

All R. Artist 761

Chapter 761 I'm That Fool

The next day. Recording studio. Lin Yuan was recording a song with Jiang Kui. "Again." "It's not good enough." "Record it again." "This note is dragged out too long." "There's not enough emotion." "It's still not good enough." "Pause." "...". Recording went on for several hours, but Jiang Kui's singing never met Lin Yuan's standard, and the atmosphere in the studio was somewhat downcast. Normally, this song wouldn't have been difficult for Jiang Kui. But today was different. Her state was too poor. Lin Yuan had no choice but to call for a break in the end. Jiang Kui hung her head in silence, her expression one of shame. She knew her problem was serious; her personal emotions were seriously affecting her work. "Let's stop here for today," said Lin Yuan. "We'll record again tomorrow." Jiang Kui spoke in a low voice, timidly, "I'm sorry for taking up so much of Teacher Admirable Fish's time; I will try my best to adjust my condition by tomorrow." Then, she apologized to the other staff members. Lin Yuan nodded without saying much more. Even if Jiang Kui couldn't finish recording by the end of the month, it didn't matter. He had a backup plan. If it came to it, they could release the song later. Back in the office. While Lin Yuan was considering his next moves, he suddenly received a call from Sun Yaohuo: "Junior, do you want to have dinner tonight? Everyone will be there." "Everyone" in Sun Yaohuo's mouth was undoubtedly the singers from Yu Dynasty. "Alright," Lin Yuan didn't decline. That evening at seven o'clock. He arrived at a restaurant owned by Sun Yaohuo and saw everyone in a private room. Indeed, all the singers from Yu Dynasty were there, including Jiang Kui. When Jiang Kui saw Lin Yuan, she seemed somewhat embarrassed, keeping her head down, especially after her poor performance during the day. Lin Yuan didn't say much either. After dinner, Sun Yaohuo suggested they all go to KTV to sing. "Sure!" Everyone happily agreed, and Lin Yuan had no objections. So, the group made their way to the KTV. Sun Yaohuo had booked a large private room, with an assortment of fruit platters being served one after another, and of course, beer to boost the fun. Tsst. Jiang Kui opened a beer and began drinking. "Slow down," Sun Yaohuo cautioned her. Everyone else started to choose songs. No one chose their own songs; instead, they picked songs by other Yu Dynasty artists. For example, Sun Yaohuo chose Chen Zhiyu's "Change Myself." Hm? You're going to sing my song in front of Teacher Admirable Fish? What are you trying to prove? Chen Zhiyu snorted and decisively picked "Red Rose," taking out the guitar he always carried with him. Out of all the Yu Dynasty singers, it was Chen Zhiyu who liked to carry his guitar everywhere, even bringing it to KTV to accompany himself. Xia Fan and Zhao Ying Ge naturally didn't want to be outdone. Even Wei Haoyun picked a song, "Easy to Ignite and Explode." Jiang Kui didn't choose any songs; she just ate fruit and drank beer. Everyone failed to notice. They only realized something was wrong when they were fighting over the microphone, and suddenly, a cry echoed through the room. It was Jiang Kui. Everyone was a bit flustered. "Why is she crying now?" "It's all Sun Yaohuo's fault for hogging the mic, Jiang Kui hasn't even sung one song!" "Come on, let's have Jiang Kui pick a song!" "What do you want to sing? I'll pick it for you!" "How about 'Initial Dream'? I always thought you could outshine Xia Fan with that song!" "What are you implying, Zhao Ying Ge!" "Cough, just my personal opinion." "Go for the high notes; your high notes are especially bright and clear!" "...". Everyone nearly forced the microphone into Jiang Kui's hands. Jiang Kui put down her beer, fiercely wiped away her tears, and then went to select the song "Father." "Always taking from you but never saying thank you..." Jiang Kui's singing was far from pleasant; it was the voice of someone inebriated, lashing out in a

drunken frenzy. It was at that moment everyone realized Jiang Kui was drunk; they looked at each other, uncertain what to do. Even the slowest to react could tell Jiang Kui was troubled. "Time, oh time, slow down a bit..." During the high notes, Jiang Kui's voice cracked; unaware of her own dissonance, she continued emotionally and immersed in the song, tears streaming down her face. "Is she missing her dad?" Sun Yaohuo whispered. Wei Haoyun gave a bitter smile. "I remember her father passed away quite early..." "I see." Xia Fan shook his head, "We can't let her drink anymore later on." Zhao Ying Ge frowned, "We let her drink too much without realizing it, she'll probably throw up soon." "She's better at drinking than me." Chen Zhiyu muttered a comment. Everyone had already noticed the empty beer bottles all over the floor. Lin Yuan had been silent, sitting on the sofa, listening to everyone sing. He had long noticed that Jiang Kui was continuously drinking, but he didn't stop her. If she had troubles on her mind, it might be good to let them out. Jiang Kui was still singing, and when she reached the last line, she shouted it out: "The child you worry about, has... grown... up!" After shouting that line, Jiang Kui started to cry even harder, fiercely wiping her tears away. Everyone was in a flurry trying to comfort her. "You don't need to comfort me, you're all steel-hearted macho men and tomboys, you don't know how to comfort people, last time Teacher Admirable Fish even said that a white swan sings better than me!" Jiang Kui even lashed out, but combined with the sobbing, it just didn't have any force. Lin Yuan: "...". He hadn't expected Jiang Kui to still remember that incident. After complaining, Jiang Kui began to throw a drunken tantrum: "My dad died a long time ago, and my mom remarried; she doesn't care about my brother and me at all. She married a rich man, and even had twins with him..." Everyone exchanged looks. Sun Yaohuo seemed to know the company gossip: "I heard that day your mom came looking for you..." "She wasn't looking for me, she was asking me for money!" Everyone was stunned. Jiang Kui was thoroughly drunk, slurring her words: "That new husband of hers got into financial trouble, now he's in jail, and his company has gone bankrupt... Her twin sons lost their jobs, their house was lost to debt, she has nothing left... So she came to me, saying I'm a big star, saying I could repay her husband's debts, do you know how much money she wanted... She just opened her mouth and it was a hundred million!" Everyone's expression changed. No one had expected Jiang Kui to encounter such a situation, and they had certainly not realized her life was so tragic. "Only an idiot would give her the money!" Jiang Kui cursed out loud: "I have my own little brothers, I bought houses for my two brothers. Those twins are her and another man's children, she never cared for us, why should I solve her problems when her family is in trouble? Where was she when my brother and I were starving? Where was she when my brother and I had to work at relatives' houses just to eat? I don't have your high education; I taught myself music, and only after I debuted did I start reading the books you all read years ago. Let me tell you, I am freaking awesome! Now that I've got some ability, she comes begging to me, asking me for money!" "It's okay." Xia Fan hugged Jiang Kui, whispering softly, "Don't cry." "We support you." Zhao Ying Ge came over with tissues to wipe Jiang Kui's tears. Wei Haoyun also spoke up: "You don't need to feel any burden." The singers from Yu Dynasty were actually quite close. Seeing Jiang Kui like this, everyone felt heartache. "I came from the mountains, I carried my two little brothers on my back, everyone praises me for being amazing, I have real talent, my singing is so beautiful, so many people love listening to my songs!" Jiang Kui wasn't paying attention to what anybody else was saying, she just kept shouting by herself. The servers outside couldn't help but peek inside, but were sent away with a look from Lin Yuan. "Only idiots would give money!" Jiang Kui used her sleeve to wipe the tears and shouted again, then grabbed a beer and started chugging. Sun Yaohuo nodded in agreement: "Exactly, only an idiot would give money." Chen Zhiyu saw where this was going, quickly snatched her beer away, and echoed in agreement: "Only idiots would give money, really." When Jiang Kui saw her beer

