

## **China's Gruesome Organ Harvest**

**The whole world isn't watching. Why not?**

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Bangkok. The jeepney driver sizes us up the minute we climb in. My research assistant is a healthy, young Israeli dude, so I must be the one with the money. He addresses his broken English to me: "Girl?"

No. No girls. Take us to the . . .

"Ladyboy? Kickboxer?"

No. No ladyboy, no kickboxer, thanks. I may be a paunchy, sweaty, middle-aged white guy, but I'm here to--well, actually, I am on my way to meet a Chinese woman in a back alley. She is going to tell me intimate stories of humiliation, torture, and abuse. And the truly shameful part is that after 50 or so interviews with refugees from Chinese labor camps, I won't even be listening that closely.

I'm in Bangkok because practitioners of Falun Gong, the Buddhist revival movement outlawed by Beijing, tend to head south when they escape from China. Those without passports make their way through Burma on motorcycles and back roads. Some have been questioned by U.N. case workers, but few have been interviewed by the press, even though, emerging from Chinese labor camps, they are eager, even desperate, to tell their stories. With the back-alley Chinese woman, I intend to direct my questions away from what she'll want to talk about--persecution and spirituality--to something she will barely remember, a seemingly innocuous part of her experience: a needle jab, some poking around the abdomen, an X-ray, a urine sample--medical tests consistent with assessment of prisoners for organ harvesting.

My line of inquiry began in a Montreal community center over a year ago, listening to a heavy-set middle-aged Chinese man named Wang Xiaohua, a soft-spoken ordinary guy except for the purple discoloration that extends down his forehead.

He recalled a scene: About 20 male Falun Gong practitioners were standing before the empty winter fields, flanked by two armed escorts. Instead of leading them out to dig up rocks and spread fertilizer, the police had rounded them up for some sort of excursion. It almost felt like a holiday. Wang had never seen most of the prisoners' faces before. Here in Yunnan Forced Labor Camp No. 2, Falun Gong detainees were carefully kept to a minority in each cell so that the hardened criminals could work them over.

Practitioners of Falun Gong were forbidden to communicate openly. Yet as the guards motioned for them to begin walking, Wang felt the group fall into step like a gentle migrating herd. He looked down at the red earth, streaked with straw and human waste, to the barren mountains on

the horizon. Whatever lay ahead, Wang knew they were not afraid.

After 20 minutes, he saw a large gleaming structure in the distance--maybe it was a hospital, Wang thought. The summer of 2001 had been brutal in South China. After he'd worked for months in the burning sun, Wang's shaved head had become deeply infected. Perhaps it was getting a little better. Or perhaps he had just become used to it; lately he only noticed the warm, rancid stench of his rotting scalp when he woke up.

Wang broke the silence, asking one of the police guards if that was the camp hospital ahead. The guard responded evenly: "You know, we care so much about you. So we are taking you to get a physical. Look how well the party treats you. Normally, this kind of thing never happens in a labor camp."

Inside the facility, the practitioners lined up and, one by one, had a large blood sample drawn. Then a urine sample, electrocardiogram, abdominal X-ray, and eye exam. When Wang pointed to his head, the doctor mumbled something about it being normal and motioned for the next patient. Walking back to camp, the prisoners felt relieved, even a tad cocky, about the whole thing. In spite of all the torture they had endured and the brutal conditions, even the government would be forced to see that practitioners of Falun Gong were healthy.

They never did learn the results of any of those medical tests, Wang says, a little smile suddenly breaking through. He can't help it. He survived.

I spoke with Wang in 2007, just one out of over 100 interviews for a book on the clash between Falun Gong and the Chinese state. Wang's story is not new. Two prominent Canadian human rights attorneys, David Kilgour and David Matas, outlined his case and many others in their "Report into Allegations of Organ Harvesting of Falun Gong Practitioners in China," published and posted on the web in 2006.

By interviewing Wang, I was tipping my hat to the extensive research already done by others. I was not expecting to see Wang's pattern repeated as my interviews progressed, nor did I expect to find that organ harvesting had spread beyond Falun Gong. I was wrong.

