

White Buddha: Portrait of an ESL Teacher in China

"Melvin..."

"Where was he from?"

"Portland, Oregon."

"That's weird."

"It's a weird place..."

"But he hated Portland, like, really, really hated Portland, always shitted on its hipsters, and politically correct, passive aggressive people..."

"He certainly was not passive aggressive."

"Wasn't he like 43?"

"Nah, he was 33, 34, 35, I think, but looked older because of his balding. Not sure why he didn't just shave off the sides."

"Crazy how he ran, every day practically, yet he still had such a big beer belly. And I don't ever remember him drinking beer, which is unusual for an ESL type."

"Soda and junk food, comrade..."

"Oh, he guzzled assloads of soda. His apartment was carpeted in coke cans, candy bar wrappers..."

"Remember that meme, the deep fake of him as Mord from *Game of Thrones*..."

"A Lannister always pays his debts."

"I hope Melvin didn't see that."

"He must have. He was always online."

"The meme of him as Shrek..."

"Man never slept, posted on his WeChat at 3 AM, status updates, like all the time."

"The cranium on him... Must have had a fuckton of Neanderthal DNA..."

"He looked better with a beard."

"His eyelids were always so droopy, puffy and red."

"And his one eye was bigger than the other. Looked all fucked up."

"He never slept."

"He was always so pissed off."

"Didn't he smoke crack or meth?"

"Nah, he didn't even smoke weed."

"Someone from Portland who doesn't smoke weed? What's up with that..."

"He watched the Fox News Channel."

“Wasn’t he also a ‘Flat Earther?’”

“Every time I saw him, he was angry and complaining about something. Usually about a person who was an asshole to him, or work problems, or China stuff...”

“He was on about something the first time I met him, too. But he seemed mostly normal, just animated, eccentric, a character. I liked him initially.”

“It’s hard to make friends in China.”

“Friendships are transactions.”

“*Guanxi*...”

“If this place doesn’t make one a misanthrope, nothing will.”

“Makes me feel better about my misanthropy. That’s for sure.”

“And my alcoholism.”

“I dislike all of you. I only talk to any of you because we work together, and I have to.”

“You’re a humanitarian.”

“Takes a special sort of human being to make it past a year in the PRC.”

“Challenges your every notion of decency, China...”

“Personal space, hygiene, honesty, privacy, freedom... Pretty much everything...”

“Can’t even count how many Westerners come and don’t make it two weeks.”

“Slipping away on a midnight run...”

“On a midnight train to Vietnam.”

“Plenty of runners.”

“Or they’re gone, disappeared by next semester, on a plane to another country or back home.”

“Or they’re violent, drunks, violent drunks, bipolar, or a missionary.”

“And those are the good ones.”

“The only sane ones are the recent college grads or older, retired guys.”

“The missionaries are occasionally okay, as long as they don’t get all freaky with the Jeebus on you...”

“That’s one thing I appreciate about China, the lack of openly evangelical, religious people...”

“At my old school there was a whole network of underground missionaries. They’d set up a pipeline from a Bible college in Kansas that had a special TEFL major... They’d send us lots of young, fresh college grads...”

“The head of the crew, this freckly, frumpy, 30-ish, ghost-white lady, would invite every new teacher to her apartment for freshly baked, chocolate chip cookies...”

“There, she and her posse’d gauge your spirituality through casual conversation and float an invite to services at an underground church, but if you declined, and they figured you weren’t sufficiently into the Big J, the cookie invitations stopped abruptly, and you were out of their orbit, shunned, really...”

“And they’d lure students with the cookies too. That’s how they roped them in. They’d do Bible study groups, weekly, at a teacher’s apartment, with students...”

“Cookies for Jeebus.”

“Some tasty cookies, I must admit. I could see how they might dissuade someone from eternal damnation...”

“Only the missionaries and crazies last in China for more than a year.”

“One girl, a pretty young white thing, came to China, and after only a couple weeks, she had mouth ulcers and her face was covered in unexplainable, horrific acne, looked like a pepperoni pizza...”

“She went to an international clinic, and the doctor’s only advice was simply to leave China. So she did a runner, and when she got back to Iowa, her ulcers and skin cleared up immediately.”

“Only the missionaries and crazies...”

“Defective human beings.”

“Yup.”

“Hey, the dumplings are delicious.”

“When they don’t give you diarrhea.”

“I’m an expert in diarrhea. A diarrhea connoisseur...”

“All the food poisoning and diarrhea has turned me into a germaphobe. I scrub the fuck out of everything now...”

“We’re all gonna get cancer or some shit... Cancer of the ass...”

“One teacher got ball cancer and had to have one of his testicles amputated.”

