

Unit 6, Review Dialogue

On the balcony of Lǐ Píng's apartment, Tom (A) and Lǐ Píng's sister Lǐ Wén (E) have a conversation.

- A: Lǐ Wén, nǐ yíge rén zài zhèr xià qí?^o Are you playing chess all by yourself out here, Lǐ Wén?^o
- E: Suíbiàn wánwanr, jǐntiān Bàba bú zài jiā, píngcháng zǒng shì wǒ hé Bàba xià qí. Zěnme, nǐ yě xiǎng wánr ma? Just fooling around. My father isn't home today. Usually he and I play against each other. What's up? Do you want to play too?
- A: Bù, wǒ bú tài huì xià; rúguǒ nǐ yǒu kòng, wǒ xiǎng hé ni liáoliao. No, I'm not too good at chess. But if you've got the time I'd like to chat with you a bit.
- E: Wǒ yě zhèng xiǎng hé ni liáoliao ne, qǐng zuò! Rúguǒ nǐ bú jièyìde huà, wǒ xiǎng wèn nǐ liǎngge wèntí. It just so happens I felt like talking with you myself. Have a seat. If you don't mind, I'd like to ask you a couple of questions.
- A: Bú yào kèqi, qǐng wèn ba! Certainly, go right ahead.
- E: Měinián shǔjiàde shihou, nǐ dōu líkāi jiā, yíge rén qù lǚxíng ma? Do you leave home and go traveling by yourself every summer?
- A: Chàbuduō shì zhèiyangr. Just about.
- E: Nàme, nǐde fùmǔ hěn yǒu qián ba? Then your parents must be very rich, I guess?
- A: Tāmen dōu zài dàxué jiāo shū, bú shì hěn yǒu qiánde rén, érqǐě wǒ lǚxíngde qián dōu shì wǒ zìjǐ zhuànde. Píngcháng shàng xuéde shihou, wǒ hái zuò diǎnr shìr, xiàng dǎ zì, fānyi diǎnr xiǎo wénzhāng shenmede. Zhuànle qián, shǔjiàde shihou chūqu zǒuzou, kànkān shìjiè. They both teach college, [so] they're not very rich; besides, I earn my own travel money. During the school year I usually do some outside work like typing, translating little articles, and so on. Then when I've earned the money I go away to see the world during summer vacation.
- E: Zhēn bú cuò. Nǐ néng fānyi, nàme nǐde Zhōngwén hěn hǎo le? Néng shuō yě néng kàn? That's great. If you're able to translate, your Chinese must be very good. You can speak and also read?
- A: Néng kàn yìdiǎnr. Wǒ duì Zhōngguo wénhuà, Zhōngguo shèhuì hěn yǒu xìngqu, hěn xiǎng yánjiū yanjiu. Suǒyǐ, rúguǒ nǐ I can read a little. I'm very interested in Chinese culture and society, and I'd like very much to study them. So, if you don't mind,

^oLǐ Wén may be working out chess strategies or playing Chinese chess (which can be done alone).

bú jièyìde huà, wǒ yě hěn xiǎng wèn nǐ jǐge wèntí.

I'd like to ask you a few questions.

E: Qǐng!

Be my guest!

A: Tīng Lǐ Píng shuō, nǐ zhīdao xiē dàlùde qíngkuàng.

I hear from Lǐ Píng that you know a bit about the situation on the mainland.

E: Wǒ yǒu hěn duō tóngxué hé péngyou, tāmen dōu shì cóng dàlù lái de. Tāmen zài nàr shēnghuóle èrsānshínián, dāng-rán hěn qīngchǔ. Wǒ hé tāmen chángcháng zài yìqǐ, yě jiù zhīdaole yidiǎnr.

I have a lot of classmates and friends who come from the mainland. They lived there for twenty or thirty years, so naturally they know quite well what goes on there. I spend a lot of time with them, so I've gotten to know something about it too.

A: Tīngshuō, Zhōngguó zhèngfǔ shíxíng nánǚ píngděngde zhèng-cè, suóyì Zhōngguó fùnǚde dìwèi tígāole hěn duō, jiātíngde qíngkuàng yě hé jiěfàng yǐqián bù yíyàng le.

I understand that the Chinese government carries out a policy of equality of men and women, so the position of women has improved a great deal, and families are in quite a different way than before liberation.

E: Nǐ shuōde duì. Zài Gòngchǎn-dǎng lǐngdǎoxià, bù guǎn shì nóngcūn háishi chéngshì, nǚ-háizi hé nánháizi yíyàng, dōu kéyì shàng xué, zhǎngdàle yě yíyàng kéyì yǒu gōngzuò. Jiā-tíng, fùnǚ hé értóng, dōu kéyì dédao shèhuìde bǎohù.

That's right. Under the leadership of the Communist Party, no matter whether in the countryside or the cities, girls can go to school just as boys can, and when they grow up they can also get jobs just the same. Families, women and children all receive society's protection.

A: Zhè bú shì hěn hǎo ma?

That's great, isn't it?

E: Mm, yīnggāi shì hěn hǎo, kěshì cóng Liù Liù nián dào Qī Liù nián, zài zhèi shíniánlǐ, shèhuì-shàng yīnwèi zhèngzhìde yuányīn yǒule hěn duō wèntí. Wǒ kéyì gěi nǐ jiǎng yige gùshi.

Yeah, it ought to be great, but in the ten years from '66 to '76, a lot of social problems came about because of political reasons. I can tell you a story.

A: Nǐ kuài shuōshuo ba!

Oh, please do!

