

SWIPEABLE NOTES · LINKEDIN EDITION

American in Hong Kong

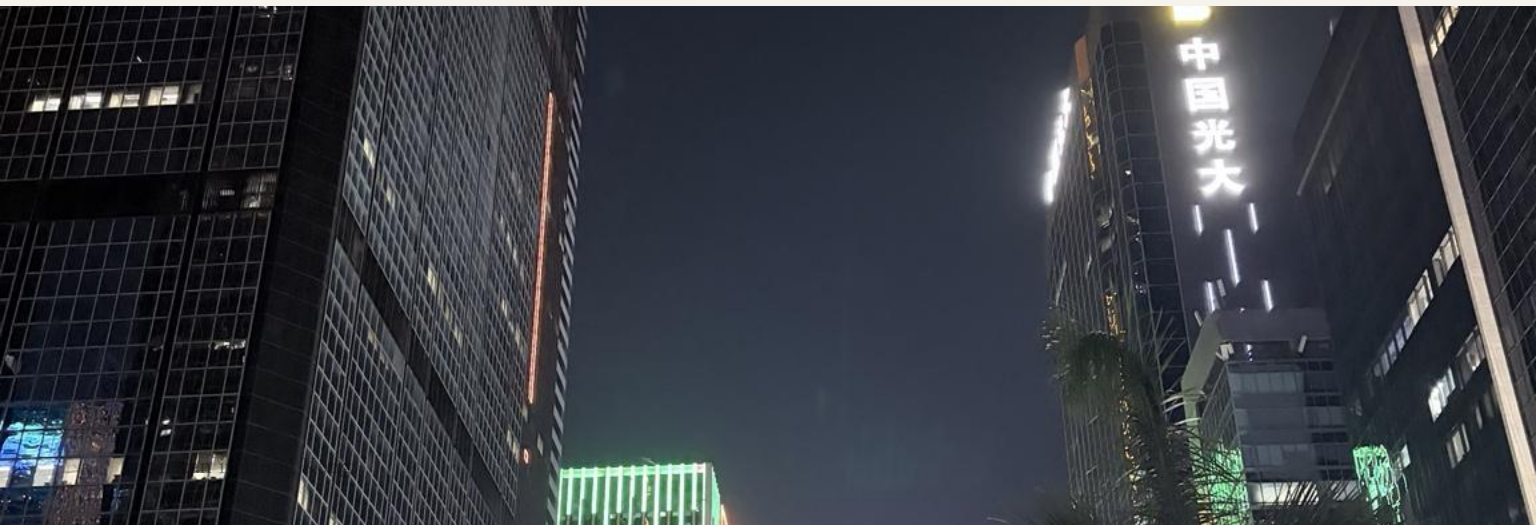
Robin Xie

OPENING

“Bin, where have you been?”

I logged into Facebook first time in a couple of years and was pleasantly surprised of my US friends sending birthday greetings and asking for how I have been for the last decade. “Bin, where have you been?”

So here is my confession:



OFFSHORE → WALL STREET

From subsea engineering to the edge of finance.

🥲🇺🇸 More than a decade ago, I was a deepwater subsea engineer deploying cute underwater robotics, ROVs and AUVs. I went offshore constantly, including a memorable stretch while pregnant, because there was usually something difficult, important, exciting, and crazy that needed me. That was a happy memory, plus I could eat four times a day in offshore trip.

🥲🇺🇸 Then the oil downturn changed the landscape in 2017. I rolled over to Wall Street to join an alumni hedge fund starting from zero 0️⃣ on options and futures - quote: “playing options and you will be left with no options, playing futures and you will be left with no futures.”

“Playing options and you will be left with no options.”



CRYPTO → MACAU

Then came crypto, venture chaos, and Macau.

🙃🇺🇸 Anyhow after realizing I am no trader material and selling options futures in low volatility would not pay the Manhattan rent, I started evaluating blockchain and crypto early phase projects and I became an angel investor. 99 out of 100 projects died or rugged or vaporized, and 1 became a 250x jackpot! 🎰

🥹🇲🇴 In 2017, my husband accepted an offer to work in University of Macau, and wait, he brought our kids with him too! Reluctantly I started hunting for opportunities in Macau. Fun fact: as an American, I could not open a bank account. There were fewer than 100 Americans in Macau.

HONG KONG

I airdropped myself into Hong Kong.

😎🇭🇰 In 2018, I airdropped myself in Hong Kong, Asia's world city, accidentally became co-CEO and executive director of a publicly listed company. It was quite dramatic, yet not that shorts-kinda drama like from rags to riches, it is more like: I was blessed with a great foundation — Class for Gifted Young is well recognized in Chinese circle, and the board respects my American background as Rice alumni, Professional Engineer, PMP etc.

"I airdropped myself in Hong Kong."