“Another guy, an older one, got lung cancer, but didn’t know it. They found him dead in his apartment on campus.”

“Crazy Stevie, from Wales, dude with the humpback... I remember him...”

“His Chinese wife stuck flyers around the apartment building asking for donations...”

“Remember that Irish lady, a couple years back, the one with the partially paralyzed face and googly eye, who died from leaving her gas tank on in the kitchen?”

“Then there was that American, hippy, granola lady last year who, on her first night in China, not knowing better, drank a glass of the tap water and had to be rushed to the hospital. Died the next day...”

“Every semester at least one teacher dies, has a nervous breakdown, or gets fired for punching or molesting students. That’s why they have language written into the contract about such things...”

“Not sure why’d you’d even need to molest anyone. Plenty of beautiful women around who aren’t students.”

“Especially for older guys. All those ‘leftover’ women the locals won’t touch.”

“I like touching them.”

“And ample supplies of hookers if all else fails, or so I heard, like, from somebody...”

"Cops shut down the brothels in the last city I worked. Replaced them with veiled kiosks selling adult toys..."

"They got factories in Dongguan developing AI sex-bots. *Bladerunner* shit."

"Already is *Bladerunner* in China, the smog, crumbling buildings, neon signage lit up at night."

"Gritty and cyberpunk as fuck."

"I dig the neon lighting."

"I've gotten to seriously appreciate the absence of a tipping culture..."

"It is a beautiful thing, not having a waiter or waitress in your face every five minutes because they're desperate for tips, needing to kiss your ass..."

"Chinese restaurant servers are usually polite, friendly but not servile, occasionally rude, but they're there when you need them..."

"I sorta like it when they're rude to me... Find it refreshing..."

"People doing stuff outside, at parks, hanging out, kids running around... That's something I like about China. Folks not so shut-in and hyper-paranoid like in the States..."

"Every girlfriend I've had is afraid to go outside... Afraid of the rain, because it's so wet... Afraid of the cold, *pa leng!*, afraid of heat, because it makes her sweat and sweat is sticky and gross, and afraid of the sun because she'll tan and her skin will be dark..."

"*Sajiao*..."

"I got *sajiaoed* out of a job once. Had a summer gig, nice paying one, summer camp in another city... Girlfriend supported it, at first, but then *sajiaoed*, ripping down our pictures from the walls, screaming about how I'd meet a girl in that city..."

"So I quit, and I told the guy who hired me I couldn't go because of my girlfriend. Figured he'd be angry, but he laughed and was quite understanding..."

"Every girlfriend I've had has looked through my phone, computer, searched my apartment..."

"My last girlfriend demanded I delete every girl from my phone and WeChat contacts..."

"A Chinese buddy of mine caught his wife installing a listening device in his car..."

"I had a Chinese girlfriend install a GPS tracking device on my phone..."

"Not hard meeting ladies in China, particularly if you're white and tall... The difficult part is what happens afterwards..."

"They're way better after 30. Far less *sajiao*, princess shit..."

"It's that way everywhere, comrade..."

"I like how the ladies in China appreciate my pasty skin..."

"And they think all British men are 'so gentlemen'..."

"British dudes kill with the ladies abroad, anywhere they go. That's why you see such high numbers of British expats... The States is packed with them too..."

"I appreciate the directness of people in China, the brutal honesty, the lack of political correctness. You'll know where you stand with them..."

"Totally is that way with the women. Some feisty, strong ladies... Let you know how they feel, one way or another..."

"*Sajiao* aside, the women are what I dig best. Beautiful, elegant, feminine, slim, high cheekbones, perfect china doll faces."

"I never really understood 'yellow fever' until I came to China."

"Once you go Asian, you can't go back to Caucasian..."

"Too much starfish sex for my taste. Feel like a necrophiliac sometimes..."

"Can't kiss either, plunging tongues down your throat like a succubus."

"Lack of porn leaves them at a disadvantage."

"Lack of experience too. Can't date much when being kept a prisoner of their parents and the State..."

"Gotta teach them... Provide experience..."

"Japanese, Taiwanese, and southeast Asian ladies are far better in the sack..."

"Fucking firewall..."

"Gotta deprogram them..."

"Bottom line... Chinese ladies are red-hot, more feminine than Western women, way thinner... All that rice and vegetables they eat..."

"Once you go Asian..."

"But if you aren't in Shanghai, Shenzhen, Beijing or Guangzhou don't count on too much sport-fucking. Anywhere outside of Tier 1 it's generally gonna be marriage, your hand, or prostitution."

"Better watch out in Beijing. Hear there's gangs of pissed off young incel types, Chincels, with baseball bats and knives, going after white dudes with Asian girls... Out looking for honkies to fuck up..."

