

BAMBOOZLED

SAMPLE SCRIPT

SCENE ONE

Mei Sheng, a female panda, sits in her enclosure. She is chewing on a piece of bamboo, and has a number of other pieces, each of the same length, lined up neatly in front of her.

Aileen and Jean, two of her zoo keepers, enter.

Aileen 早上好,美生。 Zǎo shàng hǎo, Měi Shēng. (Good morning, Mei Sheng)

Mei Sheng Good morning. Your pronunciation is getting better.

Aileen Thank you. I've been practising at home with my husband.

Mei Sheng 他是中国人吗? Tā shì zhōngguó rén ma? (Is he Chinese?)

Aileen No, he's not Chinese, but he is very patient.

Jean (to Mei Sheng) Your English has really improved too.

Mei Sheng Thank you. I've been practising on the zebras.

Jean Oh good. Does that mean you're starting to feel settled?

Mei Sheng Yes, I think so. Just a little homesick now and then, but I'm excited to be here.

Aileen And how are you finding the new bamboo?

Mei Sheng I'm not finding it: it's just here every morning.

Aileen Sorry, I meant, is it more to your taste?

Mei Sheng Yes, it's definitely better than the other one. Nice and chewy!

Aileen Good. Well there's plenty more. And we've got two weeks' worth of our own growing too.

Mei Sheng Sounds like I won't go hungry!

Jean Absolutely not. Hey, we've got some exciting news too.

Mei Sheng 真的吗? 什么? Zhēn de ma? Shén me? (Really? What?)

- Jean** Plans are in place to bring over another panda from a zoo in China.
- Mei Sheng** Another panda? Really?
- Jean** Yes. The zoo wants to give you the chance to mate. I know it's been on your mind.
- Mei Sheng** It has. 我的天，太令人兴奋了！ Wǒ de tiān, tài lìng rén xīngfèn le!
(Gosh, how exciting!)
- Aileen** I know. I'm excited too.
- Mei Sheng** It will have to happen soon, though. I only have a couple of days when I can breed.
- Jean** Yes, between late March and April. Don't worry, it's all been carefully planned.
- Mei Sheng** Well I wish him a safe journey.
- Aileen** Angus and Isla are flying out to meet him in China. In fact, they're probably already there.
- Jean** I'd love to go to China: walk the great wall, visit the forbidden city.
- Aileen** Are you sure you'd be allowed?
- Jean** . . . sample the delicious Chinese cuisine.
- Aileen** I do that every Friday night. Anyway, I'm afraid the only place we're going is to muck out the meerkats. Come on.
- Jean** Ooh, lucky us. See you later, Mei Sheng.
- Mei Sheng** See you later.

Aileen and Jean depart. Mei Sheng goes back to her bamboo. After a few moments, three zebras enter.

- Zebra One** Hello Mei Sheng. 你好吗？ Nǐ hǎo ma? (How are you?)
- Mei Sheng** 我很好,谢谢。 Wǒ hěn hǎo, xièxiè. (I'm well, thank you.) How are you all?
- Zebra One** Fine, thanks.
- Zebra Two** Very well.
- Zebra Three** Tickety-boo.
- Mei Sheng** Tickety what?
- Zebra Three** Boo!

Zebra One jumps out of his skin (not-literally!)

- Zebra One** Was that really necessary?

Zebra Three Sorry.

Mei Sheng Hey, guess what?

Zebra Two What?

Mei Sheng Another panda's coming to the zoo. All the way from China.

Zebra One Another panda?

Zebra Two To the zoo?

Zebra Three From
China? *Short pause.*

Mei Sheng *(smiles)* Yes.

Zebras Wow.

Zebra One What's China?

Mei Sheng Guys, we've already talked about 中国。 Zhōng guó. (China.) It's where I'm from. Remember?

Zebra One Oh yes, of course. How far away is China?

Mei Sheng It's over on the other side of the world.

Zebra Two Is that far?

Mei Sheng Yes, pretty far.

Zebra Three Is it big?

Mei Sheng It felt big to me. There was always so much going on. So much to see.

Zebra One What like?

Mei Sheng Well, Chinese New Year for one.

Zebra Two Is that different to Scottish New Year?

Mei Sheng Very different.

Zebra Three I bet they don't eat haggis!

Mei Sheng No, they don't. But they do eat lots of other strange things. And it's loud and bright and full of colour.

Zebra One It sounds fun.

Mei Sheng Oh it is, it's so much fun. There's nothing like it on the planet.