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小英雄

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A Little Hero

人民教育出版社

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470091

952-521
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252/11
102/12

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小 英 雄

北京外国语学院英语系教材组编

内 容 提 要

《小英雄》是一篇记述抗日战争时期太行山区白家村一个少年儿童李爱民英雄事迹的革命回忆录。李爱民在党的领导和教育下，参加了儿童团。他率领儿童团员积极配合八路军抗击日本侵略者。在一次抢收麦子的战斗中，他为了掩护老乡和民兵英勇地献出了自己年轻的生命。

本书由北京外国语学院英语系教材组根据《中国文学》(英文版)一九七一年第十二期中的同名故事用浅易英语改写，并附有汉语注释。适合中学生和初学英语者阅读。

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人民教育出版社出版

新华书店北京发行所发行

人民教育出版社印刷厂印装

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1976年7月第1版 1977年1月第1次印刷

书号 9012·012 定价 0.19 元

Quotations from Chairman Mao

毛主席语录

Never forget class struggle.

千万不要忘记阶级斗争。

The revolutionary war is a war of the masses; it can be waged only by mobilizing the masses and relying on them.

革命战争是群众的战争，只有动员群众才能进行战争，只有依靠群众才能进行战争。

Thousands upon thousands of martyrs have heroically laid down their lives for the people; let us hold their banner high and march ahead along the path crimson with their blood!

成千成万的先烈，为着人民的利益，在我们的前头英勇地牺牲了，让我们高举起他们的旗帜，踏着他们的血迹前进吧！

1. No Happy New Year for the Poor

It was winter in the Taihang Mountains in Shansi Province.

On *New Year's Eve*¹ it snowed. There was snow everywhere in Paichia Village. In the homes of the landlords they were preparing *meat*², *chicken*³ and other good things to eat. The landlords and their families *were getting ready for the New Year*⁴. But in a *cave*⁵ outside the village, things were *different*⁶. A boy called Li Ai-min was hungry and cold. So were his brothers and sisters. They were waiting with their mother for their father to come home.

Ai-min's father Li Sung-kuan was a poor

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1. New Year's Eve [i:v] 除夕, 大年夜。 2. meat [mi:t] *n.* 肉。 3. chicken ['tʃikən] *n.* 鸡。 4. 正准备过新年。 get ready for 准备(做某事)。 5. cave [keiv] *n.* 窑洞, 洞穴。 6. different ['dɪfrənt] *adj.* 不同的。

peasant. Several weeks earlier he had gone to the mountains *to hide from a landlord*¹, because he owed him money². Before he left, he told Ai-min's mother, "Take good care of the children. I'll come back on New Year's Eve." Now, it was New Year's Eve and they were waiting for him.

The family waited and waited. It got darker and darker in the cave. Was he coming back or not? *Just as they were wondering*³, the cave door was opened. The father stood *in the doorway*⁴.

"Daddy's back! Daddy's back!" the whole family cried out happily. The children all ran up to him. He had a little bag in one hand. Ai-min took the bag from him.

"I've brought back some flour⁵," said the

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1. 躲藏起来不让地主找到。hide [haid] *v.t. & i.* 躲藏。 2. 他欠了他(地主)的钱。owe [ou] *v.t.* 欠(债, 钱)。 3. 正当他们在想(他会不会回来)的时候。wonder ['wʌndə] *v.t. & i.* 想。 4. in the doorway ['dɔ:wei] 在门口。 5. flour ['flaʊə] *n.* 面粉。

father. "But that's all I've brought."¹ He paused² for a moment, then added bitterly³, "I worked in the coal mines⁴, but they treat men worse than dogs there⁵!"

He looked at the children. How small and thin they were! His eyes became wet. "Come," he said to his wife. "Come, let's make dumplings⁶ for the little ones⁷."

The mother smiled. She took the turnips⁸ from under the kang⁹ and started to cut them up. The children were very happy. They were happy because their father was back, and because they were going to have dumplings.

Suddenly, a dog started to bark¹⁰ outside. They listened. Somebody was coming! "I must get away!" Ai-min's father said. He quickly

1. 不过我只带来这么点儿东西(没有别的了)。 2. pause [pə:z] *v.i.* 停顿。 3. then added bitterly ['bitəli] 然后气愤地接着说。 add [æd] *v.t.* 加,附加一句话。 4. coal [koul] mine [main] 煤矿。 5. 他们那儿把人看得比狗都不如。 treat [tri:t] *v.t.* 对待。 worse [wə:s] *adj.* 更坏的。 6. dumpling ['dʌmpliŋ] *n.* 饺子。 7. 孩子们。 8. turnip ['tə:nip] *n.* 萝卜。 9. 炕。 10. bark [bɑ:k] *v.i.* (狗)叫。

ran to the door. He just got outside the cave when somebody *caught him by the arm*¹. This person pushed Ai-min's father back into the cave. Who was the man? He was the second son of the biggest landlord in the village.

