

## **Crazy Love 211**

### Chapter 211

“Alright, over here, you need to make some adjustments.”

“Huston, is your ability not good enough? You need to improve it. The feeling I want is that, not that. Do you understand? Do you not understand? Go down and think about it.”

Marc sat in his office, casually giving directions to the project’s newcomers like a boss.

Lifting his gaze, he saw Isabella approaching.

Marc quickly toned down his air of supremacy, grinning, “Ms. Smith, you’re here.”

As he spoke, he shot a stern look at the newcomers, “What are you standing around for? Haven’t you gone to brew coffee for Ms. Smith yet?”

The new recruits all showed a hint of humiliation.

They had joined the workshop hoping to learn something substantial.

But what now?

After a month, they hadn’t picked up anything except for listening to Marc spout incomprehensible theories.

That would have been bearable, but now they were being asked to serve coffee as if they were servants?

Their expressions were off, but Isabella had no time to care about them right now.

She waved them off hastily, saying, “No need for trouble, let them go out. I have something to ask you.

“Sure,” Marc quickly ushered them out.

Isabella’s mind was a tangled mess, yet she managed to muster a smile for Marc, “Marc, I wanted to ask about our AI project. It’s been several months. How is the development coming along?”

A flicker of unease passed through Marc’s eyes, but months of constant flattery had made him adept at feigning.

confidence.

Even now, as Isabella inquired, he appeared unfazed.

“Ms. Smith, that’s a bit of an amateur question.” Marc coughed. “Our project is high-tech, and any kind of technology needs time to develop. We’ve only been at it for a little over half a year. How could we possibly have a breakthrough so soon? Ms. Smith, you’ll have to give me a bit more time.”

“I’d like to give you time, but...” Isabella was getting anxious.

“But what?” Marc looked at her curiously.

Isabella bit her lip, swallowing back her words.

The Storm Group’s launch event for Future One hadn’t happened yet. She couldn’t very well admit she had a

premonition that Storm Group had already achieved a breakthrough in this project.

After a moment's thought, Isabella tried a different angle, "So, do you think it's possible for anyone to complete this project within six months?"

Marc pondered for a moment, then decisively said, "Absolutely not."

He genuinely believed it was impossible.

He had been groping around this artificial intelligence project for so long, still lingering at the threshold.

How could anyone have already made a breakthrough?

Isabella felt a bit more at ease.

Marc was King, after all!

And who was King?

He was universally acknowledged as the most brilliant programmer of the century.

If he said it was impossible, then it surely was.

If it wasn't the AI project, could it be that Storm Group had made a breakthrough in another field?

After all, even with King on board in her past life's timeline, the development of artificial intelligence was only achieved towards the end of the year..

It made no sense that after she poached King, the timeline would have moved up.

Isabella steadied her nerves and gave Marc another directive, "Marc, we need to step up our development efforts."

'Rest assured,'" Marc agreed readily, with somewhat convincing confidence.

Isabella was taken in by Marc's bluster, leaving reassured.

She thought to herself that no matter what breakthrough Storm Group had achieved, it couldn't surpass the impact of intelligent AI!

Once Marc's research succeeded, she was sure she could use it to soar high and firmly suppress Storm Group.

Despite her self-comforting thoughts, Isabella couldn't resist tuning in to watch the live broadcast of the Future

One release the next day.

Hosting the event was Ben himself.

Isabella's gaze lingered on Ben's face, a mix of unwillingness rolling in her eyes, but most of it had turned into resentment and anger.

Ben Landor

It was this man who had nearly destroyed her with his schemes.

Though she didn't dare provoke him now, she held the trump card with Marc, and she was convinced that with her foresight, she could eventually assist Leo in reaching the pinnacle.

Then, she would make Ben bow down before them.

Isabella imagined this scene and felt excited.

She was lost in this reverie when Ben's voice reached her ears.

Ben said, "Our Future One phone marks a major breakthrough in artificial intelligence. It will come equipped with an extensively upgraded, highly anthropomorphic personal assistant, and we have also pre-installed several games. The NPCs in these games will utilize the latest AI technology to..."

Ben's introduction was still ongoing, but Isabella felt as if her mind had exploded.

She was completely dumbfounded.

It was actually intelligent AI technology!

Why?

Isabella, having poached Marc, had believed that Storm Group would inevitably be delayed in developing the technology, yet they had not only succeeded, they had done so ahead of schedule!

What on earth was going on?

There must be a mistake somewhere.

With her bag in hand, Isabella hurried to find Marc.

He was humming a tune, leisurely sipping his coffee, the picture of contentment.

Upon seeing Isabella, he merely chuckled and said, "Ms. Smith, you're here. I was just taking a break from coding."

Usually, seeing Marc in such a relaxed state, given his reputation as King, Isabella would have just smiled and allowed him to rest a bit longer.

But now, with a terrifying suspicion in her mind, her expression darkened upon witnessing his leisurely demeanor.

Isabella approached slowly.

Seeing her like this, Marc's heart skipped a beat. He sensed something amiss in her demeanor and sat up straight, asking cautiously, "Ms. Smith? What's wrong today?"

"What's wrong?" Isabella gave him a peculiar look and then pressed, "Tell me the truth, how is our project really progressing?"

"It's going quite well, proceeding as planned," Marc answered nonchalantly.

"Really?" Isabella narrowed her eyes. "Show me the latest results. I want to have them verified by a professional."

Isabella herself didn't understand these technical matters.

She usually took Marc at his word.

But now, with doubt in her heart, she was no longer willing to take his word for it.

"Well..." Marc became visibly flustered. He hadn't actually developed anything. A professional review would expose him instantly

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Marc steadied himself, feigning anger, "Ms. Smith, bringing in an outsider for verification? Are you saying you don't trust me? Then why did you hire me in the first place?"

With that, he slammed his hand on the desk and stood up, turning to leave.

Inwardly, he was counting the seconds, expecting Isabella to call him back at any moment.

As he walked away, Isabella suddenly said, "Mr. King."

Marc frowned and turned back to Isabella, "What? Ms. Smith, what are you talking about?"

Isabella's heart skipped a beat, but she managed to force a smile, "Marc, there's no need to hide your identity anymore. I already know everything about you."

Marc's heart sank.

Did Isabella discover that he was a fraud?

As he looked at Isabella's twisted smile, he grew more convinced that she had seen through him.

Growing fearful, Marc contemplated the substantial amount of money he had received during this time.

If Isabella decided to sue him, he could end up in jail.

"Marc, just be honest with me," Isabella urged, hinting wildly, "I know all about your identities."

Sweat broke out on Marc's forehead.

Overwhelmed by Isabella's confident demeanor, his legs began to tremble.

In a shaky voice, he pleaded, "Ms. Smith, you... you can't sue me. I never intended to deceive anyone. It was you who suddenly offered to hire me with an annual salary of four million dollars. At most, I just went along with it. It

wasn't deliberate fraud."

Isabella was confused.

"You... you're not King?"

"King?" Marc was stunned. "Who is King?"

The next moment, he came to his senses and asked, "Who do you think you are? You mean that century's most talented programmer? If I were him, would I be working in a small company?"

"You..." Isabella, trembling and pointing at Marc, suddenly lowered her head and spat out a mouthful of blood in

shock and disbelief.

He wasn't King at all!

So what was all her scheming for the past six months?

Thinking she was smart?

A fool with more money than sense?



“Ms. Smith, please don’t scare me. Why are you suddenly coughing up blood? Let me make it clear, I didn’t do anything. Your bleeding is your own issue, don’t try to pin it on me,” Marc said, a hint of panic in his voice.

Isabella looked up at him, her mind almost breaking, “Marc! You’re not King, why didn’t you tell me sooner?”

Marc was

was stunned, “I didn’t know either. How could you possibly think I was King? Anyone with a bit of sense would never link me to King.”

What did that mean?

Was he implying that Isabella had no brains?

Isabella clutched her chest, nearly spitting out another mouthful of blood.

Seeing things were going south, Marc cautiously stepped back, “I didn’t even touch you, don’t try to frame me. I’ll... I’ll return half my salary to you, and we’ll act like this collaboration never happened.”

As he tried to slip away, Isabella rushed over and grabbed his clothes, gritting her teeth, “Marc, you’ve deceived me so badly, and you think you can just walk away?”

