to convince me, my mom told me the day she birthed me, my father was so disappointed I was a girl, he couldn't talk for an hour. She said it so casually, but I immediately came to tears, and it changed my relationship with my father forever. For a very long time, Chinese families

were banned to test the gender of their unborn baby, because many of them will take an abortion over having a girl as their only child. It felt like I might not be born if they knew I was a girl.

As the One Child policy loosens in the 2010s, many Chinese families chose to have another child, and the majority of those born were boys. An entire generation of Chinese girls had a very young baby brother when they were teenagers or adults. Many of these girls were expected to take care of their baby brothers for the rest of their lives.

A Roadside Banquet is a story about them, and every child who seek the unconditional love that their parents can no longer give. Underneath the joyfulness of the banquet and the magical twist of the duster is a story about being a girl—and sometimes, being overlooked and sidelined. Minimized into a supporting role, into domesticity, into something as unremarkable as a feather duster.

Director's Filmography:

adiós muchahos / 2017 / Czech

Suntanned Orange / 2019 / United States

A Roadside Banquet / 2023 / United States, China

Credits - Crew:

Director: Peiqi Peng

Writer: Peiqi Peng

Producer: Ziqi Gao

Cinematographer: Tianyi Liu

Production Designer: Ye "Yara" Wang & Yijie "EJ" Li

Editor: Christine Ho

Composer: Siyi Chen & Yusi Liu

Credits - Cast:

Mai: Sarah Zhai

Meilin: Eon Song

Lijun: Jizhong Zhang

Di: Anderson Su & Spencer Su

Downloadable Link to mov file of the film:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/z3jbgxzzrru41kq/A%20Roadside%20Banquet.mov?dl=0>



Trailer:

Trailer download:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tkZbx2AoqrgyuclTeudodn79RTiJviK7/view>

(There were no dialogue in the trailer thus no caption version)

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