TIBETAN STORY

a series of interactive stories by Mark White

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1. ESCAPE FROM TIBET ("be" verbs)

   It is a cool night in Lhasa. Where is Lhasa? The year is 1959. How long ago is that? There are Chinese soldiers in Tibet. Is Tibet a part of China? Where is Tibet? What is Tibet? It is March 17. A group of Tibetans walk out of Lhasa. They are the family of the Dalai Lama. Who is the Dalai Lama?

   The Dalai Lama goes to India. What is the capital of India? Is India a British colony? The Dalai Lama moves to Dharamsala. Where is Dharamsala?

   The Chinese government is angry. Chinese soldiers attack Tibet. They kill eighty thousand Tibetans. They destroy monasteries.

   A hundred thousand Tibetans run away. Some of them go to India. Some of them go to Nepal. Where is Nepal? Is Nepal an independent country?

   Some of the Tibetans go to the mountains. They live in the mountains. Is Mt Everest in Tibet? What is Mt Everest? In the mountains there is a secret monastery. Some Tibetan monks hide in the monastery. They are Buddhist. Are you Buddhist? Is China Buddhist?

   One family of Tibetans goes to Hong Kong. Where is Hong Kong? Is Hong Kong a British colony? From Hong Kong the family goes to Taiwan. They have friends in Taiwan. Is Taiwan an independent country?

   The Tibetan family stays in Taiwan. They have a beautiful daughter. Many years pass. The daughter grows up. She learns Chinese. Is Chinese grammar hard? Is Chinese pronunciation hard? Are Chinese characters hard?

   A Japanese businessman comes to Taiwan. Is he from Osaka? Is he handsome? Is he intelligent? Is he tall?

   The daughter of the Tibetan family meets the Japanese businessman. He falls in love with her. She falls in love with him. She marries the Japanese businessman. They have a son. The son is very clever. He can speak Tibetan and Chinese. He can see auras. He can remember past lives. He can read minds. He can communicate by telepathy.

   The Japanese businessman stays in Taiwan. He does not go back to Japan. How far is it from Japan to Taiwan?

   The Japanese businessman has a family in Japan, but he does not communicate with them. He does not write and he does not ring and he does not visit. He has a brother. The brother in Japan misses his brother in Taiwan. He thinks about him a lot.

   Time passes. The Japanese economy goes up. The Japanese economy goes down. The brother in Japan dies. The brother in Taiwan does not know.
2. THE INSURANCE COMPANY ("there is/are")

It is a warm day in Osaka. A crowd of people is in the street. There is a funeral. How many people are there at the funeral? One young man is very sad. It is his father’s funeral. Are there any neighbours there?

There are three people in the young man’s immediate family. They are his mother, his sister and himself. How many people are there in your immediate family and who are they?

The sister is a university student. Is she a good student? Is she intelligent? Is she an attractive young woman? How old is she? Is her hair blond or brown or black or red? Is it long? Is it straight? Are her clothes expensive? What colour are her clothes? What colour are her shoes? Is her university expensive? Where is it? How many students are there in her university? How many are there in her English class?

The mother is very sad too. Is she tall? How old is she? What colour is her hair? Is it long or short? Are her clothes black? Are her shoes black? Is she from Osaka originally? Is she a good mother?

The young man is tall and good-looking. Is his hair long or short or medium-length? Is it straight or curly or wavy? Is it natural colour?

After the funeral the young man sits in the kitchen of his house with his mother and his sister. He is the head of the family now. He sits at the kitchen table. He sits in his father’s place. How many chairs are there in the kitchen? Is there a microwave? Is there any food on the table? The mother opens the fridge. There are some bottles of beer in the fridge. How many bottles are there? Is there any coke? Is there any milk? What else is there in the fridge? She gives her son a bottle of beer. The mother and the sister and the brother talk about the future. They talk about money. They do not have a lot of money but the father has an insurance policy.

The next day the son goes to work. He works in a convenience store. He has a degree in Chinese and he can speak good Mandarin but the economy is not very good and he cannot find a good job so he works in a convenience store. How many staff members are there in the convenience store. Are there any pretty girls? What kind of convenience store is it? How much is the young man’s hourly wage?

A young Chinese woman comes into the store. She cannot speak Japanese. The young guy helps her. He speaks Chinese with her. She comes from Taiwan. Are there many Taiwanese people in Japan? Are there many Chinese people? The young man thinks about his father’s brother in Taiwan.

After work the young man goes home. He talks to his mother. She is worried. She has a letter from the insurance company. The company is bankrupt. The company cannot pay her husband’s policy.
3. THE TRIP TO TAIWAN (present simple tense)

It is a wet day in Osaka. Is Osaka in Japan? How many people are there in Osaka? Is it the capital of Japan?

A young man is at work. He works in a convenience store. How much does he earn per hour? What days does he work? What hours does he work? How does he get to and from work? Does he have a girlfriend? Does he have many friends?

The young man finishes work then he goes home. He lives with his mother and his sister. His father is dead. He talks to his mother. She is worried because they have no money. The sister is a university student but she does not have enough money and university is very expensive. How much does university cost per year? Does the sister have a part-time job? How much does the family need per week?

The mother talks about the father’s brother. He lives in Taiwan. Maybe he can help.

The son can speak Chinese. He wants to find his uncle in Taiwan. He wants to work in Taiwan.

Taiwan does business with Japan. A lot of Taiwanese people want to learn Japanese. The son can teach Japanese in Taiwan. He can earn a lot of money.

