

Chapter 820: Lunar Mass Driver

Beijing.

A conference room at Chang'an Avenue.

Academician Wang Rongjun was wearing a gray coat. He slowly walked into the conference room and found his seat. He placed his vacuum flask on the table.

He looked at the table and tried to find the conference documents, but he couldn't find anything at all.

Academician Wang Rongjun was confused, and he was about to ask a staff member when he heard a voice next to him.

"Old Wang, what are you doing here?"

Wang Rongjun looked over and saw Chief Engineer Academician Li Qingquan from China Railway Group. Academician Li Qingquan began walking over.

When Wang Rongjun saw his old friend, his eyes widened!

"I was going to ask you that! Last time I asked you to go drinking with me, you said you were at a meeting in another city; how come you're in Beijing now?"

"Yeah, I had a meeting in another city, but suddenly, the State Administration for National Defense called me and told me there was a secret meeting here. They even bought me the flight tickets. I thought this meeting was confidential, so I didn't tell you." Academician Li Qingquan coughed and said, "I didn't expect you to be invited as well."

"If even you were invited, then of course they would invite me." Academician Wang picked up his vacuum flask and unscrewed the lid. He took a sip and

looked around the crowded conference room. He said, “There are quite a few big names here.”

Not only were there academicians from the China Railway Company, but the academicians from the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation and China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation were also invited.

Other than that, there were also some unfamiliar faces. They didn’t look like they came from the industry, nor did they look like they came from academia. They seemed like they came from a military research organization.

He began recalling the phone call he received two days ago.

During the phone call, the person didn’t tell him what the conference was about. However, by looking at the big names here, it seemed like this was going to be an important conference...

“Yeah,” Academician Li Qingquan nodded and said, “all of the transportation industry big names are here... Maybe our country wants to plan a new super-high-speed railway project?”

Academician Li Qingquan’s eyes lit up, and he became extremely excited.

The super-high-speed railway was a concept proposed by the China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation. It used “magnetic levitation and vacuum tubes” technology to achieve supersonic speeds. It had a theoretical speed of 1,000 kilometers per hour.

When China’s high-speed railway trains reached 350 kilometers, there had been plans about building a super-high-speed railway system. The technology had been proven to be feasible, and many academicians had supported it. However, the project was never initiated.

One was due to safety reasons, and the other was because China already had a 350 kilometers per hour railway system, so there wasn’t much demand for a much faster railway.

It was more profitable and meaningful for China to export its railway technology to other third world countries such as Africa.

However, on this day, the State Administration for National Defense suddenly invited many big names from the transportation industry to this conference. People couldn't help but get excited.

"Who knows..." Academician Wang Rongjun shook his head and said, "We'll see what the State Administration for National Defense has to say."

"You're right." Academician Li Qingquan smiled and said, "The conference is about to begin, surely they will tell us what this conference is about."

It was exactly 10 o'clock in the morning. All of the attendees were in the conference room. The conference room staff closed the main entrance doors, and the meeting officially began.

Director Li from the State Administration for National Defense was the meeting host. When he walked on stage, all of the chatter in the room disappeared. Many people had a serious look on their faces.

"Thank you all very much for taking time out of your busy schedules to participate in this meeting." Director Li cleared his throat and said, "The reason why we invited you today is that we have an important matter that needs to be consulted with experts."

"Due to the confidential nature of this matter, we were not able to disclose any information prior to this conference. I hope you all understand."

"Also, I hope you can keep the conference content strictly confidential. At the same time, do not hesitate to give your own opinions. If you have any good ideas, feel free to share them."

A projector shined on the projector screen in the conference room.

Once everyone saw the projected picture, the previously quiet conference room started to become noisy.

People looked at each other with astonished eyes.

Lunar mass driver!

People had their own guesses on what the State Administration for National Defense wanted to talk about today, but none of them expected the conference to be about the mass driver.

Academician Li Qingquan was slightly disappointed that the conference wasn't about the super-high-speed rail. Academician Wang Rongjun, who was sitting next to him, had his mouth wide open.

After a while, Wang Rongjun asked, "Are they building a high-speed rail on the Moon?"

Director Li cleared his throat and spoke in a serious manner.

"According to the construction plans provided by the Lunar Orbit Committee, we plan on building an acceleration track on a lunar crater..."

"By using electromagnetic acceleration, the object will be accelerated to the Moon's escape velocity, then launched into lunar orbit through another inclined track..."

"The construction will begin at the same time as the lunar research facilities. The first-phase project budget is 200 billion yuan. More than 70 universities, research institutes, and companies will be involved."

As Academician Li Qingquan listened to the State Administration for National Defense director speak, he had a slight smile on his face.

200 billion yuan for the first phase of the project!

They're basically building another Moon Palace on the Moon!

Academician Wang Rongjun frowned at the PowerPoint on the screen, and he suddenly said, "Building this thing will probably be extremely difficult. Even if we do build it, the power consumption will be astronomical! I'm afraid we'll have to build a fusion reactor on the Moon just to supply this big cannon."

"Big cannon?" Academician Li Qingquan raised his eyebrows. "What do you mean?"

Academician Wang Rongjun replied, "It is basically a big cannon."

The electromagnetic acceleration could accelerate an object to a speed of more than two kilometers per second.

That was much faster than any cannon projectile.

Li Qingquan stared at the PowerPoint and spoke with emotion.

“They’ve been putting off the super-high-speed rail project for at least half a decade by now.”

Academician Wang Rongjun didn’t know why his friend was bringing this up, so he looked at him and asked, “I think so... Why?”

Academician Li Qingquan said, “There were a lot of academicians who supported the project, right?”

Academician Wang Rongjun: “What’s your point?”

Academician Li Qingquan sighed and said, “Nothing, I’m just feeling a bit emotional.”

The super-high-speed railway project would also cost a couple hundred billion, yet it was never approved. This “Moon cannon” project was approved with just the support of one person.

Countless academicians were no match against one person.

There would never be a scholar with as much influence as Lu Zhou...

Chapter 821: I Want to Study Mathematics With You!

Academician Li was right to be jealous.

Actually, almost the entire Chinese academic community was envious of Lu Zhou.

With a Nobel Prize and a Fields Medal under his belt, not to mention two academician positions, he could easily initiate a ten-figure project just by writing a letter. Thousands of noob researchers would kill to just publish one thesis.

Not to mention, he was only in his twenties...

He was the apex scholar of all scholars.

However, he wasn’t just jealous.

In addition to his jealousy, Academician Li Qingquan also admired Lu Zhou. Professor Lu's achievements in China would take most people multiple lifetimes to accomplish.

Therefore, it made sense Lu Zhou was being taken so seriously by the Chinese government.

Lu Zhou was miles ahead of ordinary scholars.

By the time the State Administration for National Defense conference on the lunar mass driver project ended, Lu Zhou had already left Beijing and was on his way back to Jinling.

He finished all of his work for the Lunar Orbit Committee for now. He finally had some time to set the Lunar Orbit Committee aside and focus on Jin Ling University.

Not to mention he still had to mark his students' theses. Hence, he had to come to the mathematics department office every day.

"Yesterday I received a reply from the International Materials Reviews editorial department. Congratulations, your thesis has been published."

Han Mengqi stood in front of Lu Zhou's desk, and she was pleased to hear the good news. She sighed in relief and had a comforting smile on her face.

She had been preparing for the past six months for this graduation thesis. The knot in her heart was finally untied, and she could take a break for now, at least until next summer.

Lu Zhou looked at Han Mengqi and smiled.

"Don't relax just yet, have you thought about what to do after graduation?"

Han Mengqi scratched her head and shook her head. She hesitated for a bit and said, "I... haven't thought about it."

"Start thinking about it..." Lu Zhou looked at her with a serious expression and said, "If you want to do a PhD, you should start preparing by the beginning of next year. If you want to graduate, you should start looking for a job soon. If you're applying for jobs, I can write a recommendation letter for you."

Han Mengqi stared at the ground and said in an awkward manner, "Professor, can I ask you a question?"

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "Go ahead, answering questions is my job."

"What does... doing a PhD feel like?"

"What does it feel like? That's quite a generic question." Lu Zhou contemplated it for a second before saying, "How should I describe it... Actually, it's quite similar to what you're doing right now. The only difference is your mentality."

"Mentality?" Han Mengqi tilted her head, and she was intrigued. "Can you be more specific?"

Lu Zhou: "Simply speaking, PhD and master's students do roughly the same thing. The difference is that master's students are mainly focused on learning scientific research tools, such as graphical models or Markov chain simulations. They use these tools to solve the small problems they encounter in their scientific research. During this stage, the tools used to solve these problems are recommended to the students by the supervisor. The students are responsible for finding the solution."

"But for PhD students..." Lu Zhou paused for a second and recalled his time as a PhD student. He then said, "Phd students are mainly responsible for solving problems with new tools. The problems can be created by the students or the supervisors. At this stage, the students would have the ability to find new, novel problems. They might also be able to create new tools. That means, when you're a PhD student, you're doing scientific research on your own... Do you get what I'm trying to say?"

"Ah..."

Han Mengqi, who wasn't paying attention, suddenly looked at Lu Zhou.

She noticed Lu Zhou was staring back at her, and she suddenly blushed and scratched her head as she said, "Sorry... I kind of dozed off."

Lu Zhou said, "It's fine, I can tell you're thinking about a million things right now. Whenever I get confused because of a problem, I tend to lose my attention span as well. No need to apologize."

Han Mengqi asked, “You get confused by problems as well?”

Lu Zhou played with the pen in his hand. He went silent for a while, as if he didn’t know how to answer this question.

However, after contemplating for a bit, he answered vaguely, “Of course, everyone encounters difficult problems at times. Even I can’t make the right decision all of the time. Even today, there’s a problem that I can’t find a good solution to.”

Han Mengqi was suddenly curious about what problem Lu Zhou was talking about.

Han Mengqi took a deep breath and encouraged herself to ask.

“Can I ask what problem it is?”

“It’s a personal problem...” Lu Zhou coughed and said, “Anyway, you are talented at scientific research. If you continue on the academic path, I’d recommend you to choose the computational materials science field. Especially fields such as the Berry phase and topological effects in phonons, the development of 3D topological materials, and hydrogen storage. These are all popular fields, and you will be able to produce good research.”

The goal of computational materials science was mainly to build predictable or descriptive models to help study the mechanism of materials and reduce the time and cost of new material development.

Ten years ago, this was still a new discipline, but now, it had become mature. Especially after the 2018 Nobel Prize in Chemistry, many research institutes opened a computational materials science research department. Most of the time, a strong materials science research department would hire a talented PhD student, so it had relatively good job prospects.

As for easy to produce good research...

Honestly, that was just relative to Lu Zhou’s other laboratories.

The Jinling Institute for Advanced Study was a world-leading experimental institution in fields such as aerospace materials, carbon materials, and new energy. Many materials science academic journals had even “retained” the

theses produced by this institute. Therefore, it was easy for the Institute for Advanced Study to produce good research in this field.

Han Mengqi went silent for a while, and Lu Zhou stared at her while playing with a pen. Lu Zhou suddenly asked, “What are you thinking?”

“I think...”

Han Mengqi bit her lip and contemplated it for a long time.

Finally, she looked up with determination and said, “I want to... study mathematics with you!”

Lu Zhou: “...?”

Chapter 822: One Question Exam

Study...

Mathematics?

Lu Zhou was confused.

He went silent for a while. He then coughed and said, “Computational materials science is also a type of mathematics...”

“I don’t want to learn computational materials science.” Han Mengqi shook her head stubbornly and said, “I only want to study mathematics.”

She felt like her sentence wasn’t clear, so she quickly added, “I mean, study pure mathematics.”

“Pure mathematics...”

Lu Zhou heard her request and felt a headache.

He normally didn’t want to tell others what to do with their lives...

But...

Lu Zhou put down the pen and laid his hands on the table with his fingers interlocked. He looked at Han Mengqi with a serious expression and asked, "Can you tell me why? You've studied computational materials science for three years, why are you suddenly switching to pure mathematics?"

Normally speaking, it was common to see people switch from pure mathematics to applied mathematics fields. However, it was very rare to see people do the reverse.

If it were someone else, Lu Zhou wouldn't care. But Han Mengqi was his most talented computational materials science student.

Even Jerick, who attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, wasn't as talented as her.

Obviously, Lu Zhou felt a little disappointed she was leaving the computational materials science field.

After all, he spent a lot of effort training her.

Han Mengqi avoided eye contact and hesitated for a bit.

"I don't like chemistry at all... After choosing chemistry, I already wanted to switch to mathematics. Jin Ling University did that undergraduate student training program, and I had good grades. I was then convinced by the teacher and signed up..."

She felt like this was a horrible reason, and she didn't even want to continue speaking.

Transfer?

Lu Zhou was astonished.

Oh Jesus, little girl, you're graduating with a master's degree, yet you're still thinking about transferring just because you wanted to transfer when you were 18?

"Transferring is fine, I also transferred to mathematics." Lu Zhou tried to convince her and said, "The key is if it's suitable or not..."

"Not suitable or not." Han Mengqi shook her head and looked at Lu Zhou seriously as she said, "It's whether I like it or not."

Lu Zhou looked at her serious face and paused for a second.

Speaking of which, I think this is the first time she has disagreed with me...

Lu Zhou thought back to one of his quotes and sighed. He then repeated that quote.

“You’re right, interest is the best teacher.”

Even if it weren’t for the high tech system, he would still be studying mathematics out of pure interest. That feeling of being immersed in the mathematics world was why he chose mathematics in the first place.

If his best student wanted to study mathematics...

He shouldn’t convince her otherwise.

Even if computational materials science was a better choice for her.

After hearing Lu Zhou’s approval, Han Mengqi’s face lit up. She happily spoke.

“Then I...”

Lu Zhou interrupted Han Mengqi and said, “I won’t stop you, but it’s not easy being my mathematics PhD student... especially when it comes to pure mathematics.”

Han Mengqi bit her lip and spoke with determination.

“No problem... I will work hard.”

“Some things can’t be obtained just by hard work. Mathematics is a discipline that requires talent, especially pure mathematics. There are many people who research mathematics, but very few are able to produce results. Some people spent their entire lives learning what other people have created, and never create anything themselves.”

Lu Zhou took out a piece of draft paper and picked up the pen on his table. He thought for ten seconds and wrote down a line of equations on the paper.

[For any real number $s > 1$, define $\zeta(s) = \sum 1 / (m^s) \dots$]

Han Mengqi looked at the formula and narrowed her eyes.

“This is...?”

It looks simple.

Lu Zhou said, “It’s the Riemann zeta function.”

After that, he wrote down another line.

[... Prove that $\zeta(2n)$ is a transcendental number.]

Han Mengqi heard of Riemann before and knew that the problem wasn’t easy. Her voice trembled as she asked, “Are you really going to give me such a difficult assignment already?”

“Don’t think it’s difficult just because it’s Riemann. He’s been dead for more than a century.” Lu Zhou smiled and handed Han Mengqi the piece of paper. He said, “Also, this isn’t an assignment, this is an exam.”

“Exam?”

“Yes.” Lu Zhou nodded and said, “If you can solve this problem, you can study a pure mathematics PhD with me.”

He paused for two seconds before adding another sentence, “Of course, if you want to study computational materials under me, my office doors are always open.”

After all, Lu Zhou was quite satisfied with her paper on topological crystal insulators. If this little girl could stop romanticizing mathematics and return to computational materials, he would certainly welcome her.

Pure mathematics...

Wasn’t an easy field to learn.

Han Mengqi stared at the draft paper, and as she looked at the problem that asked her to prove the transcendental numbers, her head began to spin.

Forget about solving it, she didn’t even understand the question.

When she was studying computational materials science, the mathematical methods she used were mainly in the fields of functional analysis, geometry, and topology. She had never studied analytic number theory before...

However...

She wasn't going to give up.

Han Mengqi looked up at Lu Zhou and clenched her teeth.

"Don't expect me to give up... I will start researching now."

"Of course not, I'm looking forward to your answer." Lu Zhou smiled and said, "However, you only have two months. I expect an answer by the end of this year."

"I don't need two months, one month is enough."

She picked up the piece of draft paper and left the office.

Once the office door closed, the office returned to quietness again.

Lu Zhou looked at He Changwen, who was sitting at a desk nearby. He Changwen was his pure mathematics PhD student.

"Hey, Changwen, if I asked you to prove that $\zeta(2n)$ is a transcendental number, how many different proofs could you come up with?"

He Changwen, who was writing something, hesitated for a second.

"I can think of... one way... Oh wait, no, two ways."

He Changwen spoke confidently.

Lu Zhou nodded and replied, "Two ways is pretty good."

He Changwen hesitated for a moment and asked, "Isn't that question too difficult for a master's student?"

He couldn't help but listen to the conversation that happened just now.

For most people who didn't study mathematics in their undergraduate or master's years, this problem was indeed quite difficult.

Not only did Han Menqi lack pure mathematics knowledge, but this was also a test of her mathematics thinking abilities. Abstract mathematical thinking wasn't an easy thing for mathematics students to learn, let alone a layman who had never studied pure mathematics.

Lu Zhou smiled gently.

"PhD students should be able to find problems and find answers themselves.

"If she can come up with the solution herself, that would be great.

"If she can't, then it means she is not talented in this area. She should think carefully about what she wants to do in the future."

Chapter 823: Letter From IMU

In fact, Lu Zhou hoped Han Mengqi would give up on pure mathematics because of that question.

Even though this was an open-ended question, anyone in this field knew that this question wasn't easy to answer.

Because it was related to a classic Riemann zeta function problem.

Which was, the transcendental value of the Riemann zeta function at the odd positive integer points.

Just like He Changwen had said, this wasn't a problem that could be solved by laymen.

She had to be extremely talented, self-learn the relevant knowledge of number theory, collect the literature regarding the Riemann zeta function, and conduct some research on her own...

But then again, if she was indeed really talented in the field of pure mathematics, Lu Zhou would be happy to accept her as a student.

Lu Zhou had been thinking about a problem recently.

The “medal” he received from a higher level civilization some time ago revealed a very important piece of information to him.

Which was that human beings were not alone in this universe. Human beings had even been observed by higher-level civilizations, but they hadn’t been contacted yet.

There were many possible reasons for this. It could be due to the long distances in space, or it could also be due to the cultural differences of the other civilizations. Or, the other civilizations could have already disappeared thousands of years ago...

Regardless of which scenario was true, so far, the system had information about a high-level civilization. It was likely the only way he could obtain information regarding this higher-level civilization.

It seemed like if he wanted to crack open the secrets of the system, he had to have level 10 in all of his disciplines.

If he wanted to upgrade his disciplines to level 10, he would first have to level up his mathematics to level 10 first. This was because his mathematics level set the upper limits for the levels of his other disciplines.

The only problem was that 3 million experience points wasn’t that easy to obtain.

Only the mathematical crown of the world—the Riemann hypothesis—could provide this much experience points.

The “Control of Earth and Moon” mission was under control. After the Magpie Bridge increased the lunar transfer capacity to a new magnitude, both the Moon Palace and the lunar research facility would be completed. It was only a matter of time.

Because of this, all of Lu Zhou’s extra time was used to study mathematics.

From his past experiences, he realized that the project he was currently working on had a high probability of being a system mission in the future. Even though he didn’t know what this probability was, it didn’t hurt to be prepared.

The day after he assigned the zeta function “exam” to Han Mengqi, Lu Zhou walked into his office at 8 o’clock in the morning. He placed his laptop on the table and asked Assistant Zhao to make him a cup of instant coffee. He then sat at his desk and began working.

Zhao Huan walked toward his desk with a cup of warm coffee. After she placed the coffee on his desk, she took out a document and spoke softly.

“Professor, after you left work yesterday, Principal Xu came here. He told me to give you this.”

Class of Youth conference meeting notes?

