

2004年12月孫輩每月一信

這月的‘每月一信’我將12/8 在‘英文寫作’會中宣讀的一篇文章錄給你們看。我在會中兩年多、學了很多東西。這次學到的是：寫的東西必須能‘鉤住讀者’。我以此練習寫了一故事、在班上宣讀，果然引起同學興趣、獲得掌聲。文章如下：

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Dear Grandchildren:

You probably know I have participated a society near my house namely "writers roundtable" for almost two years. An important principle I have learned to write something to be publicized is to "hook the reader". The following I quote a writing of assignment finished before long for you to read see if you are hooked up.

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ASSIGNMENT: 12/1/2004

Write paragraphs using at least one of the nine strategies to create suspense in writing a story to hook the reader as described in the handouts provided by teacher Jane in the writers' roundtable class.

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WRITING: 12/8/2004

Preface

On plotting a story, the handout says: "You must build you story beginning with one thought in mind: HOOK THE READER. Once caught, the middle must develop the plot and hold off a solution as long as possible. To build suspense, use one or more of the following: 1. Obstacles (障礙), 2. Delays (延宕), 3. Imminent danger (危險). 4.Struggle (掙扎), 5. Waiting (等待), 6. Interruptions (干擾), 7. Distractions (分心), 8. Conflict (衝突) and indecision (猶豫), 9. Others such as: Discussion(討論), introspection(反省), description (陳述), exposition (解釋), or philosophy (哲學). The following is a true story just occurred to me a few days ago serving the purpose of the assignment.

Plotting

My friend J. k. Chen, the director of the Chinese Mainlander Hunanese Association in Los Angeles, Called me 11/27: " Hi, Simou, Madame Ho Jian, our honorable President, sent us a message in her sickness asking our association to write a memorial article for her husband Gen. Ho J in to mark his 120 birth day next year, arranged to be published on one of the two famous magazines in Taiwan, the Biographical Literature (傳記文學) and Hunan Archive (湖南文獻) . We all think of you most qualified to accomplish the job. Madame Ho is scheduled to receive a surgery of throat cancer next month. At her age of over ninety, the chance of survival on such surgery is remote. That is why she almost mandatory asks us to fulfill her probably last request...."

Gen. Ho Jian (1885-1956) was one of the good warlords in my native province Hunan who served as the governor of Hunan for eight years from 1929 to 1937 in an era when I was schooled from primary to senior high. He was a friend of my father and gave our family some assistance when father passed away at his prime age of 47. Now under the present circumstances, while I have a rapport relationship in the Hunanese community, and other colleagues are either too young or too old, I naturally could be thought to take the mission. I could not find a reason to refuse, but very reluctantly said: "Ok, I will try to write out a draft for you directors to mend."

Suspense

[1. Obstacles (障礙),]

After the above conversation I began to regret the promise made because it is not an easy job to write the eulogy for a past warlord in such a short time with little information.

[2. Delays (延宕)]

Before taking any steps to do the work, I stopped to think over and over for a couple days.

[3. Imminent danger (危險).]

The danger confronted me is that I cannot make sure the two magazines to publish what I write, and that Madame Ho would hate me if I cannot satisfy her exhortation at such critical moment of hers.

[4. Struggle (掙扎)]

I tried to think of possible methods to get rid of the pitfall in either a positive or negative attitude.

[5. Waiting (等待)]

I waited for the chances some miracle might happen or some body coming out to help me out, but disappointed.

[6. Interruptions (干擾)]

At that moment, I found a fatal trouble on my computer, without which I could not do anything of formal writing. I asked my son to purchase a brand new one for me. After I received it through UPS, I found it could not work readily as I expected. It took me considerable time to adjust and get used to work.

[7. Distractions (分心)]

Junk mails, sells telephone calls, necessary shopping and other miscellaneous affairs in the eventful year end time caused much distractions.

[8. Conflict (衝突) and indecision (不能決定)]

I really thought of calling director Chen to cancel my promise but it would be very hurting to the community especially Madame Ho. I thought over and over and could not make decision.

[9a. Others such as: Discussion(討論)]

I discussed this matter with my ailing wife who had for many times helped me out of trouble. Her reply was: "I have told you thousand times never get too much involvement on the unnecessary trivial things, never promise promptly on something of uncertainty....."

[9b.Introspection (反省)]

Looking into my own thoughts and behaviors and on my wife's disapproval, I asked myself: "Am I wrong to help the respected old lady to see an eulogy about her passed husband before she assumed to leave the world?"

[9c. Description (陳述)]

I tried to described my intention righteously.

[9d. Exposition (解釋)]

I tried to expose my intention justifiably.

[9e. Philosophy (哲學)]

Finally, I am convinced with the old saying that credit is the second life of a human being. Wife's opinion is not always correct. I must keep my promise.

Solution:

As the time elapsed, I walked up and down in my house agonized. When passing by a bookshelf in the garage, a book with a title "The Daily of Gen. HO Jian and Gen. Wang Tongyuan" <何鍵--王東原日記> struck my eyes. I recalled that small book which was a gift of Madame Ho several years ago but had lapsed my memory. Now it was appearing with adequate information for me to write the needed article . I grabbed out that book and hurried to scrutinize. It took me about 20 hours to accomplish a writing to my satisfaction. On 12/5 morning, I asked J. K. Chen come to my house to get the draft telling him I would make some minor corrections according to the comments of Madame Ho and the directors. The problem is solved.

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Wish you a happiest and most fruitful New Year. Grandpa