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Teen cancer patient asked Make-A-Wish Foundation to help sick children on the mainland

The 16-year-old also inspired a local author and illustrator to write a character based on her

By **Joanne Ma** | October 31, 2019

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Libby Lam (left) created a story with a character inspired by Pansy, a cancer survivor and a Make-A-Wish recipient.

Photo: Joanne Ma

Six years ago, Pansy, who prefers not to give her full name for privacy reasons, found out that she had a malignant brain tumour. It was pressing down on her optic nerve, giving her blurry eyesight and, occasionally, causing loss of vision in one eye.

She was only 16 years old at the time, but the then teenager didn't immediately have an emotional breakdown in the face of her frightening medical diagnosis. As she now recalls, she didn't even have the time to process her illness. In the week after her tumour was detected, her treatment began. When her doctor told her she had to have surgery and chemotherapy, she felt numb.

Joanne Ma

REPORTER

A typical INFP. Quite short-sighted but never really wears her glasses. Enjoys reading under the sun and going on some good adventures.

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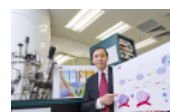
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October 22, 2019

...her computer and then refused to accept the day she wasn't upset because of her illness or the long road to recovery, but because she didn't know how to break the news to her friends. She was also scared that her family and other relatives would suffer emotionally.

It was around this time that Pansy was approached by Make-A-Wish Hong Kong, a charity that organises once-in-a-lifetime experiences for young people with critical illnesses.

"I thought about making my own wishes come true at first, like going travelling or meeting a celebrity. And yet, I felt like the joy that I would get from all of these things wouldn't be as palpable as if I were to help someone else out," Pansy tells *Young Post*.

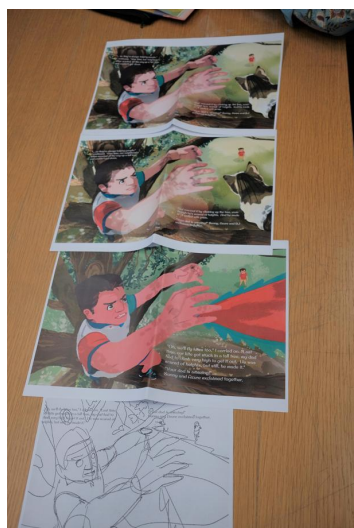
She decided to listen to her heart, and asked Make-A-Wish if she could use her wish to help children living with illnesses like hers on the mainland, where resources for cancer patients are often limited.

Benji's centre offers speech therapy to those who can't afford it

Pansy then set about raising extra funds for the project by making and selling bracelets. With the help of volunteers from energy company CLP Power Hong Kong, she was able to make 400 bracelets in one day. These were sold at CLP offices, raising both awareness for her project, and some HK\$30,000 for charity.

The money was sent to the Pau Kwong Wun Charitable Foundation, that supports children with cancer. Most of it went towards launching a new reading programme at a hospital in Hangzhou (杭州), while the rest went towards funding a volunteer training programme for reading corners, specially built in the hospital for young cancer patients.

"I have received some reports and photos from the hospital in Hangzhou. I was quite stunned by the fact that this one small wish of mine could help so many children. I never thought I could achieve something like this, just by caring about others," says Pansy, who has since recovered from her illness.



Libby Lam showed *Young Post* how she refines her creative process, step by step.
Photo: SCMP / Joanne Ma

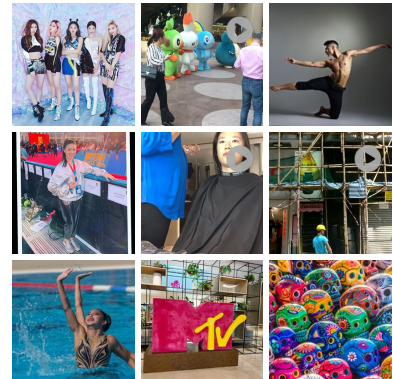
But that wasn't the end of the story. After hearing about Pansy's project through Make-A-Wish Hong Kong, local children's author and illustrator, also a Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) Hong Kong graduate, Libby Lam was so touched that she decided to create a character based on Pansy for one of her books.

The book, *Ten-Star Service*, was published this year. The story is about a boy named Max, who goes from envying his wealthy classmates to

realising that love and happiness can't be bought for any amount of money.



US Senator John McCain's brain tumour is a particularly aggressive type



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“Rather than being eager to experience the five-star hotels and services his friends revel in, he finally has an “ah ha” moment, and realises his life is actually a ten-star experience,” Lam tells *Young Post*.