Marc got irritated, “What else do you want? You were the ones who approached me for the contract. I’m being reasonable by offering half back.”

Isabella sneered, “Don’t forget, Marc. In these six months, you’ve redirected nearly ten million dollars from the company. That’s enough to land you in jail for life!”

Marc was dumbfounded, “Ms. Smith, you asked me to do it.”

Isabella looked at him coldly, “Do you have any proof? You handled the money. I never even touched it. What makes you think you can pin this on me?”

Marc became desperate, “But most of the money was transferred to you.”

Isabella laughed, “The account you transferred to isn’t mine. Even if you claim that, nobody can trace it back to me! Marc, you’re definitely carrying the blame for this.”

Marc looked at Isabella’s crazed demeanor, feeling overwhelmed, “Then what do you want?”

Isabella, with gritted teeth, said, “Storm Group’s phones are starting pre-sales now. They will officially launch in a week. I want you to launch that dating game ahead of schedule, within this week.”

Marc was taken aback, “That dating game is almost ready, but I’m still clueless about the most crucial part, the Intelligent NPC.”

“I don’t care if you have a clue or not. You either produce the game within five days, or I’ll send you to jail.”

Isabella said sternly, fixing Marc with a fierce glare. “The choice is yours.”

Marc’s lips trembled slightly. Finally, with a hard resolve, he gritted his teeth and said, “Five days is tight... but I’ll

try,”

Isabella then smiled, patting Marc on the shoulder lightly, “Don’t be too nervous. Even if you can’t create a real intelligent NPC, just make something passable that can fool the average player. I believe in you.”

With that, Isabella left.

Marc collapsed onto the ground, overwhelmed.

Five days...

Even making something passable seemed impossible to him.

But compared to prison, he felt he had to give it his all.

Five days later, Marc presented the final product to Isabella.

She opened the game, recalling her past life when she had played it.

Back then, due to her jealousy of Susan, she had only played it briefly before discarding it.

Despite not playing much herself, the game had been incredibly popular, and the discussions about it were inescapable. She had inadvertently picked up some of the storyline.

The game featured four male leads, each with their unique personality and a dedicated fanbase.

Influenced by their enthusiastic recommendations, Isabella, even without much personal experience, had a rough idea of the plot.

So, this time, she took the initiative to copy the character settings and the main storyline from the game produced

by Susan in her previous life.

In essence, her game was a complete copy of Susan's creation from her past life..

But now, it was a different time.

Susan's game was likely still the same.

But she would release a similar game first.

Then, when Susan released hers, it would look like Susan was the one copying.

Isabella was curious to see how Susan would manage to maintain her reputation and profits with the label of a copycat hanging over her.

With this thought in mind, Isabella eagerly started the game.

She hadn't played much in her past life and didn't intend to dive deep this time either.

She briefly went through the storyline.

Marc, watching by her side, was a bundle of nerves.

He had no idea what an intelligent NPC should be like. His approach was simply to add more options to create the illusion of complex branching paths.

He was unsure if the game would pass muster.

Isabella played the game for a short while and showed a satisfied expression.

The male leads' personalities and some specific plot points were exactly like those in her past life.

If the game was a hit then, it could be a hit now too.

Only this time, it would be Isabella, not Susan, who would be credited for its success.

“You did well,” Isabella said. “We’ll launch the game tonight.”

The game... passed just like that?

Marc was slightly dazed, but he wouldn’t undermine his own work, so he quickly nodded in agreement.

Isabella looked at the game and smiled subtly.

Susan, this time, I’m curious to see how you’ll turn things around.

The game you’ve made can’t be changed. If you insist on releasing it, you’ll be labeled as copying me.

If you don’t release it, you’ll disappoint your audience.

I really want to see what you’ll choose!

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On the eve of the Future One launch, a game was released with much fanfare.

Isabella, though not particularly concerned about the game’s content, spared no effort in marketing.

When Leo split from his family, he had received eighty million, most of which was already spent.

However, Penelope had saved some money over the years.

Before her coma, she had handed over her hard-earned millions to Leo.

Part of this money was used for Leo's personal expenses and the rest was invested in the company.

Now, there wasn't much left.

Isabella, in a bold move, invested all the remaining funds in marketing.

At first, Leo was hesitant, "Isabella, we're investing so much. If the game fails, we'll be left with nothing."

82% 06:10

"Fail? How could we possibly lose?" Isabella said with confidence, "Don't worry, our game is not only beautifully made, but we also have the latest intelligent AI technology. We're going to make a fortune this time."

Seeing Isabella so confident, Leo felt somewhat reassured.

He hadn't been involved in the business for a while and asked, "Have we really succeeded in developing our intelligent AI technology? How does it compare to Storm Group's?"

Isabella felt a twinge of guilt, but to boost Leo's confidence, she firmly nodded, "With King on our side, we're definitely better than them."

Leo brightened up at this,, "If our product can outshine Storm Group, then we've truly made it!"

"We will make it," Isabella said through gritted teeth, her expression determined as if making a vow.

She had given her all.

This time, she wouldn't allow herself to lose..

She would never lose.

Thanks to a massive investment in marketing, their romance game swept through Twitter overnight.

[World's first love simulation game with intelligent NPCs a must-have experience!]

[Travel to the future and embark on heart-fluttering romances with various handsome men!]

[Shocking! A simple love game surpasses Storm Group's latest AI technology in intelligence!]

Almost simultaneously, numerous marketing accounts began promoting this love simulation game.

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82% 06:10

Given the high praise from these accounts, those interested in love simulation games downloaded it immediately. Even those initially uninterested were tempted by the barrage of information and decided to give the game a try.

As the game launched, Leo and Isabella sat nervously in front of their computer, refreshing the download stats.

"One hour in, and we have 100,000 downloads!"

Isabella said excitedly. "That's a great start."

Leo nodded in agreement.

Another hour passed, and the download count increased by another 100,000.

After 24 hours, the game had reached 3 million downloads.

However, the rate of increase began to slow down.

The initial downloads were largely due to the marketing.

The game's reputation would determine its long-term success.

Given the stakes for their company, Leo, who usually loved to go out, stayed at home with Isabella, scrolling through various gaming forums to gauge the game's reception.

Upon seeing the feedback, their faces darkened.

[The character models for these four male leads are just too ugly! I can't handle this, I'm going back to playing my Love Producer instead.]

Love Producer was another popular love simulation game recently.

Isabella bit her lip in frustration, "This must be a smear campaign by hired trolls from that other game. They're deliberately bad-mouthing us."

Despite their tight budget preventing her from hiring top artists for character modeling, she thought the male leads looked quite handsome. They weren't as bad as the comment suggested.

Leo nodded in agreement, "Definitely."



Convinced, they continued reading.

[I came for the intelligent NPCs. After playing for five minutes, all I can say is... what kind of intelligence is this? Just a few more branching options? How is this different from the original game mode? Scam! Poor game!]

(Poor graphics, poor storyline, poor playability. I was going to give it five stars, but after thinking about it, I'll give it one star each time and give you five stars over five times.)

[Terrible game. Shameless marketing, feeding us garbage.]

Comment after comment, all negative, not a single positive review.

Even Leo, who was usually oblivious, had to admit the reality.

The game... probably wasn't very good.

He looked at Isabella with a dark expression, "What's going on? Didn't you say our game was high quality? That our NPC's intelligence surpassed Storm Group's? Why is everyone saying it's no different from older games?"

Isabella, now panicking

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panicking, looked pitifully at Leo, "Leo, our game is definitely not the problem. I think we're being

"Who would target us?" Leo frowned.

“Who else?” Isabella quickly responded, “It has to be Ben and Susan. That couple has always been ruthless. They’re afraid we’ll get ahead, so they’ve hired trolls to maliciously smear us! This move of theirs is just too vicious.”

Leo, who already harbored deep resentment towards Ben, was easily swayed by Isabella’s words.

“Ben.” Leo gritted his teeth. “He’s determined to undermine me.”

“Don’t worry, Leo. We still have some marketing funds left. If they hire trolls to post negative reviews, we’ll hire some to post positive ones!” Isabella quickly suggested.

Spend more money?

Leo was reluctant but saw no better option and nodded in agreement.

Isabella hurried to contact the paid reviewers.

With this, they spent their last bit of money.

The effect of hiring these reviewers was immediate.