Falun Gong became wildly popular in China during the late 1990s. For various reasons--perhaps because the membership of this movement was larger than that of the Chinese Communist party (and intersected with it), or because the legacy of Tiananmen was unresolved, or because 70 million people suddenly seemed to be looking for a way into heaven (other than money)--the party decided to eliminate it. In 1998, the party quietly canceled the business licenses of people who practiced Falun Gong. In 1999 came mass arrests, seizure of assets, and torture. Then, starting in 2000, as the movement responded by becoming more openly activist, demonstrating at Tiananmen and hijacking television signals on the mainland, the death toll started to climb, reaching approximately 3,000 confirmed deaths by torture, execution, and neglect by 2005.

At any given time, 100,000 Falun Gong practitioners were said to be somewhere in the Chinese penal system. Like most numbers coming out of China, these were crude estimates, further rendered unreliable by the chatter of claim and counterclaim. But one point is beyond dispute: The repression of Falun Gong spun out of control. Arrests, sentencing, and whatever took place in the detention centers, psychiatric institutions, and labor camps were not following any established legal procedure or restraint. As an act of passive resistance, or simply to avoid trouble for their families, many Falun Gong began withholding their names from the police, identifying themselves simply as "practitioner" or "Dafa disciple." When asked for their home province, they would say "the universe." For these, the nameless ones, whose families had no way of tracing them or agitating on their behalf, there may be no records at all.

In early 2006, the first charges of large-scale harvesting--surgical removal of organs while the prisoners were still alive, though of course the procedure killed them--of Falun Gong emerged from Northeast China. The charges set off a quiet storm in the human rights community. Yet the charge was not far-fetched.

Harry Wu, a Chinese dissident who established the Laogai Foundation, had already produced reams of evidence that the state, after executing criminals formally sentenced to death, was selling their kidneys, livers, corneas, and other body parts to Chinese and foreigners, anyone who could pay the price. The practice started in the mid-1980s. By the mid-1990s, with the use of anti-tissue-rejection drugs pioneered by China, the business had progressed. Mobile organ-harvesting vans run by the armed services were routinely parked just outside the killing grounds to ensure that the military hospitals got first pick. This wasn't top secret. I spoke with a former Chinese police officer, a simple man from the countryside, who said that, as a favor to a condemned man's friend, he had popped open the back of such a van and unzipped the body bag. The corpse's chest had been picked clean.

Taiwanese doctors who arranged for patients to receive transplants on the mainland claim that there was no oversight of the system, no central Chinese database of organs and medical histories of donors, no red tape to diminish medical profits. So the real question was, at \$62,000 for a fresh kidney, why would Chinese hospitals waste any body they could get their hands on?

Yet what initially drew most fire from skeptics was the claim that organs were being harvested from people before they died. For all the Falun Gong theatrics, this claim was not so outlandish either. Any medical expert knows that a recipient is far less likely to reject a live organ; and any transplant dealer will confirm that buyers will pay more for one. Until recently, high volume Chinese transplant centers openly advertised the use of live donors on their websites.

It helps that brain death is not legally recognized in China; only when the heart stops beating is the patient actually considered dead. That means doctors can shoot a prisoner in the head, as it were, surgically, then remove the organs before the heart stops beating. Or they can administer anesthesia, remove the organs, and when the operation is nearing completion introduce a heart-stopping drug--the latest method. Either way, the prisoner has been executed, and harvesting is just fun along the way. In fact, according to doctors I have spoken to recently, all well versed in current mainland practices, live-organ harvesting of death-row prisoners in the course of execution is routine.

The real problem was that the charges came from Falun Gong--always the unplanned child of the dissident community. Unlike the Tiananmen student leaders and other Chinese prisoners of conscience who had settled into Western exile, Falun Gong marched to a distinctly Chinese drum. With its roots in a spiritual tradition from the Chinese heartland, Falun Gong would never have built a version of the Statue of Liberty and paraded it around for CNN. Indeed, to Western observers, Falun Gong public relations carried some of the uncouthness of Communist party culture: a perception that practitioners tended to exaggerate, to create torture tableaux straight out of a Cultural Revolution opera, to spout slogans rather than facts.

For various reasons, some valid, some shameful, the credibility of persecuted refugees has often been doubted in the West. In 1939, a British Foreign Office official, politely speaking for the majority, described the Jews as not, perhaps, entirely reliable witnesses. During the Great Leap Forward, emaciated refugees from the mainland poured into Hong Kong, yammering about deserted villages and cannibalism. Sober Western journalists ignored these accounts as subjective and biased.

