



萬佛城求學散記（二）

# 上學第一天

Studying at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas – Part 2

## The First Day of School

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幸好事前已做好了「吃苦」的心理準備，在踏入萬佛城裡的客房時，忍不住驚訝它的簡陋後，倒也還能安然處之。我唯一擔心的是那兩個養尊處優慣了的小丫頭如何看待這裏的簡陋？這時果果正在房間四下張望，忙問她喜不喜歡這個房間，她竟是一頭撞入我的懷中，眼睛閃亮對我說

：「媽咪，這麼小的房間，好cute！是妳專門為小小的果果準備的嗎？」我又搖頭又點頭，心裡鬆了一大口氣。

沒有了電視、電腦，這兩個習慣於十一點以後才睡覺的小夜貓子，星期天晚上居然自己在七點一刻就呼呼大睡了，這也該算是個奇蹟了吧？這也只有萬佛城，才有可能把她們晚睡晚起的惡習徹底改掉

。為了她們不肯睡覺，與先生爭吵了多少次，跟孩子大吼大叫過多少回，我真的難以想像，她們也會有日出而作，日落而息的一天！豈不是跟桃花源裏的生活差不多了？這世上若是多一點人來過桃花源的生活，那真可以節省很多能源了。

這一覺直睡到第二天早上六點半，才聽緣緣含含糊糊咕嚕一句：「果果，妳想現在是早上了嗎？」果果迷迷糊糊地看了一下窗外，非常肯定：「沒有，現在還是半夜。」緣緣打了個呵欠：「那就接著睡吧！」我一聽，連忙跳起：「不可以，現在是早上，該起床了。今天星期一，妳們要去新學校上學嘍！」

I was mentally prepared for the “sacrifices” here. Upon stepping into the guest room in the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas (CTTB), I was astonished by its simplicity, but I knew I would be able to manage living with such simplicity. However, I was still worried about how these two young children of mine would view and accept the simplicity of this place, particularly as they were used to living a life where anything they wanted was always available to them.

After unpacking the clothes, Guo Guo looked around the room. I quickly asked her if she liked the room. To my surprise, she rushed into my arms, her eyes shining brightly, and exclaimed “Mommy, it is such a small room but it is so cute! Did you prepare this small room specially for little Guo Guo?” I was so relieved she liked the room that I alternately shook and nodded my head.

Without television and a computer, these two little ‘night owls’ who were accustomed to going to bed around eleven o’clock at night actually went to sleep at quarter past seven on Sunday night! This had to be a miracle! CTTB might be the only place that could possibly change their bad habit of staying up late and waking up late. I have quarreled several times with my husband over this bad habit of theirs. I have also raised my voice to them many times in the past. I could not believe that at last, they would wake at sunrise and go to sleep at sunset!

I thought to myself, isn’t it like the life in the Peach Blossom Garden (paradise)? If there were more people in this world who lead that kind of life, I am not sure but I think we would conserve our resources.

We slept through until 6:30 the next morning when we heard Yuan Yuan mumbling, “Guo Guo, do you think it is already morning?”

Guo Guo looked sleepily out the window, and said very knowingly, “No, it is still midnight!”

Yuan Yuan yawned and said, “Then let’s keep on sleeping.” Upon hearing this, I immediately jumped up and said, “No, it is already morning; you must get out of bed. Today is Monday, and both of you need to attend class at the new school.”



冬天的夜長，一月的萬佛城，晚上五點半，天已黑了，早上七點多，天空才有點亮——這對我們母女三人而言又是一個從未有的體驗。

7:50是學校舉行升旗儀式的時間。我站在教室門外，看著滿屋子小娃娃，在法師和引磬的帶領下，滿臉的認真，奶聲奶氣地唱著三皈依，心中由衷升起一份感動，好羨慕這群孩子，小小年紀就可以接受佛法的熏習，種下菩提種，不必像我，在滾滾紅塵中跌跌撞撞地摸索了這麼多年，繞了許許多多的彎路，才有機緣聽聞正信的佛法，找到心靈的歸途。

正想著，門忽然打開了，身兼教職的法師帶著班上的一個男孩子，手裏捧著什麼東西，連鞋也來不及穿，就光腳匆匆跑出了樓外，我剛想追上去勸他們天冷要穿上鞋子，她們已經回來了。一問才知道，原來教室裏不知從哪兒跑來了幾隻螞蟻，怕嚇到膽小的孩子，更怕孩子無意中傷生，法師跟那個男孩子就把那幾隻螞蟻抓起，匆匆跑到樓外的草地放生去了。心中暗笑，天地之大，真是無奇不有，這種事情，只可能在萬佛城中的育良小學發生吧？孩子交給這樣的老師來管，總是讓人安心不少。

下午四點，放學了。兩個小丫頭見到我，飛也似地撲進懷中，不愧是雙胞胎，兩個人異口同聲：「媽咪，我好喜歡這個新學校！」我雙手擁著這兩個豆芽似的小娃兒，她們一雙明星般閃亮的眼睛正笑瞇瞇地望著我，我心裏長長地，長長地舒了一口氣。

☞待續

The nights are long in the mountains in January. At CTTB, the sky gets dark around 5:30 pm, and it lightens at 7 am in the morning – yet another whole new experience.

The flagraising ceremony took place at ten minutes to eight in the morning. Standing outside the door, I saw a classroom full of young children under the guidance of a Dharma Master. They were singing the “Three Refuges” with serious faces. A warm feeling crossed my heart, and I was touched. How I envy this group of children for being able to receive guidance and training in the Buddhadharma at such a young age. I, in contrast, traveled so many winding roads of life before getting this opportunity to listen to and learn the Proper Dharma. From here onwards, I have the opportunity to tread upon the path home.

While I am still thinking about this opportunity, the door opened suddenly and the Dharma Master – who was also a teacher, came out with a boy who was holding something in his hand. Without wearing shoes, they quickly ran barefoot outside. I was about to chase after them to ask them to put on their shoes, as it was the winter and very cold. The door opened again and they came back inside. I asked what was wrong and was told that some ants had appeared from somewhere and might frighten the children. Fearing that the children would accidentally hurt these creatures or become more afraid, the Dharma Master and the boy had picked up the ants and hurriedly rushed to release them in the grass outside. I smiled warmly at the thought of seeing something so unexpected happen. The Universe is large, and strange happenings abound. Yet perhaps this is something that would only happen at Instilling Goodness Elementary School in CTTB. One’s heart can be peaceful, knowing the children are under the care of such a teacher.

School finished at 4:00 pm. When my twin daughters saw me, they jumped into my arms. As twins, they both said in one voice, “Mommy, how I love this new school!”

Looking deeply into their eyes I saw the stars in their eyes, like the moon, very clear and brilliant. With one child on each side of me I hugged these two wee, small children. I let out a long sigh of relief from my heart.

☞To be continued

