

序：我眼中的何文君

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何文君住在城里，我住在乡下。我们本来无缘认识，但老天还是让我认识了她。

我高考连续落榜了两年，已经打算一心一意在农村住下去，盖间瓦房，娶个媳妇，也许一辈子就没有现在这样复杂了。但老天没有饶过我，正在我心灰意懒的时候，县教育局突发奇想，在县第一中学开了一个高考外语补习班，招收那些外语类的高考落榜生，而且国家给以补助。

考上大学，离开农村，我的梦想又一次死灰复燃。我报名参加了补习班，以几乎最后一名的成绩，勉强被录取进去，结果还被选为班长，据说是因为我的落榜经验丰富。

这个班几乎都是农村来的孩子，只有几个城里的学生，何文君就是其中之一。农村孩子穿着很土，城里孩子穿着很洋；农村孩子一脸灰色，城里孩子一脸灿烂。一眼就能看出谁是农村孩子，

谁是城里孩子。何文君充满了城市女孩的光辉，是我们班里最漂亮的女孩之一，而且有着城市女孩的傲气，我们这些男生自惭形秽，都不敢和像她这样的女孩接近。

学习很艰苦，大家每天学到深夜，晚上还要在被窝里打着手电背英语。时间过得很快，不知不觉大半年过去了，大家的学习成绩都迅速提高。何文君的学习成绩很好，尤其是她的文学水平，到了让我们崇拜的地步，她的语文作文常常被老师当作范文来读。我通过自己的努力，各门功课的分数也冲到了前面。

共同的努力，终于使农村孩子和城里孩子变成了一个集体，大家一边竞争，一边互相鼓励。全班其乐融融，在学习之余经常一起出去吃饭、逛街、到野河里游泳。由于学习成绩整体上升，每一个人都对自己的高考充满了信心。

高考结束后，成绩出来了，我被北京大学录取，其他很多同学也都被名牌大学录取了。我们一直认为何文君应该进名牌大学，可她却意外落榜了。同学们为录取通知书兴高采烈的时候，我看到她在教室的角落里流泪。我们都不明白她怎么会没有考上，后来才知道高考前几个月，她母亲一直身体不好，她花了大量的时间照顾母亲，影响了她的考前备战。

当时我们已经是很好的朋友，我上北京前请她吃了饭，她和其他一些同学送我到火车站，那是我第一次见到火车，也是第一次坐火车。火车把我带进了陌生的城市，陌生的生活，我穿着打

满补丁的衣服，在北大开始了自己的大学生活。

何文君继续在家乡的县城生活着，没有再考大学。假期我回到家乡去看她，发现她眼里常常充满忧伤。没有考上大学对她来说是沉重的打击，一直到今天也是她心头的痛。她反复叮嘱我，写序时一定要不提她没有考上大学的事情。

后来，我大学毕业了，工作了，有了家庭，个人忙着自己的世间琐事，老同学之间的联系就越来越少。再后来，就几乎断了联系。

三年前，我接到一个意外的电话，一下子就听出来是何文君的声音，快二十年过去了，她的声音依然一点没变，一如既往地好听。她说她已经到了美国很多年，一直在打听我的消息，后来听人说我在中国做新东方学校，于是查到了学校的公开电话才找到了我。

前年，她和丈夫带着两个孩子回国探亲，专程到北京来看我。我发现她成了一个很好的妻子和母亲，年轻时的忧伤在脸上没有了痕迹。她说她有一个好丈夫，所以开心。但让我吃惊的是，她一直没有停止学习，一直对文学感兴趣，一直用中文写东西，后来又用英文写东西。她写出来的英文是如此流畅，很多在国外正规大学学习的中国留学生都不可能达到她的水平。她说她正在写一本中英文对照的读物，叫《马乐美国求学记》，讲述的是中国出生的孩子到美国上学遇到的种种故事和意外。我听了大为感动，

鼓励她一定要把作品完成。

现在大家手里的这本《马乐美国求学记》，就是何文君的作品，其中的每一句中文和英文，都是她自己写出来的。作品出来后，中国少年儿童出版社抢着出这本书。但看在老同学的面子上，新东方终于抢到了这本书的合作出版权。