taken away, she cried out even louder, standing up to snatch it back. Chen Zhiyu ran off. Jiang Kui was short and couldn't reach it even when she jumped. Out of frustration, she climbed onto the table, then burst into laughter: "I am that idiot!" She laughed with tears streaming down her face, while everyone else froze, their expressions complex. "I am that idiot!" Jiang Kui finally got ahold of another can of beer, but just as she took a sip, she choked on it, coughing repeatedly. Crash. She bent over, and as a result, her foot slipped, causing her to fall down. "Ah!" Amidst everyone's cries of alarm, Lin Yuan got up and caught her. "Lin Yuan!" Jiang Kui, oblivious to her near fall, just stared at Lin Yuan, calling his name for the first time. Everyone's mouth hung open in shock. But Jiang Kui continued with another bombshell: "Zhao Ying Ge has a crush on you!" "Jiang Kui!" Zhao Ying Ge's face instantly turned beet red. "She lusts after your body!" Jiang Kui didn't care about Zhao Ying Ge's feelings, the words of a drunk lacked any sense: "Xia Fan said that when you were in junior high..." "Shut up!" Xia Fan quickly covered Jiang Kui's mouth. "Mmm mmm!" Jiang Kui struggled uncomfortably. Xia Fan hesitated to let go, but when she did, Jiang Kui threw up all over Lin Yuan. Instantly, the room fell silent. Everyone looked nervously at Lin Yuan, a bit inexplicably scared. "Don't let her drink next time." Lin Yuan said nonchalantly, then said, "Xia Fan, take her home." "Alright." Xia Fan breathed a sigh of relief and responded quickly. Jiang Kui was still shouting: "Let me introduce myself, I'm the idiot..." Sun Yaohuo suddenly got heated: "It's just money, so give it to her. I'll take you to make big money from now on. Xia Fan, you're busy, I'll take her home later. What a mess over some petty issue, and you vomited all over your junior!" Everyone cast odd glances at Sun Yaohuo. Lin Yuan spoke up: "Well, that's it then, let's call it a night." Chen Zhiyu called out: "I'll buy you some clothes..." "Wear mine, they're new; make do for now, junior." Sun Yaohuo took off his outer jacket and handed it to Lin Yuan. Everyone: "...". In the end, everyone went their separate ways. Wearing Sun Yaohuo's jacket, Lin Yuan sat in the car, looking at the receding scenery, and suddenly hummed a tune softly. From the driver's seat. The driver silently turned off the car stereo and, listening to the humming from behind, his expression subtly shifted. "You are Diao..." "You are a free bird..."

Chapter 762 Diao

Jiang Kui woke up at noon the next day. She had a bit of a headache after the hangover. She shouldn't have drunk so much last night. Last night—As if she had just remembered something, Jiang Kui suddenly sat up! "Ah!" She screamed, her hands vigorously rubbing her hair! Some people have no recollection of what happened after getting drunk; others, after sobering up, can roughly remember what they did... Jiang Kui belonged to the latter. She remembered pouring her heart out to her best friend about her recent troubles, remembered climbing onto a table in a drunken frenzy, and even more distinctly remembered vomiting all over Teacher Admirable Fish... That's right! Did she also blurt out the fact that Zhao Ying Ge has a crush on Teacher Admirable Fish? Wait! Did she actually call Teacher Admirable Fish by his name yesterday? "It's over, it's over, it's over..." Jiang Kui was completely in a panic, her face burning with embarrassment even though there was no one else around, wishing she could just crawl into a hole! Isn't it good to be alive!? What on earth did I do! Jiang Kui hurriedly grabbed her phone, and just as she turned it on, she received a bunch of messages. Wei Haoyun: [If you're short on cash, tell sis, I'll lend you some.] Zhao Ying Ge: [Jiang Kui, I'm gonna fight you!] Xia Fan: [(smile) (smile) (smile)] Chen Zhiyu: [Beautiful, do you remember what happened last night? (sinister)] Sun Yaohuo: [I give up, it's just a billion yuan. I'll help you with your financial problem, did you really have to puke on your junior?] It was true! Jiang Kui's face turned pale! Just then, her phone buzzed. Teacher Admirable Fish: [You are late.] Whoosh! Jiang Kui threw her phone out as if it were a death warrant! Oh no! She had

forgotten she had to record a song today! The next moment. She jumped out of bed, not even caring that she put her shoes on the wrong feet, and rushed into the bathroom to wash up at breakneck speed! Half an hour later. Jiang Kui was lingering outside Lin Yuan's office door, dragging her feet, not daring to enter. "Whoo!" After giving herself a strong pep talk, Jiang Kui gathered the courage to push the door and enter. Inside the office. Lin Yuan was looking down at his phone; upon hearing the noise, he looked up at Jiang Kui. "I was wrong!" Jiang Kui bowed deeply, her head lowered, not daring to look at Lin Yuan's face, the image of "bowing down to the boss.gif" "I've changed your song." Lin Yuan acted as if nothing had happened, took out a sheet of lyrics and music, and casually opened a demo track. Jiang Kui, still stunned, lifted her head to take the sheets. At that moment. The room was filled with the demo Lin Yuan had previously recorded: "Diao lives in a faraway place..." As the lyrics played one by one. The nervousness and tension on Jiang Kui's face gradually vanished, replaced by a rising admiration from the bottom of her heart. When the demo ended. Jiang Kui suddenly spoke, her tone quivering slightly: "This song..." "The song is called 'Diao.' Can you sing it?" "Yes!" "Then go practice it, and get it recorded in the next couple of days." "Okay." Jiang Kui nodded seriously and resolutely, but her eyes had unknowingly reddened, despite the fact that they were already swollen from last night's tearful breakdown. "Thank you, Teacher Admirable Fish!" "You can call me Lin Yuan." Jiang Kui's knees nearly buckled, almost sending her to the ground. She practically fled the office. As she closed the door behind her, a light suddenly shone in her heart. ... At the end of July. The hottest news on the internet was about the upcoming Bluelympics in August. Conversely. The season's chart naturally made for a lively scene, after all, it was a preview of the Bluelympics! This month, the fan support songs for each continent gained plenty of attention! All these songs came from the hands of Xian Yu. Because of this, Despite the Bluelympics being in full swing, Xian Yu's name was still repeatedly mentioned! "Fish Papa is truly invincible this July!" "Speaking of which, August is coming." "Xian Yu's path to twelve consecutive championships will face a new round of challenges." "I wonder what song Fish Papa will bring in August." "I guess the news will come out soon." "There's no official promotion spot in August, so the competition should be pretty intense." "Quick, look at Starlight's official announcement, the info on Fish Papa's new song is out!" "... With some reminders, netizens hurriedly clicked on Starlight's official announcement: [Xian Yu's new song in August will be a collaboration with Jiang Kui, who will officially vie for the title of Song Queen this August!] The official announcement had a picture, Xian Yu's poster on the left, and Jiang Kui's poster on the right. At that moment, Everyone saw through Starlight's promotional intentions! "Is Fish Papa helping Jiang Kui to strive for the title of Song Queen?" "Jiang Kui's professional stats are really high, it seems she's just a bit short of becoming Song Queen. If Fish Papa can continue to top the charts in August, then it shouldn't be a problem for Jiang Kui to become Song Queen!" "Jiang Kui has had a tough life." "Jiang Kui's singing talent is really strong. You know, she taught herself to sing. Originally a street performer, she was scouted by a Star Scout from Starlight and entered the company. Then she met Xian Yu, and her career skyrocketed!" "Jiang Kui doesn't have formal training?" "Somehow there are people who don't know. Jiang Kui has mentioned her past in many interviews. A girl from the mountains, her father died, her mother remarried, and she had to make a living outside with her two younger brothers. Her experience is particularly inspiring!" "I can't believe she's already aiming for the title of Song Queen!" "I remember an entertainment show once showed pictures of Jiang Kui when she was young, emaciated and holding her two younger brothers. It was really heartbreaking to see, that's when I started following her!" "... In the internet era, information is transparent. As the highest-rated singer of the Yu Dynasty, Jiang Kui's past was dug up by many reporters after she became famous. After much digging, the public became informed. When Jiang Kui participated in

some interviews, she also revealed some of her past. Previously not much discussed, but as Jiang Kui started aiming for the title of Song Queen, these old stories were again dug up by netizens. Inspirational stories are always something people enjoy discussing. Otherwise, shows like "The Voice" wouldn't tirelessly craft tear-jerking stories. While everyone was discussing Jiang Kui, Suddenly, new explosive news appeared online: "There's a big scoop circulating in the industry recently, Jiang Kui's mother demanded one billion from her and filled her husband's accounts with it. They say her mother made a scene at Starlight trying to get the money, completely cleaning out Jiang Kui!" The affairs of stars can never stay hidden. The commotion caused by Jiang Kui's mother at Starlight ultimately attracted some attention. Celebrity family issues always have a strange allure to the public. At first, it was just rumors. Many people considered it boring, false gossip. Jiang Kui isn't a fool, how could she possibly agree to her mother's outrageous demands? But by that evening, The reports from journalists were already quite detailed! They included everything about Jiang Kui's mother, who remarried and neglected her children, but then came back begging her daughter to bail out her new husband's debts, even listing a series of compelling evidence from sources unknown... After reading the reports, Netizens were shocked! The hell, this is actually true? "One billion?" "She really gave it?" "To a mother who didn't care about her and her brothers?" "My god, how can a mother be so heartless?" "The mother didn't care when her daughter was struggling, but now she comes asking for money, moral blackmailing too?" "If it were me, I would never give!" "Damn, I can't believe this outrageous news is true!" "Her mother doesn't dare to accept interviews, claiming she owes her daughter, but damn, what she owes is more than just one billion!" "Insiders can responsibly tell everyone that Jiang Kui's assets are definitely not one billion. Without additional business interests, a top singer can't make that much. She must have borrowed money to fill this gap." "Damn!" "As a daughter, how could her mother ignore her for so many years without a care? If it were me, I would be heartbroken!" "..." Netizens were completely flabbergasted! This girl is really naive! Suddenly, Jiang Kui's story spread wide and far! Amongst the sighs and sentiments of countless netizens, August finally arrived... The song "Diao" was officially released!