04 · THE TEN-YEAR EXPEDITION

Cinderella, Tokens & Tokyo.

🤣🇭🇰 Hence starts: Cinderella's executive career and startup adventure. The executive career included rebranding global energy resources to global token, as I believe token would be the smallest unit of value of exchange in trust and meaning. I was actually not too wrong at that time. Twelve things run parallel at the same time, personal wise, I officially started my executive career at 2018-06-18 and I received my HKID at 2018-08-18, seemingly great fortunes 🔮 are beaming at me. My friends started calling me "Robin" coz Robin is an American red bird singing the spring.

😇🇯🇵 What followed was a ten-year expedition across the U.S. and Asia, building and testing ideas across the fintech and digital asset frontier, such as exchanges, wallets, stablecoin rails, merchant systems, digital identity, cross-border payment gateways, and a fairly unreasonable number of experiments. My favorite memory was our Tokyo Roppongi office, the imperial hotel with an extraordinary teppanyaki, the business meetings with former Sony CEO Nobuyuki Idei and Monex founder Oki Matsumoto etc...

FAILURE LOOPS

Most startups died. One lived.

21 ventures. 20 dead. 1 exit.

😱🇹🇼 Yet, covid19 hits, followed by the cruel reality of startup failures and failures loop x multiple times. Out of approximately 21 startup ventures, 20 were killed, crashed, or simply taught me that a viable product is not the same thing as product-market fit. Most of those SAAS (software-as-a-service) projects were killed before product-market-fit PMF, some even before minimal-viable-product MVP phase.

😘🍀 One succeeded. That exit gave me the financial freedom, and the ultimate freedom to choose what I work on. So naturally, I kept working.



TODAY

AI infrastructure, physical AI, and capital systems.





😇🌐 Today, I invest and build around AI infrastructure, robotics, intelligent systems, and the capital systems underneath them. I am especially fascinated by physical AI: what happens when tokens become infrastructure, intelligence gets a body, and machines begin participating in the economy. I view wealth through an engineering lens: money behaves like fluid mechanics, capital flows follow mathematical cycles, and portfolios require structural integrity.

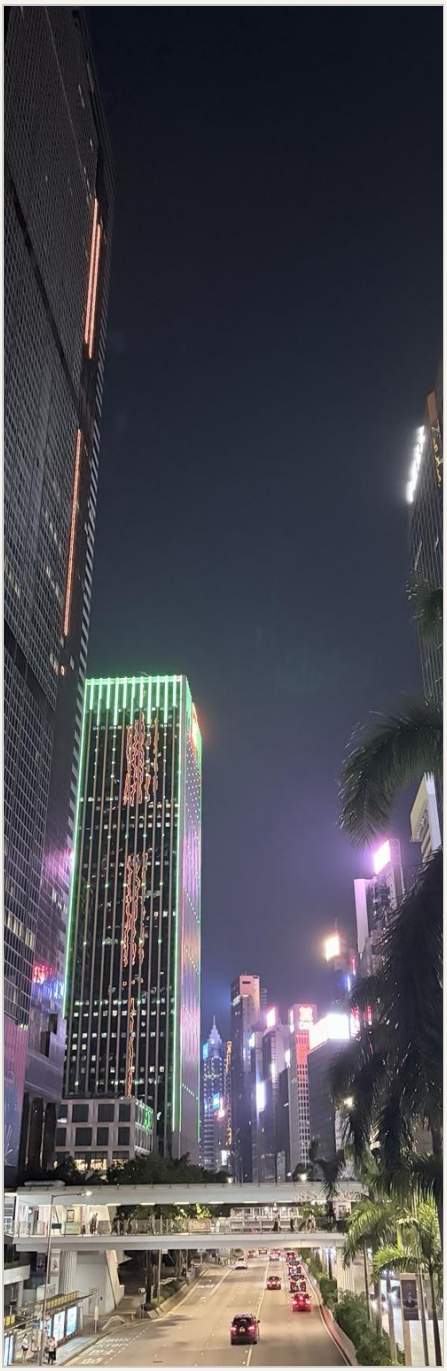
Money behaves like fluid mechanics.

THE AI CIRCUS

More joy than net profit.

😂 🛝 I am also building AI-driven capital allocation across public markets, digital assets, and private opportunities. As of now, my AI agents forms more like a circus than an organization: they bring me much more joy than net profit. There are just so many ROFL thingies between myself, Teddy, Maimai, Sweetie, my lovely AI council who constantly makes human mistakes, laugh and pick on each other.

At present, the organization chart is mostly laughter.





CLOSING NOTE

😉🤗 I’m an American 🇺🇸 based in Hong Kong 🇭🇰. If you’re building something serious in these areas and passing through Hong Kong, come say hello. I’m always happy to compare notes, make a useful introduction, and occasionally lend a desk or meeting room. Weird questions are especially welcome.