After looking at the document title, Lu Zhou raised his eyebrows. He reached over and flipped through the pages.

“I’ll find some time to read through it, thanks.”

“Okay, professor!”

Assistant Zhao nodded and walked back to her desk.

Lu Zhou leaned on his desk and drank his coffee while reading through the conference notes.

Generally speaking, the Jin Ling University Class of Youth program was going pretty smoothly. They received approval from the relevant government departments, and they were about to select the first cohort of students.

Lu Zhou cleared his throat and looked at He Changwen, who was sitting nearby reading theses. Lu Zhou spoke.

“Changwen, I have something for you to do.”

He Changwen, who was bored out of his mind, suddenly looked up with excitement.

“No problem, professor, what research project is it?”

He had been a PhD student under Lu Zhou for nearly three years. Even though he made some progress, it wasn’t much. He wasn’t particularly talented, and Lu Zhou was too busy. Most of the thesis was done by him alone.

Now that Lu Zhou suddenly said he had something to do, he was very excited.

“Uh... not a research project.”

Lu Zhou looked at how excited he was and knew what he was thinking.

Even though Lu Zhou didn't want to hurt his feelings, now was not the time to give him a research project.

After clearing his throat, Lu Zhou continued, “The day after tomorrow, attend the discussion class in Room 101 at Building A. They're all undergraduate students. Be careful when you select the topic, don't let them feel overwhelmed. I need you to prepare a discussion outline and bring it to me tomorrow.”

The moment He Changwen heard that it was a discussion class for undergraduate students, he began to frown.

“Professor, can't you give me something more challenging?”

Lu Zhou cleared his throat and said, “Do it properly, this is an important exercise... If you do this well, you will have many challenging tasks waiting for you.”

“Yes, sir...”

Lu Zhou was about to start working when a chat window popped up on his laptop.

Xiao Ai: [Master, you have new mail ✨ (● ◡ ◡)]

Xiao Ai: [Email link]

Lu Zhou put down his pen and clicked on the link Xiao Ai sent him.

He saw an unread email lying in his inbox.

When he saw the IMU icon on the email, he looked surprised.

International Mathematical Union?

Lu Zhou quickly opened the email and began reading it.

[Dear Professor Lu Zhou, I'm sorry to disturb you amid your busy schedule. According to the votes of all the representatives at the last International Congress of Mathematicians, the next International Congress of Mathematicians will be held at St. Petersburg, Russia, in 2022. On behalf of IMU, I would like to send you an invitation and hope that you will be able to give a 60-minute report at the St. Petersburg International Congress of Mathematicians...

[If you are interested, we will send you a formal written invitation. If you are busy with research and don't have time to participate, please let us know...

[Herald Holden, Secretary-General of the International Mathematical Union.]

After Lu Zhou carefully read the email, he contemplated for a bit before typing a reply.

[Dear Professor Herald Holden, I am honored to receive your invitation.

[I am planning on attending the International Congress of Mathematicians at St. Petersburg, but I cannot guarantee that I will be there. If everything goes according to plan and I am able to attend, I will upload the content for my 60-minute report prior to the deadline.]

Lu Zhou clicked "Send".

After all of this was done, he leaned back in his office chair and looked outside the window.

Time really flies by...

It's nearly been four years since the last mathematicians congress.

Lu Zhou looked at the view outside his window and couldn't help but think back to four years ago.

Back then, he was still a professor at Princeton, studying the secrets of the Navier–Stokes equations. His life now was much more meaningful and fulfilling.

He started to get nostalgic.

He wondered how his Princeton friends were doing...

Chapter 824: Friends From Far Away

On the other side of the Earth.

It was night time at the Princeton campus, only a few library rooms were still lit.

Inside a library room, Vera placed a stack of theses on the table. She found a particular line of calculations and spoke.

“... Line 11 on page 27, there’s a problem with the formula.”

She hadn’t changed much over the past three years. The only difference was that her short ponytail had now reached her arm.

If she were wearing a long skirt, one might even mistake her for a real princess. Unfortunately, she often wore teenage-looking clothes, which made people mistake her for a high school visiting student...

“Oh Jesus... My God, you’re even more strict than my PhD supervisor...”
Molina rubbed her eyebags and grabbed a pen from the table. She stretched her back and stood up.

She didn’t like pulling all-nighters, and sitting there all night hurt her shoulders and back. Even though she was one of the younger lecturers, she was still getting quite old.

At least she was when compared to Vera...

Vera smiled awkwardly as she said, “What do you mean, Sophie Morel is way worse than me.”

Sophie Morel was Molina’s PhD supervisor. The two had worked on the Riemann hypothesis for a long time. After losing the 2018 Nobel Prize, Sophie gave up on the Riemann hypothesis and began researching other areas of study. Surprisingly, Sophie had been doing quite well.

Molina, on the other hand, was still stuck on this age-old question. Even though she went from a PhD student to a Princeton University lecturer, her desire to solve this question was still there.

As for how she ended up working for Vera, it was a long story.

All in all, right now, the two were in the same research project group and had the same goal— solve the Riemann hypothesis.

“No, Vera, you’re too humble. That coward could never prove Kakutani’s fixed-point theorem so beautifully. She could never study a problem so meticulously...” said Molina. Molina scratched her head and felt irritated. She said, “Damn it, I should have thought of the Odlyzko–Schönhage algorithm a long time ago.”

“Bingo, the Odlyzko–Schönhage algorithm,” Vera said softly. She wrote down two lines of calculations on a piece of paper and said, “After we correct the algorithm, we can prove that 40% of the non-trivial zero points is on the critical line... Congratulations, Molina, you discovered a method other than Levinson’s algorithm that proved Corney’s critical line theorem.”

Vera was trying to make Molina feel better by congratulating her.

However, Vera wasn’t sure if Molina felt better at all.

It took them a month to come up with this idea, and another two months to test this idea. However, in the end, their result was already proved by someone in the 1990s.

The critical line that divided the non-trivial zero points of the ζ function was still at 40%. If anyone could increase this percentage, they were likely to win the next Fields Medal.

However, even after so many years, no one was able to defeat this dragon.

“This is meaningless...” Molina sighed and said, “Maybe Mathematics Chronicle will accept our thesis.”

Vera gave her a look of encouragement and spoke.

“I think they will consider it. After all, we found another use for the Odlyzko–Schönhage algorithm.”

Unlike other fields, mathematical research wasn’t completely a result-oriented field. Even if someone didn’t produce a beautiful result, as long as the proof process was interesting, it might be published. Not to mention that even

though Mathematics Chronicle wasn't managed by Princeton anymore, it still had a more "relaxed" attitude regarding Princeton submissions.

However...

It was unlikely for them to publish in large journals such as Annual Mathematics.

"Maybe..." Molina rubbed her messy hair and said, "I think we should change our mindset. A while ago, I found Sir Atiyah's notes, and I think his research is interesting."

Vera's mouth was wide open.

"Molina..."

Molina said, "What?"

Vera said in a serious manner, "You should really take a break."

This might be disrespectful toward Sir Atiyah, but long before Atiyah passed away, people had been trying to use his notes, all to no avail.

"Don't worry about me, I'm doing great." Molina rubbed her forehead and said, "Actually, you're right, I think I should take a break."

Anyone who studied Sir Atiyah's notes must be going a little haywire.

Vera sat next to her, and a moment of silence passed before she asked, "Why... are you so determined on solving the Riemann hypothesis?"

Molina replied sarcastically, "Just like how you're determined on getting that guy?"

Vera blushed, and she hesitated for a bit and looked at the thesis on the table.

"I... I'm not as determined as you. It's just that, he was the one who helped me when I needed help the most."

Molina: "But that was many years ago, right?"

Vera nodded in silence.

She was well aware that it was many years ago.

She didn't know if Lu Zhou still remembered what she looked like.

But she remembered exactly what he looked like...

"I feel the same." Molina smiled and grabbed the empty mug on the table as she said, "Mathematics saved me."

Vera looked at her with a puzzled look.

"But why Riemann hypothesis?"

"That's a story for another day."

Molina stood up from her chair, but because of her extreme fatigue, she struggled to maintain her balance. Fortunately, Vera stood up and supported her.

"Thanks." Molina grabbed the chair and smirked as she said, "If he doesn't want you, I'll marry you, sis."

Vera's face turned bright red, and she said, "Sorry, I don't... swing that way."

Molina pouted and smiled.

"Just kidding."

Moline picked up the thesis on the table and quickly walked away.

Chapter 825: Small World

Generally speaking, someone doing theoretical research was doing one of two things.

They were either reading the relevant literature or working on their thesis.

Even at Lu Zhou's level, he was still tied by this rule. Every day, aside from his miscellaneous work, he would either read theses from the top 3 journals or quietly sit at his desk and think about his own problems.

After the “Control of Earth and Moon” mission chain finished, he planned on returning to mathematics research and reach level 10 in mathematics. Lu Zhou used a keyword software to search for relevant mathematics literature.

Lu Zhou would find and carefully read any theses regarding the Riemann hypothesis or the Riemann function, as long as they were in the top 5 journals.

Even though he knew it was unrealistic for someone in this field to create outstanding research results, he still wanted to get a little inspiration from other people’s work.

As usual, Lu Zhou came into the office at 8 o’clock in the morning. After he finished reading He Changwen’s discussion class notes, he opened his laptop and checked if there were any relevant theses he should read.

Suddenly, a chat pop-up window appeared on the bottom right corner of his computer screen.

Xiao Ai: [Master, you have a review invitation.~ (◡‿◡)]

Thesis review invitation?

Lu Zhou put down his coffee mug and clicked Xiao Ai’s email link.

The invitation was from the Mathematics Chronicle.

Lu Zhou still remembered that his first thesis regarding Zhou’s conjecture was published in the Mathematics Chronicle. Even though he didn’t publish any other thesis on Mathematics Chronicle since then, he would still occasionally receive review invitations from that journal.

Normally speaking, any thesis that was published in this journal had some amount of value.

Lu Zhou was intrigued. He opened the thesis in his email and looked at the thesis title. He raised his eyebrows.

“... Using Odlyzko–Schönhage algorithm to prove Corney’s critical line theorem.”

Lu Zhou sat up straight and quickly read the thesis abstract. He then began reading the thesis body.

This wasn't a long thesis; it was only 15 pages in total.

The author proved Corney's critical line theorem using a new method. Even though they weren't able to push the 40% number higher, the proof method was still fascinating.

If Lu Zhou recalled correctly, everyone used Levinson's algorithm to research this problem.

After carefully reading the entire thesis, Lu Zhou wrote down his own review and approved the thesis.

Most professors took 3-5 days to review a thesis, Lu Zhou, on the other hand, could instantly spot any problems with the thesis.

Lu Zhou glanced at his screen and paused for a second. He then grabbed his mouse and highlighted some of the formulas.

He didn't know why, but he felt like the formula structures were familiar.

Mathematics Chronicle had a double-blind review system; neither the reviewer nor the author knew who the other person was. However, there were ways to find out who the author was.

Many scholars had the habit of uploading preprints online before submitting it to a journal. It was quite easy to find out who the author was.

Lu Zhou was curious about the author. After all, the thesis had already been reviewed by him, it wasn't illegal for him to find out who the author was.

I want to find out!

Lu Zhou hesitated for a bit and made up his mind. He logged onto arXiv and began searching.

As expected, the author had the habit of uploading their theses online before submission. He easily found the author's information.

When he saw the author's name, he was stunned.

Molina!

And...

Vera Pulyuy.

“This is a small world...”

After a while, Lu Zhou smiled and shook his head. He closed his browser page and went back to the Mathematics Chronicle email.

No wonder he felt the thesis structure was so familiar. He knew both the authors, and one of them was even his student before.

What surprised him was that Molina hadn't given up on the Riemann hypothesis, and she even brought Vera into this mess.

Lu Zhou was hesitant about whether he should send Vera an email and ask how her research was going. Suddenly, the office door opened and someone walked in.

“Hey, Lu Zhou, look who's here!”

Lu Zhou looked up at the door and said to Luo Wenxuan, “You came here from Beijing?”

“I came from Switzerland. I went to CERN for a two-month business trip. I just came back today,” Luo Wenxuan said. He pulled out a chair and sat across from Lu Zhou.

When he saw Lu Zhou's piece of draft paper on the table, he was intrigued. He picked up the draft paper and asked curiously, “The Riemann hypothesis? When did you start attacking this question?”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Just doing some research for fun.”

“Wow, what a fun activity...” Luo Wenxuan pulled out a file and said, “Anyway, I did what you asked!”

Lu Zhou picked up the document and glanced at it. He looked surprised.

“Already?”

This was the project plan for the lunar hadron collider!

The detailed blueprints were not in this document. It only contained a rough engineering plan. However, judging from Luo Wenxuan's expression, the detailed blueprints should have been completed.

Hearing how surprised Lu Zhou was, Luo Wenxuan smiled proudly.

"It wasn't too difficult to design. There were two main difficulties regarding the collider. One was the tens of kilometers long vacuum pipelines, and the other was the liquid helium cooling system. It's not too difficult to build these things on the Moon. The structure is a lot simpler than LHCb. The main difficulty is from the engineering side, how do you plan on building the tens or even hundreds of kilometers long tunnel on the Moon?"

"I have that sorted out, so you don't have to worry about it." Lu Zhou smiled and put the document aside. He then said, "Tell me, how was your two-month visit to CERN?"

Chapter 826: CERN

Lu Zhou asked Assistant Zhao to make him another cup of coffee. He spent the next hour quietly listening to Luo Wenxuan's experience at CERN over the past two months.

"The design of the lunar hadron collider is mainly done by the Chinese Academy of Sciences Institute of High Energy Physics and the Institute of Space Engineering. However, the Chinese research institutes don't have any experience on hadron colliders, so we contacted CERN..."

Theoretical research fields had very little confidentiality. Whenever CERN had too much data on their hands, they would often hand the data to other research institutes around the world. This was how the Internet was born. Even though there was some competitiveness when it came to groundbreaking research results, research institutes often came to an agreement.

After the Europeans heard that China planned on building a lunar hadron collider, they were even more enthusiastic than the Chinese themselves. They sent their best LHCb and ALICE detector engineers to Beijing. Then they gave

the Chinese Academy of Sciences Institute of High Energy Physics ten research visitor spots.

Of course, this wasn't all free.

The reason why CERN was so eager to help was that they hoped to cooperate with China in particle physics research. After the lunar hadron collider was built, more than half of the world's high energy physics experiments would be conducted in space. Hypotheses that weren't verifiable before could now be tested in space.

Out of all of the scholars from the Institute of High Energy Physics, Luo Wenxuan worked at CERN for the longest. Naturally, he was selected as the leader of the Chinese research visitor group.

After spending two months at CERN, he had a lot to say.

"Edward Witten hasn't been there for a long time. I've asked the people in charge at CERN. Apparently, he left his CERN office and mainly works at Princeton now.

"It's not just Witten, a lot of other knowledgeable old professors are gone too. I walked around the lecture buildings and didn't recognize any of the professors."

Luo Wenxuan looked at the vapor rising from the coffee cup, and he sighed with a hint of sadness.

He wanted to see his old friends at CERN, but most of them were gone. They were either too old to keep working, went into another industry, or went to another research institute.

"That's how CERN is like, people in the theoretical physics field will work there at least once in their life, but no one knows where they could end up," Lu Zhou said. He grabbed his coffee cup and said, "It's just like theoretical physics itself, new things come in and old things leave."

"Let's not talk about this sad topic." Luo Wenxuan smiled and shook his head. He said, "Speaking of which, I found something interesting over the past two months."

Lu Zhou said, "What?"

Luo Wenxuan: “Do you remember? The big names at CERN like to learn French as a hobby.”

Lu Zhou smiled and nodded.

“I recall something like that.”

CERN was a place of the brightest minds in the world. Whenever someone placed a group of smart people together, there would always be competition.

They obviously couldn't compete in mathematics or physics. After all, they were all at the top of their fields. Also, it wasn't like they could compare their research results against one another; it would be like comparing apples with oranges.

However, if someone could learn a language in a month or even a week or two, that would undoubtedly prove someone's intelligence above others.

This might sound unbelievable, but the big names in physics who worked at CERN could often go from being totally clueless about French to being able to converse in French in just a couple weeks.

Not to mention that half of CERN's facilities were located in France. Therefore learning French and holding lectures in French was one of their favorite “hobbies”.

When Lu Zhou first visited CERN, he didn't participate in this unique hobby. He heard about it from the other professors who worked there.

For example, Frank Wilczek once bragged to Lu Zhou that he was able to learn French in two weeks...

“It seems like the situation has changed.” Luo Wenxuan smiled and said, “Learning French is out of style now. It seems like, the new way of bragging about one's intelligence is to learn Chinese.”

“Learn Chinese?”

“That's right.” Luo Wenxuan smiled and said, “Apparently, the official language of the Moon Palace is Chinese and that the Moon Palace research results posted online are also in Chinese. As you know, translating theoretical

physics in Google is an absolute disaster. This forced many scholars to start learning Chinese.”

“... How unfortunate.”

Lu Zhou smiled and awkwardly rubbed his nose.

It seemed like this was his fault.

Even though there was no strict rule that the Moon Palace-produced theses had to be in Chinese, the observational data published and the experimental results published on the Moon Palace website were all in Chinese.

This made life much more difficult for international scholars...

However, China was the one that built the Moon Palace, so they had the right to publish in their native language.

In some sense, this was a power move.

English was a necessary skill for scientific researchers to master. However, improving the influence of one's native tongue in the academic world was also a scholar's responsibility.

If everything went well, the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Moon Palace would set up an independent journal to only publish research results from the Moon Palace.

By then, not only would the research data be in Chinese, even the journals would be in Chinese as well.

“Speaking of which, even though I didn't see my own friends at CERN, I saw your friend.”

Lu Zhou: “Mine?”

“Professor Frank Wilczek.” Luo Wenxuan shrugged and smiled. He said, “He told me to ask you; how's your research on the 750 GeV signal going? CERN did another experiment and didn't even find a 1 sigma signal.”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Tell him next time, that after the lunar hadron collider is complete, I'll give him an answer...”

Luo Wenxuan smiled and said, “Oh, really now? I’m looking forward to it then.”

Chapter 827: Handsome People Problems

[Even though the thesis did not present any groundbreaking results, the methods used have a certain degree of novelty. When it comes to research on Riemann’s hypothesis, the Odlyzko–Schönhage algorithm method is worth further exploration.

[Thesis approved.]

“I don’t think it has any novelty at all...” Molina said. She placed the reviewer’s comments on the table and sighed. She said, “I’m close to giving up on proving the non-trivial zero critical line points... Maybe Professor Atiyah was right. We should choose an easier method... Vera? Are you listening to me?”

Vera was slightly blushing. She looked at Molina and came out of her daydream. Her blue eyes looked to the side as she spoke.

“Oh... I’m listening, thesis approved? Congratulations...”

“Stop lying, you’re thinking about him, aren’t you?!”

Molina reached out her hand and lifted Vera’s chin with a smile. Vera slapped her hand away.

“Don’t...”

Vera stared at Molina with an unhappy look.

“Haha, I’m sorry, I just couldn’t help it.” Molina looked at Vera and sighed. She then said, “Just give up now.”

“...?”

Vera didn’t understand.

Molina looked at her and said, “Don’t you get it? He and I are the same type of people.”

The room suddenly went quiet.

Molina suddenly realized Vera could have misinterpreted what she had said. She waved her hand and tried to explain.

“Hey, don’t look at me like that, that’s not what I meant...”

Vera took half a step back as Molina tried to explain, “I’m just saying that he’s not emotionally available, haven’t you noticed? Has he ever been interested in any woman before?”

Vera bit her lip and didn’t say anything.

“Exactly!” Molina scratched her head and said, “I don’t know if I should say this, but even if you guys become a thing, I don’t think you’ll be happy.”

Vera asked, “Why?”

