

# A CUP OF COMFORT FOR TEACHERS 师恩难忘

主编 (美)科琳·塞尔



在坎坷的人生道路上,  
他们用辛勤的劳动为人们点燃明亮的灯,  
开启人们求知的心扉。  
warming stories of people who motivate and inspire  
【一杯安慰系列】

\*英汉对照\*

青岛出版社



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# 师恩难忘

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译者 张德玉 杜 敏



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## 序 言

科琳·塞尔

《一杯安慰》系列丛书问世于新千年伊始。该丛书为人们提供了一个交流平台，普通人可以在这里讲述他们的真实故事，讲述感动过他们的经历和人。他们的个人经历，使人振奋，揭示了赋予我们人性、带给我们希望和快乐的普遍道理。我希望该故事丛书能为不同背景、不同文化的人们架起一座交流和沟通的桥梁。诚然，以书为桥不是一个新的概念。

自从人类获得交流沟通的能力以来，我们就用故事来传播最发人深省的人生道理，传授最重要的生活经验。千万年来，故事这一非同寻常的人类礼物指引着我们人生的道路，带给我们心灵的慰藉，让我们了解自己的内心世界，是连接我们和他人之间的纽带。

本书中的故事跨越了不同的大陆，漂洋过海，把北美和中国不同地域的人们连接在一起。我和《一杯安慰》的各位作者享此殊荣，不胜荣幸。我们衷心地希望书中故事给你们带去安慰和快乐。

徐莉娜 译



## PREFACE

Colleen Sell

The Cup of Comfort anthology series was created at the dawn of the new millennium to provide a forum by which ordinary people could share true stories about the experiences and people that have inspired them. My hope was that these uplifting personal stories would create a bridge between people of different circumstances and cultures by reminding them of the universal truths that make us all human and that give us hope and happiness. It is certainly not a new concept.

Since human beings first acquired the ability to communicate, we have used stories to share humanity's most empowering truths and most powerful lessons. For hundreds of thousands of years, the uniquely human gift of story has guided and comforted us, connecting us to our inner spirits and to one another.

And now the stories in this book are reaching across continents and oceans to connect people in North America with people in China. The Cup of Comfort authors and I are humbled and honored by this privilege, and we sincerely hope that these stories bring you comfort and joy.



## 译者序

在坎坷的人生道路上,是谁为我们点燃了一盏最明亮的灯;在荆棘的人生旅途中,是谁甘做引路人,为我们指明前进的方向……是您,老师,把雨露洒遍大地,把幼苗辛勤哺育!看这满园鲜花、遍地桃李,无不渗透着您的心血!

通过本书,你将记住那位竭尽全力使学生敞开心扉的老师,那位勇于面对挑战默默无私奉献的老师,那位精心传递知识火种、帮学生到达成功彼岸的老师,那位为学生铺平人生道路的老师……他们或貌不惊人或美丽大方,或和蔼可亲或严厉至极,或沉默寡言或个性开朗,但他们内心所蕴含的殷殷真情无时无刻不感动着学生们的心灵,影响着他们的人生历程。

正如爱因斯坦所说:“老师崇高的人格魅力如神奇的钥匙,唤醒我们创新的思维,开启我们求知的心房。”让我们尽情领略本书中不同教师的迥然风采吧。

中国海洋大学 张德玉 杜 敏



## 目 录

Why I Teach 我之所以教书 .....	[ 1 ]
A Pair of Nothings 二乘以零得几 .....	[ 6 ]
Because It Matters 因为有必要 .....	[ 12 ]
The First Day 初为人师 .....	[ 20 ]
Snapshots 生活小照 .....	[ 28 ]
What Teaching Justin Taught Me 天生我才必有用 .....	[ 36 ]
What I Never Learned in Kindergarten 我没上过的幼儿园 .....	[ 44 ]
The Gift 礼物 .....	[ 51 ]
Ant Bites 食袜蚁 .....	[ 58 ]
Grieving the F 让人痛心的“F” .....	[ 64 ]
A Lesson Learned 难忘的一课 .....	[ 71 ]
Lost and Found 失与得 .....	[ 80 ]
Testing My Mettle 命悬一线 .....	[ 85 ]
There's No Substitute 没人愿意代课 .....	[ 90 ]