The yammering of a spiritual revivalist apparently counts for even less than the testimony of a

peasant or a Jew. Thus, when Falun Gong unveiled a doctor's wife who claimed that her husband, a surgeon, had removed thousands of corneas from practitioners in a Northeastern Chinese hospital named Sujiatun, the charge met with guarded skepticism from the dissident community and almost complete silence from the Western press (with the exception of this magazine and National Review).

As Falun Gong committees kicked into full investigative mode, the Canadian lawyers Kilgour and Matas compiled the accumulating evidence in their report. It included transcripts of recorded phone calls in which Chinese doctors confirmed that their organ donors were young, healthy, and practiced Falun Gong; written testimony from the mainland of practitioners' experiences in detention; an explosion in organ transplant activity coinciding with a rise in the Falun Gong incarceration rate, with international customers waiting as little as a week for a tissue match (in most countries, patients waited over a year). Finally, Kilgour and Matas compared the execution rate in China (essentially constant, according to Amnesty International) and the number of transplants. It left a discrepancy of 41,500 unexplained cases over a five-year span.

This report has never been refuted point by point, yet the vast majority of human rights activists have kept their distance. Since Falun Gong's claims were suspect, their allies' assertions were suspect. Transplant doctors who claimed to have Falun Gong organ donors in the basement? They were just saying what potential organ recipients wanted to hear. Written testimony from practitioners? They'd been prepped by activists. The rise in organ transplant activity? Maybe just better reporting. The discrepancy between executions and transplants? As a respected human rights scholar asked me, why did Kilgour and Matas use Amnesty International's estimate of the number of executions in China to suggest the execution rate had stayed constant for 10 years? Even Amnesty acknowledges their numbers might represent a gross understatement. There might be no discrepancy at all.

Finally, why had no real witness, a doctor or nurse who had actually operated on Falun Gong practitioners, come forward? Without such proof (although such an individual's credibility can always be savaged, even with supporting documents), human rights advocates argued there was no reason to take the story seriously. There certainly were not sufficient grounds for President Bush to mention organ harvesting in his human rights speech on the eve of the Beijing Olympics.

The critics had hinted at legitimate points of discussion. But so had the Chinese government: Fresh off the confession in 2005 that organs were being harvested from ordinary death-row prisoners, and after issuing their predictable denials of harvesting organs from Falun Gong, Beijing suddenly passed a law in July 2006 forbidding the sale of organs without the consent of the donor.

Three things happened. The organ supply tightened. Prices doubled. And transplants continued. So unless there has been a dramatic cultural shift since 2004, when a Chinese report found that only 1.5 percent of transplanted kidneys were donated by relatives, the organs being sold must still come from somewhere. Let's assume it's prisoners--that's what Taiwanese doctors think--and theorize that the new law was a signal: Get your consent forms and stop harvesting from Falun Gong. For now.

And the critics had one thing exactly right: Precision is an illusion. No taped conversation with a mainland doctor is unimpeachable. All witnesses from China have mixed motives, always. And, again, no numbers from China, even the one in the last paragraph, can be considered definitive.

Indeed, the entire investigation must be understood to be still at an early, even primitive, stage. We do not really know the scale of what is happening yet. Think of 1820, when a handful of doctors, scientists, and amateur fossil hunters were trying to make sense of scattered suggestive

evidence and a disjointed pile of bones. Twenty-two years would pass before an English paleontologist so much as coined the term "dinosaur"--"terrible lizard"--and the modern study of these extinct creatures got seriously under way. Those of us researching the harvesting of organs from involuntary donors in China are like the early dinosaur hunters. We don't work in close consultation with each other. We are still waiting for even one doctor who has harvested organs from living prisoners of conscience to emerge from the mainland. Until that happens, it is true, we don't even have dinosaur bones. But we do have tracks. Here are some that I've found.

Qu Yangyao, an articulate Chinese professional, holds three master's degrees. She is also the earliest refugee to describe an "organs only" medical examination. Qu escaped to Sydney last year. While a prisoner in China in June 2000, she refused to "transform"--to sign a statement rejecting Falun Gong--and was eventually transferred to a labor camp. Qu's health was fairly good, though she had lost some weight from hunger strikes. Given Qu's status and education, there were reasons to keep her healthy. The Chinese police wanted to avoid deaths in custody--less paperwork, fewer questions. At least, so Qu assumed.

