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**Subject:** **Good Sunday Morning to You!**

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Dear Family,

It's 7.15 on Sunday morning and I thought I'd chat a while with y'all!!! I decided to take a break from the usual hotel breakfast (same thing every day!) and eat in my room. I found a sweet roll and some crackers yesterday -- which went well with my brought-along jar of peanut butter. A few grapes and a cup of tea filled out the rest of the menu! I will be leaving to go to church in a few minutes and will meet Martha from Qingdao there.

I took another walk down memory lane yesterday afternoon. I know about where Si-guan is supposed to have been. That is where Farmor and Farfar lived. I walked past the old school and within a block or so is an old hutong from "our time". I felt like I was walking into the early to mid 1900's. The houses were very old. The streets were very narrow. Many of the doors had their long red paper signs with large black characters on them -- probably left over from New Years. Although the sewer was not visible down the middle of each street -- even I (with no sense of smell) detected an odor! It appears that an attempt had been made to cover the sewers with asphalt, but the sewer was still underneath the cover. Several of the old homes were no longer inhabited. Around the corner I could see large cranes where apartment buildings were being built. So, perhaps this hutong will not be there much longer.

I was able to peek inside the gate of one of these homes, as a young woman was entering her home. On the inside I got a glimpse of a small courtyard where a woman was squatting down doing her laundry in a large plastic bucket. Some clothes had already been hung on bamboo poles to dry.

A little farther down the street was an outdoor market. I walked down to see what was for sale. As discretely as possible I tried to take some pictures!!! Not easy to be discrete when you are a tall foreigner!!! There were mostly fruit and vegetable stands. I bought some beautiful grapes and two bananas! Very tasty. One woman had her peaches spread out on a blanket on the ground. It reminded me of Mother telling about Farmor bringing her peaches for her birthday every July! There was also a large area where they sold kitchen wares -- even some of those wooden bread forms that I still have.

I broke down and decided to eat at KFC today! Can you believe it?!! A KFC right near our old stomping grounds. The sandwich was mediocre, but the Pepsi with ice tasted really good. I guess I

should not be having ice since I don't know where the water comes from --- but so far, so good!! No adverse effects! I hope I'm not getting too careless!! I boil water to use to brush my teeth -- but the habit of putting the toothbrush under the running water is hard to break!

After my walk I had made up my mind that I would eat fruit and bread for dinner and not go out anymore, but at 4:30 I received a call from one of the English teachers who wanted me to have dinner with them. Her husband is Wang, the school driver who has brought me to and from school each day. She had collected two other teachers from the school, plus her sister, brother-in-law, and one child per family. I was taken to a Brazilian barbecue restaurant -- located across the street from our old girls' school. No one uses seat belts in China -- and I was a wee bit surprised that Wang's wife and I sat in the back seat, while their darling 4 year old daughter sat in the front seat without a child seat or belt to protect her. The meal was interesting and I sampled BBQ'd meats like chicken heads, chicken heart, beef tongue, pork ribs, and sausages. Wang got very happy drinking his beer to the point that his wife told him he could not drive me back home! We all had a good time -- and again, the Chinese are very hospitable!

Sunday afternoon -- Just came in from a busy morning and day. Martha met me at church and today I wanted to sit further back in the sanctuary. Old Mr. Feng came to church and sat with us. Today a woman pastor, Ms. Wang, preached -- for 55 minutes. That seems to be the normal length of sermons here. I videotaped some of the singing -- some familiar hymns and others new to me.

Martha's uncle, Dr. Gong, came to pick us up to take us to lunch. But first we went to his house and met his wife and two grandsons that she was watching today while their mothers worked. Dr. Gong's grandfather was one of the first persons who became a Christian when our family was in China. He helped the mission find some property to buy. One of his sons became a pastor -- Pastor Gong. Pastor Gong is the father of Dr. Gong! Got it? Well, in 1947, Pastor Gong and eight other people were executed -- Pastor Gong for his faith. He left three small children behind. Dr. Gong was only two years old at this time.

Dr. Gong has had a very difficult life. He had to flee to northern China in order to protect his wife and children. In northern China he met his present wife. They have three daughters. Eventually the family moved back to Jiaozhou and Dr. Gong and two of his daughters run a medical clinic of western and Chinese medicine. Dr. Gong retold his life story with great emotion telling about the suffering he had experienced during the Cultural Revolution.

We went to a jiaozi restaurant to eat potstickers! What a great place that was!!! I took one of their cards so that I can find my way there again! My playmate, Feng, came along to eat. Together the two men told about experiences that they had had during the Cultural Revolution. They feel so strongly that the only reason they made it through was by the grace of God. It is amazing, I think, how these men (and thousands of others like them) were able to stick to their beliefs in the midst of such oppression.

So, here was another 2 - 2 1/2 hour meal! Now, I hope you realize that one is eating rather slowly during this time! One bite every 10 minutes or so -- the rest of the time we were talking and I was learning about their life stories. They are truly amazing people. Makes me wonder what I would have done under similar circumstances.

Martha came back to the hotel with me just for a little while. We are planning a three day trip to Qufu, Confucius' temple, during a break in October. October 1 is the national holiday and I understand that we will have anything from 3 - 7 days off!!! The school doesn't seem to have a calendar that they follow! We take it as it comes!!!

The big news is that Lally has decided that she will come to Jiaozhou while I am here. I'm very excited about that. She has wanted to come all along, but wasn't sure she could because of health issues. But there was one ticket left -- just for her -- so the trip will become a reality. Pray for her good health. She will arrive on Oct. 6 and we will both leave on Oct. 16. I have a queen sized bed in my room so I will just move over and give her one side!! People that I have told that LALLY is coming are beside themselves with joy!!!! She is the Queen of Jiaozhou!!! I'll have to move down to a "little sister" role. And I will gladly do that!!!

My general email that I will send maybe today or tomorrow, will have some of the above material in it. Sorry for the repeat!!!

Love to you all -- miss you!

Mom/Margie/Margareta