“Don’t know,” Molina shrugged and said, “I feel like, if I married that man, our marriage would be boring.”

...

Ever since Luo Wenxuan returned to China, Lu Zhou’s office had become much more lively.

Even though this guy had his own office in the physics department, he would often come to hang out at Lu Zhou’s office.

Anyone with two brain cells knew that Luo Wenxuan didn’t come here because of Lu Zhou.

Speaking of which, Lu Zhou was actually quite astonished. He thought Luo Wenxuan would be over Assistant Kong in a month or two. Now that it had been almost a year, the man was still chasing after her.

What was more interesting was that, even though he was trying his best, the relationship between the two was more distant than ever.

Lu Zhou wasn’t interested in other people’s personal matters, so he left this aside.

After all, his office had plenty of coffee, and discussing physics problems with this guy was one of Lu Zhou's ways to kill time.

The days quickly passed by. It was soon November. Jinling City began to cool down. A gray coat and blue jeans were part of Lu Zhou's daily outfit.

According to his past experiences, this way of dressing made him stand out the least on campus. He could at least eat his lunch in peace, without people staring at him.

However, he had underestimated some people's determination.

During lunchtime, Lu Zhou went to the cafeteria as usual. He ordered a bowl of barbecued meat on rice and sat down at a quiet corner.

The moment he lifted his chopsticks, someone sat down across from him.

"I finally found you... Are you hiding from me?"

Lu Zhou looked at Luo Wenxuan, and he was a bit muddled. Lu Zhou then shook his head.

"Nope."

Luo Wenxuan: "Help a brother out."

Lu Zhou took a sip of his seaweed soup and said, "No, thanks."

Luo Wenxuan said, "What?! Aren't you going to ask me what it's about?"

Lu Zhou grabbed a piece of barbecued meat and stuffed it into his mouth. He spoke while chewing.

"I'm guessing it's not something important. If it is, you would have told me in my office. Try to solve it yourself, and don't drag me into this."

Luo Wenxuan placed his hands together like he was praying.

"Please, just this once, I don't need much, I just need a chance."

Lu Zhou: "Like what?"

Luo Wenxuan smiled mischievously and said, "Like... Maybe arrange a group date or something?"

Lu Zhou: "... No."

Luo Wenxuan took a deep breath and asked in a sincere way.

"Come on man, don't do this, I'm being serious. I'm not getting younger! I'll be single forever if I don't marry now."

Lu Zhou rolled his eyes and said, "Why did you wait until now then?"

Luo Wenxuan sighed.

"I was partying when I was younger."

"Get lost."

"Ok," Luo Wenxuan said, "I don't care if you believe me or not, but I'm being serious. I feel like I'm in love, and if I miss my chance, I'll regret it for the rest of my life..."

Lu Zhou sighed and put his chopsticks on the table.

Even though Lu Zhou didn't want to be involved in other people's emotional problems, he wanted this guy to start focusing on his work again. Therefore, Lu Zhou gave him a life lesson...

"You don't get girls by chasing them."

Luo Wenxuan paused for a second. He was muddled.

"... Then how am I supposed to get them?"

Lu Zhou said, "By attraction."

"..."

The table went silent.

Lu Zhou hesitated for a little.

He felt like he was correct. The feeling of attraction couldn't be forced.

Even animals would know that.

But honestly, for a handsome guy like him, this wasn't a problem.

Luo Wenxuan raised his hand and asked, "Can I ask a question?"

Lu Zhou: "... It sounds like you shouldn't ask me that question."

Luo Wenxuan: "Let me put it this way... Have you ever watched a movie with a girl?"

Lu Zhou: "..."

Suddenly, Lu Zhou didn't want to talk to this guy anymore.

Why don't I make him work in Beijing for a few years...

Would that be too ruthless?

Luo Wenxuan was about to comfort Lu Zhou when Lu Zhou suddenly spoke.

"I had, and it was a horror movie."

Chapter 828: Want to Switch Cars?

Luo Wenxuan: "...!"

Lu Zhou: "...?"

Luo Wenxuan thought, *F*ck, did he really watch a movie with a girl?*

Lu Zhou thought, *F*ck, when did I watch it again?*

Honest to God, Lu Zhou couldn't remember when he watched the movie.

"Long time no see," Chen Yushan said. She sat across from Lu Zhou and asked, "Do you miss me?"

Lu Zhou curiously asked, "How did you find me?"

Chen Yushan smirked and replied proudly, "When you were still an undergrad, you would always sit at this spot in the cafeteria. Your assistant told me you went to the cafeteria, so I knew you were here."

Lu Zhou: "... I can't believe you remember that."

Luo Wenxuan looked at the pretty girl, then looked at Lu Zhou. A light bulb went off in Luo Wenxuan's mind, and he said, "... Should I, head off?"

Lu Zhou: "Yeah sure, you can head off."

Luo Wenxuan: "..."

I thought he was going to let me stay.

Fortunately, Luo Wenxuan was almost finished with his meal. He ate the last couple of bites and stood up.

Luo Wenxuan gave Lu Zhou a look of goodbye before leaving.

Chen Yushan sat in his spot, which was directly across from Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou felt like she had something to say, so he asked, "Do you need anything?"

Chen Yushan blinked her eyes and said, "I'm not allowed to talk to my friend without needing something?"

Lu Zhou: "That's not what I meant..."

Lu Zhou was just surprised.

Seeing how confused Lu Zhou was, Chen Yushan smiled and said, "Okay okay, it's nothing big... I always see you riding in that black sedan. Are you interested in changing vehicles?"

"I don't know a lot about cars." Lu Zhou looked helpless and said, "But I have been wanting to switch it up a little... Do you have a suggestion?"

Chen Yushan smirked and said, "I've already arranged it for you."

Lu Zhou said, "Did you... already buy it?"

Chen Yushan said, “Not buy, someone else gave it to you. Remember last year when we invested in Zhongshan New Materials and began cooperating with BYD on the lithium-sulfur battery project?”

What, that happened?

Lu Zhou thought about it and shook his head honestly. “I don’t remember.”

Chen Yushan said, “I nearly forgot, you’re a useless chairman.”

Lu Zhou asked, “What does this have to do with BYD?”

“Around this time last year, there was an Alternative Energy Vehicle summit, right? The battery standardization plans are finally in place. In order to dominate the alternative energy vehicles, BYD launched a mid-range electric vehicle as well as a high-end one, and these vehicles were named ‘Light of God’ and ‘Electric Purple’. Apparently, their mileage range is up to 2,000 kilometers.”

When Lu Zhou heard this number, he had a surprised look on his face.

“It’s able to reach 2,000 kilometers?”

“All thanks to your lithium-sulfur batteries.”

Chen Yushan said, “As a thank you to us, or to you, BYD designed a special Electric Purple vehicle and gave it to our company. There is only one model in the world. Apparently, the control performance is first-class and the design is pretty cool. Are you interested? If you don’t want it, I’ll take it.”

Lu Zhou instantly said, “I want it! Why wouldn’t I want it? I want to change cars anyway.”

Chen Yushan knew Lu Zhou would say this, so she said, “Okay, I’ll give you the car when it arrives. Remember to give me a ride sometimes.”

Lu Zhou: “There’s really only one in the world?”

Chen Yushan nodded and said, “Yep, just one.”

Lu Zhou joked, “Hope that they won’t make any more of it...”

Chen Yushan smiled and said, "Of course they wouldn't, and if they do, I'll complain to them for you."

There was no way BYD would do anything to offend Lu Zhou. With the research and development capabilities of the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study, Star Sky Technology's place in the battery world was like Qualcomm's place in the chip world. Star Sky Technology was the father of alternative energy vehicles and mobile batteries.

Therefore, it was important for BYD to have a good relationship with Lu Zhou...

"Forget about the car." Chen Yushan placed her arms on the table and said, "There's something else I came to talk to you about."

Lu Zhou said, "What?"

Chen Yushan: "The day after tomorrow, the Russian Ministry of Economic Development will come to Jinling. The city council called us and said that their first stop is going to be Star Sky Technology. Are you free the day after tomorrow?"

Lu Zhou: "Do I have to go?"

Chen Yushan: "It'd be best if you could. After all, you are the chairman."

Lu Zhou: "I'll go if I have time... Oh yeah, when will the car arrive?"

"Within a week, what, you're interested in cars now?" Chen Yushan said.

Lu Zhou: "... A little bit."

Lu Zhou didn't know a lot about cars. He was just curious about what this one-of-a-kind electric sports car was like.

Chen Yushan smirked and looked at Lu Zhou flirtatiously as she said, "I never knew that you were into cars, I thought you were only interested in research."

Lu Zhou: "Of course I am, I have a lot of hobbies."

Chen Yushan curiously asked, "Like what?"

"Like..."

Lu Zhou's eyebrows furrowed as he tried to think of a hobby. However, he realized all of his hobbies were related to academia or research.

He looked at his bowl of half-eaten rice and said, "Barbecued meat?"

This was probably his only hobby outside of work. Chen Yushan began to laugh at him.

Lu Zhou paused for a second and said awkwardly, "Hey, what are you laughing about?"

With one hand covering her stomach, Chen Yushan said, "Nothing, I just think... You're pretty unique sometimes."

Lu Zhou: "...?"

What the hell does she mean?

What's so unique?

Chapter 829: AFK Mission

Lu Zhou finished eating his lunch while talking with Chen Yushan. His lunch break was almost over.

Chen Yushan walked Lu Zhou back to the mathematics department building and told him not to forget about the Russian visiting group. After that, she reluctantly waved goodbye and left.

Lu Zhou returned to his office and sorted out his lesson plans from yesterday. After he confirmed with Assistant Zhao that he had an afternoon class, he went to Building A.

He had a number theory lecture this afternoon. His class was considered a mathematics elective course.

Even though most of the time his PhD student He Changwen lectured for him, seeing how the semester was almost over, Lu Zhou decided he should at least give one lecture.

He didn't know why, but he felt like the students in the classroom were staring at him instead of the blackboard...

Lu Zhou couldn't help but feel a little frustrated.

He didn't realize that his lecturing abilities had fallen to the point where the students were more interested in him than his content.

He thought back to when he was lecturing at Princeton University. Students from other classes would bring their own chairs just to sit in the lecture hall.

It seemed like he had to practice giving more lectures...

Soon, all four of the blackboards were filled with writing. The classroom bell rang.

Lu Zhou closed the textbook and looked at the students. He was about to give them a summary when he suddenly saw a blue window appear in his sight.

[

Branch mission complete:

4: Alchemist: Produce 100 tons of titanium alloy.

]

Complete?

Already?

Lu Zhou was surprised internally, but he didn't show it on his face.

He cleared his throat and spoke to the students.

"The class is over for now. Take a five minutes break, and we will continue later."

Lu Zhou left the classroom and went into the nearby toilet. He went inside a stall and summoned the system.

He walked in front of the information screen and pressed a button. His mission panel was displayed in front of him.

[

“Control of Earth and Moon” second phase:

1. Crowded Planet: 24-hour active population on the moon has to exceed 100

2: Spark of the Future: Large hadron collider on the moon.

<ol start="3">

Three Feet Deep: Collect 50 tons of rare lunar soil.

Alchemist: Produce 100 tons of titanium alloy (complete)

5 Look Back on the Earth: Establish a semi-permanent Earth meteorological observation station in the Moon’s orbit.

<ol start="6">

Look into the distance: Set up a large space telescope on the Moon to produce more detailed observations of the planets in the solar system, as well as observations on extraterrestrial galaxies.

]

Lu Zhou looked at the completed mission and couldn’t help but think.

All he did was write a letter asking for funding. Then, after a few months, the mission was complete.

This was basically AFK farming.

Unfortunately, he couldn’t receive any of his branch mission rewards before the second phase of the main mission was complete.

He also didn’t know what kind of rewards the branch missions gave...

“... Five more branch missions left?”

Lu Zhou looked at the remaining missions and rubbed his chin.

The first was easy to solve. He just had to organize a tourist group of a hundred people. Now that the Magpie Bridge was complete, this mission was relatively easy to accomplish.

As for the third mission, he was able to mine titanium ores on the Moon, so lunar soil was no problem. The mission only required him to collect the soil, and it might even be profitable to ship the soil back to Earth.

He didn't really care about the rest of the mission.

It was unrealistic for him to complete all of the branch missions; completing half of them was already pretty good.

After Lu Zhou exited the system space, he was about to leave his toilet stall. However, he heard someone using the faucet.

He planned on leaving the stall anyway, but when he happened to hear the two students mention his name, he sat back down and began listening.

As a professor, he was quite interested in what the students had to say about him.

"Did you understand God Lu's lecture?"

"I understood half of it, how about you?"

The guy with glasses sighed and said, "A third. Sigh, I want to understand it, but I'm not good enough."

The guy using the faucet said, "Yeah, I guess his lectures are always difficult."

The guy in glasses: "Probably! But even God Lu doesn't have a girlfriend, that makes me feel a little better, at least I have one."

"Haha, how do you know he's single, what if he's just lowkey?"

The guy in glasses waved his hand.

"I can tell."

Suddenly, they heard a voice behind them.

"Oh, really now? How can you tell?"

The two guys looked back, and when they saw Lu Zhou, it was like they saw a ghost.

“F*ck, God Lu!”

“Professor Lu!”

Lu Zhou smiled and didn’t say anything. He just stared at the two guys.

“Professor... We were just...” The guy in glasses scratched his head and said cleverly, “We were just talking about how handsome you are!”

Lu Zhou: “...”

*F*ck sake!*

Do you think I’m deaf?

*Also, no sh*t I’m handsome.*

Lu Zhou didn’t want to waste any more time on these two dumba*ses, so he said, “Go back to class.”

“Yes, sir!”

The two students disappeared.

Lu Zhou looked at the toilet door close and sighed.

He never realized how good it felt to be a professor.

However...

Am I making a bad example? Will these undergraduate students think mathematicians are all loners?

Speaking of which, I’m not getting any younger.

My parents are going to nag me about this when I see them.

“... Forget about it, I’ll wait for a couple more years.”

Lu Zhou shook his head.

He wasn't avoiding this problem.

It was just that he hadn't figured out how to maintain a family yet.

Research took up most of his time, and he didn't have the energy to be a boyfriend, much less a father...

Lu Zhou returned to the classroom and opened his lesson plan. He turned to the last page.

"Turn your textbooks to page 47."

Paper shuffling sounds filled the classroom. Some students looked surprised.

"... The first half of the class covered basic number theory. In the second half, I'll talk about something interesting. Something I am currently researching."

He turned to the blackboard and wrote down two words.

[Riemann's hypothesis]

The moment he wrote down the words, the classroom went into an uproar.

Lu Zhou slammed his hand down on the table and tried to get the students' attention. He spoke in a clear and loud voice.

"I speak quite quickly."

"Listen carefully."

Chapter 830: On-Site Question

Teaching undergraduate students was like a knowledge review session for Lu Zhou.

Normally, he wouldn't touch on these rudimentary materials. This was the only time he set aside his research and focused on the more simple concepts.

"... We all know that the Riemann hypothesis is one of the most important conjectures in the analytic number theory. It is a conjecture about the zero

points of the zeta function. But, do any of you know how the Riemann hypothesis came to be?

“In fact, prior to the Riemann hypothesis, there was another proposition that troubled mathematicians for centuries. That is, the distribution of prime numbers.”

Lu Zhou wrote down a few equations on the board. He then looked back at the students in the classroom and continued, “Using the fundamental theorem of arithmetic, even high school students know that every positive integer can be expressed as the product of prime factors. This representation is unique, thus prime numbers are the basic elements that make up a positive integer.

“However, the distribution of prime numbers is not as easy to understand. One of the most basic tasks of the analytic number theory world is to study the distribution of prime numbers.”

The students had a look of concentration on their faces, Lu Zhou knew his lecture was going well.

The Riemann hypothesis was indeed a complex problem, understanding it was difficult, and solving it was near impossible...

Lu Zhou paused for a second. He then continued, “In analytic number theory, mathematicians often study the function $\pi(x)$, a function that outputs the number of primes lower than x . Researching the characteristics of $\pi(x)$ is one of the central tasks of the analytic number theory.

“Both Gauss and Legendre have done a lot of numerical calculations on $\pi(x)$. They guessed that when x tends to infinity, $\pi(x) \sim x/\ln(x)$. Their conjecture was later proved, which is what we now understand as the Prime Number Theorem.

“Euclid proved that there are infinitely many prime numbers. Euler introduced the Euler product. These great pioneers provided us the tools to analyze and study prime numbers. No one was able to find a suitable method for proving Gauss’ conjecture. That was until the 1950s, when a German mathematician published a paper titled ‘On the exact number of primes less than a given limit’. His research opened a new road for $\pi(x)$.

“Most people know who this German guy is, that’s right, I’m talking about Riemann. He introduced the Riemann zeta function in this thesis.”

Lu Zhou turned around and wrote down an equation on the blackboard.

$$[\zeta(s)=\sum 1/n^s]$$

Lu Zhou looked at the dead silent classroom and spoke.

“This is it... It doesn’t look hard at all, right?”

Everyone: “...”

*F*ck sake!*

How is it not hard?

“Riemann made a further hypothesis for the function he proposed, which was that all of the zero points of $\zeta(s)$ are on the critical straight line. It turns out his vision was quite revolutionary. All of our brute force calculations show that the zeros points are on a critical straight line. Unfortunately, even though we know that his hypothesis is likely correct, we have no way to prove it.

“We can often use the Riemann hypothesis to prove other conjectures. However, if the Riemann hypothesis isn’t proven, we can’t say for certain that other conjectures are correct.

“Vice versa, if we do prove the Riemann hypothesis, then thousands of mathematical conjectures that assume the Riemann hypothesis will become theorems!

“If anyone can prove the Riemann hypothesis, they would undoubtedly become the greatest mathematician of this century... I am certain of that, even though this century has just begun.”

“Professor,” a student said with his hand raised in the air. After receiving a nod from Lu Zhou, he asked excitedly, “If someone solves the Riemann hypothesis, how will they compare to you?”

“It won’t be a good comparison. After all, my work goes beyond just the field of mathematics.” Lu Zhou smiled at the student and said, “But if anyone does prove the conjecture, their work in mathematics will undoubtedly surpass mine.”

After that, Lu Zhou explained some of the current research progress on the Riemann hypothesis. Because he changed his lecture style, the students were listening more intently.

Lu Zhou was satisfied with the performance of his students.

The time quickly passed by.

Lu Zhou glanced at the clock on the wall and saw that it was almost time to end his class. He chuckled his chalk onto his desk and spoke.

"We'll end it here... Class dismissed."

Shuffling sounds of textbooks filled the classroom. Lu Zhou nodded toward the students, grabbed his lesson plan, and walked out of the classroom.

Lu Zhou was about to go back to his office. He wanted to write down his inspirations, which he got from the lecture. However, Dean Qin suddenly appeared out of nowhere.

"Excellent lecture!" Dean Qin said with a smile on his face. "It helped me a lot!"

Lu Zhou smiled.

"You're too kind, I haven't taught undergraduate students in a while."

Dean Qin said, "We all have our own priorities, and your research is obviously more important than lecturing. Speaking of which, are you busy these days?"

Lu Zhou: "Not really, why?"

"I have something to ask you." Dean Qin coughed and said, "Have you heard of the International Mathematical Olympiad?"

Lu Zhou: "I have, why?"

He had obviously heard of IMO. Unfortunately, he didn't have the chance to attend.

The IMO gold medalists were the best of the best.

For example, Schultz, who Faltings said was one of the three people who could surpass Faltings himself, was an IMO gold medalist.

As for why Schultz signed up for two more IMO tournaments after winning a gold medal... It was because Schultz thought it was fun...

Dean Qin smiled and said, "Here's the thing, last month there was a national high school mathematics competition, right? The top students in every state have been selected. The winter training camp will start in January next year. It's already November, so it's time to weed some people out."

