



# JACLR

*Journal of Artistic  
Creation & Literary  
Research*

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“茶 Chá”

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#### **Recommended Citation**

Suárez Murias, Samuel. “茶 Chá.” *JACLR: Journal of Artistic Creation and Literary Research* 5.1 (2017)

<<https://www.ucm.es/siim/journal-of-artistic-creation-and-literary-research>>

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Samuel **SUÁREZ MURIAS**

**茶 Chá**

His fingers touched her smoothly, enjoying the feeling of her peachy skin, pink as it was. He knew every soft spot in her. In fact, he could draw a map of her as a blind man would know every feature of his beloved's face. While her fingers were dancing between her limbs, he discovered a tiny lump which should not be there so he reached for the scissors which were next to him. Carefully, without remorse, he measured the cut and removed the lump from her gorgeous body. No noise was heard after the lump fell to the ground. In that precise instant, he knew that from now on, the small twig that was almost covered by the tiny lump would grow without hindrances. That twig would only embellish and enhance the presence of his dearly beloved azalea.

As he finished cleansing her, he rose smoothly and putting his hands on his knees, stood up with a bit of effort due to his crackling bones. He tidied the rest of the room putting back to his proper place every single utensil he had used to take care of the flowers. Once done and just about to leave, he stood by the door as if checking that everything was fine but this was just an excuse to have a final chance to look at the precious flowers and plants that received all his attentions and love but even more, it was the last chance to look at, from a distance, the azalea. He could distinguish her scent amidst the others. It brought so many memories to his mind...

He had started his way back home when he felt a thirst that could not be quenched. As he got closer to his home, he was becoming restless and nervous so he suddenly changed his mind and varied his route towards a different destination.

In front of him stood a grove impregnated with the wet aroma of dew on vegetation and that was the feeling that told him that he had arrived: that was the entrance to a place that as he thought, it allowed him to depart from the dustiness of this world. It had taken him some time to get there but the exhaustion of his body was nothing compared to the restlessness that had aroused in him just after leaving his flowers, his dearly loved azalea. You know, memories can disturb us as anything in this world.

He went through the grove paying attention to the sound of pebbles moving as he passed by reminding him of a mountain path. He looked at the growing moss that, as he got deeper into the wood, it was everywhere reminding him how much time had passed since the last time he had been there. He reached the small gate that welcomed visitors to his father's hut, the place where he used to drink tea. The gate was discreet and now even more as moss had claimed it for itself. The monkey that was engraved on it had almost disappeared under the moss but one thing had not changed: the gate had always been ajar, as his father thought that anyone was welcome in there.

He did not want to disturb those signs of nature claiming for herself what she pleased, so he squeezed himself through the monkey gate, as he used to call it. It appeared in front of him a pathless path made of stepping stones which showed no clear destination. He took his steps quietly, enjoying them and rejoicing in their moist look. On the way towards the hut, he got to a path that had on it a small stone above it. It showed that that way should not be taken, the rock been put there by his father. He went on walking following the other way. The hut was not in very good condition: it had happened the same to it as to the monkey gate, it was silently blending with nature and from afar, it even could be mistaken with a small hill. Despite that, it stood the passing of time. He came in and saw the empty vase welcoming him and went on towards the lonely hearth. He gathered all the necessary tools to light a fire, washed himself and took fresh water from the basin next to the hut. Once everything was ready, he poured water into the kettle.

Everything was quiet and the only sounds came from the outside: the chirping of skylarks as they passed above the hut, the croaking of frogs from the pond. These were only disturbed by the boiling water. As tiny bubbles made their modest appearance, he focused on them without realising and his mind started to wander as the bubbles were doing inside the kettle. His mind went astray and he started thinking about early in the morning when a friend of his, trying to cheer him up, gave him a nice present: a box full of tea leaves. His friend was sad because she knew how hard was for him writing a new story and the deadline was dangerously approaching and his editor was not a nice man to deal with. Despite that, she did not know that the tea leaves were even a far greater present than she could have imagined. Those tea leaves were his favourites and besides that, his father's favourites, too. He amused himself with the look of the tea. It really deserved the name of pearl tea, as the leaves really looked like small pearls that gleefully opened when put in hot water showing their radiance.

The water started to boil vivaciously and that brought him to his senses, reminding him of his duties. He finished readying the tea and made himself comfortable in order to enjoy it. The tiny hut had a pane that could be slid and opened to one of the sides of the garden surrounding it. Before him, it appeared a gorgeous sight: a noiseless light drizzle was watering the earth, the trees stood high enjoying the freshness and it seemed they were coming forth as if to enjoy the delightful scent of his pearled tea. He was sitting pleased with this peaceful sight as if his legs did not hurt anymore.

He grabbed the warm tea cup, amazed by the clever design of this piece of pottery: the bottom was made as to make it easier to held single-handedly. He loved to sip his tea as hot as possible, between moans due to the temperature. In fact, the feeling of the hot beverage running through his body made him feel alive. While beholding the out-worldly sight that was the garden, he realized about a rock that reminded him of the tiny rock that was in the middle of the path. The rock being laid there by his father some time ago was a token to

remind him of what he should avoid and not do, about the paths that he should not take. Thus, he ended being a writer. Now, he thought that his father's duties were exhausting, tiresome and painfully hard but now he was in a similar situation. He knew that he could not do anything about it so he kept beholding the sight, immersing in it.