A flood of paid positive reviews surged in, artificially boosting the game’s ratings.

[Ah! All four male leads are so handsome. Even as a lifelong single, I’m blushing and excited.]

[The art style is so exquisite! Clearly, a lot of effort was put into this,]

[This level of AI is groundbreaking! Totally in love with it.]

The paid reviews managed to pull the ratings up, and unsuspecting people thought the game was genuinely good, leading to a new wave of downloads.

But as these new players tried the game, they quickly realized it was not as advertised, resulting in a flood of negative reviews.

As more regular players joined, the negative reviews piled up, overwhelming the paid positive ones.

Frustrated, Isabella made an angry phone call, "You promised to get us to four stars. Why are we only at two now? Do you even want to stay in business?"

The head of the paid reviewers was exasperated, "Miss, it's not that we aren't trying, but your game... isn't it a bit too poor in quality? Aside from us, there's not a single person willing to leave a positive review. How are we supposed to inflate your ratings?"

Isabella's face darkened with anger and humiliation, "I don't care, that's your problem. I want a refund, give me my money back now!"

The reviewer leader snorted coldly and hung up the phone.

Furious, Isabella threw her phone to the ground.

"The rating has changed," Leo said suddenly, his voice tinged with gloom.

"Changed?" Isabella perked up. "Did it go up?"

"No, it dropped to one star."

Isabella was speechless.

The couple exchanged glances, a mix of disbelief and concern on their faces.

After a moment, Isabella steadied herself and said through gritted teeth, "Ben is really going all out to suppress us."

Leo, with a somber expression, remained silent.

Whether or not it was Ben's doing, it was clear they wouldn't make any money at this rate.

Was he facing a total loss?

"Don't worry, Leo. I have a backup plan," Isabella suddenly declared.

"What kind of backup plan?" Leo asked.

Isabella tried to compose herself, then narrowed her eyes, "Future One is about to be officially released. Soon, you'll see what my plan is."

[Poor graphics, poor storyline, poor playability. I was going to give it five stars, but after thinking about it, I'll give it one star each time and give you five stars over five times.]

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Chapter 214

At Storm Group.

Everyone was busy preparing for the official launch of their new smartphone.

Ben, in his office, played the love simulation game produced by Leo's company and couldn't help but laugh, "As expected." He had known for a while that Isabella possessed some kind of precognitive ability.

So, when he heard that Leo's company was developing a love game, he had a hunch.

This game would likely bear some similarities to Susan's game.

Now, with Isabella releasing her game just before the official launch of Future One, his suspicions were confirmed. Although Isabella's game was crudely made, its setting and male character designs were strikingly similar to Susan's game.

Ben knew this was a result of Isabella using her precognitive ability to get ahead.

But what about others?

They would simply judge based on the chronological order of release, assuming Susan's game copied Isabella's. If Susan were to be branded a copycat, it could potentially ruin her career.

However, Ben wasn't worried.

In fact, he felt somewhat relieved. Intelligence, after all, is what it is.

Indeed.

Intelligence is what it is.

What does it matter if one has the ability to foresee the future? It doesn't change their intellect.

Since Isabella likes to be clever, let her taste the consequences of her own making.



The next day.

The Future One smartphone was released as scheduled.

Stores of Storm Group, both online and offline, were swamped with customers.

Soon, the first group of people got their hands on the Future One smartphone,

Among them was Tyler, a popular Internet streamer.

He focused his live streams on evaluating various electronic products.

This time, he had managed to get his hands on one of the first batch of Future One smartphones.

Eager to share his experience, he hadn't even opened the phone himself before starting a live stream to unbox it with his audience.

He quickly updated his stream's title.

[Evaluating the Future One Smartphone!]

Just the title alone drew in a whopping 100,000 viewers in a flash, and the numbers kept climbing.

Tyler couldn't hide his excitement. Though he was somewhat well-known in the streaming world, his previous peak viewership, achieved during his evaluation of the Allure series phones, was only around 500,000.

Now, within just ten minutes of streaming, he had already hit that number. Today, he was sure to set a new personal record. [Stop dawdling, anchor, open the box already!]

[I tried to get the Future One during the online presale and it sold out in a second. | tried again in-store today and the line was 300 feet long. No chance for me!]

[I feel you, too! | couldn't get one either, so I'm watching the anchor's review first. If it's really good, I'll keep trying. If it's just okay, | might just give up.]

[Open the box, anchor, open it!]

After quickly glancing at the barrage of comments, Tyler said, "I know you guys are eager, so let's cut to the chase. and open it up!"

Tyler opened the Future One's box and took out the phone. The comments exploded in excitement. [The design looks amazing! It's even better looking than the official images.]

[Ah, | love it so much! As someone who values aesthetics, I've decided to line up again tomorrow. There's no way | won't get one.]

The appearance of the Future One was indeed stunning.

Tyler began to describe it, 'Guys, | got the Azure Color Version. Look at the back of this phone — it's a gradient blue,

looking both classy and incredibly beautiful. Even a man who doesn't care about looks, | find it really attractive. There are three other colors available from the manufacturer, and | bet they are all equally stunning."

[Enough talking, anchor. Turn it on. Let's see the features,] the viewers continued to urge. "Alright, don't rush. Let's test it out one by one," Tyler said and began testing the phone with professional software. The results left him momentarily speechless.

"Wow, Storm Group really lives up to their name. Their last phone, Allure One, was already top of its class in performance. While everyone is still trying to catch up to the Allure series, they've gone and

made another huge leap. The performance of Future One surpasses the Allure series in every aspect. It's truly the king of smartphones!"

(Wow, so awesome!] Yes, that's so great.]

[The performance is really impressive! That camera has me all excited. It feels even better than a professional DSLR costing thousands.]

This operating speed is like lightning fast.] Everyone agrees that Future One will surpass the Allure series. But that

to see some real breakthroughs.]

Right, let's test out the artificial intelligence.]

The viewers' requests were definitely to be met.

just in regular aspects! Anchor, we want

Tyler chuckled and responded, "Alright, I'll test the AI for you guys. Those who think I'm doing a good job, remember to donate me."

In a flash, Tyler received a lot of donations.

Tyler, pleased, quickly said, "I'm opening the personal assistant feature now."

As Tyler fiddled with the phone, he chatted with his audience.

"The personal assistant can be visualized on the phone screen. Hmm, I'll choose a mature lady character. Guys, you can actually customize her personality. The more specific the customization, the higher the

intelligence level of the assistant, according to the official statement. | don't have much time today, so | just do a quick edit."

Tyler Inputted, [Pretentious, sharp—tongued, saying the opposite of what she means. Occasionally gets angry.] The audience burst into laughter.

[So the anchor likes this kind of style.]

[I like a pretentious mature lady too.]

[Crying, are we cute girls destined to be unloved?]

[Go away. You say you're a cute girl, but when you turn on the camera, you're a slovenly man.]

[The guy above, have you been traumatized or something? Share it, let's all have some fun.]

As everyone chatted merrily, the personal assistant was set up.

Arealistic mature lady character appeared in the bottom right corner of Tyler's phone screen, looking almost like a real person.

The screen was immediately filled with wolf whistles.

[She's so beautiful, oh my!]

"Quick, anchor, tease her a bit. I'll donate you."

"Me too."

Tyler didn't expect that just the appearance of the AI character would cause such a stir.

He hurriedly said, "I'm starting to interact with her now."

He pressed the dialogue button and cautiously said, "Hello."

The pretentious mature lady character raised an eyebrow, huffed dismissively, and then ignored Tyler. Tyler was speechless.

The screen erupted with laughter again.

[This character really has a personality. Keep going, anchor!]

Taking a deep breath and encouraged by his viewers' eagerness, Tyler said, "Keep donating, guys. I'll keep going." But, as a straightforward guy, he really didn't know how to chat with girls.

After some hesitation, Tyler ventured, "How old are you?"

The AI character frowned and huffed again.

Feeling awkward, Tyler tentatively guessed, "Thirty?"

This comment hit a nerve.

The AI character got angry: Thirty? | am forever eighteen! | advise you, if your eyes are useless, please donate them to someone in need!"

Suddenly, a bunch of web pages popped up on his phone. Tyler looked at them.

[Organizations accepting cornea donations.]

[Cornea donation hotline: \*\*\*\*\*]

Tyler was speechless.

