

All R. Artist 341

Chapter 341: The Script that Makes One Fall

After doing some research on Quantum View, Lin Yuan skimmed through System's script for "Hachiko". Consequently, tears welled up in his eyes and slid down his cheeks, mixing with the mucus from his nose.

Lin Yuan was a man who was easily moved to tears!

Even the most cliched and emotional scenes from short videos could bring him to tears.

Of course,

If the emotional scene itself was bland enough, and the accompanying music lacked soul, then even the most heart-wrenching plot wouldn't move him—

His discernment for music could win over his vulnerability to sentimentality.

"Humph..."

Lin Yuan wiped his tears and snivel, then dove into scriptwriting.

Normally this type of work is straightforward; all he had to do was copy the tasks given by the System.

But today, Lin Yuan was struggling with it.

As he was writing, Lin Yuan felt an acid sensation in his nose and a warmth in his eyes, almost as if something was stuck in his throat.

"I feel like crying, but my tears won't come out,"

Lin Yuan couldn't help but think this as he completed the script for that night.

As tear-jerking as this script was, its filming difficulty paled in comparison to "The Life of Pi"!

If anything made it difficult to film, it would probably be the coordination required with a dog.

A movie needs cooperation between humans and animals, and while humans are controllable, animals are not.

But this wasn't a problem for Lin Yuan.

Because Lin Yuan had special props provided by the System.

One of the props was called "Emperor's Charm Potion". Normally, this prop was prepared for actors. It would generate an emperor-level performance based on the actor's appearance and style.

But as Lin Yuan read the instructions for this prop,

He discovered that dogs can use it as well, because dogs too play parts in movies.

This was a special note added by the system and Lin Yuan had noticed it before. He wasn't surprised by it since animals are often unavoidable elements in many movies.

Some movies feature cats; others have dogs.

Just like in the previous film "Sound Mixer", there were scenes involving a cat. However, since it only had few scenes, simple guidance was enough to shoot it.

Hence, Lin Yuan didn't use the Emperor's Charm Potion.

The dog in this movie, Hachiko, appeared in many scenes, so Lin Yuan was certain he would need the Emperor's Charm Potion, or else it would greatly delay progress.

The hardest part of this film was to coordinate the interaction between humans and the dog, right?

Once this problem was solved, filming “Hachiko” wouldn’t pose as a challenge.

Then, there came the second problem.

“Hachiko” required a male lead with exceptional acting skills, a literary aura, or a scholarly disposition.

Hachiko was a dog, and its owner was a professor at a university...

Being a professor at a university obviously required a certain scholastic aura, a look of decency and courtesy, and a face that gave others a good impression.

Lin Yuan wouldn’t just pick according to the original version.

Everyone has a different aesthetic taste.

Blue Star had its own aesthetic taste which leaned more towards traditional values, advocating qualities like gentleness and elegance. It would be hard for foreigners to comprehend.

Fortunately, Lin Yuan himself could solve this problem.

This time, Lin Yuan had an ideal candidate for the male lead in his mind. He was certain he had made the right choice without needing any suggestions.

His name was Zhang Xiuming, a male actor.

This man was Starlight’s film emperor, a true superstar.

Although Lin Yuan didn’t particularly enjoy working with big names because they demanded a high pay,

He wouldn't insist on using ordinary actors for roles only suitable for superstars.

Moreover, although the pay for big names would take up a portion of the budget, the company would share the cost with him.

This time, Lin Yuan planned to invest half the money with the company.

Why did Lin Yuan know Zhang Xiuming?...

Because the original owner of this body was a big fan of Zhang Xiuming.

Zhang Xiuming could play an emperor or a common laborer.

He could be a kind and gentle good guy, or a cunning and spiteful villain.

He had done a fantastic job portraying a different persona to each character in acting.

If Lin Yuan had to name someone Zhang Xiuming reminded him of, it would be a famous actor from the Celestial Dynasty.

Of course, this wasn't in terms of physical appearance but in acting skills and style. After all, Blue Star wouldn't have Earth actors.

...

Lin Yuan didn't contact Ol' Zhou because the budget for this script wouldn't be particularly high.

If they could reduce the pay for the lead roles, it could even be considered a low to medium budget film.

Therefore, Lin Yuan contacted Zhang Xiuming directly.

Being in the same company, it was easy for Lin Yuan, with his status, to get in touch with an artist within the company.

He just gave a few instructions to his assistant, Gu Dong, and soon the “Hachiko” script was in the hands of Zhang Xiuming.

“You’re saying, Teacher Admirable Fish wants to work with me...”

Zhang Xiuming looked up at his agent.

The agent laughed and said, “Yes, this script was just handed over to me by his assistant. They wanted you to be the main male lead. Of course we will have to reject since you have already accepted Mr. Long’s film, but we should at least read it first to avoid offending anyone.”

Unlike Liu Zhengwen,

Zhang Xiuming, being an accomplished actor, wasn’t short of script invitations. Therefore, he had plenty of options.

Moreover, Zhang Xiuming had just accepted an offer for a movie.

The screenwriter for that film was Long Yang, a representative figure of the screenwriter-centered employment system, who was extremely good at creating compelling scripts. He was a highly respected screenwriter in the industry.

Zhang Xiuming had previously worked with Long Yang, and naturally, he had chosen to star in Long Yang’s new film this time. Although both parties hadn’t officially signed a contract, they had roughly confirmed the situation.

“Let me take a look.”

Zhang Xiuming spoke softly.

If this had only been about Admirable Fish, who made “Flirting Scholar”, he wouldn’t have given it much thought and would have declined the offer.

It's not because he looked down on it, but because he knew that that style of performance did not suit him.

But he had recently watched "Sound Mixer".

This film indeed amazed Zhang Xiuming.

Therefore, when he found out that Admirable Fish wants him for his new script, Zhang Xiuming was quite happy.

After all, he genuinely loved "Sound Mixer", and being recognized by the screenwriter of this film was definitely a cause for celebration.

Under these circumstances, it was impossible for him not to carefully review this script called "Hachiko".

Even if he didn't accept it, there was no harm in just reading it right?

Just because he couldn't cooperate now, doesn't mean he can't in the future.

That was Zhang Xiuming's thoughts when he opened the script.

He had already made up his mind. He was going to participate in Mr. Long's film, because he really liked that script.

Yes.

Until Zhang Xiuming started to read through "Hachiko", he was steadfast about collaborating with Mr. Long.

Many things always start this way.

People tend to believe that their choices will never change.

Just like Zhang Xiuming at this moment.

But often times, when people believe nothing will change, unexpected surprises strike.

The surprise this time was called “truly fragrant”.

Half an hour later.

Zhang Xiuming’s agent witnessed such a surprise.

Or to be more accurate, it wasn’t a surprise but a real shock.

Zhang Xiuming’s agent was truly shocked!

He saw Zhang Xiuming slowly stand up, tears streaming down his face, seemingly at the brink of a breakdown, and resolutely state, “I want to act in Admirable Fish’s film.”

What about Mr. Long’s side?

Forget it.

The agent wisely closed his mouth.

He knew that when an actor is deeply moved by a script, that’s often a sign that they’re hopelessly drawn to it.

Chapter 342: Raising a Dog

Three days later, Zhang Xiuming officially agreed to take on the role in “Hachiko”.

With the main male role decided, Lin Yuan informed Ol’ Zhou that he was planning to film “Hachiko”.

“Another new script?”

Ol’ Zhou was shocked by the pace at which Lin Yuan was creating.

Lin Yuan had only recently penned “Life of Pi”.

While still in the preparation stages for that film, Lin Yuan had already put forth a new script.

He looked at the script.

The content of the script was quite short, just a story about a man and a dog.

With Ol’ Zhou’s lackluster textual comprehension skills, he found the script touching but not to the point of being brought to tears.

“It’s good, worth shooting.”

After thinking for a moment, Ol’ Zhou said, “We will prepare a budget for you.”

After all, Zhang Xiuming had agreed to the script.

As an actor of top-tier talent in Starlight, Zhang Xiuming’s accordant was of merit.

Such artists had already qualified for direct communication with the company.

If Zhang Xiuming wasn’t open to a role, it’d be hard for the company to persuade him to accept.

But Zhang Xiuming’s willingness to perform in “Hachiko” can only imply that he genuinely liked the script.

Ol’ Zhou, well-informed as ever, knew that renowned screenwriter Long Yang had also invited Zhang Xiuming to star in a film.

Under normal circumstances, that could have worked out. But with the emergence of “Hachiko”, it seemed Zhang Xiuming had changed his mind.

“Perhaps dog owners will especially love this kind of story.”

Ol’ Zhou smiled and commented, “I’ve never owned a dog, so I don’t quite understand that kind of sentiment. But Zhang Xiuming does have a dog, and the script is quite moving. Are we keeping the same crew as ‘The Sound Mixer’ for director and producers?”

“Yes.”

Lin Yuan answered.

This film wouldn’t be difficult to shoot, Yi Chenggong was capable enough.

Now that they had their leading man.

Next up was the leading dog.

In these times, there weren’t many dogs that could act in films.

If Lin Yuan asked the production team to find suitable dogs, they would surely go to professional pet training centers.

During official filming, the dog’s owner or trainer would be on hand to guide the animal.

These dogs were usually of expensive breeds, and those with gentle dispositions, which made them relatively easy to film.

But Lin Yuan had the Emperor’s Charm Potion and wasn’t concerned if the dog lacked acting skills, so he went by his own standards in searching for one.

The method to find a dog was simple – just look around at the various pet centers in Su City.

The original movie used an Akita.

Lin Yuan was flexible on the breed. He felt that any breed would do as the poignancy of the film had little to do with the dog's breed.

However, after several days of searching, Lin Yuan met many adorable dogs but he hadn't found one that truly resonated with him.

That feeling, Lin Yuan felt, was quite important. So he patiently continued his search for several more days and also asked people he knew if they knew of any cute dogs.

Upon hearing this, many people thought Lin Yuan wanted to have a dog.

Sun Yaohuo immediately put together a PowerPoint presentation for Lin Yuan of different dog breeds and pictures for him to choose from.

Whichever one Lin Yuan liked, Sun Yaohuo could get.

But Lin Yuan didn't end up choosing a dog from Sun Yaohuo's presentation.

After learning that Lin Yuan was looking for a dog, his younger sister, Lin Yao, mysteriously recommended a stray dog that lived in their villa's neighborhood...

"It's in the garden up ahead, I often see it. I named it Antarctica because I encountered it in winter, in the south of the neighborhood. It was very cold, so I went home to bring it a coat,"

Lin Yao explained while confidently leading Lin Yuan to the side of the garden,

Clearly, she often came to play with this dog.

Two minutes later, Lin Yuan saw the "Antarctica" Lin Yao had mentioned.

It was a dog that looked like a German Shepherd, its specific breed was unclear, but it was definitely a large dog.

It was walking on its front paws; both of its back legs were being dragged along, appearing to be paralyzed.

“Antarctica!”

Lin Yao’s face changed, “What happened to your leg?”

Antarctica whimpered, seeming to recognize Lin Yao.

Lin Yuan shook his head.

While the dog was nice-looking, its back legs were compromised, likely paralyzed, which would render it unable to participate in the film’s shooting.

“Have some dog food.”

Out of pity, Lin Yao stepped up and poured the dog food she brought onto the clean cement slab.

Then, to the amazement of both Lin Yuan and Lin Yao, an unexpected scene unfolded.

The dog’s hind leg was apparently quite fine. It sprang up to the dog food, eating eagerly as if it was starving.

“Was it pretending just now?”

Lin Yuan had never thought that this dog could be such a drama queen.

Lin Yao sulkily said, “Antarctica, how could you deceive me too!”

The young girl’s eyes were red just now.

Who would’ve thought this dog was pretending to limp?

Antarctica continued eating the dog food, waving its tail excitedly.

After eating, it lay on the ground, looking imploringly at Lin Yao.

With a sudden inspiration, Lin Yuan asked Antarctica, “Did you think pretending to limp would get you food?”

Antarctica whimpered twice.

Lin Yuan said, “Then go do a drama with me, I’ll treat you to egg yolk.”

Like it understood, Antarctica stood on its hind legs, then dropped its front paws and started circling around Lin Yuan.

“Bro, we should take Antarctica home!”

Lin Yao was itching to do so. She’d always had this impulse, but her sister didn’t like dogs, so she’d never dared to act.

As long as Lin Yuan was with her, she dared to.

“Sure thing.”

Lin Yuan found this dog rather clever.

Of course, it was mainly because his sister liked it.

When Lin Yuan and Lin Yao got home, the dog followed them, seeming a bit excited.

We need to give it a bath tonight.”

Seeing the dog all dirty, Lin Yao knew her sister wouldn't let the dog indoors, so it was best to leave it in the yard for now.

Lin Yuan agreed.

Lin Yao did give Antarctica a bath that night. The dog didn't resist and seemed to enjoy it.

When Lin Xuan, their older sister, got back from work, she was startled, "What are you guys doing?"

"Brother wants to keep a dog."

Lin Yao explained the situation, her voice clear and crisp.

At the time, she was giving the dog a bath, while Lin Yuan was watching by the side.

"Keeping a dog?"

Lin Xuan looked at Lin Yuan, then at Lin Yao, and grumbled, "Suit yourselves, just don't let it get close to me. I dislike dogs."

"Alright."

Lin Yao said, visibly having even more fun washing the dog.

Lin Xuan curiously asked, "Isn't Lin Yuan the one keeping the dog? Why are you washing it?"

Lin Yao replied, "I'm bored."

Lin Xuan: "..."

She didn't say anything more and went into the house.

Lin Yuan scolded, "Isn't it you who wants to keep the dog?"

Lin Yao reassured, "Between siblings, why should we sweat the small stuff."

Lin Yuan considered this, and thought it made sense, "Then, tonight you'll have to eat more vegetables."

At home during mealtimes, vegetables were rationed.

Both Lin Yuan and Lin Yao preferred meat over vegetables.

Unable to change their preferences, their mother forced them to eat a certain amount of vegetables every day.

"No way."

Lin Yao declared without hesitation.

Lin Yuan raised his voice, "Then we're not keeping the dog."

Lin Yao was not backing down, "Then we won't."

Suddenly, Antarctica barked twice.

Both of them understood.

Antarctica was saying, "I'll eat."

Chapter 343: Bringing the Dog to Work

On Antarctica's first night staying in the villa, he slept in Lin Yuan's room.

Before bedtime, Lin Yuan was watching TV, and Antarctica was watching alongside him, staring intently. It seemed as if there was a chance he might be able to understand it too.

This reaffirmed Lin Yuan's belief that Antarctica could indeed star in the movie "Hachiko".

The dog looked smart.

Even though the breed was not important, he couldn't possibly use a Teacup Poodle or Bichon Frise. Otherwise, the viewer's immersion in the film would be broken.

Larger dogs gave a better anthropomorphic feel.

Antarctica's physique was quite similar to that of the Akita in the original movie, and he also seemed rather honest and down-to-earth.

The next day, Lin Yuan asked Gu Dong to pick him up.

"Is this dog bought by Mr. Lin?" Gu Dong looked at Antarctica in surprise.

"I found him." Lin Yuan concisely replied, "Find a pet shop, check his health, and get him a rabies shot."

Even though Antarctica didn't look like a dog that would bite, vaccination was a standard procedure.

"Understood."

Soon, Gu Dong drove both Lin Yuan and the dog to a pet clinic.

The health check and vaccination were standard procedures.

"The dog has a bit of a skin disease. It might look severe but it's not difficult to treat."

The doctor said, "I'll prescribe some medicine for you. Give him a medicated bath once a week and he should be fine in about a month."

“Okay.”

Lin Yuan nodded. This might be the reason why Antarctica was abandoned by his previous owner.

After finishing, he brought the dog home and then took Gu Dong’s car back to the company, where he met with Shen Qing and Yi Chenggong.

Of course, they were discussing the preparations for “Hachiko”, a script they all were keen on.

The two had already collaborated with Lin Yuan twice, and their third collaboration became even smoother.

Shen Qing said, “Mr. Yi and I will start assembling the crew soon. But we must find the right dog for the movie...”

“Use my dog.”

Lin Yuan showed a photo he took of Antarctica in the morning to Shen Qing.

Shen Qing was surprised, “I didn’t expect Mr. Lin to own a dog. Its appearance is alright, but we don’t know if it will cooperate during the shoot.”

“I’ll handle that.”

Lin Yuan didn’t seem worried.

Yi Chenggong suggested, “We’d better let the dog build some rapport with Zhang Xiuming. After all, in the movie, Zhang Xiuming plays Hachiko’s owner.”

“Makes sense. Should we bring Antarctica over?”

Having known this earlier, Lin Yuan wouldn’t have sent the dog home. Now, he would have to trouble Gu Dong to make another trip to bring the dog to the company.

Shen Qing nodded, "Zhang Xiuming will be coming around. Mr. Lin, consider letting him take the dog home for a few days if possible."

Lin Yuan had no objections.

Half an hour later, Gu Dong brought the dog back and called Lin Yuan, "The dog is in the car, but it seems inconvenient to bring him into the company. Should he stay in the car?"

"Wait a minute," Lin Yuan replied.

He simply called Ol' Zhou to explain, "Can the dog come in? He can be kept in my office and Zhang Xiuming will take him home in the evening."

"..."

On the other end of the line, Ol' Zhou was silent for a while, then said, "I'll have to ask."

"Okay," Lin Yuan replied. "Waiting for you."

"You wait."

Ol' Zhou hurriedly got up and ran out of his office, finally stopping in front of the chairman's office to knock on the door.

"Come in."

An authoritative voice came from inside.

Ol' Zhou entered, laughing, "Chairman, it seems that Lin Yuan has brought a dog to the company downstairs. He asked me if he could bring the dog into the office. This doesn't seem to comply with company regulations..."

"A dog?"

The chairman felt a bit of a headache, but in the end, he reluctantly waved his hand, “Let him be.”

“Alright.”

Ol’ Zhou left chuckling.

He could understand the chairman’s headache, because he felt the same way. Lin Yuan had actually asked him if he could bring a dog into the company?

If anyone else had asked, Ol’ Zhou would have blown his top.

Is this a question that a normal person would ask?

But the other party was Lin Yuan, and for the greater good, Ol’ Zhou had to swallow his pride and went to ask the chairman’s opinion.

As it turned out, the chairman also had to “grit his teeth” and agree, very considerately.

Then, something happened at Starlight Entertainment that would go down in history:

For the first time since its establishment, someone had brought a dog to work.

Seeing this, some employees were on the verge of having their eyes pop out.

A dog?

Where did this dog come from?

Gu Dong, under everyone’s stares, felt his scalp prickle from surprise. He didn’t expect the representative to persuade the higher-ups, allowing him to bring the dog in.

The picture was too absurd!

As he was walking, suddenly, a man who looked like a leader blocked Gu Dong's way, angrily asking, "What on Earth? Who allowed you to bring a dog into the company?"

"Woof!"

Antarctica angrily barked back at the half-bald man.

The man jumped in fright, becoming even more dissatisfied, and glared at Gu Dong, "Which department are you from?"

"The Music Composing Department on the ninth floor."

Gu Dong replied nervously.

She recognized this man, a member of the company's management tier, who held the same position as Ol' Zhou. As Lin Yuan's assistant, she couldn't afford to offend him.

"Music Composing Department on the ninth floor?"

The man was taken aback, "This dog..."

Gu Dong hastily explained, "Mr. Lin asked me to bring him in. This is Mr. Lin's dog. He will be used in a movie."

"Come to think of it, this dog is quite cute."

The man laughed very naturally, as if the person who just lost his temper wasn't him, "Only Teacher Admirable Fish could bring a dog to the company. How amusing."

Everyone else: "..."

There's a short story called "Face Change", written by someone surnamed Feng. He is one of the leading figures in the short story field in the Great Qin.

Today they saw a real-life “Face Change”.

“What are you all doing standing around? Shouldn’t you be working?” The man glared at the employees around him.

Everyone dispersed quickly, but the same words emerged in their minds:

Humans, not as good as dogs.

Antarctica didn’t seem too happy. He barked at the man again, scaring him, making him take a few steps back, “This dog is really energetic.”

“Yes...”

Gu Dong said anxiously. After great difficulty, she finally managed to get the dog to Lin Yuan’s office.

Inside the Music Composing Department...

Watching Gu Dong lead a dog into the representative’s office, many staff members were taken aback and wondered if they were seeing things.

Inside the office...

Lin Yuan was advising Antarctica:

“In the next few days, you’ll be staying at Zhang Xiuming’s house. Zhang Xiuming is an actor, and you two will be shooting a movie together soon.”

“Yes, that’s right. He is a film emperor.”

“What do we need to talk about pay for? You’ll be adequately compensated, and your dog food will be supplied in sufficient quantity, okay?”

“When you come back, help me eat some vegetables yet again. You performed well at dinner last night.”

“You can’t sleep on the bed; you shed. I’ll buy you a dog house, and you’ll sleep in there.”

“...”

Outside the door, Gu Dong was about to come in.

Then, she heard the endless chatter inside and got stunned.

Is Lin Yuan conversing with a dog?

Was it Lin Yuan that was weird, or was this dog weird?

Chapter 344: The Forgotten Treasure Chest

“Is this the dog that will be acting with me? How did Teacher Admirable Fish manage to bring it into the company?”

Before finishing work in the evening.

Zhang Xiuming came to the ninth floor composing department.

He has two purposes, one is to see Lin Yuan to discuss the script, and the other is to take Antarctica home to build a relationship.

As a result, the moment he laid eyes on Antarctica, Zhang Xiuming felt very close to it.

Lin Yuan introduced: “Its name is Antarctica, playing Hachiko this time.”

It’s interesting.

Antarctica actually circled around Zhang Xiuming, sniffed around a bit, and finally rubbed Zhang Xiuming's trouser leg, looking very obedient.

Zhang Xiuming broke into a big laugh: "This dog is quite close to me."

Antarctica wagged its tail at Lin Yuan.

Lin Yuan said: "It smells the scent of its own kind on you."

Zhang Xiuming: "..."

What does that mean?

Lin Yuan asked: "Do you have a dog at home?"

Zhang Xiuming then realized his misunderstanding: "I do have a dog at home... How do you know, can you communicate with dogs?"

Lin Yuan said: "I think I can."

Zhang Xiuming was confused: you think?

Lin Yuan explained: "There are a few dog hairs on your clothes."

Zhang Xiuming: "..."

He's a very special young man.

He evaluated in his heart, then returned to the topic: "About 'Hachiko', I will write a character note, does Teacher Admirable Fish have anything to say?"

"Yes."

Lin Yuan said: “What kind of woman do you like?”

Zhang Xiuming replied almost instinctively: “I like the kind like my wife.”

Lin Yuan said: “Is your sister-in-law an actress?”

Zhang Xiuming laughed: “So you were asking about the female lead. I didn’t expect Teacher Admirable Fish to ask for my opinion. In my opinion, Zhou Xue is pretty good.”

Lin Yuan nodded: “Then let’s go with her.”

Lin Yuan remembered Zhou Xue, she was the female antagonist in “The Tuner”, a classic villainess. But that doesn’t mean Zhou Xue can only play that kind of role.

As a gorgeous forty-year-old actress, Zhou Xue can handle quite a variety of roles.

Zhang Xiuming chuckled bitterly: “So I just decided like that?”

Lin Yuan replied matter-of-factly: “I think it’s quite suitable.”

Zhang Xiuming’s gaze flashed with something unusual.

With Admirable Fish, a burgeoning new scriptwriter in the industry, and himself, a well-respected actor, the attention paid to the movie “Hachiko” would certainly not be small.

The selection of the female lead for such a film is actually quite a hot commodity.

In other words.

Lin Yuan could totally use this role to get some benefits from many actresses.

Not necessarily through shady deals.

With Lin Yuan's good looks, not being taken advantage of by others would already be a testament to his great success.

So-called benefits can come in many forms.

Yet Admirable Fish simply selected the candidate without a second thought, with no intention of using the role for other purposes.

Film people like these tend to be purists.

Thinking of this, Zhang Xiuming nodded: "Teacher Admirable Fish, then I'll be taking Antarctica home first."

"Sure."

Lin Yuan waved his hand.

Without even looking at Lin Yuan, Antarctica happily followed Zhang Xiuming out, not looking sad at all.

"Mr. Lin is really interesting."

Zhang Xiuming commented as he led the dog to the garage.

At this time, his driver drove the car over: "Teacher Zhang, get on."

"Alright."

Just as Zhang Xiuming was about to go forward, Antarctica beat him to it by opening the car door first, then jumped in and casually sat down, its white belly exposed, sticking out its tongue and looking out the window.

Zhang Xiuming was stunned.

A dog that could open car doors and sit like a human, was Teacher Admirable Fish's dog actually some kind of supernatural creature?

...

Zhou Xue received the drama invitation from the crew that night.

When she found out she had been chosen as the female lead for Admirable Fish's new movie, she was so happy she jumped up and down and gave her assistant a big kiss.

The assistant was a young girl, she jumped around with Zhou Xue, too excited to stand still, continually muttering:

"Thank you, Teacher Admirable Fish!"

"The male lead is Teacher Zhang Xiuming, this is an opportunity to collaborate with a highly respected actor!"

Zhou Xue was an actress who had naturally fallen out of favor as she aged. She hadn't had a glorious career when she was young, and being forgotten by the audience as she got older was a common occurrence. It was the fate of many similar actresses.

Not until she took part in "The Tuner", did Zhou Xue's career start to pick up again.

So Zhou Xue was very grateful to Admirable Fish.

Zhou Xue didn't expect that after "The Tuner", Admirable Fish would think of her for his new movie.

If she were a few years younger, if Admirable Fish wasn't so handsome, Zhou Xue would almost think he had feelings for her.

For her, being chosen by Admirable Fish twice felt like being hit by a pie falling from the sky.

Ecstatic!

In fact.

Many of the actors at Starlight were hoping to be hit by Admirable Fish's pie from the sky. Unfortunately, the number of pies is limited, so the vast majority of people are destined to be disappointed.

Lin Yuan hadn't realized that now he could change someone's fate with just a few words.

In the following few days, the crew of "Hachiko" was always busy preparing.

On Zhang Xiuming's end, he constantly communicated situations with Lin Yuan.

According to Zhang Xiuming, he got along with Antarctica so well that they could even sleep together.

"This dog understands everything. It can open car doors, use the toilet, even more incredible is that it can watch dramas with me!" Zhang Xiuming described in an exaggerated manner.

Lin Yuan, curious, asked: "What drama?"

Zhang Xiuming: "... " Are you concerned about that?

Thinking that this was Lin Yuan's dog, Zhang Xiuming felt that Lin Yuan should be aware, and could understand why Lin Yuan was so calm.

This dog was just very special anyway.

Lin Yuan indeed didn't think it was a problem that a dog could do these things.

Dogs can even help the police catch bad guys.

He remembered watching a movie in his previous life, where cats and dogs almost ruled the world.

If they were described as in Xin Xing Yi's short novel "Cats", these terrifying creatures probably already ruled the world.

All these are the small details.

What Lin Yuan is considering now is whether to continue the good tradition of "The Tuner" and add more piano music to it?

Not forcibly adding it.

At the very least it can serve as background music.

Moreover, in the movie "Hachiko", the male lead has a music teacher role.

Lin Yuan can smoothly add a piece of music without any inconsistencies.

Last time the piano music added to "The Tuner" had a very good effect.

Songs like "Mariage d'Amour" are great for promotion in excellent movies.

"Right, there's a Silver Treasure Chest..."

Lin Yuan had a Silver Treasure Chest all this time that he didn't open, almost being forgotten. It wasn't until recently that he remembered this.

Alright then.

Mainly because he hadn't stumbled upon any luck.

When he's unsure about his luck, Lin Yuan doesn't want to open the box.

But people always say, wine gets better with age, could it be the same for a box?

Having waited this long to open it, this Silver Treasure Chest probably won't disappoint him, right?

“Open the box, System.”

Lin Yuan felt somewhat expectant.

As for what he's expecting the box to contain, most people probably couldn't guess.

Chapter 345: Antagonist Male Lead

“Congratulations, Host, on acquiring the manga work ‘Death Note’.”

With the System's prompt, an extra manga appeared in Lin Yuan's backpack.

“They didn't arrange a random piano piece for me?”

Lin Yuan was surprised.

The System had previously liked to play with “coincidences”.

Well, if there's no piano piece, let's just pay homage.

Have the new protagonist play ‘Mariage d'Amour’ in the new movie, like an Easter egg. Those who know will naturally understand.

If I wanted to release a piano piece through a movie, ‘The Legend of 1900’ would be suitable.

But this film would require fine editing, so Lin Yuan doesn't plan to spend that money yet.

As for the manga from the Silver Treasure Chest...

It's perfect since I didn't know what production to take over after "Food Wars: Shokugeki no Soma".

Well, that saves me the trouble of thinking about it.

Through the information in Lin Yuan's mind, he is very clear on how famous 'Death Note' is as a manga!

From its influence to ratings, almost all data indicating that 'Death Note' is at a top tier level!

But in fact, it's a work of cult significance!

Over in Japan, this manga is one of the few that can outshine countless top-ranked manga, truly a super cult manga!

What is cult and what is mainstream?

In general, mainstream manga is virtuous, with positive themes, kind-hearted and pure protagonists, plots usually of a hero fighting demons, and the righteous side winning.

These types of works have pure-hearted female leads, buddies, and happy companions, with justice as the theme, realizing dreams, etc.

That's why mainstream manga's target audience is the broadest.

From this perspective, 'Food Wars: Shokugeki no Soma' is also considered a mainstream manga

As for 'Prince of Tennis', it's more mainstream.

However, many mainstream manga are passionate and contain a lot of fighting scenes. Apart from the first two manga of Shadow, which were passionate, there was no fighting, only tennis and cooking.

Cult manga is more of a maverick. These works contain some dark aspects, which may include crime, horror, violence, etc.

Of course, mainstream manga can also have violence, but they're not blatantly bloody.

Furthermore, the protagonist of a cult manga is usually not some harmless bunny, but could be the final villain.

Because the protagonist may not be a good person, it's easy to explore human nature, making the manga more meaningful.

Therefore, cult manga reaches a smaller audience than mainstream manga and can easily cause controversy.

As for 'Death Note', it has become a representative work of cult manga in many people's hearts. This shows how special and controversial this work is!

In any case, this anime was directly censored in our country. Everyone who wants to watch it can only resort to cloud storage.

The story begins quite wickedly.

Yagami Light, a genius high school student otherwise known as the male lead of 'Death Note', is a student filled with a sense of justice.

His father is a high-ranking police officer, comes from a prestigious family, and can be said to have an excellent background.

In school, he is extremely popular with the girls, always comes first in exams, and is as handsome as Lin Yuan.

In every sense, such a person could be considered perfect!

Firstly, having a father who is a police officer, especially at the superintendent level, is already quite impressive.

Not to mention the fact that he himself has a very high IQ, is excellent at exams, handsome, and has a good EQ. Girls are charmed by him.

If we don't discuss the subsequent storyline and just look at the introduction of the protagonist, everyone might think...

Ah, this protagonist is really cliché.

Full of self-fantasizing by the author and pandering to readers.

However, that's not the case.

This manga, with the theme of a Death Note, emphasizes a battle of wits!

The protagonist Yagami Light happened to get a 'Death Note.' He discovered that as long as he writes a person's name in the notebook, that person will die on the spot.

That day, Yagami Light decided to test it out on a hoodlum.

Then, the thug died right in front of Yagami Light.

Yagami Light was overjoyed and embarked on his journey of upholding justice!

He is an extreme advocate for justice!

With the help of the news media, Yagami Light wrote the names of criminals in the world one by one into his notebook. He believed that such actions were justice!

He is God!

He wants to create a new world without crime!

Soon, countries around the world discovered that someone was secretly punishing criminals, but the existence of the Death Note was too magical and unknown to everyone. Everyone only knew that criminals would drop dead out of the blue.

The Executor is referred to as “Kira” by everyone.

On the other hand, Interpol invited the world’s number one detective “L” to investigate Kira’s identity.

So, a battle of wits and courage began between Yagami Light and “L”.

Perhaps it’s due to the uniformity of the common King Road Manga.

This “Death Note”, with its unique style, intriguing game of wits, discussion around good and evil, has a large fan base globally!

Non-manga fans only know about the Dead Sea of Fire.

Those who really enjoy reading manga, basically all know about “Death Note”.

Blue Star’s limits won’t lead to the censorship of “Death Note”, so Lin Yuan is very relieved about this.

We won’t discuss here whether Yagami Light is good or bad.

The controversy about “Death Note” is actually centered around Yagami Light.

Some people like this kind of protagonist, some people despise it, but whether you like or dislike it, at least everyone agrees:

Yagami Light is a charismatic antagonist protagonist.

In manga, there are protagonists that are antagonists, but Yagami Light is considered to embody the extreme charm of such characters.

Lin Yuan is only reading from the perspective of a reader, and then concluded that this manga is great—

This is not merely based on the data provided by the System.

What's even more rare is that the System hasn't modified "Death Note".

The manga that Lin Yuan received before were all modified by the System.

For example, "King of the Net" was heavily modified from its novel version.

And then there's "Food Wars: Shokugeki no Soma", which had a disastrous downfall in the original author's later stage, leaving the System to tie up the loose ends.

This time, the System didn't modify it, suggesting that "Death Note" doesn't have any faults!

Even if some people are dissatisfied with the ending of this manga, overall, it is a complete and well-rounded manga.

The quality just slipped a little bit after "L" died.

Some people also say that it's not that the ending of "Death Note" declined in quality, it's just that after "L's" death, Yagami Light doesn't have an equal opponent.

Just like Ximen Chui Xue's ultimate battle was against Ye Gucheng.

It's difficult to reproduce the same earth-shattering battle after that.

Estimating the time, Lin Yuan probably figured it out.

"Perhaps during the movie filming, I can start the serialization of 'Death Note'."

“Also, ‘Food Wars: Shokugeki no Soma’ needs to be adapted into an animation.”

“The revenue brought in by the animation adaptation is much higher than I expected. Once the serialization of ‘Death Note’ is nearly finished, I definitely need to continue with the animation.”

“....”

Lin Yuan has tasted the sweetness of animation adaptation.

If possible, he even wanted to make a live-action version but considering the failures of live-action adaptations of anime in his previous life, he gave up.

Instead of believing in live-action adaptations of anime, he might as well have faith in his own novels.

For example, “Zhu Xian” can be made into a TV series.

If that’s still not safe, then “Ghost Blows Out the Light” should be ok, right?

Chapter 346: Please Teach Me

This May seemed somewhat protracted.

In the blog’s short story rankings for May, “The Fall of the Dondon Bridge” remained in the same spot after being overtaken by the second place, without any further decline —

Yet, it did not manage to regain its top spot either.

After all, this work was forcibly ranked second by many hardcore mystery enthusiasts who felt disgusted after reading “The Fall of Dondon Bridge”.

If it were not for the group of readers who forcefully granted the second place with votes, Lin Yuan would have easily nabbed the champion of the month.

Many thought, this must be the final outcome.

Old rascal Chu Kuang paid the price for his manipulative behaviour towards his readers.

However, as May was about to come to an end, an unexpected event occurred that left many taken aback.

“The Fall of Dondon Bridge”, which was comfortably sitting in second place, suddenly saw a surge in votes.

Faintly, there seemed to be momentum for it to return to the top!

The reason was simple.

Suddenly, a group of people appeared online with reviews that contrasted starkly with those who were averse to “The Fall of Dondon Bridge”:

“This novel is Chu Kuang’s reflection and play on narrative trickery.”

“This is practically a forward-thinking form of anti-mystery!”

“Ranking second is the biggest misunderstanding people have of ‘The Fall of Dondon Bridge’!”

The internet does not lack bandwagon riders.

When many people criticized “The Fall of Dondon Bridge” for treating boredom as fun, some rode the trend and cursed it.

When many people started to praise “The Fall of Dondon Bridge” for author’s groundbreaking thinking, labeling it as the author’s game and reflection, again people jumped onto the bandwagon to praise it.

Then the two trends started feud.

At this moment, Chu Kuang’s fame played a significant role.

Readers supporting Chu Kuang voiced their anguish:

“Put your brains to work for a moment, would a brilliant writer like Chu Kuang simply treat boredom as fun and write a narrative trickery to disgust readers?”

Of course not!

Many subconsciously thought this way.

And then people started analysing Chu Kuang’s true intentions.

Why does Chu Kuang satirize many famous detective novelists in “The Fall of Dondon Bridge”?

Why in the end, does he say the murderer was an ape?

Why does he write himself as both the reader and the victim?

Why...

As these questions arose, netizens who were exceptionally proficient in reading comprehension flexed their skills and an array of answers emerged.

“Chu Kuang satirizing detective novelists is perhaps to say that ultimately, detective novelists are just armchair strategists, no detective novelist can truly become a detective in real life, they can only write in a hypothetical scenario, so in the novel they also do not know who the murderer is, at a total loss, implying that they would not be able to identify the murderer when faced with a homicide in real life.”

“The murderer being an ape is the most ingenious part, many times detective novels fall into the situation of not being well liked by readers if they’re not thrilling, not knowing that in real life, a simple identification of the murderer is in fact the best news for the victim.”

“Chu Kuang writes himself as the victim, perhaps because he feels there are too many narrative trickery paths that are easy to go to extremes, becoming this pure word game, and being the creator of narrative trickery, he has the responsibility.”

“This is also why Chu Kuang writes himself as the reader, he feels as depressed as countless readers who have read ‘The Fall of Dondon Bridge’ because he also believes that such narrative trickery is pointless, true narrative trickery should provide valuable information to the readers, not pure textual misdirection.”

“The young man in the novel represents Chu Kuang who is obsessed with narrative trickery, it’s a confrontation with his current self!”

“Wow, after hearing the analysis, I realized that there is so much metaphor in this work, it’s worthy of being Chu Kuang’s work. Many people have misunderstood this novel, Chu Kuang is not such a superficial person!”

“Think carefully, Chu Kuang is just casually expressing some of his personal understanding of mystery through jokes.”

“...”

The more people thought about it, the more logical it seemed.

So Chu Kuang had been labouring over this all along!

The realm of a great artist, ordinary people can’t grasp it in a short time. Once they do, the wind really shifts towards “The Fall of Dondon Bridge”.

The result is, “The Fall of Dondon Bridge” returns to the top.

With this novel returning to first place, the novel in second naturally returns to its previous spot as well.

The author in second place experienced a roller coaster ride from the bottom to the top and back to the bottom, feeling a lump in his throat that remained unsaid:

“Are you playing with me?”

He felt like he had been played.

However, his feelings clearly don't matter.

With various interpretations appearing online, fans began to rush to Chu Kuang's tribe asking which was Chu Kuang's true intention.

Not to mention the netizens.

Jin Mu is also somewhat perplexed and couldn't help but ask Lin Yuan privately:

“Boss, what are your real intentions, why are there two Chu Kuangs in the book? Could it be that the other Chu Kuang is really hinting at your other side? Are you writing this way because of Xian Yu? Or does the boss feel lonely and hope that someone like him appears in the world?”

Lin Yuan: “...”

When the lonely ones choose not to speak, it's not that they have nothing to say, but that there's no one to tell.

And loneliness is when you have something to say, but no one is willing to listen; when someone is willing to listen, you suddenly have no words.

Alright, speaking in layman's terms.

At this moment Lin Yuan's thought process is: “I'm happy to reclaim this first place, but everyone seems to have misunderstood me.”

Just as Lu Xun said that he has two trees in front of his house, one is a jujube tree, and the other is also a jujube tree.

Lin Yuan did not foresee himself becoming those two jujube trees, receiving the same treatment.

People in this world are highly adept at interpretation.

No wonder his scores were always low during exams, even when confronting his own published songs.

What he lacked, was probably this line of associative thinking that the netizens possessed.

The system's background information had once mentioned something interesting:

After Ang Lee finished filming "Life of Pi", countless reporters questioned him on what those metaphors in the movie really signify.

Ang Lee did not answer any of them.

This was a wise move, and a practice worth learning.

So Lin Yuan has also decided not to explain.

If the misunderstanding is still quite pleasant, then let everyone continue to misunderstand.

He can't seriously tell everyone, right? That I wrote this detective story simply because the system was on sale and I just wanted to be a rascal then.

Lin Yuan even doubted that if he explained it this way, no one would believe it.

Well.

On the last day of May, Lin Yuan tearfully received the prize money for first place.

He initially thought that the battle of mystery would end here.

But as June approached, Leng Guang's latest mystery novel was suddenly released!

At the same time.

Leng Guang's tribe tagged Chu Kuang, attaching three words that marked the official start of this literary duel:

“Advise me.”

Chapter 347: Steady

He's here, he's here...

He came with a new detective novel.

Lin Yuan did not rush to respond to Leng Guang, he asked Jin Mu to buy Leng Guang's new work the next day to read.

Leng Guang's new work is called “The Apartment”.

The cover is blue, not too thick, novella-length, and the cover image is a bloody handprint.

Synopsis:

“Xiao Guang and his girlfriend have moved into a new apartment. Not long after, a death occurs in the apartment. The police investigation ends without results, and the matter is dropped. But who would have thought, not long after, another death occurs. Xiao Guang and his girlfriend decide to leave the apartment, but the day before they leave, Xiao Guang's girlfriend also dies, so he decides to find the real killer...”

Who is Xiao Guang?

Is Leng Guang ridiculing himself?

No, he should be ridiculing his ex-girlfriend, after all, in the book, it's Xiao Guang's ex-girlfriend who dies.

Mustn't think too much.

It's just a novel, just a novel.

Lin Yuan respected his opponent Leng Guang very much, as evidenced by his willingness to spend half a day reading "The Apartment".

In this novel, all the death scenes were inside the apartment.

"Murder in a locked room theme..."

"The killer has an alibi..."

"Who is the least likely suspect..."

As Lin Yuan read, he wracked his brain, trying to guess the murderer along with Xiao Guang.

Leng Guang, a devoted traditional detective lover, was a pure aficionado of police procedural mysteries, so he revealed quite a lot of clues.

Based on the clues, Lin Yuan guessed the murderer and quickly locked on a suspect.

However, Lin Yuan who happened to read the ending of the novel when about to go out for lunch was startled:

"The killer turned out to be the bedridden child?"

Although Lin Yuan had suspected the child during the process, he dismissed the suspicion as more clues appeared.

Looking back, Lin Yuan had fallen into Leng Guang's trap.

"Surprising, isn't it?"

Jin Mu seemed to have finished reading "The Apartment" before Lin Yuan, and he exclaimed when he saw Lin Yuan finish the novel:

"Leng Guang always fills his detective novels with an atmosphere of horror and suspense which makes one's neck feel chilly after reading. Even if he didn't write detective novels, he would undoubtedly sell well just by writing horror novels."

"Everyone is hiding something."

"It's the same tactic that was used in 'The Murder of Roger Ackroyd'. And the motive for the murder is a precocious child who can't bear the harassment and even harm from men towards his single mother. He even murders the man who was to be his father."

Lin Yuan nodded.

This story had a great concept.

Some things only a child can do. This is a big hint, but he didn't guess it.

Clearly, neither did Jin Mu.

This meant that even having given out many clues, Leng Guang had still managed to defeat the vast majority of readers.

"We are in a bit of trouble,"

Jin Mu patted the cover of "The Apartment", saying: "This novel is highly rated online at the moment, and is basically considered Leng Guang's most representative work to date. It might be thanks to you, boss. To beat you 100 percent, Leng Guang has exploded with potential."

It's like two people competing in a test.

One of them usually only gets eighty points, but this time, under the pressure of competition, they scored ninety points, an extraordinary performance!

...

Many internet users were following this literary duel, which also indirectly promoted the sales of Leng Guang's novel "The Apartment".

As a work that Leng Guang dared to put forward in a literary duel, the novel didn't disappoint its readers.

As more and more people finished reading "The Apartment", there quickly appeared countless praises online.

"Teacher Leng Guang has created another masterpiece, this work is even more exciting than his previous detective stories! The murderer, the child, had some mother-spoiling tendencies. The methods of murder were not complex, merely taking advantage of one's identity to disguise and each had their own secrets that confused the real clues. As a fan of Leng Guang, I can declare without hesitation, the victory of this literary duel belongs to Leng Guang."

"Leng Guang's win is secured, rock solid, helix solid, the story is terrifying, the ending is thrilling, it's a shame I guessed the killer, even though I didn't find any credible clues, I just felt that the author designed it this way."

"Leng Guang is indeed solid, does this duel need to continue? It's going to be hard for Chu Kuang to turn the tables."

"It's meaningless to blindly guess the killer. It's like this when reading detective novels. Sometimes, you can guess the killer by relying on your intuition. After all, there are only so many suspects. But if it's Chu Kuang's narrative trickery style of writing, your blind guess might be useless, so I don't think Leng Guang has definitely won."

"Who would have thought that Leng Guang would suddenly explode with talent? Although I feel that Chu Kuang doesn't have much chance of winning now, there is still a chance."

“I wonder if Leng Guang will dominate one-sidedly, or if there will be a back-and-forth battle?”

“If it’s at the level of ‘The Murder of Roger Ackroyd’, I feel Chu Kuang could definitely put up a fight. The problem now is, the novelty of the narrative trickery has already been used up, if Chu Kuang continues to use narrative trickery, it needs to be more clever.”

“Have you guys forgotten something? The one who goes first is bound to lose, Chu Kuang has the upper hand (sarcastic).”

“The eerie thing about the old rascal Chu Kuang is, the more you think he won’t make it, the more likely he’ll succeed!”

“...”

Although the tide seemed to be turning in favor of Leng Guang, there were still quite a few people who supported Chu Kuang. Everyone agreed, though, that Leng Guang’s performance this time had reached his personal limit.

Horror, suspense, he did it all very well.

Even Lin Yuan admitted, he even reviewed “The Apartment” again, personally feeling the endless charm of police procedural mysteries.

In the apartment, anyone could be the murderer. That thrilling feeling is everywhere. People who like this atmosphere will enjoy this process a lot.

The most ingenious part of this novel is when the detective said:

“Many adults are like children, morally they have not fully developed.”

The underlying message of this is:

“Many children, because of their age, have not fully developed morally.”

So, the killer had already been hinted at here.

Lin Yuan was pleased with this. The biggest reason he was pleased was that “Murder on the Orient Express” had come across a very strong opponent who was bound to lose.

Both are locked-room murder scenarios.

Regardless of the motive or the method of murder, “Murder on the Orient Express” is sure to be more unimaginable!

Now that Leng Guang had taken the initiative.

Lin Yuan finally responded to Leng Guang using Chu Kuang’s account–

He specially checked that he wasn’t logged into the wrong account.

The repayment was also simple, as if it was routine notice: “The new book ‘Murder on the Orient Express’ will be released in one week.”

This was the publishing date set by Jin Mu and Silver Blue Books.

By that time, Jin Mu had finished reading “Murder on the Orient Express”. After reading it, he just said two words that made Lin Yuan flinch for a moment:

“Sure thing.”

Chapter 348: Must Read Classics

There’s a reason why Silver Blue Books didn’t immediately publish “The Murder on the Orient Express” and instead chose to release the novel a week later for a showdown with Leng Guang.

Two reasons, in fact.

Before we delve into those reasons, we should note the reading experience Silver Blue Books had the day they received “The Murder on the Orient Express” —

Stunning!

Praise-worthy!

Shocking!

As the first editor at the publishing house to complete “The Murder on the Orient Express,” Dezhi Cao, couldn’t hold back his astonishment when he got to the end of the novel. He even exclaimed in his office:

“Awesome!”

The outburst was so loud that it echoed throughout the mystery department, startling many of the editors there.

Not just in the mystery department.

In fact, his screams reached the magazine department next door and triggered some chatter.

“Is Dezhi watching another soccer game?”

“I don’t think there are any games on recently.”

“So why is he freaking out?”

“...”

The magazine department next door chatted for a bit.

It seems they were also taken aback by Dezhi’s loud outburst.

Everyone remembered the last time Dezhi had made such a racket at work – he was secretly watching a soccer game, and his team, which he had supported for many years, won the championship for the first time.

As a result, he had 1,000 yuan deducted from his performance bonus.

Unfortunately, due to the underperformance of Silver Blue Books' mystery department, Dezhi didn't get much bonus in the first place.

It was a big blow for Dezhi, already the poorest editor-in-chief at the company.

This time, with no passing senior executives, Dezhi got off scot-free.

Or so he thought that morning.

However, that afternoon saw the mystery department seemingly infected by Dezhi's excitement, and they started shrieking. The ruckus spread throughout the entire company—

Affecting many departments.

How to describe it?

It's like when you were a student, quietly attentive in class, and suddenly the class next door erupts into a frenzy, piquing your extreme curiosity.

What happened?

Did all the teachers in the class next door fall ill?

Is only the physical education teacher healthy enough to teach?

What happened exactly?

Why are they so excited?

Why do I feel a bit envious?

In any case, the editors of the magazine department next door were certainly curious.

A few even stealthily came over during their break to inquire.

“Our department’s performance this year is promising!”

The editor of the mystery department excitedly explained why they had just erupted into cheers, a faint blush still lingering on their faces.

“Which bigwig is leading the charge?”

Being editors themselves, they naturally knew that if a department’s performance was promising, it could often be attributed to a masterpiece by one of their authors.

In the literary world, supporting a department with a single masterpiece is not a problem.

“Does the mystery department have other bigwigs?”

The editor of the mystery department responded naturally: “Chu Kuang, of course! His new work ... eh, you’re not into mystery, so let me tell you this way, Chu Kuang’s new work is destined for greatness!”

“...”

The magazine department editor stayed dumbfounded for a moment, then felt a pang of envy.

The specific reasons remain unmentioned for now.

Returning to the two reasons the novel can only be published a week later.

The first reason:

Dezhi Cao wanted a heavyweight from the world of mystery to write an introduction for “The Murder on the Orient Express” to help promote the novel.

This takes time.

The novel is too good, it must have a preface written by a very highly esteemed author.

Normally, if Dezhi Cao wanted to get a heavyweight from the mystery world to write a preface for a new book by one of their authors, he’d have to pull all sorts of strings, and it wouldn’t be easy.

After all, writing a preface doesn’t pay, and if an author’s status isn’t high enough, why would they go out of their way to write one?

But...

If it’s a preface for “The Murder on the Orient Express,” Dezhi Cao believes that even top-tier mystery authors would not refuse!

They might even be happy about it!

Who wouldn’t want to write a preface for a piece destined to become a classic? Writing a preface for such a work is also an honor for the author!

The second reason:

Dezhi Cao hopes that “The Murder on the Orient Express” can first be sent to the detective association under the Literature and Art Association for scoring. He wants the piece to dominate its rivals in the Literary Duel with its score even before its release.

This also needs a few days.

As for the department being too rowdy and consequently being reprimanded by the company for lack of discipline, Dezhi Cao doesn't care.

When you're standing in front of a mountain of gold and your boss calls to tell you that your bonus will be deducted this month, you won't mind either, you might even find it amusing.

The analogy might not be perfect, but when Dezhi Cao got "The Murder on the Orient Express," he did feel the joy of hitting the jackpot.

Dezhi Cao couldn't help but recall the first time he read "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd."

While he knew Chu Kuang's work was fantastic, he never imagined that he was witnessing the rise of a new god in the world of mystery!

It turns out that Narrative Trickery was just a warm-up for Chu Kuang.

The truly terrifying Chu Kuang is serious Chu Kuang after the warm-up!

In fact,

The publication of "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" alone, has already made the performance of the mystery department less disappointing this year.

When averaged with the current annual sales of the company, everyone's data looks pretty decent—

That's right.

The sales of Chu Kuang's works, combined with the sales of other mystery writers in the department, and then averaged, the results indeed look pretty decent.

This is the so-called one man supporting a department!

If you average the property of a group of poor folks with that of Jack Ma, the average wealth will look pretty impressive.

Chu Kuang is indeed the pillar that raises the average performance of the mystery department.

Meanwhile,

Chu Kuang's new work seems to be taking the whole department to new heights! How can Dezhi Cao not scream in excitement?

Over the next few days,

News keeps coming back to Dezhi Cao.

"Professor Carter has written the preface for 'The Murder on the Orient Express'. He personally sent it over and also expressed that if possible, he hopes that Mr. Chu Kuang could also write a preface for his work."

"I see."

Dezhi Cao smiled as expected.

Even Carter couldn't resist the allure of "The Murder on the Orient Express" and even wanted Chu Kuang to write a preface for his work—

Of course, Carter wouldn't just let anyone write a preface for his work.

"In addition,"

Dezhi Cao's assistant looked a little stunned, "The detective association has also given a score for 'The Murder on the Orient Express', and their teachers have asked us to submit the work for next year's mystery award."

"We'll talk about awards later. What score did they give?"

“See for yourself.”

The assistant handed over the document.

After glancing at the score, Dezhi Cao obviously started breathing more rapidly.

Mystery Novel “The Murder on the Orient Express.”

Detective Association Rating: 92.4

By the way, the score for “The Apartment” was 79.3, which is already a great score.

And another thing, every piece that has received a score above 90 from the detective association is universally recognized as a super masterpiece within the industry!

There’s a saying in the industry, “Mystery stories that received a score above 90 from the detective association are all considered must-read classics!”

And this is “The Murder on the Orient Express.”

Chapter 349: I Forgot to Eat Today

He’s already won!

Face the windstorm!

Here comes the soaring dragon!

For the first time in his career, Cao Dezhi was laughing with such confidence, feeling as if he had finally flaunted the masculinity and the authority of being the chief editor of the mystery department—

This was the true sense of “assured victory”.

Meanwhile.

The outside world was still unaware of what Chu Kuang's new book looked like.

The result of the literary duel between Chu Kuang and Leng Guang was fueling debates across the mystery community.

Then, in an unexpected moment, all disputes vanished.

If you gathered the online crowd into one classroom, it might resemble the lively chatter during self-study period.

People eating, people talking about love.

Suddenly, the teacher arrived.

And then, the classroom fell silent.

The difference was that people were momentarily stunned by the promotion for "Murder on the Oriental Express", not by the fear of the teacher.

They doubted if they had misread something.

[Carter: This is a work that rank amongst the top ten in the Blue Star mystery literary field.]

[Received a score of 92.4 from the Detective Association, becoming the seventh highest-ranked work in mystery history.]

[Chu Kuang's new work, "Murder on the Oriental Express", could be a flawless detective novel.]

These three lines were pretty much the promotion from Silver Blue Books.

But for the mystery community, it was no less than a depth bomb!

Boom!

The mystery community was exploding in all directions!

From mystery authors to mystery fans, everyone was swept up by the blast of the torpedo!

A work in the top ten of the mystery world?!

Almost a perfect detective novel?!

After the initial shock, the entire internet exploded!

“My goodness!”

“Isn’t this too exaggerated?”

“It feels like Chu Kuang has unleashed the Bomb this time?”

“At first, I thought, did Carter take a bribe, but the promotion later told me that what Carter said seems to be the truth. I’m feeling a little confused right now, is Chu Kuang’s new work so formidable?”

“The Detective Association scored it 92.4 points!? I’m dumbfounded!”

“This score can be ranked the seventh in the history of mystery writings. Today, all mystery enthusiasts witnessed history because it’s not every year that we see a work that can rank in the top ten of the mystery score chart.”

“The last time the Detective Association scored a novel over ninety was five years ago...”

“If I remember correctly, the score for ‘Apartment’ didn’t break eighty.”

“A literary duel? What a joke.”

“Leng Guang: This disrespectful youngster used a novel that scored over ninety by the Detective Association to attack me!”

“This is a one-sided massacre, isn’t it...”

“What the hell did Chu Kuang write to make both Teacher Carter and the Detective Association fall for it?”

“This is outrageous! The long-awaited literary duel, Chu Kuang hasn’t even officially made his move yet and it seems like Teacher Leng Guang has already lost his standing!”

“The one who goes first loses, the ancient people did not lie to me!”

“Did Chu Kuang launch a direct attack from the stratosphere?”

“...”

Although the wave caused by the explosion will eventually fall back to the water surface, the shocking ripples take a long time to dissipate, expanding like the concentric circles of a ripple, ultimately touching everyone in the mystery community. It was the collective anticipation raised by the mystery community—

The anticipation for Chu Kuang’s new work!

Everyone knew that the Detective Association was very fair. So far, there were hardly any cases where their scores were far from impartial.

More importantly, there was a mutual validation by Carter and the Detective Association!

If “Murder on the Oriental Express” were a work that could be written into the history of mystery novels, then Carter would be a figure that could ranked amongst the top ten in the history of mystery literature!

For the sake of his own reputation, he wouldn't possibly give Chu Kuang such false publicity.

So, inevitably, Chu Kuang's new mystery work might truly be a classic!

...

If the promotional event by Silver Blue Books was likened to exploding fish, then everyone in the mystery genre is a fish at this moment, including Leng Guang, the victim of the literary duel.

Yes, "victim" is the title everyone just gave to Leng Guang.

He went to Chu Kuang for a literary duel on mystery novels, but Chu Kuang's works were recognized and promoted by top-tier figures in the industry even before they were published. Moreover, the initial evaluation was that they would "make history in mystery literature". How would that make Leng Guang feel?

That he lost?

I haven't even seen his book yet, you mean to tell me, I have already lost?

Chu Kuang is yet to officially make a move, and I'm already down for the count?

Leng Guang wanted to say:

I'm not convinced!

But after looking at the rating given by the Detective Association to "The Murder on the Orient Express" and the evaluation by Carter, Leng Guang sadly realized he truly had lost.

This was no longer about the lack of etiquette among young people.

The "literary duel" had basically become nothing but empty words.

Could an ant and an elephant have a duel?

The answer is no.

The rating from the Detective Association and Carter's evaluation had already declared the outcome in advance. Chu Kuang appeared to be the elephant, making Leng Guang unexpectedly the ant, which made him feel rather stifled.

Of course, he felt stifled.

But at the same time, Leng Guang was genuinely curious.

The curiosity of a person of the mystery genre, at least this curiosity didn't include any impurities.

He wanted to know, what kind of work was it?

Or rather, how did he lose exactly?

If he didn't even know this, it would be too much of an injustice.

Fortunately, this wasn't an imaginary battle between Leng Guang and Chu Kuang. Even though this literary duel seemed to have already been decided, it ultimately needed to be put into the actual writing.

Carrying everyone's expectations, "The Murder on the Orient Express", was... published!

Later on.

Some people referred to this day as the start of the "Chu Kuang Era" in the mystery circle.

On this day.

Leng Guang got up a bit late, and even after visiting three nearby bookstores in a row, he failed to buy the “The Murder on the Orient Express”.

Many bookstores were out of stock, indicating just how many reader’s expectations were fulfilled by this novel’s booming sales.

Upon returning home, Leng Guang found a package from Silver Blue Books had been delivered to him.

Inside was a copy of “The Murder on the Orient Express”.

Without guessing at Silver Blue Books’ intentions, Leng Guang immediately retreated to his study and opened “The Murder on the Orient Express”.

The preface was written by Carter:

“I don’t remember the first time I read a mystery novel, but I remember how thrilled and shocked I was. Years later, I became a well-known mystery writer, only to find that I was struggling to find mystery novels that moved me. I thought perhaps my heart was growing numb, but when I opened ‘The Murder on the Orient Express’, I knew it wasn’t that my heart had grown numb, but rather that it had been too long since any groundbreaking masterpiece had been introduced in the mystery genre, depriving our senses of new stimuli for too long. I don’t want to let everyone spend too much time on a preface, because excitement can’t wait. I hope you enjoy this ride on the Orient Express.”

It’s a short preface.

Full of praise.

Common in other novels, but since Carter wrote it gives it a different significance. Anyway, from what Leng Guang knew about Carter, this was the first time he saw Carter praising a colleague like this.

“Let’s begin.”

On a quiet afternoon, Leng Guang opened “The Murder on the Orient Express”.

Upon reading the last word, he carefully closed the book and placed it on the easily accessible shelf.

“When I was a kid, I wasn’t good at studying, didn’t like doing homework, and would make up excuses the next day, saying I forgot to finish it. The teacher would always scold me by asking, ‘How come you didn’t forget to eat?’ ”

“Now, I want to tell the teacher that I really forgot to eat that day.”

This was what Leng Guang said later in an interview.

The interview took place in this study, and in the background on the bookshelf was the eye-catching “The Murder on the Orient Express”.

Later on, the interview inexplicably went viral and sparked a famous and decent admission of defeat in the literary duels of Blue Star:

“I forgot to eat today.”

Those who lose the literary duel tend to say it in a roundabout way, expressing their admiration and respect for their opponent, while also preserving their dignity.

The online translation, “I lost.”

Chapter 350: Poirot on Fire

In fact, Leng Guang’s reading speed was not fast, and he wasted quite some time buying books.

The time he wasted was enough for the first batch of readers of “Murder on the Orient Express” to write a bunch of book reviews, even sparking some topics.

In fact.

The real response started with the reviews given by the first batch of readers, and an internet detective forum became the first to blow up on the web!

The detective forum is a gathering place for detective fans.

The number of hardcore detective lovers isn't small!

Those are the readers who continued to be enthralled by the content of "Murder on the Orient Express", even after being vindicated by the detective association and Carter; it was their almost satisfied moan emanated after reaching ultimate satisfaction.

Swish Swish Swish!

An infinite number of posts emerged like bamboo shoots after a spring rain!

Perhaps no single post could represent everyone's feelings.

Everyone had different feelings, but everyone was unanimous in their shock at this novel!

"I thought I was reading traditional whodunit, Chu Kuang was writing a Narrative Trickery, and I was deceived twice in a row; this time I thought no matter how traditional Chu Kuang's plot is, I believe this is definitely a dazzling narrative trickery. But when I saw the ending, I actually knelt... Chu Kuang is really starting to write traditional whodunit now!"

This comment received high praise!

Just as Lin Yuan planned.

His works could be narrative trickery, or they could be traditional, but the readers will never guess the answer until the end if they are shifting between reality and fiction!

The following posts received similarly high praise and replies.

"After reading this novel, I started to believe that Chu Kuang's 'Dondon Bridge Falling' was really a mockery of narrative trickery; and I suddenly felt a bit sorry for Teacher Leng Guang. Why did you mess with his Literary Duel..."

“This topic is beyond the syllabus!”

“I almost fainted when I saw Poirot uncover the truth, definitely not exaggerating: when I found out that the lone murderer killed the victim, I almost burst my eyeballs. My scalp tingled and goosebumps erupted all over my body!”

“Carter’s preface didn’t lie to me! Masterpiece! Explosive!”

“Before reading it, I thought the score of a detective novel was a bit high, but after reading it, I thought, isn’t this score actually low? This is a textbook-level detective novel!”

“Poirot Poirot Poirot! I am in love with this pineapple!”

“Hahahaha when the name Poirot appeared, Chu Kuang might just have wanted to eat a pineapple.”

“Sorry, but Chu Kuang is a god!”

“I apologize, I had a prejudice against Chu Kuang because of the Narrative Trickery, but after reading this new work, I must admit I was impressed. The ending was very touching, I always hoped that in this dirty world, in corners where law can’t reach, there would be an invisible hand holding the sword of judgment, like these twelve so-called murderers. When I saw Poirot’s decision and the final lines, I felt incredibly warm. Although I can’t do anything and am a small fry, I still want to use my humble five-star review to show my respect for this kind of action and understanding.”

“The victim is the perpetrator, twelve victims... very shocking. As he turned around in the end, Poirot was super cool! I already heard the battle song in my mind! Too bad the bgm didn’t match Poirot.”

“2333, Chu Kuang has Xian Yu, let Xian Yu write a song.”

“Poirot is probably the first detective in history to spare a criminal, or at least this is the first time I’ve seen it written this way... There may be controversy, but I want to tell Chu Kuang, well done!”

“...”

In the discussion, Poirot was repeatedly mentioned.

Poirot's decision led to a lot of debate as well.

Someone screenshot the text from the novel, when Poirot gave two choices and said:

[Things are either right or wrong, but you...]

He was silent for a long time before he said these confused words:[I can't make a decision.]

He left the choice to others.

When everyone chose the first conclusion, that the murderer was innocent, Poirot took off his hat, bowed, announced his withdrawal from the case, and slowly turned to leave in the snow.

What is kindness, and what is evil?

This was the first time Poirot couldn't distinguish, yet he charmed numerous readers!

It seemed as if everyone had seen a lonely figure trudging on in the snow, walking and reflecting...

In fact, readers who had read “The Murder of Roger Ackroyd” knew very well how proud and principled Poirot was.

Everyone was used to Poirot's wisdom and intelligence in solving cases!

For him to say “I can't make a decision” was unthinkable.

Just like his eventual withdrawal from the case.

Because it was so unthinkable, readers felt Poirot's torment and choice!

At this moment, Poirot had become a recognized great detective in many people's minds!

You have to know, "world-renowned detective" was a setup given to Poirot by the novelist.

The novelist's pen can freely set things up in the novel, such as the handsomest man in the world, or the most beautiful woman, etc.

Inferior writers indulge themselves with their own settings.

Top-notch writers, the moment their story and settings appear, readers reach a collective climax as if those characters actually exist.

This is called writing power.

So for readers to recognize "Poirot is a world-renowned detective" is not an easy thing, but Chu Kuang has effortlessly done it—

With just two novels.

The foundation and suspense were laid in "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd".

"Murder on the Orient Express" opened up a reputation and recognition.

Poirot's story may continue in the future, but at this moment, Poirot, the famous detective who has acquitted the murderer, has become extremely popular in the readers' minds!

Of course.

The riddle-lovers were also taken care of, just like this comment says:

“I can never guess the old rascal Chu Kuang’s tactics! The most hateful thing is that, Chu Kuang, the old rascal, confidently laid out a very complex setup, even listed out the simple drawings of the carriages and time schedules of the characters, only to suddenly throw out his newly invented impossible crime mode after I racked my brains to fill a paper!!”

Yes.

Many readers tried to find out the truth before the detective when reading “Murder on the Orient Express”, which is a hobby of mystery lovers when reading such books.

But when everyone reached the end, they were all flabbergasted while being stunned.

Did you cheat?!

Chu Kuang, surprisingly, completed a new reasoning mode again!

The murderer turns out to be twelve people!

Of course, it’s surprising, all the passengers in the carriage conspired together, helping each other with alibis, leading to the possibility that all testimonies could be false.

Who could foresee this!?

Isn’t the normal mindset that there is only one murderer?

If there are occasional collaborations, wouldn’t there be at most two or three people?

But in this novel, all conventional reasoning is wrong, and the ending turns out to be everyone being good!

At the same time, everyone is a murderer!

Just like the first time I saw Narrative Trickery, no matter how hard I try, I couldn’t guess who the murderer was, Chu Kuang’s “Murder on the Orient Express”, this is a whole new reasoning mode!

Basically impossible to guess!

So, when everyone finished reading, it's hard not to be flummoxed!

Not to mention, right until the answer was revealed, everyone instinctively thought that Chu Kuang was writing Narrative Trickery.

The media hype had begun.

The Literary Duel between Chu Kuang and Leng Guang, the duel between Narrative Trickery and traditional reasoning.

As a result, when Chu Kuang's new book came out, everyone only realized it after reading, ah, this guy is just genuinely messing with us, this time it's the same as what Leng Guang wrote, it belongs to the traditional reasoning category!

Moreover, it's not much different from the locked-room murder mode!

"I feel that Chu Kuang is really the author who can tease the readers the most, yet I am still delighted to be teased."

"Chu Kuang created Narrative Trickery, but Chu Kuang never said he could only do Narrative Trickery, he is just being naughty and tricky, knowing that everyone has inherent thinking, he simply didn't explain the type of this writing, it's precisely because he didn't explain it made me stunned when I realized it was a traditional reasoning yet almost subverted the traditional reasoning mode!"

"Truly the old rascal."

"The old rascal is messing with our feelings! He must be hiding somewhere sniggering!"

"Clearly Leng Guang was the most toyed with, he pulled Chu Kuang into a duel, only for Chu Kuang to beat Leng Guang with traditional reasoning, what Leng Guang is best at."

“This is equivalent to Chu Kuang defeating Leng Guang with the Martial Skills that Leng Guang is most adept at, this is somewhat awkward.”

“I feel for Leng Guang, even though this guy loves to rant, he doesn’t speak without reason, the reasoning underlying his critique is pretty sound, it’s just bad luck that he ran into Chu Kuang this time.”

“Chu Kuang also slapped the anti-unreliable narrator readers in the face this time. When ‘The Fall of the Dondon Bridge’ came out before, weren’t many people criticizing that Chu Kuang only knows how to do Narrative Trickery? They even did a second vote, wanting to pull Chu Kuang down, and now Chu Kuang is clearly telling everyone: bro’s traditional reasoning is executed even better than Narrative Trickery.”

“...”

This is not an over-interpretation or conjecture this time.

That’s exactly what Lin Yuan thought.

He didn’t want to leave the impression that he only knew how to do Narrative Trickery.

So, this time it had to be traditional reasoning, and it had to be an explosive work.

Now, this work has indeed exploded!

Traditional reasoning can still innovate and create a mode where everyone collaborates to murder!

This is just trickery within trickery!

It has directly swollen the faces of those mystery fans who previously despised Chu Kuang.

Just like some readers’ comments, who could have thought that Chu Kuang’s traditional reasoning would be played even better than Narrative Trickery!

Those who voted against Chu Kuang before, one by one, had to admit their mistake in front of “Murder on the Orient Express”.

And the shockwaves of this explosion didn’t just stun the readers, it also toppled countless authors in the mystery circle...

These are mystery writers, the most sensitive group of people to mystery novels.

The readers are simply admiring the ingenuity of this story, but the mystery writers clearly understand how difficult it is to create such a story!

“Chu Kuang is outrageously talented!”

On this day, a fellow mystery writer, having also finished reading “Murder on the Orient Express”, sighed in a group chat.

In the group chat, there were only +1’s.