

Traffic-cheating of the Chinese old people

--a sorrow of the improper treatment towards the elderly without family

The accident happened to Ye

Mingshu Ye stood on the side of the road. His bicycle lied on the road-as well as an old lady. People started to gather around them, chattering with each other.

This route, starting from his school to his home, usually took the 16-year-old half an hour. It's not the most convenient path but the most enjoyable one, with challenging curves on Mount Zijin. But this time, it took him days and the curves became the start of his nightmare.

Ye is an ordinary high school student of Nanjing Xuanwu High School, China. His classmates describe him as somewhat 'socially challenged'. As his class monitor Feiyi Yun said, "Ye seldom takes part in school activities, but no one can deny that he is a hard-working student. Ye's family has trouble in finance, maybe this is one of the reasons why he rejects communicating with other students." And his head teacher thought of him as a 'friendly but extremely introverted' student.

"When he went home on January 13th", Ye recollected, "an old lady suddenly fell over in front of my bicycle" He memorized it happened on the curve of Mount Zijin.

" I couldn't brake and stroke on her. " Ye described and then explained that "I am sure it was the lady who lay down first, there was no one nearby to witness, nor was there any surveillance camera. "People started to gather around and the lady cried for help, insisting that Ye stroke her down. Ye tried to take her to the hospital for further diagnosis, but she refused to move. Ye also said : " The old lady promised to leave immediately only if I pay her 3000 RMB. " However, Ye chose to call the police.

One hour later, the police arrived, as well as his parents. Without any witness, Ye had no advantage in this case. He faced the problem of either pay the 3000 RMB and privately end this event, or, solve it on the court.Mr Sun, the police in charge of this accident told us that:" I know there are a lot of people who do traffic-cheating, but I cannot let Ye go without any proof that he is innocent."

It was difficult for his family to pay the 3000, but it was even harder for them to hire a lawyer. Ye's mother said after she worked a day from the food market: " Ye's father and I earn only about 7000RMB a month, we don't have enough money to own a lawyer." And she also mentioned about Ye: " He is a lovely boy, I can't imagine that he stroke an old lady intentionally"

After the mediation of the police, Ye's family finally compensated the lady with 300 yuan and paid all the money she needed for medical diagnosis-1500 yuan.

The Situation

Ye is not the first nor the most tragic victim of traffic racketeering, the action of cheating money from drivers by deliberately tumbling down in places with no witness. In November 20, 2006, Peng Yu, a citizen in Nanjing, took an old lady who stepped off at the bus station to hospital, but was framed up as the one who swept her off. This case struck all netizens in China and the litigation took 2 years to come with an end. Peng Yu was adjudicated to pay 40,000 yuan. This was the first known case of racketeering of China.

This social phenomenon is becoming one of the most serious moral problems in China. With the rise of people's alertness comes the detachment in various urgent accidents. In October 13th, 2011, a two-year-old girl, Wang Yue, was struck down by a car. 18 people passed by in 7 minutes, but nobody dare to help. When the ambulance finally arrived, it was already too late to save her life.

Countless cases ensued. According to our survey, among the claimed-racketeering cases appeared in China each year, 62% percent of them was led by old people beyond 60 years old.

Similar accidents happening again and again keep questioning people. Why is this? Why are the elderly people, who used to be regarded as the symbol of experience, becoming a group of villains who cheat with the protection of law?

The Interview of Mrs. Liu

After many postponement, we finally made a contact to Mrs. Liu, the lady "struck down" by Mingshu Ye. As promised, her name would not appear on our report.

The first several interviews was proceeded through phone calls. But Liu finally decided to meet us because "the electricity fee was expensive".

Liu rejected to tell anything about her personal life at first, and simply described her intention as "to earn some extra money". We kept asking and promised to pay her more when the interview is over. Liu thus reluctantly agreed to say more.

