

Power and Wealth

Chapter 500 – I'm Back!

Morning.

It's dawn, and the sky is slowly turning bright.

Dong Xuebing stood outside of Tokyo International Airport and straightened his collar. He walked around slowly to observe the departure hall. The airport's security was tightened, and lots of armed officers are patrolling. Dong Xuebing purposely walks past a few patrolling Officers.

Those Officers took a glance at Dong Xuebing and continued with their way.

Dong Xuebing knew those officers had not seen his face.

Alright! It's safe now.

Dong Xuebing had worked in Public Security for over a year and knows about the Police procedures and how they operate. The more secretive you behave, the more they will notice you. He walks towards the flight information display to check the flights. BEIJING... BEIJING... Yes! J311. Boarding at 6 is from Tokyo to Beijing!

Dong Xuebing looks at the time. It's 5.50 am!

That's it!

Dong Xuebing does not have any identification or an air ticket, and it's impossible to go through the normal boarding process.

Dong Xuebing looked around and stepped into a secluded corner.

STOP!

Time stopped.

Dong Xuebing looked at the people in the departure hall and ran towards the escalator.

There are too many people on the escalator, and he could not squeeze through them. He had to step on the handrails to get upstairs. He almost fell several times. He did not stop as he got near the immigration counters. He got past the immigration and security checks and went into a nearby toilet.

STOP! Time resume.

A few young men are speaking in mandarin with a Northeast accent.

“I heard more than 200 people had died in the air crash. No passengers survived.”

“That’s right. I am afraid of flying after I heard it. That flight was supposed to fly from Tokyo to Beijing.”

“I heard the crash is due to a flock of birds hitting the plane’s engine. I think we will not be so unlucky this time.”

“Who knows? We just need to be careful. If we encounter the same situation, just jump off the plane.”

“Haha... Stop talking nonsenses.”

Dong Xuebing hid in the cubicle and rubbed his chin. He had gotten past the immigrations and checks. But how is he going to get the ticket?

Dong Xuebing can use STOP to get onto the plane. He only needs to get through the second security check at the boarding gate, and he can get onto the plane without an air ticket. But what about the seat? Where can he hide on the plane? Most flights will not have empty seats, and he cannot hide in the toilet for a few hours. The aircrew will notice him.

Steal an air ticket?

Knock someone out and steal his ticket?

That will not work. The person will report to the Police, and Dong Xuebing will be discovered. He will be arrested before the plane touchdown.

That’s right! The cargo hold!

No one will be checking the cargo hold, and there will be nothing other than luggage!

Dong Xuebing stepped out of the toilet and started looking for the boarding gate. Although there’s still time for the passengers to board, the check-in luggage will be

transported into the cargo hold first. He needs to get into the cargo hold before they close it.

J311 boarding gate....

J311 boarding gate....

Found!

The passengers are starting to enter the holding room, and someone is checking their tickets.

Dong Xuebing avoided the CCTV and mumbled STOP. He got through the checks and hides behind a corner before resuming time. After that, he followed other passengers towards the plane. One minute later, he saw the stairs to the plane. There is another round of air ticket checks, and he does not want to go over. He looks around and saw the cargo hold is opened. The airport staff is loading the luggage onto a conveyer belt into the cargo hold.

Dong Xuebing squats down and pretends to tie his shoelaces.

After the passengers walked past, and no one is noticing him, Dong Xuebing mumbled STOP again. He quickly runs towards the cargo hold.

Five meters....

Ten meters....

Twenty meters....

Dong Xuebing jumped onto the conveyer belt and ran up into the cargo hold.

This is the first time Dong Xuebing saw the interior of the cargo hold. There are rollers and locks in it, and staff is working. There are no seats, toilets, or carpet. The windows are much higher than the passenger compartment, and it looks like a big warehouse. Luggage is being loaded into the cargo hold, and it's about one-third full when he enters.

Dong Xuebing doesn't have much time remaining.

He quickly jumps over a stack of suitcases, covered by a net, into the gap between two stacks of luggage.

STOP!

The conveyer belt continues to send luggage into the cargo hold.

Dong Xuebing, who is hiding behind the luggage, could not see anything. He can only hear the staff talking and some machinery sounds. This continues for about ten minutes.

After a while, there were the sounds of doors slamming shut.

The cargo hold went into total darkness!

Dong Xuebing sticks his head out and saw the cargo hold's door had been closed. The cargo hold is only half-filled, and he felt some vibrations beneath his feet. The plane is moving, and it should be moving towards the runway. He is getting nervous because of the air crash he experienced previously. What if it happened again?

Hope it will be a safe flight.

Even if I am damn unlucky, I should not encounter two air crashes in a row...

Dong Xuebing cleared his throat and steadied himself in the gap between two stacks of luggage. He grabbed onto the dark green net straps and prepared himself for the takeoff.

Five minutes later, the plane took off.

The cargo hold is for luggage and goods. It is not as comfortable as the passenger compartment. Dong Xuebing can feel strong vibrations, and the luggage is covered in nettings and locked in place. He can only hold on to the nettings, and the vibrations continued for more than ten seconds, making his butt numbed.

But the worse is not over.

It's almost the end of May, and the temperature should be warm.

But it's cold at a higher altitude and cannot be compared to the temperature on land. It's freezing.

Air condition? Who will install air condition in a plane's cargo hold?

The worst part is the oxygen levels. It's too low, and Dong Xuebing has difficulties breathing. This is worse than being on the high mountains.

Dong Xuebing clenched his teeth. Damn! I had experienced life and death so many

times. This little hardship will not bring me down!

One hour....

Two hours....

Three hours....

Finally, the plane starts to descend!

Five minutes later, the plane touch down on the runway, and Dong Xuebing can finally relax.

Time to leave. Dong Xuebing stood up and walked over to the cargo hold's entrance. He waited until the cargo hold's door is opened and shouted STOP! He runs down the conveyer belt and resumed time after he got near the alighting passengers. He mixed with the passengers and entered the terminal building. The passengers need to go through customs and immigrations before they can leave.

Dong Xuebing can only use his last remaining STOP time to get past the checks and got into a toilet at the last second!

Swoosh!

Time resumed automatically!

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“Ah!”

“You gave me a fright!”

Two people, who were standing at the urinals, look at Dong Xuebing in shock. They almost peed onto their pants when they saw a man appearing suddenly in the toilet without any sound. They did not notice anyone opening the door or entering the toilet.

Dong Xuebing smiled embarrassedly at them.

Dong Xuebing left the toilet. He does not even have one second left, but he had finally reached his destination.

A few passengers are chatting beside him.

“I was so worried during the flight.”

“Me too. I am afraid the plane will crash. There are no parachutes on board, and no one can survive if it crashes.”

“Yes. All passengers on that flight had died from that crash. I heard no one escaped.”

“Stop talking about that tragedy. Sigh... that’s more than 200 lives gone.”

“Let’s go.”

Dong Xuebing followed these people out of the terminal building into the arrival halls.

Sigh... Dong Xuebing is a relief to see the familiar Chinese characters, sounds, and people around him. He knows he is in Beijing and almost shouted out in joy.

I’m back!

I am finally back!