They Wanted to Teach 献身教育 .....	[ 97 ]
Grade School Lessons for a Lifetime 终生受益的小学课程 .....	[ 107 ]
The Educated Dude 少爷念过书 .....	[ 113 ]
In the Light of a Master 老师引我前行 .....	[ 124 ]
Show-and-Tell 表演与讲述 .....	[ 130 ]
Field Trip 田间之旅 .....	[ 140 ]
A Matter of Trust 信任的力量 .....	[ 146 ]
Last Day 最后一天 .....	[ 153 ]
I Can't Read 我不识字 .....	[ 164 ]
The Joy of Learning 乐在学中 .....	[ 170 ]
Mama Mentor 亦师亦母 .....	[ 180 ]
Innocence and the Divine 童真与神圣 .....	[ 189 ]
The Broken Heart 痛失吾爱 .....	[ 195 ]





## Why I Teach

I know my students. Masses of awkward seventh graders swarm the halls of my rural middle school each day, hauling backpacks over one shoulder, talking and shuffling along the tile hallway floor<sup>①</sup> from class to class. I watch them like a general from my post (my classroom door) and smile at the fact that I can call each one by name.

I know their secrets, their stories. Dora slouches<sup>②</sup> and is shy, and I know it is because she spends all her time at home trying not to get noticed, so she won't feel the brunt of her stepfather's angry hand. Jay can pitch like a tenth grader, and all the girls swoon when he and his blond hair strut by, but I know he doesn't really even like baseball that much (he plays because his dad wants him to) and he is too scared to ask out the girl he likes. The kids think Keith is just the class clown, but I know of his dreams to become an astronaut (and I've recommended him for space camp). I know my students because I am their writing teacher. They trust me with their stories and so I am given the privilege of having a secret bond with each and every one of them.

I teach my students about the power of words, and I try to let them find release and expression through writing. We learn to trust each other in writing class because we learn how hard it is to write openly and honestly, and we learn that sharing your words





takes courage. I see courage every day in my classroom, and I am always amazed at the words that come from my students' hearts.

One such example of courage took place during author's chair, a sharing session at the end of our writer's workshop in which students volunteer to share what they have written. We had a new student to the school, Al. Al was small and, with his dimpled cheeks and baby face, he looked younger than his classmates.

In fact, when Al was first introduced to the class two weeks earlier, one student said, "You're not in the seventh grade. You're a baby."

To that, Al quickly responded, "I'm Al Billsington, and I *am* in the seventh grade."

Despite his obvious courage, Al had been with us for only a short while and was still trying to fit in, so I was a little surprised when he volunteered to read during author's chair. I had one of those teacher moments, when I smiled and nodded for him to read, while inside I said a silent prayer that the other students would not tease the new kid after he read. The room fell silent, and Al began to read.

"If I had one wish, it would be to meet my dad..." He started out loud and clear and held the attention of my usually restless seventh graders as he read on for what seemed like fifteen minutes. He told of how he had never known his father, who had left the family when Al was a baby. He shared the intimate details of his struggles to be the only man in the house at such a young age, of having to mow the lawn and fix broken pipes. He revealed to us the thoughts that raced through his mind constantly about where his father might be and why he might have left.

My eyes scanned the room for snickering faces<sup>③</sup> of seventh-grade kids who I knew were prone to jump at a weakness and try to crack a joke, but there were no snickers. There were no rolling eyes or gestures insinuating boredom or pending attacks<sup>④</sup>. All of my seventh-grade students were listening, really listening. Their eyes were on Al, and they were absorbing his words like sponges. My heart was full.