Chapter 766: Before the Movie Viewing

After the promotion of the movie began, it didn't matter how high the expectations were pulled, at the very least it caught the attention of many people. Aside from Xian Yu's own fans, internet users interested in this type of movie had already become the potential consumer group for the box office — "Adventure." "Big investment." "Special effects movie." These were the initial impressions the promotion gave to everyone, and it actually wasn't strange to conclude from these impressions that this movie was a commercial film, especially after Xian Yu had filmed "Spiderman." Everyone knew that this crossover player was also skilled at making commercial films; after all, it was rare for art films to have investments of several hundred million. Using normal logic, which company would dare to bet so much money on the success or failure of an art film? And this conclusion of the internet users was also the conclusion of the creative team behind "Nightfall." The movie named "Nightfall" was a work of Qi Continent from the Blue Star Film Pantheon. After the movie was released, it received a wave of positive reviews. Many people said that "Nightfall" would reap huge rewards at the Dragon Awards, including the inner belief of the movie's creative team. "It seems Xian Yu has already given up on next year's Dragon Awards." Director An Xu of "Nightfall" said with a smile. He was one of the most famous art film directors in Qi Continent and had won Best Director at the Dragon Awards eight years ago, making him a significant figure in the film industry. "Even if his new film continues to be an art film, we still don't need to worry." The head screenwriter of the movie, Jiang Zhu, followed with a laugh. Jiang Zhu and An Xu were old

partners. Eight years ago, the screenwriter for An Xu's film that won Best Director was Jiang Zhu. However, An Xu's films were director-centered, with screenwriter Jiang Zhu in a subordinate position. "I'm just playing it safe." An Xu's eyes flashed with admiration and he said, "That 'The Truman Show' at the start of the year was excellent. It's amazing that Xian Yu could write such a script. If his new movie were also an art film, then I really wouldn't dare to take it lightly." An Xu recognized "The Truman Show." No matter whether this movie could win the ultimate award or not, it could not change the fact that the movie was a classic. After all, awards are not the only standard for measuring whether a movie is good or bad, just as box office cannot represent everything. In fact. Even if Xian Yu had only released "The Truman Show," an art film this year, it would still be taken seriously by An Xu and Jiang Zhu. This movie was still the strongest competitor for "Nightfall" at the Dragon Awards. "His creative energy is very robust, and the quality of each script is notable. I truly admire that, but your concerns are still superfluous. Art film scripts aren't that easy to write. 'The Truman Show' at the beginning of the year was a rare gem. I don't believe he could produce another of this type. His new film taking a commercial route is within my expectations," Jiang Zhu analysed calmly. An Xu's mouth curled up slightly, "I'll be free in a few days. How about we go watch Xian Yu's new movie together?" Jiang Zhu nodded, "I was thinking the same." Xian Yu now held a certain status in the film circle, and his peers in the industry were curious about his movies. "By the way." Jiang Zhu suddenly said, "It seems the genre of Xian Yu's new movie has left some film critics quite dissatisfied. Some of them have such a prejudice against commercial films that I have to consider their views when I think about writing a commercial script..." "There's a bunch of pretentious literati among the film critics." An Xu scoffed, as he was not only a director of art films capable of winning the Best Director at the Dragon Awards—how could he possibly only make art films? He also had some commercial works to his name, including some that were big box-office hits. Pure art film directors have difficulty winning the Dragon Awards, because box office is also one of the considerations for the awards. "To make a commercial film is to fall from grace, those critics who say such things, I seriously doubt their professional integrity. Looks like Xian Yu's 'Spiderman' caused quite a backlash from some film critics. These people honestly don't seem to want others to make money," An Xu said. "You have a point, I think I'll also ignore them," Jiang Zhu spoke up. "However, Xian Yu's commercial films are different from others. Even for a commercial movie like 'Spiderman,' he added his own thoughts and understanding, which is something I should learn from. Let's see how he does with his new film, it might bring me some interesting inspiration." People from Qi Continent in the film industry still have a strong spirit of learning. That's probably also why Qi Continent is the Blue Star Film Pantheon. Of course. The reason the two could chat so easily and happily in the end was because they both agreed that Xian Yu's new movie was a commercial film, which did not pose a competitive threat to their "Nightfall." In this day and age. A big investment with high special effects in a commercial film, unless its box office explodes to a certain extent, would have difficulty competing with a work like "Nightfall," which had both critical acclaim and box office success, for the significant awards at the Dragon Awards. ... In the following days, the promotion of "Life of Pi" remained quite lively. There were indeed other films being promoted at the same time, but the name "Xian Yu" still carried weight in the hearts of movie fans. This was because Xian Yu's name could now provide a certain quality assurance for movies. During the promotion process. Starlight also released a few minutes of promotional footage for the film! The promotional footage didn't offer much in terms of content, focusing instead on special effects: A flying fish darting through the seabed... Jellyfish emitting a magnificent light... Dolphins leaping out of the water one after the other... Of course, there were also whales, as everyone imagined, but they appeared in groups, with

one creature that resembled a whale causing countless waves to leap over a small boat... Below the whales. A tiger and a boy, one on the bow and one on the stern. It's hard to imagine this being a sea disaster—could there be such a romantic survival at sea? All the scenes were breathtakingly beautiful! For those who like such lavish visuals, this kind of promotional footage was fatally attractive! "Such a beautiful ocean!" "The use of color is really amazing!" "The director is Qi Continent's Du An, he and Xian Yu together, indeed, took the visual quality to the next level!" "I almost thought it was a documentary about the ocean!" "The visuals are stunning!" "I'm going to see this movie with my girlfriend, just not sure if the ticket checker will let me in." "Not let you in? Is your girlfriend made of some kind of silicone material?" "Xian Yu makes commercial films with a unique perspective. For example, when he directs a superhero movie, he focuses on the character's inner growth rather than saving the world. It seems he's taken the same approach with 'The Fantastic Voyage of Pi.' While others make their stories thrilling with long legs and beach bikinis, his focus is on the beauty of the ocean!" "..."

This trailer indeed attracted a lot of netizens. The director's talent is so important, which is why Lin Yuan chose to work with renowned directors like Du An! If Yi Chenggong were to direct, he couldn't make it more beautiful than Du An! Of course. Everyone has their own strengths. Yi Chenggong did a great job with 'The Truman Show.' That movie didn't need fancy visuals, just to convey the story well, which is Yi Chenggong's forte. He is very skilled at bringing a script's story to life. The precondition is that the script's story has to be good in itself, which is precisely what Lin Yuan can satisfy. And so, August 7th arrived. The release date advertised in the movie trailers! That day, the major cinemas were bustling! An Xu, holding a movie ticket, was waiting for the film to start and also observing the crowd buying tickets in the lobby: "There really are a lot of people buying tickets." Jiang Zhu, who came to watch the movie with An Xu, laughed and said, "Xian Yu is very popular, and the quality of his movies has always been superb, so he's naturally attracting more and more audiences." "Mhm." An Xu thoughtfully said, "Maybe one day Xian Yu will stand at the top of the movie industry's food chain, becoming a force capable of challenging Zhong Continent." "Zhong Continent..." Jiang Zhu started to smile bitterly. Qi Continent might be Blue Star's hall of cinematic fame, but all Blue Starians knew that the true center of art was Zhong Continent, which wasn't considered in others' calculations. Zhong Continent was too strong. In the past, everyone could ignore how strong Zhong Continent was, since each continent had cultural barriers. But a few years later, Zhong Continent would join the process of merging with other continents, and the entire artistic and cultural scene of Blue Star would become unified. At that time, how to compete with the genius minds of Zhong Continent was something every top-tier artistic talent on each continent had to consider. Meanwhile, as they chatted, the theater showing 'The Fantastic Voyage of Pi' began checking tickets. "Let's go." An Xu stepped forward. Jiang Zhu followed, and they checked in together. Inside the theater, An Xu took his seat in the seventh row, a spot he had carefully chosen when buying his ticket. Jiang Zhu sat next to him. This was a top-tier screening hall, with superb 3D effects. In front of the audience was a gigantic screen, nearly thirty meters wide and twenty meters high! The sound system and other equipment, everything was top-notch! Such a premium theater was only used for blockbuster movies - a single ticket cost hundreds of yuan! Smaller budget films didn't even qualify to be screened here. For instance, non-3D movies wouldn't be shown in this hall. Furthermore, this hall also used glasses-free 3D effects, meaning audiences didn't need to bother with wearing 3D glasses. It's worth noting, Earth's movie technology hadn't reached the point of glasses-free 3D, with only Hollywood's number one tech enthusiast Cameron tirelessly exploring this field. On Blue Star, glasses-free 3D was nothing new for audiences, with 3D glasses becoming obsolete. But that's not all. Beyond the glasses-free 3D effect, the seats in this hall were smart-enabled, adjusting to the

movie's atmosphere with even mild movements. However, this was a feature the audience could control, choosing to disable it if desired. The lighting in the theater wasn't fixed, either. In short, normally only movies with an investment of over half a billion could afford such top-tier technology, which is why Blue Star's big-budget VFX blockbusters were so successful at the box office – watching them felt like being transported into the movie's world! This was something low-budget films couldn't match. It's also worth mentioning that this was Lin Yuan's first film equipped with such advanced Blue Star technology. In Ol' Zhou's words: This was Lin Yuan's first time, and Blue Star had never seen an art film using this screening standard! And now, 'The Fantastic Voyage of Pi' had officially begun! As the movie company logo flickered, All the audience members, including An Xu and Jiang Zhu, looked up at the immense screen.