Qu was 35 years old when the police escorted her and two other practitioners into a hospital. Qu distinctly remembers the drawing of a large volume of blood, then a chest X-ray, and probing. "I wasn't sure what it was about. They just touch you in different places . . . abdomen, liver." She doesn't remember giving a urine sample at that time, but the doctor did shine a light in her eyes, examining her corneas.

Did the doctor then ask her to trace the movement of his light with her eyes, or check her peripheral vision? No. He just checked her corneas, skipping any test involving brain function. And that was it: no hammer on the knee, no feeling for lymph nodes, no examination of ears or mouth or genitals--the doctor checked her retail organs and nothing else.

I may have felt a silent chill run up my spine at points in our interview, but Qu, like many educated subjects, seemed initially unaware of the potential implications of what she was telling me. Many prisoners preserve a kind of "it can't happen here" sensibility. "I'm too important to be wiped out" is the survivor's mantra. In the majority of the interviews presented here, my subjects, though aware of the organ harvesting issue, had no clear idea of my line of questioning or the "right" answers.

Falun Gong practitioners are forbidden to lie. That doesn't mean they never do. In the course of my interviews I've heard a few distortions. Not because people have been "prepped," but because they've suffered trauma. Deliberate distortions, though, are exceedingly rare. The best way to guard against false testimony is to rely on extended sit-down interviews.

In all, I interviewed 15 Falun Gong refugees from labor camps or extended detention who had experienced something inexplicable in a medical setting. My research assistant, Leeshai Lemish, interviewed Dai Ying in Norway, bringing our total to 16. If that number seems low, consider the difficulty of survival and escape. Even so, just over half of the subjects can be ruled out as serious candidates for organ harvesting: too old, too physically damaged from hard labor, or too emaciated from hunger strikes. Some were simply too shaky in their recall of specific procedures to be much help to us. Some were the subjects of drug tests. Some received seemingly normal, comprehensive physicals, though even such people sometimes offered valuable clues.

For example, Lin Jie, a woman in her early 60s living in Sydney, reported that in May 2001, while she was incarcerated in the Chongqing Yong Chaun Women's Jail, over 100 Falun Gong women were examined "all over the body, very detailed. And they asked about our medical history." Fine. Yet Lin found herself wondering why "one police per practitioner" escorted the women through the physical, as if they were dangerous criminals. Practitioners of Falun Gong are

many things--intense, moralistic, single-minded--but they are strictly nonviolent. Clearly someone in the Chinese security system was nervous.

Or take Jing Tian, a female refugee in her 40s, now in Bangkok. In March 2002, the Shenyang Detention Center gave a comprehensive physical to all the practitioners. Jing watched the procedure carefully and saw nothing unusual. Then, in September, the authorities started expensive blood tests (these would cost about \$300 per subject in the West). Jing observed that they were drawing enough blood to fill up eight test tubes per practitioner, enough for advanced diagnostics or tissue matching. Jia Xiarong, a middle-aged female prisoner who came from a family of well-connected officials, told Jing outright: "They are doing this because some aging official needs an organ."

But Jing sensed something else in the air that fall, something more substantial: Prisoners were arriving in the middle of the night and disappearing before dawn. There were transports to "hospital civil defense structures" with names like Sujiatun and Yida, and practitioners with no names, only numbers.

It was not a good time to be an angry young practitioner, according to a refugee in her 30s recently arrived in Hong Kong. She has family in China, so let's call her Jiansheng Chen. Back in 2002, Chen noticed another pattern. When the blood tests started, she said, "before signing a statement [renouncing Falun Gong] the practitioners were all given physicals. After they signed, they wouldn't get a physical again."

Chen was a "nontransformable"--with an edge. Not only did she refuse to renounce Falun Gong, but she shouted down anyone who did. Chen was getting medication three times a day (possibly sedatives), so drug-testing can't be ruled out. Yet as her resistance dragged on, the police said: "If you don't transform, we'll send you away. The path you have chosen is the path of death." For eight days efforts were made to persuade Chen to renounce Falun Gong or gain her submission by torture. Suddenly the guards ordered her to write a suicide note. Chen mocked them: "I'm not dead. So why should I sign a death certificate?"

The director brought in a group of military police doctors wearing white uniforms, male and female. The labor camp police were "very frightened" at this point, according to Chen. They kept repeating: "If you still won't transform, what waits for you is a path to death."

