

White
Mountains
and
Black
Waters
Nurture
Rare Talent
(Continued)

白山黑水育奇英

(續)

上人自述：

我告訴你們一個很奇怪的故事！我也不知怎麼搞的，在3月16日跑到這世界來；我的師父常智大師，也是很奇怪的，在3月15日那一天，他也跑到這個世界來；我的師伯，就是我廟上方丈和尚常仁大師，他是3月17日；這也不錯！三個人都碰到一起。出家也是很奇怪的！我是9月16日出家，我師父是9月15日，師伯是9月17日，又是一連串。所以這個世間有很多的事情不知怎麼搞的，安排得這麼巧合；想起來很好玩，事情就是這麼不其然而然，不可思議的！

我生來有一些壞習氣，就是愛哭，由出生就開始哭。哭的時候，好像有什麼很不開心的事情。嬰兒的我，一連哭了好幾天，哭得人晚上都不能睡覺，白天又要去工作，非常疲倦！最後我不哭了，大約哭了幾天也累了。所有人也都累得睡著了，沒想到這時就有人來家裏偷東西。本來已是一個窮苦家庭，有一點點比較值錢的東西，也都被賊給偷去了。由這個之後，我就不哭了。

我沒出家以前我有個假名字，叫白中一，那時候以為這個名字很好的，我是中國第一人！後來又想：這個名字又有什麼呢？在什麼地方呢？沒有。所以以後就叫活死人，活的這個人已經死了，不過這還是個假名字。以後守孝，一般人又稱我是「白孝子」，這還是個假名字。出家的名字叫安慈，後來叫度輪，現在又叫宣化，這統統都是假的！什麼是我真的名字呢？虛空。我真的名字就是虛空！

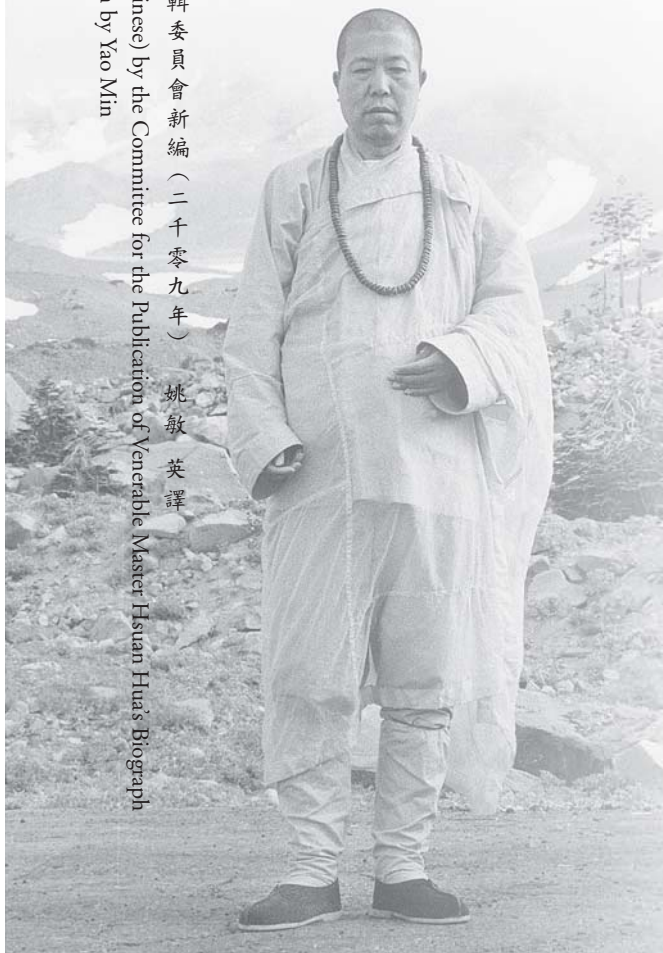
As told by the Venerable Master:

I will tell you something curious: I was born on the 16th day of the third lunar month; my teacher, Master Chang Zhi, was born on the 15th of the third lunar month; and his Dharma brother, Master Chang Ren, the abbot of our temple, was born on the 17th of the third month. Equally curious are the dates we entered monastic life: I on the 16th day of the ninth lunar month; my teacher on the 15th day of the ninth lunar month; and his Dharma brother on the 17th of the ninth lunar month. In each case, the dates follow in immediate succession. Many things in this world are inexplicable and seem to happen coincidentally.

