

TOP READERS

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Lisa in China



level
2



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CHAPTER 1

IT IS MONDAY AFTERNOON AND LISA IS IN HER BEDROOM, talking on the phone with her friend Ellie. Lisa is holding an official-looking envelope in her hand.

"It is from the Young Reporters Association," Lisa tells her friend. "I wonder... what is it about?"

"Go on then, what are you waiting for?" asks Ellie. "Open it right away, I'm so excited!"

Lisa opens the letter and reads aloud:

Dear Lisa,

We are very happy to inform you that the Young Reporters Association has randomly selected you to participate in the 1st International Photo Convention with your photographs. The Convention will take place on 27-31 July, in Beijing. You will also have another six days for sightseeing on a train-tour with Hu Tian, one of our Chinese members. The Young Reporters Association will plan and pay for the whole trip. So, pack your bags, Lisa. You are going to China!

Sincerely,

Yao Ming

General Secretary of the Young Reporters Association

"They want to send me to China! I can't believe my luck!" she exclaims. "I have never been to China before. What an interesting place to go!"

"Lisa! That's great news!" exclaims Ellie.

“I know!” answers Lisa. “I have never been to China, but it has always been one of my dreams,” she says.

“Yes, it’s an amazing opportunity for you,” says Ellie. “And, when you get back, you could write a report about your trip for the school on-line newspaper. What do you think?”

“Oh, Ellie,” laughs Lisa. “OK. You never seem to forget your position at the paper, do you?”

“Well, I’m not the editor for nothing,” the girl laughs back. “Let’s hang up now,” she adds. “You have to do some research before the trip, don’t you think?”

“You’re right,” says Lisa. “China, here I come!”



CHAPTER 2

AFTER A LONG FLIGHT, LISA FINALLY ARRIVES IN BEIJING. AT the airport, a young man is waiting for her. He is holding a sign reading “Lisa, YRA.” Lisa goes towards him and the man greets her warmly.

“Nice to meet you, Lisa,” he says and introduces himself. “I am Hu Tian and I work for a local teen magazine here in Beijing. I will be your guide in China!” he says as he takes her suitcase. Lisa is relieved. Everything is so strange to her here and there are so many people everywhere! Hu Tian takes Lisa to her hotel by taxi.

“You must be tired after your long trip,” he says when they arrive. “Have some rest, and we’ll meet again in the afternoon. Then, you can have a taste of China.”

Lisa smiles as she goes to her hotel room. “I wonder what he meant,” she thinks to herself. “Oh, well... I guess I’ll find out in a few hours,” she says and falls asleep right away.

After her nap, Lisa feels like a new person. She meets up with Hu Tian and his sister, Mei. The two take her to a restaurant in the Old City.

“So that’s what you meant with ‘a taste of China!’ Lisa exclaims.

“Yes,” smiles Hu Tian. “You’re going to enjoy a traditional Beijing dinner.” Lisa remembers the delicious Chinese food in New York and is excited to try some authentic Chinese cuisine. Maybe it will be even tastier.

At the restaurant, Lisa sees a round piece of glass in the centre of the table.

“I know!” shouts Lisa. “It’s a rotating tray! The waiter puts all of the dishes on the tray so that the people at the table can turn it and try each of the different kinds of food,” she says with a smile.

“It is customary to try a little bit of everything. It is also polite to always leave the last bite on the plate,” says Mei.

When the waiter comes to the table, they order traditional tea and several different dishes.

“We ordered Peking Duck, it’s a famous dish here,” explains Mei.



The cook then brings the roast duck and cuts it in front of them. A waiter also brings different dishes to eat along with the duck. Lisa is impressed.

“What are all these little bowls?” asks Lisa. “There are pancakes in this one and vegetables and three different kinds of sauces.”

Hu Tian and Mei laugh. “Let me show you how to eat Peking Duck” says Mei. “First, you take a pancake. Then, you put some sauce and some vegetables on your pancake.”

“Ok, I got that,” says Lisa. “This is fun, actually.”

“Now put some duck in the pancake and wrap it. Enjoy!” says Mei, smiling to the girl.

“Mmmm, delicious,” says Lisa. “No wonder it’s so famous!”

They take turns turning the tray and tasting the different kinds of food. Hu Tian and Mei are eating with chopsticks.

“Is it difficult to eat with chopsticks?” asks Lisa.

“No, not really,” says Hu Tian and Mei offers to teach her.

“I’ve never learnt so much at a dinner table before!” Lisa says with a giggle. It is a fun evening of new experiences.





CHAPTER 3

THE NEXT DAY IS VERY BUSY. LISA SPENDS ALMOST ALL morning at the Photo Convention, presenting her work and talking to lots of people. Then, she and Hu Tian meet with Mei and they go to Tiananmen Square.

“Wow, this square is huge! It is much larger than any other square I have ever been to!” Lisa exclaims.

“This, my dear, is the largest city square in the world!” boasts Hu Tian. “One million people can fit here!”

“And who's that in the picture over there?” asks Lisa.

“It's Mao Zedong, the founder of the People's Republic of China,” explains Hu Tian.