

The Wong Way

Mr Wong is a practising solicitor in the Hongkong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC). Because he is a solicitor, he is very proud of his position in society. He wears only the latest fashionable clothes, which he purchases at a very fashionable departmental store, the same fashionable departmental store from where he purchased all of the furniture for his home. Solicitor Wong lives on The Peak, a very fashionable part of Hongkong. He lives in a house. He is married to a former teacher of the English language. He has a teenaged son who attends an international school. He is the proud owner of a white Rolls Royce, which he purchased, second-hand, about 8 years ago.

The following are just some of the things that Solicitor Wong does; and, the reasoning (or lack of it) for his actions.

It was a hot Sunday afternoon in the summer when Solicitor Wong decided to investigate, more closely, his very elegant white toy: His shiny Rolls Royce. He was interested to learn, above all, how it worked. He summoned his Filipino driver to take him for a short trip around The Peak. In a sloping cul-de-sac, he ordered the driver to stop the motor car about 10 feet in front of a large tree.

Solicitor Wong looked in the boot, carefully lifting the fitted carpets in order to see what was beneath them. Then, he looked under the bonnet in order to admire the powerful and very mysterious engine. The state of the leather in the back seat was the next thing that he inspected in order to make certain that his chauffeur was keeping it spotlessly white. After a forensic inspection, which lasted one hour, Solicitor Wong was satisfied. He remarked: *'What a work of automotive art! And all for \$HK50,000! What a bargain!'* But, then, something caught his eye: The handle of the handbrake looked dirty.

Without realising that the gear shift was in the neutral position, he released the handbrake and the Rolls Royce started to move forward, gaining speed just before hitting the tree. A dent appeared in the front bumper on the right-hand side. Solicitor Wong was crest-fallen – a love of his life was not completely perfect. He thought to himself: *'What a catastrophe!'*

The following day, he called around and discovered that a new front bumper for his ageing Rolls Royce would cost upwards of \$HK30,000. That was just \$HK20,000 less than he had paid for this 8-year-old, Rolls Royce. *'This is outrageous!'*, the Hongkong solicitor determined. *'They are not getting my \$HK30,000! No! Never!'*

That evening, Solicitor Wong and his Filipino driver drove the Rolls Royce back to the sloping cul-

de-sac and proceeded to try to beat out the dent in the front bumper with a large iron hammer, which had been purchased just for this one, home-repair job. Horror of all horrors! The pounding on the front bumper from the underside resulted in the rusted bolts, which held the bumper to the chassis, to drop off, one by one. Within minutes, the bumper had adopted a 20-degree angle ... until it fell to the ground, that is – because the remaining rusted bolts could support the weight of the bumper no longer.

When the repair shop returned Solicitor Wong's Rolls Royce to him some 3 weeks later, there was a new, shiny front bumper, attached firmly to the motor car's chassis. Solicitor Wong, without telling his wife, secretly paid the bill of \$HK67,834 for the new front bumper, new, stainless steel bolts, firmly attaching the bumper to the chassis, a new paint job where the hammer had missed its mark, the cost of the lorry to tow away the motor car from the cul-de-sac, and all of the other damage that he had caused to the motor car in Solicitor Wong's attempts to save \$HK30,000.

Life can be trying even for a Hongkong solicitor.

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