

门槛 The Threshold

Winnie Mo

离开那家打印公司后，阿碧很快开始独立接活。修改图纸、绘制施工平面图、车位图、水管施工图，偶尔也接一些简单的室内设计。

每接到一份任务，她都认真对待，反复琢磨，尽力让每一张图纸都符合客户要求。凭着踏实肯干的态度，她渐渐赢得了客户信任，也积累了一批固定客源。

随着业务增多，阿碧意识到一个人的力量有限，便把乡下的侄女阿霞接到身边。她手把手教阿霞使用电脑和 AutoCAD 绘图。阿霞常常通宵赶图，阿碧则一早检查修改，送图交货，再带回新的任务。

那段时间虽然忙碌，却充满希望。她常常想：“也许再坚持几年，我真的能拥有一家属于自己的设计公司。那些曾经看不起我的人，也许会对我另眼相看。”

梦想并不宏大，却足以支撑她日复一日地奔波。然而，问题也逐渐显现出来。

阿碧有绘画基础，也掌握了简单的电脑绘图技术，但对建筑结构知识却了解甚少。客户开始带她去施工现场，希望她独立完成设计图纸。她依然拼命钻研，可图纸一次次被退回。比例不准确、标注不规范，有些甚至无法按照图纸施工。

起初她有些不服气。“我明明已经很认真了，为什么还是不行？”

后来她渐渐明白，建筑图纸和绘画不同。绘画追求美感，而建筑图纸首先追求精准。画错一条线，现实中就可能出现无法弥补的问题。

她意识到，自己真正缺少的不是勤奋，而是专业知识。

为了跨过这道门槛，她决定进入专业公司学习。不久，她应聘到一家室内设计公司担任设计助理。

公司规模很小，更像一间夫妻经营的家庭装修作坊。丈夫负责外面的装修业务，妻子负责绘图。

不久，大部分工作都落到了阿碧身上。图纸要求异常严格，却没有人告诉她原因。一张图纸往往要修改几十次。

“这里不对。”“那里有问题。”这是她每天听到最多的话。

她一次次重画，一次次修改。深夜里，她盯着屏幕上的线条，心里反复想着：“到底哪里不对？”“如果不告诉我原因，我怎么学得会？”“难道真的是我太笨了吗？”越想学，越迷茫。

赶工的时候，她连续几个晚上没有睡觉。电脑屏幕泛着冷光，线条交错重叠，她改到后来连自己都认不出最初的样子。

走出门的时候，双腿发软，脚下像踩着棉花。可即便如此，她还是劝自己：“再坚持一下吧，也许明天就懂了。”“大家不都是这样熬出来的吗？”

然而一天又一天过去，她开始发现，自己只是在机械地修改，却没有得到真正的指导。她知道哪里被判定为“不对”，却始终不知道什么才是“对”。

渐渐地，一个念头在心里冒出来：“他们需要的也许不是学徒，而是一个不用付学费、也不用付工资的劳动力。”

想到这里，她自己都吓了一跳。因为她一直相信，只要努力，就会有人愿意教你。

可现实似乎并非如此。

终于有一天深夜，她望着屏幕发呆。眼睛干涩，肩膀僵硬。那一刻，她突然问自己：“我到底是在学习，还是在消耗自己？”房间里安静得只剩下电脑风扇的声音。她知道，自己该离开了。

第二天，她提出辞职。夫妻二人没有挽留，只淡淡地说：“你画的图纸都不能用，我们不给工资。”

那一刻，她心里一阵发凉。委屈，愤怒，眼泪一起涌上来，但更多的是疲惫。两周的通宵和劳累，仿佛已经耗尽了她的力气。

她默默走出那间屋子，没有回头。清晨的街道空荡荡的，她高一脚、低一脚地往前走。微风吹过脸颊时，她忽然对自己说：“没关系，这条路走不通，再换一条路。”“总有一天，我会找到真正能让我成长的地方。”

多年以后，阿碧依然记得那段经历。努力没有让她的技术突飞猛进，却让她明白了一个朴素的道理：不是所有付出都会有收获，也不是所有机会都值得珍惜。

在人生最渴望进步的时候，人往往容易用时间、体力，甚至尊严去交换一个并不存在的未来。而成长，有时恰恰始于看清这一点。

The Threshold

After leaving the printing company, Abi quickly began taking on freelance drafting work. She drafted architectural drawings, produced construction floor plans, parking layouts, plumbing diagrams, and occasionally handled simple interior design projects.