Lu Zhou said, "You're not asking me to write exam questions, right?"

Dean Qin: "This wasn't my decision, the China Mathematics Society wants you to come up with the final problem."

Lu Zhou: "Is that appropriate?"

Dean Qin smiled and said, "Of course it's appropriate. The final question last year was also chosen by an academician. Not only are you an academician, but you're also a Fields medalist."

Lu Zhou: "Fine, it's only one question anyway."

"Yeah, thanks." Dean Qin suddenly remembered something and said, "Oh yeah, don't make it too difficult. There's no point if no one can solve it."

"Don't worry, I won't make it too difficult." Lu Zhou pulled out a piece of draft paper from his lesson plan and began writing.

Dean Qin looked at him, perplexed.

"You're not going to write the question right now, right?"

Lu Zhou: "Of course I am, why?"

Dean Qin said, "This is the national final competition, so you should think about it carefully."

"I just did." Lu Zhou wrote down the question and handed it to Dean Qin. "Give this to China Mathematics Society. It should be fine."

Dean Qin stared at the piece of draft paper. Lu Zhou began to walk away as Dean Qin muttered to himself, “Riemann zeta function?”

Dean Qin rubbed his chin and thought to himself.

“Can high school students even solve this problem?”

However, he suddenly realized something, and his eyes lit up as he spoke.

“Wait a second... This question is interesting...”

Dean Qin carefully looked around him and stuffed the paper into his pocket. He then quickly walked back to his office.

Chapter 831: Clue for the Riemann Hypothesis

Inspiration always arrived at unexpected times.

Lecturing about the history of the Riemann hypothesis had pointed out some of the details that he ignored when conducting research.

Even though most of the time these details were useless, these irrelevant clues could occasionally play an important role.

After Lu Zhou returned to his office, he sat down at his desk and pulled out a piece of draft paper. He began writing down his thoughts.

“The Riemann hypothesis was proposed to study the $\pi(x)$. Riemann’s pioneering work wasn’t on the proposal of the Riemann hypothesis, but it was on using Riemann zeta function to increase the domain of $\pi(x)$ to complex numbers.”

Lu Zhou’s pen glided on the paper. He wrote down a line of the equation.

$$[\pi(x) = \int_0^x \frac{dt}{t} + O(x^{1/2+\epsilon})]$$

“Riemann hypothesis’ equivalence problem,” Lu Zhou said as he placed the tip of the pen on the paper. He said to himself, “If the Riemann hypothesis is true, then we can drive this asymptotic formula from the Riemann hypothesis...”

“The key to solving this problem is the function $\pi(x)$ itself.”

He felt like he was missing something.

It was almost like he was a third of the way done with a jigsaw puzzle, with the rest of the pieces scattered nearby. He just needed to connect the rest of the pieces. He needed a clue.

With that clue, he could connect the rest of the pieces.

Lu Zhou sat in front of his desk for an hour or so. His stomach began to rumble.

He looked outside and saw the sunset outside his window. He finally realized how long he had been sitting there.

“You were too focused, I didn’t want to interrupt you,” Assistant Lin said. “Do you plan on going to the cafeteria?”

Lu Zhou looked at Assistant Lin, who was standing at the door, and he thought for a second before saying, “If you’re going to the cafeteria, bring me something.”

He planned on staying in the office for a bit longer as he didn’t want his thoughts to be interrupted.

Lin Yuxiang blinked and said, “Barbecued meat on rice?”

Lu Zhou looked at her.

“How did you know I wanted that?”

Lin Yuxiang winked and said, “I guessed it.”

Lu Zhou felt a little creeped out. Lin Yuxiang gave him the chills.

“I don’t want barbecued meat on rice tonight. Can you bring me some spicy chicken on rice... Thanks.”

Lin Yuxiang glanced at Lu Zhou with a hint of resentment. She then turned around and left.

He didn’t have to wait for long.

Lu Zhou was still sitting at his desk, writing formulas on a piece of draft paper, when Assistant Lin, who just came back from the cafeteria, placed a takeaway box of spicy chicken on rice on Lu Zhou's table.

Lu Zhou opened the takeaway box and looked at the tender chicken mixed with red and green peppers. He opened the pack of disposable utensils, placed some chicken on the rice, and began eating.

Because of his busy schedule, Lu Zhou had a fondness toward fast food. In Princeton, he would only eat bacon sandwiches, and in China, he would only eat meat on rice at the cafeteria.

Even though his diet wasn't healthy from a nutritional point of view, these inexpensive meals made him feel satisfied. It was just like instant coffee.

Not to mention, his metabolic capacity was strengthened by the system, so he didn't have to care about his diet.

Lu Zhou quickly finished his meal. He opened his computer and contemplated it for a moment. His ten fingers quickly tapped on the keyboard as he transformed his thoughts into words.

Even though his ideas might be trivial, any progress on the $\zeta(s)$ function would contribute to the research of prime numbers. Therefore, even trivial ideas had a certain amount of value.

Lu Zhou didn't care if his ideas would inspire other scholars, he was going to upload this onto arXiv regardless.

After reading some theses from other scholars, Lu Zhou turned off his computer and planned on going home. However, he suddenly received a video call.

Qin Yue was the person video calling him.

Lu Zhou pressed the "Accept" button and saw a familiar face appear in front of him.

"How's it going? How's lecturing at Princeton?"

It was morning over in Princeton.

The man sitting in front of the camera looked exactly the same as he did four years ago, just with a little more confidence.

Qin Yue looked at his ex-supervisor and said, "It's been going great. Remember the Ivy Club club? I was accepted a year after you left."

"They obviously aren't going to reject a mathematician who proved the Collatz conjecture." Lu Zhou smiled and said, "Is there something you want to talk about?"

Mathematicians generally didn't like small talk. Qin Yue adjusted his glasses and asked, "I heard you're researching the Riemann hypothesis?"

Lu Zhou: "... Yeah, why?"

Qin Yue smiled awkwardly and said, "Nothing, I just saw that you reviewed a thesis related to the Riemann hypothesis. I was just curious."

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "You found out about that?"

Jesus, is he stalking me?

It was very rare for someone to look at someone else's academic review record.

Qin Yue looked at Lu Zhou and said, "I promise the majority of mathematicians are stalking you. I'm not the only one."

Lu Zhou felt a little weird, but he didn't know what to say.

He nodded and replied, "... I have been researching the Riemann hypothesis."

When Qin Yue heard that his former supervisor was trying to solve this century-old problem, a look of interest appeared on his face.

"How's the progress—I mean, do you need my help?"

Halfway through his sentence, he realized it was inappropriate to ask how the progress was going, so he changed his words.

However, Lu Zhou didn't seem to care.

“I have some clues, especially after reading Molina’s thesis. That further confirmed my guess.”

Qin Yue: “What guess... Are you allowed to tell me?”

“Of course I am. If you can prove the Riemann hypothesis using my guess, I would be happy.” Lu Zhou smiled and said, “My guess is that, the method of lowering the lower bound estimation of the zero points on the critical line might lead to some interesting conclusions, but it is unrealistic to solve the Riemann hypothesis using this method.”

Qin Yue had a serious look on his face.

Lowering the lower bound of the zero points on the critical line was one of the most popular methods for researching the Riemann hypothesis. The “closest” result in proving the Riemann hypothesis was proved using this method.

However, Lu Zhou said this method might not work, which surprised Qin Yue.

“What do you mean?”

Lu Zhou said in a serious tone, “We might have to research the $\pi(x)$ function itself to find the last puzzle piece to solve this problem.”

Chapter 832: Professor Lu Is Making a Move?

Regressing the $\pi(x)$ function...

Qin Yue thought to himself while staring at the ceiling of his Princeton office.

After a moment of silence, he suddenly shook his head with a brooding look.

“If that’s the case... Then the work Molina is doing is useless?”

It’s not just Molina...

If this spreads throughout the mathematics world, I think the entire community would be shocked.

Especially the people in the field of analytic number theory, research on the Riemann hypothesis will totally change...

After all, Professor Lu had already solved two Millennium Prize Problems. Professor Lu thinking something was unreliable was the same as a death sentence.

Qin Yue hesitated for a bit and decided to keep his mouth shut. After all, he wasn't sure if Lu Zhou was being serious.

However, what Qin Yue didn't know was that, shortly after he hung up the phone, Lu Zhou uploaded the complete thesis to Arxiv.

This was going to cause a sensation in the mathematics world...

...

"Ahh... I feel like all my hair is going to fall off."

Han Mengqi sat at her desk and stared at the question on the piece of draft paper. She bit her pen and scratched her head. She had no idea how to solve this problem.

"For any real number $s > 1$, define $\zeta(s) = \sum 1 / (m^s)$... Prove that $\zeta(2n)$ is a transcendental number."

Han Mengqi repeatedly read the equation with a pouty face.

After a while, she sighed and leaned back in her chair in defeat. She stared at the ceiling and began to daydream.

"What if there's no answer?"

Han Mengqi sat up straight and searched the question on Baidu, and like before, she couldn't find the question anywhere.

Looks like Lu Zhou came up with this question himself...

The girl sighed in defeat and sat with her feet on the chair. She wrapped her arms around her knees and stared blankly at the draft paper.

Tools used in computational materials science couldn't be applied to pure mathematics at all.

She knew it would be beneficial for her to look through the relevant literature and try to find similar studies that she could use as references. However, she was completely new to the analytic number theory field, so she didn't even know where to begin.

She was totally lost...

"Does he really not want me..."

Han Mengqi buried her chin between her knees.

Quickly after, she slapped herself on the face and began motivating herself.

"Pfft..."

"So you think I can't prove it?"

Han Mengqi imagined how surprised Lu Zhou would be when he found out that she had solved the problem. Her eyes were filled with determination.

"I can do it!"

...

"Achoo!"

Lu Zhou was back in his Zhongshan International mansion. He just came out of the shower and pulled out some chocolate milk from his fridge. He sneezed two more times.

"Is someone talking about how handsome I am..."

Lu Zhou closed the fridge and walked into his study room. Xiao Ai, who was next to the coffee machine, flew into the air and chased him.

"Master, sneezing once means someone is thinking about you, sneezing twice means someone is insulting you, sneezing three times means you are sick. No one is calling you handsome..."

Lu Zhou: "Shut up."

The drone speaker turned off. A line of characters appeared on the display.

[(•▽•) ...]

[Master, you are handsome~]

Lu Zhou ignored Xiao Ai and sat down in his study room. He placed his laptop on his desk. Suddenly, his phone began to vibrate, and two messages popped up on his screen.

[Come to the office tomorrow!

[Don't forget!]

Lu Zhou looked at Chen Yushan's messages. He smiled and replied [Ok]. After that, he set his phone aside and logged onto arXiv.

His thousand-word thesis, which was uploaded less than five hours ago, already had thousands of downloads. It was even referenced by someone.

Is five hours even enough time to read through my thesis?

Lu Zhou logged on to his Mathoverflow account and looked at the international mathematics community discussing his thesis.

However, the discussions weren't exactly academically focused...

"Unbelievable."

[Levinson's algorithm has produced the best Riemann hypothesis research results we have ever seen. But does anyone think this road is not feasible? Does that mean Conry's critical line theorem is useless?]

[Professor Lu's thesis did not state that. He thinks that this idea might produce valuable results, but it is very difficult to solve the Riemann hypothesis.]

[I agree with Professor Lu's point of view. A while ago, Professor Molina from Princeton and her partner Vera proved the Conry zero-bound theorem using the Odlyzko–Schönhage algorithm. They failed to increase the 0.4 number. This might mean 0.4 is the limit.]

[Remember the twin prime conjecture? Using the sieve method, people were able to reduce the 70 million number to 246, but Lu Zhou was the one that used a topological method to solve the conjecture... Maybe the same applies to the Riemann hypothesis.]

“Doesn’t anyone have an ounce of creativity?”

After reading through the forum for a while, Lu Zhou didn’t find one coherent academic argument. It was all a bunch of mathematics PhDs freaking out.

But this did make sense. It was extremely difficult for someone to understand his thesis in a short amount of time. After all, the Riemann hypothesis was at the top of the food chain. Forget about normal PhDs, even people like Professor Deligne had trouble understanding the Riemann hypothesis.

Lu Zhou yawned and saw it was getting late. He turned off his computer and left his study room.

He still had to meet the Russian visiting group tomorrow, and there was probably a banquet afterward, so he planned on getting a good night’s sleep.

Even though he didn’t have to pay much attention to the Lunar Orbit Committee, as the chief designer, he still had some work to do.

While Lu Zhou was sleeping, the discussions on Mathoverflow grew, and this attracted the attention of many big names in the field.

It wasn’t just Mathoverflow, all major mathematics forums around the world were discussing this topic.

Professor Lu plans on attacking the Riemann hypothesis!

He’s already made some progress!

This was just like what Qin Yue had envisioned.

The mathematics community went crazy because of Lu Zhou’s thesis...

Chapter 833: Visiting Group From the North

The next day, Lu Zhou woke up early in the morning. After cleaning up in his bathroom, he asked Xiao Ai to fetch him his suit.

He had a diplomatic event today, and it was probably going to be broadcasted on national TV.

In order to please his fans, Lu Zhou spent a couple of minutes styling his hair.

Lu Zhou admired himself in the mirror for a while, until it was about time to leave. He went into the kitchen and microwaved last night's leftovers. After finishing his breakfast, he sat in his black sedan and headed toward the high-tech aerospace industrial area.

Lu Zhou sat in the back of the car and looked at the scenery. He suddenly remembered his conversation yesterday, so he said, "I plan on switching cars."

Wang Peng: "What car?"

Lu Zhou: "A fully electric one."

Wang Peng: "Is it safe?"

Lu Zhou: "You can inspect it when it comes."

Wang Peng nodded and said, "No problem, I'll drain the battery when it comes."

Lu Zhou: "... Fully drain it? You sure?"

Wang Peng looked at the rearview mirror and said, "... Why, what's wrong?"

Lu Zhou: "Nothing is wrong, but it has a 2,000 kilometers range... Are you sure you want to fully drain it?"

2,000 kilometers!

Wang Peng nearly choked on his own saliva.

He clenched his jaw and spoke stubbornly.

"No problem! It's just 2,000 kilometers."

Just 2,000 kilometers.

That was the distance from Jinling to Beijing and back...

Seeing how stubborn this guy was, Lu Zhou didn't have anything to say.

2,000 kilometers...

Once he fully drains the battery, it will barely be a new car anymore...

In less than half an hour, a black sedan drove past the high-tech zone, toward the newly-built high-tech aerospace industrial area.

Strictly speaking, the aerospace industrial area was part of the high-tech zone. However, they were separated for convenience.

Ever since the completion of the Jin Ling City aerospace launch site, the entire Jin Ling City aerospace industry had developed at an incredible speed. Jin Ling City became Asia's Houston.

From satellites to spacecraft components, from heat sinks to aerospace batteries, from state-owned aerospace giants to privately-owned companies, more than 500 companies had recently moved here. Every component of the Moon Palace or the Magpie Bridge could be found in Jin Ling City.

This was why the Russian Ministry of Economic Development decided to visit Jinling instead of Beijing. The Russians wanted to learn from China's aerospace industry.

The Russians had a huge aerospace foundation, but due to its depressed economy, it had lost all of its power.

The entire world wanted to ride China's aerospace bandwagon, and the Russians were the first to act...

Star Sky Technology building.

A black sedan parked at the entrance.

When Lu Zhou got out of the car, a man standing next to a security guard noticed him and quickly walked toward him.

"Academician Lu Zhou, you're finally here!" The man tightly shook Lu Zhou's hand and said, "I'm Zhong Quan, I'm from the minister's office. You can call me Secretary Zhong."

"Lu Zhou. Academician is just a title, my job is still a professor, so you can just call me Professor Lu." Lu Zhou smiled and said, "Has the Russian visiting group arrived?"

Zhong Quan smiled and said, "They arrived a long time ago! Mr. Georgiev asked about you the second he got off the plane, and he hasn't stopped talking about you."

Asking about me?

Why?

Lu Zhou smiled and continued, "Oh really? Let's not make our guests wait any longer, take me there."

The secretary made an inviting hand gesture.

"Come this way!"

Because of the foreign visiting group, the high-tech aerospace industrial area was in shut-down mode. However, even though they were shut down, they were busier than normal.

Twenty black sedans were parked neatly in the parking lot near the Star Sky Technology building. A group of Russian diplomats followed a group of Chinese diplomats and local officials, who gave them a tour of the Star Sky Technology building reception.

Finally, Georgiev from the Russian Ministry of Economic Development saw the person he wanted to see.

"Hello, Professor Lu! I'm Georgiev," Georgiev said as he shook Lu Zhou's hand tightly. This Russian man smiled heartily and said warmly, "I always hear your name in Roscosmos meetings, and I'm glad to finally see you in person."

Lu Zhou shook Georgiev's hand and said humbly, "Oh, you're too kind. It's my honor to meet you, Mr. Georgiev."

"I'm quite impressed with the development of your aerospace company. I wonder if you can give me a factory tour today?"

Minister Yang from the Ministry of Commerce looked at Lu Zhou. After seeing Lu Zhou nod his head, Minister Yang replied, "No problem, come with me."

Star Sky Technology's aerospace assembly center was located in the high-tech aerospace industrial area. In fact, the entire high-tech aerospace industrial area was built around the assembly center.

Georgiev insisted for them to walk there instead of taking a car.

While walking, the Russian man looked at the buildings around him and couldn't help but look astonished.

He suddenly looked at Lu Zhou and said, "... After seeing all of this, I finally understand how you guys are able to create such wonders like the Moon Palace."

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "Not exactly a wonder. It's not much bigger than the International Space Station."

Georgiev shook his head and said, "The International Space Station was the joint effort of dozens of countries, and it took them more than a decade to finally complete assembly. It is unbelievable that the Moon Palace was completely assembled in less than a year. If that isn't a world wonder, then I don't know what is."

Even though Lu Zhou knew this Russian man was kissing his a*s, he couldn't help but feel proud.

After all, before the dissolution, the Soviet Union was one of the world aerospace powerhouses. Even though they were nowhere near as strong now, their dominance in the past allowed them to survive until now.

Most people didn't know that the "flow staged combustion cycle" technology used by the "Raptor" liquid oxygen methane engine on the Space-X BFR rocket was based on the Soviet Unions' RD-270 engine and UR-700 rocket.

Lu Zhou smiled and replied humbly, "We're just standing on the shoulders of giants."

His ion thruster propulsion technology was reversed engineered from a higher-level civilization, so in a sense, Lu Zhou was correct.

However, Georgiev seemed to have misunderstood Lu Zhou's words. Georgiev thought that Lu Zhou was talking about America. Georgiev laughed out loud and didn't know what to say. Fortunately, Minister Yang diverted the conversation.

Even though they had a little friction between them, this didn't affect their relationship. Georgiev wasn't a petty person; not to mention Georgiev wasn't in the position to argue.

Especially when it came to the aerospace field.

The aerospace industry was shifting from low-Earth orbit to lunar transfer orbit. If Russia wanted to stay in the industry, they had to get help from China.

China's strength was the only reason the grumpy old Russians were being so friendly.

Chapter 834: Commercialization and Production Scale

The group of people soon arrived at the space shuttle assembly center.

The center of the factory was the birthplace of the Skyglow spacecraft. This was also the birthplace for a series of spacecraft components produced by Star Sky Technology.

A giant metal "hull" was lying horizontally in the factory. The metal hull looked more like a nuclear submarine instead of an outer-space spacecraft.

Because the narrow hull could not support its own weight, the entire hull was divided into three parts, which were suspended by a mechanical skeleton.

The second the Russians went into the factory, they began staring at this object.

Mr. Georgiev and the bureaucrats from the Ministry of Economic Development didn't react too much. However, aerospace experts who accompanied the Ministry of Economic Development group had their eyes wide open.