Meanwhile in Nakhon Phanom a young Thai man has the same problem. He has no money. He wants to work in a factory in Taiwan.

Nakhon Phanom is on the Thai border with Laos. The young Thai man lives in Nakhon Phanom but he doesn’t have any money. He has fifteen brothers and sisters. How many sisters does he have? How many brothers does he have? Where is Thailand? Where is Taiwan?

A lot of Thai and Filipino workers go to Taiwan to make money. Where are the Philippines? What is the GDP per capita in Thailand? What is it in the Philippines? What is it in Japan and in Taiwan?

The Thai guy meets an agent. He gets a job at a factory in Taiwan. He flies to Taipei.

Back in Japan the young Japanese guy does the same thing. He buys a ticket to Taipei. How much does it cost? Does he need a visa? Which airline does he fly with? Which travel agent does he buy his ticket from? Does he get a one-way ticket or a return? Does he fly from Osaka or Nagoya? How long does it take? Is there a boat from Japan to Taiwan? When the Japanese guy leaves, his sister and his mother come to the airport. What time does the plane leave? Does the guy have a suitcase or a backpack? How many pieces of hand luggage does he have?
4. THE FLIGHT (present continuous)

It is a warm day above the Pacific Ocean. A plane is flying from Japan to Taiwan. A young Japanese man is on the plane. Does he have a window seat or an aisle seat? He is going to meet his uncle. What is he wearing? It is lunchtime. The young man is eating chicken and rice. Another man is sitting next to him. What is he eating? What is he wearing? The man comes from Seattle. He works for an aircraft company. He is flying to Taiwan on business. He is a businessman. The young man is talking to the businessman. What are they talking about? What language are they speaking?

Meanwhile another plane is flying across the South China Sea. It is flying from Bangkok to Taipei. There is a young Thai man on the plane. Is he flying for the first time? Is he wearing nice clothes? Is he wearing sandals or shoes? Is he wearing a jacket? What kind of shirt is he wearing? Is he sitting in a window seat or an aisle seat or in the middle row? Is he talking to the person next to him? Where does the person next to him come from? What is that person wearing?

The young Thai man is thinking about his family. Do you think about your family a lot?

Meanwhile on the other plane, the young Japanese guy is thinking about his family too. He is talking to the American businessman about his family. He is talking about his sister. At that moment his sister is back in Japan. She is shopping. She is buying something. What is she buying? How much does it cost? What is she wearing? Who is she with?

The American businessman tells the Japanese guy about his family in Seattle. How many people are there in the American guy’s family and who are they and what do they do and where are they right now and what are they doing right now?

The plane from Japan lands in Taipei at about the same time as the plane from Thailand. The passengers go through customs and immigration. How long does that take? There is a bus from the airport to the city. How long does it take to get from the airport to the city?

The Thai guy is going to a factory in south Taiwan. The Japanese guy is going to the same factory. The Japanese guy’s uncle owns the factory. The Japanese guy sits next to the Thai guy on the bus. They sit next to each other but they do not talk. They are going to the same place but they do not know.

The American businessman takes a taxi. He goes to a big hotel. The receptionist is wearing a red uniform. What colour shoes is she wearing? What is she doing? How many people are working on the reception desk? Are they all wearing the same uniform?
5. THE UNCLE (future “going to” tense and “have to”)

It is a fine sunny day in Taipei. A young Japanese guy is lying in his bed in a cheap hotel. He is going to get up then he is going to take a shower then he is going to check out. Is he going to wash his hair? What is he going to eat for breakfast? He is going to visit his uncle. He has his uncle’s old address in Tainan. Tainan is in the south of Taiwan.

At that moment the uncle is sitting in his office in his factory in Tainan. He is talking to a customer on the telephone. The customer is an American businessman from Seattle. He is in a large hotel in Taipei. The American customer cannot speak Chinese or Japanese and the uncle cannot speak English. They have a problem. How long is the American guy going to stay in Taiwan?

Later that day the Japanese guy catches a bus to Tainan. The Thai guy is on the same bus. The Thai guy is going to Tainan too. He is going to work in the same factory. How long is he going to stay there? How much is he going to earn per month? How much is he going to send to his family?

That evening the bus arrives in Tainan. The young Japanese guy checks into a cheap hotel. The next day he is going to find the factory and he is going to meet his uncle for the first time.

The next morning the young guy gets up early and he finds the factory. There is a Chinese secretary there. She has a beautiful body and an ugly face. She smiles at the Japanese guy. Her smile is beautiful.

The guy meets his father’s brother for the first time. Does he look like his brother?

His uncle is not happy to see him. He tells his uncle about his family but his uncle does not want to hear about the family problems. His uncle does not want to help.

The young guy is very sad. He goes back to his hotel. He cannot go back to Japan. He has to make some money. He has to help his sister and his mother. Is he going to get a job in Taiwan and save money or go back to Japan? Is he going to tell his mother the truth about the uncle? Is his sister going to finish university? How is the family going to survive? That night he drinks a lot of beer. He worries about his family.

Meanwhile the Thai guy is sleeping in the workers’ dormitory. He is going to start work tomorrow. Is he going to work hard? Is he going to enjoy his new job? Is he going to learn Chinese? Is he going to meet other Thai people? Is he going to get a promotion? Is he going to be happy?