"Remember the French guy in Beijing whose fiancée got stabbed to death, in public, broad daylight, at a shopping mall, by a young Chinese dude with a samurai sword? Not one passerby helped, and she bled to death on the street..."

"Yeah, fuck Beijing. They closed the famous food street, too. The one with all the fried insects, scorpions, and crazy Asian snacks."

"Fascist assholes... No more fried grasshoppers and tarantulas?"

"Forget the insects, I gotta worry about my girlfriend getting slashed by maniacs wielding samurai swords?"

"Shanghai, comrade. The Shanghaiese are too apathetic and rich to care."

"And, unlike the big ruffians up north, they're usually too girly-man to put up much of a fight."

"I don't know, those long fingernails they got. Shanghai dudes going Freddy Kruger, Wolverine on your ass... Slash you to shreds..."

"I've seen tattooed, scary, gangster triad types, all over, north to south. Not the types I'd want any problems with. Hate to be caught making one of them wear the green hat..."

"Have no fear, comrade, the fuckbots are on the way. All equipped with QR codes..."

"The mobile phone payments are handy. I've gotten to appreciate them."

"At least you don't need a VPN for those."

"Couldn't live without my VPN."

"VPN, hand sanitizer, tissues, condoms, air purifier, pollution mask, McDonald's, noise-cancelling headphones, bottled water, probiotics and penicillin. The essentials of the China Expat Survival Kit..."

"My VPN was down for almost a month last year during the 'World Internet Conference.' Was brutal..."

"My VPN gets molested every June 4th..."

"Thank Mao for pirated DVDs..."

"Loves me some pirated DVD..."

"Probably my favorite thing about China is the public transportation links, not needing a car."

"The subways are great when they're not too jammed with the masses."

"The bullet trains. War-mongering imperialist countries need to catch up with that infrastructure..."

"Infrastructure's top-notch, girls are pretty, food is tasty, but all the daily life stuff, the small annoyances, the attrition of it... That's what gets to you... That's much of what drives everyone out eventually..."

"I can't understand anyone who'd come to China for a regular job. If you're not making buckets of cash in IT, business, or seriously forwarding your career, teaching at an upscale international school or simply doing ESL to live a stress-free lifestyle, travel, have fun, then how could you do it?"

"Defective human beings..."

"World travelers..."

"Dropouts..."

"Misfits..."

"Alcoholics..."

"*Diaosi*..."

"Disgruntled former high school chemistry teachers..."

"Disgruntled former university adjunct professors..."

"Career changers..."

"Hermits..."

"At large criminals..."

"Those in the witness protection program..."

"The divorced, the indebted, the curious..."

“The binary...”

“Conspiracy theorists...”

“Globalists...”

“Bolsheviks...”

“Sinophiles...”

“Maoists...”

“Sexpats...”

“Like you.”

“Guilty as charged, comrade...”

“Why is it that men are stigmatized for liking Asian women, foreign women? Mail order brides? Younger, legal age, ladies? Yet you’ll never hear anyone putting down a ‘cougar’ or being pissed about fat older white ladies prowling Jamaica and Africa for the BBC...”

“To each his or her own, I say... Everyone has his or her reasons, and as long as they’re not hurting anyone...”

“Only things I’m hurting are my lungs and my rectum...”

“The lower cost of living is a big reason for me... At least for ESL you got low hours, disposable income, cash for paying off student loans, debt, doing an online master’s... Beats many other alternatives... I know lots of folks who bettered themselves with it, moved on to greener pastures...”

“Fucking gig economy...”

“I’m living the Chinese Dream. One that doesn’t include 996 and paying a fortune for a crumbling concrete box that you lease from the Jinpoo Bear, on an ever so tenuous basis...”

“I got a foreign passport already. I’ve achieved the Chinese Dream...”

“If you got the right connections and can handle the physical, environmental, emotional and mental challenges, China can be a fun place to be. At least while you’re still young...”

“Or just crazy...”

“Or tough...”

“It’s a decent place to teach. A lot of the students are a pleasure. They generally don’t talk back, give teachers shit.”

“It’s the flipside, the positive aspect of authoritarianism, creates some obedient students...”

“Teachers are generally quite well-respected in their society. Not too common for students to challenge them, shit on them...”

“Might also be that parents can beat their kids. Used to be like that in the States, now parents can’t do anything...”

“Think that’s a big reason why there’s such a culture of little bastards, sluts, and freaks shooting up schools... No parents around to smack ‘em upside the face, slap the taste out their mouth, no belts, switches, spankings... No discipline or fear of consequences...”

"You'll still hear about spree stabbers at schools... Kid in a high school stabbed eight of his classmates the other day, during morning readings..."

"Media doesn't perpetuate those mucker stories as much as in the West. Ban that news quickly..."

