



白山黑水育奇英

Events in the Life of the Venerable Master:
The China Period

宣化上人事蹟（中國篇）

White Mountains and Black Waters Nurture Rare Talent (Continued)

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Translated into English by Genglin Zheng and others

28. 賒棺葬母

上人雖然家境貧困，還是處處熱心助人，甚至不收學費辦義學。上人的母親往生之後，拮据到連買棺木的錢也沒有，無力籌辦老母的後事。上人不忍一生劬勞的母親草草入殮，憑著一片孝心，如願賒得一口棺木，安葬母親。

上人自述：

我看《三國》，看到關公被人殺的時候，我哭了三天。我為什麼哭？我覺得關帝公這麼正義的人，都被人殺了，這真是太悲痛了。可是我母親死那麼大的一件事，我沒有掉過淚。為什麼？那時候可能也哭不出來，我已經盡了自己能盡的責任。我對你們講，我母親死的時候，我在她旁邊，我的口袋裏空空，連一分錢都沒有，那時真是貧窮困苦。

我把幾個哥哥都找來，他們都沒來，只有三哥白玉堂來了。我問他：「母親故去了，我們要買一個什麼樣的棺材？」他說：「唉！我們這個環境還能買什麼棺材？我們現在連吃飯都沒有錢，哪有錢買棺材？」我說：「那怎麼辦呢？」他說：「用幾塊木板釘一個木匣子，埋

28. Buying a Coffin on Credit to Give His Mother a Proper Burial

Although the Venerable Master was very poor, he was enthusiastic to help others, and opened a free school that did not charge tuition. After his mother passed away, he did not have any funds for his mother's funeral -- not even for a coffin. Because of his filial piety, the Venerable Master did not want his hardworking mother to be buried carelessly, so he purchased a coffin on credit to give his mother a proper burial.

As told by the Venerable Master:

In reading *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, when I read about Lord Guan being killed, I cried for three days. What did I cry about? I thought it was so sad that such a person of such great moral integrity as Lord Guan had been killed. However, I did not shed tears over the death of my mother, even though it mattered a lot to me. Why? At that moment I could not cry because I had tried my best to save and serve my mother. Let me tell you all, at the moment my mother was passing away, I was with her. I had no money, not even a penny. It was really a time of hardship and poverty.

I summoned my brothers, but only my third brother, Bai Yutang came. I asked him, "Mother has passed away. What kind of coffin should we buy?" He replied, "Alas, what kind of coffin can we possibly afford? We don't even have money for food; how can we buy a coffin?" I said, "Then what should we do?" He replied, "Just

葬起來就算了！」我說：「這樣做太對不起母親了！她生我們這麼多個子女，死了連個棺材都沒有，這樣不好。」想要買棺材，一分錢也沒有，這怎麼辦呢？和我幾個哥哥商量，你看看我，我看看你，都沒有法子。我說：「你們都沒有法子，我去找朋友去。」

幸虧我平時有一些研究佛學的朋友，又參加道德會，在拉林鎮道德會任總務科長，我還認識一些人；其中有一個是賣棺材的，我就到拉林鎮去賒棺材。棺材舖老闆姓田，大家都叫他田老烏。為什麼叫老烏呢？他的嘴很黑，好罵人，是個跑江湖的，水陸兩道都通。我到那兒，這賣棺材的老板認識我，說：「你來買棺材？」我說：「我沒有錢，你賒給我可不可以？」他說：「好，我賒給你！隨便你要買什麼樣的棺材，你自己挑。你什麼時候有錢，什麼時候給我。」

我買了一個棺材，臨走的時候，這個老板又說：「你連買棺材都沒有錢，一定沒有錢辦喪事。我借給你三百塊錢，你拿去用；什麼時候有錢，什麼時候還我。」又借給我三百塊錢。在那時候，三百塊錢是很好用的，拿港幣來講，差不多可以頂現在三萬塊錢來用；因為那時候買什麼東西都很便宜，當時錢很值錢的。因為他對我很有信心的，我說：「好！」棺材沒有問題了，就想法子運棺材回去。你看！因為我平時歡喜幫助人，所以等到我有事情的時候，就會有感應，有人會來幫我。 待續

nail a few boards into a box and use it as coffin to bury her!" I said, "It is unfair for Mom. She gave birth to all of us. It is not right to bury her without a coffin." But how can we buy a coffin with no money? I discussed it with my brothers. We looked at each other and had no idea. I said, "You have no ideas. I will ask friends for a solution."

Fortunately, I had some friends with whom I studied Buddhism. In addition, I participated in the Ethics Society of Lalin town and served as its Chief of General. So, I knew a few of people in Lalin town. One of them sold coffins, so I ran to Lalin town to ask him for a coffin on credit. His last name was Tian and everyone called him the old crow Tian. Why did people call him the old crow? His lips were black, and he liked to scold others. He frequently traveled to many places and knew many different people. I arrived at his coffin shop, and since he knew me, he asked, "Would you like to buy a coffin?" I said, "Yes, but I have no money. Can you please sell me one on credit?" He said, "Okay, I will let you buy one on credit. Just pick any coffin you want. And you do not need to pay me until you have money."

I picked a coffin, and before I left, the boss said, "If you cannot even afford a coffin, I am sure you have no money for a funeral. I will lend you 300 Yuan and you don't need to pay me until you have money." Hence, he lent me 300 Yuan. Back then, 300 Yuan was a large sum of money equivalent to \$30,000 Hong Kong dollars today. Everything was very cheap then, and one Yuan could buy many things. The owner trusted me. And I replied, "It's a deal!" Finally, the problem of having no coffin was solved, and I delivered the coffin back home. You see, because I loved to help others, whenever I encountered difficulties, someone would help me.

To be continued



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