Back in Taipei, the American businessman is very unhappy. He needs a translator. He is going to go to Tainan. He is going to visit a factory. He is not going to be able to understand. What is he going to do?
6. THE JOB (present perfect tense)

It is a hot day in Tainan. A young Japanese guy is in his hotel room. He has a hangover. Has he ever had a hangover before? Have you? There is a knock at the door. It is the uncle. Has the uncle ever been to this hotel before?

The uncle comes in. He talks to his nephew. He has changed his mind. He is sorry about yesterday. He offers his nephew a job. How much is he going to pay him? Is he going to get an annual bonus? The young guy goes back to the factory with his uncle.

The young guy has a job as international business manager. He has to talk to foreign customers. The uncle can speak Chinese and Japanese so he can communicate with Chinese customers and Japanese customers but he cannot communicate with American customers because he cannot speak English. Has he ever been to America?

The young nephew can speak Chinese and Japanese and English so he can talk to customers from China and Japan and America and Europe. Has he ever been to Europe? Have you? Has the young Japanese guy ever worked for an international company before? Has he been to Taiwan before? Has he been to Mainland China?

Later that day an American businessman from Seattle arrives in Tainan. The Japanese guy knows him from the plane. They laugh and talk like old friends. They go to lunch with the uncle.

The American guy wants to buy aircraft parts. Has he ever bought aircraft parts in Taiwan before? He wants to buy rivets. Has the uncle’s factory ever produced rivets for aircraft before?

After lunch the American businessman and the Japanese guy’s uncle sign a contract. The uncle’s factory is going to produce rivets for the American aircraft manufacturer.

The American guy goes back to Taipei that night. The young Japanese guy works in the factory office during the afternoon and at night he sleeps in the workers’ dormitory at the factory. He does not meet the uncle’s family. The uncle does not introduce him.

The young Japanese guy meets a young Thai guy. How long has the Thai guy been in Taiwan? What do the Japanese guy and the Thai guy talk about? The Japanese guy also meets a guy from the Philippines and a guy from Sri Lanka and a fellow from Ghana. They all work in the uncle’s factory. How long have they worked there? Have any of them been to Japan? Have any of them been to the States? Has the Japanese guy ever met people from those countries before?
7. THE WORKERS (“would” conditionals)

A young Japanese guy is working at his uncle’s factory in Taiwan. He takes care of foreign business. Would you work in another country? The young guy can speak Chinese and English. Would you study Chinese? The job is quite interesting. He works with a young Chinese woman. She has a really beautiful body but her face is very ugly.

A lot of foreigners work at the factory. They are labourers. Every night the Japanese guy sleeps in the dormitory with the other foreign workers. The uncle does not introduce him to his family. If you were the uncle, would you introduce your nephew to your family? If you were the nephew, would you ask to meet your uncle’s family?

There is a young blind man at the factory. He never talks to the other workers. He always works by himself. He polishes machine parts. He always sits in the same chair. If you were the young Japanese guy, would you talk to the blind guy?

The Japanese guy asks the other workers about the blind man. He is Chinese. He is from Taiwan. He never talks to the other workers. He is very quiet. Would you talk to the other workers, if you were him?

Every month the Japanese guy sends money to his family. Would you send money to your family, if you were him?

One night he drinks beer with the other workers. They talk about working conditions in the factory. The conditions are very bad. The workers are not free. The uncle keeps their passports. Would you keep their passports if you were the uncle? They cannot leave. They have to work overtime every night but the uncle does not pay them. Would you work overtime if you were one of the factory workers? Would you pay the workers for overtime if you were the uncle? The young guy is upset. If you were him, would you talk to the uncle? The workers are afraid of the uncle. Would you be afraid of him? The uncle is a gangster. He has mafia connections.

One morning the young guy comes into the office. He smiles at the young Chinese secretary. She smiles at him. Her smile is very beautiful. He talks to her about the workers. He talks to her about the passports. She is afraid. The Japanese guy wants to take the passports. He wants to give the passports to the workers. Would you give the passports to the workers? What would you do if you were in the Japanese guy’s situation?

That afternoon the Japanese guy talks to the blind guy. He is not really Chinese. He is Tibetan. He is a lama. He is a reincarnation of a famous lama from a secret temple in the mountains in Tibet. Would you believe his story, if he told you? He wants to go to Tibet with the Japanese guy. If you were the Japanese guy, would you take the Tibetan guy to Tibet?
8. THE BLIND TIBETAN’S STORY (past tense)

A long time ago a beautiful woman lived in Tibet. Where is Tibet? The Chinese invaded Tibet. When did the Chinese invade Tibet? The beautiful Tibetan woman ran away with her family. How many Tibetans ran away from Tibet after the Chinese invasion? She came to Taiwan. Did she come by plane or by ship? She married. What month did she get married in? Was it an expensive wedding ceremony? She had a son in Taiwan. The son grew up. He was healthy and strong.

One day the woman went for a drive in the mountains. What kind of car was she driving? There was a car accident. The woman died. Her son was very young. He did not die. He survived. He walked away. He walked into the mountains.

The son met some Taiwanese aborigines. What kind of clothes were they wearing? Were they hunting? They took him in. They looked after him. How many aborigines were there in that tribe? The aborigines taught the young Tibetan boy to hunt. Did they teach him to catch fish? Did he learn their language?

When the Tibetan boy was seven years old, he was hunting in the forest one day and he met a priest. The priest was a Buddhist. How old was he? Was he wearing an orange robe?

