

# *Our Man in China*

## Characters

LAURA: A Chinese women in her 20s, dressed in a black pantsuit. She speaks perfect English and is all-business.

GEORGE: An American man in his 30s, dressed in a somewhat rumpled suit. He's an adjunct English teacher, rough around the edges, a bit nervous and immature for his age.

Time: Present

Place: Beijing, China

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A bare utilitarian office with a desk and two chairs. LAURA, is behind the desk reading an iPad and wearing earbuds. The door is open as GEORGE peeks his head inside and knocks on the door jamb.

GEORGE

Excuse me, is this Apple Total Tech?

LAURA

(Startled. She removes earbuds.)

Ah, yes, yes. Come in, please.

GEORGE

Oh, great! I had a bit of a hard time finding your office. I'm George Adams. I have a 10 a.m. appointment for an interview.

LAURA

Yes, Geroge, I have your application right here. I am Laura.

GEORGE

Very nice to meet you, Laura. There're so many offices here. I got a little confused.

LAURA

Yes, I know. This is temporary. Just for recruitment.

GEORGE

Oh, cool. So, uh, I'm very interested in this job. I saw the ad a while ago, so I'm happy it's still available because I kind'a need more income now, you know, like everyone else ... um, I'm sure.

LAURA

Please, have a seat. Where are you from?

GEORGE

I live here, in Beijing.

LAURA

Yes, but where in America?

GEORGE

Oh, right. I'm from Philadelphia.

LAURA

Ah, Philadelphia.

GEORGE

You have perfect pronunciation! I mean, I teach English here, so.

LAURA

Yes, I see that on your application.

GEORGE

English is tough.

LAURA

True, but it can be mastered.

GEORGE

Yeah, not like Chinese. If I had to know Chinese to teach English, forget about it.

LAURA

So, you do not speak Chinese?

GEORGE

Not really. Uh, is that a problem? For the job, I mean.

LAURA

No. In fact, it is excellent.

GEORGE

Really? Like I don't have to know any Chinese?

LAURA

No. We will provide you with an interpreter.

GEORGE

Cool. I was wondering, because, you know, the ad said you want a "communications" expert. And I didn't know if it was Chinese communications or American communications ... So, what, exactly, does Apple Total Tech do? Sounds like it has something to do with Apple products. Am I right?

LAURA

No, not Apple.

GEORGE

Oh, well, Apple's in the name, so I thou... /

LAURA

Not Apple

GEORGE

Not Apple?

LAURA

No.

GEORGE

Okay, cool, got it.

LAURA

We manufacture parts for computers, cell phones, iPads, (she holds up her iPad), earbuds (points to her ears).

GEORGE

But not for Apple, even though Apple is in your corporate name?

(Getting annoyed)

LAURA

That is correct, George. Not Apple. Now, I have some questions I need you to answer for me.

GEORGE

Sure! Ask whatever you'd like.

LAURA

Do you own another suit?

GEORGE

Uh, not really. Like I said, I teach English ... part time. That's sort'a the problem. (Grabs his lapels.) This is two week's pay here.

LAURA

(She writes in her notebook.)

I see. One suit.

GEORGE

But ... but I have a sports jacket that matches these pants ... And then another okay pair of dress pants. You know, not jeans.

LAURA

(She writes in her notebook.)

One sports jacket.

GEORGE

That's good, right?

LAURA

Yes. Very good, George. Now, do you have experience addressing large groups.

GEORGE

Well, I routinely lecture to students.

LAURA

How many students?

GEORGE

Oh, I don't know, maybe 25-30? Except on Thursdays when they combine the two English classes. Then, it can be as high as 60.

LAURA

Not thousands?

GEORGE

Thousands?! All at once? No! No way.

LAURA

(Writes in her notebook.)

Not thousands.

GEORGE

Is that bad? Look, you're losing me here. What the heck is this job about? Maybe I'm not even qualified and I'm just wasting your time.

LAURA

I don't think you're wasting my time, Geroge. This is a very important position.