何文君的两个孩子已经长大了，但她对孩子的爱延伸到了她的作品中，也延伸到了她日常的生活中。她在美国开了一个幼儿园，很快幼儿园里就挤满了学生。因为，每一个孩子的家长都能从她眼神里看到她对孩子们的热爱。

何文君还在写作，她还要写《马乐美国求学记2》、《马乐美国求学记3》，要把她的书写成一个系列，来指导中国学生的英语学习，使中国学生对国外更加了解，使自己能够对中西文化的交流作点贡献。

我知道她能够做到。因为她已经做到了很多人上了大学和上了研究生都做不到的事情。我们很多人都在抱怨命运对自己不公平，但命运其实就在自己的手中。

何文君因为对生命的热爱，掌握了自己的命运。作为她的朋友，我感到骄傲，是真的骄傲！



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1. Prologue



My Chinese name is Ma Le. My mom told me that while searching for my beautiful name, she **flipped**¹⁾ through every single page of *The Xinhua Dictionary* and *The Collection of Chinese Names*, but she still couldn't find one she liked.

She couldn't decide on my name until my dad returned from the United States. Daddy said, "I hope my child is happy when he grows up." **Thus**²⁾, my name was born. My first name really means Happy in Chinese. I have carried it for seven years.

Ever since I came to America a year ago, I've had an English name: M-i-c-h-a-e-l. Do you know the famous basketball player Michael Jordan? We have the same first name. Each time someone calls my name, I feel very proud. It is as if Michael Jordan were my brother.

1) flip [flɪp] *vi.* 翻动书页(或纸张), flip through 则是浏览的意思

2) thus [ðʌs] *adv.* 因而, 如此



1、引子

我的中文名字叫马乐。妈妈跟我说为了给我起个好名字，她翻遍了《新华字典》的每一页，还有一本叫作《人名大全》的书，但还是没有找到一个她喜欢的名字。

直到爸爸从美国回来，我的名字才被定了下来。爸爸说：“希望我们的孩子长大后快乐。”于是我的名字就诞生了，在中文中，“乐”是“快乐”的意思。这个名字跟随我七年了。

自从一年前我来到美国，我又有了一个英文名字——迈克。你知道著名篮球运动员迈克·乔丹吗？我们的名字是一样的。每当别人叫我的名字时，我就感到特别自豪，就好像乔丹是我的亲哥哥似的。





2. The First Day of School



On the first day of school, I was very nervous.

Before going to bed, I opened and closed my backpack several times. There was nothing in it but two pencils, a small pack of goldfish crackers, and a bottle of water. I kept thinking something missing.

My mom comforted me again and again, “Everybody has his or her first time to go to school. The teacher will be waiting for you at the door.” I still didn’t feel so confident. My heart beat very fast when I thought about tomorrow.

My first day of school was different from any other child’s.

First, I had just come to the United States. My English was not good enough at the time. I was also very shy (My kindergarten teacher said so).

Second, my kindergarten was in one building. The **elementary**¹⁾ school was in a lot of buildings connected by the **hallways**²⁾. I felt



like I was in a **labyrinth**³ while I was at school. The hallways went in every direction. There were many doors in the hallways. They all looked the same to me. The only difference was the big pencil hanging on every door of the classrooms. On the big pencil there was a teacher's name.

Third, I had never ridden a bus before. What would happen if I got on the wrong bus or got off the bus too early? What would I do then?

There were many more reasons that kept me awake. I went to the bathroom three times, drank water twice, and tried to count to a thousand. I still couldn't fall asleep.

Mom gave me a glass of milk and told me that milk could help me sleep. I started counting all over again and fell asleep at last.

Maybe because I slept very late last night, I didn't hear the alarm clock until mom woke me up. There were only 15 minutes before I had to leave. I was in a big hurry. I **shoved**⁴ my food into my mouth and **gulped**⁵ my milk down in two seconds and rushed to the entrance of my **subdivision**⁶ to wait for the bus.

Ha, there were already about twenty kids of different ages waiting for the bus. I went to the end of the line.

At seven o'clock, the bus came on time. All the parents kissed their children and said their goodbyes. My mom gave a kiss and said, "I'm sure you'll have a great time in school. Bye!"

There was one girl who didn't want to get onto the bus. Her



mother pushed her onto the bus, but she jumped off and ran into her mother's arms, crying, "I don't want to go to school." Her mother pushed her back to the bus, but she jumped off again. This happened three times and the people all laughed.