The boy was not an aborigine but he lived with the aborigines. The priest took the young boy to a monastery. How many priests lived in the monastery? The young boy learned about Buddhism. He was a very good student. He understood everything. Did he chant sutras? The young boy also had special powers. He could see auras. He could communicate by telepathy. He could tell the future. He could remember his past lives. He could remember Tibet. He wanted to go back to Tibet. Do you want to go to Tibet?

When he was seventeen the Tibetan boy left the monastery. He went to the city. He got a job in a factory. How much did he earn? The boss was Japanese. Did he come from Osaka? He was a bitter and angry man. He gave the boy a job but the work was dirty and dangerous. There was an explosion in the factory. The explosion damaged the young man’s eyes. Did it kill anybody? The young Tibetan man became blind. He still worked at the factory.

Meanwhile in Tibet the lamas were looking for the young man. He was the reincarnation of the head lama of the temple. How many lamas were looking for him?

The temple was a secret temple high up in the mountains. There was a lot of snow and ice. The Chinese government did not know about the temple. It was a secret monastery. How many lamas lived in the monastery?
9. THE FACTORY (passive present)

A young Japanese businessman has a problem. He is working at his uncle’s factory in Tainan in southern Taiwan. His uncle is keeping the passports of his foreign workers and he is not paying them overtime. How much are the workers paid per hour? How much should they be paid? The passports are kept in the office. Are they kept in a safe?

The factory is located on the edge of Tainan City. Where is Tainan located? Machine parts are made in the factory. They are sent to other countries in Asia and also to Europe and North America. Are they sent to Eastern Europe? Are they sent to South America? Are any of the parts sent to Australia or New Zealand? Are any of them sent to Japan?

The machine parts are used in cars and vending machines and in many types of industrial machines. Are they used in vending machines in Japan? They are also used in aircraft. Are they used in military aircraft?

The factory has a new contract with a company in Seattle. What companies are located in Seattle? Aircraft rivets are produced in the factory then they are sent to Seattle. Are the rivets being manufactured right now? The rivets are used in aircraft manufacture in Seattle. How many rivets are used in one large passenger aircraft? How much money is earned from this contract (by the uncle)?

The young Japanese business manager goes to the office. He talks to the Chinese secretary about the problem. She is frightened. The uncle is a member of the local mafia.

Just then the uncle comes in. The secretary and the Japanese guy are not working. They are talking. The uncle is angry. He shouts at them. The Chinese secretary is very frightened. Is the Japanese guy frightened?

After work the Japanese guy goes to the factory. He talks to the workers. How many workers are employed in the factory? He also talks to the young Tibetan blind man.

The young Tibetan guy was injured in a factory accident several years ago. He became blind. Was he taken to hospital? Were his eyes bandaged? Was he paid any compensation money? Was anybody killed in the accident?

The young Tibetan man wants to go to Tibet with the young Japanese guy. It is his destiny. He is destined to go to Tibet with the young man. Do you believe in destiny?

That night the Japanese guy has a dream. In his dream he sees a face. It is the face of an old man. The old man is a Tibetan lama. Is he wearing a long robe? The old man is calling him. He is calling him to Tibet.

Tibet is occupied by the Chinese. When was it invaded? How long have the Chinese been in Tibet now?
10. THE FAULTY RIVETS ("that" as conjunction)

It is morning on the edge of Tainan. A young Japanese man wakes from a dream. He has just dreamed that he can see the mountains of Tibet. He has dreamed that he can hear a voice. The voice was calling him. It was calling him to Tibet.

The young man gets out of bed and gets ready for work. He goes into the office. He smiles at the secretary. Does he tell her that he has dreamed about Tibet? He looks at some papers. The papers are about aircraft rivets for a big contract with a company in Seattle. The rivets are supposed to be metal but the factory is producing plastic rivets. Does the secretary know that the rivets are plastic? Does she know that they are supposed to be metal?

The young man goes into the owner’s office. The owner is his uncle. The young man says that the rivets are plastic but they are supposed to be metal. The boss says that plastic is cheaper. Does the young man say that it is dangerous to use plastic rivets in an aircraft?

The young man goes to the factory. He talks to the blind Tibetan. He says that he is ready to go to Tibet. Then he goes to the factory workers. He says that he is going to give them their passports. Do the workers know that the rivets are faulty? Do they know that the young guy is going to go to Tibet? Do they know that the Tibetan man is the reincarnation of a famous lama?

In the afternoon the young Japanese guy goes to a travel agent. He books two tickets to Hong Kong.

That night the young Japanese man says goodbye to his friends the factory workers from Ghana and Sri Lanka and Thailand and the Philippines. Then he gives them their passports. After that he says goodbye to the secretary. She is doing overtime. The secretary says that she loves him. She says that she wants to go with him. Would you take her with you?

The Japanese guy talks to the secretary for a long time. She says that the uncle is not really a bad man. She says that his wife and his son were killed in a car accident a long time ago. She says that he was a good man before but he became bad. She says that he became bad because he lost his family. Would you become bad if you lost your family? If you were the young Japanese guy, would you tell the uncle that you were leaving?

The next day the Japanese guy and the Tibetan guy fly to Hong Kong. The Japanese guy calls the secretary from Hong Kong. He says that he has arrived safely. Does he call his mother and tell her that he is going to Tibet with a blind man? The secretary says that the uncle is furious. Would you be furious? (if you were the uncle)
A young Japanese guy and his blind Tibetan friend are staying in a cheap hotel in Kowloon. Staying in Kowloon is cheap. Staying on Hong Kong Island is not cheap. They are getting a visa to go to China. Does getting a visa take long? How long does it take? Does getting a visa for China cost a lot?

