A frequent inheritance-related scam many foreigners succumb to

Description

Does it, the following cited paragraph, look familiar to you in any way?

> Good Day Sir
>
> I am an American and was contacted by Citic Bank in November of 2015 some months ago as heir to a sum of money from there bank. They have set fees for months and I have paid all but this final fee which is in route to them by transfer, but they only give me 72 hours. They have never told me exactly how must each fee is until they set some deadline that forces me to take a loan or borrow from friends to meet. I told them a number of times that if they would let me know about fees in advance I could have finished months ago, but now another deadline and I have to take another loan to meet it.
>
> I feel this is deliberate some how to keep me from finishing this process, and was wondering if there is a real time line in chinese law for settling and inheritance with a bank or can the bank set arbitrary rules.

The other day, a Canadian person contacted me for advice on China inheritance laws (indeed, it should be HK laws) whereby he was informed by a bank called “Shanghai Commercial Bank” in Hong Kong (at least this bank maintains a live website) that there was a big sum of bank deposit estate up to USD 2,230,000 bequeathed to him by his friend. The bank instructed him to contact a lawyer of that bank to prepare documents in order to complete the inheritance of the fund. Whoo…. a lot of money, isn’t it? Of course, before the person can set his hand on the money, he has to pay a sum of legal fee (up to USD 50,000)

Then he forwarded an email to me:

> Like I had promised in my previous correspondence, please find attached some of the documents. I have had to do all within my powers to ensure that all is done legally and perfect so we do not encounter any problems within a brief time as this will expedite the process,the rest of the documentation hard copies had to be sent to the Bank(SCB).Now that all the documents have been prepared, I have sent all this documentation to the Shanghai Commercial bank and they have instructed our branch in Hong Kong to immediately contact you.
>
> I am sending you copies so you understand how we are progressing. They will then tell you the procedure for making an application for the release of the funds.I am not a wealthy individual but had to do this as a matter of necessity and I have incurred serious debts to settle this which has left me completely empty and broke for now. I have no worries as I know that the funds I have spent so far would be replenished in a thousand folds. I will be

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keeping all my receipts as this will all be deducted as expenses before we share the money. Please keep these documents very safe and away from everyone. This is it now; I believe that you will be contacted in a few days.

I cannot sleep at night anymore. I am so excited; I have waited for a breakthrough like this all my life and I do not intend to miss this. Please I expect that you act very diligent when you are contacted and inform me immediately so I can continue to advice and guide you to successful completion of this our project. I advise always and that you do all that is asked of you immediately and everything will be fine. We should be concluding this in a matter of days after a very well perfected process from my end; contact could be via direct mail, telephone or email that you have provided. Please be prepared at all times and alert. Our roles are reversed now; you will now be the one to feed me daily with the information passed over to you when you have been contacted.

Please let me know if you received this email.

This email seems to come from the lawyer recommended by the bank.

Briefly after I had a few words with the client over phone, I realized that this was 99% a scam. I asked the client whether he knew the deceased person, he told me that dead person is a friend long time ago and he had not seen for more than a decade. He seemed to believe that this is a true story while being hesitant in making payment of the legal fee. Once enlightened by me, he now agreed that this big windfall in his life should be just a scam.

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I came to know such a scam years ago when I helped a foreigner to look into a similar inheritance matter for him by calling a guy in China who didn't want to talk to me at all. That guy held out himself as an executor of a will in which that foreigner was appointed as a beneficiary. Similarly, the foreigner seemed to know such a friend with such a name in China many years. Unfortunately, that foreigner had paid some fee already.

There are so many scamming emails every day. I have got accustomed to them and never given any damn to them at all.

What surprised me a bit is that there are people, foreign people, who easily succumb to such scams. Look like that foreigners are more simple and naive compared with Chinese people. No? I hope I am wrong.

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