Al continued on, telling of nightmares at night, of never knowing a man so important



to him, yet so unreal. I could hear his voice growing shaky as he read such passionate and honest words, and I saw a tear roll down one of his dimpled cheeks. I looked to the audience. There were tears on Jessica's face and on the faces of a few others seated quietly, intently listening.

*They are letting him do this, I thought. They are allowing him to share something he perhaps has never shared before, and they aren't judging him or teasing him.* I felt a lump in my own throat.

Al finished, struggling now to read his last sentence. "If I had one wish, it would be to meet my dad, so I wouldn't. . ." His tears were rolling now, and so were ours, "... so I wouldn't have to close my eyes in bed every night just wondering what he looks like."

Without any cue from me, the class stood up and applauded. Al smiled from ear to ear as they all rushed him with hugs. I was floored.

This is why I teach. I teach because I am allowed to learn the stories behind the faces. I teach because I can watch kids grow and laugh and learn and love. I teach because of students like Al.



— Whitney L. Grady

**Notes:**

- ① ... shuffling along the tile hallway floor: .....沿着走廊的瓷砖地面慢吞吞地走着
- ② slouch: 无精打采, 懒洋洋
- ③ My eyes scanned the room for snickering faces...: 我扫视了一下屋子, 寻找那些窃笑的面孔.....
- ④ ... insinuating boredom or pending attacks: .....显示出厌烦或准备攻击的姿势



## 我之所以教书

我对我的学生们了如指掌。在我们的乡村中学里,每天一群青涩的七年级学生,肩上吊着背包,吵吵嚷嚷地,沿着走廊的瓷砖地面,慢吞吞地从一间教室走向另一间教室。我站在自己的岗位——教室门口——看着他们,仿佛一个将军在检阅自己的士兵。我为能叫出他们每个人的名字而欣喜。

我知道他们的秘密、他们的故事。多拉是个无精打采而羞涩的女孩。我知道这是因为她在家时把所有时间都花在尽量不惹人注意上,以免挨上继父那愤怒的拳头。杰能像一个十年级学生一样扔棒球。当他顶着一头金发昂首走过时,女生们通常都会眩晕。但是我却知道他自己并不喜欢打棒球,只是迫于父命而已;而且他也很害怕约喜欢的女孩子出去。学生们都认为凯斯只不过是班上的小丑,可我知道他一直梦想成为一名宇航员(同时我也把他推荐到一个太空夏令营)。我了解我的学生是因为我是他们的作文老师。他们对我敞开心扉,于是我就有了与他们分享秘密的特权。

我教他们文字的力量,教他们尝试从文字中释放自己,表达自己。在作文课上我们学会了相互信任,因为我们深知:诚实、公开地写作并非易事;分享自己的语言更是需要鼓足勇气的。每天在教室里我都能看到这种勇气,也常常震惊于学生们的肺腑之言。

这里就是一个考验勇气的例子。它发生在小作者讲座——“作者工作室”里学生们自愿分享文字的一个环节中。学校里新来了一个学生阿尔。他很瘦小,两个酒窝再加上一张娃娃脸,让他看起来比所有的同学都要小。

事实上,两周前当阿尔第一次来到班上时,有一个同学就说:“你不应该上七年级吧,你还是个小孩呢!”

阿尔当即回答说:“我叫阿尔·比尔史灵顿,我上七年级。”

虽然他的勇气是显而易见的,但毕竟来到我们中间不久,还处在试着融入这个班集体的



阶段。因而,当他毛遂自荐要在小作者讲座上朗读自己的作文时,我还是有点吃惊。像往常一样,我微笑着点头示意他开始朗读,内心却在为他默默地祈祷,希望其他同学不会奚落这位新来的同学。教室里安静下来,阿尔开始朗读了。

“如果说我有什么心愿的话,那将是见到我的爸爸……”他的声音洪亮而清晰,在接下来的大约 15 分钟的朗读过程中,紧紧抓住了我那些平常就骚动不安的七年级学生的心。他讲述了自己从未见过父亲的原因:在他还是个孩子的时候父亲就离家出走了。他与大家分享了一些隐私的细节,如自己如此年轻,就为成为家里唯一的男人而努力,再如刈草坪和修理下水管道等。他还透露出自己心里一直有着父亲究竟在哪里,以及他为什么离开的疑问。