Chapter 767: This is Actually an Art Film

The movie began. What first appeared before the audience was a wildlife zoo. It somewhat resembled a documentary about wildlife. Various animals appeared one after another. Because the movie effects were good enough, it made the audience feel as if they were touring the zoo. "Did you grow up in the zoo?" "I was born there too, in a small town in Han Continent..." Two people were chatting, and to the audience's surprise, one of them was played by Jian Yi! The other wasn't a well-known actor, but a nondescript man with dark skin. ... In the audience. "Memory?" An Xu immediately understood the intention of the film. Xian Yu's "The Tuner" also started with a dialogue between two people and then unfolded through memories, which reassured An Xu even more. "The Tuner" was a suspense film. It also did well commercially. "The colors are very beautiful." Jiang Zhu's attention was on the zoo seen earlier. The myriad of fascinating animals was interesting, which is why people like watching wildlife—wild animals have a strange attraction to humans. ... On the giant screen. Two men were eating. Their relationship revealed itself through their conversation. Jian Yi played an ambitious writer who visited the man's home for material for his book. He was a man who was very strict with his work, once destroying text that had taken him two years to write because he was dissatisfied with the story. He had heard: This man named Pi had ventured across the sea, and the process was bizarre, exciting, and almost unbelievable, making it perfect material for a novel's story, so he sought out Pi. Pi did not refuse. He invited the writer to dine with him, then began to tell his story starting from his birth. The pace of the story was very slow. Pi spoke about his childhood, even his schooling experiences, and his family's religious beliefs. ... It was strange. An Xu slightly furrowed his brows. Pi's recounting of his story seemed irrelevant to the adventure itself, which didn't match the pace of a commercial film at all. Surely Xian Yu wouldn't be unaware of the rhythm a commercial film should follow? Not right! A sudden realization dawned on An Xu; this didn't appear to be a commercial film, at least not purely so. "It's been almost half an hour." Jiang Zhu checked the time on his phone, his expression becoming a bit odd. The movie was promoted as a story about survival and adventure at sea, but nearly half an hour had passed and the sea adventure hadn't even started? This pace was frighteningly slow! What exactly was Xian Yu trying to convey with this film? Jiang Zhu, an experienced screenwriter, didn't believe Xian Yu would waste the limited runtime of a movie on pointless plots; surely there was something he wanted to express with such a long introduction. But the problem was... At this pace, it was very risky. The patience of the audience was limited, and everyone's tolerance was almost at its limit! Indeed, it was crucial. An Xu and Jiang Zhu could clearly sense that the audience was becoming restless. Whispers began to rise in the theater. "So boring." "Why has it taken so long to get to the main point?" "This is nothing like what I imagined." "I could understand the part about the tiger—Pi was trying to show that tigers and humans can have emotions, but the rest of the

introduction seemed a bit excessive..." "So dull, I'm about to fall asleep." "This movie by Xian Yu is a bit below standard." "Isn't this buildup a bit too long?" "Who cares who Pi's family members are." "His dad, mom, and brother have too much screen time." ... The audience was becoming dissatisfied. The movie spent half an hour recounting the story of Pi's childhood and school days, including countless plots about his father, mother, and brother, which seemed utterly unrelated to the main theme of the film! And just as the audience was about to lose patience, the plot finally took a turn! Pi's father suddenly announced one day that he had sold the zoo and was transporting the animals to Qin Continent across the ocean! Amid Pi's dissatisfaction and confusion, his family set out to sea! An Xu and Jiang Zhu exchanged glances, both detecting the oddity in each other's eyes. Clearly. Both realized that something was amiss with the movie, and it seemed very different from what they had imagined! Fortunately, it finally got to the main topic. ... On the giant screen. Pi and his family were on a ferry at sea. Countless animals on the ferry resided in the lowermost deck of the ship, which was as vast as a continent and resembled a fortress at sea, moving slowly but resolutely. That night. Pi couldn't sleep and decided to go for a walk. Upon opening the cabin door, Pi discovered that a fierce wind was sweeping outside, and the sea was tumultuous with waves crashing against the ship! "A storm!" It was the first time Pi had seen such a spectacular scene. He waved his arms, letting the seawater drench him. Splash. He fell. He panicked momentarily but noticed that all the lights on the ship were on, and someone was shouting: "The cabin is taking on water!" Pi was terrified and wanted to wake his parents and family, but he fell again after taking just a couple of steps. The sailors had already lowered the lifeboats: "Old people and children first!" Suddenly, cries and shouts filled the air! Pi was almost pushed into a lifeboat by the sailors. He wanted to save his family, but the sailors stopped him because the situation was very dire, and amidst the chaos, the animals locked below deck had somehow managed to escape.

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Boom! The zebra crashed into the lifeboat, snapping its tethering ropes. The white lifeboat fell into the sea and became adrift like a rootless weed. "Parker!" In the midst of the chaos. Pi saw a tiger also climb aboard the boat in the sea; Parker was the name Pi had given the tiger. In the midst of the disaster at sea. Humans and animals alike were following their instinct to survive! And when the storm calmed and daylight broke. Pi clung tightly to a pole on the lifeboat and climbed into the cabin. At that moment. A orangutan floated aboard on a bunch of bananas in the distance. This orangutan was also an inhabitant of the zoo, named Orange Juice. Suddenly. A hyena leaped out, aiming to attack Pi. It turned out that in the midst of the shipwreck, not only the zebra but also this hyena had made it aboard, and of course, the tiger that had hidden in the cramped boat cabin as well. Things just got lively. This tiny lifeboat was now occupied by various creatures. They were the zebra, which had broken its leg upon crashing into the boat, the orangutan that had floated aboard on bananas, the hyena that had come aboard at some unknown point, and the tiger that had retreated into the cabin upon boarding, and of course, the protagonist of the movie! The hyena bared its teeth and snarled. The zebra lay immobile. Sorrow filled the orangutan's face. Pi was hiding at the bow of the boat. The tiger lurked in the shadows. On the cramped lifeboat, several different animals coexisted, along with a helpless human hiding at the bow. Adrift on the boundless sea, what kind of story would unfold between them? ... Pi was recounting the past events. The writer's expressions changed, clearly captivated by the story. Meanwhile, in front of the screen. The audience gradually ceased their complaints, their gazes locked onto the giant screen. This tense and thrilling tale of shipwreck had almost made the audience forget the dreary thirty-minute lead-up. When the disaster struck, even their seats seemed to rock slightly, as if they too had just