I was born with a bad habit, that of crying. I began to cry the moment I was born and wailed nonstop for a couple of days. I cried lamentably, as though in response to something sorrowful. This kept my family up all night. But they still had to work during the day, and so they became very fatigued. Finally I stopped crying—I guess that I had cried myself to exhaustion—and everybody finally had a good night's sleep. Unexpectedly, that very night, a thief came into our house and stole our belongings. We were so poor that what was stolen was of little value. After that, I didn't cry any more.

Before I became a monk, I was given an absurd name: Bai Zhong Yi. At

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02. 孩子皇帝

上人自幼沉默寡言，富有俠義心腸。因好抱不平，令雙親憂心，直到十一、二歲以後，幡然覺悟，改過自新。

上人自述：

我還想跟大家說一說，告訴大家，我過去是怎麼樣一個不守紀律的人，是怎麼樣一個不孝順的人。我不說，心裏覺得總是像有件事沒辦好似的。說這個，得要從頭說起，要先講我自己這一部經。

二至五歲

我生在一個貧苦的家庭，有一點田地只夠維持一年的生活，沒辦法那麼早讀書。因為家裏要去做工，才有飯吃，這和要飯的一樣，所以小的時候就叫「乞士」。我父親是個好喝酒的人，他有錢一定跑到街上，去買半斤酒回來，來回五里路；他自己買自己喝，半斤酒分兩次喝，喝完酒就睡覺。

父親有兄弟五個，父親那一輩有幾個女的，我不知道。我這一輩，有五個男的，三個女的，我是最小的，所以父母最寵愛，把我慣得很古怪；一天到晚就這麼坐著，一天不講話也可以。我從小不隨便講話，不講不真的話，打妄語是不行的！常常和小孩子們一起玩，有一個小孩用口咬我的腳後跟，我也不知道哪兒痛就哭起來，也不懂得去打對方。

那時候，也沒有其他什麼本事，只會哭，一哭就哭一天一夜、兩天兩夜、三天三夜地這麼哭。誰惹到我，我就哭，哭得要往死裏哭，也不吃東西。那時，心裏有個什麼想法呢？我知道父親母親都捨不

first, I was pleased – “I am the number one person in China!” [Bai is the family name. Zhong means China, and Yi means first.] Then I thought, “What’s in a name? Nothing.” After that, I called myself “the living dead person.” But even that name was meaningless. When I observed mourning at my mother’s grave, people called me “the filial son of the Bai family”—yet another meaningless name. Then, when I became a monk, my first Dharma name was An Ci; later I was called Du Lun. And now I am known as Hsuan Hua. Not one of those names is real! What is my real name? Emptiness! My real name is Emptiness!

02. A King among the Children

The Master was taciturn but loyal and warmhearted as a child. His parents were concerned because he always fought on behalf of those whom he thought were not being treated fairly. He did not realize his recklessness and stop this behavior until he was 11 or 12 years old. After that, he reformed himself.

As told by the Venerable Master:

I also wish to admit to you all how undisciplined and unfilial I was in the past. If I don’t speak about it, I will always feel there is some unfinished matter in my heart. I will start from the beginning of my life.

2 to 5 years old

I was born to a humble family. We owned a tiny plot of land that could barely sustain us, and so I was unable to go to school. My family had to work for others in order to put food on the table. Ours was similar to a beggar’s life, and so I was called “beggar” as a child. My dad liked to drink alcohol, and so whenever he had money, he would go out and buy a half-pint bottle (0.25 kg) of alcohol for himself; the round trip was five li [Chinese miles]. Each time he returned, he would drink half the bottle, and then fall asleep.

My father had five brothers; I don’t know how many sisters he had. In my generation, there were five boys and three girls. I was the youngest and the favorite, and so my parents spoiled me in my odd behavior of sitting around all day without saying a word. But I never spoke recklessly or told lies. I often played with other children. Once a child bit me on the heel, and I cried because I didn’t know where the pain had come from. I didn’t know enough to bite back.

At that time, my only skill was crying. I could cry one day, two days, or three days nonstop. If someone made me unhappy, I would cry and refuse to eat. I did that because I knew my parents loved me so much they would give in, and if I did not eat or drink anything, I would get what I wanted. I was that spoiled!