"Ah, students, kids, people in general, are good and bad everywhere. Students in China are just not usually as demonstrative with it. More passive aggressive than anything. Rarely openly hostile, rude..."

"I had a few students who were openly rude, but only a couple. One who asked me, in class, why I was fat, if I was gay... Another who sat in my class with his chair turned backwards so he could face away from me... Aside from that, had very few problems..."

"My students are usually too busy staring at their phones to give me any problems..."

"The English majors are usually the best. Quite friendly, eager to learn, and genuinely curious about other countries and cultures."

"My classes of Art majors hardly ever turned up on time, or at all on occasion... Girls covered in tattoos, goth makeup, lazy as anything, respectful and friendly, though..."

"Mao help you if you ever are stuck with Computer Science majors, especially classes filled with boys. I've never seen such lazy oafs... They'll play on phones, watch TV on tablets, wear ear buds, talk over you and not give any sort of a fuck."

"The Computer Science students' determination not to learn and lengths they'll go to ignore teachers are impressive..."

"The worst is the Chinese college students' teacher evaluation system..."

"Whether students 'like' you, rate you highly, is largely the basis on whether they renew your contract, for both Chinese or foreign teachers... So you're basically compelled to be 'nice' to them..."

"It's like *Lord of the Flies*..."

"*Children of the Corn*..."

"It's a *guanxi* based society... If the school likes you, you're respectful to the students, nice to the administration, patient, don't give them shit, they'll keep you around for years and rip you off far less..."

"Although if you're too strict or too 'serious' as the students say, you're generally toast..."

"Nah, if the administration likes you, if you're not showing up to classes drunk, you're polite, friendly, punctual, don't cause trouble, keep your paws off the female population, they'll give you a chance, pull you in for tea, and allow you the opportunity to lighten up, correct your ways, quit pissing off the customers..."

"But if no one likes you, like the guy they recently let go, you're a ghost..."

"That crazy Korean American guy throwing books at students, got into a kickfight with one... Everybody hated him..."

"No, that was last year, just this past semester, the ex-marine guy..."

"The bald head, muscled-up dude from South Carolina, oh yeah, he would get all drill sergeant on the students, be strict about phones, was fighting a war against digital devices in his classes, but he said they were ingenious at concealing them, that they'd find ways to hide phones in their books, clothes, use smart watches, girls hiding wireless earphones under their hair..."

"The students complained about him being too strict and his classes being 'boring', so the school sacked him..."

"It's the inmates running the asylum..."

"The Chinese teachers don't usually care about that stuff, the phones, tablets... I've seen Chinese teachers playing on their phones, too, during classes. But did hear about one throwing her students' phones out a window once... So there is progress being made somewhere..."

"The students are fried. Those stupid propaganda classes they sit through, being burned out from the *Gaokao*, and, mostly, I think it's because they know they can't fail..."

"They can't fail?"

"For Oral English classes, if they fail or get too low a score, an admin will just change the grades..."

"For subject courses, Chinese universities will make teachers create an answer key for every exam and a corrupt administrator will circulate a copy of the answers to the students, before the test, to ensure none fail..."

"To their credit, they've cracked down on some of that in recent years... Enforcing an entry card swipe system to track attendance, deducting 'morality' points for those late to or skipping classes... Used to be many wouldn't turn up at all, until the final..."

"But still, Chinese universities, upper tier, Ivy League status equivalent included, have like 80% class score, grading requirements and 98% graduation rates, not too demanding... Not exactly Yale..."

"Speaking of Yale, Yale withdrew from China, because so many of the students at its campus there were plagiarizing..."

"I taught a writing course at my last university and, first paper I assigned, nearly every student handed me a plagiarized paper."

"So I had to explain plagiarism and why it's wrong... And the students looked so pissed I'd even brought it up..."

"Afterwards I made them write papers, in class, so they couldn't copy anything from the internet, but then they copied off each other, students blatantly staring at each other's papers..."

"The Chinglish on many of those papers, too, was murder trying to wrap your head around it..."

"A teacher I know, at an upscale international school, went through about five layers of security measures to obstruct cheating, but somehow, even the kids who couldn't speak English would always hand in 'A' papers..."

"The corruption, it's endemic, from a micro to macro level... Even Xi Jinping plagiarized his PhD thesis..."

"They're conditioned not to think, purposely. Dictatorships don't want critical thinkers, intellectuals..."

"It is depressing. But I've made my peace with it. Not up to us to sort out. It's their country..."

"I try to help who I can help. Not pay too much attention to the slackers, those forced to be there..."

"It is a shitty thing to do, to force a language on someone. At least many of the English majors have chosen it..."

"A lot of the English majors were forced to study English as well...."