experienced a shipwreck! "What a bizarre scene!" "Four animals on a lifeboat, plus a spooked protagonist!" "When will the tiger come out?" "It's making me so nervous!" "The zebra and orangutan are harmless, but this hyena clearly has aggressive intentions toward the protagonist!" "That hyena is going to end up dead by the tiger, isn't it?" "The first half-hour was too boring, this part is a bit more interesting." "... Familiar audience members conversed with each other; however, the discussions were barely audible over the movie's background noise within the whole theater. "Sigh." An Xu let out a breath: "Such wild imagination." Past adventure stories always featured a group of people together, with men and women each playing their roles. But Xian Yu's tale of survival at sea was of a bunch of animals on a boat with only one human protagonist. "The audience is hooked." Jiang Zhu glanced around, then spoke up. Not just the regular viewers, but her, a screenwriter, was drawn in by this astounding brainchild. Who wouldn't be curious about what story might unfold on such an oddly assembled lifeboat? It should be noted... Land creatures at sea was already against logic, only a shipwreck that set all onboard animals loose could result in such an eerie and miraculous scene. And it was entirely a screenwriter's wild imagination! Nevertheless, Jiang Zhu and An Xu still couldn't make sense of why the first thirty minutes of the movie were such an extensive setup. No matter how they looked at it, those thirty minutes were boring. Compared to the current scenario, there seemed to be no significant connection, a hefty prefix that could have been cut, simplified into a setup completed within ten minutes. Meanwhile. The two of them found it hard to see the movie as just a simple commercial film anymore, for a commercial film wouldn't be shot this way! For the time being, they did not dwell on this thought. Both of them, along with countless other viewers, were curious about the same question, which was how the protagonist would break the deadlock next? On the narrow boat. Four animals and one human—could they possibly coexist peacefully? Let alone the fact that among these animals were the vicious hyena and the fearsome tiger hidden in the shadows! Clearly. The intrigue had been established. Just then, an audience member gasped! ... On the giant screen. The hyena, unable to attack Pi hiding at the bow, turned and began to viciously bite the zebra! "No!" Pi had developed a deep bond with the animals from a young age, and his eyes reddened upon witnessing this scene, while the orangutan named Orange Juice violently attacked the hyena in an attempt to protect the zebra. Accompanied by a mournful cry, the zebra was killed by the hyena. At the same time. The orangutan knocked the hyena unconscious. However. The hyena regained consciousness after a few minutes and tore into the orangutan! The orangutan died as well. The audience was gripped with anguish. The hyena was too savage! Just then. A tiger's roar filled the air. The tiger named Parker rushed out, biting the hyena to death before immediately turning towards Pi! Pi hastily retreated. The tiger's attempt was thwarted as it growled at him, causing the audience to shudder! The pattern of wildlife coexistence was utterly destroyed! The zebra, the orangutan, and the hyena, all were dead! On the boat, only the tiger and the protagonist Pi remained! The fantastic voyage of the young Pi had, at this moment, truly begun! ... The audience's eyes widened, thoroughly captivated by the plot! A brutal survival scenario unfolded before them in the wilderness, presented graphically to the audience! There was no melodramatic treatment, no heroic protagonist taming the hyena and tiger to lead the animals in a desperate fight for survival—only the law of nature's survival of the fittest! The hyena was hungry! It couldn't eat humans! So it wanted to eat the zebra and orangutan! The tiger was also hungry, so it killed the hyena! "The tiger is emotionless, regardless of whether it's the hyena, the orangutan, or the zebra; they all could become its food, and Pi is its backup food. Once the animals are eaten, it will find a way to eat humans!"

"As a child, I steadfastly believed that animals have emotions." "Whether such wild animals have emotions is hard to say, but surviving at sea like this, such brutality is normal. To survive, the tiger would inevitably have to consume other animals. There was a scene set up in the first thirty minutes, where Pi's father put it well—animals will always be animals. They only have their animal instincts, while humans possess humanity. That's why when animals are hungry they eat other animals, but when people are hungry, they don't eat people." "I'm too curious about the latter part of the story. How is Pi going to contend with the tiger?" "The promotion says Pi has to coexist with the tiger for over two hundred days. Wouldn't the tiger have him down to his bones in that time?" "Little sister, ever heard of the protagonist's halo?" "Let's see how Xian Yu is going to resolve the upcoming plot." "... Now, the audience was thoroughly enjoying themselves, having endured the boring set-up of the first half hour. The current scenes were quite interesting and anticipation for the storyline was high. How can a man coexist with a tiger for over two hundred days? Everyone was greatly curious about this. ... As the film progressed, An Xu was also thinking, but he considered much more than the average viewer! He wasn't stupid! After about an hour into the movie, to still treat it as a normal commercial film would be foolish! It wasn't that An Xu was slow to react. In fact, the monotonous set-up of the first thirty minutes had already made him realize that something was off about this film. He smelled something! It was the scent of an art film! An art film? Investing hundreds of millions, employing the highest level of production standards, only for Xian Yu to come out with an art film? An Xu felt his understanding of cinema had been greatly shaken! This was the reason he dared to be sure only now! Who would have the guts to do such a thing? To throw in so many hundreds of millions and bet on the profitability of an art film!? That's crazy! Do you really think that with the approach of an art film, if you tell an interesting story, audiences will buy it!? Too greedy! Xian Yu wants both the reputation of art films and the box office of commercial films, so he made such a film! From boring to interesting – a full hour! Only then did the film begin to enter into the rhythm of the story between man and tiger! How much of a ripple would the subsequent plot need to justify this investment? An Xu couldn't dare imagine! And as An Xu fully came to his senses, Jiang Zhu also came back to reality. Her expression was one of shock, her tone filled with strong disbelief: "This is an art film!" An Xu's gaze flickered: "Weakness is a sin, so even with the protection of a gorilla, a zebra with a broken leg has no chance against the hyenas, and the gorilla trying to protect the zebra is killed by the hyenas too. This proves that if you want to protect others, you must have the strength to do so; otherwise, you will just end up getting both of you killed." This wasn't a difficult lesson to grasp. Jiang Zhu gradually understood the idea: "The hyenas represent evil forces, and the tiger represents an even greater evil force. This can be understood as a kind of 'dog-eat-dog' scenario, where the wicked will ultimately be consumed by something even more wicked. But isn't that too simple?" This is an art film! Recognizing the essence of the film, many scenes couldn't just be taken at face value and should instead be considered from a deeper and more comprehensive perspective. However, this level of contemplation seemed insufficient for an art film's exploration of depth and substance. "Xian Yu is too greedy and too hasty this time." An Xu shook his head: "The film already has bugs." "What bug?" Jiang Zhu's gaze slightly sharpened. An Xu said, "Think about how the gorilla got on the boat before. It boarded using floating bananas. Setting aside whether bananas can float in the sea, even if the bananas could float, do you think they could carry the weight of a gorilla?" Jiang Zhu's eyes widened! Yes! A gorilla weighing hundreds of pounds, how could the bananas carry it? There really is a bug in this plot! As for the movie's reviews after it was released, let's not go into that. In any case, Xian Yu's knowledge of physics is bound to get criticized by the professionals. "Actually, this is just a trivial matter." An Xu shook his head, "The real point is, it took him an hour to get to the

main topic. With such a slow pace, it simply can't support the investment cost of this movie. Wanting to grab the reputation of an art film and the box office of a commercial film, there were greedy people like this before, but you, as an industry insider, should be as aware as I am of the outcome." Jiang Zhu nodded. Xian Yu's ambition is too great, but judging by the current level of this movie, although exciting, it can't support such grand ambitions and expectations. It can only be said that the concept of humans and animals struggling for survival at sea is indeed a splendid idea. ... In reality. Inside the major cinemas, many industry insiders watching the film started looking stunned one after another upon realizing Xian Yu's grand ambition! Among them. There were directors, screenwriters, film critics, and more. Xian Yu's film indeed attracted a lot of attention from industry insiders! "This is actually an art film!?" "The key point is, it lacks the flavor of an art film and instead just explores the relationship between humans, animals, and nature?" "What on earth is he thinking?" "Is this plot worth such a high investment?" "He wants to take the commercial film path and also the art film path, doesn't he know that you can't have the best of both worlds?" "It's too crazy!" "The plot is interesting now but the pacing at the beginning is too slow, taking a full hour to get going!" "The structure is too bloated." "Since when is an art film represented by a group of animals!" "It's not that the structure is bloated, on the contrary, it feels too simple. Man and tiger surviving at sea, such content isn't enough to express anything profound, and yet he spent an hour setting it up for just this!" "Xian Yu is better suited for smaller investments." "Large productions don't suit him." "It just shows that everyone excels at different things. From the script level alone, it's interesting, at least it doesn't make you want to stop watching halfway through." "... For industry insiders, the movie was just okay, not as exceptional as some may say! But the investment in the film was too high! With such an approach, even breaking even is tough! In the meantime, a small number of people remained silent. Because the movie had another hour to go, and Xian Yu might still have a chance to turn it around in the next hour, even though the possibility was very slim. And at this point. The movie was still ongoing. What nobody realized was that from the moment the hyenas started eating humans, the movie had turned sinister and terrifying!