"So you're trying to *run away*² again, eh?" shouted the landlord's son. "Well, you ran away once, but you're not going to run away again! Now, pay back the money you owe us!"

Just then the old landlord himself came in at the head of a *gang*³. He was as fat as a pig. He had a little round cap on his head. He looked around. Then he said to Ai-min's father, "Are you ready to pay me the twenty *dollars*⁴, Li Sung-kuan?"

Ai-min's father answered, "But I haven't got the money now. Can't you see? The children don't even have enough to eat...."

"Not enough to eat!" the landlord's son shouted. "Then why do you have so many

1. 抓住他的胳膊。
一帮人, 一伙(坏人)。

2. 逃走。 3. *gang* [gæŋ] *n.*
4. *dollar* ['dɒlə] *n.* 元(钱币)。

children? Look at them! Even dogs can *keep watch at doors*¹, but what can your children do?"

When Ai-min heard this, his little heart *burned*² with *hatred*³.

The old landlord looked round the cave. Then he went outside. His son followed him. They talked for a while. Then the old man went away with his men. The son came back into the cave.

"Give me the money, quick!" he shouted.

"I've told you," said Ai-min's father. "I haven't got any money. Maybe next year I'll be able to...."

"Next year! Next year! we'll put you in *prison*⁴!" the landlord's son shouted. "And don't think you can *fool*⁵ me. You say you've got no money, eh? Well, what's this?"

He *pointed at*⁶ the bag of flour and the turnips.

1. 看门。 2. burn [bɜ:n] *v.t. & i.* 燃烧。 3. hatred ['heitrid] *n.* 恨。 4. prison ['prizn] *n.* 监牢。
5. fool [fu:l] *v.t.* 欺骗。 6. 指着。

“What’s this?” he asked again. “You don’t have any money! Then where did you get the flour to make dumplings!”

*With a quick move, he swept all the turnips onto the ground.*¹ He picked up the bag of flour and walked out of the cave.

The parents and children just stood and looked at the cave door. Their hearts burned with hatred. The *beast*²! That night, they *lay*³ close together on the *kang*, but they could not sleep.

That was how they spent their New Year’s Eve.

2. Little Shepherd⁴

A few days later, Ai-min’s father and brother went away to work on a railway. After

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1. 他一步走上前去, 把萝卜全部扫到地上。 move
[mu:v] *n.* 动作。 2. *beast* [bi:st] *n.* 畜牲。
3. *lie* [lai] *v.i.* (*lay* [lei], *lain* [lein]) 躺, 卧。
4. *shepherd* [ˈʃepəd] *n.* 牧羊人, 羊倌。

they left, Ai-min's elder sister went to the market every day to work in a coal shop. In that way, she got *a bit of*¹ money to buy some food for the family. But there was never enough for everyone, so Ai-min had to go to work too, although he was only six years old.

He went to work as a shepherd for the fat old landlord. On the very first day, the landlord's son told him, "Little *beggar*², take good care of my sheep. If you don't, I'll beat you to death!"

Every day Ai-min went out early in the morning and came back late at night. In winter, the cold north wind cut like a knife. His hands and feet were *swollen*³; his nose and ears were *frost-bitten*⁴. How he wanted to sit by his mother and get a bit warmer! Many times he wanted to leave the sheep and run away. But he

1. 一点点, 少量。 2. *beggar* ['begə] *n.* 乞丐, 要饭的。
3. *swell* [swel] *v.i.* (swelled, swollen) 肿。
swollen ['swoulən] *adj.* 肿的。 4. *frost-bitten* *adj.* 冻伤了。
冻伤了。

remembered what his mother had told him. "We all hate that landlord. But we owe him money. You *herd*¹ sheep for him and help us pay back the money."

So he kept on herding the landlord's sheep. Sometimes he sang a song an old shepherd had taught him:

*The landlord's sheep get fat and strong,
While the shepherd grows hungry and cold.²
He must herd the sheep the whole day long,
And at night he must sleep by the fold³!*

One spring evening, a big *storm*⁴ was coming. Ai-min decided to drive the sheep back. When the sheep were going down a hill, a *wolf*⁵ suddenly came out and *attacked*⁶ them. "Let the wolf do what it wants," Ai-min thought. "They're the landlord's sheep. What do I care?"

1. herd [hə:d] *v.t.* 看(牛、羊等)。 2. 地主的羊长得又肥又壮, 而羊倌却在挨饿受冻。while *conj.* 当……的时候; 而(表示对比)。 3. fold [fould] *n.* 羊圈。 4. storm [stɔ:m] *n.* 暴风雨。 5. wolf [wulf] *n.* 狼。 6. attack [ə'tæk] *v.t.* 进攻(这里指狼扑向羊群)。

So he climbed up a tree and waited until the wolf had carried off one of the sheep.