The audience was rolling with laughter.

This personal assistant was quite something. Feeling a bit embarrassed but trying to keep up, Tyler coughed and said, "Please find me a lyric song." The pretentious character, seemingly displeased with him, started pulling up a bunch of music while continuing to snipe at him.

"A lyric song? | didn't expect someone as ugly as you to like lyric songs. It's surprising — someone as unattractive as you trying to be peculiar."

Tyler: "... Hey! You can't even see me, how can you call me ugly?"

The pretentious character scoffed coldly, "All phones from Slots Grau

share imagediray Here, take a oe selfies. If they're not ugly, what are they?"

She pulled up a bunch of photos. Tyler was speechless again. Comments flooded the chat, [Lol.]

Feeling somewhat wronged and annoyed, Tyler said, "I don't like this personality. I'm going to reset her! Guys, wait, I'll set up a gentler type."

He opened the program, about to reset the pretentious character.

The character seemed to understand what he was about to do.

She didn't speak but tilted her head up slightly, displaying a defiant and proud demeanor.

Yet, upon closer inspection, there appeared to be a hint of tears in her eyes.

The audience began to feel sympathy.

[Oh no, she looks so pitiful, anchor, don't reset her!]

[This feels just like a real person. Host, you can't 'kill her!]

[My heart is breaking.]

Tyler's finger hovered over the reset option for a long time before he resignedly let it go. [Alright, alright, I'll make do] The pretentious character instantly perked up, "Hmph. I knew you didn't have the heart to reset me."

Her smug look struck a chord with Tyler, hitting right at his soft spot.

The audience, initially hesitant about buying the new phone, were now eagerly clamoring, swearing they absolutely had to buy one.

The personal assistant feature alone was a compelling reason to purchase it.

After interacting a bit more with the tsundere character, Tyler proceeded to open and showcase the phone's built-in apps.

"Hmm, Starry Romance. Looks like a romance game. As a straightforward guy, I'll Rags, anchisdrte? Any girls inteldsted can buy it and try for themselves."

Tyler was about to skip it, but the audience quickly chimed in.

[Don't skip it! We love watching straightforward guys play romance games.]

[Play it, anchor, or we'll unsubscribe.]

Tyler glanced at the comments and declared with conviction, "I'm a man of principles. If I say I won't play, I won't play." [A thousand dollars] someone offered.

"Even for a thousand dollars, I won't play," Tyler insisted. "It's not about money. It's about integrity."

[Ten thousand dollars!]

Tyler swiftly opened Starry Romance, "Deal."

The comment was speechless.

After skillfully manipulating the chat to his advantage and in high spirits, Tyler opened the game while introducing it.

"According to the official description, this game is equipped with the latest artificial and AI NPC fe highly intelligent. Let me take you all on an experience with this game."

Chapter 215

As Tyler launched Starry Romance, melodious music began to play.

The beautiful tune, enhanced by high-quality sound, was a real treat.

Tyler appreciated it for a moment before commenting. "This music is great, feels like it's composed by a master."

He then turned his attention to the game's start screen. 'Starry Romance' was a single-player game, but its production was impressively detailed.



The character customization feature, especially the facial creation part, offered thousands of options for different facial features. Theoretically, one could recreate any real-life person's face.

In addition to this, players could draw their own face or use a real photo, making the options incredibly diverse.

Tyler initially wanted to select a random face, but the audience, seeing the option to use a real photo, encouraged

him to use his own.

A generous viewer even offered fifty thousand dollars for it.

So, what choice did he have but to bow to the demands of money?

Following the audience's request, Tyler named the female protagonist Tyler and uploaded his photo. Soon, his face appeared on the female protagonist's body, creating a somewhat jarring image.

The audience, however, found it hilarious and donated more dollars.

Playing as this eyesore protagonist, Tyler proceeded into the game.

The game started with an opening animation, which is usually a fixed sequence.

The first character to appear was a female military officer.

Tyler, with a bag of chips in hand, settled in to enjoy the story.

The officer glanced at him and suddenly displayed an indescribable expression.

'Sorry, my mission requires a beauty. With your... kind of looks... goodbye.'

The screen went black with a pop.

A message appeared, [Congratulations on achieving the 'Seen and Rejected' accomplishment.]

Patter.

The chips in Tyler's hand dropped onto the table.

What in the world was this?

What was wrong with his face?

Why wouldn't they even let him watch the opening animation?

Tyler was utterly baffled.

The audience was nearly dying of laughter.

Taking a deep breath, Tyler said, "I'll try again."

This time, he randomly chose a combination of facial features and ended up with a pretty character.

He re-entered the game, meeting the same female military officer again.

She sized up the new character with a slightly furrowed brow, showing a bit of disdain but finally relenting. "Average looks, but maybe the person is tired of delicacies and wants to try something simple? Fine, you'll do."

Tyler heaved a sigh of relief.

He had finally entered the main storyline.

The female military officer informed him that she was a spy, and her mission was to seduce the Empire's Marshal.

To aid her in this task, the officer arranged for her to assume the identity of an impoverished young girl.

During an inspection tour of his territory, the Marshal happened upon a scene where a group of ruffians were harassing the young girl.

The Marshal was passing by!

Normally, at this point in such games, there would be various options to choose from.

However, this game offered no options.

Instead, it prompted Tyler to speak up. He could use his natural voice or select from a variety of voice changers. provided by the system, including sounds like 'cute girl' and 'mature lady'.

Tyler chose the 'cute girl' voice.

Then, in a squeaky, delicate tone, he said, 'Marshal, save me, please.'

"Wow, the anchor is a monster."

“I’m getting goosebumps.”

Tyler turned off the game voice and chuckled, “You don’t understand, this is me sacrificing for art.””

Just then, in the game, the Marshal glanced indifferently at the female protagonist and said, “Take her away and

execute her.”

The next second, the screen went black again.

Tyler was speechless.

The chat erupted in laughter.

Tyler was starting to feel a headache coming on.

How on earth was he supposed to play this game?

“I refuse to give up,” he declared, starting a new game.

No matter what tone or words he tried, the result was always the same: execution by the Marshal.

How was he supposed to play this?

On the brink of frustration, Tyler noticed his online viewership was nearing ten million.

Among these viewers was Susan, who couldn't help but burst into laughter watching Tyler's desperate attempts to find a way to survive in the game.

Fed up with the variety of ways he met his end, Tyler resolutely turned to his computer to search for some game

strategies.

The comments section of the game was overflowing, but not a single strategy could be found.

It seemed like everyone was playing a different version of the game.

For example, because Tyler hadn't spent much time on character creation, he always started as a poor girl.

Those who created attractive characters began the game as lovers.

Even those with particularly unattractive faces had opportunities.

One player, on the verge of getting the black screen from the female officer, used his eloquence to persuade her, leading to a servant starting scenario.

Aside from these three common starting points, some players managed to make their own unique beginnings.

If you made logical suggestions to the female officer, she would sometimes adopt them.

One player convinced the officer to place him in the army camp, leading to a military route in the game.

Some players chose to pursue a storyline of love and conflict with an adversary.

Others opted for routes that involved getting closer to the Marshal's family.

In short, Just the beginning of the game alone had been turned into a myriad of possibilities by the players.

Tyler was astonished as he read through these strategies.

One thought kept recurring in his mind, "Is this even possible?"

But the game offered even more than that.

Apart from the wildly varied beginnings, the game allowed a high degree of freedom in its later stages.

Some players, by choosing the right paths, quickly found their way to the Marshal's side.

Others, who took wrong turns, spent hours without even seeing the Marshal.

Moreover, the game featured no set options.

All dialogue was created by the players themselves, and all actions were under their direct control.

This led to the NPCs reacting in diverse and unpredictable ways.

[The first time I played this game, I was laughing and joking around. But the more I played, the more terrified I became. Are the NPCs in this game really just NPCs? I keep feeling like they're actual, living beings.]

[Is this the latest in artificial intelligence technology? It's kind of scary. Do these NPCs possess human-like Intelligence? I hope the scenarios of machines revolting in movies won't become a reality.]

[It seems like Storm Group has opened Pandora's box!]

Regardless, the internet was abuzz with discussions about this game, which had quickly become a sensation.

Some people were immersed in this novel gameplay.

Others genuinely fell in love with the NPCs in the game.

Meanwhile, a few were spreading panic, hoping the government would ban this technology.

