

## CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

A reminiscence of the  
prison yard by:  
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The summer of 1990 was hot in the prison yard. I was having a very tough withdrawal from psych meds, and I was behaving strangely. I have no tattoos, but I was convinced that I had them all over my scalp, and I questioned inmates about these tattoos- so of course, my head being shaved, they just laughed and poked fun at me.

A prisoner whom I do not remember his name, would often walk with me and talk sense- more of spiritual things. It was a comfort, because I was in a bad state mentally, my abdomen was hurting awful, and I had to keep running my head under water because it was feeling really hot. He related to me the following as either a true story, or it may have been a fable, and this is how I remember it:

His friend was really smart in High School, and he took it upon himself to learn Chinese, even tho they dint offer it at the school. Sometimes he would demonstrate it in front of the class whenever it was a show and tell type of activity. His teachers were amazed at how he had such grasp of such a difficult subject, all without any teacher. Nearing graduation, he learned he had been recommended for, and actually received a full scholarship to University to further his studies in Chinese and about the Chinese.

So he began at University and was so advanced over the other students that mid-way thru the first couple years he received an invitation for an all expenses paid, and tuition to study in China. He was thrilled and began to prepare for a three year absence to China. His part time employment at the restaurant, although not a career, had to be given notice. He was walking home after closing time at the restaurant when the skies opened up and the rain came down hard. He was stepping near a clogged up storm drain and he happened to notice thousands of ants running frantically in single file in both directions. He looked closer, and saw tiny white things in their jaws which he soon realized were their young, and looking further, he saw that the clogged up storm drain was putting their colony in jeopardy- the ants were taking their young to higher ground.

He took off his shoes and socks and unclogged the storm drain of leaves, discarded paper and plastic. After a loud sucking vortex, the drain cleared and the water receded. He put on his shoes and went home.

Three years later at the institute in China, he was taking a last exam in Chinese Philosophy. Unlike Western schools, only 100% all correct answers rendered a passing grade. All Chinese lettering had to be perfect. Under that kind of pressure he made one error, leaving a tiny horizontal line omitted from one letter. The master shook his head in displeasure, when a surprise took place. Two tiny ants took their place to make up the missing part of the letter. He asked: Have you done any favors for ants? He was then passed as 100% correct and advanced to the next level.