

《Power and Wealth》

Chapter 23 – He is not scholarly. He is illiterate!

The whole morning, everyone in the office was rushing out the drafts.

Zhou Changchun did not only asked Dong Xuebing to write a draft. To be safe, he asked everyone in the office to draft out a speech, hoping Bureau Chief Yang would be satisfied with one of them.

Dong Xuebing wrote confidently. Although he had not met Yang Yizhong before, from the rejection of Tan Limei and the rest drafts, he concludes that Bureau Chief Yang must be a “scholarly” person since he was so fussy about his speech. So, Dong Xuebing wrote the draft using flowery words. He put in some idioms and references from Classic literature into his drafts.

Dong Xuebing stopped typing at lunch. He looked at his monitor and nodded.

Alright. This should do it. Xuebing.... This is your chance to shine in front of the leader.

Dong Xuebing went upstairs to Yang Yizhong’s office with his speech draft. He took in a deep breath and knocked on the door confidently.

“Come in.”

Dong Xuebing entered the room and saw Yang Yizhong. Dong Xuebing was shocked by his appearance. Yang Yizhong looked nothing “Scholarly” as he imagined. He looks rugged. But Dong Xuebing thought that looks can be deceiving. Maybe he had a “Scholar” living underneath this appearance.

Yang Yizhong frowned, squeezing his thick eyebrows together. “Who are you?”

Dong Xuebing replied politely: “I am Dong Xuebing. I am new to the General Affairs Office.”

“Oh. Is the speech ready?” Bureau Chief Yang stretched out his hand. “Let me take a look.”

Dong Xuebing excitedly passed an A4 paper to him and stood there waiting for praises. He wants to claim this credit, and everyone in the office will look at him differently when he returns.

But in just 3 seconds, Dong Xuebing's daydreams were shattered. Bureau Chief Yang threw the draft back at Dong Xuebing.

"What are you writing?" Yang Yizhong had a dark expression, and he banged the desk. "Rubbish!"

Dong Xuebing's face turns green. "Ah?" Have you even read it?

Yang Yizhong shouted: "What is wrong with the General Affairs Office? I just wanted a simple speech. What's so difficult? Especially you! I wanted you to write a speech according to my topic. What did you write?" Yang Yizhong pointed to the first few lines of the draft. "Knowing honor and stop to achieve prosperity. What are you talking about? Ah? What the fuck are you writing?"

Dong Xuebing weakly replied: "Bureau Chief Yang, you misread it. It is 'Knowing Honor and understanding shame to achieve prosperity.'"

Dong Xuebing had touched Yang Yizhong's nerves with that sentence, and he burst out in anger: "What's wrong?! I only have primary school standard of education and does not know many characters!"

Dong Xuebing was in a daze. Fuck! Was this a joke? This guy was not the "Scholarly" type? Doesn't he have high expectations of his speeches? Primary school standard? Damn! He was an illiterate and not a scholar!

Oh shit! I am in trouble!

Dong Xuebing knew he had offended Yang Yizhong and immediately shouts: "BACK!"

.....

The shouting ceased.

There was only the ticking of the second hand of a clock.

"You are?" Yang Yizhong looked at Dong Xuebing.

Dong Xuebing immediately knew which time it was now. He was relieved and replied: "I am Dong Xuebing. I am new to the General Affairs Office."

“Oh. Is the speech ready?” Bureau Chief Yang stretched out his hand. “Let me take a look.”

Dong Xuebing will never let him look at his draft. He hides the draft behind his back and thought of an excuse. “I’m sorry Bureau Chief Yang. It is not ready yet. I am here to ask what time is the latest deadline.”

Yang Yizhong frowned impatiently: “Didn’t I say I want it as soon as possible?”

“Sorry for disturbing you. I will go back now.”

Yang Yizhong stood at the window after Dong Xuebing left. He lit a cigarette and stared outside. He had started work early at a chemical factory in the outskirts of Beijing, and then he followed his leader to join the government sector. His education level was very low and does not know a lot of Chinese characters. This was why he rejected all the General Affairs Office speech drafts and did not tell them the reason. How to tell them the real reason? Tell them that he only has a primary school education? He is illiterate? He was too embarrassed to say it. If the General Affairs Office still cannot give him a draft that satisfies him, he will have to look for his old subordinates from the East City Branch to write his speech.

Before Dong Xuebing returned to the office, he threw away his draft. This stupid draft had almost cost him his career. Luckily, he was able to use BACK. If not, it was the end of his life there.

Tan Limei and the rest had returned from their lunch and saw Dong Xuebing entering the office. She asked: “Bing Zhi, how is your draft?”

“Ah? Almost done....”

Guo Shunjie commented sarcastically that he was too eager to perform. Even the seniors of the office could not write the draft, yet Dong Xuebing wanted to try.

Changjuan pushed her keyboard away from her: “I can’t do this. I can’t write anymore!”

Guo Panwei also scratched his head in frustration.

Tan Limei grumbled: “What sort of speech does he want? I had already tried my best.”

