

## Rise 27

### Chapter 27: Yesterday's Naughty Boy Comes Back Today

Before starting a new lesson, Old Scholar Sun had a session for checking homework. Zhu Ping'an could see clearly from outside as Old Scholar Sun randomly selected several students and asked them to come forward. He then covered the textbook with a piece of paper, revealing one character, and asked them to identify it one by one.

Since Zhu Pingjun had slept in class with his deskmate yesterday, he was particularly scrutinized by the teacher during the homework check. As a result, just like he had said at home yesterday, Zhu Pingjun could only remember four characters and did not complete his homework, getting his palm struck four times by Old Scholar Sun. His deskmate fared little better, remembering one more character than Zhu Pingjun and getting struck three times.

After punishing their palms, Old Scholar Sun instructed them to return to their desks and began the lesson.

"Yesterday, we taught eight characters from the Thousand Character Classic; today we will teach you how to write these eight characters," Old Scholar Sun said, having the children prepare their brushes, ink, paper, and inkstone. "To learn to write, one must first learn to hold the brush."

While explaining, Old Scholar Sun demonstrated, saying, "Today, I will teach you the five-finger grip method. This method emphasizes the use of all five fingers through pressing, applying pressure, hooking, topping, and supporting..."

Writing with a brush was a weak point for Zhu Ping'an, so he listened particularly attentively from outside.

Old Scholar Sun carefully explained the techniques of pressing, applying pressure, hooking, topping, and supporting, demonstrating each one twice. After finishing his explanations, he went down to each child to point out their mistakes, teaching them the correct way to hold the brush hand by hand.

Once he saw that the children had mastered the brush-holding technique, Old Scholar Sun then taught them the wrist technique, including resting the wrist, suspending the wrist, and suspending the elbow. Since the children were all beginners, he focused his explanation on the method of suspending the wrist.

"The most important thing in practicing calligraphy is persistence. You must practice earnestly; if you practice with your heart, you will naturally write well. Only when your heart is right can your writing be right. The strength in brush writing lies at the tip of the brush. When you write, you must be firm yet gentle, gentle yet firm, combining both to create a strong and resilient writing style..." Old Scholar Sun was an experienced and absolutely competent teacher, explaining the calligraphy principles along with his own experiences and patiently correcting every child's mistakes.

This highlighted the difference between self-study and having a teacher. If one learns brush writing alone, without knowing what to pay attention to, they might stray further down the wrong path; but with a teacher, there are no detours, allowing one to get ahead from the start.

Zhu Ping'an was grateful to attend the class and glad that Old Scholar Sun was a good teacher.

While the children were dipping their brushes in ink inside the private school, Zhu Ping'an was outside, dipping his brush in water to practice on a board.

While practicing brush writing, Zhu Ping'an realized that writing with a brush was definitely not a simple task. The brush felt awkward in his hand, refusing to respond as he wished, making it quite difficult.

Old Scholar Sun had previously said that the strength in brush writing lies at the tip of the brush, and this statement had a significant impact on Zhu Ping'an. Practicing brush writing required channeling strength through the brush handle to the tip. Understanding this was one thing, but practicing it was another. Zhu Ping'an tried to hold the brush according to Old Scholar Sun's five-finger grip method, attempting to apply his strength through the handle to the tip. However, he found it very challenging and momentarily lost his grasp of the technique. While listening at the door to Old Scholar Sun correcting each child's issues, he discovered the key: it was important to pay attention to the grip posture, the application of wrist strength, and the height of the brush in hand. These factors all influenced the writing of the brush. Holding the brush high meant that the distance for strength to reach the tip was farther, creating a sense of floatiness in the writing. Conversely, holding the brush lower meant a shorter distance for strength to reach the tip, resulting in more solid and powerful writing. Zhu Ping'an also realized that the tightness of his grip on the brush affected the writing as well. Thus, he practiced while attentively listening to Old Scholar Sun's guidance for the children, gradually entering a state of focus through self-exploration and summarization.

Zhu Ping'an was much older in mental age than the children in the private school, so he found it easier to understand Old Scholar Sun's explanations. While the children in the private school were still struggling with their brushes, Zhu Ping'an had already moved from feeling awkward at the beginning to slowly becoming less clumsy; he was not far from adapting.

The mischievous boy from yesterday was back to play again today, and Old Scholar Sun inadvertently saw Zhu Ping'an outside the private school while he was teaching.

Seeing the chubby little kid pouring water from a bamboo tube onto a rock, Old Scholar Sun naturally assumed Zhu Ping'an was just playing around and didn't pay it much attention.

"Let him play as long as he doesn't make noise and disturb the students," Old Scholar Sun thought, glancing at Zhu Ping'an before shifting his focus back to his students, correcting their mistakes one by one and even teaching them how to write by hand.

In reality, Zhu Ping'an was pouring the water from the bamboo tube into a naturally formed groove in the rock, using it as an inkstone. He then dipped the brush made by his father into the water to write on a black wooden board. After all, he couldn't dip the brush directly into the bamboo tube; that was his drinking cup.

Old Scholar Sun only saw Zhu Ping'an pouring water on the rock and missed the scene that followed.

As Old Scholar Sun taught in the private school, Zhu Ping'an was attending the class from outside. After a long session on writing, Old Scholar Sun began to teach the children how to recognize characters. This time, instead of the Thousand Character Classic, he was teaching the Three Character Classic.

"Humans at their birth are inherently good; their natures are similar, but their habits are far apart." Old Scholar Sun led the children in reading it nearly ten times before he began to explain its meaning.

After explaining the meaning, he led the students to recognize each character one by one. Outside the private school, Zhu Ping'an repeatedly copied the traditional characters of the Three Character Classic, imprinting them deeply in his mind, diligently converting the simplified characters in his head into traditional characters.

After a while, seeing that Old Scholar Sun seemed ready to take a break, Zhu Ping'an gathered his things and walked toward the bamboo forest.

To avoid unnecessary trouble, just in case the teacher didn't like outsiders attending his class, or if other children saw him and caused rumors, Zhu Ping'an decided that the best strategy was to leave.

The old yellow ox outside had been grazing for half a day and needed to go drink some river water.

Zhu Ping'an hid his brush and wooden board in a concealed spot in the bamboo forest and led the old yellow ox down the slope toward the river.

Oh, what the heck! Why is that cunning little loli here again at the foot of the slope? Can someone tell me what's going on?

"Ah, you little poor thing! I thought you wouldn't dare to come!"

The bored, cunning little loli, seeing Zhu Ping'an appear on the hillside, lit up with excitement, her big eyes sparkling with provocation like a fighting rooster.