

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.

The suit that one wears depicts the real worth of a true gentleman. The watch that one wears depicts the careful attention to detail, the tell-tale sign of a true gentleman. The lady that a man selects to bear his children depicts the intelligence of a true gentleman with regard to his art of selectivity. These are just some of the important aspects that Solicitor Wong holds to be absolutely true. And, when he talks to his friends – and they are few and far between – he never baulks at uttering how a man is judged by his peers, the above 3 attributes, being among the key indicators of a man's true worth. His suits are, always, made in Italy, England or France; his watch is the best that money can buy, costing upwards of \$HK500,000, and all are well-known brands, such a Patek Philip, Vacheron Constantin, etc; and, his wife, Judy, is among the most-elegant of ladies that Solicitor Wong could discover in his wife-hunting expeditions while studying at The University of Hongkong about 3 decades earlier.

But his Rolls-Royce was showing signs of ageing. The white motor car was more than 8 years old. Elegant it was, but it was showing signs of wear. What to do? He paid a visit to the Rolls-Royce showroom in Central Hongkong and, there, fell in love with *'The Ghost'*.

'It is well worth every penny of the base price of \$HK4.70 million that is being demanded,' he explained to Judy at dinner one evening. And, then, he added: *'It is white, too! It is perfect for me and my business. Of course, I shall have to get a Gurkha to drive it because I have had enough of the Filipino drivers who have managed to scratch and dent the old Rolls-Royce.'* Judy continued to eat her dinner, listening only to her husband when she heard the figure: \$HK4.70 million! As Solicitor Wong continued to praise *The Ghost*, Judy was thinking of her dream vacation, shopping in the

capital cities of Europe. She dreamed of visiting the world-famous Avenue Montaigne in Paris, France, sleeping at Hôtel de Crillon in Paris, France, one of the oldest luxury hotels in the world, located at the foot of the Champs-Élysées on the north end of Place de la Concorde. Ah! What joy! Judy had collected and compiled all of the necessary brochures, secretly, and had dutifully circled the best accommodation at Hôtel de Crillon, at €800 per night for the 3 of them – Solicitor Wong, Judy and Nickolas, their teenaged son. All in all, Judy determined that a 6-week vacation would cost her society husband about \$HK2 million – not including Judy's shopping expeditions, of course.

However, now, Solicitor Wong seemed to have his heart set on buying a new, \$HK4.70-million Rolls-Royce. Judy determined that it was going to be her plan for the family's 6-week vacation: The new Rolls-Royce Ghost could wait for a year or so. *'My dear,' she started, 'it sounds wonderful, but you work so hard that I am afraid that you have no time to relax and unwind. I do not mean to upset you, but you are losing your hair. It is sign of something, don't you think? I am only thinking of you, my husband, and your health. Please don't work so hard!'* Solicitor Wong was deeply touched by his wife's tender entreaties. *'It is true,' he admitted, 'I do work very hard. Perhaps, too hard. But I am happy to work hard just as long as I can give you and Nickolas a comfortable life.'* *'Then,' responded Judy, 'I want you to come with me and Nickolas to visit Paris and sleep in the bed in which Maria Antoinette, wife of Louis XVI, slept in 1770. It is in Hôtel de Crillon in the heart of Paris. It will be an experience to last you for your entire professional life; and, you can tell the story over and over again at dinners with your legal friends. The cost of hotel is only 800 per night'* (she carefully omitted to state that the currency of France was the euro). Solicitor Wong was about to object because he was in danger of losing his Ghost when Judy continued her monologue, unabashed. *'Also, I have noted that your watch needs a new strap. Why don't you let me buy you a new Vacheron Constantin in Paris? Watches are cheaper in France than in Hongkong, you know. And, as you are aware, the best Vacheron Constantin watches are limited to just 12 pieces. Nobody in Hongkong would have the watch, purchased in Paris, France, as the one that you will display to your legal colleagues. Judges will be dazzled by your watch, which would be number one of 12, of course. I suppose you know, also, that Brioni suits are at least 30 percent cheaper in Paris than in Hongkong. You, really, look so smart in an original Italian suit, you know. You look so ... so masculine!'*

Judy had hit the correct nerve: Solicitor Wong sat mesmerised at his wife's narrative of Paris. A new Vacheron Constantin watch! One of 12! Brioni suits! Sleeping in the same bed as did Maria Antoinette! Eating original, authentic French cuisine! It was all so magical. But what would Judy do while he was shopping for his new watch and new suits? *'Only 800 per night,'* he heard himself susurrate. *'By the way, it takes me some time to select suits and even longer to make a decision about a new watch. You will be so bored, coming with me. It would be so impolite and selfish of me to treat you in such a fashion ...'* Judy, immediately, cut off her husband's sentence, saying: *'I have Nickolas to take care of, my dear. I only want you to enjoy yourself and relax on a lovely vacation that I shall plan, just for you.'*

One month later, in an aeroplane, bound for Paris, France, Judy sat, scanning a magazine, displaying the shops of Avenue Montaigne and the catalogue of Cartier's new jewellery selections. Meanwhile, Solicitor Wong studied the Vacheron Constantin catalogue. Nickolas was playing with his new, play station, portable toy. It was a thoroughly contented family, all the members of which were overjoyed that their respective dreams were about to come to pass.

Oh! Are you wondering, Dear Reader, about the new Rolls-Royce! Well, it never, really, stood a ghost of a chance, balanced against the weight of the carefully crafted monologue of Judy, that insidious instrument of Solicitor Wong's undoing when he planned to do that which his wife determines that he should not do.

Women: They may be difficult to live with, most of the time, but it is even more difficult to live without them.

Or, put another way:

*Be to her virtues, very kind;
Be to her faults, a little blind;
Let all her ways be unconfin'd;
And clap your padlock—on her mind.*

.....*yaW gnoW ehT*

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