“Seriously, could you imagine that? A college assigning you a major?”

“Especially a language you have no interest in? Like you show up to UCLA and an administrator points at you and commands that you study Portuguese for the next 4 years, whether you like it or not!”

“It’s university with socialist, Chinese characteristics.”

“Explains the apathy...”

“Master’s of Apathy...”

“Hobbies include shopping, computer games and breathing...”

“Learned helplessness.”

“So this might be why my English majors can barely speak English.”

“Used to be all the students, even Accounting majors, could speak well, easily hold a conversation.”

“But since 2013, China’s public schools have been doing away with a large portion of their English education, replacing English courses with Marxism, ‘patriotic’ education, Chinese cultural courses.”

“Last couple years CCP has been banning Christmas too, Christmas parties, sending squads of goons, in grinch vans, to chop down Christmas trees outside shopping malls, tear down Christmas decorations...”

“Fascism with Chinese characteristics...”

“CCP has also been demanding Chinese companies change their brand names from English and European names to patriotic Chinese names... Claiming foreign names ‘hurt the feelings of Chinese people...’”

“And they have been purging English language TV shows, movies from CCTV, apps, the Chinternet...”

“Didn’t they also ban ghost movies, time travel plots too?”

“And a highly rated, beloved historical drama that was actually popular in other Asian countries, which is a rarity for Mainland China... Something about the stories being too ‘racy’, women showing too much cleavage...”

“The Great Leap Backwards...”

“Has to suck for English majors, so little useful media, and the atrocious textbooks they get... Full of Chinglish or 10, 20, 100 years old...”

“Have you seen their university course schedules? College students commanded to sit through 10 hours a week of those lame propaganda classes. On weekends, late into the night, too, until 10 PM.”

“They could, at the very minimum, for the English majors, conduct those propaganda courses in English, couldn’t they? A win-win...”

“They sleep through those propaganda sessions, like most of their classes. I’ve walked by those Marxism courses and seen them sleeping or watching movies on tablets, with headphones on, while a Chinese teacher stands behind a podium, reading from a book, mumbling into a microphone... The *Peanuts* voice...”

“Not every single one of them is sleeping... Some take it quite seriously... The Communist Youth League types... The ‘*wumao*’ eunuch sorts who go online and argue with foreigners, defending China’s politics, policies...”

"I've had a couple eunuch students, admins, turn up to my class, sometimes trying to goad me into political debates..."

"I don't think it's fair to argue with Global Times readers, *wumao* eunuchs. They don't have unfettered access to information. Their ignorance is a handicap. They're intellectual cripples..."

"Debating with pro-China, pro-CCP people, when you come from a free country, is like the intellectual equivalent of LeBron James and a team of NBA Allstars playing at the Special Olympics..."

"Horrible for them to be denied information like they are, kept ignorant... The CCP must not be too confident if they won't allow opposing sides to simply speak..."

"From a competitive perspective, too, how hamstrung Chinese college students are being denied access to academic resources, losing time, irreplaceable, precious time, rotting away in those propaganda courses..."

"I guess they figure instilling nationalism and brainwashing to be of crucial importance, vital to their competitiveness. The fear of anti-government uprisings must keep the CCP's billionaires up at night..."

"They saw *glasnost*... They study the USSR's fall religiously, for a reason... Don't expect a free press anytime soon..."

"But if they're so serious about their propaganda and brainwashing courses, why do they allow students to sleep through them, play on phones the whole time?"

"Why aren't there teacher's aides prowling around, enforcing discipline? Like why have such strict rules, be authoritarian, yet have so little enforcement?"

"*Chabuduo*..."

"Don't fear, comrade, the AI, facial recognition cameras and software will be able to spot students on phones, those daydreaming, sleeping, 'morality' points and sesame credits deducted..."

"Monetary fines, instantaneously subtracted from your Alipay, WeChat wallet, like the AI software, facial recognition cameras are now doing for jaywalkers..."

"*Xi Dada* is watching..."

"There's already testing for that in middle schools. Cameras zeroing in on facial expressions, deducting points from students seemingly disengaged..."

"I'm still not convinced. *Chabuduo* is ever pervasive... It'll be programmed into the AI... *Chabuduo* will save the day..."

"Maybe not for the *Gaokao*, that could be above *chabuduo*..."

"Nothing is above *chabuduo*..."

"Lower tier universities, colleges... If *chabuduo* can prevail anywhere..."

"All Chinese colleges... You can't *Gaokao* these kids and not expect them to require the PTSD, mental health recovery facilities that Chinese colleges serve as..."

"The phones are medication and preparing them for the job where they'll sit in a cubicle all day, sleeping, playing phone games and shopping on Taobao..."