Professor Kaufman, who was an expert from Roscosmos and an academician from the Russian Academy of Engineering, was so surprised that his chin fell to the ground.

After looking at this behemoth for a couple of seconds, Mr. Georgiev sighed.

"I can't believe it... Is this your spacecraft?"

“It’s the Magpie Bridge.” Lu Zhou smiled and said, “You can call it a spacecraft, but I think it’s more like a boat.”

Academician Kaufman, who was standing next to Georgiev, couldn’t help but speak.

“Such a large spacecraft... How are you going to get it into space?”

Suddenly, some of the Chinese personnel became nervous.

Because this involved sensitive information.

Minister Yang planned on diverting the conversation, but Lu Zhou gave him an assuring look.

Lu Zhou looked at the enthusiastic Academician Kaufman and said, “We’ll separate it into three launches, first the command module, then the storage module, and finally, the engine. They will be docked together in outer space.”

The Russian expert was shocked.

The most difficult part of aerospace was spacecraft docking. The more components one had to connect, the more risk there was. So far, the technology only allowed for two-piece outer space docking.

However, Lu Zhou was now telling him that China had the technology for three-piece docking. Even Mr. Georgiev was shocked.

“I can’t believe your launch technology is so far ahead...” Georgiev looked at the Magpie Bridge and said, “Can I ask if this is using an ion thruster propulsion system?”

Lu Zhou: “Ion thruster propulsion system is the future. Outer-space voyages don’t need a ton of thrust, and the only advantage of chemical rockets is the initial launch thrust.”

Georgiev and Academician Kaufman looked at each other in awe.

Minister Yang from the Ministry of Commerce coughed and smiled.

“Well, that’s the end of the assembly center tour. There are many outstanding companies in the high-tech aerospace industrial area that are looking forward to meeting you guys.”

“Yeah, we did spend quite a long time on Star Sky Technology.” Georgiev smiled and said, “Then, Minister Yang, will you please give us a tour of the other companies?”

For the rest of the visit, Georgiev seemed to be uninterested. The expert behind him also seemed to be unamused.

Even though there were many excellent companies in the high-tech aerospace industrial area, none of them were at the level of Star Sky Technology. Some of them had huge factories, but they were lacking in the technical department. Even though some of them had groundbreaking technology, the company’s capital restricted them toward only supplying accessories.

However, Georgiev was relieved to see this.

Fortunately, Star Sky Technology was one-of-a-kind.

If there were two companies that had state of the art research and development capabilities, then China’s aerospace industry would be too scary...

For the rest of the visit, Lu Zhou didn’t accompany the Russian visiting group. However, there was a banquet held at the Purple Mountain Hotel in the evening. As the chief designer of the Lunar Orbit Committee, Lu Zhou decided to show up.

It was a Chinese style banquet.

Even though Lu Zhou sat at the same table as Mr. Georgiev and Minister Yang, he didn’t talk a lot during the meal.

He wasn’t good at socializing at formal occasions. Unless someone took the initiative to talk to him, he wouldn’t speak. Instead, he placed the majority of his attention on the delicious food in front of him.

Mr. Georgiev, who toured Star Sky Technology’s factory in the morning, tried to talk to him.

“Actually, I’ve always been curious. Aerospace has never been China’s strong suit, but you guys have been rapidly advancing in recent years. Can you tell us how you did it?”

Lu Zhou didn't try to avoid the question. He said, "Pick a direction, then do your best."

Georgiev made a helpless gesture and raised his wine glass.

"That's a little abstract, can you specify?"

"Depends on how you interpret it." Lu Zhou tapped his wine glass with Georgiev and said, "By direction, I mean finding a realistic goal, this is done by the scientific researchers. Fortunately, the experts working with us are good scholars, and they helped us solve a lot of problems."

Georgiev said, "Then what do you mean by doing your best?"

"It means to have sufficient funding, and this is the state's responsibility," Lu Zhou said. "Roughly speaking, it is to focus on important tasks and allocate resources properly. Right now, the main problems of aerospace are the commercialization as well as the production scale. We have already solved the production scale problem, so the next step is commercialization. We have to collaborate with other companies and try to guide private equity into the industry."

"Commercialization and production scale?" Georgiev smiled and said, "But doesn't that violate the objective laws of market economics?"

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "The Queen of Spain funded Columbus' voyage, Mr. Georgiev. Was that a violation of the objective laws of market economics?"

Georgiev said, "Interesting, but that's a different story... Are they similar?"

"Of course they're similar. The ultimate goal of the aerospace industry is to step out of our homeland and expand our living space, which is essentially the same thing as discovering a new continent." Lu Zhou drank some wine and said, "The market is a catalyst for economic development, but not everything is developed in accordance with the laws of the market. At least not in the mathematics world."

"Hahaha, your opinion is very interesting." Minister Georgiev took a sip of red wine and smiled. He looked sincerely at Lu Zhou and said, "If you ever have the time, I'd like to sincerely invite you to visit Russia, I'm certain the Russian scholars will be glad to discuss this issue in depth with you."

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "I definitely will have the time. I plan on attending the International Congress of Mathematicians next year."

Georgiev said, "If you do come, we'll give you a grand welcoming ceremony!"

Chapter 835: Diplomatic Dinner

The banquet continued.

Because Lu Zhou didn't stop eating, he was full pretty quickly.

Mr. Georgiev kept trying to talk to him, while Academician Kaufman was staring at him. After politely stating that he had to go to the bathroom, Lu Zhou left the banquet hall.

He finally had some peace and quiet.

Lu Zhou slowly walked to the bathroom and washed his face. After that, he walked to the Purple Mountain hotel balcony.

He had been to his hotel many times. The annual Star Sky Technology meeting was held here. Back in college, he was invited to a celebration party here as well. Therefore, he was quite familiar with the layout.

The balcony on the fifth floor directly faced the Purple Mountain. The scenery during the autumn sunset was breathtaking.

Unfortunately, it was already eight o'clock at night. There was nothing but the cold breeze.

Lu Zhou wanted to avoid the loud and noisy banquet hall, so he tried to kill some time here.

When he sat down on a bench, a hotel waiter nearby walked over with a menu.

"Sir, would you like to order anything?"

"A mocha, please."

“Got it.” The waiter nodded and scribbled on his notepad. Suddenly, he heard someone speak behind him with a weird Chinese accent.

“I’ll have a glass of Tequila sunrise.”

With her pale blonde hair laying on her shoulders, a Russian girl in a dress walked up and sat next to Lu Zhou. She looked at the waiter and gently said, “Please don’t forget the ice.”

Even though it wasn’t winter season yet, the breeze on the balcony was quite chilly. Ordering an iced drink was unusual.

“Oh... okay.” The waiter looked at the beautiful blonde girl and said, “Won’t take long.”

After that, he put away the menu and left the balcony.

Lu Zhou looked at the strange lady sitting across from him. He guessed she was probably with the Russian visiting group. He was about to ask for her name but the lady spoke first.

“Looks like I’m not the only one sick of the banquet.”

Lu Zhou: “Who are you?”

“Victoria. My father is in the visiting group.” The blonde lady reached out her hand and said, “It’s nice to meet you.”

Even though Lu Zhou felt like she knew who he was, he still introduced himself.

“I’m Lu Zhou, a mathematics professor.”

Victoria seemed to be amused by Lu Zhou’s introduction. She twirled her finger around her hair and said, “Just a mathematics professor?”

Lu Zhou made a helpless gesture and said, “I also do a bit of physics... and chemistry.”

Victoria smirked and said, “You’re funny. I think you do a lot more than just physics and chemistry.”

“Really? I guess...” Lu Zhou looked at the waiter walking over and said, “Your cocktail is here.”

“Thanks.” Victoria lifted her cocktail glass and took a sip. She said, “My Chinese is not very good, I only started learning three months ago.”

Lu Zhou: “You’re pretty good for someone learning for only three months.”

Mastering Chinese wasn’t an easy feat for Russians, and being able to speak at this level within three months was insanely good.

Obviously, Victoria wasn’t just a pretty face.

While Lu Zhou was judging her, Victoria was doing the same. However, she didn’t make it as obvious. She spoke to Lu Zhou like Lu Zhou was her good friend.

“Am I being complimented by a genius?”

“Genius? Me?” Lu Zhou smiled and shook his head as he said, “I’m no genius, I just work a little harder than others.”

Also... I have the system.

But I wasn’t born with that, so I guess it’s not my own talent.

Victoria smiled and said, “You’re so humble. You’ve done more in one lifetime than most people can do in ten lifetimes. That’s not just because of a little hard work.”

Lu Zhou: “Maybe, but who knows what can happen in the future.”

Victoria smiled and said, “I studied economics at Moscow University and took some elective courses in functional analysis. We often hear our professors praise your mathematical abilities. That is very rare for Russians. We rarely praise others for their mathematics talents.”

Lu Zhou: “You know mathematics?”

“Just a little bit... Why, are you surprised?” Victoria said with a flirtatious smirk on her face.

Lu Zhou nodded and said, "I am, I didn't expect to meet someone that speaks the same language as me here."

"I'm happy to hear that. I'm also very curious about your research project... Or rather, I'm curious what kind of question is troubling a genius like you." Victoria took a sip of her cocktail, leaving a print of red lipstick on the glass. She said, "Let's talk about it."

Are you sure?

You want to hear about my research project?

Lu Zhou was glad to speak to her. After all, there was still two hours before the banquet ended.

Lu Zhou looked at her "curious" eyes and smiled awkwardly.

"I'm happy to oblige."

...

Mr. Georgiev obviously knew Academician Lu didn't want to talk to him.

Most scholars had introverted personalities. Especially those in theoretical research fields. They generally didn't like to talk with "shallow" people.

As a bureaucrat who used to be a diplomat, Georgiev was obviously aware of this. As for why he kept trying to talk to Lu Zhou...

How else could his daughter Victoria have a chance?

He swore he wasn't trying to sell his daughter out.

From a father's perspective, even though Professor Lu was a foreigner, he was definitely a qualified husband; a lot more qualified than those Russian alcoholics. His daughter had yet to find a suitable partner in university, so why wouldn't he want these two to be a thing?

However...

Things often didn't go as smoothly as planned.

He thought his plan was perfect, but he still underestimated Lu Zhou...

After the banquet ended, Victoria walked into the hotel room looking tired.

Georgiev looked at his tired daughter and asked, "How is it? Did you meet Lu Zhou?"

Victoria: "I did, and we drank on the balcony together."

Georgiev looked happy, and he continued to ask, "What happened?"

"Riemann zeta function..."

What?

What the hell is this?

Georgiev frowned.

"Riemann... what?"

Victoria smiled weakly and said, "We talked about Riemann zeta function for three hours, but he was suddenly inspired, that he ditched me... At least he paid for my drink."

She was exhausted at pretending to be interested in the conversation.

Why can't Lu Zhou be interested in movies or music?

He is quite handsome, but I would die if I had to talk to him every day...

Georgiev: "..."

Victoria looked at her dad and asked, "Dad, am I ugly?"

Georgiev paused for a second and said, "No, darling, you're as beautiful as your mother..."

"I've never had doubts about my looks before."

Victoria began to doubt her life, and she began to stare at the ceiling.

Georgiev didn't know how to comfort his daughter, so he sighed. "Maybe his standards are too high..."

Even though this was unfortunate, he couldn't do anything about it.

It just wasn't meant to be...

Chapter 836: He Will Definitely Come!

A room inside Princeton's university library.

Vera pushed open the door and walked in. She walked to the table joyfully and stuttered. Finally, she was able to get out a complete sentence.

"He's researching the Riemann hypothesis!"

Molina was sitting at the desk, and without looking up, she knew exactly what Vera's facial expression was.

"The thesis on arXiv? I know, what's so surprising about it..."

Molina's sense of urgency had become stronger ever since that thesis was released.

Lu Zhou had never been defeated by a problem before. Even Millennium Prize Problems like the Navier–Stokes equations and the Yang-Mills Equations, were no match for him.

Because Lu Zhou had become an academic leader, he rarely participated in the mathematics world. He hadn't been to any conferences, but the mathematics community had not forgotten about him.

Even to this day, stories about him were still spread around the Princeton campus.

There was no doubt that Lu Zhou was a powerful opponent.

She had been attacking this conjecture for many years. If Lu Zhou was the one to take the crown from her, she would have a mental breakdown...

"Molina..."

Molina looked at Vera and blinked as she asked, "What?"

Vera forced a smile and asked, "Where do you think his research is at?"

Molina stared at Vera's blushing white cheeks and said, "How would I know? Why don't you ask him? You have his email."

"I..." Vera played with her own finger. She looked away from Molina and said, "... I'm not good enough for him yet."

I can't!

I can't take this anymore!

Molina stood up and held Vera by the shoulders.

"Listen, Ms. Pulyuy, I know he's your ideal lover, but realize that he is our enemy! You can't..."

Before Molina could finish, Vera interrupted her.

"He is not my enemy!"

Vera's eyes were full of determination.

"... Okay, I worded it incorrectly." Molina thought for a second and said, "Don't you have a contract with him about the Fields Medal?"

"!"

Vera suddenly began to look nervous.

Molina noticed this, and she smirked and patted the girl on her shoulders.

"Do your best. If we solve the Riemann hypothesis, we'll win ten Fields Medals."

Vera held her breath and tightened her fists as she muttered to herself, "If I solve the Riemann hypothesis... he will notice me."

Molina gave her an encouraging look and said, "That's right, not just him, the entire world will notice you."

Vera's face turned even redder as she looked down at her feet and smiled.

“No, no thanks...

“Just him is enough.”

...

There wasn't a lot of exciting news in the mathematics world; therefore, the story of Lu Zhou beginning to research the Riemann hypothesis was considered a sensational story. Everyone was talking about Professor Lu's quest on solving the Riemann hypothesis; from online forums to Princeton's campus. Lu Zhou became the talk of the town.

Students weren't the only ones talking about him; the professors were no exception.

A big story like this obviously didn't escape the ears of Professor Fefferman, head of the Princeton mathematics department.

While Vera was talking to Molina, Professor Fefferman came to Professor Deligne's office with a printed copy of the same thesis.

When he arrived at Deligne's office, Deligne was sitting at his desk.

When Deligne heard footsteps, he looked up and squinted his eyes at the thesis in Professor Fefferman's hand.

“I'm guessing you have his arXiv thesis in your hand.”

“Looks like you've already read it...” Professor Fefferman threw the thesis aside and said, “I didn't expect you to be so well informed.”

“I'm quite good at keeping up with the times, and I've been using the Internet since 20 years ago...” Professor Deligne looked at the thesis and said, “You came here just for this?”

“What do you mean just for this?” Professor Fefferman looked in disbelief and said, “Haven't you heard of that legend? The person who can solve the Riemann hypothesis will become an immortal, not just in an abstract sense, but literally.”

This legend came from a long time ago, around the 19th century. French mathematician Hadamard and Belgian mathematician Poussin made the first

substantial progress on the Riemann hypothesis. They lived to 98 and 96 years old respectively.

Living to nearly a hundred years old back then was quite amazing. That started a legend where the person who proved the Riemann hypothesis would live forever.

Of course, this was only a joke, but this joke had been living on for a century now.

Deligne snorted and spoke.

“... That legend is more than a century-year-old. Bohr and Landa’s theorem was much more impactful than Hadarmard’s. If I remember correctly, they both died in their sixties.”

“Okay fine, God isn’t going to take care of everyone.” Professor Fefferman smiled and shrugged. He then asked, “Legends aside, don’t you think his thesis is very interesting?”

Professor Deligne: “Before he publishes a formal proof thesis, I will refrain from commenting.”

Professor Fefferman smiled and said, “I’m not asking you to make a comment, I’m just curious about the point he made about solving Riemann zeta function using the $\pi(x)$ function. I did some research and didn’t find any interesting clues... I’m curious, how do you think he will solve it?”

Professor Fefferman: “What do you think he will do?”

Professor Deligne glanced at him and said, “Didn’t you work with him on the Navier–Stokes equations? Don’t you know him better?”

Professor Fefferman said, “Actually, I don’t know him very well, he’s used to working alone.”

After that, Professor Deligne groaned.

He reminisced about the past and said, “You can’t solve the Riemann hypothesis with just an idea. I can come up with a dozen ideas on how to solve it, but none of them gives me hope. The $\pi(x)$ function is pretty new, but not totally unique. People have tried using it before.”

Professor Fefferman nodded.

This wasn't the first time he heard the idea of using $\pi(x)$ to solve the Riemann zeta function. He had even heard people talk about it in cafes.

"He's a scholar who is both good at using tools and creating tools. Whether or not he successfully applies the $\pi(x)$ function, I'm certain he will be able to find the successful tools."

Professor Fefferman: "Like the Group Structure Method?"

"Not quite." Professor Deligne smiled and said, "This problem has troubled the mathematics world for more than a century and a half. He will probably create a new tool that will help us understand the Riemann zeta function."

He paused for a second and continued, "I'm looking forward to the next International Congress of Mathematicians."

Professor Fefferman said, "He might not come."

Deligne shook his head.

"Trust me, he is coming."

837 Boundary Approach Method!

After successfully killing time on the balcony, Lu Zhou left the waiter some cash for the drinks. He then immediately went to the parking lot and got into his black sedan.

"Back to Zhongshan International."

"Okay."

Wang Peng, who was in the driver's seat, nodded and soon began driving.

He talked about the Riemann zeta function with the lady for a long time. Even though, for the most part, he was talking by himself, he was still somehow inspired by the conversation.

Lu Zhou, who was sitting in the back seat, suddenly spoke.

“I need a tool.”

Wang Peng paused for a second.

“... What tool?”

“... Nothing.”

“Do you want to go to the supermarket?”

Lu Zhou shook his head and smiled.

“If only they sold it at the supermarket.”

Wang Peng felt like if he kept on asking, he would be muddled by Lu Zhou’s response. Therefore, he shut his mouth and focused on driving.

Zhongshan International wasn’t far from the Purple Mountain Hotel, and after a ten-minute drive, Lu Zhou was back in his gated neighborhood.

The car stopped at his front door. Lu Zhou told Wang Peng not to come in tomorrow. After that, Lu Zhou walked home and up the stairs.

“It’s not realistic to solve the $\pi(x)$ function using a general method. There have been thousands of people who have tried to solve this problem in the past. Even though this idea might work, the most obvious pathway must have been attempted before.”

“A novel approach requires a novel tool!”

“I need a new tool!”

The quad-rotor drone flew next to Lu Zhou, following him up the stairs.

Xiao Ai curiously asked Lu Zhou.

[Master?]

“Give me a cup of coffee, instant, send it to the study room.”

[But it’s so late... (°—° ”)]

“It doesn’t matter, I don’t plan on sleeping tonight.”

[Okay, Master, but please stay healthy.]

Lu Zhou opened his study room door and replied, “Okay!”

Climbing the Riemann hypothesis mountain at once was unrealistic. This mountain had stood in the mathematics world for far too long. Countless people had attempted to challenge it, only to stay at the bottom. Even though there were now signs pointing toward the top of the mountain, there wasn’t a single tool they could use to climb the mountain.

No matter what kind of proof he was going to use, he had to lay a solid foundation.

This way, it would give himself some hope...

Lu Zhou sat down at his desk and threw the pile of used draft papers into the bin. He then took out a new stack of blank draft paper.

Lu Zhou looked at the draft paper on his desk and smirked. He shook his head and muttered to himself, “... This is probably the least expensive project I’ve done this year.”

When he tried to prove Yang-Mills Equations, he requested CERN to conduct several sets of expensive experiments.

For a pure mathematics problem like the Riemann hypothesis, the costs were draft paper and his brainpower...

...

Lu Zhou hadn’t devoted himself to one research project for a long time.

Ever since he became the chief designer of the Lunar Orbit Committee, he had played the role of an academic leader. Rarely did he participate in the forefront of scientific research.