Chapter 767 He's Lying

Above the giant screen. Man stands face to face with a tiger. Ocean currents surge in darkness. This tiny lifeboat quietly floats on the sea's surface, its final destination unknown to all. Pi begins to fight for survival. He discovers some food supplies and fresh water in the lifeboat, along with a survival manual that teaches him how to live on the open sea until help arrives. There is a raft on the boat. He pushes the raft into the sea and stays on it, keeping his distance from the tiger on the boat— He attempts to tame the tiger. But he is not a qualified animal trainer, and his plan to tame the tiger concludes with Parker marking his face with a spray of yellow urine. Pi knows that the tiger can swim. When the tiger is desperately hungry, it will surely swim over to eat him, so he has no choice but to try and catch fish from the sea to feed the tiger. There is not much water. When it rains, he collects rainwater for drinking and shares it with the tiger. A man and a tiger, they survive day by day like this. The process doesn't seem long or boring. The emerald sea, tranquil as a painting when calm. At night, the stars make the sea mesmerizing and magnificent. When the ocean rages, waves sweep and churn with towering fury, the boat rocked countless times amidst violent storms. Flying fish... Bioluminescent jellyfish... Schools of dolphins swim by... And whales roam in groups, stirring up countless waves. However. Food and fresh water aren't always available, and the tiger becomes extremely hungry; it tries to fish in the water and swims toward Pi. It wants to eat Pi! Pi jumps from the raft onto the boat and retracts the raft, isolating the tiger in the sea. Just when the

audience thinks the tiger is doomed, Pi suddenly has a change of heart and decides to save the tiger onto the boat. The next few days. He tries to tame the tiger little by little by feeding it chunks of fish meat. This time, he succeeds. ... This is a fantastical adventure journey; when the tiger is tamed, some audience members can't restrain their excitement and let out a small cheer! "It's so beautiful!" "This ocean journey is fraught with dangers, but the scenery is truly beautiful, including the glowing jellyfish!" "Those fish are so pretty!" "The part with the swordfish cracked me up. A group of swordfish flew by, and the largest one got taken by Pi; the poor meerkat was left to eat the smaller fish." "I thought Pi would kill the tiger!" "After spending so many days together, he couldn't bear to kill it. He's wanted to be friends with a tiger since he was a child, and being alone on the ocean, he really needed companionship, even from a tiger." "The special effects are really amazing!" "You watch big-budget films for the effects, so exhilarating. The plot finally got thrilling too; previously, Pi was just being bullied by the tiger, and it made me so anxious that my palms sweated." "The tiger is kind of cute, like a cat." "They should have shown this part earlier. Luckily I made it through the first thirty minutes of boring flashbacks until about an hour in, when the story became exciting!" "... The audience chats in hushed tones. An Xu gently raises an eyebrow. Even as a director, he couldn't find fault with the recent scenes—the beautiful ocean captured perfectly by the camera almost took his breath away. The budget is definitely burning! And the segment of Pi interacting with the tiger, all the way to taming it, is also very impressive, sustaining excellent pacing. The atmosphere of despair juxtaposes with several amusing moments without feeling forced. "It seems pretty good." Jiang Zhu speaks up, her feminine longing for beautiful imagery evident when such scenes are displayed, almost making her forget this is about survival at sea. Stunningly beautiful! Wonderful images, the seabed's myriad of strange creatures, the occasional shark fins gliding by, gorgeous yet deadly! But let's not forget. The problem of survival weighs heavily on both Pi and the tiger. After days of drifting, they are nearing their limit—then a storm hits! ... This storm is too intense! Its ferocity is comparable even to the day the huge ship capsized! Pi always does foolish things, like thinking such scenes are awe-inspiring, gifts from God, until he sees the tiger struggling desperately in the waves. Pi suddenly yells at the sky: "Why are you scaring him!" "I have lost my family, I have lost everything!" "I submit!" "God!?" "What else do you want from me!" Pi completely breaks down; perhaps from that moment, he no longer believes in God, his faith starting to crumble! ... An Xu's expression shows he is moved. Jiang Zhu also has a look of sympathy in her eyes. The audience's faces are filled with concern. Everyone has unwittingly grown fond of the man and the tiger; they like this mode of coexistence. "It reminds me of 'The Truman Show'." An Xu speaks up. The protagonist in 'The Truman Show' also experienced a terrifying storm, the difference being that storm was manipulated by humans. The difference is: Truman did not give in! But Pi shouts out that he submits! "Truman had no attachments, so he feared nothing, not even losing his life. But Pi has developed an attachment. The tiger has unknowingly become the pillar supporting his existence. Once a person has an attachment, they reveal weaknesses..." Jiang Zhu shares her thoughts. This has the characteristic flavor of an art film, always able to provoke contemplation. The scene seems to be a fascinating crossover with 'The Truman Show'. ... When the storm calms, the tiger is at death's door, Pi's lips are cracked, and his spirit is on the verge of collapse. "We're going to die." He holds the tiger, which can no longer open its eyes and has severely damaged skin. However. Just when they are completely hopeless, they arrive at an island. This is a magical island. The island had edible plants and swarms of meerkats that weren't afraid of people, and there was even a beautiful freshwater pool in the center of the island! Parker gobbled up the plants! The tiger feasted on the meerkats to his heart's content! After days of drifting, they finally had a place to settle and feel secure. With this island, Parker and the

tiger no longer had to worry about survival! However. When night fell, Parker saw the tiger scrambling onto the boat, and the meerkats crazily climbing the trees, so he also climbed a tree in fear, along with the meerkats. At that moment. He suddenly noticed that the freshwater pool where he had swum during the day was filled with countless fish carcasses. Furthermore. He found a tooth in the tree! A human tooth! In the distance, the island emitted a faint glow and was long in shape. The next day. He decided to leave the island, taking some food with him. He blew his whistle and called for the tiger. And the tiger actually followed him off the island. "What kind of island is this?" When Parker got to this part of his story, the writer suddenly asked a question. If it hadn't been for the sudden shift in the camera angle, everyone might have forgotten that this scene was just a part of Parker's narration and memory. "Haven't you realized yet? This is a carnivorous island!" "Like a Venus flytrap?" "Yes, every night the water in the center of the lake turns into sulfuric acid, killing all the life in the water. The entire earth is slowly corroded and digested. That's why I thought about the fate of those who stay there—lonely, and eventually forgotten, like that tooth left in the tree." ... Pi's incredible odyssey, in reality, wasn't magical. But combined with his experiences, it seemed to take on a kind of magical hue. The audience was mesmerized. However. An Xu furrowed his brows at some point without anyone noticing. "Something's not right..." He suddenly spoke up. Jiang Zhu heard him: "What's not right?" An Xu didn't respond, but in his mind, he replayed the scene from that night. It was a long shot. Directors are highly sensitive to camera angles, so it puzzled him why the island was long in shape, rather than round. It made the island look like... A lying person? A lying person!? An Xu was startled by his own thought. He didn't know why such a terrifying association had come to mind. Could it be because the island really resembled a lying person? Too bad they were in a cinema. An Xu couldn't rewind the scene as if it were film to watch it again. He even doubted if he had seen it correctly. Jiang Zhu didn't receive a response from An Xu but was also struck by a thought. "Don't you feel there's something off about this island?" "Like what?" "Countless meerkats that aren't afraid of people, a lake that turns into sulfuric acid at night due to some chemical reaction, but is indistinguishable from a normal freshwater lake during the day..." "A bit." An Xu spoke: "But it's possible if there are no natural predators for the meerkats on the island and if it's some area of the ocean. Nature is amazing; there are many phenomena that can't be explained without research." "Hmm." Jiang Zhu didn't say more, but she somehow felt uneasy. Perhaps it was from the moment Parker found a human tooth on the island that she felt there was something disturbing about this island. "The Cannibal Island, huh..." She muttered to herself, yet her eyes never left the big screen, each frame compelling her to keep watching. Judging by the time of the movie, it was nearing the end. Cannibal Island? An Xu caught Jiang Zhu's mutter, and a light flashed through his mind, making him more convinced that something was amiss. Parker. The Tiger. Cannibal Island. Human Tooth. The sulfuric acid in the lake's center. The supplies for survival. From the start of the drift after the ferry disaster, a number of significant details interconnected by an invisible thread replayed in An Xu's mind. He suddenly realized there were many strange aspects in this story. The clue lay with the bananas. An Xu didn't believe those bananas could support the weight of a gorilla. And from this doubt, An Xu thought of the shipwreck. Could the ferry capsize that easily? Did Parker really survive over two hundred days at sea just with the existing supplies and a survival manual? Parker was seventeen years old at the time of the disaster! Could a seventeen-year-old tame a tiger at sea? The so-called fantastical voyage — was the fantasy in its incredulous unfolding? Wait! This segment about Cannibal Island, why switch suddenly to the conversation between the writer and Parker? There are no useless shots in a movie! If there are useless shots, that's a sign of the director's incompetence! An Xu knew the director of this film, Du An. He was a big-time director from Qi Continent. Although not as skilled as An Xu himself, he

still had talent. A director like that! In combination with Xian Yu's script! Would they produce a meaningless shot? "He was reminding the audience that the story is being told by Parker, so why did he use that particular shot to remind us? The writer's expression seemed subtle; he was doubting! That interpretation shouldn't be wrong; it's clear he suspected something off about the island. But why would he suspect that?" An Xu's mind raced! Suddenly! He understood! Lying! The writer was suspecting that Parker was lying!!!!!! Once this idea leaped into his mind, An Xu felt a chill down his spine, and he shivered uncontrollably!