"Chinese colleges are like kindergartens for young adults. They've got curfew, nap times. It's basically adult babysitting."

“Aspects of it are maybe better than American colleges, no keg parties, or frat, sorority culture...”

“No 10 million dollar a year, asshole of a football coach... No NCAA crooks...”

“No adjuncts teaching at five schools, trying to make ends meet... Chinese colleges actually provide on-campus housing and decent benefits, pay...”

“American colleges are fucked up... Hear there’s an American college thing called ‘blowjob contests’ where a line of girls sucks off a line of guys, and the guys vote on the best brain...”

“Happened once at my college, a girl was bragging about her dick sucking skills, blew five dudes in a row at a party, in front of everyone...”

“I saw a tiny girl, like 5’0, dark skin, think from southeast Asia, girl called Tina, at a fraternity house, take on the whole college football team. Linebackers, everyone, ran a train...”

“Couldn’t see that happening at a Chinese college...”

“Not happening as much anymore at American schools. Students mostly sitting around staring at phones, 24/7, there too...”

“A happy medium between debauchery and prudence would be nice...”

“They’re nowhere close to debauchery at Chinese colleges...”

“The boys and girls sit on opposite sides of the classroom, barely talk to each other.”

“Most any of them do, if they have a boyfriend or girlfriend, is hold hands...”

“I had one girl confide in me, after class, in tears, that she’d had sex with her boyfriend, after he pressured her to do so, and then he broke up with her afterwards, saying that he couldn’t be with a girl who would have sex before marriage...”

“Hypocrisy with Chinese characteristics...”

“Learned helplessness...”

“Chinese hospitals regularly offer hymen replacement surgery. Probably have the department for that not too far from the medical testing they need for a marriage license...”

“Vagina mechanics...”

“Gotta wonder who invented that procedure...”

“Can and can’t get away with anything...”

“Seen their dorm rooms? Five, six, eight to a room, only one squat toilet... Bunk beds... A college I was at didn’t have AC or heating and the dorms’d be freezing in the winter, far colder than outside, boiling in summer, far hotter than outside...”

“I taught at a school like that... Students would be comatose in the morning classes, late Spring Term, from not sleeping because of the heat... How poorly ventilated, hot those buildings were, swarming with bugs too...”

“It’s character building, comrade... Their Struggle Sessions...”

“And meanwhile the administration buildings and living quarters all had central heating and air... Admins in Audis...”

“Classrooms didn’t have AC either, it was around 100 degrees in there, only had these loud, overhead fans that just moved the muggy air around...”

“Classrooms with decaying, moldy walls, old, hard, beat up desks, no projectors or computers, only a warped blackboard... Sweltering hot in there, the temperature, plus having 50 people packed in a tiny room... One time I got vertigo and almost fainted...”

“My last school had an online ‘suggestion box’ for the administration, open to students, teachers who wished to make recommendations... No one used it...”

“Hundred Flowers...”

“A good way to get deported, that...”

“I don’t know, for shits and giggles, if nothing else, I’d fire up the VPN, leave a snarky remark about installing AC, ending vanity construction projects around campus, ditching the farcical ‘military training’...”

“I fucking despise that military training...”

“During the military training, late summer, I saw a girl collapse on the street, from heat exhaustion, had to be rushed via taxi to hospital...”

“That mandatory military training every college must do is so unnerving, seeing those students dressed in camouflage uniforms, carrying flags, marching, belting out communist slogans and songs in unison...”

“Eight hours of hate...”

“It’s a waste of time... They don’t usually learn how to fight or shoot. They just yell stuff and learn to march. Seen prissy girls and fat kids, lounging in the shade, sleeping through it or playing on their phones...”

“Worrying, for their sake, if there really were a war. Those singing, dancing PLA guys, students who can’t fight, can only march in formation... Not exactly formidable opponents... Plus all their weapons are ‘MADE IN CHINA’... Guns, missiles can’t fire...”

“Rest assured, comrade... They’ll send wave after wave of humanity at the enemy, marching right at ‘em, swarm ‘em, like they did in Korea...”

“1.4 billion people, plenty to spare... They’ll send the bare branches, *diaosi*, and old people first, wave after wave of *ayis* and *shushus*, with hammers, sickles and walking sticks... fatboys with cellphone nun chucks... *Nongmin* with pitchforks and lit cigarettes...”

“*Ayis* wielding pissing and pooping babies...”

“No war is gonna happen... Certainly no young people going... Those *ayis* and *shushus* won’t let their pension funds go to fight... They won’t even let them go outside...”

“Tiger parenting...”

“Many of my students’ parents call them 6 times a day, simply to tell them to eat lunch... Facetime them twice a day... Tiger parents with movement tracking, listening devices, GPS apps on their kids’ phones... Even from afar they can’t do anything...”

