

THE STAR AND I  
CHAPTER 2: Dreams of Stardom

Oblivious of everything that was happening in the adult world, I took up tennis. Every week-end I would spend my time on the tennis court. At the back of my mind, I was wondering why I was no longer spending my time in Chantilly. In Asia we bow to our parents as a sign of respect and would never interfere in their plans or decisions.



In Asia we bow deeply to our parents without interfering in their plans or decisions

Anyway my attention was mostly focused on playing tennis since I enjoyed that sport so much that I began to fancy myself as the next Michael Chan or Andre Agassi. Well, to be honest, I wanted to be better than both those superstars.



Tennis Court



Andre Agassi



I am the super star

So when I heard that the Nick Bolletieri Tennis Academy was staging a summer coaching camp near Paris, I quickly persuaded my father to enroll me. That was a bad move. All the other wannabe Agassis turned up too, most of them twice my height, for I did not stretch until later.



I did not stretch until...



M. Lesbodes and Christopher at Arc 2009. It seems I have stretched !!!

I started at 6.00am, was allowed an hour's lunch break, and finished at 6.00pm, with a 5km run through the woods. The really keen ones ran 10Km - Me? I struggled to make it beyond 500m. By way of moral encouragement, my father joined me in the camp. He lasted just a week, going off instead to play golf at St Nom la Breteche, collecting me, exhausted, at the end of each day's endurance test. Somehow – I really don't know how – I managed to win the tournament for my age group. Nevertheless, at the end of that ordeal, I told Dad that tennis was too tough for me. Perhaps I could take up his sport?



I was exhausted at the end of each day's endurance test

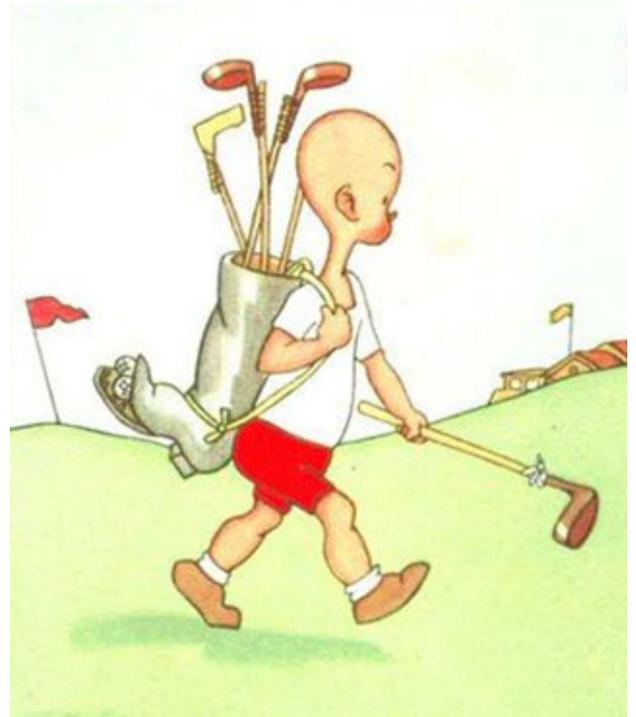


Father joined me in the camp for a week...

Like a man possessed, Dad whisked me off to the pro shop and kitted me out with a super set of juvenile clubs. Now it was my mother's turn to become possessed.



Super set of juvenile clubs



I started my golf venture at age of eleven like my Dad

Bad enough that she was married to a golfing nut, there was no room in her life for two! In fact, it was not two but three. My grandfather MG Tsui, was likewise addicted to the 'Scottish game'. He had inducted Dad when he was only eleven. They played together regularly until my grandfather died in 1992.



Dad plays Golf all over the world with his father, my grand father

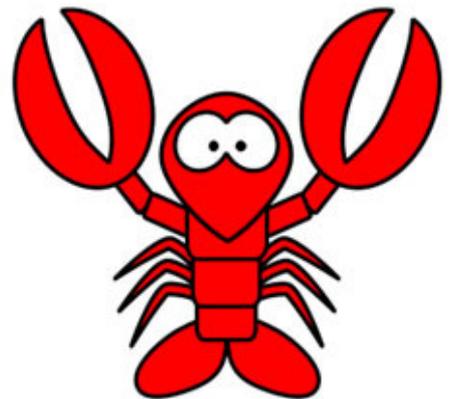


This is the bitter nut for a golfer's wife

We went to Paris when I was four. However, I had already been exposed to my father's golfing obsession at the tender age of two. He took me with him to follow Spanish star Seve Ballesteros – his current hero – playing at the Hong Kong Royal Golf Club, in broiling sunshine. Utterly absorbed in studying his idol, Dad completely forgot to protect me from the sun. My mother was terribly upset when her 'ling' son and heir returned home looking like a lobster.



Hong Kong Golf Club



Mother's heir looking like a baby lobster

A few sessions at the driving range was enough for me to become a golfing nut. Agassi and Chan were forgotten, tennis abandoned, because word began to emerge from America of a youthful prodigy, one who could hit a drive further than Jack Nicklaus, further than any mortal. Woods was this wonder kid's name, something Woods.



Tiger Woods

I now spent my week end in-Saint-Nom-La-Breteche, Dad is the only Chinese member or to be more precise, the only Asian member of this very exclusive French Golf Club where the Trophy Lancome was held.



We spent our week- ends in Saint- Nom- la- Breteche



Christine in front of Saint- Nom- la-Breteche Clubhouse