

# 《Power and Wealth》

## Chapter 5 – Preparations! Preparations! Preparations!

It was a few days more to the Civil Servant entrance test. Since Dong Xuebing had promised his mother, he had to do his best.

After dinner, Dong Xuebing returned to his room and started to go through all the cupboards and drawers, looking for something. He found a stack of Optically answer sheets and a stack of writing papers from under his bed. He had used these Optically answer sheets during his high school days. He placed the sheets and paper on his desk and prepared his stationaries, like eraser and 2B pencils. He started training his memory. ABCD, 1234.....

This was the only way Dong Xuebing could pass the Civil Servant Test. Although the chances of him passing was less than 20%, he was determined to try.

The next morning.

Dong Xuebing woke up on the couch among the stacks of answer sheets. He immediately continued practising. “AABDDCCABDC.....” He closed his eyes and started to rattle off the answers from his mind.

Dong Xuebing’s mother felt he was being weird and asked: “Xuebing, what are you doing?”

Dong Xuebing coughed and replied: “Preparations.”

His mother looked at him: “Didn’t you bought the revision materials for the test? Why are you looking at those old answer sheets?”

“Oh... don’t mind me. I know what to do.” If Dong Xuebing could still use Back on the day of the test, all his efforts will not be wasted.

Practice... Practice... Practice...

One hour... Two hours... 3 hours...

Ring, ring, ring. Dong Xuebing’s handphone rang. He took a look at the caller ID and it was an unknown number. “Hello?”

“Hi, are you Xiao Dong?” The caller asked. He sounded quite old.

“Yes, you are...?”

“My surname is Hu.”

Dong Xuebing replied: “Oh... You are Grandpa Hu? How’s your health?”

“Thanks for asking. I am feeling good. Haha... are you busy today? If you are free, can you come over to the hospital to accompany me?”

“Huh? Sorry, I am taking the Civil Servant test in a few days. I am still doing my revisions.”

The other party on the phone sounded a bit surprised: “You are taking the Civil Servant test? Did you register earlier this year in Beijing for this test?” There was a slight pause. Grandpa Hu continued: “Hmmm... if you do not have confidence with the written test, come and look for me at the Cancer Hospital’s Oncology ward. Don’t think I am old, I am able to teach you about the techniques to answer the written test, especially the essay questions. Are you interested?”

Dong Xuebing was stunned. “Ah.... Really?”

“Of course. Do you think this old man will lie to someone who had saved his life?”

Dong Xuebing had found the way to handle the multiple-choice questions. But he was not confident on the essay questions. “Alright. I will go over now. Thank you.”

After hanging up, Dong Xuebing told his mother where he was going and ran out with his materials and books.

Beijing Cancer Hospital.

Dong Xuebing was not working for some time, and he did not have much savings left. On the way to the hospital, he bought some cheap fruits from a roadside stall. At the hospital, he asked around and found the ward. It was ward 3016. He stood outside the ward and knocked on the door.

“Come in.” On a bed near the window, Grandpa Hu was looking at a photograph with his reading glass.

Dong Xuebing walked over and placed the fruits on the side table. “Grandpa Hu, I wish you a speedy recovery.”

“You should not waste your money.” Grandpa Hu smiled and pull Dong Xuebing to sit down. He touched his family photo and showed Dong Xuebing. “This is my eldest son, and this is my daughter. This is my youngest son and his wife.” The woman in the picture was pregnant. “sighed.... I almost miss the chance to see my new-born grandson. Xiao Dong, thanks for pulling me back from hell that day. I really want to thank you.”

“Don’t mention it.”

Tears start to well up in Grandpa Hu’s eyes: “There is no hope for my lung cancer. Sometimes I feel like I should just die earlier. But when I was almost killed, I realized that I can’t let go. I still want to live.”

Dong Xuebing had changed both Grandpa Hu and Qu Yunxuan’s fate that day, and he was also deeply moved.

After some pleasantries, Grandpa Hu suddenly said: “Show me your revision materials for the test. Which part of this you are unclear about? I will explain it to you.”

Dong Xuebing immediately asked some questions about the areas where he does not understand.

Grandpa Hu thought for a while and answered: “If you answer this question this way, your answer will be too subjective. It is not a good answer. After all, this is not an argument. There will be bound to have mistakes here and there. The markers might deduct your marks with your answer.”

Dong Xuebing did not understand and asked: “How should I answer this question then? Paint a good picture? Answer in a high-sounding way?”

Grandpa Hu laughed: “Xiao Dong, don’t look down on being ‘Fake, Lies, Empty Promises.’ It is not easy to master this art. If you learned this, you would be able to score points in your answers. When you need to be fake, you got to be fake. When you need to lie, you got to lie. When you need to make empty promises, you got do that. This does not apply only to the Civil Servant entry test. Even when you become a government official, you need to use this too. Come... Let this old man explain this to you.....”

Dong Xuebing listened the whole afternoon attentively.

Grandpa Hu was very knowledgeable. His explanations were clear and easy to understand.

After a few hours, Dong Xuebing got more comfortable with Grandpa Hu. He was able to talk freely. “Sighed... The person who set these questions is too much. Why did he set such difficult questions? Is he trying to make things difficult for us?” Dong Xuebing grumbled. “I had practiced the past year's questions and noticed that the questions were getting harder and harder each year. It is easy for the one who set these questions. He just moves his mouth. But we are the ones who are suffering. Who did we offend?”

Grandpa Hu frowned and did not say a word.

“Huh?” Dong Xuebing was shocked. Did I say the wrong thing?

After a while, Grandpa Hu said: “You should not be saying these. If these questions are easy, then what's the use of having this test? There will only be one or two vacancies, and if all the candidates scored full marks, they would still have to compete with each other. It will still be the same.” Grandpa Hu flipped open a reference book and pointed to the page: “My son and I are scholars. But he is more capable than me and had become a professor years ago. Look, he is the one who set most of last year's Shanghai Civil Servant Test's essay questions.”

Dong Xuebing realized that when he grumbled about the person who set the questions, he had also scolded Grandpa Hu's son indirectly.

Shit. Me and my big mouth.....

Oh yes, I still have not use “Back” today.

Back!

.....

The time returned back to one minute ago. Dong Xuebing could feel his mouth moving. He should be in the middle of saying something. Grandpa Hu who was listening to him frowned. Dong Xuebing looked at his facial expression and knew that he had used Back too late. “Errr..... Grandpa Hu, where did I stop?”

Grandpa Hu smiled weakly and said: “You are saying that the one who set these questions is making things difficult for you all.”

“Yes.” Dong Xuebing immediately thought of how to continue. “Making things difficult for all of us.”

Grandpa Hu knitted his brows.

“But.....” Dong Xuebing continued and picked up the revision book who contains all the past years’ questions. “But two years ago, Beihe Province and last year’s Shanghai questions was quite meaningful. Look at the questions. Although it is difficult, but from the questions, you will know that the person who set these questions have a higher standard of education. If I encounter these questions during this year’s test, I will have no grumbles even if I can’t answer them.”

Grandpa Hu stared blankly at him for a while and burst out laughing: “Xiao Dong... I will tell you something. My son is the one who set the essay questions for last year’s Shanghai essay questions.”

Dong Xuebing pretended to be surprised: “Ah?”

“My son is more capable than me.” Grandpa Hu stroked his beard and smilingly said: “Haha. Xiao Dong, I will teach you how to answer essay questions, and I promise you will score high marks.”

“Really?”

“Of course. If you can’t pass, you can come and look for me!”