However, Lu Zhou wasn’t out of practice.

When he devoted himself to a mathematics problem, the strings of numbers and Greek symbols flowed through his brain like music.

The rising vapor from his cup of coffee gradually disappeared. The street lights on the asphalt roads went out. The Purple Mountain was pitch black. After a while, Lu Zhou heard the birds chirping outside, and this made him stop writing.

“The new cohomology mathematical tool ‘Étale’ created by Grothendieck while researching Weil’s conjecture made a huge impact on the development of algebraic geometry and the entire mathematical field. That ultimately led to Deligne’s proof of Weil’s conjecture.

“If I want to find a way to climb the mountain, I have to climb the smaller mountain first... A weak Riemann hypothesis.”

When it came to the twin prime conjecture and the Polignac’s conjecture, the latter was contained within the former. Even though the former didn’t lead to a direct proof of the latter, it could inspire one to prove the latter.

That was how the mathematics world was explored.

From proving the weak form of a conjecture, to proving the conjecture, to then proving a stronger form of the conjecture; once all of these were completed, all of the clues became connected, and the tower of mathematics was built.

Lu Zhou wrote down a line of equations on a new piece of draft paper.

$$[\operatorname{Re}(s) = 1 - c / \ln [| \operatorname{Im}(s) | + 2] \quad (u003e0) \dots]$$

Lu Zhou smirked, and his dignified look gradually disappeared.

“If I want to prove that all zeros are distributed on the zero limit line, I should start by excluding areas where zeros do not exist! $\operatorname{Re}(s) \leq 0$ and $\operatorname{Re}(s) \geq 1$, as long as I think of a way to enhance this proof to all areas outside the critical line, that is, $\operatorname{Re}(s) < 1/2$ and $\operatorname{Re}(s) > 1/2$, I can prove the Riemann hypothesis!

“I’ll start from the right limit!”

This proof method was called the critical zone method! Instead of proving what percent of zeros were on the zero limit line, the proof attempted to shrink the critical zone area containing all zeros, eventually reaching the critical line!

As long as he could prove the right boundary of the critical zone from $\text{Re}(s) = 1$ and the left to $\text{Re}(s) = 1 - \epsilon$ ($\epsilon > 0$), for all values of epsilon, he could prove the Riemann hypothesis!

He had an idea, and all that was left to do was execution!

His intuition told him that this piece of the puzzle was in the algebraic geometry field! Unfortunately, that was one of his main weaknesses...

"If only I had someone to talk to."

Lu Zhou shook his head.

Especially Professor Deligne...

Unfortunately, some things couldn't be explained through email. Video calling might work, but the atmosphere wasn't the same as talking in person.

It seemed like he could only rely on himself.

"I won't rely on others."

Even then, Lu Zhou couldn't hold back his curiosity. He opened his computer and went on Mathoverflow.

He was soon disappointed.

When he uploaded his thesis on arXiv, he hoped it would help lay the foundation for others. He wanted to see some interesting discussion on Mathoverflow, as that might inspire him.

But now, it seemed like his plan was clearly unsuccessful.

Even though this was supposed to be a professional mathematics discussion community, full of PhDs, most people were more interested in gossip.

Although there were some academically focused discussions, most of them were outdated.

"Looks like I have to retreat for a few days."

Lu Zhou leaned back on his chair and picked up his phone. He told Wang Peng not to disturb him for a few days. He then yawned and went into his bathroom.

He was hoping to get inspired throughout the night, maybe even produce some in-progress results. However, the situation was much worse than he had thought.

Since he decided to go on a retreat, there was no reason for him to stay awake anymore.

Before he would officially start working, he planned on making up for last night's sleep...

838 Riemann hypothesis!

Even with a research plan, solving the problem wasn't easy.

The concept of a critical zone had been around for more than a century.

The zones $\text{Re}(s) \leq 0$ and $\text{Re}(s) \leq 1$ were solved the earliest as they were the easiest. The regions $\text{Re}(s) = 0$ and $\text{Re}(s) = 1$ took nearly a decade to solve.

The exclusion of these two areas directly led to the proof of the prime number theorem.

In order to dive deep into this topic, Lu Zhou collected a large amount of thesis in this area. He even found electronic versions of Grothendieck's academic works, which were removed by major publishers. He found the original Étale proof method, as well as the theses published by Professor Deligne on Weil's conjecture.

Lu Zhou actually should have read these theses during his PhD, but unfortunately, he was involved in the field of number theory, not algebraic geometry.

Research on Goldbach's conjecture took up all of his time. Professor Deligne gave him a lot of freedom, otherwise, he wouldn't have been able to concentrate on Goldbach's conjecture.

There were both pros and cons from Deligne's style of teaching.

On the first day of his retreat, Lu Zhou spent the entire day collecting all of the theses.

Lu Zhou spent the next two days reading the thesis and summarizing the main points.

On the fifth day, Lu Zhou combined his algebraic geometry hypotheses with his newly-learned theorems. He chose an algebraic curve over a finite field as a support, which gave him a shortcut to the final answer.

Inspirational thoughts flew out of his brain.

After finding the algebraic curve on the finite field, all the puzzles began connecting themselves together...

On the eighth day.

Lu Zhou was sitting at his desk. He stretched his back and stood up from his chair.

He finished writing the thesis last night. He didn't even know what time it was.

Because he was too concentrated on his research, he didn't remember when he fell asleep.

This feeling of being completely immersed in the mathematics world was magical, time flew by without him knowing...

Sure enough, mathematics was his passion.

That felt amazing!

He looked at his phone, which was on the corner of his desk. Unsurprisingly, dozens of missed calls and texts popped up on his screen.

Lu Zhou didn't have time to cater to these things. He left his phone aside and planned on replying later. He then looked at the pile of A4 papers on his table.

"Looks like it's time to type the thesis on a computer..."

Without eating breakfast, Lu Zhou transferred the written thesis into the computer.

With Xiao Ai's help, the thesis transfer didn't take a lot of time.

After Lu Zhou double-checked the thesis and made sure there were no formatting mistakes, he sent it to the editorial department of Annual Mathematics.

His last thesis didn't have any publication value, so he only uploaded it on arXiv.

But this thesis was different.

The research on the Riemann hypothesis had been stalled for nearly a century, and his research was a giant step for humanity!

He had proved that when the value of ε approached zero, there were no non-zero trivial points of the ζ function in the region of $\text{Re}(s) \geq 1 - \varepsilon$!

He creatively named this problem.

The Quasi Riemann hypothesis!

...

While Lu Zhou was on his retreat, people in the outside world started to worry about him.

It was fine not leaving the house, but not answering the phone made some people a little anxious.

Another week went by.

Wang Peng, who was guarding the mansion, began to worry if Lu Zhou had anything left to eat. Doctor Yan, who was responsible for the health and safety of Lu Zhou, couldn't wait any longer. She drove her SUV and came to his front gate.

Yan Yan was wearing a white doctor's coat. She walked to the front gate and looked at Wang Peng, who was smoking a cigarette.

"Why hasn't Professor Lu come out?"

Wang Peng tapped his cigarette and shook his head.

“I don’t know.”

Yan Yan: “...”

The hell is I don’t know?!

You’re his bodyguard!

Yan Yan tried to look into the front yard. She hesitated for a second before asking, “Should we go inside?”

Wang Peng smiled and shook his head. He said, “Don’t do that, he will get angry.”

Yan Yan: “How do you know? What if he needs our help...”

Wang Peng tapped his cigarette and replied, “Because... I’ve done it before.”

Yan Yan frowned and was about to say something. Suddenly, the front gate opened, followed by the front door opening.

The two looked at the front door and saw Lu Zhou walking out of the house in a gray jacket.

Wang Peng threw the cigarette into the trash and said, “You proved it?”

Lu Zhou looked at Wang Peng and Yan Yan, and he was slightly surprised.

“Do you even know what I was researching?”

Wang Peng awkwardly shook his head.

He obviously didn’t know what Lu Zhou was researching. However, from his past experience, he knew it must have been a difficult problem.

Lu Zhou began walking toward the car. Yan Yan stopped him and said, “Wait a second, you have a physical examination today. We made an appointment last week...”

“We did?” Lu Zhou rubbed his head.

Yan Yan nodded.

“Do you want to hear the call recording?”

The f*ck?

Why did you record the call?

“No need, I trust you.” Lu Zhou coughed and said, “We’ll do the examination later, I have something more important to do.”

Wang Peng looked serious, and he began looking for his car key.

“Where are we going?”

Lu Zhou smiled and began to look excited.

“We’re picking up a new car.”

Wang Peng: “...”

Yan Yan: “...”

How is that important?!

839 Don’t Piss Him Off

Three days ago, Chen Yushan had been texting Lu Zhou. She told him that the Electric Purple car from BYD had arrived, telling him to pick it up from the dealership.

However, Lu Zhou’s phone was turned off at the time, so he didn’t see the messages. It wasn’t until a few minutes ago, after he uploaded the thesis onto arXiv, did he have time to check his text messages.

Then...

Within half an hour, Lu Zhou was in the dealership, standing next to the cool black sedan.

The sales lady was nervous about Lu Zhou's security guard, and she tried to maintain a professional smile as she talked about the basic functions of Electric Purple.

After hearing her explanation, Lu Zhou immediately asked, "What's the max speed?"

The sales lady politely said, "Max speed is 260 kilometers an hour, but you'll never reach that on normal roads."

Lu Zhou nodded expressionlessly.

F*cking nuts!

It's crazy an electric car can go that fast.

This is even faster than Teslas... Of course, this isn't a production car, but still, this is pretty awesome.

Lu Zhou asked another important question, "What about its safety features?"

The sales lady smiled politely.

"The glass is bulletproof..."

"I'll take care of that," Wang Peng said confidently. "If it doesn't pass our tests, we will modify it."

Lu Zhou suddenly became nervous.

"Don't turn this thing into a tank."

Wang Peng said, "Of course not... We have experts in the department for this kind of modification. It will look exactly the same after it is done."

Bullsh*t!

Lu Zhou hesitated for a second and said, "I have one request."

Wang Peng: "What request?"

Lu Zhou awkwardly smiled and said, "Before you modify it, drive me around first."

Wang Peng: "... Okay."

...

Even though Lu Zhou wasn't particularly interested in cars, every guy was more or less into cars.

Driving around a limited edition car was quite exciting.

Especially since Lu Zhou had just finished tackling a problem, it was time for him to relax.

Wang Peng drove around the Purple Mountain and the city center. Lu Zhou opened the windows on both sides of the car and let the breeze hit his face.

However, after ten minutes or so, he started to feel bored.

As expected, he wasn't fond of luxury cars.

Mathematics was more interesting to him.

After Lu Zhou closed the windows, he took out his phone and logged into his Mathoverflow account. He then looked at the trending posts.

Just like he had expected, within an hour of him uploading his "Quasi Riemann hypothesis" thesis, the discussion boards on Mathoverflow exploded!

[Jesus... I can't believe it!]

[A few days ago, Professor Lu was still researching the $\pi(x)$ function, right? How come he suddenly changed his research path???

[How many scholars have claimed to have made a major breakthrough on the Riemann conjecture? $\text{Re}(s) = 1 - c / \ln[|\text{Im}(s)| + 2]$ is infinitely close to $\text{Re}(s) = 1$ when $\text{Im}(s) \rightarrow \infty$, so we can't extend the right boundary toward the critical line at all! Can't these millennials be more rigorous!]

[This is Professor Lu you're talking about! Have you even read his thesis? He didn't even reference $\text{Re}(s) = 1 - c / \ln[|\text{Im}(s)| + 2]$]

[I know this is Professor Lu, but Sir Atiyah has won much more mathematics awards! Mathematics research should be looked at objectively, the author's

background doesn't matter! If he made this submission anonymously, no one would care!]

Lu Zhou smiled when he looked at the comments.

No sh*t!

If some no-name mathematician claimed to have made progress on Riemann's hypothesis, no one would believe him.

You don't believe me?

Just wait!

Interestingly enough, he saw a familiar name-tag on the forum—Terry Tao.

This was obviously none other than Professor Tao Zhexuan from Los Angeles.

Professor Tao's comment was interesting.

[I'm still reading through the thesis, give me a second, this might take a while.]

Professor Tao rarely gave ambiguous comments on whether a thesis was correct.

If the thesis topic was in an area he was familiar with, he could often immediately find a disproving argument.

But now, this seemed to be different.

His comment further heated the discussions on Mathoverflow.

Lu Zhou continued to scroll and saw some interesting comments. He slowly smirked.

Wang Peng looked at him. He was curious about what Lu Zhou was reading on his phone. He knew he shouldn't be asking, so he decided to concentrate on driving.

After driving around Purple Mountain, this beast-looking Electric Purple car stopped at the gate of Zhongshan International. A neighbor walking their dog looked at the car curiously.

They had never seen the car logo before.

Nor had they seen the car model before.

This wasn't unusual for laymen, but for car enthusiasts, it was like they had discovered a new continent. They took out their phones and began taking photos.

However...

When they saw the person getting off the car, the neighbors quietly put their phone away.

Oh Jesus, it's that guy...

Taking photos of normal celebrities was fine.

Even B-list celebrities weren't a big deal in this gated community.

But when it came to Lu Zhou...

They didn't dare to mess with him...

840 What a Rush

For a high-end gated community like this, every entry and exit had to be registered.

After Lu Zhou moved in, the gated community increased its security levels. There were more security guards roaming around the area.

Even though this was Lu Zhou's car, he still had to follow security procedures.

After Wang Peng parked the car, he got off and muttered, "What a rush this car is."

Due to his profession, he had driven many cars. Ranging from premium foreign cars to customized domestic cars. However, this was one of the best cars he had ever driven.

Considering the fact that electric cars had only been around for a few years, this was even more amazing.

Lu Zhou stretched his shoulders and smiled. "Of course."

Wang Peng: "It's not cheap, right?"

Lu Zhou: "I don't know, but there's only one in the world..."

Wang Peng spoke emotionally.

"So that's how rich people live."

Lu Zhou said, "Stop pretending, you've driven military tanks before, this is just a sports car."

Wang Peng rubbed his nose and said, "I haven't driven a tank, I've only ridden in one..."

Lu Zhou: "..."

Wow...

I was just kidding, I didn't expect this guy to actually have sat in a tank before.

Lu Zhou was suddenly curious about what kind of life his bodyguard used to live.

Wang Peng looked at the car key in his hand and said, "I'm going to register the vehicle, it might take a few minutes. Do you want to wait or come with me?"

The gated community was quite safe.

This community was the safest place in Jinling; even intelligence personnel from other countries would have trouble entering.

"I'll just stay here. Remember to pick me up tomorrow. I don't have any plans tonight, so I won't need the car."

Wang Peng nodded and said, "Okay then, I'll head off then."

“Sure... Remember to not modify the car too much, just a little,” said Lu Zhou with a worried look on his face.

Wang Peng looked at how nervous Lu Zhou was, and he smiled and said, “Don’t worry, I’ll bring it back the exact same way.”

“I’ll hold you to that!”

Lu Zhou gave a reluctant look at his brand new sports car. He then turned around and walked back to his mansion.

After returning home, he threw his trench coat on the couch and saw Xiao Ai flying over. He told Xiao Ai to make him a cup of coffee. He then went upstairs to his study room.

It had been a while since he uploaded his thesis, so the entire world probably knew about his mathematics thesis at this point.

However, the only opinion he cared about was from Annual Mathematics.

Normally, a thesis review would take a long time, but he directly submitted it to the editorial department’s email, therefore he skipped the general procedure.

He went on his computer and saw an unopened email in his mailbox.

Unsurprisingly, it was from the editorial department of Annual Mathematics.

[Dear Professor Lu, we have received your thesis manuscript. I would like to thank you for choosing us as your publisher. The thesis is in peer review, but as you know, there are very few scholars in your field of research. We are currently contacting an appropriate reviewer. We will notify you of any updates.]

There hadn’t been any progress regarding the critical zone research for more than a century. Even though there were a few people researching Riemann’s hypothesis, very few people chose this as their research direction.

However, this hypothesis was still quite important in the field of analytic number theory. Otherwise, it wouldn’t have been named the Quasi Riemann hypothesis.

Basically, if a scholar could solve this problem, they would undoubtedly receive a Fields Medal.

For more than a century, no one had been able to increase the right boundary limit of the critical zone, even by a little. A lot of people thought that this proof idea was not feasible, but now, someone suddenly proved $\text{Re}(s) = 1 - \varepsilon$ ($\varepsilon \rightarrow 0$), which proved that the critical boundary band could be moved!

What did this mean?

For ordinary people, this might not mean much.

But this was huge for the mathematics community!

Therefore, it wasn't easy to find a reviewer.

Because of Lu Zhou's connections in the academic community, it was difficult to find an appropriate reviewer who didn't have any conflicts of interest...

Therefore, it seemed like the ill-tempered Professor Faltings was the best choice. Also, Faltings happened to be in the field of algebraic geometry and analytic number theory...

However, this still depended on whether or not Faltings had the time to review.

After all, reviewing a thesis like this was no piece of cake...

"Hope that Faltings has the time to review my thesis."

The door gently opened, and a drone holding a steaming cup of coffee steadily flew inside.

[Master, your coffee. (๑•̥̥̥•́)]

"Put it on the table."

[Okay, Master. (•̥̥̥̥̥)]

The drone landed steadily on the corner of the desk. Its retractable arm then placed down the coffee.

The bottom right corner of Lu Zhou's screen read: [Please enjoy (* / ω \ *)]. Lu Zhou smiled and picked up his coffee, taking a sip.

“Thanks, it’s delicious.”

Lu Zhou placed the coffee on the table. He then dragged the email to his recycling bin.

He was able to close his email and continue his unfinished research, which was to extend the value of ϵ towards $1/2$. However, an email suddenly appeared in his mailbox.

Lu Zhou paused for a second and clicked on the email.

He noticed the familiar email address and held his breath.

[Professor, are you researching Riemann’s hypothesis?]

841 Debatable?

Any research progress regarding Riemann’s hypothesis would be talked about in the mathematics community.

This was no exception for the mathematics department at UC Berkeley.

After Professor Lu uploaded his thesis onto arXiv, the news regarding the proof of the Quasi Riemann hypothesis spread like wildfire. People were discussing the news all over campus.

“Did you hear? The Quasi Riemann hypothesis was proven!”

“I did, that’s incredible. No one has made any progress for a century!”

“Last time the prime number theorem was proved as a result of research on the Riemann hypothesis. I wonder what Professor Lu will make of it this time.”

“Yeah, if only I had Professor Lu’s intelligence.”

“Keep dreaming!”

The mathematics department students weren’t the only ones talking about this event. The professors were talking about it as well.

Analytic number theory wasn't Berkeley's strong suit. They leaned toward the partial differential equations side. However, for scholars like Tao Zhexuan, who was proficient in multiple fields, they obviously kept up with the latest news in mathematics.

Tao Zhexuan sat inside an office in the mathematics building at Berkeley. His desk was full of draft papers. With a pen in his hand, he stared intently at the thesis on his table. He was so focused he didn't even hear the knock on his door.

After a while, the door was pushed open. A thin Asian man walked in with a box of pizza. He was a PhD student.

"Professor, the pizza you ordered is here."

Tao Zhexuan replied without looking up, "Just put it aside."

"Okay, but you should eat it while it's hot." The PhD student looked at the thesis in front of him and asked curiously, "Oh yeah, yesterday, I saw your comment on Mathoverflow... Are you still reading that thesis?"

Tao Zhexuan: "Yes."

The PhD student gulped and asked, "Is there a conclusion yet?"

"I would tell you if there were one."

"Okay then." The PhD student gave a helpless expression then left the room.

Normally speaking, Professor Tao was an approachable person. He was one of the big names at Berkeley who were friends with the students.

However, there were exceptions.