Chen was blindfolded. Then she heard a familiar policewoman's voice asking the doctors to leave for a minute. When they were alone, the policewoman began pleading with her: "Chen, your life is going to be taken away. I'm not kidding you. We've been here together all this time, we've made at least some sort of connection by now. I can't bear to see this--a living person in front of my eyes about to be wiped out."

Chen stayed silent. She didn't trust the policewoman--why should she? In the last eight days, she had been hung from the ceiling. She had been burned with electric batons. She had drunk her own urine. So, the latest nice-nice trick was unconvincing. Then Chen noticed something dripping on her hand--the policewoman's tears. Chen allowed that she would think about transforming. "That's all I need," the policewoman said. After a protracted argument with the doctors, the police left.

Practitioners like to talk about altering the behavior of police and security personnel through the power of their own belief. It's a favorite trope. Just as a prisoner of war is duty bound to attempt escape, a Falun Gong practitioner is required by his moral code to try to save sentient beings. In this spiritual calculus, the policeman who uses torture destroys himself, not the practitioner. If the practitioner can alter the policeman's behavior, by moral example or supernatural means, there's

some natural pride, even if the practitioner still gets tortured.

But practitioners vary. Chen did not tell her story with composure. She screamed it out cathartically, in a single note of abrasive, consuming fury. It's also relevant that Chen is not just stubborn, impossible, and a little mad, but young, attractive, and charismatic. She gave her account of the policewoman without braggadocio, only abject, shrieking shame at having finally signed a transformation statement. The policewoman had met a fellow warrior--her tears are plausible.

Dai Ying is a 50-year-old female refugee living in Sweden. As 2003 began, 180 Falun Gong were tested in Sanshui labor camp. The usual our-party-especially-cares-for-you speech was followed by X-rays, the drawing of massive blood samples, cardiograms, urine tests, and then probes: "They had us lie on [our] stomachs and examined our kidneys. They tapped on them and ask[ed] us if that hurt."

And that was it--organs only, hold the corneas--a fact that Dai, almost blind from torture at the time, remembers vividly. Corneas are relatively small-ticket items, worth perhaps \$30,000 each. By 2003, Chinese doctors had mastered the liver transplant, worth about \$115,000 from a foreign customer.

To meet the demand, a new source of supply was needed. Fang Siyi is a 40-year-old female refugee in Bangkok. Incarcerated from 2002 to 2005, Fang was examined repeatedly and then, in 2003, picked out for special testing in the Jilin detention center in Northeast China.

Fang had never seen the doctors before: "Upon arriving here, they changed into labor camp uniforms. But what struck me is that they seemed to be military doctors." Twelve prisoners had been selected. Fang estimates that eight were Falun Gong. How did she know? "For Falun Gong, they called them, Little Faluns." Who were the other four? "[The staff] would say, Here comes another one of those Eastern Lightning."

Eastern Lightning are Christians--fringy, out-there Chinese Christians to us, incurable, nontransformable deviants to the party. Jing, too, remembers Eastern Lightning being given blood tests in 2002, but Fang remembers the Jilin exam as far more focused: "The additional examinations would just be blood tests, electro-cardiograms, and X-rays, nothing else. It was Falun Gong practitioners and Christians."

Compassion fatigue seeping in? I'll keep this short.

"Masanjia Confidential" has family in China, so prudence dictates mentioning only that she's about 40 and is in Bangkok. Her experience takes us into what I call the "Late Harvest Era" of 2005, when many practitioners seem to have been whisked off to wham-bam organ exams and then promptly disappeared. When I asked her if anyone in Masanjia Labor Camp actually received medical treatment, she responded without missing a beat: "If people came in on a stretcher, they were given cursory treatment. In good health, a comprehensive exam. . . . They needed healthy people, young people. If you were an auntie in your 60s or 70s they wouldn't pay attention to you."

Were there military personnel present at the physicals? "They didn't need them. Masanjia is very close to Sujiatun [hospital]--a pretty quick drive. If they needed someone they could just tie them up and send them over. . . . Usually they were taken at night."

In 2007, Yu Xinhui, free after five years in Guangdong prison, signed himself, his wife, and their infant son up for a foreign trip with a Chinese tour group. Upon arriving in Bangkok, they fled to

the YMCA and applied for U.N. refugee status. Yu is in his 30s, the picture of robust health. While in prison, he was tested repeatedly, finally graduating to an "organs-only" exam under military supervision in 2005.

