

上人的承諾

The Venerable Master's Promise

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出家以前，就聽法師說過上人曾經告訴弟子，出家之後不用擔心家中的父母，他們將來都會被安排得好好的。出家以後，我自己也在錄音帶中親耳聽到上人的這個許諾，因此在修行中就比較安心。

2016年9月，姐姐從中國打電話通知我，母親再次重病發作被送入急診室，這次生還的希望很渺小。雖然這些年都沒有辦法在她身邊照顧她，但是每次回家探望，我都會給她講一點佛法。2015年是我第一次以沙彌尼的身份回去看她，這也是我和她的最後一次相聚。我從美國帶去上人的像片，並在客廳裡設置了一個簡易小佛堂以方便家人供養。

起初我勸母親拜佛，她都會搪塞說很累而不肯拜。當初她本來就不喜歡我出家，但又沒有辦法說服我，因此她的抵觸情緒，是由於還沒徹底面對我出家的事實。這時候如果硬勸她念佛拜佛是行不通的，隨後我便想起實法師在三步一拜中的小故事。於是在一個陽光明媚的下午，我就準備講這個故事給她聽。因為是憑記憶，可能與真實故事有一些出入。

這一天，實法師正在三步一拜，心中充滿喜悅，因為金輪寺就在眼前，馬上就可以見到師父了。這時不知從哪裡出現兩個摩托車騎手，身穿皮衣，體型魁梧，而且還醉醺醺的，看起來正不知怎樣發洩心中怒火。他們就站在金輪寺的大門



Many years ago before leaving the home life, a Dharma Master told me that the Venerable Master used to instruct his disciples not to worry about their parents after becoming a monastic, because they would be taken care of in the future. Since my head was shaved, I have been free of this worry, especially after I heard the Master repeat this commitment in one of his lectures on tape.

In September 2016, my sister in China left me a message regarding my mother's critical illness. She was in the ICU. My sister was afraid that she would have very little chance of

making it out of the hospital this time. I never had an opportunity to take care of my mother during those years, but every time I visited home, I would constantly share some Buddhadharma with her. The year 2015 was the first and only time I was able to visit with her as a novice nun, but it was also the last time that I saw her in her final year. I took the Venerable Master's photo with me and set up an altar in the living room for my family to worship.

I tried to convince my mother to bow to the Buddha. At first, she said that she was too tired to do it. I knew she was unhappy about the fact that I had become a nun, but she was unable to find a way to persuade me to change my mind at that time. Therefore, I understood why she was reluctant to initially practice when she actually saw me in person. I thought it would not work if I kept trying to convince her. A few days later, a story came to my mind and lit up my heart, which was about an interesting experience that Dharma Master Sure had during his three steps one bow pilgrimage. So on a beautiful afternoon, I pretended to casually chat with my mother in order to tell her the story. Here I will briefly paraphrase the story from memory.

口，其中一個手拿著鐵鍊，對另一個人說：「喂，你看那兩個是什麼人？他們到底在做什麼？真是兩個怪物！我們得好好修理他們一頓。」另一個回答：「對，對，好好修理修理他們！」說著，兩人做出準備攻擊的架勢。

實法師心裡有點緊張，自己絕不是他們的對手，只能盡量收攝身心，默念觀世音菩薩保佑。正在這時，金輪寺的門突然打開，上人走了出來！他站在兩個摩托車騎手的背後，用手拍拍兩人的肩膀，趁他們一回頭的功夫，就把兩個人帶進了金輪寺。實法師看見以後心裡便打鼓：「怎麼辦？我應該去保護師父嗎？他一個人怎麼對付這兩個醉漢？還是應該老老實實拜佛，不要打這麼多妄想？就算進去，恐怕也幫不上什麼忙……。」

正在這麼猶豫著，金輪寺的門又開了，兩個摩托車騎手走了出



The Flower Adornment Dharma Assembly, the Shurangama Platform, and the Fortytwo Hands and Eyes establish the Heavens and the Earth.

The World Honored Ones of Wonderful Enlightenment and the Bodhisattvas of Equal Enlightenment, with a billion transformation bodies, can turn oceans into mountains.



One day, Dharma Master Sure was happily bowing on the sidewalk in front of Gold Wheel Monastery to meet the Venerable Master. However, two motorcyclists suddenly appeared, wearing leather jackets; these two big guys seemed a little drunk and angry. They stood right at the gate of the monastery, one of them was even holding an iron chain in his hand and asked the other one: “Hey, look at them! Who are these two people? What are they doing? So strange! We should give them a lesson!” It seemed that they were ready to attack.