Meanwhile in Japan the Japanese guy’s sister is at her boyfriend’s place. He is a friend of the brother. They are talking about driving. He has a car. What are the good and bad points of having a car? She is getting her drivers’ license. Is getting your drivers’ license hard? Is it expensive? She is living with her mother. Is living with your mother good? Is living alone good and why or why not? That night the sister thinks about her brother. She thinks that he is in Taiwan. She thinks that he is working in Tainan. She is going to university. Is going to university important?

The next day the Tibetan guy and the Japanese guy go to a travel agent. They talk about traveling in China. Is traveling in China safe? Is it expensive? Suddenly the Tibetan guy looks ill. He sits down.

He is receiving a telepathic message from Tibet. The message is from a lama in the secret monastery in the mountains. The lama says that it is dangerous to travel across China. He says that Chinese soldiers know that the blind lama is coming. He says that they are watching the airports and the railway stations. He says that the travelers should enter Tibet from India.

The Japanese guy has to buy a ticket to India. Is flying to India expensive? Is flying fun? Is it safe? The Japanese guy worries about his sister. He feels responsible for his sister. He is supposed to send money to his sister. He is supposed to take care of his sister. Is taking care of your sister important?

That night the Japanese guy has a dream. He dreams that he is walking in the mountains in Tibet. There is a lot of snow. He is walking with an old bearded man with a kind face. The young Japanese guy wants to help the blind lama and he wants to help his sister too but he cannot do both things at the same time. He feels guilty. The old man in the dream says that the young guy should not worry. He says that he should follow his destiny. Is following your destiny important? Is listening to your dreams important?

The next morning the blind Tibetan says that Hong Kong is not safe. He says that Chinese soldiers are looking for them. The two travelers go to the airport. They take a plane to Bangkok. That night they stay in another hotel. The young Japanese guy is still worried. He has saved a lot of money at the factory but he is not sending money to his sister now. He is spending money on airline tickets and hotels.
12. A TRIP TO THE BANK (comparatives)

A young Japanese guy and his blind Tibetan friend are traveling from Taiwan to Tibet via Bangkok. They are staying in a hotel on Khaosarn Road in Bangkok. Is staying in Bangkok cheaper than staying in Hong Kong? The young Japanese guy has a problem. He cannot relax. He wants to help the Tibetan guy but he wants to help his sister too. He wants to work and save money and send money to his sister but he also wants to help the blind guy get to Tibet. Which is more important, helping your sister or helping a blind guy get home?

That night the Japanese guy dreams about the old man with the kind face and the long beard again. The old man is laughing at him. He says that the Japanese guy should not worry. Is worrying good or bad?

The next morning the young Japanese guy feels better. He sits up in bed. He looks across at the Tibetan guy. Who is taller, the Tibetan guy or the Japanese guy? How does the Tibetan guy compare to the Japanese guy in weight?

That day the two companions buy tickets to Nepal. It is cheaper to fly to Nepal than it is to fly to India. Is Nepal closer than India? How does India compare to Thailand? How does Thailand compare to Japan? How does Tibet compare to Japan? After they get their tickets and visas, the two travelers go to a café and eat. How does Thai food compare to Japanese food? After that the Japanese guy checks his email. He has a yahoo account. How does yahoo compare to hotmail? Which one has a bigger mailbox?

The Japanese guy has an email message from the Chinese secretary in Taiwan. She says that she misses the young Japanese guy. She says that she wants to come to Tibet with him. She says that she wants to quit her job. She says that she wants to tell him something important. He emails back and says that he is going to fly to Kathmandu tomorrow. She emails and says that he is going to meet him in Nepal.

Meanwhile the uncle in Tainan is working. He is sending plastic rivets to Seattle. Everybody thinks that the rivets are metal but they are plastic. Which is stronger, plastic or metal? After work the uncle goes for a walk in the street. He sees an old man with a long beard and a kind face. Who is taller, the uncle or the old man? Who is heavier? Who is more intelligent?

The uncle talks to the old man. He feels good. The next day he gets up and he goes to the bank. He sends money to his brother’s family in Japan. He uses Tokyo Mitsubishi Bank. How does that bank compare to Citibank? How do Japanese banks compare to American banks? After that he goes to the factory. He wants to talk to his secretary but she is not there. She has flown to Nepal. How does Nepal compare to Thailand?
13. THE PLANE CRASH (superlatives)

It is midday in Kathmandu. Kathmandu is in Nepal. Is the highest mountain in the world in Nepal? Is Kathmandu the most dangerous city on earth? Is it the highest? Which is higher, Zurich or Kathmandu? What is the most dangerous city on earth? What is the safest country?

A plane circles and lands at Kathmandu airport. A young Japanese guy and a blind Tibetan are on the plane. They clear customs and take a taxi to a cheap hotel. That night another plane from Hong Kong arrives. The Chinese secretary from Taiwan is on the plane. She clears customs and goes to the hotel. She meets the Japanese guy and the Tibetan at the hotel. Is it the most expensive hotel in Kathmandu? Is it the cheapest?

The three friends have dinner. Who is the hungriest? Who eats the most? Who talks the most? They drink lassi. A lassi is a yoghurt drink. Who is the thirstiest? Who drinks the most? They are all tired. After dinner they go to bed. Who sleeps the longest?