But regardless, Starry Romance, along with Future One, became incredibly popular, igniting widespread interest.

In front of the screen, Leo's eyes were red, and his face was dark as coal.

He glanced at Isabella and demanded, "Where is that backup plan you mentioned?"

His demeanor frightened Isabella, but she quickly responded, "Leo, don't worry. The more popular this game gets,

the harder it will fall."

"I want to see results immediately," Leo insisted.

"I'll arrange it right away, Isabella agreed.

A few hours later, while everyone was still raving about Starry Romance, a trending topic quietly surfaced on social

media.

“Starry Romance Plagiarism”

Despite her outward confidence, Isabella was somewhat uneasy. She feared Ben might suppress the trending

topic.

At Storm Group, someone brought the news to Ben, suggesting, “Mr. Landor, should we contact Twitter to suppress

this trend?”

After a glance, Ben smiled and said, “No need to suppress it. Help it reach the top.”

Huh?

The employee was puzzled by this response but quickly followed Ben’s instructions.

Soon after, the topic “Starry Romance Plagiarism” climbed to the top of Twitter Trends.

Chapter 216

Upon seeing the trending topic, Isabella couldn’t hide her joy. Excitedly, she said, “Leo, it looks like the public is wise after all. Even Ben can’t suppress the truth.”

“That’s right,” Leo said, his eyes shining as he looked at Isabella. “Isabella! How did you know Susan would copy your work?\*



Isabella had her explanation ready and said with a smile, "I personally wrote the script for our game, a true masterpiece. I bribed someone on Susan's team to submit the script to her. To my surprise, Susan took the bait immediately!"

Leo couldn't help but give her a thumbs up, "You truly are a mastermind."

Isabella chuckled, "Don't praise me just yet. We should think about how to use this situation to our greatest advantage."

A dark glint flashed in Leo's eyes as he coldly said, "Storm Group is a big company, and this game is currently very popular. Exposing their plagiarism now will not only tarnish their reputation, but I also want them to pay a huge penalty fee!"

Even if their own game wasn't making money, Leo felt confident that they could earn a fortune just from the penalty fee.

"That makes sense," Isabella said admiringly. "I'll leave it to you."

\*Rest assured," Leo replied, puffing out his chest. "We have the upper hand. Whatever we demand, they'll have no choice but to comply."

"Right, Isabella nodded, fully trusting in Leo's plan,

Leo's pride was greatly satisfied.

He took out his phone to call Ben, but after three seconds, he looked bewildered.

He seemed to have been blocked by Ben..

"Leo, What's wrong?" Isabella asked with concern.

Leo discreetly put away his phone. "I think we should meet Ben and Susan in person! I want to see their defeated expressions myself".

"Sounds good," Isabella agreed with a smile.

She too was eager to see Susan's face of despair.

The couple decided to go to Storm Group to confront them..

Leo had been worried that Ben wouldn't see him, but to his surprise, as soon as he spoke to the receptionist, he was told that Ben had already arranged for them to meet at a café near the entrance.

"Oh? Ben arranged this?" Leo raised an eyebrow.

"Yes," the receptionist confirmed with a smile.

Leo immediately smiled, "Looks like he knows he's in trouble."

He confidently took Isabella's hand. "Let's go wait for them. This time, I'm going to make sure he pays dearly."

Isabella also thought Ben was coming to negotiate and smiled in agreement.

Leo and Isabella happily headed to the café to wait.

Soon, Ben and Susan arrived.

Eager to see their panicked faces, Leo turned to look at them.

But to his surprise, Ben and Susan seemed relaxed, chatting and laughing without a hint of worry.

Leo frowned, confused by their demeanor.

Isabella whispered, "They must be pretending to be calm."

Leo nodded, agreeing with her speculation.

"Mr. and Mrs. Landor," Leo said sarcastically, "I'm surprised such busy people like yourselves have time to meet us."

"Sit down, Susan," Ben said, pulling a chair for Susan. He casually ordered two cappuccinos and a freshly baked soufflé from the waiter.

The waiter left to fulfill the order.

Throughout this, Ben hadn't given Leo a single glance, which darkened Leo's mood.

In the past, Ben ignoring him would have been expected, given Ben's status.

But now?

Ben was the one in trouble, yet he still dared to treat him this way?

Leo couldn't help but scoff, "Cappuccino? That's not real coffee, is it? Just sugar and milk. Mr. Landor, I remember you only drank black coffee before. Has your taste been lowered so much since getting married?"

Finally, Ben looked at him. Leo straightened his back, appearing proud and aloof.

Ben raised an eyebrow and said indifferently, "What would you like to drink today? It's on me."

Leo let out a cold laugh.

Leo thought that Ben was now trying to appease him, but it was too late for that.

Ben continued calmly, "After all, by the end of today, you might not even be able to afford coffee."

Leo was shocked.

He was incredulous, staring at Ben.

Had he heard wrong?

Wasn't Ben supposed to be here to plead with him?

How could he still be so arrogant?

Unable to hold back, Isabella spoke up, "Mr. Landor, you've seen today's trending topic, haven't you?"

Ben nodded, "It's quite interesting," then turned to Susan, "What do you think, Susan?"

Susan just smiled, "Indeed, quite interesting."

They both seemed completely unperturbed by the situation.

Arrogance to the extreme!

Leo was furious.

He slammed his hand on the table, "Ben, stop pretending. Let's get straight to the point. Your game plagiarized ours! Now, I demand compensation of twenty million dollars... no, sixty million dollars! Otherwise, this matter won't

end here."

Ben looked at Leo curiously, "What do you mean by 'won't end here?'"

"I'll sue you, ruin your reputation!" Leo's expression was sinister. "You should know, a company's reputation is worth more than gold. If this goes to court, your losses, both overt and covert, might exceed sixty million dollars! I'm only offering this discount because of our past brotherhood."

"You give me sixty million dollars, and I can help you resolve this plagiarism issue. Otherwise..."

Leo smirked coldly.

Ben remained calm, "You should know that Susan's game didn't actually plagiarize anything."

Leo just laughed, "I don't care whether you plagiarized or not. As long as everyone believes you did, you're guilty."

Ben gave Leo a meaningful look, "You're set on sixty million dollars, no less?"

"Absolutely not a penny less," Leo said firmly.

Sixty million dollars was nothing compared to Storm Group's reputation.

He was confident Ben would make the right decision.

Ben narrowed his eyes slightly and said, "I understand."

He called the waiter, had the coffee and cake packed to take away, and said, "Put today's bill on my account."

After that, he glanced at Leo, "Goodbye."

Then, Ben and Susan left without looking back.

Leo was speechless.

Isabella was also speechless.

They were both completely baffled about Ben's intentions that day.

Isabella ventured, "Leo, maybe he was trying to appease us!"

Leo snorted coldly, "What good is that? Without the sixty million dollars, I'm not letting this go."

He spoke with absolute certainty and an air of triumph.

Isabella nodded, already calculating in her mind how they would spend the sixty million dollars.

On their way out, Susan looked up at Ben, "Why did you insist on meeting them today?"

Ben gently ruffled her hair. "It was an unnecessary gesture on my part."

He hadn't needed to come today, but something compelled him to do so.

He simply wanted to see how far Leo would go.

Now he knew.

Leo had completely lost his mind.

In light of this, Ben knew there was no need to hold back in his counterattack.

It was just unfortunate that his grandfather would likely be distressed by the whole affair.

Chapter 217

After returning home, Leo and Isabella sat back, expecting Ben to bring them the money.

However, they waited an entire day, and there was no response from Ben's side.

Incredulous, Leo opened Twitter.

The top trending topic was still about the plagiarism accusation.

He clicked on the topic and saw that netizens were demanding a statement from Storm Group.

Usually, in such a situation of public outrage, a company would quickly come forward to clarify.

But Storm Group did the opposite, remaining silent despite the trending topic hanging there for two days.

Was this appropriate?

Had Ben not seen the questions from the internet users?

[I can't believe a big company like Storm Group would stoop to plagiarism! This is so disappointing!]

[True, although the two games differ drastically in production, their settings and male character designs are very similar. Starry Romance is definitely a copy.]

[Are they ignoring it just because the copied game was produced by a smaller company?]

[This is disgusting!]

