

Online Writers Craft Unique Narratives

By Guan Ruotong

With the flourishing development of web fiction in China, a group of outstanding writers has emerged. They focus on contemporary realities and chronicle the spirit of the times, creating new narrative styles with unique storytelling and ideas. These authors have contributed numerous classics to the world of web literature, many of which have been adapted into popular film and television IPs, achieving phenomenal viewership and generating lasting value.

Mao Ni



Born in 1977 in Yichang, Hubei Province, Mao Ni's real name is Xiao Feng. He began his web fiction career by writing *Ten Years in Yingxiu* (《映秀十年事》) in 2003 on the PaPa Book Database. In 2005, his work *Zhuque Ji* (《朱雀记》) was serialized on Qidian Chinese Network and then he became a professional web fiction writer. With the pen name "Mao Ni", he went on to write acclaimed works such as *Joy of Life* (《庆余年》), *The Outcast* (《间客》), and *Ever Night* (《将夜》). In 2014, he signed with Tencent Literature's Chuangshi Chinese Network.

Mao Ni is known for his delicate depictions of characters and settings, often weaving historical, cultural, and philosophical elements into his stories. His works go beyond mere storytelling, delving into profound themes such as humanity, fate and choice. *Joy of Life* and *Fighter of the Destiny* (《择天记》) have become immensely popular IPs, achieving widespread acclaim both as literary works and through their TV adaptations.

In 2007, Mao Ni won the First Prize for Fantasy and Martial Arts at the 4th Sina Original Literature Competition for *Zhuque Ji*. In 2011, *The Outcast* earned him the Silver Award for the Most Popular Sci-Fi Novel at the 2nd Global Chinese Science Fiction Nebula Awards. In 2015, *Ever Night* won both the Tencent Academy Literature Award for Author of the Year and the Gold Award at the First Web Fiction Biennial Award. *Fighter of the Destiny* received the Tianma Literary Award in August 2020, while *Joy of Life* was shortlisted for the 2019 Chinese Web Fiction Rankings.

Feng Huo Xi Zhu Hou



Feng Huo Xi Zhu Hou was born in 1985 in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, whose real name is Chen Zhenghua. He graduated from Zhejiang Gongshang University and is a member of the China Writers Association. He currently serves as Vice Chairman of the Zhejiang Provincial Web Writers Association, Vice Chairman of the Hangzhou Web Writers Association, and a member of the 12th National Youth Federation. He began writing web fiction in college, initially publishing on the HuanJianShuMeng platform. In 2005, he joined Qidian as a contracted author and later moved to Zongheng Chinese Network.

Feng Huo Xi Zhu Hou rose to prominence with *The Unrivalled Gentleman* (《极品公子》). Though his output is limited due to slow updates and frequent project switches, his works span diverse styles and genres, with a focus on urban life and martial arts. His notable works include *The Unrivalled Gentleman*, *Chen Er Gou's Extraordinary Life* (《陈二狗的妖孽人生》),

Swordsman (《剑来》), and *The Snow Wielding Knife Line* (《雪中悍刀行》).

The Snow Wielding Knife Line received the Silver Award at the First Web Fiction Biennial Awards in 2015 and was included in the Chinese Writers Association's 2016 Chinese Web Fiction Rankings. *Swordsman* also made the 2017 list during the inaugural Chinese Web Fiction Week. In 2013, Feng Huo Xi Zhu Hou ranked 16th on the 8th Chinese Writers Rich List for Web Writers, earning royalties of ¥3 million.

Fei Wo Si Cun



Fei Wo Si Cun's real name is Ai Jingjing, who also used pen-names of Si Cun, Fei Xiao Cun and Li Xian San Qian Li. She was born in 1978, in Zhongxiang, Hubei Province. In 2004, her modern romance novel *The Hibiscus Mat* (《芙蓉簪》) began to be serialized and her historical romance *Lonely Courtyard in Late Spring* (《寂寞空庭春欲晚》) was published in 2005. She gained widespread recognition with her urban romance novel *Good Times Are Like Dream* (《佳期如梦》).

As a leading figure in original Chinese romance fiction, Fei Wo Si Cun is known for her emotional storytelling, often crafting heart-wrenching tragedies. Her works span various themes and have earned her the title of "Queen of Tragedy". Notable works include *Goodbye, My Princess* (《东宫》) and *Love Like the Stars* (《爱如繁星》).