Meanwhile in Taiwan an old Japanese man is travelling to the airport. He is going to return to Japan. He has not been to Japan for many years. He has not seen his family for many years. What is the longest time that you have gone without seeing your family? The man is going to visit his brother’s family. His brother is dead but his brother’s wife and daughter are still alive. He has sent them money. He is going to help them. He is coming home.

Back in Kathmandu it is morning. Three friends are in their hotel. Outside there is an explosion. Some terrorists have blown up a bus. There are dead bodies everywhere. There is a lot of blood and there are body parts on the street. The three friends are horrified. Who is the most horrified? Who is the most afraid?

The Tibetan guy sits in his room and meditates. The Chinese secretary and the Japanese guy go downstairs and drink hot tea. The Chinese secretary tells the Japanese guy that the Tibetan guy is really the son of the Uncle. The Tibetan guy is the Uncle’s son but the Uncle does not know and the Tibetan guy does not know. The Chinese secretary knows because she is friends with a priest from the mountains in Taiwan. He told the Chinese secretary.

Meanwhile high up in the sky above Okinawa, a plane is in trouble. The rivets that join the wings to the body of the plane are plastic. They should be metal but they are plastic. They are not strong enough. Which is the strongest, steel, aluminium or plastic? The wings fall off. The plane goes down.
14. THE JOURNEY INTO THE MOUNTAINS
(present perfect continuous tense)

It is morning in Kathmandu. Three friends are staying in a small city. They are a Japanese guy, a Taiwanese woman and a Tibetan guy. The Tibetan guy is blind. The Japanese guy has been staying at the hotel for three days. How long has the Taiwanese woman been staying there? How long has the Tibetan guy been staying there?

The three friends decide to hike to Tibet. They need warm clothes and food. They go to a camping shop. The shop is owned by an old Nepalese man. How long has he been living in Kathmandu? How long has he owned the camping goods shop? The three friends buy some gear. What do they buy? The old man recommends a guide.

The guide is a young Nepalese man. How long has he been working as a guide? Has he been living in Kathmandu for a long time? He smokes a cigarette. How long has he been smoking? Do the three friends smoke?

The Tibetan guy says that they do not need a guide. He is blind but he does not need a guide. How long has he been blind? Why doesn’t he need a guide? The three friends go to a restaurant. The waiter is from Tibet. Tibet is next to Nepal. How long has the waiter been in Kathmandu? How long has he been working at the restaurant?

The next day the three travellers begin their journey. They travel north on a bus then they get off the bus. They walk through the mountains. They climb higher and higher. When they have been climbing for several hours they feel tired. They stop and rest. There is a small hut beside the path. They drink hot chai and eat chapati and curry. Chapati is flat bread. Chai is Indian style tea. A family lives in the hut. How long have they been living there?

The three travellers move on. They continue through the mountains. They camp in a hut and they continue the next day. After three days they cross the border but there is no checkpoint because it is a small secret road. The Tibetan guy cannot see but he knows the way because he has telepathic powers. How long has he had telepathic powers? An old lama is guiding him. How long has the old man been guiding him?

The old Lama lives in a secret monastery high up in the mountains of Tibet. The monks have been living there for thousands of years. The Chinese government cannot find the monastery.

The three travellers climb higher and higher into the mountains. They pass the snow line and it is very cold. Each night they find a hut and they sleep in that hut. On the fifth night in the snow, they can not find a hut. They are cold and tired and hungry. Suddenly the Japanese guy sees a yeti. A yeti is a mythical snowman.
15. THE YETI (present perfect passive)

Three travelers are high up in the mountains of Tibet. Suddenly they see a yeti. What is a yeti? How long has this yeti lived in these mountains? Has he ever seen a human before? Has he ever been seen by a human before? How tall is he? Is he hairy?

The Taiwanese woman is frightened of the yeti. Is the yeti frightened of her? The blind Tibetan guy goes up to the yeti. He touches him. Has the yeti ever been touched by a human before? Has he ever touched a human? He touches the young Tibetan man. The Tibetan smiles at the yeti. Has the yeti ever been smiled at before? Can the yeti smile?

The yeti takes the three travelers to a cave. The Taiwanese woman is tired. She falls asleep. The Japanese guy makes a fire. The yeti gives him some meat. He cooks it. It is yak meat. Has the Japanese ever eaten yak meat before? The Tibetan guy does not eat meat. He eats tsampa. Tsampa is Tibetan food. It is flour and butter. The Japanese guy makes tea. They drink it together. The yeti drinks tea. Has he ever drunk tea before? The yeti wakes the Taiwanese woman. Has she ever been woken up by a yeti before? Have you? He gives her some tea. Has she ever been given tea by a yeti before?

Most people are afraid of the yeti but the yeti is not dangerous. In fact he is very gentle and he is very lonely because people are afraid of him. He is alone in the world and he has no friends. The yeti cannot talk but the blind Tibetan lama can understand him because he can read his mind. He can read his thoughts. Has the yeti’s mind ever been read by anybody else before this?

The three adventurers sleep in the cave of the yeti. The next day the yeti leads them up higher and higher into the mountains. Has anybody ever been led up there by a yeti before? High up on top of the highest peak, the four climbers can see a monastery below in a hidden valley. The monastery has never been found by the Chinese. It has been there for thousands of years. It is a school. People go there to learn secret things.

The three humans climb down to the monastery but the yeti does not come down. He stays in the mountains. He watches the three travelers enter the monastery then he goes back to his cave.