我环视了一下屋子,寻找那些窃笑的面孔。因为,我深知,这些七年级学生习惯拿别人的弱点来开心、作乐。但是并没有人笑。我很欣慰地看到,没有人左顾右盼或作出显示厌烦或准备攻击的姿势。所有人都全神贯注地听着。他们看着阿尔,像海绵吸水一般不放过每一句话。我心满意足。

阿尔继续朗读着,述说自己的那些噩梦,述说自己从来没有感觉到一个男人对自己来说如此地重要,而离自己又如此地遥远。当他读着如此打动人心而又真诚的话语时,我能感到他的声音越来越颤抖,还看到一颗泪珠从他那挂着酒窝的脸颊上滑落。我看了看观众,只见杰希卡和其他几个坐在那里静听的孩子的脸上也泪光滢滢。

“他们允许他这么做。”我想,“他们允许他分享一些可能从来没有分享过的东西,并且他们并没有看不起他、嘲笑他!”我哽咽了。

阿尔快结束了,正费力地朗读最后一句话。“如果说我有什么心愿的话,那将是见到我的爸爸,那么我就不会——”他已经泪如雨下,我们也一样。“那么我就不会每晚躺在床上,想像他的模样了。”

在没有我任何指示的情况下,全体同学站起来开始鼓掌。当大家纷纷跑上前去拥抱他的时候,阿尔会心地笑了。

这便是我之所以教书的原因。之所以教书,是因为我可以了解到那些面孔下面隐藏的故事;是因为我可以看着孩子们成长、欢笑、学习和友爱;更是因为那些像阿尔一般的孩子们。

——惠特尼·L·葛拉德



## A Pair of Nothings

I held my breath as I watched my brother's finger trace through the newspaper listing of teachers assigned to third graders. I squeezed my eyes shut tight<sup>①</sup>. *Please, please, don't let it be Miss Ball.*

"Miss Ball."

My brother's words hit me like a punch to the stomach. Wasn't it bad enough that third graders had to learn their multiplication tables<sup>②</sup> before they could pass to fourth grade? No one wanted to be in Miss Ball's class to do it. She was scary.



According to my father, Miss Ball's badly scarred face was the result of smallpox in her youth. Knowing the cause didn't diminish the effect. Tall and slender, with eyes as black and shiny as onyx and lean fingers that could snap like a rifle shot, she was the most intimidating figure<sup>③</sup> on the entire second floor.

That September I dragged my newly shod feet into class, completely demoralized by my class assignment<sup>④</sup>. With such a stern demeanor<sup>⑤</sup>, Miss Ball would have even less of a sense of humor than the teachers I'd experienced previously. No tolerance for a creative imagination in her class. I prepared myself to hate every minute of the next nine months.

Reading was the first class. A breeze for me. My older brother Doug had taught me to read when I was four. Geography was a snap, too. Same with history. When we came back to the classroom after lunch recess, there it was on the blackboard: the first





row of the dreaded multiplication table. The “zero times.” The school chili gurgled in my stomach. By the end of the day, we would be repeating the numbers in that mindless prisoner-of-war style I had learned to resent from my first day of first grade. I planted my face on my fists.

Zero times zero made sense. I could even accept one times zero. But I had to question why two times zero was still zero. I was just a farm kid, but I knew when you had two of anything you had *something*. My hand shot up, wagging.

“Doesn’t that two mean anything?”

Miss Ball stared at me, her black eyes unreadable. My classmates stared at me. I held my breath until my vision blurred. Maybe it really was possible to slither to the floor and sink into one of the cracks between those worn hardwood slats.

