

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.

Solicitor Wong was relatively happy as a member of The Aberdeen Boat Club even though his interest in sailing was beginning to wane on noting that many of the sailing members were sots: Solicitor Wong did not have too much time for people who were not of his class – unless they were his clients, of course. His wife, Judy, was a member in good standing at The Ladies Recreation Club (The LRC). Solicitor Wong was obliged to accompany Judy when it was time for Nicholas, their teenaged son, to take swimming lessons. The lessons were conducted on Saturday afternoons so Solicitor Wong could sneak down to The Aberdeen Boat Club on Sundays in order to rub shoulders with the ‘salts’, as he described his sailing acquaintances. At The LRC, he would sit in the shade, remarking to anybody, close at hand, that his son, Nicholas, was doing so well that, one day, he, that is Nicholas, could well be a member of the Hongkong National Swimming Team. (Even if the name were wrong, it still sounded very official and gave prestige, so he thought, to the father of Nicholas).
What father is not proud of his only son?

Judy, always dressed in a turtle-necked blouse with long, white trousers and a cap with a large peak, in order to keep the sun away from her face as well as shielding her eyes, watched attentively as Nicholas, her idol, splashed around in the water. She looked on with great interest as he received his hour-long lesson, wearing, of course, his cap, being the name of his international school. Armed with a glass of lemonade, Judy was in her element. The LRC was one of the clubs that a respectable family, living on The Peak, should join in order ‘to know’ the ‘right’ people. So, Judy would spend as much time as possible at The LRC, leaving Solicitor Wong to rub shoulders with the salts at The

Aberdeen Boat Club on every occasion that lent itself to such an accommodation. Solicitor Wong and Judy Wong were well known at The LRC and they were frequent visitors to the food outlets at this posh club. It was on the occasion of one meal, following Nicholas, having received swimming instructions, that the young boy asked his mother the reason that she always wore so many clothes even on the hottest of days. Solicitor Wong had, also, wondered about Judy's attire because, clearly, the large umbrella and her clothes, that covered every inch of her body, prevented even the slightest chance of sunlight, touching her alabaster skin. Solicitor Wong had never raised the question because he was a little concerned as to the response from his wife. Judy, at first, did not want to answer the question, posed by Nicholas, but she was pressed by her son for an answer and so she explained that she suffers sunburn very easily and so she decided to shield herself from the sun's rays, completely.

That night, when Nicholas was asleep, Solicitor Wong felt a little brave about the matter of his wife's skin problem and so he asked her to see a doctor about the matter. Judy shot a dagger-look at her husband, saying that there was nothing wrong with her skin. Solicitor Wong was nonplussed and pressed on with his questioning about the sun and its alleged harmful effects on his wife's skin. At last Judy confessed. She said that Chinese ladies are very afraid of little black spots on their faces and so they shield themselves from the sun's rays in order to try to prevent their faces from being infected. She explained that she went, weekly, to a beauty parlour in order to remove any hint of any black spots on her face. She, also, had special creams applied to her face in order to help to retain her youthful appearance, she explained. *'You do want me to look beautiful, don't you?'* came the rhetorical question, followed by, *'What would people say if they saw me with black spots on my face? It would not be good.'* At this point, Solicitor Wong mounted his high horse: *'This is vanity! Really, it is too much!'* Now, Judy was, at one time, used to unruly children, having been a school teacher at the best secondary schools in Hongkong, and she knew how to defend herself from children when they are prone to tantrums. She looked daggers, once again, at her husband ... then, her hands gently pulled down her husband's head, exposing his bald patch, covered over with some thin strands of hair that had been carefully placed in order to try to cover the offending pate. She asked: *'Are you going bald?'* Solicitor Wong in defence: *'I did have a problem, but I am seeing a hair doctor and my hair is growing back, now.'* Judy said: *'A hair doctor? I have never heard of such a medical specialty.'* *'It is a new science,'* Solicitor Wong said in defence, again. Judy looked one of her knowing looks at her husband and, before she could utter another word, Solicitor Wong, realising that he was about to lose the fight admitted: *'OK, OK! You go to your beauty parlour about your black spots on your face and I shall say no more about that matter; and, you don't mention, again, that I am losing my hair.'* And, then, he added thoughtfully: *'Actually, I am thinking of having a toupée fashioned so that nobody will recognise my little problem.'*

All Judy could say was: *'And you called me, vain? Vanity is man!'*

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