Yu makes a good show of indulging my questions, but to him it was never a big mystery: "There was common knowledge of organ harvesting in the prison. . . . Even before you die, your organs are already reserved." Criminal prisoners would taunt the practitioners: "If you don't do what we say we'll torture you to death and sell your organs." That sounds like a stupid game, but everyone knew there was a real list: Prisoners and practitioners alike would be taken away on an annual schedule. Yu knew which month the buses would arrive and where they would park in the courtyard. He gave me a tour of the exact spot on Google Earth.

When Falun Gong's claims about organ harvesting surfaced in March 2006, Yu still languished in prison, incommunicado. So it's all the more interesting that he vividly remembers a large, panicky deportation of prisoners (perhaps 400 people, including practitioners) in May 2006. "It was terrifying," Yu says. "Even I was terrified." The timing is consistent: With all the bad publicity, mainland doctors were hinting at a close-of-business sale on organs at exactly this time.

By 2007, the consensus was that the Chinese government had shut down Falun Gong harvesting to avoid any embarrassing new disclosures before the Olympics. So my final case must be viewed as borderline, a comprehensive medical exam followed by . . . well, judge for yourself.

Liu Guifu is a 48-year-old woman recently arrived in Bangkok. She got a soup-to-nuts physical--really a series of them--in Beijing Women's Labor Camp in 2007. She was also diagnosed as schizophrenic and possibly given drugs.

But she remembers her exams pretty well. She was given three urine tests in a single month. She was told to drink fluids and refrain from urinating until she got to the hospital. Was this testing for diabetes or drugs? It can't be ruled out. But neither can kidney-function assessment. And three major blood samples were drawn in the same month, at a cost of about \$1,000. Was the labor camp concerned about Liu's health? Or the health of a particular organ? Perhaps an organ that was being tissue-matched with a high-ranking cadre or a rich foreign customer?

The critical fact is that Liu was both a member of a nontransformed Falun Gong brigade with a history of being used for organs and was considered mentally ill. She was useless, the closest approximation we have to a nameless practitioner, one of the ones who never gave their names or provinces to the authorities and so lost their meager social protections.

There were certainly hundreds, perhaps thousands, of practitioners identified by numbers only. I've heard that number two hundred and something was a talented young female artist with nice skin, but I don't really know. None of them made it out of China alive.

None of them likely will. Tibetan sources estimate that 5,000 protesters disappeared in this year's crackdown. Many have been sent to Qinghai, a potential center of organ harvesting. But that's speculative. Both the Taiwanese doctors who investigate organ harvesting and those who arrange transplants for their Taiwanese patients agree on one point: The closing ceremony of the Olympics made it once again open season for harvesting.

Some in the human rights community will read that last assertion with skepticism. Until there is countervailing evidence, however, I'll bet on bargain-basement prices for organs in China. I confess, I feel a touch of burnout myself at this thought. It's an occupational hazard.

It's why I told that one-night-in-Bangkok joke to get you to read beyond the first paragraph. Yet



what's really laughable is the foot-dragging, formalistic, faintly embarrassed response of so many to the murder of prisoners of conscience for the purpose of harvesting their organs. That's an evil crime.

Washington faces its own imperatives: The riptide of Chinese financial power is strong. Those in government do not want to hear about Falun Gong and genocide at a time of financial crisis, with China holding large numbers of U.S. bonds. So the story continues to founder under the lead weight of American political and journalistic apathy. At least the Europeans have given it some air. They can afford to. They aren't the leader of the free world.

It will be argued--quietly, of course--that America has no point of easy leverage, no ability to undo what has been done, no silver bullet that can change the Chinese regime. Perhaps not, but we could ban Americans from getting organ transplants in China. We could boycott Chinese medical conferences. Sever medical ties. Embargo surgical equipment. And refuse to hold any diplomatic summits until the Chinese put in place an explicit, comprehensive database of every organ donor in China.

We may have to live with the Chinese Communist party, for now. For that matter, we can console ourselves that there are no bones, for now. There will be none until the party falls and the Chinese people begin to sift through the graves and ashes.

We are all allowed a touch of compassion fatigue--it's understandable. But make no mistake: There are terrible lizards. And now that the Olympic Games are over, and the cameras have turned away, they roam the earth again.

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