She treated every assignment with care, studying the details and doing her best to meet her clients' expectations. Her diligence and reliability gradually earned their trust, and before long she had a steady stream of repeat customers.

As the workload grew, Abi realized she could not do everything alone. She invited her niece, Axia, from the countryside to help. Abi taught her how to use a computer and draw with AutoCAD. Axia often worked through the night completing drawings, while Abi reviewed and corrected them in the morning, delivered finished work to clients, and returned with new assignments.

Those were exhausting days, but they were full of hope.

She often thought *maybe if I keep going for a few more years, I'll have my own design company. The people who once looked down on me will finally see me differently.*

It was not a grand dream, but it was enough to keep her moving forward. However, problems soon began to surface.

Abi had a background in art and basic computer drafting skills, but she knew very little about architectural structures and construction standards. Clients increasingly took her to building sites and expected her to produce complete drawings on her own.

She worked harder than ever, yet her drawings kept being rejected. The proportions were off. The dimensions were marked incorrectly. Some drawings could not even be used for construction.

At first, she felt frustrated. *I worked so hard on this. Why is it still wrong?*

Gradually, she came to understand that architectural drafting was very different from drawing. Art valued beauty and expression; construction drawings demanded precision. A single incorrect line on paper could become a costly mistake in real life.

She realized that what she lacked was not determination but professional knowledge.

Determined to bridge that gap, she decided to join a design firm and learn from experienced professionals. Soon she found a job as a design assistant at an interior design company.

The "company" turned out to be little more than a small family-run renovation business. The husband managed renovation projects while the wife prepared drawings. Three computers in the living room served as the entire office.

Before long, most of the drafting work was handed to Abi.

The standards were extremely strict, yet nobody explained them. A single drawing might be revised dozens of times.

"That's wrong."

"Fix this."

Those were the comments she heard every day.

She redrew and revised endlessly. Late at night, staring at the glowing screen, she kept asking herself: *What's wrong with it? If no one explains it, how am I supposed to learn?*

The harder she tried to improve, the more lost she felt.

During busy periods, she went several nights without sleep. Under the cold light of the monitor, she modified the same lines over and over until she could hardly recognize the original drawing.

When she finally stepped outside, her legs felt weak and unsteady. Even then, she told herself:

Just hold on a little longer. Maybe tomorrow it will finally make sense.

Isn't this how everyone learns?

But day after day, she realized she was simply making endless revisions without receiving any real guidance. She knew what was considered "wrong," yet nobody could show her what "right" looked like.

Slowly, an unsettling thought entered her mind. *Maybe they don't want an apprentice. Maybe they just want someone to work for free.* The thought startled her.

She had always believed that if you worked hard enough, someone would be willing to teach you.

Reality, however, seemed different.

One night, she sat staring blankly at the screen. Her eyes were dry, her shoulders stiff.

Suddenly she asked herself: *Am I learning, or am I simply wearing myself out?*

The room was silent except for the hum of the computer fan.

At that moment, she knew it was time to leave. The next day, she resigned.

The husband and wife made no attempt to stop her. They simply said, "Your drawings aren't usable, so we're not paying you." A chill ran through her. Hurt and anger welled up inside her, and tears stung her eyes.

But more than anything, she felt exhausted. After two weeks of sleepless nights and relentless work, she no longer had the energy to argue.

She walked out without looking back. The street was nearly empty in the early morning light. As she made her way forward, tired and unsteady, a light breeze brushed against her face.

Quietly, she told herself: *It's alright. If this road leads nowhere, I'll find another one. One day, I'll find a place where I can truly grow.*

Looking back years later, Abi realized that those difficult weeks had given her something more important than technical knowledge. They taught her that effort without direction can lead nowhere, and that wisdom often begins with knowing when to walk away.

When we are desperate to move forward, we can easily mistake sacrifice for progress. True growth begins the moment we learn the difference.