

《Power and Wealth》

Chapter 9 – These are the Essay Questions?!

The AAT test was over.

In the corridor outside of the classrooms, Dong Xuebing met Xiao Dong.

Xiao Dong glanced at Dong Xuebing and sarcastically said: “The AAT this year is harder than the national exams. Are you still confident of passing?”

Dong Xuebing looked at him and asked: “Did you screw up your test?”

“Me? Screw up?” Xiao Dong laughed and confidently replied: “You think I am the same as you? Other than 2 logic questions which I know I got it wrong, and a few general knowledge questions which I am not confident, I am confident that I got the rest of the questions right. Before I handed over my answer sheet, I calculated, and I am confident that the questions I got it wrong will not be more than 7%. Hmph! What about you? I think you should get at least 40 to 50 questions wrong.”

Dong Xuebing smiled: “Don’t worry about me. If you are confident of passing, then I should not be a problem.”

“Stop putting on a brave front.” Xiao Dong does not know what Dong Xuebing meant.

After this first test, Dong Xuebing felt relieved. But when he thought of the essay test in the after, he became nervous again.

Dong Xuebing had no appetite for lunch.

Qu Yunxuan and Mrs. Xu, who were waiting for them, did not ask them about the test. They do not want to give them additional stress. They had a quick lunch in dumpling restaurant near the school, and soon it was time for the afternoon test.

Back at No. 15 Middle School, Xiao Dong looks calm and confident. “Do your best and do not fail.”

Dong Xuebing had no confidence at all, but he still stubbornly replied: “Speak for yourself.”

“Hmph!” Xiao Dong went back to his classroom.

The written essay test was 2 and a half hours.

13:30 to 16:00.

This written test was to test the candidates in 7 aspects. Reading comprehension, analytical skills, problem-solving skills, language, writing, knowledge of current political affairs, and administrative skills. There were no fixed answers and candidates had to answer in short essays.

Dong Xuebing was not good at critical essays. However, he did improve slightly under Grandpa Hu’s guidance over the past few days. Dong Xuebing knew that he was still not good enough to pass this test. Actually, Dong Xuebing had planned to use Back during the essay test, if the morning test was not too difficult.

But his plan had failed. The morning test was too hard, and he got to use Back. Now, he had no more tricks up his sleeves.

What do I do now?

If the essay test is on the same standard as the morning test, Dong Xuebing knew that he will not pass.

Maybe it’s fated that I can’t enter the government service.

Half an hour before the start of the test. Room 026. Once again, Dong Xuebing could feel the tension in the air. Everyone was affected by the difficulty of the morning test, and they were frowning.

Dong Xuebing sighed and tapped his cheeks. In his heart, he was praying.

He was now not hoping to answer all the questions, he only pray that his scores will not be too low. He might still be able to pass with the overall marks. This was his only wish.

13:30, test starts.

Dong Xuebing picked up his pen and immediately start on the first question.

He read the article given and then looked at the required answer. He could feel a shiver. This test was on the same difficulty as the morning test. Dong Xuebing read the article twice and does not understand what the article was about. There was no way he could answer the question.

Damn.

As good as dead.

Dong Xuebing gritted his teeth and just answered whatever he knew, hoping to score at least some marks. He flipped the question booklet to the second question.

“China has rich resources in the surrounding sea, but our Per capita income is low. Bo Sea is China’s biggest inland sea. It is crucial to the economies of the Northeast region...”

Eh?! Dong Xuebing could not believe his eyes. Why was this question so familiar?

He flipped over to the third question.

“Write a suggestion to the head of the Tourism Bureau with regards to our China tourist misbehaving overseas. The required answer needs to be relevant and implementable. It needs to be concise and not more than 400 words.....”

Dong Xuebing was stunned and gasped out loud: “Eh?”

“What’s wrong with you?” The examiner looked at him. “Do your test quietly and don’t make any noise.”

Dong Xuebing immediately said: “I’m sorry.” He looked at the questions again to make sure his eyes were not playing tricks on him. He was surprised and overjoyed when he saw the fourth question. He does not know how to describe his feelings.

Are these really the test questions?

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Dong Xuebing asked himself the same question thrice. He could hardly believe what he was seeing.

It was half an hour into the test, and Dong Xuebing could not afford to be still in a daze. He picks up his pen again and starts to answer.

Dong Xuebing was writing down his answers smoothly with no pauses in between.

The examiner had been watching Dong Xuebing, and he suspects that Dong Xuebing

was cheating. He walked over to Dong Xuebing and stood behind him to watch him. He glanced at Dong Xuebing's answer sheet. A minute passed, and the examiner was surprised. He stood there until the bell announcing the end of the test rang. He and the other examiner collected all the answer sheets from the candidates and sealed it in an envelope.

When Dong Xuebing was about to leave the room, that examiner looked at him and nodded with a smile.

Dong Xuebing was surprised and smiled back. He slowly walked out of the room. What had happened? Why were all the essay questions the same as what Grandpa Hu taught me?

Complaints of the candidates could be heard when they were making their way out of the school. "Sigh.... I'm dead. The questions were too difficult."

"That's right. The AAT was hard enough, and the essay test was even harder. Especially the third question. How many of us can answer that?"

"I know I had flunked this test. Sighed.... Guess I have to try again next year."

9 out of 10 candidates were pulling a long face.

Outside of the school gate, Mrs. Xu, Dong Xuebing's mother, and Qu Yunxuan were waiting in the shade under a tree. Dong Xuebing was still in a daze. When he saw his mother and Qu Yunxuan waiting for him, he put up his hand suddenly: "Wait. I need to go somewhere urgently. Please go back first."

Before his mother and Qu Yunxuan could react, Dong Xuebing flagged a taxi.

"Sir, please send me to the Cancer Hospital." Dong Xuebing told the driver.

At the Oncology ward, Dong Xuebing was surprised to find Grandpa Hu's ward empty. There was no luggage, and he asked a nurse who was passing by. Grandpa Hu had discharged last night. It should be not long after Dong Xuebing left. Dong Xuebing immediately called the number in his handphone. The call got through, and a woman answered: "Hello, Cancer Hospital, Oncology ward."

This was not Grandpa Hu's number? He had used the hospital phone to call me that day?

Dong Xuebing ran to the nurses' station to try to get Grandpa Hu's contact number and address. But the nurses there told him that they could not reveal their patient's details.

Dong Xuebing stood in the corridor, staring at the empty ward.

Grandpa Hu should not have many days left. Could yesterday be the last time I see him?

Dong Xuebing faced the empty ward and bowed deeply 3 times.

He understood why Grandpa Hu had told him that he will surely score high marks for the essay test. He realized why Grandpa Hu does not allow him to reveal what he taught to others. Maybe it was his son who had set the questions, or perhaps he knew the questions through his connections. Grandpa Hu had taught him how to answer almost 70% of the questions in the Essay test.

If Dong Xuebing still could not get high marks for this test, he might as well kill himself!