

February

Alien

alien adj foreign; repugnant (to); from another world n foreigner; being from another world

Is unbelievable, I arriving London, 'Heathlow Airport'. Every single name very difficult remembering, because just not 'London Airport' simple way like we simple way call 'Beijing Airport'. Everything very confuse way here, passengers is separating in two queues.

Sign in front of queue say: ALIEN and NON ALIEN.

I am alien, like Hollywood film Alien, I live in another planet, with funny looking and strange language.

I standing in most longly and slowly queue with all aliens waiting for visa checking. I feel little criminal but I doing nothing wrong so far. My English so bad. How to do?

In my text book I study back China, it says English peoples talk like this:

'How are you?'

'I am very well. How are you ?'

'I am very well.'

Question and answer exactly the same!

Old saying in China: 'Birds have their bird language, beasts have their beast talk' (...). English they totally another species.

Immigration officer holding my passport behind his accouter, my heart hanging on high sky. Finally he stamping on my visa. My heart touching down like air plane. Ah. Wo. Ho. Ha. Picking up my luggage, now I a legal foreigner. Because legal foreigner from Communism region, I must re-educate, must match this capitalism freedom and Western democracy.

All I know is: I not understanding what people say to me at all. From now on, I go with Concise Chinese-English Dictionary at all times. It is red cover, look just like Little Red Book. I carrying important book, even go to the toilet, in case I not knowing the words for some advanced machine and need checking out in dictionary. Dictionary is most important thing from China. Concise meaning simple and clean.

hostel

hostel n building providing accommodation at a low cost for a specific group of people such as students, travellers, homeless people, etc

First night in 'hostel'. Little Concise Chinese–English Dictionary hostel explaining: a place for 'people such as students, travellers and homeless people' to stay. Sometimes my dictionary absolute right. I am student and I am homeless looking for place to stay. How they knowing my situation precisely?

Thousands of additional words and phrases reflect scientific and technological innovations, as well as changes in politics, culture, and society. In particular, many new words and expressions as well as new usages and meanings which have entered the Chinese language as a result of China's open-door policy over the last decade have been included in the Chinese–English section of the dictionary.

That is sentence in Preface. All sentence in preface long like this, very in-understandable. But I must learning this stylish English because it high-standard English from authority. Is parents' command on me: studying how speak and write English in England, then coming back China, leaving job in government work unit and making lots money for their shoes factory by big international business relations. Parents belief their life is dog's life, but with money they save from last several years, I make better life through Western education.

Anyway, hostel called 'Nuttington House' in Brown Street, nearby Edward Road and Baker Street. I write all the names careful in notebook. No lost. Brown Street seem really brown with brick buildings everywhere. Prison looking. Sixteen pounds for per bed per day. With sixteen pounds, I live in top hotel in China with private bathroom. Now I must learn counting the money and being mean to myself and others. Gosh.

First night in England is headache.

Pulling large man-made-in-China-suitcase into hostel, second wheel fall off by time I open the door. (First wheel already fall off when I get suitcase from airport's luggage bell.) Is typical suitcase produced by any factory in Wen Zhou, my hometown. My hometown China's biggest home-products industry town, our government says. Coat hangers, plastic washbasins, clothes, leather belts and nearlyleather bags, computer components etc, we make there. Every family in my town is factory. Big factories export their products to everywhere in the world, just like my parents get order from Japan, Singapore and Israel. But anyway, one over-the-sea trip and I lost all the wheels. I swear I never buy any products made from home town again.

Standing middle of the room, I feeling strange. This is The West. By window, there hanging old red curtain with holes. Under feet, old blood-red carpet has suspicions dirty spots. Beddings, they covering by old red blanket too. Everything is dirty blood red.

Room smelling old, rotten. Suddenly my body feeling old too. 'English people respect history, not like us,' teachers say to us in schools. Is true. In China now, all buildings is no more than 10 years old and they already old enough to be demolished.

With my enormous curiosity, walking down to the night street. First night I away home in my entirely twenty-three years life, everything scare me. Is cold, late winter. Windy and chilli. I feeling I can die for all kinds of situation in every second. No

safety in this country, I think unsafe feeling come from I knowing nothing about this country. I scared I in a big danger.

I scared by cars because they seems coming from any possible directing. I scared by long hair black man passing because I think he beating me up just like in films. I scared by a dog. Actually chained with old lady but I thinking dog maybe have mad-dog-illness and it suddenly bite me and then I in hospital then I have no money to pay and then I sent back to China.

Walking around like a ghost, I see two rough mans in corner suspiciously smoke and exchange something. Illegal, I have to run – maybe they desperate drug addicts robbing my money. Even when I see a beggar sleeping in a sleep bag I am scared. Eyes wide open in darkness staring at me like angry cat. What he doing here? I am taught everybody in West has social security and medical insurance, so, why he needs begging?

I going back quickly to Nuttington House. Red old carpet, red old curtain, red old blanket. Better switch off light.

Night long and lonely, staying nervously in tacky room. London should be like emperor's city. But I cannot feel it. Noise coming from other room. Laughing in drunkenly way. Upstairs TV news speaking intensely nonsense. Often the man shouting like mad in the street. I worry. I worry I getting lost and nobody in China can find me anymore. How I finding important places including Buckingham Palace, or Big Stupid Clock? I looking everywhere but not seeing big posters of David Beckham, Spicy Girls or President Margaret Thatcher. In China we hanging them everywhere. English person not respect their heroes or what?

No sleeping. Switching on the light again. Everything turning red. Bloody new world. I study little red dictionary. English words made only from twenty-six characters? Are English a bit lazy or what? We have fifty thousand characters in Chinese.

Starting at page one:

A

Abacus: (meaning a wooden machine used for counting)

Abandon: (meaning to leave or throw away)

Abashed: (meaning to feel embarrassed or regretful),

Abattoir: (meaning a place to kill the animals)

Abbess: (meaning the boss of woman monk's house)

Abbey: (meaning a temple)

Abbot: (meaning the boss of a temple)

Abbreviate: (meaning to write a word quickly)

Abduct: (meaning to tie somebody up and take away to somewhere)

Words becoming blurred and no meaning. The first night I falling into darkness with the jet-lag tiredness.