Old Yan was the only one that was calm in the office. He was still reading his newspapers relaxingly. As if it was none of his concern.

Dong Xuebing had no time to chat with the rest. He sat behind his monitor and was typing furiously. He knew what Yang Yizhong wanted, and he was able to write out the draft effortlessly. Idioms? References from classics? Those must not be in the draft.

Simple and straight forward.

The speech must be very simple and straight forward.

Speech: Dear leaders. This topic I will be talking about is . After typing this, Dong Xuebing immediately felt this was wrong and deleted it. No. Deputy Bureau Chief Yang might not know this character. He changed it to . Yes. These are all simple words.

Dong Xuebing thought hard about the words and continued to type.

It was not easy to write in primary school's choice of words. This speech must be simple, and the contents must be straight forward. It was really challenging for Dong Xuebing.

“Huh? Bureau Chief Yang?”

“Bureau Chief Yang!”

Tan Limei and the rest immediately stop what they were doing. All of them could feel the hairs on their back standing.

Yang Yizhong had a gloomy expression when he asked: “Is the speech ready? Almost half the day is gone!”

Zhou Changchun walked out of his room quickly. “It's done, and I was about to send them to you. Xiao Tan, Xiao Chang, bring the drafts over.”

With Zhuang Zhi and the other two Guo, there were a total of 5 drafts.

Yang Yizhong took the drafts and scanned through: “No..... Wrong..... This is also not right..... What is this? This too.... Cannot....” Within a minute, all the drafts were rejected. “Old Zhou, your General Affairs Office can't even write a simple speech?”

Tan Limei and the rest lowered their heads.

“Bureau Chief Yang, we.....” Even if it were one rank higher, heads would roll. Furthermore, Yang Yizhong was several ranks above Zhou Changchun. If he was unhappy with Zhou Changchun, Zhou Changchun might not be able to be the Deputy

Chief for long. This was why Zhou Changchun tried to establish a good relationship with this new Deputy Bureau Chief. But now, his plans were in jeopardy.

Zhou Changchun was also getting pissed, but he could not show it in front of Deputy Bureau Chief Yang. He stared at Guo Shunjie and the rest. All of his subordinates seem capable and eager on regular days, but during crucial times, all of them were useless.

“Bureau Chief Yang.” Dong Xuebing took the printout from the printer. “My draft is done.”

Guo Panwei looked at Dong Xuebing and thought to himself. Was this idiot fearless or ignorant? You hand up your draft now? Are you looking for a scolding from Bureau Chief Yang?

Yang Yizhong had lost his patience and did not say a word when he took the draft from Dong Xuebing.

Everyone in the office sighed in their hearts and closed their eyes, waiting for another round of scoldings.

1 minute.....

2 minutes.....

3 minutes.....

No scolding was heard. After a while, everyone was shocked. Yang Yizhong laughed. He raised his right hand and hit on the draft a few times. “Look at what he has written. This is the speech I want.”

This outcome had made everyone in the office speechless.

Yang Yizhong patted Zhou Changchun’s back: “Old Zhou. Seems like your General Affairs Office have strong potential. Not bad.....” Yang Yizhong turned and look at Dong Xuebing. He nodded: “I remember your name is Dong..... Dong Xuebing right? Good job. In the future, you will be in charge of writing my speech.”

“Thank you, Bureau Chief Yang.” Being able to leave an impression with the leaders was rare. Dong Xuebing straighten his back to try to look as smart as possible.

The office was in chaos after Yang Yizhong left.

Tan Limei was the first to ask: “Bing Zhi, what did you write? Why is Bureau Chief

Yang so happy?”

Changjuan laughed: “Our office has Crouching Tigers and Hidden Dragons.”

Guo Panwei stared at Dong Xuebing with jealousy.

Guo Shunjie was not looking too good either. Why was that picky Bureau Chief Yang satisfied with Dong Xuebing’s speech and the rest of them who had sent over 10 drafts were rejected?

Dong Xuebing could not tell the rest that Yang Yizhong had a limited vocabulary. If Bureau Chief Yang knew he was the one who told others about this, he would be in trouble. So, Dong Xuebing explained that Yang Yizhong likes simple and clean words.

After all of them saw the draft on Dong Xuebing’s monitor, they understood what the meaning of “Simple and Clean” words was.

Tan Limei was deeply impressed. She gave Dong Xuebing a thumbs up: “Terrific.”

Zhou Changchun also did not expect the problems lies in Yang Yizhong’s education levels. He was impressed with Dong Xuebing’s attention to details. He patted Dong Xuebing’s back: “Good work. You have done a great job.” Zhou Changchun felt what the General Affairs Office lacks was someone like Dong Xuebing. Someone who would stand up and save the situation in critical moments.

Translator’s notes:

Yang Yizhong had read Dong Xuebing’s draft as 知榮明止, but what Dong Xuebing had written was 知榮明耻. This was some Chinese idioms. It meant to be righteous and not to do anything dishonorable.

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon