

## All R. Artist 111

### Chapter 111: Task Completed

“Ding Dong! Congratulations host on completing the task of achieving a thousand prestige points in painting, successfully obtaining a Bronze Treasure Chest, and a Silver Treasure Chest.”

Five days later.

Lin Yuan finally completed the painting task recruited by the System just before the deadline. Hearing the pleasing notification sound felt like his efforts of skipping classes to earn prestige points in the Art Club over these five days weren't wasted in vain.

He got treasure chests!

Not just one Bronze Treasure Chest.

There was also a Silver Treasure Chest.

Last time, from a Silver Treasure Chest, Lin Yuan obtained piano music. Who knows what he will pull out this time?

System: “Would you like to open it?”

Lin Yuan: “Store them in the warehouse for now.”

He decided to save the treasure chests and open them when he felt lucky.

Opening chests was a bit of an uncertain art. You randomly open a chest and what if you get something bad?

The System wouldn't allow him to return the item either.

After the task was done.

Lin Yuan felt rather relieved.

Next, he planned to continue writing the first volume of “Zhu Xian”.

The novel was divided into eight volumes by the System, with each volume having around two hundred thousand words.

Presently, Lin Yuan had already written one hundred and fifty thousand words. With Lin Yuan’s typing speed, in two or three days, he could finish the rest, and that too in between other tasks.

If he were to cut class to write like he did for the task, he would be able to finish the first volume in less than a day.

While writing the novel, Lin Yuan’s mind is constantly flashing scenes from

“Zhu Xian”.

The story of the first volume unfolds from the perspective of Zhang Xiaofan.

As the male protagonist of the novel, Zhang Xiaofan and his good friend Lin Jingyu join the Qingyun Sect together.

Zhang Xiaofan is not very talented, unlike his friend Lin Jingyu who is very gifted in cultivation. As a result, all the elders of the Qingyun Sect wanted to take Lin Jingyu as their disciple, while Zhang Xiaofan was completely ignored.

Standard treatment for the inept.

In the following plot, Zhang Xiaofan gradually becomes stronger through his initial adventures and a magic weapon called the Burning Stick

Not only that.

Zhang Xiaofan falls in love with his master's daughter, Tian Ling'er, who he had grown up with, but unfortunately, Tian Ling'er only saw Zhang Xiaofan as a brother, without any romantic sentiments involved.

Just like that.

As the plot progressively gets deeper, the entire worldview of "Zhu Xian" gradually takes shape in front of the readers, which was what Lin Yuan felt most deeply about as he continued writing.

At the end of the first volume.

The Qingyun Sect is about to hold the Seven-Sect Martial Arts Contest! Zhang Xiaofan will also participate in this contest. However, no one has any expectations of Zhang Xiaofan, and his master only hopes that Zhang Xiaofan can gain some experience.

But Lin Yuan knows.

The readers won't think so.

Readers are observing the book from the perspective of a distant god, so they are very clear that Zhang Xiaofan is not as weak as he seems.

Zhang Xiaofan has his extraordinary experiences.

And he has his own magic weapon.

The Seven-Sect Martial Arts Contest is the best stage for Zhang Xiaofan to prove himself. Therefore, Lin Yuan believes that any reader who has finished the first volume of "Zhu Xian" would be most looking forward to Zhang Xiaofan shining in the contest!

The pacing is just right.

Zhang Xiaofan goes through some tough times in the beginning.

He went through a great catastrophe in his village. His cultivation talent was weak, and few people took his cultivation seriously. From the readers' perspective, they must be hoping for the protagonist to vent out his frustration.

A few days later.

Just as Lin Yuan was planning to finish the first volume of "Zhu Xian" in one go the next day, he received a call from Xia Fan.

"I have a competition tomorrow!"

"Then Jian Yi and I will come with you."

Lin Yuan temporarily stopped writing the next day.

Qin Continent's annual "Bloom" was about to begin, and Xia Fan, as a contestant, had to go through the preliminary rounds.

Even though deep down, they knew that Xia Fan passing the preliminary rounds would be a piece of cake, Lin Yuan and Jian Yi still accompanied her to the competition venue.

The venue for the preliminary rounds was Su City's largest stadium.

As the biggest talent show in Qin Continent, on the first day of the preliminary rounds, the stadium was crowded and filled with excitement. It was clear how enthusiastic people were about this competition!

"I'm a bit nervous."

Xia Fan looked somewhat serious.

Jian Yi laughed: "What are you nervous about, you are a veteran, and moreover, look who's standing next to you!"

Xia Fan looked at Lin Yuan.

All Lin Yuan could do was reassure her, “Regardless of the result, you have already signed with Starlight, so just relax and enjoy the competition. You can definitely make your debut next year.”

Xia Fan took a deep breath: “Then I’ll head backstage.”

Lin Yuan and Jian Yi nodded. Contestants had to wait in the backstage area. If they don’t show up on time, they risk being disqualified.

Soon after Xia Fan left, the preliminary rounds began.

Lin Yuan stood in the audience, listening with great interest.

In the future, he would have many different styles of songs that would require different people to sing.

If he found any promising talents here, Lin Yuan could take note, as he could use their talents later.

However, as this was the preliminary round, it was a mixed bag of talent.

Lin Yuan listened to eight people perform back to back, but none of their voices amazed him.

Five of them were even cut off by the judges halfway through their songs.

Xia Fan was the ninth contestant to perform and was one of the earlier ones to take the stage.

When it was her turn to perform, Lin Yuan and Jian Yi waved their hands frantically from below the stage, unfortunately, Xia Fan didn’t notice because of the large crowd.

But Jian Yi’s teasing wasn’t wrong.

Xia Fan was indeed a battle-hardened veteran.

For the first round of the preliminaries, she sang an old song. After the performance, the judges conversed briefly before unanimously raising their boards indicating she had advanced to the next round.

“Thank you, judges!”

Xia Fan bowed, stepped down cheerfully, and promptly shared her joy with Lin Yuan and Jian Yi.

“This is just the beginning.”

Jian Yi said with a smile: “You need to keep putting in more effort as the competition progresses. If it really comes to it, just sing ‘Initial Dream’ and shock all the judges!”

Xia Fan just smiled without responding.

She wasn’t planning on singing ‘Initial Dream’ in the competition – using it simply for winning a position in the next round seemed like a waste. She wanted to sing this song when she made her official debut.

Seeing that it was getting late.

Jian Yi suggested: “Shall we go back?”

Xia Fan nodded, saying to the two of them: “Let’s go back today. I have several more rounds to participate in, but you two don’t have to accompany me.”

She was only nervous this first day.

She couldn’t inconvenience them both throughout the competition.

The two of them agreed with a laugh.

Although university life is somewhat leisurely, it is not common for everyone to be free at the same time.

The duration of Xia Fan's competition was quite long. Lin Yuan and Jian Yi could accompany her if they were free, but if they weren't, there was nothing they could do.

After returning home.

Lin Yuan looked at his phone and felt that there was still some time before bedtime, so he opened "Zhu Xian" and continued to write.

With his fast typing, updating was not a big deal.

Around nine o'clock.

Lin Yuan finally completed the first volume of "Zhu Xian".

Chapter 112: Heaven and earth are unkind, treating all things as straw dogs

The next day.

After Lin Yuan got up and washed up, he went down to have breakfast. When he was ready to pay, the breakfast shop owner laughed and waved his hand:

"No need to pay."

Lin Yuan asked, "Why?"

The owner laughed even more excitedly, "We have a new owner for our breakfast shop. His name is Sun Yaohuo. He showed us your picture, said he's your good friend. He also said that, from now on, you are the most precious lifelong, super free member of our breakfast shop."

"Thank you."

Lin Yuan didn't insist.

He was quite surprised.

It is said that celebrities in the entertainment industry like to invest in catering. He didn't expect senior Sun Yaohuo to be also interested in it.

He had set up a milk tea shop a while ago, and today he invested in a breakfast shop.

Should he also consider investing in the future?

Forget it.

He should not think about this for now.

The first volume of "Zhu Xian" has been completed, and Lin Yuan plans to release it as soon as possible.

He will choose Silver Blue Books as his publisher.

Lin Yuan has a good impression of Silver Blue Books. During the serialization of "King of the Net", both the distribution and promotion channels were quite comprehensive, and they even increased their contract share in the middle. He has no reason to change his partner.

Also, Lin Yuan had once cooperated with Silver Blue Books' "Fun Reads" on a short story, and the experience was also—

They gave a satisfying amount of compensation.

Unlike the trepidation he felt last time, Lin Yuan is quite confident in "Zhu Xian" this time.

Thinking of this.

On his way to school, Lin Yuan sent a message to his editor, YangFeng, "I have finished my new book."

“So fast?”

YangFeng responded almost instantly, “Can you send it to me now?”

The reason why YangFeng replied so quickly was because he set Chu Kuang as his special attention.

Although he is responsible for communication with many authors, Chu Kuang is the most famous author YangFeng is in charge of, so he must pay special attention to him.

Before Chu Kuang could reply.

YangFeng, fingers flying across his phone screen, continued to ask, “Is your new book still about tennis? You should know this sport best, and with the experience of the last book, writing it should be easier. I think it won’t be difficult to achieve another success.”

YangFeng was cheering Chu Kuang on.

He believed that Chu Kuang’s new book would definitely continue to write about the sports competition theme that he is best at, and persist in this niche genre. This is also the matter most expected by everyone in the Fantasy Editorial Department of Silver Blue Books.

Chu Kuang: “No.”

YangFeng: “Then, what are you writing?”

If he’s not writing about tennis, is Chu Kuang planning to write about the currently popular basketball or football? Recently, many people in the industry are following Chu Kuang’s trend and writing about sports competitions, mostly focusing on football and basketball. Is Chu Kuang planning to teach these people how to write about basketball or football?

That’s quite audacious!

Chu Kuang really lives up to his reputation!

YangFeng felt that his speculation was quite accurate, but when he saw the answer given by Chu Kuang, he was stunned. Because the two words Chu Kuang replied with made even him, an editor, feel somewhat estranged:

“XianXia.”

Chu Kuang wants to write XianXia.

The question is, what is XianXia?

YangFeng felt like he was going to split apart. As a professional editor, of course he wouldn't not know what XianXia is. But precisely because he knows, he feels it's troublesome: “Like ‘Immortal and Demon War’?”

“More or less.”

Lin Yuan had looked up the information before and knew that “Immortal and Demon War” was Blue Star's most recent XianXia work. After this work, Qin Continent had no other noteworthy XianXia novels. It has been about eighty years till now.

“Can I call you?”

“I am about to go to class.”

Chu Kuang stopped replying after that. However, YangFeng's mailbox received a novel called “Zhu Xian”. YangFeng was both amused and frustrated. After all, Chu Kuang was really going to persist in the niche genre till the end!

Writing a XianXia novel?

Is Chu Kuang an old-fashioned guy?

He is clearly a university student.

Readers who have feelings for XianXia probably have to trace back to YangFeng's grandfather's generation. "Immortal and Demon War" was a work praised by that generation. Now someone wants to write XianXia, YangFeng simply can't imagine it.

YangFeng arrived at the company with a mournful face.

His colleagues found YangFeng's appearance very strange: "Did another author go off the rails again?"

"Worse than that."

YangFeng said, "Chu Kuang is starting a new book."

Everyone was taken aback, then they all laughed.

"That's a good thing."

"Chu Kuang is starting a new book, why do you look so gloomy?"

"Exactly, Chu Kuang is willing to write a novel again, you should be happy!"

"I was worried that Chu Kuang might cooperate with other publishers. Now it seems that he is quite satisfied with our Silver Blue Books."

"Does the new book also write about tennis?"

"I feel like he would write about basketball or football."

The colleagues were quite interested in discussing this.

YangFeng looked at everyone and said, "Chu Kuang's new book is about

XianXia.”

The editorial department was silent instantly.

After a long time, someone asked tentatively, “Is it the XianXia I know about?”

YangFeng forced a smile, “Do you know ‘Immortal and Demon War’?”

Really?

A XianXia novel?

What year is this?

Everyone was really confused. The scene turned silent once again.

Ignoring everyone else.

YangFeng has already taken a seat at the desk.

No matter what, he has to review the manuscript, to see what on earth Chu

Kuang has written in this XianXia novel.

To be honest.

YangFeng almost gritted his teeth when he opened “Zhu Xian”. The first thing that caught his eye was the preface of the book.

“Heaven and Earth are not benevolent, and regard all things as straw dogs!”

This is the first sentence in the preface of “Zhu Xian”.

If YangFeng has read fewer books, he might think this sentence is amazing.

In the past, some people even thought this sentence was the original creation of “Zhu Xian”.

However, YangFeng has read the “Tao Te Ching”, he knew that this sentence came from that work.

Laozi was one of the most famous people during the Spring and Autumn Period. Therefore, there are two conjectures in the academic world about this sentence. The first conjecture is: Laozi wanted to express the idea of fairness between heaven and earth.

The second conjecture is: Heaven is not kind, and only treats all things as lifeless offerings.

No matter which conjecture is in line with Laozi’s thoughts, the fact that Chu Kuang could think of quoting this sentence as the beginning of the novel gives the impression that he seized the initiative.

It seems that Chu Kuang didn’t decide to write XianXia on a whim, but had done some homework in advance.

But why did he insist on writing XianXia?

YangFeng shook his head and continued to read.

Editors read books very quickly, and so did YangFeng.

The preface, Chapter One, Chapter Two, Chapter Three, YangFeng read them very quickly.

But when he read to Chapter Three, YangFeng suddenly stopped.

Like someone had pressed the pause button on him.

When the image resumed, as if rebooting, somehow, YangFeng opened the preface of “Zhu Xian” and started to read it again.

This time, his reading speed is incredibly slow, he is practically reading word by word.

This is the first time in YangFeng's editing career that he has read a book at such a turtle's pace—

As if, he was afraid of missing a word.

Chapter 113: won't allow you to speak about Teacher Chu Kuang like this

The off-work time at Silver Blue Books is at eleven in the morning, and work resumes at one in the afternoon, leaving a two-hour gap which is enough for everyone to have lunch or rest. However, very few people went home, and everyone would usually rest in the office at noon.

11:15 a.m.

The editors in the Youth Fantasy Department had just finished their meal in the company cafeteria, and as they returned to the office in small groups, they found YangFeng sitting still in front of his computer, seemingly out of sorts.

They all shook their heads.

Everyone sympathized with YangFeng.

It was really tough for YangFeng, who had finally found a bestselling author, Chu Kuang. However, "King of the Net" ended quickly in less than half a year of serialization. YangFeng then placed his hopes on Chu Kuang's new book, but Chu Kuang chose a theme that made no sense.

Not just YangFeng.

If this situation was faced by any other editor in the department, it would be unbearable. YangFeng was probably brainstorming how to persuade Chu Kuang to change the theme. Thus, everyone took turns in patting YangFeng on the shoulder:

"Go have a meal first."

“There’s still room for manoeuvre in this.”

“You can talk to Chu Kuang later, make him understand the situation in our circle, persuade him to continue writing a sports competition story. Even if he can’t match the success of “King of the Net” with his skills, it won’t be far off.”

“He sure can’t write fantasy.”

“The theme is too old-fashioned.”

After his shoulder was patted by his colleagues repeatedly, YangFeng seemed to have snapped back to reality. He suddenly stood up from his seat, his face rosing red, fervently shouting:

“You all don’t know shit!”

After an exchange of puzzled glances, everyone began to doubt whether YangFeng had become mentally disturbed due to the shock. Therefore, because they felt even more sympathy for him, they did not blame him for his outburst.

“Bro, take it easy.”

“This is not your fault.”

“It’s all Chu Kuang’s fault.”

“The sudden ending of “King of the Net,” shows that Chu Kuang is a very capricious writer, and the writing of such capricious writers is full of uncertainties. Don’t be too upset.”

Everyone thought that after their consolation, YangFeng would feel better. However, to everyone’s surprise, YangFeng seemed somewhat angry as he glared at them and said, “I won’t let you speak ill of Mr. Chu Kuang like that!”

Everyone: “...”

YangFeng was full of excitement, just like a dehydrated fish returning to the embrace of the lake, filled with life's passion, "You bunch of people obviously don't understand what fantasy is. Teacher Chu Kuang's talent is beyond your comprehension and imagination!"

YangFeng was really excited!

When talking about fantasy, people had to trace back to eight decades ago to "Immortal and Demon War." That was why many editors' first reaction when they heard that Chu Kuang wanted to write fantasy was that this theme was outdated.

YangFeng initially thought the same.

Until ten minutes ago, when he had finished reading the first volume of "Zhu Xian," he understood how much he had misunderstood. Chu Kuang's imagination had exceeded all the editors' expectations.

So this is how fantasy could be written!

Under the grand and novel worldview, the scenes of the Qingyun Sect's Bamboo Peak unfold gradually, like a mist-shrouded traditional Chinese painting.

Zhang Xiaofan and his mundane burning stick, his playmate and senior sister Tian Ling'er who is eccentric and quirky, the strange yet kind-hearted younger brothers, as well as the mysterious master. Nearly every character seems to have emerged from the paper.

The Blood Swallowing Pearl!

The Three-Eyed Spirit Monkey!

The battle of Buddha, Tao and Devil!

Qingyun's Seven-Sect Martial Arts Contest!

The development of each storyline made YangFeng's heart surge. The emergence of every setting made YangFeng exclaim with admiration, especially when he saw Zhang Xiaofan's frustration in

the early stages and the imminent convening of the Six-Sect Martial Arts Contest by the Qingyun Sect. The pacing of the story always fell at the most exciting spots.

YangFeng was utterly impressed.

He didn't pay attention to his colleagues who were consoling him. He didn't give any elaborate explanation about how brilliant this novel was either. Instead, he just sent the file of "Zhu Xian" to everyone's email, believing they would understand his feelings once they finished reading it.

Having finish these tasks.

YangFeng went downstairs to have lunch.

YangFeng was indeed acting odd today. His colleagues stood in place, dumbfounded for a while until they each returned to their seats. They then saw "Zhu Xian" from YangFeng quietly lying in their individual mailboxes.

"Chu Kuang's new book?"

"YangFeng sent it to us?"

"Let's see what Chu Kuang wrote."

After a pause, everyone mutually exchanged a few words before each of them, curious, opened the book. It was Chu Kuang's new novel, after all. Even if it was the baffling fantasy genre, they were still somewhat interested. Besides, YangFeng had purposely sent the document to everyone's email, obviously hoping that everyone could help take a look.

Everyone started reading.

Albert Einstein, from Earth, once gave an interesting interpretation of the theory of relativity: when a person is bored, they will feel that time passes very slowly, but when dating a beautiful girl, they will feel that time flies.

This is Blue Star.

The editors in the Fantasy Department didn't know who Einstein was, but to them, a good novel is like a beautiful girl. If they had to choose, they would even choose a novel over a girl. This shares the same logic as some otakus ignoring goddesses for games.

Continuing with the theory of relativity:

When reading a boring novel, editors feel that time passes slowly. But when they read an excellent novel, they feel that time passes incredibly fast. The two-hour lunch break seems to have passed in the blink of an eye.

Everyone even forgot about resting.

Resting is a daily routine in the Editorial Department. If they don't rest for a while, it can easily affect their work performance in the afternoon. But today, there weren't any such allowances in the Fantasy Editorial Department. As working hours in the afternoon began, everyone was still engrossively reading the first volume of "Zhu Xian".

Work?

Not important.

Everyone was totally drawn into "Zhu Xian," reading very seriously. The Editorial Department was unprecedentedly quiet, everyone hadn't even heard YangFeng's footsteps when he came back to start his work.

YangFeng smiled.

He fully understood his colleagues' feelings because he had experienced the same thing that morning. "Zhu Xian" must be published. Even if Chu Kuang decided to switch to writing a sports competition story now, YangFeng wouldn't be pleased. Let Chu Kuang write fantasy!

Write sports competitions?

At this moment, several company executives passed by. Seeing the editors in the Fantasy Department engrossed in their work, they nodded with satisfaction: “The Fantasy Department is highly enthusiastic about their work, making a great start as soon as the afternoon shift begins.”

“Good.”

“That’s how it should be.”

“Better than other departments.”

Normally, it takes time for these editors to get into the working state, because they tend to be drowsy from just completing their rest, and it would take them some time to shake off the sleepiness and return to work.

The executives left, satisfied.

What the executives didn’t know was that soon after they left, one of the editors suddenly yelled at his computer screen in frustration and anger:

“Damn it. It’s already over?”

Chapter 114: The Essence of Human Nature is a Repeater

Flipping page, flipping page, flipping page, flipping page...

This editor reads books faster than anyone else in the department. Now, he had reached an important chapter in the first volume of “Zhu Xian” where the Qingyun Sect’s Seven-Sect Martial Arts Contest is about to start. But his mouse was at risk of breaking, and the next chapter still hadn’t appeared, so he was anxious.

Did the first volume end here?

Chu Kuang is baiting me with an unfinished chapter!

However, just because this editor had finished reading, that didn't mean all the others were done too. Everyone else was engrossed in reading when they suddenly heard his rants and, irritated, stared at him threateningly:

“Shut up!”

“I'm only...”

“Don't you dare spoil it for us!”

Not daring to incite their wrath, the editor closed his mouth obediently.

However, his comments did serve as a reminder to the other editors who were still reading.

As they read, they were praying inwardly:

May the progress bar stay strong!

Everyone knows that the progress bar never holds up.

The editors read books considerably faster than regular readers.

Even if they tried to read more carefully, the progress bar would ultimately perform its legendary disappearing act.

So when everyone had finished reading the pitiful first volume of “Zhu Xian”, the editorial department went into turmoil. The editors exclaimed:

“What the hell, it's over?”

“What the hell, it's over?”

“What the hell, it's over?”

It was as though they were not a group of editors but a collection of echo machines.

Perhaps the essence of humanity is to echo things.

The editor who finished reading first finally dared to speak: “Reading too fast is an occupational hazard for us editors.”

Everyone wholeheartedly agreed.

The most troublesome thing was not the speed of their reading but the abrupt end of the first volume of “Zhu Xian”, which left them very frustrated:

“Why is Chu Kuang’s work so short!”

“How unreal to leave us hanging like this!”

“I want to see Zhang Xiaofan make a move!”

“Being stuck in the middle like this is torture!”

“Why did it suddenly finish when it was getting good!

II II

In fact, Chu Kuang’s work wasn’t short at all.

A 200,000-word update was quite substantial.

Most novels were published in volumes. Some novels were brave enough to be published as one volume after just over 100,000 words. A 200,000-word volume was undoubtedly conscientious in the industry.

Ultimately, everyone's frustration stemmed from the unfinished chapter. The Qingyun Sect's Seven-Sect Martial Arts Contest was clearly a significant climax. Who would want to stop right before the climax?

"So what do you think?"

YangFeng spoke with a relaxed smile on his face.

Earlier, YangFeng had been more excited than anyone, but seeing everyone else's reactions, he suddenly felt a sense of superiority.

"Awesome!"

"Cool!"

"Mind-blowing!"

The editors had an awfully limited vocabulary of descriptive words. They were editors for crying out loud, and all they could come up with was "What the hell?".

Two minutes later.

Reason gradually returned to the editors: "This book has completely redefined the genre of immortal fantasy. Chu Kuang has started a new trend!"

"So this is how you can write an immortal fantasy novel."

"In 'Zhu Xian', I even detected a hint of martial arts, but its themes are obviously more sophisticated than that. Chu Kuang's work might lead the market trend again."

Martial arts novels once enjoyed great popularity.

Most of the old men in the Fantasy Department, over ninety percent, have fantasized about venturing in the martial arts world, so they had a soft spot for the genre.

Unfortunately, the era of martial arts novels had ended.

just like with the Celestial Dynasty on Earth.

Martial arts books were once the pillar of the book market.

The popularity of the genre was even more exaggerated than the most popular genre today, otherworldly adventures.

But now, no one can stomach martial arts novels anymore. The level of excitement they offer is far from sufficient for today's readers!

This is the trend of the times.

You can't go against the flow. Even if Elder Jin traveled to the future, he wouldn't be able to change this inevitable conclusion.

But after reading "Zhu Xian" today, everyone felt the long-lost sensation of martial arts. Yet, this novel was not just a martial arts story; it elevated martial arts to a whole new level with its immortal fantasy elements.

"No wonder he didn't want to continue writing about sports competitions."

"So immortal fantasy is the true romance of men!"

"Chu Kuang really knows his stuff. This book totally slapped my face." "Who could have imagined, Chu Kuang's immortal fantasy would look like this."

"Though it's still an immortal fantasy genre, its content and structure are completely different from 'Immortal and Demon War'. This is an entirely new way of composing an immortal fantasy story."

The past ‘Immortal and Demon War’ simply rehashed various mythological templates, creating a story of conflict between the righteous and the evil.

It was really a martial arts story in disguise.

The author merely raised the level of power in martial arts. But ‘Zhu Xian’, written by Chu Kuang, portrayed a vivid world of cultivation! When everyone was reading this book, they even felt a sense of realism, as if this world truly existed.

Even though it was mystical, the worldview was self-consistent. The pursuit of cultivating the Dao was intricately profound.

This world emphasized serendipity, the cycle of cause and effect, and the mystery of magical treasures.

Especially, the occasional mention of the “Zhu Xian Sword Formation” added a touch of expectation!

Although Chu Kuang didn’t delve deeper into how terrifying the Zhu Xian Sword Formation was, the two characters “Zhu Xian” alone were enough to make everyone look forward to it, feeling the vast grandeur!

Looking back.

The opening sentence “Heaven and Earth are unkind, treating all creatures as straw dogs” is not simple. It feels like this saying by the sage Lao Tzu was tailor-made for this story, and the more you think about it, the more burning it makes you feel.

At this point.

Chief Editor 01’ Xiong entered. Seeing the editors whispering excitedly, he roared: “Stop goofing around and get back to work!”

Boonie Bears have appeared!

All the editors, shocked, abruptly closed their mouths and put on their serious working faces.

As the Chief Editor of the Fantasy Department, 01' Xiong had quite an imposing manner.

Last time when Yu Rong from "Fun Reads" arranged for Chu Kuang's submission without his permission, 01' Xiong made a big fuss at the magazine department. Many people still remembered it vividly.

"This is what happened."

At this moment, only YangFeng dared to speak: "Chu Kuang sent me his new book. I reckon we can start promoting it earlier, and directly publish it next month."

"Chu Kuang's new book?"

01' Xiong's face softened: "Is it still about tennis, or another sport?" YangFeng replied, "He wrote about immortal fantasy this time." 01' Xiong's face stiffened for a moment: "You're joking, right? YangFeng wasn't surprised by 01' Xiong's reaction and quickly replied, "You should read it first. I've sent the draft to your mailbox."

"Hmm..."

01' Xiong looked puzzled as he walked toward his office. Just before he closed the door, he couldn't help but turn back and question YangFeng once more: "Are you sure you're not teasing me?"

"Please read it first."

YangFeng said, smiling.

The others remained silent, sporting unusual expressions, observing 01' Xiong, and secretly looked forward to Old Xiong's reaction after reading "Zhu Xian".

The answer was revealed.

just as the workday was coming to an end, 01' Xiong suddenly burst out of his office, sprinting like a man possessed and ignoring everyone. His heavy footsteps echoed through the room!

Bang!

Without uttering a single word, he disappeared out of sight in the blink of an eye, leaving only the violently swaying door making creaking noises.

“That’s the fastest I’ve ever seen 01' Xiong run.”

The editors were fascinated, sharing secret glances. This was truly a Boonie Bear in the wild.

Chapter 115: Sincerity is Priceless

Silver Blue Books.

An office somewhere.

Editor-in-chief Lu Bei was getting ready to head for a meeting when he saw 01' Xiong huffing and puffing like a heavy tank, running towards him.

“What happened?”

Lu Bei quickly stepped aside.

01' Xiong leaned against the door, panting heavily. It was a while before he could speak, “I’ve just sent you the new book by Chu Kuang. You must read it!” “Chu Kuang’s new book?”

A notion struck Lu Bei, and he nodded. Seeing 01' Xiong panting heavily again, he didn’t say anything more and directly proceeded to the meeting room.

It was an internal meeting.

A leader was pontificating about a certain proposal while Lu Bei surreptitiously took out his phone and opened the newly released book by Chu Kuang that 01' Xiong had mentioned.

Lu Bei is a big fan of Chu Kuang.

The short novel “The Gift of the Magi” written by him last time deeply moved Lu Bei. He even took time off during the New Year to go home and spend the holiday with his family. Since then, he had been following Chu Kuang’s work enthusiastically.

“Zhu Xian?”

‘The title of this novel is quite domineering,’ Lu Bei thought to himself. He began to sneakily read the book in the meeting, which tended to be long and tedious, typically lasting more than a few hours.

Just don’t get caught.

It wasn’t the first time Lu Bei was slacking off during a meeting, and he had never gotten caught before. He didn’t just bury his head into the novel, he would occasionally pretend to listen attentively to the meeting reports, nodding his head occasionally, and even solemnly tap on his laptop as if he was taking notes for the meeting- –

In reality, all he typed was gibberish.

The kind that even programmers wouldn’t understand.

But Lu Bei was less cautious this time. He hadn’t expected “Zhu Xian” to be so mesmerizing that he was completely enthralled within just ten minutes. He totally forgot to pretend to be taking meeting notes and even missed when someone called his name:

“Editor-in-chief?”

“Editor-in-chief?”

Finally, the leader who had been expounding on his views banged the table in anger. His voice was full of fury, “Lu Bei!”

“Huh?”

Lu Bei was brought back to reality. He couldn't help but grin sheepishly and reluctantly put away his phone. Most of the higher-ups present at the meeting were his peers; if he wasn't so annoying, they wouldn't have referred to him by name.

The meeting continued.

Lu Bei was in agony.

He wanted to continue reading because all he could think of was the plot of “Zhu Xian”. He couldn't help but anticipate the next developments. He didn't pay any attention to the discussion during the meeting; all he wanted was for the meeting to end quickly so he could go back to his book.

“Meeting adjourned!”

Finally, the meeting ended.

Lu Bei quickly left the meeting room and was about to call 01' Xiong when he noticed that 01' Xiong was waiting for him by the door. He sounded quite anxious, “Should we increase Chu Kuang's contract?”

“What was it before?”

“Seven percent.”

“Raise It to ten percent.”

Lu Bei immediately responded. This was the rate given to many best-selling authors. Though Chu Kuang wasn't quite there yet, Lu Bei was convinced that this new book by Chu Kuang would no doubt be as popular as his previous work “King of the Net”. He was sure of this even though he'd read only a small portion.

“Got it.”

01' Xiong was not surprised.

After reading “Zhu Xian He’d never thought that

“, his first reaction was that this novel would take off. a fantasy novel could be this fascinating!

He was stunned!

That’s why he sprinted out of the meeting room earlier!

He had to personally liaise with the public relations, publishing, and other departments, and draw the editor-in-chief’s attention to just how good this novel was.

“Remember.”

Just as 01' Xiong was about to leave, Lu Bei spoke again, sounding a tad annoyed, “I asked you to get me an autograph from Chu Kuang last time. Why didn’t you do it?”

01' Xiong was taken aback.

He had completely forgotten about it, and he thought the editor-in-chief had as well. But the appearance of “Zhu Xian” reminded Lu Bei.

Lin Yuan had no idea of the impact “Zhu Xian” was causing at the editorial department. However, he received a call from YangFeng that evening after school.

“Teacher Chu Kuang!”

YangFeng could clearly detect a diminishing assertiveness in his voice when speaking with Chu Kuang, “Your new book is simply amazing! The company is considering publishing the first volume of “Zhu Xian” next month. What are your thoughts on this?”

It wasn’t like this before.

In the past, YangFeng might have said something like this, “Chu Kuang, congrats! Your novel has passed our editorial department’s review. We have arranged for the publication of your novel next month.”

The message is the same.

But with a different attitude.

Lin Yuan, however, was completely oblivious to the subtle shift in YangFeng’s tone.

As always, he was succinct, “You can publish it. When are we signing the contract?”

“Well!”

YangFeng laughed and said, “The company has decided to raise your novel’s royalty to ten percent, which is a high rate in the industry. Please let us know if there are other things you need...”

“That’s great!”

Lin Yuan subconsciously raised his tone.

YangFeng was somewhat surprised. Didn’t Chu Kuang not care about money? Why was he so excited at the news of a higher royalty?

Right.

Money can represent many things.

Perhaps what Teacher Chu Kuang cared about was not the small increase in the royalty, but the company’s recognition of his writing skills and the sincerity expressed through the money!

Yes, royalties have a price.

Sincerity is priceless.

He must have faced some psychological pressure writing in a genre like fantasy this time, so he probably needed validation now more than ever.

Thinking about this,

YangFeng laughed and said, “As long as you’re satisfied. Also, I need to inform you that the company will soon start the presale promotion for “Zhu Xian”.” “Mm.”

“Is that all?”

“Yeah, that will be all.”

After hanging up the phone, Lin Yuan was in a good mood.

Silver Blue Books always took the initiative to raise prices, which pleased Lin Yuan.

It seems like the decision to continue cooperating with Silver Blue Books was the right one.

Will they continue to raise prices in the future?

He should ask his sister about it later.

His sister, Lin Xuan, is a publishing guru; she should know more about this.

Speaking of this, Lin Yuan had considered taking “Zhu Xian” to his sister’s publishing company,

But after investigating, Lin Yuan found that his sister’s publishing house was not large enough and would definitely not make as much money as Silver Blue Books. Therefore, he decided against it.

Compared to boosting sales for his sister, making money was more important.

As for his sister, he could simply share some of his earnings with her. She was working hard to earn a higher salary, which Lin Yuan understood perfectly.

His sister must love money even more.

Is there anyone in the world who doesn't love money?

That very night when Lin Yuan and YangFeng finished their call,

News about the author Chu Kuang releasing a new book in July was finally posted on the official website of Silver Blue Books. This was a pre-heating mode for the new book's promotion.

When the news came out,

Chu Kuang's fans were thrilled!

#### Chapter 116: Redefining Fantasy

Although the previous "King of the Net" was only serialized for a few months and even finished in less than half a year, Chu Kuang had accumulated some fans during the serialization of this novel. These fans have been closely following Silver Blue Books, waiting for news on Chu Kuang's new book, so when they saw that Chu Kuang was about to release a new book, they were quite excited and anticipatory.

"Faster than I expected."

"King of the Net" ended not too long ago. Most other authors would rest for a few months after finishing a book, but Chu Kuang seems to have no plans for rest and hurriedly churned out a new book.

"I just love Chu Kuang's unpredictability!"

"Because of 'King of the Net,' I became a fan of athletic novels. After Chu Kuang's work ended, I looked for many similar novels. Quite a few people in the market were imitating him, but compared to Chu Kuang, other sports novels I read always seem to fall short."

“After all, Chu Kuang is the originator!”

“Chu Kuang’s new book is also an athletic genre, right?”

“Should we ask if Chu Kuang’s new book is still about yaoi?”

“Hahahaha, I feel like the decent Youth Academy Tennis Club has been ruined by you guys, always saying they’re yaoi, when it’s clearly a proper tennis sports novel (serious face).”

King of the Net” is a male-oriented novel that perfectly portrays the characters of the Youth Academy Tennis Club. With some interesting daily life scenes and a group of men sweating together every day, many readers jokingly called this novel a yaoi novel disguised as a sports novel.

Because of this characteristic.

The ostensibly male-oriented “King of the Net” surprisingly attracted quite a few female fans. These fans didn’t care about the competitions in the novel: they were only interested in the characters’ daily interactions, and their various yaoi fantasies could also bring them great joy.

In this world that values copyright.

If not for copyright disputes, “King of the Net” fan fictions would probably be everywhere by now. Never underestimate the creative power of yaoi fans. If they were allowed to run wild, they could probably sustain several fiction websites no regular guy would ever tap into.

But worth mentioning is.

Almost all fans think that Chu Kuang would continue to write sports competitive genres as he has pioneered the market for this genre. He wouldn’t abandon the big market he has opened after the hard work he put into “King of the Net,” right?

That’s naturally the logic.

Moreover, authors do care about maintaining a stable fan base. Chu Kuang's pen name is firmly tied to fantasy novels and sports novels. If he were to change his genre, fans might not buy it.

It's not only the fans who think this.

Publishing houses also think the same way, because now the sports genre is no longer unpopular. Although it's still a niche compared to mainstream genres, it could still support several best-sellers.

If he continues to write in this genre.

Even if Chu Kuang had the worst of luck, he could still manage a decent amount of sales. Given Chu Kuang's skill at writing sports novels, would he only aim for decent sales? The publishing houses in the industry wouldn't belittle Chu Kuang like that, choosing to view him in as positive a light as possible.

Perhaps it could be another "King of the Net"!

Everyone was even a bit panicked, especially some publishers who competed fiercely with Silver Blue Books, because Chu Kuang's speed in starting his new book was a bit too fast. Who would finish their old book and immediately start a new one without rest?

Is he some kind of alien?

If there were to be another very successful work, then the end of "King of the Net" would not be a loss for Silver Blue Books but a boon, because it would mean that Silver Blue Books had one more quality work!

Chu Kuang indeed is an alien, something everyone in the industry guessed correctly, but everyone made one wrong guess: Chu Kuang's new book did not continue with the sports genre, but switched to two topics that seemed unfamiliar to everyone at first glance:

Xianxia genre!

Silver Blue Books did not beat around the bush. They announced that Chu Kuang was going to release a new book that night, and the next day's website banner revealed the genre of Chu Kuang's

new book. They also launched a grand promotion through various channels, which made Chu Kuang's fans stunned for a few seconds.

"What the heck?"

"A Xianxia novel?"

"It's not a sports novel?"

"Why not keep writing sports? Chu Kuang is clearly gifted in that genre. Even if it's not tennis and switches to basketball or football, I'd still completely accept it!"

"Isn't the switch too drastic?"

"This is a leap from a hot-blooded sports field to 'Immortal and Demon War'. But the problem is I don't like reading fantasy novels. This ancient theme has long been outdated. What on earth is Chu Kuang thinking?"

II II

Indeed, no one writes fantasy novels, but the influence of 'Immortal and Demon War' is still significant. The novel even became a TV drama and is part of many people's childhood memories. Most people's concept of fantasy comes from this work from many years ago.

The fans are perplexed.

The industry is equally baffled. They have looked carefully at the banner advertisement from Silver Blue Books. It does say that Chu Kuang's new book is a fantasy-themed one, and even the slogan is quite arrogant, stating just two sentences:

"'Zhu Xian' on sale July 1st!"

"Watch Chu Kuang redefine fantasy!"

Several people in the industry are a bit apprehensive. It would be unfair to say they're not optimistic, Silver Blue Books is not stupid. If Chu Kuang's work was really garbage, the company wouldn't bother promoting Chu Kuang's new book; they would have rejected the manuscript.

But how good can Chu Kuang write?

How great can a fantasy novel be?

As for those called redefining fantasy, those in the know, understand that such statements are just for show. Every advertisement has to make bold claims. Even terrible movies claim to be epoch-making before their release.

"I understand."

Some industry insiders speculate: "Perhaps this novel called 'Zhu Xian' is decent. As you know, there are some novels that fall in the middle range, too good to reject outright but unlikely to be a huge hit. Plus, Chu Kuang being the author, Silver Blue Books definitely wouldn't want to offend him, give his proven abilities, so they simply gave him an opportunity?"

Bestselling authors have some say.

For non-bestselling authors, if editors reject their works, it's done. But for bestselling authors, even if the work is not especially good, editors will not easily reject it, especially if the bestselling author insists on publishing it. In order not to offend the author, the publisher will usually give it a chance.

What if it becomes a hit?

An editor's judgment is not always 100% accurate. There are indeed cases where manuscripts rejected by the first publisher are published by the second and become bestsellers. Isn't it the case that 'King of the Net' was not initially favored by the industry?

It seems like Chu Kuang enjoys such challenges.

He always writes challenging themes.

Most people in the industry accept this reasoning. But the chief editor of Prosperity Publishing House feels that things are not that simple, given that Silver Blue Books have made such a grand promotion. To appease Chu Kuang, they really did not need to go that far.

“Could there be a bombshell inside?”

It is not surprising that the chief editor of Prosperity Publishing House is suspicious. It is mainly because ‘King of the Net’ made him lose face once. People of his status learn lessons from their failures. Unlike some, who, despite previous failures, still use the old perspective to view things. He believes many others are also concerned.

“No!”

“There’s a problem!”

“Lu Bei is not stupid!”

“He’s hiding a bombshell!”

The more Prosperity’s chief editor thinks about it, the more he feels his opinion is valid. He paces back and forth in the room, but no matter how much he thinks, he can’t figure out how a novel with a fantasy theme could become a bombshell in the book market. So his eyelid keeps twitching.

This feeling makes him uneasy.

What on earth has Chu Kuang written this time?

Chapter 117: Top Hundred

The Chief Editor of Silver Blue Books was tormented, a torment accompanied him throughout the whole month of June. He hoped desperately it was a matter of paranoia, for if his worries came to pass, the torture would be even worse – As for Lin Yuan, his life remained the same.

He even started writing the second volume of “Zhu Xian”. Open-ended commitments weren’t a good habit; they would affect Lin Yuan’s income. At least in terms of money-making, Lin Yuan was still very diligent.

However, one can't be making money forever.

For instance, Tribe Literature recently contacted Lin Yuan and intended to commission another short story from him, but Lin Yuan declined. He only had two short stories left, which he wanted to save because the price for this new short story wasn't going to be a loss for him.

His reason for the refusal was:

Lack of inspiration for a short story lately.

He used the same excuse to decline Silver Blue's magazine department's request; the only thing that kept him on the fence was that both sides were offering a similar price. He didn't know which platform to choose to maximize the benefits.

Both fell for Lin Yuan's tall tale.

In the eyes of a normal person, it would seem strange if a writer were to constantly have new inspirations, especially since the short stories Chu Kuang releases are always so classic. A classic work signifies the difficulty of creation, who could effortlessly produce such masterpieces?

Classic novels are not as common as cabbages.

This was another reason why Lin Yuan turned down the two short stories. There are limits to genius; if Lin Yuan started releasing dozens of classic songs customized by the system, the public would likely be scared rather than surprised.

So, Lin Yuan was not in a hurry.

He indeed lacked prestige value.

But panicking wouldn't help either.

On the other hand, Xia Fan was still busy with her competition. The June tournament of "Bloom" had a tight schedule. She had taken quite a few days off, but the vocal music department wasn't

giving her a hard time. While the school didn't endorse students stepping into the entertainment industry at such an early age, it didn't outright stop students either.

On one day in mid-June,

Lin Yuan and Jian Yi accompanied Xia Fan to the "Bloom" competition again. This was the second time after the auditions that the two accompanied her to a competition, mainly because the competition held significant weight, determining whether Xia Fan would make it into the national top too.

Xia Fan was slightly traumatized.

She had competed twice before but didn't make it into the top too; she was always just a sliver short of winning. Lin Yuan and Jian Yi tried to boost her confidence, hoping that she could break her own limits today. Only by making it into the top too could she have the chance to appear in front of the audience in Qin Continent.

Just like the auditions,

The atmosphere at the location was bustling.

The competition for the top too spots was underway simultaneously in various major cities. While there were a hundred spots, only five from Su City would be selected. Each city had to contribute a certain number of competitors, so the competition that Xia Fan faced was quite stiff.

"I'll go to the... backstage for a moment."

Xia Fan scurried off as soon as Lin Yuan and Jian Yi arrived at the venue. The two finally caught on this time — Xia Fan definitely went to the restroom!

This was a signature behavior of Xia Fan's.

Whenever she was nervous, she felt the need to use the restroom. If she was extremely nervous, she would need to defecate. If she was moderately nervous, urinating would suffice. And if it was mild nervousness, she would just squat in the restroom for a bit. It wasn't that Xia Fan had shared this

with them — as a girl, she would have been too embarrassed. They merely concluded this through observation and did not dare to mention it in front of her.

What if they got murdered?

This time, it should be a small one, right?

That would indicate she was only moderately nervous.

A moderate amount of nervousness could be beneficial for the competition. Although Xia Fan performed late into the event, when it was her turn to go on stage, Lin Yuan and Jian Yi could tell that her state was acceptable — at least she was not clamping her legs together in a way that suggested she needed to use the restroom.

“Wait for me, whether for my chilling beauty or for me...”

The song Xia Fan chose for the competition for the top too was “Easy to Ignite and Explode”. Lin Yuan himself chose this song for her. It suited Xia Fan’s voice pretty well as she inherently possessed a bold and uninhibited personality akin to a man’s. She rushed into a basketball game brawl even faster than Lin Yuan. If she wasn’t so buoyant, she wouldn’t get along so well with two guys.

She sang the song with ease.

As the song ended, the audience broke into enthusiastic applause. After a brief discussion, the four judges awarded Xia Fan a spot in the top too from Qin Continent. The applause became even louder.

“She’s becoming a star.”

Jian Yi suddenly remarked, somewhat pensively.

As a performing arts student, Jian Yi’s dream also resided in this entertainment industry. Seeing Xia Fan getting better and better, he felt the urge to make strides too. However, it generally takes longer to gain fame in acting than in singing.

Lin Yuan nodded.

As one of the contestants in the top too of Qin Continent, Xia Fan was likely to be covered by the local Su City media since she was likely to appear on television in the near future, bringing glory for Su City.

“Lin Yuan.”

Jian Yi turned to Lin Yuan, his expression somewhat serious: “In the end, how far Xia Fan goes depends on herself. She can’t rely on you forever. You just need to support her when necessary.”

“I’ll try my best.”

Lin Yuan replied.

Jian Yi wanted to say more, but after considering for a moment, he decided against it. He secretly hoped that Lin Yuan could always help Xia Fan. However, he didn’t want Lin Yuan to sacrifice his own career for that. He stammered: “I actually...”

“I know.”

“What do you know?”

“Whatever it is, I know.”

Lin Yuan smiled naturally.

Jian Yi rolled his eyes: “I actually think that neither you nor Xia Fan has a personality that suits the entertainment industry. You can navigate your way because you’re behind the scenes, but Xia Fan may have to step into the spotlight in the future. That’s my only concern.”

“I understand your concern.”

“Aren’t you worried?”

Lin Yuan didn’t say anything. By now, Xia Fan had finished her performance and several reporters quickly started interviewing her. Lin Yuan and Jian Yi didn’t approach her until the interviews were over. They then celebrated with Xia Fan. Jian Yi asked her with a smile, “How does it feel to advance into the top too?”

“I need to use the restroom.”

Xia Fan darted off again and was nowhere to be seen.

All Lin Yuan and Jian Yi could do was give each other a look.

For a while after this, Xia Fan had no competition, but she practiced even harder every day. She had to go through the top 100, then 80, then 50, and so on in the competition. Although the schedule wasn’t as tight, the competition was intensifying.

The composition department was also tense.

Given that the remaining time in June was rapidly diminishing, there wasn’t much time left to prepare for the annual assessment. Since this year’s annual assessment was of unprecedented significance, everyone was giving it their all and didn’t dare to relax for a moment.

Lin Yuan decided to submit his works along with everyone else.

After all, “Initial Dream” had already been recorded. He didn’t need to refine his works further. According to the teacher’s instructions, as long as he handed in his works before the deadline at the end of the month, the school would arrange for professionals to review them in July.

However, Silver Blue Books made some moves.

“YangFeng” sent a message to Lin Yuan, informing him that the initial print run for the first volume of “Zhu Xian” would be one million copies. This number was ten times greater than the initial print run of Lin Yuan’s first work, raising Lin Yuan’s expectations for the sales of this novel!

## Chapter 118: Gone Mad

“What are you writing?”

“Let me have a listen.”

“Why won’t you let me hear it?”

“I’d rather not embarrass myself.”

Everyone seemed to be keeping their compositions for this year’s exam very close to their chest, vigilantly guarding their work as though it was something extraordinary. Very few were willing to share their songs prematurely. However, by the end of the month, everyone had handed in their compositions.

Lin Yuan also submitted his song.

It’s easy to understand the mentality of many students in the Music Composition Department. Anyone who chooses this major nurtures an inner “Maestro” dream. And perhaps Lin Yuan was the most knowledgeable about his classmates’ works, as he was involved in the arrangement production of seventy percent of his classmates.

Speaking objectively.

Lin Yuan thought that some of his classmates’ works were quite good. The music environment of Qin Continent could easily nurture promising composers —perhaps one or two industry leaders could emerge from his class in the future.

That being said.

Lin Yuan had a lot of confidence in “Initial Dream”. It was one of the most influential inspiring songs in the Celestial Dynasty, and its brilliance had been proven countless times. However, what some people might not know was that this song was not originally from the Celestial Dynasty. It was a cover of a popular track by Neon’s top diva, Nakajima Miyuki, performed by the Taiwanese singer Christine Fan.

The song was called “Riding on the Back of a Silver Dragon”.

No wonder there was a saying that Nakajima Miyuki was responsible for the livelihood of half the Chinese music scene. Many of the Taiwanese and Hong Kong songs that people loved when they were young turned out to be covers of Neon’s works when they grew up.

Also, at the end of this month.

The publishing department of Silver Blue Books was counting the number of pre-orders for the new book “Zhu Xian” from various booksellers. As the employees reported the numbers, the female department head Shi Yun’s expression did not look very good:

“NewCathay Bookstore: 80,000 copies.”

“Soaring Dragon Bookstore: 50,000 copies.”

“Universal Bookstore: 30,000 copies.”

“Yazhi Book Society: 20,000 copies.”

“Pinnacle Bookstore: 10,000 copies.”

“Time Bookstore: 10,000 copies.”

The counting continued, but Shi Yun’s face was getting worse and worse.

The company’s editorial department was completely confident in “Zhu Xian”.

The editor-in-chief had personally issued the order, so this book had an initial print run of one million copies, seeming quite certain of its potential success.

But the market apparently didn’t feel the same way.

Silver Blue Books had printed a full one million copies of “Zhu Xian”.

However, according to Shi Yun’s calculations, the total orders from the booksellers in the Qin Continent amounted to only about 280,000 copies.

A portion of these orders was made because of Chu Kuang’s performance on his last book.

“Is this too few?”

“We did extensive promotion this time, so logically, the order amount shouldn’t be this low,” one of Shi Yun’s subordinates frowned. “It seems that these booksellers and many other publishers in the industry are of the same thought, expecting ‘Zhu Xian’ to flop.”

Chu Kuang’s new book was a Fantasy-fairy-story.

When this news first came out, various discussions arose within the industry, with hardly anyone optimistic about this theme.

Many people thought that Chu Kuang’s new book would flop.

Silver Blue Books agreed to publish it, possibly because they could not resist Chu Kuang’s insistence.

Even if the book didn’t flop, the sales would certainly be far lower than Chu Kuang’s previous book, “King of the Net”.

Some people on the Internet even carried out a survey targeting the readers of “King of the Net”.

The survey presented them with three choices, asking if they would support Chu Kuang’s new fantasy-fairy-book.

The result was six to three to one.

Sixty percent chose not to support, thirty percent chose to support, and ten percent of the readers chose to wait and see.

This did not look promising for Chu Kuang's new book.

It seemed that most booksellers held the same view and were not very optimistic about Chu Kuang's new book, hence the extremely cautious order amounts.

This was a dangerous signal for Shi Yun!

With a print run of one million copies, only 280,000 copies were sold. Could it be that the remaining 720,000 copies would end up unsold?

She decided to talk to the editor-in-chief.

The editor-in-chief, Lu Bei, was surfing the web in his office. Seeing Shi Yun approaching, he smiled and asked, "How are the orders?"

"The total order amount is 280,000 copies." Shi Yun's expression was somewhat worried.

Lu Bei was taken aback: had they really only sold that many?

He laughed and said, "I can't blame the bookstores. If I were in their position, I too wouldn't dare to commit to large purchases. What if no one buys the books?"

Shi Yun:

Then why had you allowed so many prints?

And you're grinning ear to ear?

Lu Bei was oblivious to Shi Yun's grumbling, his smile still brilliant, "The top ten bookstores have all placed their orders with us, right?"

Shi Yun replied, "Tranquility Bookstore hasn't ordered yet."

Lu Bei nodded, "I'll handle Tranquility Bookstore's order."

After saying that, Lu Bei made a phone call.

Shi Yun did not speak, quietly waiting on the side.

The call went through quickly, and the first thing Lu Bei said was, "Pei Du, do you want to play bigger?"

"How big?"

Pei Du, the General Manager of Tranquility Bookstore, smirked and said, "You want to persuade me to order more 'Zhu Xian', right? I was just thinking of contacting you. How about 100,000 copies?"

"You have such little faith in Chu Kuang?"

"It's not that I lack confidence in Chu Kuang, it's that I lack confidence in the fantasy genre. Let's stop beating around the bush, tell me what Silver Blue Books is really up to."

Lu Bei put on a nonchalant demeanor, "What I'm selling is the ultimate tonic!"

Shi Yun rolled her eyes. She was only responsible for publishing and sales and didn't know much about novels.

Pei Du gave a bitter smile, "Tranquility Bookstore is the fifth largest chain bookstore in the country. You know I've been the general manager for only one year and my position is not very stable. There are so many eyes waiting for me to make a mistake. If you scam me too much, I might have to leave my position next year."

"If you want to secure your position as the General Manager of Tranquility Bookstore, believe me, order one million copies!"

Shi Yun really wanted to remind Lu Bei that their company didn't have that much stock.

But on second thought, the person in charge of Tranquility Bookstore was no fool, how could Lu Bei easily trick him.

As expected.

Pei Du burst into laughter. He and Lu Bei were good friends, so there was less restraint in their conversation, "Are you kidding? Bro, do you dare to print a million copies?"

"You don't have to worry about that.", Lu Bei said leisurely.

Pei Du gritted his teeth, "Then I'll go along with you, let's place an order for 500,000 copies."

He didn't believe that the other party would scam him.

If the other party dared to scam him, they would completely offend Tranquility Bookstore. Besides, they had a good relationship. The value of this relationship was much higher than several hundred thousand copies of the order.

"That's a bit less. Since you've mentioned 500,000 copies why not just make it 700,000 copies," Lu Bei's eyes twinkled.

Pei Du exclaimed, "Are you crazy or am I crazy?"

Lu Bei raised his voice, "Neither of us is crazy. If anyone is about to go crazy, it's those who are prudently watching. This time, I want to let the entire Qin Continent know that believe in Silver Blue Books and you will rule the world, believe in Chu Kuang and you will live forever!"

"Sounds like you're a cult leader.", Pei Du's tone was a little complex.

"Silver Blue Books has developed to its current status from a medium-sized publishing company. I, Lu Bei, may not claim great credit, but at least I have made significant contributions. What do you think I've based this on?"

Pei Du did not respond.

There was a silence on the phone for three full minutes.

Lu Bei was silent too, demonstrating his patience.

No one knew what kind of struggle Pei Du was going through in his heart.

After three minutes, he suddenly roared, “God damn it, I’ll trust you once, 700,000 copies!”

“Great. Get ready for your bonus and performance next year. Got to go.”

“Don’t say ‘got to go’. That’s unlucky. I need to face the upcoming storm.”

He hung up the phone.

Lu Bei said, “It’s done.”

Shi Yun, who had been listening to the whole call, was amazed!

A 700,000-copy order right off the bat and it was concluded just like that?

No wonder Lu Bei was the chief editor, his ability to charm people was frightening!

But...

The company did clear its inventory, but what if ‘Zhu Xian’ didn’t sell? In the future, won’t Tranquility Bookstore blacklist Silver Blue Books?

If things go wrong, Mr. Pei Du might be buried alive in the stock of ‘Zhu Xian’!

Chapter 119: Hurry Up and Replenish Stock

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The last night of June.

When seven hundred thousand copies of Zhu Xian were moved into Tranquility Bookstore's warehouses and onto the shelves, the company was in turmoil!

"Pei Du, have you gone mad?"

"You ordered seven hundred thousand copies of Zhu Xian?"

"Do you know how many copies the other bookstores in Qin Continent ordered?"

"At most, less than one hundred thousand!"

"Others avoid it like the plague, yet you treat it like a treasure?"

"You didn't take a cut from Silver Blue Books, did you?"

Pei Du took a series of phone calls from several executives, facing criticism, doubts, and worries. His response to each call was the same: "If there's a problem, I'll take responsibility."

Was he regretting it?

A bit, yes.

The executives' reaction was fiercer than Pei Du had imagined. Even his subordinates looked worried, thinking that Pei Du had been swindled by Silver Blue Books.

"The General Manager is in trouble now."

"Silver Blue Books must not have been able to sell the books, so they sold them in bulk to us."

“Now all we can do is pray that the readers will buy a lot tomorrow.”

“With the seventy thousand inventory, sell however much we can.”

“The more leftovers, the greater the Manager’s responsibility.”

Pei Du gritted his teeth.

Regretting it now would be useless.

He gritted his teeth again, issuing three commands in a row.

The first command, the headline on the company’s official website tomorrow must be Zhu Xian.

The second command, starting tonight, replace all the promo banners at all Tranquility Bookstores’ branches with Zhu Xian.

The third command, Zhu Xian should be the only book on the front shelves in all Tranquility Bookstores. All other books should be relegated to the secondary shelves!

Pei Du wants every person stepping into Tranquility Bookstore to see Zhu Xian first!

“Understood.”

His subordinates could only execute the commands.

The General Manager has lost his mind.

Given how much noise Tranquility Bookstore was making, the industry insiders who kept abreast of the news took notice. Their reaction to the shocking news was unanimous:

Pei Du has gone mad!

No one knew what hallucinogenic potion Silver Blue Books had given Pei Du. By taking such a risk, Pei Du was seemingly gambling with his position as General Manager.

“Way too reckless.”

“Is Pei Du a fan of Chu Kuang?”

“Other than Chu Kuang’s fans, I can’t think of anyone else who would have such high confidence in Zhu Xian.”

“He might be dismissed soon.”

“Everybody’s playing it safe, only he’s going all out.”

Just as there is competition between publishing houses, there’s also competition among the major bookstores in Qin Continent. Now that Tranquility Bookstore was making such a bold move, many people were laughing.

If the books don’t sell, of course, Tranquility Bookstore can handle it.

Even if all seven hundred thousand copies remain unsold, it’s not an issue. As one of the nationally ranked chain bookstores, Tranquility Bookstore certainly has the capacity to absorb that.

Nonetheless, it would be quite a significant loss.

If Zhu Xian flops, Tranquility Bookstore’s reputation will suffer as a result.

This was the scene that people were most happy to see.

Everybody was waiting for the next day!

That night, countless people were eagerly waiting for the dawn.

As for Pei Du, he couldn't fall asleep that whole night, constantly feeling anxious. He ended up staying awake until the break of dawn.

"I feel terrible."

The older generation's ability to pull all-nighters is typically poor. Pei Du, who was forty this year, felt an overwhelming headache after staying awake the whole night.

He felt a bit better after drinking a cup of water.

Should he try to sleep some more?

Pei Du shook his head, deciding to drop by the bookstore as he was feeling too restless.

Tranquility Bookstore, ranked fifth in Qin Continent, had several branches in Su City alone. Pei Du arrived at the largest one.

This branch had three floors.

After arriving, he ordered the store to be opened, and he went in for inspection.

The individuals below did indeed leave all the banners for "Zhu Xian," as he had requested.

The front row of bookshelves, generally reserved for the bookstore's highly recommended books, was currently displaying "Zhu Xian".

In the entire Su City-

No, it should be said that in the entire Qin Continent, only the Tranquility bookstore gave such high treatment to "Zhu Xian".

"Manager, we haven't started business yet."

One of the bookstore's employees carefully reminded him, clearly aware of what Pei Du would face today.

"It's okay."

Pei Du gave a wave of his hand, found a corner to sit down, and began to rest his eyes.

The people below didn't dare to say much, each of them prepared to face their day's work.

An hour later.

The bookstore officially opened.

A bustling sound aroused, jolting awake the nearly asleep Pei Du. Rubbing his eyes, he saw quite a few customers had already entered.

Hmm?

Many customers exhibited surprise upon entry.

Because within the entire Tranquility Bookstore, from the banners to the walls right down to the bookshelves, it was all "Zhu Xian". It was hard not to notice.

Very few books get to enjoy such a pervasive promotional strategy.

Thus, in their curiosity, many customers picked up "Zhu Xian" to read.

Pei Du's drowsiness suddenly disappeared; his reddened eyes fixated on each customer picking up "Zhu Xian". Only two words filled his mind:

Buy it!

Buy it!

Buy it!

Pei Du was even thinking of walking up and promoting it himself, but this wasn't a clothing store, his sudden approach would only scare customers —

Indeed, he frightened a customer.

One of the customers who had picked up “Zhu Xian” for reading suddenly noticed a man in the corner staring at him with bloodshot eyes, nearly throwing the book in his hand.

“I apologize.”

Pei Du coughed once, continuously waving his hand to express his apologies, then averted his gaze. However, the corner of his eyes was still on these customers, the little person in his mind constantly screaming:

Buy it!

Buy it!

Buy it!

Somewhat supernaturally, after the little person in Pei Du's mind had roared for a while, the first customer who picked up “Zhu Xian” really went to the counter to pay.

Following that...

More and more customers began reading “Zhu Xian”. The grandiose recommendation by the bookstore was indeed quite effective for the customers.

The second one...

The third one...

The fourth one...

The fifth one...

More and more customers purchased “Zhu Xian” at the counter. Even the salespeople at the front desk looked at each other in bewilderment:

Looks like it’s selling well?

Is this due to the promotion?

An answer to this question was found half an hour later, as two-thirds of the copies of “Zhu Xian” on the shelves had been sold. The top shelves were already empty. The sales were happening at an alarmingly fast pace!

“Is it really that popular?”

The girls at the front desk had already widened their eyes. Their experience as front desk workers told them that this couldn’t be solely attributed to the promotional effects!

Quality determines the sales volumes of a book!

Promotion merely adds icing to the cake!

Sometime later, a customer appeared at the counter, looking quite pleased, held up a copy of “Zhu Xian” and said:

“Check out.”

“Is the book good?” One of the girls at the counter couldn’t help but ask a question. Upon asking, she realized that it seemed inappropriate given her position.

“Hehe.”

The customer paused, then laughed, “Is that a question?”

“Of course, it’s a declarative sentence.”

Pei Du appeared at the counter at some point.

He gave the customer a small smile, then turned his head and roared in a nasal voice:

“What are you standing around for, don’t you see we need to restock!”

The girls at the cash register were startled before they noticed that the shelves which used to be full of “Zhu Xian” were almost empty.

Chapter 120: You’ve Been Removed from Group Chat

This is just the beginning.

Within two hours after the bookstore front shelves were refilled with books, Zhu Xian sold out again!

“Restock!”

Pei Du practically bellowed!

The bookstore employees were dumbstruck.

No one expected Zhu Xian, a novel predicted to fail in the market, to sell out entirely on its release day!

“It hasn’t been three hours, has it?”

The employee in charge of restocking looked puzzled.

Restocking twice in less than three hours was a treatment only the most popular books could enjoy. Didn't a lot of people say that Zhu Xian would not sell?

Do you call this a failure?

Then show me what success looks like?

The moment the shelves were filled with copies of Zhu Xian again, a figure shot in through the door, practically sprinting towards Pei Du, with an urgent tone, "Why aren't you answering your phone, sir?"

This was Pei Du's secretary.

All Pei Du's focus was on the book Zhu Xian, he had no mind to check whether his phone was ringing or not: "Didn't notice it, what's the matter?"

"We have a hit!"

The assistant excitedly stated, "Zhu Xian is a complete success. All other branches in Su City are selling like hotcakes. Thank God you ordered seven hundred thousand copies in advance, otherwise, our branches would have run out of stock!"

"Other branches too...."

Pei Du's voice quivered slightly. He had roughly guessed the situation at the other branches based on what was happening here, but when he heard the assistant's report, he still couldn't help but feel thrilled.

He had won this gamble!

His assistant noticed the emphasis on the word "too" in Pei Du's words, turned his head slightly, and noticed several customers at the checkout counter holding Zhu Xian in their hands.

Even the other branches are selling fast!

This is hotter than King of the Net!

He suddenly shivered with excitement and gave Pei Du a thumbs-up, lavishly praising him, “Sir, you are indeed insightful. You saw through everything. Nobody understands Zhu Xian better than you!”

“That’s not what you said yesterday.”

The secretary paused, then laughed bitterly, “That’s why I’m just a small secretary, and you’re the General Manager of Tranquility Bookstore. Our whole company owes you an apology. We were blind and did not appreciate your foresight and grand vision!”

Pei Du subconsciously puffed out his chest.

He felt like he had just had refreshing watermelon on a hot summer day, his body filled with a sense of satisfaction and pleasure. The fatigue from staying up late seemed to disappear, and he felt he could have a good night’s sleep tonight.

Company losses?

700 thousand in inventory?

Going to bury myself?

Sorry, but these 700 thousand copies of Zhu Xian are my ladder to the clouds. No one will be able to threaten my position as General Manager next year. If my year-end bonus isn’t doubled, don’t blame me for throwing a fit!

Thinking of this.

Pei Du suddenly remembered Lu Bei’s classic line during their previous phone call, “Those who trust Silver Blue Books will rule the world, and those who trust Chu Kuang will gain eternal life!”

That's a good line.

And now it's mine.

He gave his assistant a light pat on the shoulder and calmly said, "Those who trust Chu Kuang will rule the world, and those who trust Pei Du, me, will gain eternal life!"

"Amazing, truly amazing!"

The secretary was instantly awestruck.

Pei Du didn't bother with his assistant's flattering remarks. He was suddenly curious, wondering what the other book dealers in Qin Continent must be feeling. It seemed they only stocked a little bit, was that enough?

The beginning of the month is the busiest time for bookstores, so all major bookstores pay great attention to it. The big book dealers are even more eager, ready to make a great success!

But soon, they found....

Something was wrong.

Very wrong.

It seemed that over fifty percent of the customers, after scanning the new books of the month, chose Zhu Xian without discussing this with others. "Why?"

Upon discovering this phenomenon, the big book traders were somewhat bewildered.

Wasn't it said that Zhu Xian, being a Wuxia novel, wouldn't sell well? Wasn't it said that Chu Kuang's new book is doomed to fail?

And a book that sells this well is considered dead on arrival?

Of course, it's a good thing that regardless of the book content, as long as it sells well, because the goal of business is to make money, and for book merchants, it makes no difference which book the customers buy.

But the problem is...

There's not much of Zhu Xian left in the warehouses!

The customers still have money in their pockets, but there are no books left to buy, what should we do?

Noises everywhere!

No one knew where it started, or perhaps it started everywhere at the same time; in any case, all the major bookstores were in uproar!

"Why is this book selling so fast."

"Our Zhu Xian books have sold out!"

"We've restocked three times and sold out every time!"

"Boss, we're out of Zhu Xian!"

"Why did we only get ten thousand copies of Zhu Xian!"

"We've sold forty thousand out of fifty thousand, it's only morning, what about the afternoon?"

"Damn it, who can tell me why this thing is selling so fast!"

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When all the major bookstores have run out of Zhu Xian, all the book dealers outside Tranquility Bookstore were dumbfounded.

You can't make bricks without straw!

For these book merchants, the cruelest thing in the world is stocking up too many books that don't sell.

But an even crueler thing is what's happening before their eyes right now.

Customers still have money in their pockets, but there are no books left to sell!

"It's okay, the other stores are also running out of stock."

Some leaders tried to reassure the people in charge of the branches in this manner.

They usually take comfort in this, as it's inevitable for book merchants to misjudge the sales of a book sometimes. What matters next is which merchant can restock faster.

About this.

A manager of a branch bookstore had to remind his superior, "The Tranquility Bookstore next door ordered a whole seven hundred thousand copies of Zhu Xian. We really have no stock left, but they are still abundant."

The leader: "..."

This was reminding the decision-makers of the major book traders that the problem was not that Zhu Xian was selling fast, but that we initially ordered too few!

But mate, do I need you to remind me?

Who the hell doesn't know that Tranquility Bookstore ordered seven hundred thousand copies of Zhu Xian as if they were crazy?

We just mocked their manager last night!

At this moment, the Qin Continent's book industry is in a state of deep despair!

A big book dealer sputtered angrily, "Who was the first to say that Zhu Xian would flop because it's a Wuxia genre? Stand up and I promise I won't kill him!"

"I only purchased fifty thousand copies!"

"I only purchased thirty thousand."

"Should I just hit my head to death with a block of tofu because I only purchased ten thousand?"

"Um, I only purchased five thousand."

"Hahahahaha...you're so miserable...! must be getting old...why am I crying while laughing..."