E: Nǐ tīngzhe, ā. Yǒu yíwèi lǎo gànbu, zài Shànghǎi gōngzuò. Tā zhǐ yǒu yíge nǚér. Kěshì zài Liù Qī niánde shíhour, lǐngdǎo shuō tā yǒu zhèngzhì wèntí.

Listen to this. There was this old cadre who worked in Shànghǎi. She only had one daughter. But in '67 the leadership said she had political problems.

- A: Zāogāo! Nà tā nǚér yě yǒu mǎfan le. Uh-oh! Then her daughter was in for some trouble too.
- E: Yìdiǎnr dōu bú cuò. Zhèige nǚháizi bù néng rù Tuán, bù néng cānjiā Hóngwèibīng. Péngyou, tóngxué dōu líkāile ta. Yǒude shíhour, zài dàjiēshang, hěn shóuxīde rén yě hǎoxiàng bú rènshi ta yíyàng. Absolutely right. This girl couldn't join the (Communist Youth), League or the Red Guards. Her friends and classmates all left her. Sometimes when she was walking down the street, people she knew well would act as if they didn't know her.
- A: Nà, tā zěnmē bàn ne? Well then, what did she do?
- E: Nèige shíhou, tā juéde shēng-huó zhēn shi yìdiǎnr xīwàng yě méiyǒu. Tā kāishǐ hèn tāde mǔ-qīn. Tā yào líkāi ta, tā yào líkāi tāde jiā. At that time she felt that her life was completely hopeless. She began to hate her mother. She wanted to leave her. She wanted to leave her home.
- A: Hòulái ne? And after that?
- E: Hòulái, tāmen zhēnde fēnkāi le. Nǚér dào le nóngcūn. Afterwards, they really did split up. The daughter went to the countryside.
- A: Zhèiyang, tāde qíngkuàng huì hǎo yìdiǎnr ba? That way her situation got a little better, I guess?
- E: Yìdiǎnr yě méiyǒu. Zài nóngcūn suǐrán tā gōngzuòde hěn hǎo, tā háishi méiyǒu shénme zhèngzhi shēnghuó, lǐngdǎo hé rénmen yě méiyǒu yīnwei tā líkāile mǔqīn jiu gǎibiàn duì tāde kànfǎ. Not a bit. Although she worked very well in the countryside, she still didn't have any political life. The leadership and the people didn't change their opinion of her just because she left her mother, either.
- A: Nà, tā dàgài bú huì yǒu shénme péngyou, yě bù róngyi àishang shénme rén. Well then, she probably didn't have any friends, and it probably wasn't easy to fall in love with anyone.
- E: Shì. Tài nán le. Tā àishangle yíge nánháizi, nèige nánháizi yě ài tā, érqǐè yīnwei tā, bù néng yǒu ge bǐjiǎo hǎode gōngzuò. Yes. It was really hard. She fell in love with a boy, and he loved her. But because of her, he couldn't get a better job.
- A: Zhè shízài tài bú xiàng huà le. That's really absurd.
- E: Jiǔnián yǐhòu, lǐngdǎo nòng-qīngchǔ le, tā mǔqīn méiyǒu wèntí. Zhèige nǚháizi jíjí máng-máng pǎohuī Shànghǎi, kěshi tā zài yě jiànbudào tāde mǔqīn le. Tā mǔqīn yǐjīng sǐ zài yīyuànli le. Nine years later, the leadership got it straightened out that her mother was (politically) okay. The girl rushed back to Shanghai in a flurry, but she was never to see her mother again. She had already died in a hospital.

- A: Yíge jiāting jiù zhèiyang wán le! Nǐ zěnmē huì zhīdao zhèige gùshi?
Just like that, a family was destroyed! How do you happen to know this story?
- E: Yàoshi nǐ zhùyì yíxià Qī Qī nián, Qī Bā nián de Zhōngguó bàozhǐ, jiù kěyì kàndào hěn duō zhèiyang de gùshi. Wǒ zài gěi nǐ jièshào yìběn shū.
If you watched the newspapers in '77 and '78 you could see lots of stories like that. Let me recommend a book to you, too.
- A: Shénme shū?
What book?
- E: Zhōngguó Yī Jiǔ Qī Qī nián dào Yī Jiǔ Qī Bā nián Duǎnpiān Xiǎoshuō.
Chinese Short Stories of 1977-1978.
- E: Nǐ zhīdao, rúguo yǒu rén xiǎng dǒngde Zhōngguó shèhuì, jiù yíding yào yánjiū cóng Liù Liù nián dào Qī Liù nián de qíngkuàng. Yánjiūle yǐhòu cái néng míngbai jīntiān de Zhōngguó zhèngfǔ hé Zhōngguó rén wèishénme yào gǎibiàn zhè shínián lái de zhèngzhìshàng, jīngjìshàng de qíngkuàng, ràng Zhōngguó rén zhēnde dédao jiěfàng.
You know, if someone wants to understand Chinese society they have to study the situation from '66 to '76. Only after you've studied it can you understand why today the Chinese government and people are trying to change the political and economic conditions of the past ten years and let the Chinese people really be liberated.
- A: Nǐ néng bāng wǒ zhǎodào nèiběn shū ma?
Can you help me find that book?
- E: Wǒ yǒu zhèiběn shū, kěyì sòng^{*} gěi nǐ. Kàn shū hái bú gòu, yǒu jīhuì qù dàlù kànkan.
I have it, and I can give it to you. But reading isn't enough. If you get the chance, go visit the mainland.
- A: Wǒ yǒu jīhuì yíding qù.
If I get the chance, I certainly will.

*Sòng here means "to give" something as a gift.