An old man with a beard and a kind face greets the three travelers. He welcomes them. He gives them food. He has been expecting them. How long has he been waiting for them?

The blind lama becomes the head of the monastery. All the monks have been waiting for him for a long time. How long have they been waiting?
16. THE HIDDEN MONASTERY (place where, person who)

A Japanese guy and a Taiwanese woman are studying at a Tibetan monastery. How old is the place where they are studying? Are the rooms where they are living comfortable?

They are studying meditation, telepathy, Tibetan language, singing and massage. They have five teachers. What are the names of the people who are teaching them? Each night after his lessons, the Japanese guy goes to his room. He thinks about his sister. Is the room where he sleeps close to the room where the Taiwanese woman sleeps?

Each night the young Taiwanese woman goes to her room. She thinks about the young Japanese guy. She is in love with him. Is he in love with her? She thinks about her family too. What are the names of the people who she thinks about and who are they?

One day the blind lama comes to the Japanese guy’s room and talks to him. The Japanese guy says that he wants to go back to his family but the blind lama says that it is not safe to return now because there are Chinese soldiers in the mountains. They are looking for the hidden monastery.

Far away in the next valley, there are ten Chinese soldiers. They are looking for the hidden monastery but they cannot find it. There is a storm and the soldiers get lost. They cannot find their way back. They run out of food. They are cold and tired and hungry. They are afraid. The old lama with the beard and the kind face speaks to one of them in a dream. He tells them not to worry.

Meanwhile in the valley where the hidden monastery is located, the weather is fine. It is a hidden valley and it has calm weather. It is protected. How many kilometres is it from the valley where the Chinese soldiers are to the valley where the hidden monastery is?

The blind lama takes the Japanese guy and the Taiwanese woman high up into the mountains. They cross a mountain pass and they enter another valley. They come down into a secret valley. There is a lake at the bottom of the valley. There is a hot spring. The water is warm and there are fruit trees and there is green grass. The mountains all around are covered in snow but the valley where the lake is has warm weather and warm water. It is very strange. The three friends swim in the lake.
There is a terrific snowstorm high up in the mountains of Tibet. Ten Chinese soldiers are trapped in a valley. Five of them are killed but five of them survive. The five who survive are from different places in China. One of them is from Beijing. One of them is from Shanghai. One of them comes from Chengdu. One of them comes from Kunming. The last one is a native of Guangzho. One of them is tall and well-built. One of them is thin and wiry. One of them wears glasses. One of them always looks at the ground. One of them has very intense eyes. Who comes from where? (Which of them comes from which place?)

A group of five lamas from the next valley cross a mountain pass. They go down in to the snowstorm. They find the five soldiers who are still alive. They carry them back. Each of the five lamas has different characteristics. One of them is tall and strong. One of them has a great sense of humour. One of them is serious and never speaks. One of them is a compulsive talker. The last one is a really good meditation teacher. Which lama carries which soldier?

The five soldiers are unconscious when they arrive in the valley where the hidden monastery is located. They do not know the way in and they do not know the way out. They are trapped in the valley. The lamas take care of them. Do the soldiers feel scared? Do they miss their families? Do they come from rich families? Have they been in the military for long? Did they join of their own free will? How old are they?

The lamas give the soldiers warm robes and food and they teach them. What do they teach them? There are about two hundred monks in the hidden monastery. Were they born there? Do they like living there? Are they able to do read minds? Can they speak Tibetan? Are they able to speak English? Do they have shaved heads? Do they have kind eyes?

Meanwhile in the next valley the Japanese guy and the Taiwanese woman and the head lama who is blind are swimming in a warm lake. They feel happy and relaxed. After they swim they dry themselves and they go to a small hut by the water. A hermit lives in the hut. He speaks perfect English. He looks like he is about fifty but actually he is five hundred and fifty-seven years old. He smiles at them and he gives them some fruit. He tells them some jokes. How long has he lived in this valley? How long is it since he has been on a trip? Is he able to travel to other places using his mind? Is he able to speak Chinese or Japanese? What is the secret of his long life?
18. THE HERMIT (look, feel, sound, smell, taste PLUS adjective)

A young Japanese guy who can speak Chinese is in a hidden valley in Tibet. He is with a young Taiwanese woman who is in love with him. Is he in love with her? Does he look tired? Does she look tired? There are flowers in the valley. How do they look? How do they smell?

An old man lives in a hut. Does it look old? The old man does not look old. He looks young. Do his clothes look old? The old man is teaching the two young northeast Asians about medicinal herbs. Have you ever taken traditional Chinese medicine? How did it taste?

The old man walks to the side of the lake with the two young people. He wades in the water. Does it feel cold or warm? How does he feel? The man picks some weeds by the waterside. He gives them to the young man. Do they feel damp? Do they feel prickly? He gives some more weeds to the woman. Do those ones feel the same? Do they smell the same? The old man says that the weeds can cure cancer if you eat them.

That afternoon the old man hikes up into the high mountains with the young couple. He teaches them about disease and about medicine. He tells them many things. He shows them a cave and he gives them diamonds and rubies and sapphires and emeralds. How do the stones feel? How do they look?

That night the three of them have dinner with the blind lama who is the head of the monastery on the other side of the mountains. How does he look? How does he feel? They eat tsampa with yak butter and they drink hot salty tea. How does the butter smell? How does the tea taste? How does the tsampa feel? How does the food taste?

