

**RUPERT CHAN** is a university administrator, award-winning playwright and lyricist, and a well-known versatile translator, writer, radio host, and opera commentator. Many are in his debt for his English sur-titles and sub-titles for Cantonese operas and films. He is Chairman of Directors of the Chung Ying Theatre Company and a Director of the Composers' and Authors' Society of Hong Kong (CASH). He has been an adviser on opera and drama to the Hong Kong Government's Leisure and Cultural Services Department. *Chocolate's Brown Study in the Bag* is Chan's second book in English.

Chan received the Hong Kong Artists' Guild Playwright of the Year Award in 1990. He wrote the lyrics in Mandarin of *Nine Regions Singing As One*, composed by Professor Chan Wing-wah for the 1997 Hong Kong Reunification with China (sung by Warren Mok and Choir), which won the Most Performed Original Local Serious Work Award from the Composers' and Authors' Society of Hong Kong. He received the Home Affairs Bureau Certificate of Commendation for making outstanding achievements in the promotion of arts and culture in 2004.

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The Narrator of **CHOCOLATE'S BROWN STUDY IN THE BAG** is a thirty-three month old chocolate-coloured toy poodle, born in Australia and flown to Hong Kong for sale in a pet-shop. He has become a well-loved addition to a middle-class Hong Kong Chinese family who take him everywhere, sometimes (when the place is forbidden to dogs) hidden in a bag. Paradoxically, when zipped up in the pitch black darkness inside the bag and naturally entering into a brown study, he enters the colourful world of dreams, reviewing in them his past and present life. As Chocolate tells his tale, we learn his human family's habits, history, hobbies, education, professions, relationships, aspirations and thoughts. We meet his doggie friends and learn about the special world that Hong Kong dog-owners inhabit. Unexpectedly, we also partake of the small dog's wisdom and learn the secret of happiness.

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**"Rupert Chan has a light, humorous touch. Delightful. Witty." —Proverse Prize Judges, 2009.**  
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### **"Chocolate Introduces Himself**

I am often zipped up in a bag by my parents and smuggled into all sorts of places I am not supposed to visit. Thus kept in the pitch-black darkness and keeping mum – a veritable brown study – paradoxically I start reminiscing about my bygone days, all thirty-three months of them, in a multi-coloured dreamland like Dorothy venturing from monochrome Kansas into Oz in the movie! My whole life, as people say, flashes across my mind's eyes in flashbacks of mingled reality and fantasy: my joys, my woes, my highs, my lows; my daily routines, my weekly fun times, my favourite flings, my direst dreads! And to crown it all, my family's unremitting love for me, in return for my devotion to them!

I am too small, and too puerile and naïve, to do any serious soul-searching or reflections on the meaning of my existence. But in my brown study in the bag I chronicle my virtual autobiography: at least Part One thereof.

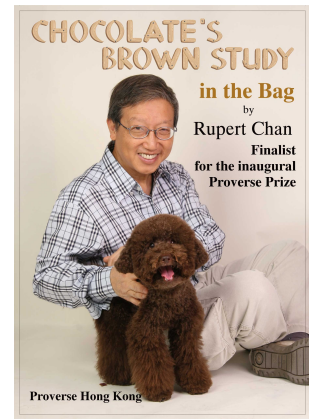
Oh, allow me to introduce myself. I am Chocolate, my parents' last born – *à la* "last born boy clutches heart, last born girl clutches all five vital organs," as the Chinese saying goes, a toy poodle. Woof!"

...  
"All dogs have short memories.  
That is why dogs are always cheerful."

...  
"Puppies have a keen sense of domestic hierarchy, and accord a commensurate and appropriate degree of respect to each household member. Mimi is the undisputed supreme monarch and commander-in-chief in our household. Next comes Aba, his ranking being primarily by virtue of seniority, but also as a compassionate concession that acknowledges his obedience in allowing Mimi to run him. Then there is Lena who stays at home all day to look after my meals and 'convenience walks', and keep me company. Her rank is ascribed by merit."

...  
"Aba remarked, in mid 2007, "I've lived here in this building for eight years. Hardly any neighbours know me. Chocolate's been here eight months. And the whole neighbourhood know and greet him, from street cleaners to expatriate housewives."

~~ From Rupert Chan, "Chocolate's Brown Study in the Bag"



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