Chapter 768 Terrifying Boiling

An Xu's back was already drenched in cold sweat! Was he lying? Why would he lie? If he lied, which part specifically was the lie? In this story, what is real and what is fictitious? Was the fantastical drift real? Or could it be... that I misunderstood? For the first time, An Xu realized that this story wasn't as straightforward as it seemed on the surface, and his previous understanding and interpretation were too one-sided! However. No matter how hard An Xu racked his brain, he couldn't understand why he would lie, but he faintly felt that there was a terrifying truth behind it all! It made him very uneasy! "What's wrong?" Jiang Zhu noticed that something was off with An Xu—the famous director from Qi Continent seemed restless. An Xu still didn't answer. He looked up at the big screen. He wanted to know what the truth really was! What exactly was the story that Xian Yu wanted to tell! He didn't realize that his hands were trembling slightly. ... On the giant screen. After leaving the island, he finally reached another shore. This time, it wasn't an island! This was the Zhao Continent of Blue Star! He was saved! As he stepped onto the shore, immense exhaustion overtook him, and he collapsed. In a daze. He saw the tiger jump off the lifeboat, stretch mightily, and then walk into the jungle. Reaching the edge of the forest, the tiger stopped. "I was sure it would look back at me, ears turned back, emitting a roar, ending our relationship in some way," he said, but the tiger did not look back. This fearsome companion, the animal that had helped him survive, vanished from his life from then on. He was rescued by passersby. As he left, he was in tears. Not for being saved, but because the tiger left him so easily. The tiger was without sentiment. He remembered the lessons of his father from childhood, but he insisted on believing: In the tiger's eyes, he must have been more than just a reflection. "We didn't say goodbye properly." He hadn't said goodbye properly to a girlfriend, to his family, to the tiger. He seemed to repeat such words more than once, but this time tears flowed. ... The audience seats were silent. When he was rescued, no one cheered; instead, like him, they were immersed in the sadness of the tiger's departure. Indeed. There's always sadness, accompanying each other for over two hundred days, depending on each other for survival, struggling to live, transitioning from adversaries to companions. Nobody disliked the tiger. In fact, they liked the tiger. "If only the tiger could have continued accompanying him," someone said. "He lost everything, and he only had the tiger left, but the tiger belongs to the jungle, so it left him." "I feel the tiger had feelings for him." "After more than two hundred days together, maybe the tiger started to see him as a master or even a friend." "This story is a bit more fascinating than I thought." "The first half-hour was genuinely boring; indeed, the build-up with family was meaningless." "The pacing is problematic in the beginning. The movie is about two hours long, and it only gets exciting after an hour in." "It feels like this movie is quite thought-provoking." "I thought it was a commercial film, but towards the end, it started to feel like it had some arthouse elements." "... The audience's instincts were not as sharp as the professionals', but they too gradually realized that this movie was not commercial; rather, it was filled with contemplation. About humans and nature. About survival and perseverance. About the power of faith. About the importance of companionship. Such metaphors and implications abound, and these

are the hallmarks of arthouse films. Yet the process wasn't boring, especially once the shipwreck started, almost entirely capturing the curiosity of the audience, an aspect rare in commercial films. Yet An Xu's brows furrowed even more. "No!" He kept shaking his head. It couldn't be that simple! He didn't believe it was that simple! Jiang Zhu didn't know An Xu's thoughts; she was sharing her opinion: "The beginning was boring; after the shipwreck, it became exciting, but such an ending seems to lack some power, feels like it's still missing something..." If Jiang Zhu were to rate it, she would give it an eight out of ten. It was a movie worth eight points, quite good, but that was all. But this wasn't the official ending. The movie wasn't over yet. ... On the giant screen. The movie appeared to be heading towards an official conclusion. "Since I was the only survivor, the Japanese shipping company sent two people to find me. They needed to find out the cause of the ferry accident to process the compensation matters..." he told the writer. The scene switched. The shipping company's employees didn't believe his story. How could an island exist with thousands of meerkats undetected? How could bananas float? A brief argument ensued. They believed this wasn't the truth! Finally. He spoke again: "You don't want things you haven't seen, no surprises, no fantasy, no animals, no islands..." His expression changed for a moment. Inside the movie theater, the audience was taken aback. They had believed what he had told them, but his words seemed to suggest something was amiss? At that moment. Pi told the second story. "Four people survived; the cook and sailor had already relayed their accounts. The cook pulled me aboard with a lifebuoy, my mother climbed up on a bunch of bananas and drifted to the ship. That cook was disgusting, he ate a rat, that man was like a beast, the sailor broke his leg jumping off the ship..." As Pi narrated, the shipping company employees' faces shifted with emotion. And in front of the giant screen. Some viewers looked utterly bewildered. Others furrowed their brows tightly. They realized a problem. It was a problem An Xu had already realized before. Pi... lied! Two stories, one true and one false! The author understood and he connected the two stories: "In both stories, the zebra and the sailor broke their legs, the hyena killed the zebra and the orangutan, so, the hyena is the cook, the sailor is the zebra, your mother is the orangutan, and you are... the tiger." An earth-shattering twist!!! ... Ssshh! With the author's last word, a jarring noise suddenly erupted in the cinema hall, like the harsh scrape of shoe soles against the floor! It was painfully ear-piercing! Extremely uncomfortable! The light from the giant screen shone on the audience's faces, reflecting faces that, unknown when, had become utterly horrified, ghostly pale and rather frightening! Inside the cinema! It was as if the temperature suddenly dropped, the air turned frigid, oppressive to the point of almost becoming stagnant! "Huff... huff..." Jiang Zhu gasped heavily, his chest heaving violently, his eyes filled with disbelief! The truth! This was the truth! The blood-soaked truth! The sailor was the zebra, he broke his leg and lacked the power to defend himself; the cook was the hyena, extremely aggressive; the mother was the orangutan who had protected the protagonist, and the protagonist was the tiger who ended it all!!! Therefore!!! The cook killed the sailor, then killed the mother, and Pi killed the cook! What kind of magical adventure at sea? It was nothing but a human bloodbath, in the quest for survival, blades drawn against one another! That tiny lifeboat was the scene of a terrifying series of bloodshed, simply a living hell! Underneath the magnificent packaging of the movie, lay filth and sin! Just like the calm ocean! Calm on the surface, but with raging undercurrents below! Those beautiful, elaborate shots, the more resplendent they were, the more lethal! Wrong. It was more than just slaughtering! Every slaughter has its reasons, but on that tiny lifeboat, the slaughter had only one reason—they were starving! For survival! They were eating people! "Ugh..." Jiang Zhu felt queasy. Boom! After the utmost silence, the entire cinema hall suddenly exploded! All the viewers started to clamor as if they had gone mad, some even screamed, some couldn't help but to stand up! "My God!!!" "I'm getting chills all over!" "This is too scary, too

horrific!" "It turns out that there wasn't really a zebra, an orangutan, a hyena, or a tiger in the magical adventure, everything was a story made up by the protagonist. In reality, all these animals were people, they were killing each other, they were eating people!!!!" "Holy shit, so there were no animals on the boat, just people!?" "Eating corpses?! I'm gonna throw up, damn it!" "How can this be so terrifying!" "I really thought this was a story about the protagonist and animals, but it turns out not to be about the law of the jungle among animals, but about people who lose their humanity and resort to cannibalism in order to survive!" "I get it now! Crap! Where did the teeth on Cannibal Island come from? They came from corpses!" "Humanity has been annihilated, such a beautiful story, such a stunning ocean, why is the truth so cruel!" "I've been deceived by Xian Yu!" "All the previous plot points were traps, so many traps were dug!" "I'm convinced, Xian Yu is GOAT, I'm in awe, truly in awe!" "I's worldview is shattered!" "... The audience was paralyzed by fear, the horror boiling over! The movie did not explicitly state that they were eating corpses, but by using animal metaphors, even the most naive audience understood! This was why their faces turned deathly pale and even trembled! A shocking twist instantly shattered everyone's beliefs, making them question every single shot they had seen before! At this moment. Looking back, every piece of the plot was utterly terrifying in hindsight! Even... The seemingly insignificant mouse in the movie, almost unnoticed by everyone, had an extremely symbolic significance! "I won't be able to sleep tonight!" Jiang Zhu, struggling to contain the discomfort in his stomach, trembled as he spoke: "Xian Yu is too twisted, how did he come up with such a terrifying story, I've been writing scripts for so many years, watching movies for so many years, and this is the first time I've been scared by an art film!" Scared! Truly scared! What was terrifying wasn't the imagery; there wasn't even a depiction of animals being eaten in the movie, but this was precisely what made it more chilling! Because everyone would imagine it! The more they imagined, the more panic-stricken they became! However, as Jiang Zhu reacted so dramatically, An Xu suddenly let out a long breath and said something that made Jiang Zhu go completely stiff: "You think this is the truth?" You think the second story is the truth? You think Xian Yu didn't deceive you twice in a row? You think, this is the most horrifying answer? An Xu pressed his hand to his heart, where his heartbeat was excessively fast and his whole body was cold, as if his breathing had almost stopped. He thought more, saw more than the audience. Therefore... He was more horrified by the story's terror than anyone else!