Dharma Master Sure was a little nervous, he was bowing, and definitely wouldn't fight, so he gathered his body and mind within and prayed to Guan Shi Yin Bodhisattva. Right at that moment, the monastery's front door opened, there came the Master! He was standing behind the two men and tapped their shoulders. While they were about to turn around, the Master just led those big guys into the monastery. Dharma Master Sure struggled in his mind, “Oh, what should I do? Should I go protect Shr Fu? How will he defend himself against these two big men? Or should I just concentrate on bowing instead of having so many false thoughts? Well, even if I go, I probably wouldn't be able to help much...”

While Dharma Master Sure hesitated, after a while the door of Gold Wheel Monastery opened again, and the two motorcyclists came out.

來。這時兩人完全變了，看起來像是天真的小男孩，兩頰紅撲撲的，一手拿著佛珠，另一手提著一袋廟上做的素包子，臉上帶著憨笑，徹底陶醉在無知忘我的喜悅中。不一會兒工夫，他們回過神來，驚奇地互相看著對方，再回頭看看身後的金輪寺，可能心想：「這個人到底是誰？」

聽完上人的神奇小故事，我的母親高興極了，眼裡放著光彩，對上人立刻充滿了極大的信心。我趕快順水推舟讓她去禮拜上人，求上人加被，於是她非常虔誠地給上人叩頭。而且從那天起，她經常自動地去頂禮上人。不但如此，對於我出家的事也完全想通了，還笑說我看起來就是一副出家人的樣子。一個小故事徹底轉變了我的母親，我明白這是上人的加持，否則我不但沒辦法感化她，還只能留下終身的遺憾。

姐姐打電話來的那天夜裡，我與母親簡單通話之後，直覺告訴我她就要走了。站在萬佛城的喜捨院裡，我仰望星空，腦海中浮現上人的開示：無始劫以來，生生世世無數的六親眷屬死去，他們的白骨堆得如須彌山那樣高，而我們為他們流下的眼淚，如四大海水那麼多。

這段話不知道怎樣跑出來的，而且以前所未有的強度充滿我的意識。我想可能是上人讓我要放下，不要太悲傷。可惜我的修行相差太遠了，第二天早上得知母親往生的消息後，我還是忍不住往這四大海水裡又倒進了半桶。

我從姐姐那裡得知母親往生前的細節。就像醫院裡的其他病人一樣，母親身上連著許多儀器，但是她沒有幻想奇蹟的再次出現，而是大吵著要把所有的儀器全部拔掉。當時醫生不同意，因為那是維持她生命的最後希望，儘管醫生也很清楚，她已經走到了人生的盡頭。

由於母親一直吵鬧不休，醫生和姐姐實在拗不過她，最後就同意了。當撤下身上所有的電線之後，本來一直煩躁不安的母親頓時安靜下來，身邊只有我從前帶回去的念佛機緩緩地唱著。母親異常平靜，就這樣在沒有任何干擾的情況下，安然逝去。我相信，這一切默默中都有上人的加被。

母親往生後，我最關心的就是：她去哪裡

Surprisingly, like two innocent school boys, they looked completely different. With red cheeks and silly smiles on their faces, each of them was holding a strand of recitation beads in one hand and a bag of vegetarian buns (baozi) in another hand, they were filled with joy. A few minutes later, they seemed to wake up from that state, looking at each other and the temple behind them, and they likely wondered to themselves: "Who was that man?"

My mother was very delighted after hearing this story, her eyes lit up, and inspired a greater trust in the Venerable Master. I quickly suggested she pray for his support, so she bowed without hesitation. Since then, she often went to bow to the Master sincerely. After that, my mother completely accepted me as a Buddhist nun, and warmly told me that I looked just like a nun. A little story had completely changed my mother. If the Venerable Master didn't help me, there would have been no way to influence my mother, and till the end of my life there would have been an inextricable knot in my heart and deep regret.

That night when my sister left me a message, I had a brief conversation with my mother. Right after hanging up the phone, my immediate instinct told me that she would be leaving very soon. Standing inside Joyous Giving House at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, I looked up at the stars in the sky, and the Venerable Master's words flew into my mind: Since limitless eons, our beloved relatives have passed away, life after life. If we piled up their bones, the pile would be as high as Mount Sumeru. The tears we have shed for them are equal to the water in the four great oceans.

I don't know how these sentences came up, but they kept resounding in my mind and rubbing my consciousness. I thought perhaps the Venerable Master wanted to comfort me so that I would put aside my emotions and not be so sad. Unfortunately, my cultivation still falls short of the Master's expectations. The next morning when I received the sad news of my mother's passing, I couldn't help but pour another half bucket of tears into the four great oceans.

I asked my sister for all the details of my mother's passing. Like all the other patients in the ICU, my mother was connected to all kinds of equipment all over her body. But unlike other patients, she didn't expect another miracle to happen. She shouted that they should disconnect all of them. Of course the doctors didn't agree because that would hasten her death, although they were all very clear that there was no way to save her life.

