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**EXCERPT FROM A IS FOR A-KÉ, THE CHINESE MONSTER
AND THE TRAGEDY OF P, HIS PARASITIC TWIN**

*Based on the true medical case of a young Cantonese man with a parasitic twin in 19th
Century China in the lead-up to the First Opium War with Britain*

R IS FOR REVOLTED

The Cantonese revolted. In a fever
of provincial rage fueled by opium
they vowed to endeavor every means to sever

ties with Britain, ban them forever
from trade with the Chinese emporiums.
They revolted, and in their fervor

dumped chests of resin in the Pearl River,
torched the sweet-smelling effluvium,
and vowed to endeavor every means to sever

foreign passage on Shameen Bridge, to take over
the port. The British watched the pandemonium.
They were revolted. It seemed a fever

burnt through Canton. They calculated covered
losses, their cost, and in their opprobrium
vowed to endeavor every means to sever

with all locals till their profits were recovered.
Amid the tumult, the twins sat sullen in their slum.
They revolted each other. A-ké, in opium's fever
dream, vowed he'd find means to forever sever.

S IS FOR SOCIETY FOR MISSIONARY MEDICINE

Canton, 1838

Dear Sirs:

I have indicated in my missives, the Chinese remain deficient in medicine & surgery. Amusing & ridiculous compounds of astrological dogmas & dissertations take the place of principles of physiology now received in the West.

Yet, with regards to the current unrest, such restrictions on commerce do not awaken amongst them that love of science & spirit of inquisitiveness.

The case of A-ké vexes—you have all I conceive can be known of this curious being, previous to his death—&, indeed, all that will ever be known if it should die in this country where the vulgar, to whom this poor boy has been presented, take him as a mere show.

Could it be carried to Europe by the cupidity of a speculator, the more refined might be afforded a view, which would amply repay the venture.

—Highly desirous as it would in the event of the lad's death permit the application of the demonstrative knife of the anatomist, & reveal the interior secrets of his anomalous formation.

The uncle, I believe, is reasonable & may perhaps be prevailed upon to see the profit.

I submit to you as one most qualified to extract from these facts all that is truly valuable—

Your pupil—