Chapter 769: There is a 3rd Version

Giant screen. The finale. Pi's eyes fixed on the author, "I told two versions of the story about the sea accident, so which one do you prefer?" The author did not answer immediately. After a few seconds of silence, The author spoke up, "The one with the tiger, that one is more exciting." "Thank you." Pi seemed relieved. In fact, Pi's question was less directed at the author and more at the audience. Which of these two versions of the story do you prefer? In the cinema, The boisterous audience fell silent for a few seconds, as if they were scrutinizing their own hearts. Which of these stories do they like? "Like the author, I prefer the one with the tiger, where a man and a tiger become an unusual duo, staging a fantasy struggle for survival over more than two hundred days at sea. I can't bear to shatter such beauty of strength and will." "I prefer the version without the tiger." "Although the movie didn't make it explicit, Pi's reaction has already told everyone that the second story is the real one, and although the truth is cruel, reality itself is cruel. I think choosing the tiger itself is a form of evasion." "The whole movie was a deception, Fish Papa's twist was stunning!" "If there hadn't been the final twist explained, I might have left the cinema thinking I really just watched a fantastical ocean adventure of a young Pi..." "Despite so many clues, I never noticed them!" "The key is, I wasn't angry after realizing I'd been deceived; instead, I willingly fell into the trap because there

were many clues planted, and if I had watched carefully, I would've noticed something was amiss." "... The answer might be hard to unify. Screenwriter Jiang Zhu was also contemplating her answer. Just then, An Xu suddenly turned to look at Jiang Zhu, who was lost in thought, "Buy tickets." "What?" "I want to rewatch it." An Xu had many things to reconfirm, one viewing wasn't enough to fully understand. The movie was like a mystery told in Narrative Trickery. The screenplay was rife with deceit from the screenwriter, covered by the director's cinematic shots, and only at the end did it pull off a shocking twist! It can be said, Without this earth-shattering twist, the movie would just be a very exciting ocean survival film. With this twist, everything changed! It almost gave the audience the illusion of having watched two movies at once! One thing was certain; the film's rating was destined to soar several levels because of the final twist, turning it into a classic that would remain in people's hearts. Retracing the plot after the ending was the most charming part of the movie! "Okay!" Jiang Zhu nodded. She took out her phone, ready to buy tickets when she noticed that a screenwriters' chat group she was a part of was exceptionally lively at the moment. Countless people were discussing the movie. Without opening the group chat, Jiang Zhu began to repurchase her ticket for a second viewing. She wanted to use the plot to trace back through the film again, but this time, she was watching with a mindset of learning, as this was a script worth studying by all screenwriters! Of course, Jiang Zhu and An Xu had tacitly avoided discussing next year's Dragon Awards, although both sensed the impact this movie would have on the awards after watching it. ... In a screenwriters' group on Blue Star, Just as Jiang Zhu noticed, the group was abuzz! All the screenwriters who had seen the movie were dumbfounded by the ending's shocking twist! "Holy crap!" "The ending twist scared the hell out of me!" "I'm sweating buckets; the entire movie was a massive deception!" "Back when 'The Piano Tuner' came out, it was twist after twist, but the twists in that movie felt a bit contrived. This movie's twists, however, are pure genius, utterly seamless!" "This movie is going to blow up!" "The ending twist is nothing short of brilliant, Xian Yu is truly the king of twists!" "Thought it was a commercial flick at first, then I thought it was an art film, halfway through it seemed like an inspirational movie, but after finishing, I realized, it's a horror movie!" "One twist completely overturned the entire movie; it's insane!" "The real horror is retracing the story after the ending, who would've thought those animals were actually people!" "At the beginning of the movie, daddy says the difference between animals and humans is that animals lack humanity, but the film tells us that humans just have a higher threshold for their bottom line, and when pushed to the edge, humanity can be abandoned!" "Don't forget humans are animals too, of course we have beastly instincts!" "So the tiger represents the protagonist's animalistic side, which is why, when Pi was rescued and the tiger left, his humanity returned. This metaphor is so clever!" ... At various cinemas, The first batch of audience members who saw the movie at the same time also went wild; no one expected the true nature of the film to be so horrifying! "I kneel before Fish Papa's boundless imagination!" "Fish Papa, such a gentle soul, yet he wrote such a cruel and desperate horror story!" "I'm never scared by horror films, but this movie actually got to me a bit!" "I've got goosebumps all over!" "When Pi told the second version of his story, I felt my scalp tingle and hair stand on end!" "Looking back at the whole story after watching the ending, those beautiful scenes seem so ironic!" "The visuals are so beautiful, yet who knew there were so many secrets hidden beneath them!" "Leaving the plot aside, the special effects alone are top-notch!" "This is Fish Papa's first time shooting a big-budget film, and it feels like the big stage is where Fish Papa truly excels—something small budget films could never achieve!" ... Online. The same excitement, the same buzz, the same shockwaves—tribe blogs and major forums alike were all boiling over. Countless people were discussing the plot! "This movie is freaking amazing!" "Who exactly did Pi eat?" "Definitely his mother. You might not have noticed, but when Pi leaves the carnivorous island,

if you look at it from a distance, it clearly resembles the shape of a woman's body. And Pi found the tooth because he bit into the teeth part, which is why he decided to leave the island, realizing that if he continued like this, he would go completely mad!" "Damn, is it really like that?" "I think the carnivorous island is his girlfriend, so he tied the rope his girlfriend gave him around the island. Moreover, when he mentioned his girlfriend, he said, 'I can't remember how I said goodbye to her...' Isn't that hint clear enough?" "So many metaphors, man. Who does the rat metaphorically represent then?" "I feel like the island is the mother, and the rat is the girlfriend. She must have hidden aboard the boat as a stowaway because Pi doesn't remember saying goodbye to his girlfriend. But the truth is he never said goodbye to her at all. They boarded the ferry together." "Holy cow, so many GOATs in the comment section. I didn't really get it!" "What does the meerkat on the island symbolize then? Since the island doesn't exist, the meerkat must be fake too, right?" "Don't you get it? The meerkat isn't afraid of people, and the island is a corpse. What things on a corpse aren't afraid of people?" "Maggots!?" "The meerkat is... maggots!?" "Ugh, stop it, I was planning to eat!" "My whole worldview is shattered. I told my girl during the movie that the meerkat was cute!" "Meerkats are creatures of the desert; there's no way they could be on the island. So Pi lied about this part. Considering the island's meerkats aren't afraid of people, and indeed maggots aren't afraid of people either, and since maggots are a source of protein, the equation 'meerkat equals maggots' holds true. They drifted at sea for over two hundred days, so it's inevitable for the body to get maggots. What Pi ate later must have been rotten, and don't forget that tigers can eat carrion too!" "I can't even look at this movie straight anymore!" ... GOATs frequented major forums, with countless interpretations appearing, some of which perfectly fit the plot! Some had an epiphany! Others held different views! Regardless of what the real answer was, these interpretations were repeatedly striking the hearts of the audience! Because these interpretations weren't far-fetched. While the movie left things ambiguous, it also provided many hints! It's precisely because the movie didn't explain the process directly, and the second version was only covered in a few minutes, that the audience was given unlimited space for interpretation! A textbook example of disturbing subtleties! Some even started arguing over which interpretation represented the truth! Everyone had their own theories. Everyone had their own explanations. Each one was terrifying, completely overturning all conclusions made before the movie's twist! And just when netizens thought they were getting close to the truth. Someone noticed that Blue Star's famous screenwriter Long Yang had personally posted a thread in a movie forum, and the title of the thread was: [Still too naive. Do you think Pi's second story is the whole truth?] This renowned core screenwriter dared to write a film review for "Life of Pi"? Of course, that's not the point. The point is, Long Yang is suggesting that Pi's second story is not the entire truth? In an instant! Netizens widened their eyes! Holy crap! The second version isn't the truth? We've interpreted the truth to be so horrifying already, and he's calling us naive? Are you sure you're not just seeking attention? If Long Yang weren't a top screenwriter, he would have been blasted, but considering his professional status, netizens held back and couldn't help but wonder—Long Yang seems intent on overturning the twist at the end of the movie! You know, regardless of the debates, the starting point for everyone was the second version of the story told by Pi, and no one ever doubted the authenticity of the second version! Alright then. Considering Long Yang's generally good reputation as a very capable screenwriter, netizens were still curious and clicked on his thread. And what they saw. Upon entering the thread, everyone saw the first line: [Before reading this interpretation, please answer three questions for me. Actually, there are many questions, but I won't trouble you with all of them.] The first question: "Why has Pi never explained the cause of the ferry accident? Does he really know nothing about it?" The second question: "Why did the mother slap the cook but he didn't fight back, given his character was previously portrayed as rough

and aggressive?" The third question: "Why didn't they delete the first thirty minutes of the movie's family background, which was so dull? With Xian Yu's capabilities, wouldn't he know that the first thirty minutes drag on for too long?" Why? Netizens were stumped by Long Yang's three questions. Suddenly! A terrifying thought crossed everyone's mind: Did Pi also lie in the second version of the story he narrated? If the first version is a lie, then who could say for sure that the second version... ..didn't contain lies as well?