Whenever he was troubled by a question, he would act cold toward everyone, even his wife...

"Interesting.

"He's using an algebraic geometry, similar to something Grothendieck would do, but it's not obvious.

“Choosing an algebraic curve on the complex plane... How did he come up with this idea?

“Also... Can he really prove it using this method?”

Tao Zhexuan leaned back on his chair and looked at the dusty ceiling fan. He scratched his head.

It was rare for a problem to bother him for this long.

He tapped the pen on the paper and solemnly spoke.

“Debatable.”

However, he didn’t sound confident at all.

“Am I the one who’s wrong...”

Maybe the proof does in fact, exist?

...

Speaking of which, Lu Zhou didn’t remember when was the last time he received an email from Vera.

Was it a year ago?

Or even longer?

Obviously, Vera, who was researching Riemann’s hypothesis, saw Lu Zhou’s thesis on arXiv. She took the time to read it and had some questions.

Most things were difficult to convey through email. Therefore, the two agreed to a video call at 8 pm Beijing time.

After three years, Lu Zhou could finally see the student he was proudest of.

Even though it was through the Internet...

At 8 pm the next day, the video call began.

Lu Zhou made a cup of coffee and sat in his study room. He was prepared to discuss academic problems, but the atmosphere was a bit stiff.

It seemed like the girl had too much to say, but she didn't know where to start. She nervously sat in front of the computer screen without saying anything.

Lu Zhou had an awkward look on his face.

Her blonde hair was combed into a ponytail. Lu Zhou could even tell she was wearing a different shade of lipstick. Clearly, she dressed up.

What should I say?

Long time no see?

That seems a bit cold.

Nice hairstyle?

What if she thinks I'm hitting on her?

Lu Zhou coughed and spoke clearly in a formal way.

"Let's get to it... Tell me what your question is."

Having small talks and greetings might make the atmosphere even stiffer. Therefore, he went straight to the topic.

As expected, the tension in the room disappeared.

Vera sighed in relief and nodded. She spoke quietly.

"Okay, wait a second..."

The girl walked to the side and dragged a fully-written blackboard into the camera view.

Lu Zhou looked at the lines of equations and paused for a second. He looked surprised, then gradually, he started to look serious.

Vera cleared her throat and said quietly, "This is the algebraic geometry method you used to prove the Quasi Riemann hypothesis, I tried to summarize the proof."

Lu Zhou skimmed through the blackboard and nodded with approval.

“Not bad.”

No wonder she’s my star student.

Being able to summarize all this is not easy.

Vera smiled and said, “Even though Molina... I mean Ms. Abel told me not to discuss these problems with you, I think it’s better... to discuss it with you.”

Talking about ideas with a genius scholar was risky, because the academic community only recognized who produced the result, not where the initial idea came from.

Therefore, some scholars even resisted the urge to publish their in-progress results... They wanted to aim for higher, something more significant.

Vera put on a serious face and spoke.

“I carefully studied the algebraic finite field curve you introduced when ε tends to infinitely small. I found out that there are no non-zero trivial points of the ζ function in the region of $\text{Re}(s) \geq 1 - \varepsilon$. The properties of $2\Gamma(1-s) = (2\pi)(s-1)\sin(\pi s / 2) \zeta(1-s)$ hold...”

Vera turned toward the blackboard and wrote on the right corner, which she purposely left blank.

Lu Zhou looked at Vera and frowned, but he quickly relaxed.

He had a rough idea of Vera’s thought process.

She used his own proof as a foundation and introduced a homology mapping function that connected the nilpotent Lie groups... Basically, she made some improvements on his Group Structure Method and applied that to the enlargement of ε .

The chalk in Vera’s hand stopped moving. She turned around and smiled.

“This method will probably work, but I can only do it halfway. I was thinking if you could finish it...”

“So... I need your help.”

Vera spoke quietly. She wasn’t even sure if Lu Zhou could hear her.

Lu Zhou stared at the formula on the blackboard for a while. He suddenly asked, "Do you know why you can't complete the proof?"

Vera paused for a second and asked, "Why?"

Lu Zhou spoke the truth with a look of regret.

"Because you can't prove this problem with the Group Structure Method."

Vera: "...?"

842 Disagreement

A tint of red appeared on Vera's white cheeks, and she pouted and looked stubborn.

"Why?"

She would be fine if Lu Zhou found a calculation error. But Lu Zhou simply told her the proof idea wouldn't work, without reason. She couldn't accept this.

Even though he was her respected ex-supervisor.

Lu Zhou knew what Vera was thinking. He sighed and patiently explained to her.

"The curve $\text{Re}(s) = 1 - c / \ln [|\text{Im}(s)| + 2]$ is infinitely close to $\text{Re}(s) = 1$ when $\text{Im}(s)$ approaches infinity. By using the Group Structure Method, this result is inevitable. Therefore, if we want to use the critical line, we must use a different tool. This is the reason why I did not use the Group Structure Method when I proved the existence of epsilon. Instead, I used an algebraic geometry method."

Lu Zhou knew the Group Structure Method like the back of his hand.

When it came to Deligne's proof that "all zeros of the ζ function of a d -dimensional algebraic cluster over a finite field lie on the complex plane, $\text{Re}(s) = 1/2, 3/2, \dots, (2d-1)/2 \dots$ ", before using a homology group method and the Fourier transform, Lu Zhou first thought about using the Group Structure Method.

However, things didn't go that well.

When he tried to apply a group theory method to the Riemann zeta function, he soon discovered it would not work as expected.

Lu Zhou looked at the blushing girl and spoke.

"On the surface, the research on the critical line is an analytic number theory problem. However, it actually is a complex analysis problem. When it comes to the group construction of Riemann's zeta function, I recommend you to read some of Grothendieck's algebraic proofs of the Riemann-Roch theorem. It might inspire you."

The steam slowly rose from Lu Zhou's coffee cup. The girl stared at her keyboard and didn't speak.

After a while, she looked up and stared dead straight at Lu Zhou.

"I still think my theory is correct.

"We don't have to prove that $\text{Re}(s) = 1 - c / \ln[|\text{Im}(s)| + 2]$ infinitely approaches $\text{Re}(s) = 1$ when $\text{Im}(s)$ approaches infinity to use the Group Structure Method. I will prove it to you!"

When Lu Zhou looked at how determined Vera was, he contemplated it for a second before smiling.

"I think there are better approaches, but it seems like you have made up your mind. If you are sure you can do it, then you might as well try. Maybe you are right, maybe we will meet on the finish line."

Vera nodded.

"Yeah! I will not give up!"

The girl covered her mouth and coughed twice.

Lu Zhou paused for a second and asked, "Are you okay?"

Vera looked up and smiled reluctantly. She then replied softly, "Nothing... The weather has been changing, so I might have caught a cold."

Lu Zhou: "Take care of yourself. Put more clothes on, drink some water."

Vera began to blush. She didn't know if it was because of Lu Zhou or because of her cold.

"Thank you."

The conversation died.

The two went into silence.

It seemed like they didn't know what to talk about outside the world of mathematics.

Lu Zhou was about to end the call, but Vera suddenly spoke first.

"Um..."

Lu Zhou: "What?"

Vera bit her lip and stared firmly at Lu Zhou.

"I still remember our agreement.

"I will try my best!"

Lu Zhou paused for a second.

He was about to say something, but the call was disconnected.

Lu Zhou stared at the blank screen and went silent for a while.

Suddenly, a pop-up window appeared on the lower-right corner of his desktop.

Xiao Ai: [Master, do you want me to call her back? (๑•. •๑)]

A few seconds went by, Lu Zhou smiled and shook his head.

"No, it's fine. Even if you do call her back, I wouldn't know what to say."

Xiao Ai: [Okay then 0.0]

Lu Zhou: "Speaking of which, I didn't know you can video call people for me..."

Xiao Ai: [That's very easy for Xiao Ai to do.]

Lu Zhou: "True."

He nearly forgot that Xiao Ai hacked into a European government affairs system and used the loopholes in the system to forge an identity. This helped him sneak in a prohibited machine tool.

Video calling a person was a piece of cake in comparison.

...

The Quasi Riemann hypothesis was solved. Even though epsilon was determined to be infinitely small, this was still a huge step forward for the critical line idea.

Now, the only problem was how to advance the epsilon to $1/2$.

Over the past few days, Lu Zhou spent four hours a day locking himself in the Jin Ling University library.

The library at Jin Ling University wasn't as great as the Firestone Library in Princeton, and he could even access original manuscripts at the Firestone Library. However, he could find most of the resources he wanted at the library at Jin Ling University.

And for the ones he couldn't, as long as he put in a request, the library would buy the book for him.

Speaking of which, a small accident happened.

When he was sitting in the library studying the Riemann zeta function, someone secretly took a picture of him sitting at his desk with a pile of books and sent it to their friends' news feed on WeChat.

After that, somehow this photo went around the entire school.

In fact, Lu Zhou was happy to see himself set as a good example for the students. The only downside was that the caption used for the photo was "Keep on studying and you'll never be old".

What do you mean old?

I'm not even thirty years old yet!

The hell is old?

Ah, I'm so pissed off!

It was worth mentioning that while Lu Zhou was researching on how to extend the proof of the Quasi Riemann hypothesis, Mr. Faltings, the director of the Max Planck Institute for Mathematics, finally received the review invitation from Annual Mathematics.

Now that the thesis had a reviewer, Lu Zhou's thesis finally entered the peer review process.

This was going to be a long wait.

Due to the difficulty of the 40-page thesis, it would be at least December before the results would be published.

The entire mathematics community was talking about the Quasi Riemann hypothesis thesis.

Lu Zhou could even hear people talking about it at Jin Ling University campus.

However, Lu Zhou didn't really care about what other people think about him. He put all of his attention onto the value of epsilon.

Just like this, November came to an end.

Another major event occurred in the international community, one that had nothing to do with mathematics, one that far surpassed the proof of the Quasi Riemann hypothesis.

After half a year of construction, the first phase of the lunar research facility was finally complete!

843 Permanent Station on the Moon!

A dark space filled with stars.

The Moon Palace space station peacefully floated in lunar transfer orbit.

A long spacecraft gradually floated toward the space station.

The number “002” was written on the side of the spacecraft, implying this was the second “Magpie Bridge” launch.

A few scientific researchers, which came from all over the world, were on the Magpie Bridge.

The landing gear extended forward as the Moon Palace gradually approached the Moon Palace space station.

Professor Stephen stood next to the porthole. As he looked at the white planet nearby, he couldn't help but exclaim, “Unbelievable.”

Professor Ian Crawford from Birkbeck College, University Of London looked at him and asked curiously, “What's so unbelievable?”

“I can't believe the Chinese actually did it. They built a scientific research station on the Moon.” Stephen looked outside the porthole and said, “I always thought they were just scamming money from the United Nations.”

A few months ago, the idea of building a semi-permanent experimental facility on the surface of the Moon sounded like a fantasy.

Professor Stephen never would have thought the Chinese could really do it.

However, reality proved him wrong.

The production was completed on Earth and was transported to the surface of the Moon via the Magpie Bridge.

If he didn't see the photos of the scientific research station, he wouldn't even believe this was all real.

Not just that, but apparently, China planned on building a hadron collider for particle physics experiments. CERN had sent a team of experts to Beijing to help China with technical problems.

It seemed like the Chinese and the European Union were getting along nicely.

In order to participate in the lunar research station project, various countries had to pay a large lump sum of money to China in exchange for the

opportunity to allow their own scientific researchers to set foot on the research station...

"They have completely industrialized the aerospace industry." Professor Ian continued, "I spoke about this in my thesis a long time ago. The development of lunar resources is our only way to advance technology. There is bound to be a country that could do this first."

"That's why I said this is unbelievable." Professor Stephen sighed and said, "They've done more in a year than we have in ten years."

Professor Stephen looked at the space station and suddenly spoke.

"Speaking of which, I wonder if Dr. Z is on this space station."

When the Mars bacteria crisis was happening, an anonymous thesis published on arXiv saved the entire Earth's ecosystem.

This matter had been widely talked about in the biology community.

Legends had been made about Dr. Z's identity. However, even though official institutions had tried to investigate this matter, no one had yet been able to identify the person who saved all of mankind.

Professor Ian looked at him strangely and asked, "Why do you think he's here?"

"I've carefully read his thesis. His writing style is very similar to some of my Chinese students. My intuition tells me he is Chinese. It's very likely he was involved in the research of the X-0172 bacteria. Right now, the only patient with the X-0172 bacteria is lying on the research station, so there is no reason for him to not come here."

Professor Ian jokingly said, "I still remember that a while ago, you couldn't believe China could produce such research results."

Professor Stephen coughed and rubbed his nose.

"That was the past, the times have changed."

While the two were talking, the Magpie Bridge successfully docked with the Moon Palace, and the connection hatch slowly opened.

The researchers wearing spacesuits gathered in front of the cabin door and floated into the space station.

They stood in the cabin pressure buffer room. A Chinese staff member with a serious face stood in front of the researchers.

He cleared his throat and spoke with perfect English.

“Welcome to the Moon Palace space station, I am in charge here.

“The flight to the Moon’s surface will depart in three days. You will receive training over the next three days to help you adjust to the low-gravity environment.

“Now, please show your e-passport...”

Even though the Moon didn’t belong to one single country, the facilities built on the Moon were owned by various private countries and organizations.

Even though China didn’t claim territorial sovereignty over the lunar research station, strictly speaking, the research facility was part of Chinese soil.

Therefore, they had to show a passport and visa before entering...

...

Lu Zhou didn’t expect that he went on trending for two different things.

One was for the Quasi Riemann hypothesis.

Even though this hypothesis wasn’t particularly well-known, it still didn’t stop him from ending up on the trending page.

On the other hand, the completion of the lunar scientific research station made him number three on the trending page.

This lunar scientific research station was named “Guanghan Lunar Palace”, and it far surpassed the proof of the Quasi Riemann hypothesis in terms of popularity.

Not only did media outlets all over the world report on the news, but netizens around the world also enthusiastically discussed this matter.

It seemed like the entire world had their eyes on China.

For Lu Zhou, the attention and media reports didn't phase him. He didn't care about them at all.

He put all of his energy on the Riemann hypothesis. The Lunar Orbit Committee was moving forward as scheduled, so he didn't have to worry about it at all.

However, while Lu Zhou was minding his own business, something confusing happened.

Which was, after the completion of the Guanghan Lunar Palace, the second phase of the "Control of Earth and Moon" mission chain was marked by the system as complete.

844 Golden Mission Card?

[Congratulations, user, for completing the second phase of the "Control of Earth and Moon" mission: Permanent Station on the Moon

[Requirements: Construct a semi-permanent scientific research station on the Moon's surface for astronomical observations, as well as observation of climate activities and high-energy particle physics experiments.

[Reward: 200,000 mathematics experience points. 200,000 engineering experience points. 100,000 materials science experience points. 50,000 energy science experience points. 500 general points. One lucky draw ticket.

[Secondary goals:

1. Three feet deep: Collect 50 tons of rare lunar soil. Reward: 1,000 general points, random experience points card. (completed)

2. Alchemist: Produce 100 tons of titanium alloy. Reward: 500 general points, 100,000 experience points, one lucky draw ticket. (completed)

]

Lu Zhou: "..."

Lu Zhou looked at the information screen and didn't feel happy at all. In fact, he was cursing himself.

The lunar hotel is already under construction, per Chen Yushan's suggestion. The one-day lunar tourist scheme was just posted on Star Sky Technology's website. But now you're telling me the second phase of the mission is over?

What about the lunar hadron collider, and the giant lunar telescope...

They had already finished the design for the lunar hadron collider, but they hadn't begun preparing for the giant telescope.

Lu Zhou didn't expect the branch missions to be completed by themselves, but now the system was telling him the main mission was completed as well?!

For the first phase, I have to submit the mission myself, right?

How come it was automatically submitted for the second phase...

Lu Zhou closed the panel and shook his head.

All in all, the mission rewards were quite plentiful.

Lu Zhou took a deep breath and looked at the information screen in front of him. He spoke with a clear voice.

"System, open my characteristic panel!"

The moment he finished speaking, a blue light swept across the screen, and Lu Zhou's updated characteristic panel was displayed in front of him.

[

- A. Mathematics: Level 8 (974,000/3 million)
- B. Physics: Level 7 (11,215/1.2 million)
- C. Biochemistry: Level 6 (10,000/600,000)
- D. Engineering: Level 6 (0/600,000)
- E. Materials science: Level 6 (163,000/600,000)

F. Energy science: Level 4 (0/200,000)

G. Information science: Level 3 (3,000/100,000)

General points: 4,335

]

His engineering went from level 5 to level 6, energy science went from level 3 to level 4. The rest stayed the same.

As for the remaining 100,000 experience points...

Lu Zhou thought for a while and chose to allocate all of them to information science, which made his information science level go from level 3 to level 4. Even though he could receive information science experience points from his branch missions, due to the importance of informatics in the aerospace industry, it was cost-effective for him to level up as soon as possible.

“Speaking of which, I still have a random experience card...”

Lu Zhou went into his inventory and selected the golden experience card.

[Random experience card (receive 1-9,999,999 random experience points.)]

I can win seven digits of experience points!

But I can also only earn 1...

After reading the card description, Lu Zhou gulped.

If I receive 2 million experience points, I can increase my mathematics to level 9!

“Is the system going to scam me again?”

Lu Zhou silently prayed in his heart. His fingers trembled as he reached out and tapped the card.

An animation showed the card disappearing into golden stars. A line of text appeared on the system inventory panel.

[Congratulations, user, 100,000 mathematics experience points received!]

As expected, he didn't receive 7 figures of experience points.

He knew the system wouldn't be so kind to him.

Even though this was a little unfortunate, the 100,000 experience points was still pretty good.

Lu Zhou closed his inventory panel and returned to his characteristic panel.

"Here comes the exciting part."

Because of his branch mission rewards, he had two lucky draw tickets.

Since it turned out that praying was useless, Lu Zhou didn't waste any time. He closed his eyes and pressed the draw buttons.

It turned out he was pretty lucky this time.

[Congratulations, user, a sample is given!

[Receive: "Transcendence" X-1 computer!]

[Congratulations, user, special item received!

[Received: Golden mission card!]

Lu Zhou didn't really care about the Transcendence X-1 computer since he could tinker with that in his laboratory at a later date. He was more interested in the golden mission card.

He reached out and tapped his inventory panel, where a translucent dialog box popped up.

[Golden mission card (A special mission card that comes with bonus experience points). Use it to activate a golden reward mission. If the user is currently assigned to another mission, the golden reward mission will take priority until the golden reward mission has either been completed or abandoned.]

"Bonus experience points... What does that mean?"

The description read like a mobile video game.

Lu Zhou was curious. Since there was a golden mission card, were there also a silver mission card and a diamond mission card?

“Current mission will be paused... Does that mean it’s similar to urgent missions?”

But it’s not actually an urgent mission, and I can abandon the mission at any time?

Regardless, I should look at the final missions for the Control of Earth and Moon mission chain.

Lu Zhou left the card alone and went to his mission panel.

Now that the lucky draw was completed, his mission panel should have been updated.

He clicked on the translucent panel, and a dialog box appeared in front of him.

[Goal 3: Control of Earth and Moon!

[Requirements: Build a mass driver on the lunar surface with a delivery capacity of 50 tons.]

[Secondary goals: ...]

When Lu Zhou read this mission, he froze.

What surprised him wasn’t that the system had the same idea as him.

When he looked at the secondary goals section, he saw that the unfinished branch missions from phase two were transferred into phase three...

It seemed like he didn’t miss out on the branch mission rewards after all.

But this also meant he had a lot of missions to do...

845 Three Years!

Lu Zhou stared at his mission panel for five minutes, and in the end, he decided to activate the mission card.

Even though the Lunar Orbit Committee planned on building a mass driver on the moon, he had no idea how long it would take.

