

Chance Encounter in Tiananmen Square

Location: Beijing, Tiananmen Square, traffic is heavy and people busily traverse the square.
Characters: A young couple, a Western Falun Gong practitioner.

Western Falun Gong practitioner (Offstage): This time in Beijing, besides filming the Great Wall, I also need a lot of other shots of China. So I am here at Tiananmen Square.

(The young couple enters)

Male: Hello!

W FLG (Eyes slowly moving away from the video camera viewing screen): Oh, hi.

Female: What are you filming?

W FLG: I'm taking some shots of Tiananmen Square.

M: Wow, you look professional?

F: Yes, very professional.

W FLG (Dejectedly raises palm to forehead): Let me show you some photos. Shoot! The batteries are dead. Oh, well. Well, what are you all doing here in Beijing?

M: We're students of Fine Arts. We study painting.

W FLG: I also study painting.

M&F (at the same time): You study painting too!

W FLG (smiling): We're all "artists."

F: What do you paint?

W FLG: I like still life painting.

M: You paint pictures?

F: Then would you like to see some Chinese paintings?

W FLG: You mean like traditional Chinese paintings? Yes, I like Chinese art, where are they?

M: At a nearby gallery, there are many paintings including some of my pieces. Come on, let me show you.

W FLG: How did you come to speak English so well?

M: Oh, Really? No, it's not that good.

F: We have an English teacher from America. We studied with him. Your Chinese is also very good!

W FLG: Oh, Really? No, it's not that good.

M: Here we are.

F: Look at these paintings. Which one do you like? This one? Or that one?

W FLG: Let me take a good look at all of them first.

M: This bamboo represents Truth. You know, bamboo is very strong and upright, just like the truth.

F: The center of bamboo is hollow, but it is very strong and pure. Nothing can change it. Do you like this one?

(Offstage voice: In these few years, Falun Gong practitioners in China, whether in Tiananmen Square, in the city, at home, at school, at work—in every situation, they have tirelessly defended the Truth.

Disregarding likely arrest, torture, beating, rape, extortion, intimidation, or dismissal from work, they have continued to stand up and will not be cowed into hiding. Yet of these practitioners of Falun Gong, none speak of themselves, of individual strength, they believe this great courage and strength come from Falun Dafa. Wouldn't you say that they are like this bamboo?)

F: Look at this one. This lotus flower painting represents virtue and kindness.

W FLG: Yes, very nice.

M: Here how about that one?

W FLG: Chinese Calligraphy. This is “ren,” ah, “ren,” It's beautiful! I know this character “ren” represents restraint, patience, tolerance, and forbearance in the face of suffering.

M: Yes. Its message is very profound, and very far-reaching.

W FLG: That, I know.

M: Uhh, people today don't appreciate traditional art, it's really sad. By the way, why are you so interested in Chinese culture?

W FLG: Well, because I practice Falun Gong.

F: What? You practice Falun Gong?

M (to girl): Not so loud.

F: Why do you do it?

W FLG: I have been practicing Falun Gong for five years. Falun Gong is an ancient practice for body and mind, which is based on Truthfulness, Compassion, and Tolerance. It's a very good practice.

F: Then what about those people who set themselves on fire in Tiananmen Square?

W FLG: I am glad you asked. That incident was staged. Those people weren't even Falun Gong practitioners. Have you seen the Chinese Government's footage?

F (nodding): Yeah, I saw it.

W FLG: When we got a hold of the footage, and watched it in slow motion, you know what we saw?

F (shaking her head): What did you see?

W FLG: We saw the terrible truth. When the police used a fire extinguisher to extinguish the fire around one of the women, there was lots of smoke around her. You can see a police officer use a heavy object to strike her on the head, and right away she fell to the ground. When we shared this footage with the world and explained it, your government took the edition it had released and deleted this shot. Furthermore, in news reports the number of self-immolators changed more than once in the space of one week. In the second week, the news started reporting that a young girl had also set herself on fire. How could the media have forgotten a young girl in the first week after the incident? And how did so many police officers get fire extinguishers that fast? Foreign reporters were prohibited from investigating, and when they tried to report on the self-immolation incident or on Falun Gong, they were persecuted. You guys don't know about this because whenever anyone in the government exposed the truth of the situation, that person was also persecuted. Some of China's officials are doing everything they can to help former President Jiang Zemin conceal the truth. In fact, no one wants to accept that Chinese officials are responsible for this self-immolation incident; this incident is just too ruthless, people simply can't accept that officials could be responsible. The day when the truth comes to light many people will hang their heads in shame. It's really a tragedy! China's tragedy.

W FLG: Your government – the same government that persecutes Falun Gong – estimates that there are 70 million people practicing Falun Gong. With such a large number of people, and just five people

who have harmed themselves, how can you condemn Falun Gong? This is why the self-immolation incident is so clearly a propaganda stunt, because the media has used this incident specifically to attack Falun Gong.

(Sound of police car)

M: Be careful, we're back in Tiananmen Square.

W FLG: OK. Let me talk about myself. You know what? Before I practiced Falun Gong I was chronically weak and didn't have much hope for life. But I changed. I practiced these exercises and I feel healthy, happy, and strong. Because of the change my mother and some of my friends also started practicing Falun Gong.

F (with deep respect): Really?

W FLG: Do you guys know that there are people practicing Falun Dafa in more than sixty countries worldwide?

M&F: No, we didn't know that.

W FLG: Do you guys know that Falun Dafa and founder Mr. Li Hongzhi have received hundreds of awards for contributing to society?

M&F: No, we didn't know that.

W FLG: Do you guys know that Mr. Li Hongzhi has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize two years in a row?

M&F: No, we didn't know that.

W FLG: If you guys could visit any country outside of China, you could browse online and find anything you want to know about Falun Gong. But if you search the Internet in China, as soon as you type "Falun Gong" these two words, bam, your IP address will be tracked, you might even be arrested or taken to jail.

F: (To M) It seems Falun Gong isn't like what the government has been saying.

(To W FLG) I want to know more about Falun Gong.

W FLG: That's wonderful. You can also help right now by telling all your friends and relatives about what I've said.

(M hears a police car, gets scared)

M: Stop saying that. It is forbidden.

W FLG (surprised): Excuse me, what did you say?

M: It's forbidden. These words are anti-government.

W FLG: Your mistaken. They are to teach people how to be a good, what part is anti-government? Falun Gong isn't opposed to the government, and never will be. We're just cultivators.

M: I saw Falun Gong people in Tiananmen Square raising banners and shouting: "Falun Dafa is good". Why in the world are they protesting our government like that?

W FLG: What else can we do? Almost 3,000 of us have been tortured to death, and countless others have been beaten, tortured, injected with drugs, just for practicing Falun Gong. When you have no other way to call for justice, what would you do? This is just like the bamboo painting you just showed me. We must defend the Truth, even in the face of persecution. Chinese people should know that Falun Gong is good.

(sound of bus)

M: The bus is here.

F: Thank you for telling us all of this.

W FLG: This is something you should know. People should know the truth about Falun Gong.

M and F walk in the direction of the bus.

W FLG shows the exercise.