[Ha, they probably think, "What does it matter if you know we plagiarized? You're still going to buy our phones, right? Typical big company arrogance.]

[Boycott Storm Group, boycott their new phone.]

In two days, the ever-efficient gossip mongers unearthed even more information.

For instance, the plagiarized game was called Future Romance, produced by a company named Infinite Technologies.

The sole shareholder of this company was none other than Leo.

Who is Leo?

Ben's half-brother from the same father.

But recently, Old Mr. Landor had publicly announced Leo's expulsion from the Landor family.

At the time, the gossip enthusiasts had a brief discussion about it.

But without any response from the concerned parties, the discussion faded after a few days.



Now, the topic was reignited.

[I said it before. Leo being expelled from the Landor family was definitely Ben's doing, trying to suppress him and keep the inheritance for himself!]

[I also think there's something fishy going on here!]

Some even began to defend Leo's game.

[Actually, Future Romance isn't that bad. But it only has a one-star rating in the software library. I think Ben must have deliberately suppressed it.]

[Driven out of the Landor family and now having his work plagiarized, Leo really has it rough.]

People naturally sympathize with the underdog, and at the moment, Leo appeared to be just that.

Plus, with Storm Group's continued silence, the public felt even more sorry for Leo and started spinning conspiracy

theories

[I just found out that Susan was the lead manager of the Starry Romance. And she's Ben's wife! Ben's refusal to admit fault must be because of his wife!]

[If that's true, Ben and his wife are tainted for life.]

There were occasional voices of reason urging people to calm down, but such logical arguments were not as

attention—grabbing as conspiracy theories.

Soon, the comments were flooded with various doubts and theories.

Leo, seeing these comments, was naturally pleased.

But what he wanted more was the sixty million dollars.

So, he waited another day, patiently.

The trending topic remained at the top, and Storm Group still hadn't offered any explanation,

Leo figured Ben probably didn't want to pay.

"Ben, you're forcing my hand," he thought.

With a grim face, Leo logged onto Twitter and posted a message.

[I haven't slept for three days. Future Romance was a labor of love by my wife, Isabella, like our own child. We never imagined that changing its clothes would lead to it being snatched away. The thief is rich and powerful, while I am just a castaway expelled from my own family. What do I have to fight with?

[I thought about giving up.

[But seeing my wife's red eyes, I can't let it go.

[Right is right, and wrong is wrong. Why should we back down when we're not the ones in the wrong?

[This time, even if I have to walk through all difficulties, I am resolved to fight for my child and Isabella.]

Along with this post, Leo shared a picture of a legal notice.

He had officially filed a lawsuit against Storm Group.

His post was full of vulnerability and sorrow.

His followers, who already sympathized with him, left encouraging comments.

[You can be assured of justice. Plagiarism is plagiarism, and we all can testify for you.]

[I refuse to believe that Ben can be stronger than the law.]

[If this issue is simply brushed aside, I will lose my faith in our country.]

Thousands of supportive comments quickly filled the feed.

Leo browsed through the comments, letting out a cold laugh..

“Ben, you forced my hand.

“Now, I want to see how you’re going to silence these voices.

“You’ve lost this time.”

Leo’s post rekindled the interest in the trending topic, which shot back to the top of the charts.

Storm Grou

The public demanded a response from Storm Group.

However Group remained silent.

Storm

Instead, Rose posted on her Twitter.

[Seeing this trending topic, I'm filled with questions. If Ben really had that much power, would this topic even be allowed on the charts? Think before you jump on the bandwagon.]

Her post set off another explosion of comments.

Within moments, she received thousands of negative responses.

[Here comes the sycophant. How much did you get from Storm Group?]

[Don't be so harsh. Maybe she's just eagerly trying to curry favor.]

[I used to think Rose was an individual with integrity and even liked her a bit. Now, I'm turning from a fan to a hater.]

Her comment section was swarmed with people turning from fans to haters.

Most female celebrities would panic at such a backlash, but Theresa got excited instead.

She had been feeling down lately and was looking for a reason to argue with someone.

So, she actively engaged in online spats with the netizens.

[Turning into a hater? Please do it fast. Having a fan with such low intelligence is a disgrace to me.]

[Yes, Storm Group gave me a cent. For that dime, I absolutely must stand up.]

[You're right, you're all right. Not only are you right, but you can also reach the skies.]

After Theresa's tirade, the netizens became even more agitated and started to argue back fiercely.

She was unfazed, taking on thousands single-handedly.

1

Unfortunately, after just half an hour of argument, her account was suddenly taken offline and she couldn't log

back in.

Her agent called her, furious, "What are you doing? Do you realize you've offended all the netizens? Theresa, you're not getting your account back for a month."

Theresa held the phone away from her ear and smirked slightly, "Fine, as long as you're happy."

After hanging up with her agent, Susan called.

"Theresa, why did you have to speak up at a time like this? Are you out of your mind?"

Theresa replied nonchalantly, "As soon as I saw the trending topic, I knew you were up to something. Even if I get

scolded now, it will surely turn around soon.”

Susan laughed, “You saw right through it.”

Theresa raised an eyebrow, “With Ben’s capabilities, he can suppress any trending topic. Seeing it hanging there so obviously, it’s clear there’s something fishy. Mainly, I was just in a bad mood and wanted to argue with the

Susan asked curiously, “Why were you in a bad mood?”

Theresa frustratingly tugged at her hair, “It’s my mom again. She’s forcing me into blind dates, and this time it’s

with Thomas.”

Susan was surprised, ‘Thomas? Since when did you two get involved?’

Theresa briefly explained the situation, leaving Susan shocked throughout the conversation.

Theresa couldn’t help but complain, “Before, I would have gone on these blind dates just to appease my mom,

now, I...”

“Now what?” asked Susan.

Theresa paused for a moment, “There’s nothing, really!”

Suddenly feeling flustered, she abruptly hung up the phone.

On the other end, Susan, hearing the dial tone, wore a curious expression.

She had a hunch.

Was Theresa experiencing something unusual?

Theresa, a true Gemini, was unpredictable and enigmatic.

What would she be like in a romantic relationship?

Susan couldn't help but wonder.

Meanwhile, Theresa opened her computer game, looking troubled at the grayed-out username on her friend list:

“Light.”

She had initially thought Light was a girl.

Moreover, sensing that the girl seemed a bit depressed, she had made a point of playing games with her.

As they played together more. Theresa realized something was off.

She was starting to develop feelings for Light.

but

This realization left Theresa in a state of shock. Could it be that her lack of interest in romance was because she

actually preferred women?

Theresa struggled with these thoughts for several days.

Then, a few days ago, Light confessed something to her.

Light revealed that she was actually a “trap” – a guy playing a female character in the game.

So, the person Theresa had been playing with and developing feelings for was actually a guy

She was initially panicked and immediately logged off.

When she finally sorted out her feelings and went online again, Light’s account never became active again.

Theresa waited day after day at their usual meeting spot in the game, but she never saw him again.

This left her feeling incredibly downhearted.

Amidst these emotions, she saw the trending topic on Twitter and, in a burst of anger, started lashing out at

netizens.

But even

But even after venting her frustration, when she logged back into the game and saw Radiance’s still inactive username, her heart felt even emptier.



So this was what liking someone felt like.

When that person wasn't around, it seemed like nothing else mattered.

But once you had that person, it felt impossible to accept anyone else.

Holding a pillow over her face, Theresa began to wail.

Was this... online love?

She had fallen for someone who might never log in again.

Indeed, it seemed she was the most miserable one.

Chapter 218

Early the next morning.

At seven in the morning.

When many people were still asleep, a topic rapidly climbed the ranks on Twitter.

Unaware of what was happening on Twitter, Leo and Isabella had arranged to meet a lawyer that day, intending to formally initiate their lawsuit against Storm Group.

Just as they were about to leave, the lawyer called.

Picking up the phone, Leo cheerfully said, "Mr. West, don't worry, we are just about to head out."

There was a moment of silence on the other end, and then Mr. West, the lawyer, said, "Have you checked Twitter this morning?"

Leo was momentarily taken aback, then nonchalantly replied, "Everyone on Twitter supports me. Whether I look at

it or not doesn't make a difference."

After a pause, the lawyer slowly said, "You should take a look."

"Alright," Leo responded casually, "I'll check it on my way."

"There's no need to come. We don't have to meet. I'm withdrawing from the case," the lawyer stated.