That evening when the landlord *counted*¹ his sheep, he found that one was *missing*². He started to give Ai-min a terrible beating. "You little beggar!" the landlord shouted, his face red with anger. "You eat my food, but you're not even as useful as my dogs. Why didn't you call for help when you saw the wolf?" *The boy was beaten black and blue.*³ Finally the landlord *kicked him out of the door*⁴. Ai-min had worked for him for a whole year, *but the landlord didn't give him a single copper*⁵.

So Ai-min went home half-dead and without any money.

When his mother saw the boy her heart nearly broke. *Tears*⁶ ran down her face. But

1. count [kaunt] *v.t.* 数。 2. missing ['misiŋ] *adj.* 丢失了, 不见了。 3. 这孩子被打得青一块, 紫一块。(这孩子被打得遍体鳞伤。) 4. 把他踢出门外。 5. 但地主连一个铜板都不给他。 copper ['kɒpə] *n.* 铜板(钱币)。 6. tear [tiə] *n.* 眼泪。

she quickly wiped them away. "Don't go to work for him any more," she told the boy. "You stay home. If we must *starve*¹, we'll starve together!"

After Ai-min got well, he went with his elder sister to carry coal. Their life was as *miserable*² as before. How they hoped for their father and brother to come back!

A year passed by. At last, on the evening of December 28, Ai-min's father and brother came back. Everyone was happy. Ai-min's mother thought: "The two of them have worked for a whole year. I'm sure they have brought back some money for the family." But when she looked at Ai-min's father, she *realized*³ something was wrong. The father said bitterly, "A year of hard labour nearly killed us. Then, a few days ago, the old landlord's son came and made us give him the money we owed him.

1. starve [sta:v] *v. i.* 挨饿。
[ˈmizərəbl] *adj.* 悲惨的, 痛苦的。
[ˈriəlaiz] *v.* 意识到, 理解。

2. miserable
3. realize

After paying that, we didn't even have enough to buy *tickets*¹. So we had to walk all the way back!"

"When shall we poor people ever see the end of these bitter days?" asked Ai-min's mother. She was almost in tears.

Her husband said nothing for a moment. Then he said slowly, "On the railway I heard people say that the Communist Party and the *Eighth Route Army*² are coming soon to Shansi. They'll help the poor. *I think the end of our bad times will come soon.*"³

3. The Eighth Route Army Comes

In the summer of 1937, the Japanese imperialists *invaded*⁴ north China. In autumn, they *launched a big attack*⁵ in Shansi Province. The Kuomintang troops ran away. The Eighth

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1. ticket ['tikit] *n.* 票。 2. the Eighth Route [ru:t] Army 八路军。 3. 我看我们的苦日子快要熬到头了。end *n.* 尽头。 4. invade [in'veid] *v.t.* 入侵。 5. 发动一次大规模进攻。launch [lə:ntʃ] *v.t.* 发动。 attack [ə'tæk] *n. & v.t.* 攻击, 进攻。

Route Army, led by Chairman Mao and the Communist Party, fought back against the Japanese *aggressors*¹. They won many victories. These victories did a lot to *raise*² the fighting spirit of the people of the whole country.

One morning in May the next year, Ai-min was out with his *donkey*³. On the donkey's back was coal that Ai-min was going to sell in the market. As he went through Panlung Village he saw some soldiers far away. They were marching with a red flag at the head of the line. They wore grey *uniforms*⁴ and carried *rifles*⁵ on their shoulders and *bamboo hats*⁶ on their backs. Around each soldier's arm there was a piece of red cloth with two *characters*⁷ on it: *Palu*⁸.

“Are these Eighth Route Army men?”

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1. aggressor [ə'gresə] *n.* 侵略者。 2. raise [reiz] *v.t.* 提高。 3. donkey ['dɒŋki] *n.* 驴。 4. uniform ['ju:nifɔ:m] *n.* 制服。 5. rifle ['raɪfl] *n.* 步枪。 6. bamboo [bæm'bu:] hat 斗笠。 7. character ['kærɪktə] *n.* 一个(汉)字。 8. 八路。

Ai-min wondered. "Father and Uncle Fifty-Seven told me a lot about the Eighth Route Army."

He hurried on to the market and as soon as he had sold the coal he went home. When he got there the whole village was busy. Some of the villagers were *boiling*¹ water. Some were cooking. Others were cleaning their rooms. Everyone was getting ready to welcome the Eighth Route Army.

Uncle Fifty-Seven stood in the middle of the village. "The Eighth Route Army is the people's army," he told the people. "They punish the landlords and fight the Japanese."

"That's true," Uncle Chang Yin said. "The Communists and the Eighth Route Army men have won many battles. Just the other day they won a big victory in a battle not far from here."

Just then they heard singing *in the distance*². Everyone ran to look. They saw some soldiers

1. boil [boil] *v.t.* 煮, 煮沸。
['distəns] 在远处。

2. in the distance