Then Miss Ball did something beyond my realm of experience. She smiled. A gentle smile. Not that evil smile teachers get when they sense a smart aleck in the class. I’d expected reproach. What I got was goose bumps<sup>®</sup>. This was definitely new territory for me. Now everyone was staring at the woman at the front of the room and not at me. I could breathe again.

She turned to the blackboard and drew a large rectangle, which she divided into halves. “This,” she said, pointing to the blank interior of the left block, “is a nothing. A zero.” Next she gestured to include both portions of the divided rectangle. “And these are two nothings. Class, what do you get when you have one nothing and one nothing?”

“Nooothiiiing, Miiiss Baaall.”

I stared at that divided rectangle long after Miss Ball and my classmates had moved on to discuss other zeroes. A blank domino<sup>⑦</sup>. A pair of nothings. I wanted to hug myself with delight. At last, a teacher who could illustrate a point, who could make me visualize rather than merely saying, “Just because.” Even back then, before analysis of learning behavior became popular, she was perceptive about some students learning better through visual aids and reinforcement rather than auditory instruction.



In later lessons, when her personal stock of colored chalk appeared, I discovered Miss Ball could draw flowering trees with nests hiding in them, clouds with exotic birds flying around the sky, and rays of sunshine and rippling water with lily pads that looked real. She could write poems, too. Short poems with exciting new words that expanded my vocabulary and my horizons.

Miss Ball was a kindred soul. A creative soul. A beautiful soul.

Later in the year a box appeared on the activity table. It was full of 3-by-8-inch cards. On each card was a word. On the back of the card was the definition of that word. Nothing in my education to that point had ever struck such a spark of excitement. Words were some of my most favorite things in the world. I found words fascinating, not so much the sounds they made when you spoke them as their appearance, their meanings, how they could be employed in a sentence to alter meanings. These were all new words, big ones, 250 of them. This was not the vocabulary you learned on the farm. Not a single domestic animal resided in their midst. The box represented the lexicon of journalists, scholars, and philosophers.

Like a new kid in class, the words became my friends. I copied them, played with them, and introduced them into my conversation. And, like any other eight-year-old, I'm sure I mistreated them on occasion. I hardly noticed that none of my classmates shared my enthusiasm. The words were my companions on the baseball field and playground as well as in the library and the classroom.

Tears stung my eyes that final day with Miss Ball. I had more to learn from this wonderful teacher. She had so much more to teach. There were more boxes full of those musical, magical new words.

Fifty years have passed since I sat behind that old wooden desk with notches and initials carved by generations of students and darkened with decades of varnish, ink, and grime. Of all my teachers, I remember Miss Ball most, not for her flawed complexion and intimidating demeanor, but for her ability to spark the imagination of a dirt-poor,



pigtailed country girl. Thanks to Matilda Ball, the desire to learn burns as brightly for me today as it did when she drew that simple white-chalk rectangle filled with a pair of nothings.

— Kathleen Ewing

**Notes:**

- ① I squeezed my eyes shut tight. 我紧紧闭上眼睛。
- ② multiplication table: 乘法表
- ③ the most intimidating figure: 最令人感到恐怖的身影
- ④ ... completely demoralized by my class assignment: ……被课堂作业整得筋疲力尽。demoralize, 意为“泄气、沮丧”。
- ⑤ stern demeanor: 严酷的举止。demeanor, 指“举止、风度”。
- ⑥ goose bump: 鸡皮疙瘩
- ⑦ a blank domino: 一个空白的多米诺骨牌。多米诺骨牌: 一个小长方木头或塑料块儿, 其面分两半, 每半或者空白或者刻有一到六个类似于骰子上的点。



## 二乘以零得几

报纸上列出了教三年级学生的老师名单, 哥哥正在查找。看着他的手指在报纸上划过, 我紧闭双眼, 屏住了呼吸。拜托, 拜托, 千万别是鲍老师……

“鲍老师。”

哥哥的话如一拳打在胃上, 给了我重重一击。三年级的学生在升入四年级之前必须学乘法表, 这还不算糟糕吗? 没人想进鲍老师班学乘法。她让人望而却步。