Luisa begins the dialogue by saying to Max “Are you still here?” this is one of those questions you ask when you’re surprised about something. Obviously Luisa can see that Max’s still wherever they are. She says “I thought you got off at 3:00.” To get off a work means to finish your work schedule, to be able to leave the place where you work, to someone says what time do you get off, they means what time do you get off work, when you stop working, what time do you stop working? Max says “I picked up a second shift.” A shift s-h-i-f-t refers to a period of time when people work, usually this term is used for job when people work at that particular location more than 8 hours or that they are people working at that location for more than 8 hours, it might be, for example, a place where there is someone working 24 hours a day. Well, one person is not going to work 24 hours to straight, so they break up the day into shifts. So, a few work, the day shift you work in probably from 8 in the morning to around 4-5 in the afternoon. If you work in the night shift, you’d be working perhaps from 4-5 in the afternoon to midnight. If you’re working what we call the grey yard shift, you work in probably from eleven o’clock at night or midnight to 7 or 8 in the morning. Those are shifts, then. The vision of the work day in a place that usually opens for more than 8 hours. Max says he picked up a second shift. To pick up here means to get, to obtain, he was working one shift, then now he picked up a second shift, which means of course he works in more than 8 hours a day. Why has Max done it? Well, he says “I could use the money.” When someone says “I could use the money.” - he means that he would be able to benefit from getting more money. He has some need of extra money. Luisa says “But I thought you have another part-time job in the evenings.” A part-time job is a job usually that is less than 40 hours per week. In the United States, 40 hours per week can consider full-time. If it’s less than 40 hours, we might call it part-time. Luisa thought that Max has another part-time job. Max says “I normally do, but the restaurant where I work has been cutting back my hours.” When we talk about someone’s cutting back on something, we mean that he is using less of it, or he is reducing the number of something. The two-word phrasal verb – to cut back – then means to reduce the number of something. In this case, we’re talking about the restaurant where Max works cutting back his hours. His hours refer to the number of hours that he can work. Max says he tries to pick up as many extra shifts here as I can. Luisa then asks “And don’t you work at the amusement park on the weekend?” An amusement a-m-u-s-e-m-e-n-t park is a large park usually that has large of what we would call rides in them, places where people, especially children can play games and get into the machines that go really fast. For example, Disneyland is an example of amusement park here and has another in California. Luisa asks if Max is still working in the amusement park on the weekend, he says “I do half a year - meaning I do work there part of a year- but in winter, and the park only keeps a skeleton crew on during this month.” Max is saying that the amusement park was he normally works in summer time, only have the skeleton crew during the winter time. A phrase skeleton s-k-e-l-e-t-o-n crew c-r-e-w refers to a very small number of workers, the minimum number of workers you can have at a place. If the business doesn’t have very many customers, it might have very few employees and we might call that skeleton crew. If during busy time, the company has more employees. This is the case which the amusement park gets have the skeleton crew. The word crew just refers to a group of people. The word skeleton is normally used to describe the bone of your body or the bone of an animal. Max says “In the meantime – meaning during this winter season – I’m working for a temp agency which give me short-term assignments.” A temp t-e-m-p agency is a company that finds people temporary jobs. The word “temp” is short for “temporary”, meaning short-term, not permanent, not for a long time. There are of course many companies that find workers, find people to work for companies that just need workers for a short period of time. Max says the temp agency gives him short-term assignments. Short-term refers to a short amount of time, perhaps a week, perhaps even a day. I used to work for temp agency when I was in a college. I would call a lot every morning and see if they have new work for me. And then they will send me to job that would last maybe one day, maybe two or three days. Sometimes, it’s long in a month. Temp agencies are very popular now, especially when the economy is not doing so well, companies don’t want to hire employees full-time. Luisa says “I don’t know how you juggle all these jobs?” The verb to juggle j-u-g-g-l-e usually refers to throw in objects up in the air and keep them up in the air. We refer to someone who does it and say juggle it. But here, the verb means to handle many different things at the same time, to be able to do many different things at the same time. Max says “I have no choice – I have no other options- I have to piece together in income if I want to pay rent.” To piece p-i-e-c-e together something means to put together, to assemble. And income i-n-c-o-m-e refers to the money you get from working. Max is saying there he has to work a little bit at this job, and a little bit at that job in order to make enough money to pay for his rent. Luisa says “Have you ever thought about going back to school to qualify for other works something full-time?” To qualify q-u-a-l-i-f-y for something means to have the skill and or education in order to be able to do something. So for example, if you want to be a doctor, you have to study for many years in order to qualify for that kind of job. At least, I hope you study many years if you are a doctor. If not, please don’t be my doctor. Luisa is asking if Max has ever thought about going back to school to qualify for some kind of job that would be full-time, that would be 40 hours a week. Max says “Sure, all the time – meaning I have thought of it a lot.” He says “I’d like a better job, one which benefits and they will be likeable salary.” Benefits b-e-n-e-f-i-t-s refers to things such as health insurance and vacation time and sick pay, money you get when you can’t work because you’re sick. These are common benefits that you get when you have a full-time job. Salary s-a-l-a-r-y refers to money that you get to work at a certain place, usually by a month or by a year. We talk about salary; we’re talking about money you get, regardless of how many hours you work. The two kinds of ways of giving pay, one is by the hour, when you get paid certain money for every hour you work. Another way of giving paid is by salary. When you get in paid on a salary, we would say you are getting a certain amount of money and are expected to do your job even it takes more than normal 40 hours a week. Luisa says “What’s stopping you – what’s preventing you – from going back to school?” Max says “I have to pay for something called food.” Max is making a joke here, he is saying that he can’t afford to go back to school, he doesn’t have enough money to go back to school because in addition the payment of his rent, he also has to eat, and to eat he has to buy food. He finishes by saying “I haven’t met my fairy godmother yet.” A fairy f-a-i-r-y godmother g-o-d-m-o-t-h-e-r is a character from children stories, stories that we tell children usually involve in a woman who has some sort of magical power. The fairy godmother is a common character in certain fairy tales that are told to children, these are made up stories about magical events. Here Max is using an expression to mean that he hasn’t found someone who’s just going to give him money to pay for his expenses and to go to school.

Now it’s time for listening to the dialogue this time at a normal speed.