The turning point in the book happens when Max meets a cancer patient named BJ, a character based on Pansy. Instead of focusing on his own suffering, BJ wants to spread joy and care for other children living with cancer. Just like Pansy, he holds a charity sale.

This prompts Max to remember how much fun he and his family used to have doing simple things together like fishing, reading bedtime stories, and watching films on rainy nights in. Thanks to BJ, Max learns to appreciate the family who have always loved and supported him.

Student support for Fun4Funds raises money for children in need

“The concept of gratitude can be quite abstract for young children and sometimes, if you’re forcing this concept onto them, they may become quite resistant to it,” says Lam.

“But through showcasing different scenarios on a day-to-day basis, they start to understand it more.”

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Make a wish, cancer, brain tumour, Ten-Star Service, Pansy, medical diagnosis, critical illness, Make-A-Wish, CLP, CLP Power Hong Kong, Pau Kwong Wun Charitable Foundation, Hangzhou, Volunteer, Libby Lam, gratitude, appreciation, author, illustrator, children's book, children's book author, writing, Books

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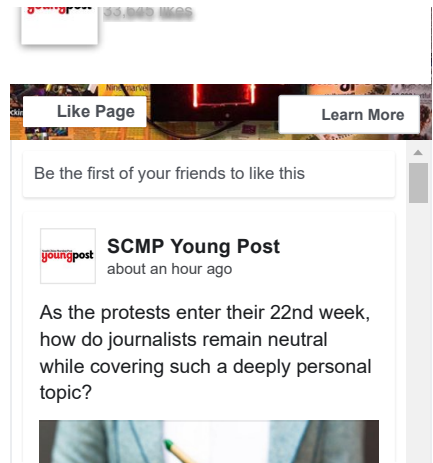
HONG KONG PROTESTS

Discontent about the now-withdrawn extradition bill escalated into a wider anti-government movement. Protesters have five core demands, including full amnesty for arrested demonstrators, and the setting up of an independent inquiry into alleged police brutality.

Hong Kong protests: Halloween costumes set to test the city's mask ban

Police prepare for renewed anti-government protests, planning to station about 3,000 riot officers and three water cannons on Hong Kong Island

Wong Tsui-kai | October 30, 2019

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NEWS - SPORTS

Sha Tin College student and rhythmic gymnastics star goes the extra mile by training in Russia



Halloween may put the new mask law to the test.
Photo: Winson Wong/SCMP

Hong Kong's anti-mask law may be put to the test tomorrow night, as protesters have called for a march on Hong Kong Island. The participants will walk from Victoria Park in Causeway Bay to Lan Kwai Fong in Central, which is the traditional site of a Halloween street party where many revellers dress up in scary costumes.

A police source said about 3,000 riot officers would take up positions from Tin Hau to Central before 5pm, and three water cannon would be stationed on Tim Wa Avenue outside the Chief Executive's Office and near Beijing's liaison office in Western district.

Another source said officers would order revellers "to remove their masks to check their identities if they are chanting slogans instead of celebrating Halloween".

Why has *V for Vendetta*, and its famous Guy Fawkes mask, become so popular in Hong Kong?

"Failure to do so is an offence," he said.

Legislator Au Nok-hin said local businesses had complained about police asking people not to go to Lan Kwai Fong because it was unreasonable and would affect their income. He is also concerned about possible clashes taking place on the night.

"According to the law, the police have the right to ask people to take off their masks. That might cause conflicts between police and people who are celebrating," Au said.

Confused by some of the legal terms used to talk about the protests? We've got you

Meanwhile, Ocean Park has been accused of censoring their annual Halloween Fest after they made changes to their show and personnel transfers in response to complaints.

The changes allegedly involved the removal of terms such as "Hongkongers, add oil" and "Are you ready, Hong Kong?"

Performers are reported to be organising a Halloween strike.

Replying to a written query by *Young Post*, a spokeswoman for the park said: "The Park [emphasises] that all entertainment shows and performances are solely aimed at providing the greatest fun to visitors, which would not involve any stance or attitude of the Park regarding any social events or issues."



fighting for his life



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Hong Kong protests: HKUST student in critical condition after falling while attempting to escape tear gas



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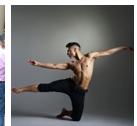
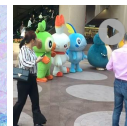
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Mask ban means Hong Kong police 'could remove Halloween make-up'



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Hong Kong protests: Students at schools including HKU and HKDI take part in demonstrations on campus



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