Leo immediately became anxious, "How can you just decide not to take the case? Just yesterday, you were excited, saying that winning this case would make you famous. We've even signed a contract.

Your withdrawal now is a

breach of contract!"

The lawyer's tone was just as harsh, "Become famous? That's only if the case had a chance of winning. As a client, you've withheld such critical information from me. Regardless of where this is discussed, it's your fault in the first place!"

"What information have I hidden?" Leo angrily demanded.

"Just check Twitter," the lawyer replied, frustrated, and hung up.

Perplexed by the lawyer's strange attitude, Leo felt a sense of ominous foreboding.

He hurriedly opened his phone to check Twitter.

“Leo, what’s wrong?” Isabella cautiously asked, sensing something amiss.

Despite wracking her brain, she still believed their plan was flawless, leaving no room for mistakes, unless

somehow they discovered she was reborn, which seemed impossible.

Ignoring Isabella, Leo immediately opened the trending topics on Twitter and his eyes instantly fell on the top trend, causing his eyelids to twitch and fingers to tremble.

His fingers on the keyboard couldn’t help trembling.

“Starry Romance Author Responds”

What did this mean?

Starry Romance was just a game, right?

How could there be an author involved?

the topic.

He quickly clicked on with Isabella peering over his shoulder.

Five minutes later, both their faces turned ashen.

'This... how is this possible?' Isabella stepped back, her eyes filled with disbelief.

At the top of the topic was a post from a verified author on Love Literary Network, going by the pen name "Azure

Sea."

Azure Sea, [The trending topics these past few days have been absurd. I never imagined people could be so malicious, branding something as plagiarism! I hereby declare that the Starry Romance game is adapted from my novel 'Flirting With the Marshal in the Future World!' Storm Group had purchased the adaptation rights to my novel months ago, and the game adaptation was based on this purchase!

[The so-called Future Romance game does share similar backgrounds and character designs with Starry Romance. However, it's not Starry Romance that plagiarized, but Future Love, which plagiarized my novel.

I

[Seeing these recent trends, I now understand the true meaning of "the villain becomes the accuser even before. being accused."

[Since Infinite Technologies wants to send a lawyer's letter, I will also issue one.

[Infinite Technologies, I'll see you in court.]

Finally, there was a straightforward lawyer's letter, along with a link to her novel and its publication date.

When netizens clicked on the link, they discovered the novel had been published three years ago.

Moreover, the novel's background and character settings were indeed identical to Starry Romance.

This meant that Starry Romance hadn't plagiarized but had actually purchased the rights to the novel!

The real plagiarists turned out to be Infinite Technologies, Leo, and Isabella.

The netizens, who had been slapped with the truth, flocked to Leo's previous tweet.

The last time they viewed it, it was with sympathy and pity.

But now, only anger remained, especially as Leo had repeatedly claimed that the game was a labor of love by

Isabella.

Looking back, it was all seen as mockery.

—

What a labor of love plagiarizing, huh?

Feeling duped, the netizens were furious.

The more they had sympathized with Leo before, the angrier they were now.

His tweet was soon flooded with vitriolic comments.

Theresa, who had been heavily criticized the day before, now welcomed a wave of apologetic messages.

She didn't care much about this as she had anticipated such a development.

She aimlessly scrolled through the apologies in her messages before logging off, disinterested.

Leo, witnessing this drastic turn of public opinion, felt his gaze gradually fill with a blood-red rage.

How could this be?

He turned to Isabella and asked, "Didn't you say that the work was your original creation? How come someone else published a novel with the same content three years ago?"

"I..." Isabella was visibly panicked.

In her previous life, she hadn't played much of Starry Romance, so she only had a vague understanding of the story behind the game.

How could she have known that the game's background and character settings were based on a novel?

And crucially, that novel wasn't well-known at all, or else someone would have mentioned it earlier.

She wondered how Susan managed to dig up such an obscure piece.

A plan that seemed foolproof was shattered by just four words, "adapted from a novel."

This had to be Susan's deliberate sabotage!

Leo, observing Isabella's flustered face, lost every ounce of pity he had for her.

He realized he was ruined.

He was done for.

All his investments had gone down the drain, and his reputation was in tatters.

He no longer had the means to make a comeback.

And all of this, he believed, was due to Isabella's doing.

His previous pity and trust in Isabella turned into towering rage.

He raised his hand and viciously slapped her, yelling, "Wretch!"

Isabella, stunned by the slap, looked at him in disbelief. "You... you slap me?"

"What's wrong? Can't I slap you?" Leo's expression was ferocious.

"You can't do this to me," Isabella said fearfully. "You love me. You even abandoned your mother for me. How can you hit me when you love me so much?"

Leo scoffed coldly. "That old woman gave all her money to me, keeping her around wasn't much use anyway. I chose you because you seemed somewhat useful. But it turns out you're just an incompetent fool!"

Chapter 219

Isabella stood frozen, utterly shocked by Leo's words.

She had always believed that Leo deeply loved her.

For that love, she even gave up on Ben, planning to spend her life with Leo.

But who could have imagined Leo's true nature to be so horrifying?

“You...”

Slap!

Leo was expressionless and slapped Isabella again. “You what? You wretched woman, either return all the money lost in this project to me or resolve this situation. If you can’t fix this, I’ll sue you and Marc for commercial fraud!”

Leo threatened.

Commercial fraud?

The accusation of commercial fraud sent a shiver through Isabella. She almost thought Leo had discovered her secret financial dealings.

However, she calmed down, realizing it was likely just an empty threat.

Otherwise, he would have been even more enraged.

Gathering her wits, Isabella replied, “Leo, don’t panic. Just give me some time, I will turn the public opinion around.”

“You better be quick,” Leo said coldly.

Watching Leo’s behavior, Isabella regretted her decisions. She realized she had gotten in way over her head.

Clenching her teeth, she made a call to her family, who were still unaware of her marriage to Leo.



She had always planned to reveal her achievements before confessing her marriage, but now, instead of achievements, she faced a multitude of problems.

Isabella, out of options, vaguely explained to her parents about her marriage and starting a company.

“Dad, Mom, right now Storm Group has hired a bunch of trolls to falsely accuse me. I’m on the brink of utter ruin. Only you can help me now. If you don’t, I might as well be dead,” Isabella cried on the phone.

Her parents were shocked to hear about her situation.

Despite their astonishment, they couldn’t bear to see their only daughter suffer and agreed to help her this one

time.

Armed with her parents’ funds, Isabella attempted to sway public opinion.

“There must be something fishy between Storm Group and Azure Sea, right? If the truth was that simple, why didn’t Azure Sea explain earlier and wait for days?”

She instructed the trolls to obscure the fact about the original novel and instead, spun the issue into a conspiracy

theory.

This initially had some effect.

But soon, Azure Sea responded.

[The trolls’ comments are laughable. I didn’t reveal certain things earlier because I didn’t want to appear pitiful. But since you all clamor for the truth, here it is. A year ago, I was diagnosed with severe

depression and have been struggling with it ever since. Recently, my condition worsened, I was bedridden and couldn't even get up. When

Storm Group purchased the rights, I explicitly asked them not to promote my novel or reveal my identity. I knew

how outstanding the game would be and how much fame the novel would receive if publicized. But I wanted none of it. I just wanted peace. Ms. Miller, as known as Mrs. Landor, who handled the rights negotiation, fully respected my wishes and promised not to reveal any information about the novel or the author unless I agreed.

[Ms. Miller's respectful attitude was a great comfort. So, I agreed to the collaboration.

[But I never imagined she would keep her promise to this extent.

[Despite the uproar online these past few days, she didn't use the novel to clarify things. I know she was protecting

1. me.

[I am once again grateful to Ms. Miller and Storm Group for all their help.

[The game is indeed adapted from my novel, there is no doubt about that.

[As to why I am only responding now, it is due to my personal weakness.

[But now, I am willing to stand up for Ms. Miller and Storm Group.

[I am ready to take full legal responsibility for my statement.]

Azure Sea then attached a diagnosis certificate for depression, confirming it was from a year ago, as claimed.

This time, the netizens were both angry and remorseful.

The truth of the matter turned out to be so different from what they had thought.

Their anger stemmed from the fact that Leo and Isabella, as a couple, had plagiarized someone else's work and yet had the audacity to accuse Susan of plagiarism, which was utterly shameless.