The bus began to move, getting further and further from my mom. I felt tears in my eyes. Oh no. I shook my head, trying not to let them come out. If somebody saw me crying, they would laugh at me, I was sure.



After I got on the school bus, I didn't dare to look around and kept my eyes on the back of the head of the person in front of me. I didn't realize a boy was sitting beside me until the bus almost got to school.

I smiled at him instead of saying Hi.



The boy said to me politely, “Hi, my name is Charlie. I’m going to first grade.”

I had just begun to feel bored when this stranger spoke to me. Excited, I introduced myself with my poor English, not caring if he could understand or not.

Surprisingly enough, he did understand what I said. He held out his hand and said, “It’s very nice to meet you.”

I shook his hand shyly.

It just so happened that we were in the same class!

We got off the bus, and started to look for our classroom. After a couple of turns, we finally found it. I thought I would have gotten lost if I hadn’t followed Charlie.

Ms. Cindy was already there waiting for her students to arrive at the door. As soon as she saw us, she said, “Good morning, Charlie! Good morning Michael!”

I replied politely, “Good morning, Ms. Cindy!”

I still remembered the time I just came to the United States a year ago. My English was not very good. I always pronounced “La” as “Na”. I made some other silly mistakes too. Also, instead of calling the teacher “Ms.” or “Mrs.”, I just called her “Teacher”. Luckily, my teacher never got mad at me. She thought I was very cute. I called her “Teacher” during the rest of time. Today I didn’t call Ms. Cindy “Teacher”. I didn’t want the other people to laugh at me again.



After the bell rang, we sat in a circle on the rug to introduce ourselves. When it was my turn, I forgot what I supposed to say. Everybody was staring at me. That made me even more nervous. I even could feel my lips **quivering**⁷⁾.

Ms. Cindy said, “That’s OK. Let’s **skip**⁸⁾ Michael. He can do it later.”

After all of them finished, Ms. Cindy asked me, “Are you ready, Michael?”

I was feeling much better by then. I started to speak with my broken English, “My name is Michael, and I’m from China.”

Ms. Cindy was the first to applaud. She said, “I think China is a country far, far away. Welcome to our country.” Everybody started to clap. Andrew, sitting beside me, **groaned**⁹⁾, “I wish I were from China.”

Ms. Cindy showed us around the classroom. She showed us the library, the computer lab, and where we should sit to do our work.

I walked around the classroom and opened two books from the library. Most of the words I didn’t recognize. Then I went to the computer lab, and clicked blindly. I didn’t find anything interesting except some strange pictures. I walked to the sink. Something caught my eyes. There was a round thing sitting next to the sink.

What was it? I had never seen this anywhere before. I stared



at the round thing for a while. It was made of metal and shaped like a bird tail. Curiously, I used my right hand to press down on the end of the metal object with all my weight. Guess what happened?

The water shot straight up to the ceiling and fell on everybody standing around.

“It’s raining!” Someone screamed.

“What’s going on?” Ms. Cindy asked with a puzzled expression.

“I’m so sorry!” I cried out in fright.

When Ms. Cindy looked at my surprised face, she realized my situation.

I was told the thing that looked like a bird tail was for drinking water. A small press would send the water shooting out. I had pressed too hard, making the water **squirt**⁽¹⁰⁾ to the ceiling.

Ms. Cindy looked at her wet students. She began to laugh. Soon, everybody was laughing. Ms. Cindy said, “Michael, thank you for bringing us the man-made rain.”

The morning passed so fast. It was lunch time now. Ms. Cindy told us to go to the **cafeteria**⁽¹¹⁾ in line.

There were already a lot of people in the cafeteria. They all looked bigger than us. I was told all the first and second graders had lunch at the same time.

It was like a **buffet**⁽¹²⁾ except that there were not as many choices.



I didn't know the name of anything except fried chicken. What should I eat? I got nervous again.

It was my turn now. The lunch lady asked me if I wanted salad or soup. I didn't really understand what she said. By looking at the person in front of me, I told her: "I want the same one as him." I also got a small jar of chocolate milk from the cooler.

Sitting on the bench, I started to look at my lunch: there were four pieces of fried chicken, a small vegetable salad, a bowl of reddish soup and an apple. They all looked so nice to me.

I took my spoon and got a spoonful of that soup.