In 2018, Fei Wo Si Cun was elected as a member of the 12th Hubei Provincial CPPCC. In 2018, she became Vice Chair of the 7th Council of the Hubei Writers Association. In 2019, she served as producer for the web drama adaptation of *Put Your Head on My Shoulder* (《致我们暖暖的小时光》). In 2021, she was elected as a member of the 10th National Committee of the China Writers Association. Fei Wo Si Cun has received numerous accolades, including the 2nd Mao Dun Literary Newcomer Award for Web Fiction, the 7th Hubei Literature Award, and the 2nd Hubei Micro Role Model Award in 2013.

Tian Xia Ba Chang



Born in 1977, in Tianjin, Tian Xia Ba Chang's real name is Zhang Muye. Tian Xia Ba Chang gained fame with the *Ghost Blows Out the Light* (《鬼吹灯》) series, initially serialized on the Tianya Forum in 2006 before being licensed by Qidian Chinese Network. In September of the same year, *Ghost Blows Out the Light: Candle in the Tomb* (《鬼吹灯之精绝古城》) was published as a book. With its imaginative plot and thrilling elements, the novel quickly captured readers' attention and sparked a trend of tomb-robbing fiction, becoming a pioneering work in the

genre.

The fictional world created by Tian Xia Ba Chang is filled with mystery and fantastical elements. Beyond the *Ghost Blows Out the Light* series, he has written other notable works such as *Tientsin Mystic* (《河神》), *Let the Lightning Fall* (《大耍儿》), and *Sky Pit Treasure* (《天坑宝藏》). In 2015, he co-founded the "Upward Bachang" studio with Up Pictures, serving as Chief Content Officer. The film adaptation of *Chronicles of the Ghostly Tribe* (《九层妖塔》) premiered in 2015, followed by *Mojin: The Lost Legend* (《寻龙诀》) in December, breaking multiple box office records for domestic films. In 2017, Tian Xia Ba Chang was listed among the Top 100 Master Authors in the 2nd King of Web Fiction Awards. He currently serves as Chief Content Officer and shareholder of Up Pictures.

I Eat Tomatoes



Born in 1987 in Baoying County, Jiangsu Province, I Eat Tomatoes' real name is Zhu Hongzhi. He developed an early passion for martial arts novels from reading works by authors such as Jin Yong, Gu Long, and Wolong Sheng. While studying at Suzhou University's Mathematics Department, he published over six million words of web fiction during his two years of study before dropping out in his third year to become a full-time writer. His works predominantly focus on fantasy and xianxia (immortal hero) genres, featuring male protagonists and incorporating video game-inspired elements such as "level grinding". His concise storytelling style offers readers a highly immersive and engaging experience.

In 2005, his work of *Legend of Xingfeng* (《星峰传说》) began to be serialized on Qidian Chinese Network. His breakthrough came in 2006 with *Inch of Radiance* (《寸芒》), followed by the record-breaking *Stellar Transformation* (《星辰变》) in terms of collections, clicks and subscriptions on Qidian. From 2010 he began serializing *Swallowed Star* (《吞噬星空》) on Qidian. Many of his works, including *Stellar Transformation* and *Coiling Dragon* (《盘龙》), have been adapted into comics, TV dramas, and games. His mysterious fantasy works of *The Desolate Era* (《莽荒记》) and *Coiling Dragon* were included in the "Recommended Original Web Literature" list and the "20 Best Chinese Web Novels of 20 Years" list in 2018. The fantasy novel *Lord Xue Ying* (《雪鹰领主》) won the Gold Award for Fantasy and Xianxia at the inaugural Pan-Chinese Web Fiction "Golden Keyboard" Awards. *Stellar Transformation* sold its film adaptation rights for ¥800,000 and its game adaptation rights for ¥1 million. With royalties totaling ¥21 million, he ranked second on the 7th Chinese Writers Rich List in 2012. In 2017, he won the Newcomer Award for Web Literature at the 2nd Mao Dun Literature Newcomer Awards organized by the China Literature Foundation. In 2018, he was crowned "King of Web Fiction" at the 3rd Chengguo Network Literature Awards.