

Mike the single parent rooster proves he's no chicken

癡情奇「雞」

Mike, a popular rooster from Hunei Township, Dahu Village in Kaohsiung County recently lost his wife. Following her death, he became **dejected** and kept crying in sorrow, even losing all the feathers on his tail for a while. However, he recovered and started to take on the responsibilities of his deceased wife, including taking care of his chicks. His deep love and the actions he has taken are praiseworthy indeed.

Lee Huang, who runs a coffee shop based on the theme of old records in Hunei Township, received a pair of small Japanese chickens as a gift from his friend at the start of last year. Lee and his son, Lee Chi-yuan, named the rooster Mike and the hen Ashley and built them a clean and comfortable love nest.

Mike originally had a good **appetite** and would eat anything. Each morning when Lee Huang called his son to get out of bed, Mike would mistake the sound for the **crowing** of another chicken and would either cuckoo along with Lee or scream "Lee Chi-yuan" at the top of his voice. Mike's unusual behavior made him the most popular rooster with local Hunei residents.

Lee Huang says that Mike and Ashley were deeply in love and they gave birth to seven broods with more than thirty chicks over the last year. However, not many of them survived. Then a little more than a month ago, Ashley was bitten to death by a large dog outside their house, leaving behind four newborn chicks. After witnessing the incident, Mike fell into a spiral of depression. After crying "Lee Chi-yuan" in a sorrow-stricken fashion all day long, he kept quiet for a week, looked downhearted and lost all his tail feathers.

Mike had been dissolute, but after his **grieving** period was over, his personality changed all of a sudden, and even his brightly-colored tail feathers grew back. He now takes his chicks outside everyday to practice searching for food. When the chicks lower their heads to peck at their food, Mike sticks his neck out and looks around to guard his young. As soon as night falls, Mike hops into the chicken nest to clean it and then calls the chicks into bed. Mike really deserves a lot of credit for the way he has taken responsibility for mothering duties.

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Top: Ashley, left and Mike are shown in this undated picture. The pair were deeply in love.

Center: Mike's owner shows the feathers Mike lost from his tail as a result of being too upset, in this photo taken in Kaohsiung County earlier this month.

Above: Mike and one of his chicks are shown in their nest in Kaohsiung County earlier this month. As soon as night falls, Mike hops into the chicken nest to clean it and then calls the chicks into bed.

PHOTO: SOO FU-NAN, LIBERTY TIMES

最上圖：在這張未註明日期的照片中，艾西（左）與麥克出雙入對、鶼鶼情深。

中圖：這張本月稍早攝於高雄縣的照片中，麥克的飼主展示傷心過度的麥克所掉落的尾羽。

上圖：這張本月稍早攝於高雄縣的照片中，麥克和一隻小雞窩在雞巢中。天一黑，麥克會先跳進雞巢整理乾淨，再召喚小雞們上床睡覺。

照片：自由時報記者蘇福男

高 縣湖內鄉大湖村人氣小公雞「麥克」最近喪偶，不僅啼叫聲哀戚、尾椎鮮艷羽毛一度掉光，還交代母職照料起親生小雞，癡情公雞行徑，令人嘖嘖稱奇。

在湖內鄉大湖村開設「老唱片主題咖啡館」的李煌，去年初獲友人贈送一對日本小雞，李煌和兒子李致遠分別為小公雞、小母雞取名為「麥克」、「艾西」，並為這對小情侶打造一個乾淨又舒適的愛巢。

麥克不僅吃食「葷素不拘」，還錯把李煌每天早上叫兒子李致遠的起床聲，誤當成雞啼聲，每天一大清早不是「咕咕咕」叫，而是扯開喉嚨高喊「李致遠～」、「李致遠～」，麥克與眾雞不同的怪異行徑，讓牠成為湖內人氣指數最高的公雞。

李煌說，麥克、艾西鶼鶼情深，一年多來已陸續繁衍七窩、三十多隻小雞，但小雞存活並不多，一個多月前艾西在家門口被一隻大狗咬死，留下四隻剛出生的小雞，麥克目睹慘狀後，疑似罹患憂鬱症，在啼叫一整天聲調哀戚的「李致遠～」之後，連續一週閉口噤聲、無精打采，尾椎羽毛也掉光。

哀傷期過後，原本放蕩不羈的麥克，突然性情大變，尾椎的鮮豔的羽毛又長了出來，現在牠每天帶小雞外出練習覓食，小雞低頭啄食時，麥克會引頸環顧四週警戒，等到天一黑，麥克還會先跳進雞巢整理乾淨，再召喚小雞們上床睡覺，麥克交代母職，令人嘖嘖稱奇。（自由時報記者蘇福男）

TODAY'S WORDS 今日單字

1. **dejected** /dr'ɔ:ektɪd/ adj.

情緒低落的 (qing2 xu4 di1 luo4 de5)

例: Players from the losing team looked dejected as they walked off the pitch. (輸隊的球員離開球場時看起來情緒低落。)

2. **appetite** /'æpə,tart/ n.

食慾 (shi2 yu4)

例: Julie has lost her appetite since contracting a mystery virus. (裘莉自從染上一種莫名的病毒後就食慾不振。)

3. **crow** /kro/ v.

雞啼 (ji1 ti2)

例: When I lived on a farm, I was often woken up by the sound of cocks crowing.

(以前住在農場時，我常被公雞的啼叫聲叫醒。)

4. **grieve** /griv/ v.

哀傷 (ai1 shang1)

例: The family are still grieving the passing of their beloved grandfather. (那一家人仍沉浸在鍾愛的爺爺過世的哀傷中。)