“I was told by an admin not to fail any of my students, even if they never came to class, because it ‘makes the parents, school and students lose face.’”

“The face... Always about the face...”

"You snowflakes... I worked as a high school teacher in America. I had parents flipping out on me, and snarky bureaucrats, who never taught a class in their lives, dictating our lesson plans. I once had a student get violent and slam a door shut on my hand, lost the tip of my thumb..."

"So Chinese colleges, I can handle pretty easily. Many unfortunate things about it, but, all in all, my students, lazy oafs included, are completely respectful and friendly to me, wonderful kids... Many genuinely want to learn, improve themselves... I can't complain much..."

"Yes, sir. They can be sugar-sweet, but careful what you say around them. There're at least one or two snitches in every class, recording you, ready to report you for spreading 'wrong ideas' or being a spy. They can even get paid reward money for it..."

"A middle-aged white guy teaching Oral English at a lower tier Chinese university. The picture-perfect profile of a CIA operative..."

"Read the comments some post online about foreigners, on Weibo, Sina... Scary stuff. The stink eye, dirty looks come from somewhere..."

"Has gotten much worse since the Trade War. Xinhua had a graphic with two boxing gloves, one painted as an American flag, the other as a Chinese flag, smashing into each other. Think of the effect that has on the local populace. That's their one and only news source..."

"I don't know, I've not noticed any uptick in dirty looks and hostility. I've always gotten dirty looks from the locals, especially the *laotou*."

"Nah, I'm definitely noticing more stink eye from younger ones nowadays."

"The generation now, those born in the late 90s, early 00s, are way more nationalistic. You should see the propaganda they were taught, hatred of foreigners... In primary school."

"Atavism..."

"They're preparing for another Long March..."

"5000 years of history... Don't say they didn't warn you!"

"*Dangran*, comrade, most of the young people are quite patriotic, but not violent or crazy about it..."

"They can be... I know an Italian guy who was beaten up at a bar, simply for being a foreigner..."

"Bars are the worst. Random drug testing there too, make you whip it out, piss in a cup, in public..."

"A year ago I had to spend the night at a police station because the coppers had raided the bar to do drug tests but hadn't brought their drug testing kits, so we had to go back to the police station with them and wait for 5 or 6 hours while they found the officer who actually had the kits..."

"I hate Chinese bars, fake alcohol, never any girls there, aside from a few hookers, and it's mostly dudes sitting around, staring at their phones, or playing that stupid dice drinking game..."

"Worst experience at a Chinese bar for me was the time I had a young guy ask me if the Diaoyu Island is Japan's or China's... Told him I didn't follow the news much and don't know what Diaoyu Island is... He then screamed at me that 'It's China's!'"

"He kept yelling at me, 'China's!' 'It's China's!' and so I got up and left the bar and he followed me down the street yelling 'Diaoyu Island is China's!' until I got into a taxi and drove off..."

“Incredible how it takes so little for the CCP to push those nationalist buttons and have the masses go wild.”

“Controlled conditioning... Pavlovian...”

“Still are some nice ones who see through that. Had one kid tell me how all the anti-Japan shit in the news is just to keep people from being pissed off about housing prices and pollution.”

“One told me globalization is a positive thing because they can learn about human rights and how China doesn’t have human rights.”

“One of mine posted on her WeChat Moments about how last year they were supposed to hate Korea, the year before Japan, this year America... Which country should they hate next...”

“Taiwan!”

“Tibet!”

“The East Turkestan Republic!”

“Transnistria!”

“Doghouse Diplomacy with Chinese characteristics...”

“Ai-yo, fuck you hairy barbarians, you foreign devils! I’m still optimistic about China’s future, once the Red Guard dies off... You’ll see...”

“Some of these young people, these students truly are great. They’re a big reason why I’ve stayed.”

“They sure do beat the elder generation, for the most part.”

“Fucking Red Guard, that ‘Lost Generation’. Only Islamic State, Jihadis are worse than those people...”

“The Educated Youth...”

“Even the other Chinese hate that ‘Lost Generation.’”

“Just smile a lot. Smile at everyone. Do the Asian thing. Even if they don’t smile back. Which they often don’t.”

“They smile at me when I speak Chinese.”

“Really depends where you are, I guess, and who you come across. I’ve met amazingly kind older people. I once had a random guy stop and drive me back to my apartment, which was an hour away, because I’d gotten off at the wrong bus stop and was haplessly lost.”

“Just don’t be a dick. Show the respect you want shown to you...”

“Certainly, be careful what you say and how you say it.”

“Pretty much any country doesn’t appreciate foreigners ‘picking quarrels’ or being judgmental.”