She led us to her home. It was difficult to call this place "home". Shabby furniture scattered everywhere-most of them was acquired from waste yards. According to Liu, her children left without words after graduation, and her pension was not even enough for monthly electricity and water bill.

Five years ago, her husband died from cancer, and the condition became worse. They

cost every piece of their savings, and the pension became less with the left of her companion. It was at that time when she had the idea of getting money through racketeering.

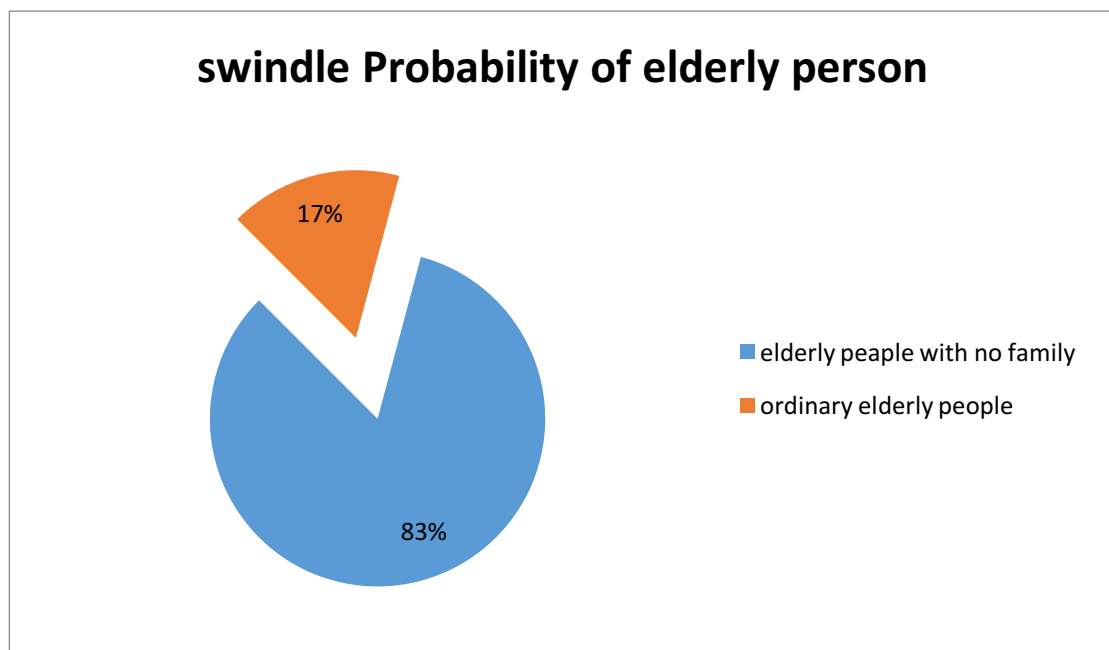
Liu's income is not fixed. "Sometimes I can get a lot if the driver is unwilling to waste much time on me, but sometimes I would not get much if they insisted to check in the hospital." She said about the income from traffic-treating.

There was even once when she cheated a Lamborghini driver who had friends in the police office. She was adjudicated to compensate the repair money.

"I cannot even memorize my children, my normal pension is under 800 yuan." Liu told us about her short of money.

Liu admitted that she is not the only solitary old people who do racketeering in her community. This community, aimed by the government to provide the elderly people with cheaper house rent, became the last shelter of many olds. While we ask Liu's neighbour Mrs Feng, she said" it's very common to do the traffic-treating. " Their children left them here to live by themselves. As a result, many of them had to do a living. Without much working abilities, they chose the easiest way to earn-to cheat.

Sadly, Liu's experience is not the only, and Ye would not be the last vicim.



--In China there are thousands of traffic racketeering happening every year. Above 80% are caused by people of over 60 years old and 83% of these people are with no family.

While the government still cannot give a perfect solution to the finance problem of elderly people with no family ,the possibility of traffic racketeering will still be high.