得我，我一不吃東西，豁出來不要命地哭，父親母親一定就心軟了，不得不向我投降。我就這麼壞！

七至十歲

我在小時候很霸王，七、八歲的時候願意當孩子王，喜歡人家恭敬我。怎麼樣恭敬法呢？我喜歡做皇帝，把土堆得高高的，坐到上邊，這就是「登基坐殿」。所有的小孩子，譬如有三十個小孩子，或者有五十，或者有一百，都要聽我指揮，向我叩頭，要三呼「萬歲」。和小孩子在一起玩，我喜歡管著其他的小孩子，要他們聽我招呼；誰不聽我招呼，我就打他。這樣的一個人，怎麼樣也想不到以後會信佛的。

我有生以來，無論什麼事情，寧可折而不彎的，性情很剛強，而且還最歡喜打抱不平。無論前村後村的小孩子，我看見哪個做事不公道，就是不要命也要主持公道。我打架的對象，都是比我大的孩子；我十歲敢和二十歲的人打架。但是講公道，有的人不高興，就來找我算帳。我那時候雖然小，和人打架，可是很勇敢的；打得頭破血流，遍體鱗傷也不在乎，一定要把對方打服了，那才算。誰也打不過我，為什麼呢？我不怕死，打死我也不怕。我這個手指頭，就是和人打架，被人用刀割的。我十二歲，他十八歲，我用手抓住他的刀，把手指頭的筋都割斷了；我還是不在乎也不怕，終於把他打敗了。

我就是這樣剛強的一個人！對我父母非常忤逆，不聽話，常常在外頭闖禍，給我父母惹了很多麻煩。

03. 體悟生死

上人生長在農村裏，生活單純，從來都沒見過死人。十一歲的時候，第一次看到小孩的屍體，頓然覺得生死事大，無常迅速，毅然立下出家的志向。

上人自述：

雖然東北文化最高的縣市就是哈爾濱，哈爾濱文化最高的縣鎮就是雙城縣，雙城縣文化最高的區域就是拉林鎮，可是我家那兒是個窮鄉僻壤的地方。我家是間泥牆、苫草屋頂的破舊房子，和一般人家距離大約有一百步遠。在這種環境裏，從來就沒有見過、也沒有聽過小孩子死的事情。

☞待續

7 to 10 years old

I was a bully as a child. I enjoyed playing king and receiving respect from the other kids. I would sit on top of a mound of dirt, just like a king at his inauguration, and all the other kids—sometimes thirty, sometimes fifty or even one hundred—would follow my commands and kowtow to me, exclaiming three times: “Long live the king!” Every time we played, I would boss them around and demand their obedience. I would even hit those who didn’t listen to me. You would never have expected someone like me to become a Buddhist.

From the time I was born, I was stubborn about almost everything; I would rather break than bend. I took the greatest pleasure in standing up for kids who I thought were being treated unfairly. I would risk my life in defense of justice, no matter who the opponent was. My adversaries were always older than me—at the age of 10, I dared to challenge 20-year-olds. Even so, some people didn’t like my attitude and wanted to get even with me. In spite of my age, I was very daring in a fight. I didn’t care if I broke my head, shed my blood or bruised my body; I only cared about winning. And because I was not afraid even to be beaten to death, no one could subdue me. Look at this finger, for example. It was cut during a fight. I was 12 and my opponent was 18. I grabbed his knife, and my tendon got severed. I didn’t care, and I wasn’t afraid, so that finally I was able to defeat him.

I was such an unyielding person! I was unfilial to my parents and ignored what they said. When I went out, I often made trouble for them.

03. Understanding Birth and Death

The Master was born in a rural area, lived a simple life, and had never seen a dead person. He first saw the child’s corpse when he was eleven years old, and it suddenly impressed the finality and rapid approach of birth and death upon him. So he made a decision to become a Buddhist monk.

As told by the Venerable Master:

Throughout northeast China, Harbin is most advanced in literary culture. Within Harbin, Shuangcheng County is foremost, with the Town of Lalin—my hometown—as the cultural hub. However, this was a poor, rural area. My family lived in a shabby, old cottage with mud walls and a thatched roof. Our closest neighbor was about 100 paces away. In that environment, I had never seen or heard of children dying.

☞To be continued