The remorse was because of Azure Sea, who already suffered from depression, and they almost became the final straw that broke her.

Consequently, Azure Sea's tweet was flooded with messages of apology and encouragement.

As for Leo's tweet....

It had become utterly unreadable.

Minutes later, Storm Group's official account, along with Ben and Susan, shared Azure Sea's post, offering her support and encouragement.

Azure Sea didn't respond to anyone except for Susan, to whom she sent a smiley face.

Susan, seeing this smile, felt a warmth in her heart.

Actually, Susan hadn't expected Azure Sea to come forward, knowing her aversion to fame when they negotiated.

From the beginning, Susan had no intention of disclosing Azure Sea's pen name or the original novel.

Knowing that Isabella had the ability to foresee events, she and Ben were well-prepared.

Before initiating the game project, Susan had already started the script adaptation.

Once the script was ready, she immediately registered the patent.

The date of this registration was even earlier than when Isabella claimed to have started writing the script.

Ben and Susan had been waiting for the right moment to reveal their evidence.

Unexpectedly, Azure Sea herself stepped forward, which only made their case stronger.

This time, the effect was even better.

Leo and Isabella became utterly disgraced, akin to rats crossing the street that everyone shouts at.

From now on, it's likely that no matter what they say, the netizens will never believe them.

Conversely, whatever negative news might arise about Ben and Susan in the future, the public probably won't

believe it either.

"Depression?" Isabella, looking at this turnaround, murmured in a frightened tone, "Impossible, this must be a lie."

She wanted to continue mobilizing her trolls, but to her shock, the leader of the trolls bluntly hung up her call.

“Miss Smith

“Miss Smith, you should have a conscience.”

Frustrated, Isabella threw her phone away, biting her lip. “There must be a way, there has to be a way to turn this around,” she thought.

But no matter how she looked at it, her future seemed bleak and dark.

Left with no other choice, she called her parents, tearfully recounting the events.

This time, however, even her parents had no solution.

Her mother even used this opportunity to urge her to divorce and return home.

Return home in such a defeated state?

The idea filled Isabella with pain.

She was not ready to give up. She couldn't accept her fate.

At this point, she didn't even know why she was unwilling to give up.

Was she unwilling to accept that, despite being reborn, she ended up worse off than in her previous life?

Or was it the fr

was it the frustration of not achieving anything despite her foreknowledge?

As Isabella wallowed in her despair and unwillingness to accept her fate, the door suddenly opened.

Leo entered the room, his face clouded with anger.

Isabella tried to muster a smile, "Leo, listen to me..."

Before she could finish, Leo slapped her hard across the face.

Isabella hadn't even recovered when she was bombarded with a series of punches and kicks.

"Wretch, why did I ever marry someone like you?" Leo raged, his expression crazed. "I just went to the company to check the accounts! Marc confessed everything. What exactly is your relationship with him, joining hands to embezzle my company's funds?"

He continued his assault.

Isabella was kicked so severely that she coughed up blood.

Chapter 220

Isabella struggled to get up, but Leo was not done yet.

He approached her, intent on continuing his assault.

In a flash of fear, Isabella blurted out, 'No matter how much money we've lost, my parents can cover it!' Leo's hand paused mid-air, his expression shifting to skepticism.

"Really?" he asked.

Desperate, Isabella nodded vigorously.

Leo's demeanor softened slightly as he stated, "I'll believe you one last time. I've lost over twenty million dollars on this project. Bring back forty million dollars, and we can continue our life together. Otherwise..."

"Forty million?" Isabella was shocked and fearful, "Isn't that too much?"

"Too much?" Leo sneered menacingly. "Either bring the money or face the consequences. Your choice." Leo looked like a devil.

Frightened, Isabella agreed to find a way.

"When are we going to Riowert then?" Leo asked.

"Us?" Isabella was bewildered.

"What, you thought you'd go ask for the money alone? What if you run away? What about my losses then?" Leo looked at Isabella with a threatening gaze.

Feeling cornered, Isabella had no choice but to agree, "Don't worry. Once we sort things out here, we'll go ask my parents for the money."

At this, Leo's face lit up with a radiant smile.

He reached out, helping her up. "Isabella, don't be afraid. I was just angry earlier. You're the one I truly love. Why else would I forsake even my own mother to be with you? What I said earlier was all in the heat of the moment."

"Really?" Isabella was partly surprised and flattered.

Leo nodded affirmatively. "Of course. I'm pushing you to ask your parents for money for our future. Think about it, you're an only child at home, but you have many cousins. Remember how you used to

complain about them. hanging around your parents, trying to benefit from them? Now that you're not around much, they're probably even more ingratiating. What if your parents are deceived by them and leave the family fortune to them instead?"

"They wouldn't dare!" Isabella exclaimed in shock and anger.

"They can do whatever they want with their money," Leo said soothingly. "So, our top priority now is to gradually secure your parents' wealth for ourselves. Otherwise, who knows who might end up benefiting from it in the future?"

Isabella nodded thoughtfully.

She knew Leo had his own ulterior motives, but his words made perfect sense.

She was the only child, and the family wealth was rightfully hers. Taking it in advance seemed justifiable. Moreover, in her mind, she harbored numerous opportunities to make money. | With the funds, she was sure she could make a comeback.

Sensing Isabella's agreement, Leo couldn't help but smile satisfactorily.

Although his wife was foolish, she had wealthy parents.

Securing the Smith family's assets would offset his previous losses.

With a backup plan in place, Leo and Isabella stopped resisting the online backlash. The legal case was clear-cut. The court quickly made a judgment.

The charges of plagiarism and malicious defamation were indisputable.

The plagiarism charge in Coraland was lighter, merely requiring a fine.



However, the defamation could have led to imprisonment, but Isabella's parents intervened, paying a substantial sum to have others take the fall.

Infinite Technologies' reputation was irreparably tarnished, making it impossible to continue operations. Leo promptly dissolved the company.

Then, he and Isabella quietly left Coraland to start anew in Riowert.

At the Landor residence.

The TV was on, but Old Mr. Landor watched without really focusing.

Penelope, sitting beside him, also seemed lost in thought.

Ben sighed and took the initiative to speak, "Leo bought someone to take the fall for him, and he and Isabella have gone to Riowert."

Ben knew about Leo's scheme to have someone else take the blame. However, he never exposed his actions.

After all, Leo carried the bloodline of their family.

Despite Old Mr. Landor and Penelope often speaking bitterly of Leo, if he had actually gone to prison, they wouldn't have been able to let go.

Especially grandpa — with his advanced age and frail health, Ben didn't want to see him distressed over Leo's situation. "Escaped to Riowert?" Old Mr. Landor exclaimed angrily, "That rascal! He only knows how to run away after causing

trouble."

“He should be locked up for ten or eight years,” Penelope added vehemently.

The two elders continued to grumble about Leo, but their spirits visibly improved.

Ben shook his head slightly.

Indeed, no matter how unfilial the younger generation might be, elders in their hearts could never bear to see them fare poorly.

Now that they knew Leo had fled to Riowert, where he had the support of the Smith family, his life would likely be comfortable. This knowledge seemed to provide some relief to the concerned elders.

However, Leo and Isabella had completely lost touch with reality.

Ben narrowed his eyes.

For his grandpa’s sake, he was willing to let Leo and Isabella off the hook.

But it would be best for them to stay quietly in Riowert and never set foot in Coraland again.

Otherwise, they shouldn't blame him for showing no mercy.

Leo and Isabella left in disgrace, but their actions inadvertently brought massive popularity to Susan’s game.

Regardless of whether people played games or not, everyone now kn about a ame callex’Stdmry- . Rionianee” that used the latest AI technology, offering an experience akin to a second world.

In an instant, countless people flooded in.

Typically, even the best-made

games see a dip

However, "Starry Romance" maintained perfect scores from the third day of its release, never experiencing a

decline.

A week later.

The game's revenue figures were released.

As the project leader, Susan was the first to see them.

She was utterly astonished by the numbers.

Could this game really be so profitable?

In just one week, the revenue reached a staggering two hundred million dollars!

To put that in perspective, the previous record for monthly revenue was only four hundred million dollars.

If the trend continued, this seemingly trivial love game would set a new national record for gaming revenue.

"Director Miller, are we getting a bonus this