After dinner the blind lama plays strange music on a metal bowl. How does it sound? That night the Japanese guy goes to sleep. Does he feel cold? He has a dream. He dreams that he can see his mother and his sister. How do they look? How do they feel?

The following day the four friends hike up into the mountains again. The old hermit teaches the Japanese guy and the Taiwanese woman about more plants and herbs. He shows them how to prepare a medicine that will cure diabetes. They dig up a plant. It has a long stem and roots and little branches but it has no leaves. There are little berries on the plant. The old man grinds all the parts up in a bowl. Two of the people there taste it. Who tastes it? How does it taste? Of the people there one smells it. Who smells it? How does it smell? Everybody touches it. How does it feel?

How does it feel to have diabetes? Does the Japanese guy’s mother have diabetes? The Japanese guy wants to go back to Japan. He misses his family.
19. KATHMANDU (look, sound, smell, feel, taste LIKE plus noun)

A Japanese fellow and his Taiwanese companion and their guide, who is a Tibetan lama, are walking through the Himalayas. The guide is a young novice monk. He is not blind. He has good sight and hearing and a good sense of smell too. He does not smoke. How does smoking smell? How do cigarettes taste? The three hikers are walking in front of a huge snow-covered mountain. It looks like a giant white pyramid. Suddenly they see an animal in the distance. What does it look like? The animal cries out. What does it sound like? How do the three travelers feel?

The three stop to eat. What do they eat and what does it taste like? They camp for the night. They sleep in rough blankets. The wind blows. It is very cold. During the night, they hear a sound. What does it sound like? At one point, the Taiwanese woman peers out of the tent. She sees a strange figure. What does it look like? The figure comes closer. She recognizes it. It is the yeti. The yeti makes a sound. What does it sound like? What does it look like? The Taiwanese woman touches it. What does it feel like?

In the morning the three hikers leave the yeti and descend to Nepal. The young couple say goodbye to their guide then they take a bus to Kathmandu. What does the bus look like? What does the driver look like? How do the two travelers feel?

That night the two of them check into a hotel. Japanese guy has some medicinal herbs in his bag. He also has some strange fruit, which he has never seen before. It comes from the lake at the top of the Himalayas near the secret monastery. He takes a piece of fruit out of his bag. What does it look like? What does it taste like? What does it smell like?

Outside strange music can be heard. Under the window a man is playing an unusual musical instrument. What does it look like? What does it sound like?

For dinner the two of them eat buffalo curry. What does buffalo taste like? They also eat pizza with buffalo cheese. What does buffalo cheese taste like?

From Kathmandu to Bangkok the two travelers take an Indian Airlines plane. The plane is painted beautifully. It looks like a Hindu temple. On the plane they eat curry but they don’t know what kind of curry it is. What does the Taiwanese woman think it tastes like? What does the Japanese guy think it tastes like? They ask the waitress what it is. What does she say it is?

The Japanese guy has some precious stones in his pocket. One is red. One is blue. One is green. One is clear. They are not normal stones. They have medicinal qualities. What do they look like? The two friends land in Thailand. There is a tsunami.
20. THE TSUNAMI (adjective plus infinitive)

Two travelers are in Thailand when the tsunami hits. Is it necessary to get a visa to go to Thailand? It is dangerous to be on the coast when a tidal wave hits. Is it dangerous to be in Bangkok? Is it dangerous to be in Chiang Mai? The two friends want to spend two days in Bangkok and then continue their journey.

Is it normal to take your shoes off inside a Thai house? Is it ok to leave them on? How about in Japan? In Thailand it is rude to touch another person’s head. Is it ok to touch another person’s head in Japan? Is it possible to travel in Thailand if you don’t speak Thai? Is it difficult to get around if you don’t speak Thai? Is it possible to travel there if you don’t speak English? Is it difficult to get around? While they are in Bangkok, the two friends walk along the canals. Is it interesting to walk around in Bangkok? Is it dangerous? One of the travelers is Japanese. He is ready to go home. He misses his family. The other traveler is Taiwanese. She misses her family but she is not ready to go home yet. The Japanese guy has been away from home longer than her. He has been away about a year but she has only been away about two months. Is it good to live away from home?

The two travelers are going to Japan. They get a taxi to the airport. Is it hard to find one? Is it normal to sit in the back of a taxi or in the front in Thailand? The plane takes off and about five hours later the two travelers are flying over Japan. The weather is cloudy at Kansai airport. Is it convenient to fly to Kansai airport if you live in Kyoto? Is it more convenient to fly from Kansai or Nagoya if you live in Nagahama?

The plane is ready to land. Is it difficult to fly a plane? The plane approaches the runway and it touches down. The Japanese guy and his friend, who is Taiwanese, have just arrived in Japan. Is it necessary to have a visa for Japan if you are Taiwanese? Is it possible to get a visa on arrival? How about for Japanese people, when they go overseas to Australia or America, is it necessary to have a visa and if so, is it possible to get it on arrival?

The Japanese guy meets his mother and his sister. They are very happy to see him. He introduces his Taiwanese friend. Is she happy to be in Japan? The mother tells the son that his uncle is dead. Is he sad to hear that? The mother and the daughter have a lot of money from the uncle. Is it good to be rich? The Japanese guy gives his mother and his sister some rubies and sapphires and medicinal herbs. Is it legal to bring them in to Japan? The Japanese guy’s mother and sister do not need him now. Is it good to feel needed? Is he going to stay in Japan or go back to Tibet? What is the Taiwanese woman going to do?