Finding himself relaxed, something caught his attention: a red-bright dragonfly was flying quickly amidst the drizzle as if to find somewhere to avoid the falling water but in the blink of an eye, it started looping into the air and making daring cabrioles as if playing with the rain drops. While delighting himself with the dance of the bright-red dragonfly and as his body had got restored by the quietness of the place, his mind came at ease, came into nothingness.

The tea's warmth enlivened him or maybe it was the bright-red dragonfly's show but a thought came to his mind: he had heard that this centuries-old beverage was now a sensation among westerners. His mind began to wander around this idea while he kept watching the swiftness of movement of the shiny dragonfly.

Suddenly, the dragonfly flew and landed in a blade of grass that was under cover. It was resting above a drop of dew that crowned the light-green blade. It seemed to him that the bright-red dragonfly had become tired of playing with the rain drops and was now becoming drowsy as if preparing for some sleep.

By beholding the dragonfly, he also started to feel drowsy as if it had passed into him the whole of its exhaustion. He started nodding off and a question came to his mind: How would westerners delight themselves in the pleasures of tea? That was it, he would write a story about them enjoying tea and with this thought in mind, he fell asleep along with the bright-red dragonfly.

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*The dragonfly's dream*

*Setting*

*On the blade.<sup>1</sup>*

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That day was one of those days, a day on which you should not get out of bed but one's duties were something to be utterly respected. At least, he always woke up with a nice sight just in front of him. He loved flowers and the first thing that greeted him the day was his lovely purple-flowered azalea. She always had the way to cheer him up.

He went through the day with a restless mind as that day was the anniversary of him departing home after his father's death. Leaving home had not been easy and it was becoming harder and harder living on his own. Despite all the issues, he loved to confront difficulties but sometimes that was difficult.

Once he got home, he knew that the day was almost over: he had just to take his dog for a walk who was waiting for him anxiously. He patted him on the head and started readying the things to go to the park: today he would take it easy or at least he would try. He was about to get out of home when he found by his door a tiny parcel that caught his attention, he grabbed it and just for a moment remained still thinking about what it could be. It had been a while since he had received something that were not bills or the like. There was no return address on it which made him even more curious. He opened the parcel smoothly, with care, as if afraid of what he could find inside.

As soon as it was opened, a subtle scent came to his nose: the smell of remembrance. There was on it a tiny bag and a small letter with a hand-writing that he knew perfectly: it was her sister's hand-writing which was utterly unmistakable and absolutely undecipherable for the rest. The message was short:

*"Cheer up! Love you"*

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<sup>1</sup>夏目漱石 Natsume Sōseki (1867-1916)

With trembling hands and anxiety due to him knowing the content of the tiny bag, he proceeded with the opening. It was full of his father's favourite tea, the one that had become his favourite too. Its green leaves resembled to tiny pearls and with a funny smile on his face, he closed the door leaving the threshold. He decided to prepare some tea and take it with him. He would drink it while his dog would be minding his own business.

He got to the park and his dog, as if smiling, started running towards their usual place: a nice bench under a lovely tree. He saw the tree from afar, it was a wonderful mimosa that since his childhood had put a spell on him. She was surrounded by a meadow covered with wildflowers. Curiously enough, he always had the feeling of smelling her scent even when she was not in bloom but maybe it was the song of the cuckoo what lured him to her. They were in the dog days which were not the proper season to her, she was a stranger in a strange land, a foreign beauty and her time to bloom was not the same as ours.

He sat under the cover of her branches, resting his back on her strong and soft body. Her scent, as he felt it, appeased him. While watching his dog, a smile crossed his face and he started drinking the tea. He thought about the leaves unfurling to fully disclose the whole potential of its flavour and wondered about its name for the first time ever. It was called pearled tea or gunpowder and it truly looked like gunpowder pellets. Unlike the pellets, this was not made for killing but for healing.

With this thought in mind, the remembrance of his father was inevitable. He had been a sailor and he had wandered around the world and from those trips he always brought amazing things full of stories and this tea was one of them. Few memories of his father remained and they came back and forth as the sea waves do and now an old advice by his father made its appearance:

*"Life is an endless river. No matter the problems, weather them as there is no storm which would not cease."*

With that saying in mind, the scent of mimosa surrounding him and the flavour of the pearled tea in his body, he felt relieved. He just sat there into nothingness.

He was beholding his dog running aimlessly when he realised that in fact, the dog was playing with a bright-red dragonfly, both of them performing daring pirouettes while enjoying themselves. Nature usually made strange companions.

The dog had become exhausted as if the play had drained him of energy and he came to take refuge from the scorching sun just under the legs of his human friend. The bright-red dragonfly, as if angered by the decision of his playmate of not going on with the game anymore, settled on a blade of grass.

It was a nice sight, a bright-red dragonfly surrounded by the green blades of grass and the flowering lilies. This scene restored his soul and he wondered if the dragon-fly would be resting as his dog was doing. This thought provoked some drowsiness in him along the warmth of the beverage. He also started nodding off as his animal friends seemed to do. While in this dreamy state, a blurry thought came to his mind. Maybe, it was a good idea, an idea that would please his boss, a story about how easterners would have delighted themselves in the joys of tea. And, with this in mind, he fell asleep...

**Bioprofile of the author:**

Samuel Suárez Murias es licenciado en Filología Inglesa por la Universidad de Oviedo y cursa estudios de Doctorado en la misma universidad.

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Samuel se interesa también por los Idiomas y la Adquisición del Lenguaje, los estudios Postcoloniales, Filosofía y Religión y el Yoga

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