

Personal Diary, Entry 1, Feb.16

I have been thinking of writing diary for a long time, however, I am too lazy to do so. Since I will leave for work for a whole year, I hope that I can record all the events that happen this year. I wish for success.

I will start my work tomorrow. It's my first time to leave home. I'll miss my home, mom and sister so much. However, I am also looking forward to my new life. Will it be interesting?

Mom is packing for me and keeps talking to me. Finally I can go to sleep now. I wonder whether I can fall asleep tonight. I am so excited!

Entry 2

I cannot believe that I kept sleeping so late today. Chen Yu's brother came over to pick Ling Xiaojun and I after the breakfast.

Not unexpectedly, I threw up three times because we changed buses three times. After arriving at the factory, we paid the deposit first and then got the accommodation done. Dad went back right after the lunch. I found that except Chen Yu and her relatives there were nobody from my hometown. I felt so lonely.

I started working at 2 o'clock this afternoon. It's not interesting at all. I kept working till 2 a.m. I feel like sleeping. I miss home so much that I want to cry. It is a horrible experience to work in the factory. I wonder how time passes so slowly.

Entry 3

Two more workers joined the factory today. There are 10 people in my dorm now. We are reading novels, chatting, listening to music every night. I feel happy about that.

The 50 products I made yesterday were returned because they did not reach the standard. I am sad. Li Ying made her quota and the supervisor praised her for her good work. Then the supervisor told me to learn from Li Ying, but it is really hard for me to work here.

Entry 4

Everyday in the factory is the same without any changes. It's quite boring. But I am getting accustomed to this kind of life day by day. I wonder how my parents are doing these days.

This factory is so unfair! All the boys get more money for making beads. It is so unfair! It is also unfair that we girls have to line up to buy our food, but the boys do not have to do so. I don't know why the boys have so many advantages over us. I am very angry about it,

but what can I do? I have to obey.

Entry 5

We keep talking and making jokes with each other during the work, but the supervisor tells us to stop talking. It's none of his business. Why should he worry about us talking?

Entry 6

Today after we ate dinner we found that someone had taken Liying's bag of beads/pearls. She was very angry. We helped Liying work till 1 o'clock in the morning. I am exhausted.

Entry 7

We got our income today. I earned 50 RMB (\$6.25) this week. Qiu Bixian earned 30 RMB (\$3.75) this week. I am very excited because it is my first time to earn money by myself. I did not realize the difficulty of earning money till now. I earned more than the other 9 girls in my dorm. I treated my friends with a dinner tonight to celebrate.

Entry 8

I asked how much Qiu Bixian earned for this month. She answered me calmly, "I only earned 80 RMB (\$8 U.S.), nothing to be happy about!" She did not understand at all.

Entry 9

I really miss my home.

Entry 10

The ambitious Liying worked even harder this month to earn more money. She gets up at 6:00 in the morning and works till 11:00 p.m. She asked us to accompany her because she is bored. I don't want to work for such a long time, however, we all fear that we will be punished if we don't keep up with her. I don't feel like getting up that early in the morning. It is so cold!

Entry 11

Liu Jun came over later today and the supervisor entered the dorm. We were afraid of being punished by him. He told Liu Jun to leave the dorm.

Entry 12

When we were working this afternoon, the boss rushed to our table because we were talking. He yelled at us and warned us that we would be fired in one month if we did not

behave. The other manager told us not to set a bad example for other workers.

Tonight Zhao Qin and I wanted to leave the factory to have fun, but we cannot get outside without permission from the boss. Zhao Qin tried to convince the gatekeeper to let us out, but he said "No," so we went back to our dorm. I want to go out so much now.

Entry 13

Tonight we paid the guard some money to let us go out. We went shopping and Zhao Qin got a haircut. We went to clubs till 3 o'clock and then went to McDonald's since we had nowhere else to go. A woman came over and asked whether we'd like to look for a hotel. We followed her to a place which was dirty and small. However, it was too cold outside to stay and we had to stay in this terrible place for the night. I am very tired today, but the experience is interesting. If my parents knew what I did today, they would blame me without question.

Entry 14

If I describe yesterday as the heaven, today turns out to be hell for us. As soon as we arrived at the factory, the boss approached us; he was very angry because we left the factory. We were fined 100 RMB (\$12.5) and Zhao Qin was fired. All of us are terrified.

We took a picture with Zhao Qin before she left. We could not help crying when Zhao Qin left. We cried not only because we lost a good friend but also because we did not feel comfortable ever since we started working here. Zhang Suhong and Liu Xingmei came over to comfort us, however it made us feel even sadder.

When we entered the dinning hall, everybody looked at us. It was so embarrassing that I had to hide my face. I did so even when I went to the restroom. I felt shameful and I cried.

The supervisor told us to write an apology letter to the boss. I want to quit my job, but I can't because I will not be paid.

Entry 15

An American with a camera arrived at our factory today. He is interviewing people in different workshops. We feel interesting about what he is doing. Everybody is talking about him; we cannot concentrate on our work.

Entry 16

It is Sunday and it is my first day off in 2 weeks. We all danced in our dorm today. I feel a little better after dancing.

Entry 17

It is tiring these days. We work all day and night and get little sleep. I don't want to work here any more. It is very boring and everyday is the same. But if I were home now, I would feel much more bored. What do I do? I want to quit this job and do something adventurous.

Entry 18

Working in this factory makes me feel obsolete from the outside world. Li Ying says that she feels the same way I feel and that she is quitting at the end of the month. If she leaves, I will be lonely and by myself.

Entry 19

Li Ying sent her resignation letters to the boss today. She will leave the factory after 10 days.

Entry 20

Four more girls handed in their resignation letters today. I cannot believe they have decided to quit the job.

Entry 21

Today two more girls quit working here. Now only Xiaojun, Qiu Bixian and I are left. I don't feel like working these days. I did not finish my quota last time and will be fined again.

Entry 22

I don't feel like working. I don't know what I am thinking about. My friends all assumed that I would quit and go with them. I told them that I would not leave, but they didn't believe me. I will not quit because my best friend is here. I will stay with her until the Chinese New Year. I will not give up.

Entry 23

I feel like pulling the iron string. I have a good mood today. [NOTE: Iron string is the bead machine].

Entry 24

Deng Zhenxiang's husband was killed by a car in an accident in front of the factory gate yesterday. She was heartbroken and kept crying for the whole night. We don't know how to comfort her. Life is susceptible.

Entry 25

Deng Zhenxiang came over to say goodbye to us today. She got thinner all of a sudden. She still could not stop crying because her husband died. We cried together with her. She has to bring up two children by herself from now on. How is this possible?

Entry 26

When I read the story called "The Old Man Who is Riding the Bicycle" today, I suddenly made up my mind to go back to school. I realized that if I were not educated, I could do nothing but ride a bicycle and sell vegetables like the old man in the story. I called my mom and told her my thoughts. She said that it would be great if I went back to school next year. Will I go back to school next year?