Finally, the doctors and my sister agreed to disconnect all my mother's equipment because she kept shouting and strongly demanded to pull out all the wires. When my mother's body was all free of them, she dramatically calmed down from her agitation. The only sound in the room was coming from the recitation box

了？就像每個佛教徒一樣，我立牌位、做功課，處處迴向，不過心裡仍然沒有把握。返回中國之前，我獨自來到寧靜的萬佛殿，心裡一遍一遍地問上人：「究竟怎樣能知道母親在哪裡？」

突然之間，一個答案閃現出來：《地藏經》裡面講，若要知道已故六親眷屬的去處，只需虔誠恭誦地藏菩薩名號一萬遍，夢寐之中自然得到答案。我頓時豁然開朗，覺得自己太笨了，從前在家每天誦一部《地藏經》，誦了幾年，現在居然全忘了。於是我感謝上人給我答案，並打算在搭機回中國的途中完成這個任務。

在飛機上的十幾個小時，我緊握念珠，不敢有一絲懈怠。醒著要念，半睡半醒要念，睡著了也得想辦法念。本來以為可以輕鬆完成的一萬遍地藏菩薩聖號，最後是勉強勉強才誦完。回到家以後，我抓緊時間做功課，每天晚上都盼著做夢，能得到一些啟示。就這樣在第七天，我終於做了一個夢。

在夢中我清楚地回到萬佛城，晴朗的天空和青翠的草木，正如現在眼前所見。這時迎面走過來一位比丘尼，淡黃色的長袍和咖啡色的袈裟分明可見。我心想這是誰？來到眼前，這正是我的母親。她的頭光光的，臉上帶著安詳的微笑，她的樣子好極了。醒過來以後，我對母親說：「當初不要我出家，現在跑得比我還快。我還是個沙彌尼，你已經來萬佛城做比丘尼了。」

感恩上人度我的母親，感恩地藏菩薩的願力。上人說他從沒有離開我們，然而對於更多沒有親身見過他的人，對善知識堅固不動的信心，要從何而來？對善知識慈悲無我的精神，能有多少瞭解？如果不是經歷這一切，一位從未謀面的開山祖師，可能只是一個心中的精神偶像。

然而，在面臨生死大事之際，一位真正的大善知識是那麼貼近我們，他的慈悲加被就像巨大的光環籠罩著我們，即使我們一點也沒有察覺到。❀

that I had brought back for her. It was chanting in a very soft tone. My mother stayed very calm until her last peaceful breath. I believe that the Venerable Master quietly supported her till the end.

After that, all I cared about was wondering where she went. As all the Buddhists do, I set up a plaque right away, did all the practices as possible, transferred merit to her all the time, but I was still not quite confident. So before going back to China, I came to the silent Buddha Hall to pray and asked the Master, "How do I know where my mother is? How will I know?" I repeated the question again and again.

All of a sudden, an answer popped up. The *Earth Store Sutra* indicates, "If one would like to know where his deceased relative went, he may sincerely recite the Earth Store Bodhisattva's name for ten thousand times, and he will be able to know it in his dream." This answer relieved me. I was so stupid. Before I left home, I used to recite *Earth Store Sutra* once a day for several years, and now I have completely forgotten. So I said "thank you" to the Master and planned to finish this task on the airplane back to China.

During the ten-hour flight, I didn't dare slack off, but held the recitation beads the whole time. When I was awake, I recited; when I was half awake, I kept reciting; when I was asleep, I would also try to recite. I thought that I could easily finish this job, but I almost wasn't able to complete the full ten thousand times. Once I arrived in China, I tried to recite different Sutras and every night I hoped to have a dream in response. On the seventh day after my mother's passing, I finally did have a dream.

In the dream, I clearly saw myself standing on a pathway in the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, the blue sky and the green trees are just like what we see today. A Bihkshuni is walking towards me, and I can clearly see her light yellow robe and brown sash. I wonder who she might be. As she comes closer, I realize that it is my mother! There is no hair on her head, and she looks really wonderful with a beautiful smile on her face. After I got up, I talked to my mother: "Well, you opposed me becoming a nun, but now you have run even faster than I. I am still a novice, but you have already been ordained."

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Venerable Master for saving my mother, and also to Earth Store Bodhisattva's great vows. The Venerable Master used to say that he never left us. As part of the next generation who have never met the Master before, how do we give rise a solid trust in him? How do we truly understand his selfless spirit and great compassion? Those who have never experienced the Master's teachings might consider this founding patriarch to be like a spiritual idol.

But, when we have to face life or death moments, a genuine wise teacher will be very close to us. His compassionate support is like a great aura shining upon all of us even though sometimes we think that we don't feel anything at all. ❀