What kind of soup was this? It was too late to change my mind.

I **reluctantly**¹³⁾ **swallowed**¹⁴⁾ the soup and then took a big sip of chocolate milk to avoid the nasty taste.

My **tummy**¹⁵⁾ probably didn't like the soup. While I was chewing on the second chicken, I felt something pushing up from my tummy. I tried to swallow it down but it didn't work.

"Ah..." My mouth opened so big that everything I ate poured out.

"Oh, no!" The people sitting beside me stood up quickly and escaped away. Some kids even covered their nose. I stood there helplessly, not knowing what to do. I wished there were a hole on the ground I could get into to hide my **embarrassment**¹⁶⁾.

Ms. Cindy came over. She arranged the kids to eat at another table and tried to comfort me, "That's OK!"



Back in the classroom, Ms. Cindy asked me, “Is this your first time drinking American soup? Didn’t you like it?”

“No, no, I didn’t...” I shook my head hard.

“Ha...” All the people laughed. I laughed along with them too.

Ms. Cindy said, “What a special day we had today!”

- 1) elementary [ˌɛlɪˈmentəri] *adj.* 初等的; elementary school 是小学, 初中是 middle school, 高中是 highschool, 而大学则是 university
- 2) hallway [ˈhɔ:lweɪ] *n.* 走廊
- 3) shove [ʃʌv] *vt.* <口> 推挤, 强使; 这里用来形容马乐急急忙忙吃东西十分形象, 所以要记住这个用法——shove food into one’s mouth
- 4) labyrinth [læbərɪnθ] *n.* 迷宫
- 5) gulp [gʌlp] *vt.* 吞, 一口吞(下)
- 6) subdivision [ˈsʌbdɪvɪʒən] *n.* 细分, 一部; 这里是社区的意思
- 7) quiver [ˈkwɪvə] *vi.* 颤抖; 大家想到震动, 一般只会想起 shake 这个词, 其实表示震动的词是很多的, quiver 是形容轻微快速地颤抖, 这里用来形容人的嘴唇抖动十分恰当
- 8) skip [skɪp] *v.* 跳跃
- 9) groan [grəʊn] *v.* 呻吟着说
- 10) squirt [skwɜ:t] *v.* 喷出
- 11) cafeteria [ˈkæfɪˈtɛəriə] *n.* 食堂
- 12) buffet [ˈbʊfeɪ; (ʌs)bəˈfeɪ] *n.* 自助餐
- 13) reluctantly [rɪˈlʌktəntli] *adv.* 不情愿地, 嫌恶地
- 14) swallow [ˈswɒləʊ] *vt.* 咽, 吞没
- 15) tummy [ˈtʌmɪ] *n.* 肚子
- 16) embarrassment [ɪmˈbærəsmənt] *n.* 困窘



2、开学第一天

开学第一天，心情很是紧张。

睡觉前我把书包打开又关上，关上又打开，重复了好几遍。其实，书包里除了两支铅笔、一小包金鱼饼干、一瓶水，什么也没有。可我总觉得忘了什么似的。

妈妈安慰我了一遍又一遍，说：“每个人都有第一次上学的经历，老师会在教室门口等你的。”可我的心里还是七上八下的，一想起明天，心就一阵乱跳。

我第一天上学和别人第一天上学当然不一样啊。

第一、我才来美国不久，英文还不太好，而且，还很害羞（这是我的幼儿园老师说的）。

第二、在幼儿园，所有的活动都是在同一栋房子里，而小学里，很多栋房子连在一起，走进学校大门，就像走进了迷宫。里面的走廊四通八达，走廊里有很多门，对我而言它们看上去都是一样的，惟一的区别是每个教室的门上都挂着一支大铅笔，上面写着老师的名字。

第三、我从没坐过校车，万一上错了车或者早下了车怎么办？

还有第四、第五，很多理由，让我无法入睡。我一连去了三趟厕所，喝了两次水，从1数到1000，还是不能入睡。

最后妈妈给了我一杯牛奶，告诉我说牛奶能够帮助睡眠，于是我再从1开始数，记不得数到多少，终于睡着了。

可能是昨晚很晚才睡着的缘故，连闹钟响我都没听到，直到妈妈把我叫醒，可离校车来的时间只剩15分钟了。我一边急得跺脚，一边往嘴里塞