“Definitely don’t ‘hurt the feelings of the Chinese people’. There’s actually a law about that...”

“Oh, they are a sensitive lot. Fragile glass hearts. Don’t handle criticism well.”

“Face culture...”

“Such delicate creatures, they are.”

“The three T’s especially will have ‘em riled up.”

“Roger that, comrade.”

“Not so sure about Tiananmen Square... That happened over 30 years ago... Most people these days are too selfish to give a fuck.”

“A teacher I know showed video in his class of the 1989 riots, talked about ‘Tankman,’ since he was leaving the country in a couple days, and his students didn’t really care. Most just had their heads bowed to their phones...”

“Taiwan and Tibet, though. Those are airport topics. Discuss those, and you’ll find yourself at the airport, stat...”

“One girl I was dating flipped out when I mentioned Taiwan as a country. She actually threatened to have me arrested. Seriously...”

“The South China Sea too... That sure ruffles their feathers... The evening newscasters the other day were all butthurt about a Japanese primary school textbook with a map listing some tiny island as Japan’s territory. The anchor was fuming about it...”

“Some of it I understand, the sensitivity, their antipathy to foreigners, especially those being critical... They did get done wrong, Mongols, World War 2, Century of Humiliation, the Opium War...”

“That sticky sweet black stuff didn’t go well, did it?”

“Fucking British Empire. The genesis of our presence and a large part of why they detest us.”

“The opium paradox... But now they’re avenging the yanks with fentanyl...”

“I had a middle-aged Chinese man in Shanghai cut in front of me and steal off in the taxi I was about to get in... He flicked me the finger and yelled ‘yankee doodle, motherfucker!’ as the cab peeled away...”

“You shoulda yelled back: ‘Fuck you for killing Tom Petty, you bastard!’”

“And Prince too! Bitch!”

“I was looking for some of that shit, the fentanyl that killed Prince, couldn’t find it anywhere...”

“With good reason. Could you imagine if they let loose fentanyl on the natives?”

“Population control, that.”

“They already got tobacco, melamine and smog. The herd’s being sufficiently thinned daily...”

“I think they are truly prone to addictive personalities, something in their genes, maybe... I mean, look at the history, the opium, and now it’s gambling, cigarettes, drinking, e-gaming, and phone addiction.”

“I’ve never seen such phone addicted people...”

“I read somewhere the average Mainland Chinese person under 45 spends 12 hours per day on their smartphone...”

“Been reading articles about parents on phones, having their kid jumping into rivers and drowning, falling from windows, running out in front of cars...”

“One 10-year-old kid found wandering alone at a subway station, told police he’d run away from home because his parents didn’t pay attention to him, only played on phones all day...”

“Never seen so many people walking down the street while texting... Particularly college campuses, just swarming with phone zombies...”

“Palm Readers...”

“The bowed head tribes...”

“This is why AI, the robots will eventually win, displace humans... If we can't handle phones, how will we handle AI, infinitely smarter than us, able to self-replicate... We're doomed...”

“The robots already have won... By our own hands...”

“Look at these young people, young couples, on their phones at bars, restaurants... Sitting there the entire time, face to screen, not speaking a word to each other. Even at fancy places...”

“Fucking cyborgs...”

“It's everywhere, a global epidemic... We're all cyborgs now.”

“They take tech addiction to new levels, though...”

“Aside from occasional shitty parenting, can't begrudge them, though, working the hours they do, they need an escape mechanism...”

“That's it, comrade. They work hard, play on phones hard. Hell, they go hard with everything. Mainlanders are simply extremists.”

“Hardly... the *chabuduo*? Half-assery?”

“That's different, that's craftsmanship, work ethic... You can't expect a kid, a construction worker, or repairman from some impoverished village to give too much of a fuck. He knows he's never going far. He knows the game is rigged. So he does just enough to get by...”

“They're not stupid. They know what's what.”

“Some of the smartest people I've met in China have been migrant workers, doing menial jobs. Could be because they escaped the indoctrination of the college entrance exam.”

“Fucking human rights violation, the *Gaokao*. Studying 10 hours a day for 12 years straight, for a single test. Memorizing ancient poetry, line by line, rewriting the same essay over and over about 'Why I Love China', methodical, purposeful brainwashing...”

“That's it, comrade.... I've met people who dropped out of middle school to work in a factory and were cool, smart, mature, great friends... Solid people... Then you got so many of these university grads, 22 years old, totally clueless, with the mind of a 14-year-old.”

“Bachelor's of Apathy...”

“Hobbies include sleeping and eating...”

“Sheeple...”

“Apathetic phone-zombies...”

“Think of all the people in China who are going to have Carpet Tunnel Syndrome...”

“Carpal Tunnel Syndrome...”

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