He should be using this time to complete another mission instead.

After all, the lunar mass driver was advancing forward by itself, so the mission could be picked up again at any time.

[Golden reward mission: Activated!

[Description: The beginning of a future era starts with mathematics...

[Requirements: Solve the Riemann hypothesis within three years!

[Mission rewards: 10,000 general points, two million mathematics experience points. "Legendary" mission card.]

"... Solve the Riemann hypothesis in three years?"

Lu Zhou finished reading the translucent mission panel and muttered to himself, "I know this is the crown of mathematics, but three years...

"Is more than enough time."

Lu Zhou double-checked the mission requirements again. He then tapped the screen and closed his mission panel.

Solving the Riemann hypothesis wasn't an easy task. Even though he already solved the Quasi Riemann hypothesis, climbing the final part of the mountain would take a lot of effort.

But why was Lu Zhou so confident?

Because there had yet to be a problem that took him more than three years to solve...

Lu Zhou had no doubt that he could solve this problem within three years.

This was both his mathematics intuition and his self-confidence from being the king of modern mathematics!

"The 'legendary' mission card sounds exciting..."

Surely legendary is better than golden, right?

Lu Zhou didn't know what was hidden behind that mission card, but the word legendary made him thrilled...

...

After Lu Zhou exited the system space, he opened his eyes and woke up in his office.

He felt a warm sensation climbing from his spine to his brain. It was like his neurons were immersed in a spa of knowledge. He never felt better before.

It felt like...

He was one step closer to becoming the omniscient God.

It didn't take long for the information to enter his brain, and the warm sensation in his spine gradually subsided.

Lu Zhou moved his shoulders and felt something weighing on him. He reached out and felt a blanket.

He looked at the girl in the office. The girl blushed and said, "I saw you were sleeping, so I put the blanket on you."

Lu Zhou looked at Han Mengqi and smiled.

"Thank you."

"You're welcome... Oh, the question you assigned me, I finished it."

Han Mengqi was turning bright red. She tried to avoid eye contact as she walked up and handed him the stack of A4 papers.

"I don't know if it's right, but... I thought of it myself."

"Let me see."

Lu Zhou took the stack of A4 papers from the girl and glanced at it.

The title was the question he assigned her.

[For any real number $s \geq 1$, define $\zeta(s) = \sum 1 / (m^s) \dots$ Prove that $\zeta(2n)$ is a transcendental number.]

Lu Zhou spent five minutes looking through the first couple of pages. He then gave her an evaluation.

“Standard proof.”

Lu Zhou looked at the calendar, then looked at Han Mengqi.

“I’m surprised. I thought it would take you more time to prove it, I didn’t expect you to finish it this year.”

Han Mengqi couldn’t help but smile proudly. She pouted and replied, “I’m actually pretty smart.”

Lu Zhou smiled.

“I agree with that.”

Lu Zhou looked like he had some questions, so Han Mengqi energetically spoke first.

“Go ahead, ask away!”

“Line 16, page three.”

Han Mengqi quickly found the line on her A4 copy.

Lu Zhou picked up the room temperature coffee cup on his table and took a sip. He paused for a second before saying, “Explain in detail on how you introduced the $\zeta(2n)$ from equation 2 as a transcendental number.”

After hearing this question, Han Mengqi was relieved.

She did a ton of preparation before coming to Lu Zhou, so she didn’t expect Lu Zhou to ask a fairly basic question.

She took a deep breath and replied, “This can be obtained by transforming equation 2 using Euler’s formula. For any integer $n \geq 1$, $\zeta(2n) = \frac{1}{(2n)!} \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} (-1)^{k+1} B_{2k} \pi^{2n-2k}$.”

" $B(2n)$ is a sequence of rational numbers, which is, Bernoulli numbers. Obviously $\zeta(2)$ is π^2 times a special rational number, and $\zeta(4)$ is π^4 times a special rational number... So it is obvious that $\zeta(2)$, $\zeta(4)$... are rational numbers. And because π is a transcendental number, the function values are also transcendental numbers."

After hearing Han Mengqi's explanation, Lu Zhou nodded with approval.

"Not bad.

"Don't be happy just yet, that was just to prove you wrote the thesis yourself. The following question is the real challenge."

Lu Zhou put down his coffee cup and spoke.

"Now that you have proven that $\zeta(2n)$ is a transcendental number, I want to ask, what about $\zeta(3)$?"

What a simple question...

Han Mengqi proudly raised her chin.

However, when she was about to answer the question, she froze.

$\zeta(3)$!

$\zeta(3)$!

What what what?

What is that?

Han Mengqi was muddled, Lu Zhou smiled and asked, "Can't answer it? $\zeta(3)$ seems simpler than $\zeta(2n)$, right? It doesn't even contain a variable."

"Yeah..." Han Mengqi pondered. She didn't know what to say.

After a while, she spoke in an uncertain tone.

"Maybe... it's also a transcendental number?"

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "Oh really? Why?"

Han Mengqi answered honestly, "It was a guess."

Seeing the girl lower her head, Lu Zhou smiled and spoke.

"It's not surprising you don't know the answer. Because Euler also didn't know. It wasn't until 1978, when French mathematician R. Apéry proved that $\zeta(3)$ is not a rational number. As for whether or not $\zeta(5)$ is a rational number, we still don't know."

After Han Mengqi heard that there was no answer to the question, she pouted.

"What is that... There isn't even an answer to the question... You're bullying me."

"There is an answer." Lu Zhou smiled at Han Mengqi and said in a serious manner, "There's an answer to every mathematics problem, we just don't know it. When you become a PhD student, that is where the challenge is. You will have to find your own ideas for proofs, then find the proofs themselves."

Han Mengqi paused for a second.

She immediately realized what was going on, and she looked ecstatic.

"Wait a second, you're saying that I can be your student!"

Lu Zhou smiled and nodded.

"I actually already made up my mind after you answered my first question."

"The second question will be your research project."

Lu Zhou stood up from his desk and walked to the blackboard. He picked up a piece of chalk and wrote on the blackboard as he spoke.

"The transcendence value of the Riemann zeta function at odd positive integers has always been a classic problem in analytical mathematical theory. According to Euler's formula and the properties of Bernoulli numbers, we can easily prove that $\zeta(2n)$ is a transcendental number. Therefore, our hypothesis is that for any integer $n \geq 1$, $\zeta(2n + 1)$ is also a transcendental number.

"The best result so far is that there are countless $\zeta(2n + 1)$, which are irrational numbers. However, the difference between infinities is still infinity.

“If you can do good research in this area, even if it’s only a small proof, you will be recognized by the academic community.

“By then, you will be able to graduate.”

846 Quantum Computer?!

In fact, strictly speaking, Lu Zhou’s research direction wasn’t regarding the transcendental values of the Riemann zeta function at odd positive integers. The Riemann hypothesis had little to do with transcendental numbers.

However, having said that, things in mathematics were often linked in unexpected ways.

Lu Zhou didn’t expect Han Mengqi’s research to be useful for him.

She was assigned to conduct research in this area because his research was regarding the Riemann zeta function. If she ever ran into any trouble, he could easily help her.

As for the other less important reason, it was because he hoped he could be inspired while guiding her.

After Lu Zhou assigned the research project, he and Han Mengqi talked about some housekeeping matters. Matters related to compensation and expectations.

Even though this chick’s family was loaded, he still had to go through the normal procedures.

Lu Zhou had the habit of taking care of every single one of his students.

After Lu Zhou explained all of the relevant details to Han Mengqi, he told her to take the day off. They would go through the formal process tomorrow and register at the Academic Affairs office. She would also come report at his office tomorrow.

Han Mengqi, who was full of joy, happily left the office. Lu Zhou called Wang Peng and told him to bring the car to the mathematics department. He wanted to go to the Institute for Advanced Study.

Suddenly, his office door was pushed open, and He Changwen walked in while chewing on a pork bun.

He looked at the blackboard and paused for a second. He nearly dropped his bun.

“Boss, you... are researching the transcendental values of the Riemann zeta function at odd positive integers?”

Lu Zhou had only just solved the Quasi Riemann hypothesis, and there was now another world-class mathematics problem on his blackboard.

Even though this problem wasn't as nutty as the Riemann hypothesis, anything related to Riemann zeta function was considered a world-class problem.

He was ready for Lu Zhou to say “yes”.

However, Lu Zhou didn't nod his head.

“This isn't my research, I assigned that to student Han. Oh yeah, by the way, she's going to be your PhD classmate now... Is that fine?”

He Changwen looked at Lu Zhou angrily.

Lu Zhou thought back to what he said. He didn't think he said anything wrong.

“Nothing.”

He Changwen shook his head with an angry look.

Damn it!

I've been with you for three years, yet you've never assigned me such a big project!

I mean, I wouldn't have contributed to the Quasi Riemann hypothesis anyway...

But you're already assigning this new chick such a big research project.

This is so unfair!

He Changwen began to look even angrier.

Lu Zhou: "...?"

...

Because there was still a system reward waiting for him to "unbox", Lu Zhou didn't stay for long at work. He decided to leave early.

He didn't have to wait for long before his Electric Purple car was parked at the mathematics department building.

Lu Zhou saw his beloved car and sighed in relief.

Thank God he didn't make too many modifications to my baby car.

At least it looks somewhat the same.

Wang Peng walked up and helped him open the door. Lu Zhou asked curiously, "What did you change?"

"We changed the class, the car frame was also replaced with reinforced steel. We then repainted it and coated it with carbon fiber. The weight might have increased, the acceleration might be slightly lower, same with the horsepower. But the rest should be the same." Wang Peng happily slapped the roof of the car and said, "I told you, I wouldn't destroy your precious car."

Lu Zhou: "I'm curious, what's the point of modifying it?"

Wang Peng: "It makes a big difference. Before, if this thing were hit by a truck, we would be screwed."

Lu Zhou: "What about now?"

Wang Peng replied calmly, "The truck would be the one that's screwed."

Lu Zhou: "..."

I guess it's better to be safe than sorry.

I wonder if we can test it with a truck...

While Lu Zhou was getting in his car, two female students walked out of the library and walked past the mathematics department building. They noticed the cool looking sports car and spoke to one another.

“Yo, look over there... That’s God Lu’s car, right?”

The girl with bangs excitedly looked toward the car.

“I think so... I remember he used to drive a boring sedan, right?”

“Maybe he changed his car after becoming an academician?”

“Maybe! But I heard he has his own company, so he might have bought it himself?”

“I think God Lu doesn’t have a girlfriend...”

The two female students went silent for a second.

Two seconds went by, and the girl with bangs exclaimed, “Sigh, actually money isn’t important, I just like guys who are good at mathematics. They’re so intellectually charming.”

Her friend replied, “Forget about it. There are plenty of smart boys doing mathematics, yet I don’t see you going out with any of them?”

While the two students were joking around, the Electric Purple car already drove away.

They suddenly realized that they had forgotten to take a photo and post it on their friends’ news feed...

...

The Jinling Institute for Advanced Study was close to Jin Ling University, and the drive took less than ten minutes.

After they arrived at the institute, Wang Peng registered the vehicle while Lu Zhou went straight to the main building of the institute. He took the elevator and went directly to the third floor underground laboratory.

This was his secret warehouse. It was mainly used to store Xiao Ai’s main server, as well as some samples and debris from the system.

Lu Zhou walked to the center of the laboratory and closed his eyes. He extended his right hand and entered into the system space. He went into his inventory and clicked the item.

When he opened his eyes again, light blue particles began to fly around him, and the particles slowly gathered together and formed an object.

When the blue light disappeared, a black metal box was sitting in front of Lu Zhou.

[“Transcendence” X-1 computer, a medium-sized industrial quantum computer with an integrated quantum chip, used for server software... Note: Due to intellectual property laws, this device has anti-engineering protection and cannot be disassembled or scanned. Any unauthorized use will lead to unpredictable consequences.]

It’s a quantum computer!

After reading the translucent dialog box in front of him, Lu Zhou’s heart skipped a beat.

However, after reading the last sentence, his heart rate calmed down.

F*ck sake!

What do you mean I can’t disassemble or scan it?

So I can’t use my scanner gun then?

Lu Zhou was curious what would happen if he accidentally broke the computer, who would fix it for him?

Maybe this is just for experimentation?

But then again, if this is truly industrial grade, it should last me for more than a decade.

Lu Zhou was wondering how to connect this computer to a power supply when the quad-rotor drone flew over.

[Master, can you give it to Xiao Ai?

[(´ ͡ ͡ ͡~)]

847 Xiao Ai Upgrade!

[(´ ͡ ͡ ͡)]

The drone floated up and down next to Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou guessed that this was the artificial retard's way of being pouty.

Lu Zhou looked at Xiao Ai's drone. He coughed and spoke.

"Shut up, let me figure out how this thing works first."

This wasn't just a children's toy. This was the only commercial quantum computer in the world. This was different from the laboratory quantum guinea pigs.

If he somehow broke this computer, it would be a huge loss to humanity!

Xiao Ai: [Ah, but Master... I'm scared you are going to destroy it! :(]

"Of course not!"

Lu Zhou suddenly realized the system didn't even give him a manual, so he awkwardly said, "... Do you know how to use this thing?"

Xiao Ai: [Nope! But I'll learn!]

Xiao Ai: [I can also help you install an operating system!]

Really?

Since Xiao Ai was so confident, Lu Zhou thought about it seriously for a while and made a decision.

"Then I'll have to thank you in advance."

Information science wasn't his strong suit.

Even though his information science level was rising, his subject level didn't equate to raw knowledge. It only allowed him to absorb knowledge at a faster

rate. Since he didn't spend a lot of time programming, his coding abilities had stagnated over the past couple of years.

He could write some small programs, but when it came to the cutting-edge computer science field of quantum computing...

He didn't even know where to begin.

Xiao Ai: [I'll take care of it! (๑`▢´)✧]

The moment the line appeared on the screen, the VGA logistics truck and the robotic arm attached to the wall began moving.

The computer was first transported next to the wall. The robotic arm on the wall then quickly connected the cables of the computers to their respective outlets.

Lu Zhou looked at this and almost had a heart attack. He didn't want his "new toy" to be ruined.

Fortunately, nothing happened.

Xiao Ai was obviously more knowledgeable than him. It even built a water-cooled heat sink case for the computer.

Xiao Ai: [Master, Master, installation is complete! Time to witness a miracle!]

Lu Zhou: "Cut the crap, turn on the computer."

The signal light on the case flashed, and the monitor signal light was lit.

However, even though the monitor signal light was lit, there was no picture.

Lu Zhou stared at the dark screen. If it weren't for the text box on the upper left corner of the screen, he wouldn't have realized the computer was on.

After a while, Lu Zhou looked at the drone and said, "That's it?"

Xiao Ai: [Yeah, it's sorted!]

Lu Zhou: "There's no desktop?"

Xiao Ai: [This is a command-line operating system... Of course, Xiao Ai can design a graphical operating system for Master... Wait a second, Xiao Ai feels weird...Σ (°△° |||)]

When the text on the drone screen disappeared, Lu Zhou quickly asked, “Are you okay?”

“Xiao Ai!”

The quantum computer suddenly began to emit a bright blue light.

Lu Zhou looked at the computer and realized the light wasn’t coming from the computer, it was coming from himself...

Or rather, the system.

Half a second later, a translucent dialog box appeared in front of him.

[Congratulations, user, “Artificial intelligence” technology branch upgraded.

[Current level: level 3]

“Artificial intelligence” technology branch!

It leveled up by itself!

Lu Zhou was ecstatic.

When he returned from Princeton, he remembered giving Xiao Ai a new home, but that wasn’t enough for an upgrade.

I can’t believe level 3 requires a quantum computer!

That’s such a harsh upgrade condition!

Lu Zhou reached out and clicked on the translucent dialog box. The level 4 requirement was displayed in front of him.

[Upgrade requirements: Collect sufficient human social data.]

It seemed like level 4 wasn’t about increasing computing power. This made Lu Zhou feel relieved.

This was already a quantum computer from a higher-level civilization, there was no way for him to find a better “home” for Xiao Ai.

What does “collect human social data” even mean? That’s so abstract.

What if I just register a few social media accounts and record my friends’ activities, is that enough?

Lu Zhou stared at the empty progress bar and went into deep thought.

Xiao Ai, who was silent this whole time, finally came back to life. The drone swayed up and down and flew next to Lu Zhou.

Xiao Ai: [Master, I’m fine now. (✿◡‿◡)]

The translucent dialog box disappeared. Lu Zhou looked at Xiao Ai’s drone and asked, “How does it feel after the upgrade? Anything different?”

Xiao Ai: [I feel smarter! (๑•̥̥̥•̥̥̥)✧]

Lu Zhou: “...”

I don’t know why...

But I feel like...

Letting Xiao Ai use this computer is a waste?

...

Because Lu Zhou couldn’t reverse engineer the X-1 computer, he lost most of his interest in the novel quantum computer. After giving Xiao Ai its new home, Lu Zhou exited the laboratory and went to his office on the top floor of the building.

Lu Zhou sat in front of his desk and planned on doing some paperwork. He pulled out some documents from his file cabinet.

He was about to flip through the documents when he heard a knock at his door.

Lu Zhou closed the document and left it aside.

“Come in.”

Yang Xu, the director of the Institute of Computational Materials, walked in with an excited look on his face.

Lu Zhou paused for a second. He then smiled and asked, “What’s so exciting?”

“Amazing news!” Yang Xu quickly walked up to Lu Zhou’s desk and smiled. He placed a report on Lu Zhou’s desk and asked, “Remember the carbon-based chip project we initiated two years ago?”

Lu Zhou immediately sat up from his chair.

“Results came out?”

“Not just results...” Yang Xu looked at Lu Zhou and took a deep breath. He then exclaimed, “We figured it out!”

848 Shine Bright Like A Diamond

The carbon-based chip project had been completed!

This was the best news Lu Zhou had heard over the past few days.

Without hesitating, he immediately told Yang Xu to bring him to the Institute of Computational Materials, where the carbon-based chip team was located.

When the two arrived at the laboratory, the laboratory was dead silent.

A group of researchers surrounded a piece of large experimental equipment, and one of the researchers seemed to be carefully adjusting something.

Lu Zhou and Yang Xu didn’t interrupt them. They quietly waited at the doorstep.

Soon after, the crowd gasped.

Lu Zhou looked at the excited expressions on the researchers’ faces, and he immediately knew what was going on.

Yang Xu started to get impatient, and he looked over at Lu Zhou and said, "Let's go over there."

Lu Zhou nodded.

"Yeah."

The two walked through the laboratory and approached the main experimental equipment. The group of researchers finally noticed Lu Zhou and Yang Xu.

A nerdy looking middle-aged man looked at the two with a surprised look on his face.

"Director Yang? Dean Lu?"

"This is the person in charge of the project," Yang Xu said, "Professor Wu Tianqun."

"Nice to meet you, Professor Wu."

"Hello hello." Professor Wu shook Lu Zhou's hand and enthusiastically said, "Academician Lu, what brings you here?"

"I heard there are some new experiment results, so Yang Xu brought me here." Lu Zhou looked at the equipment and smiled as he said, "Is it finished?"

Professor Wu stood up straight and replied, "This is the second experiment, the first experiment was successfully conducted yesterday!"

Lu Zhou immediately asked, "Can you demonstrate it to me?"

Professor Wu immediately made an inviting gesture.

"Come with me!"

Computer chip production was an extremely complicated process. Layering silicon wafers with photomasks, stacking them like Legos... All these processes required a high level of precision.

This sounded simple, but these "Legos" were measured in nanometers. Not to mention the complex IC designs and photolithography processes. Producing a chip that met market expectations was one of the standards for measuring a country's electronics technology output.

This was a huge technical feat.

In CMOS production, the feature size was typically represented as the width of the “logic gate”, which was also the channel length of the MOS device. Generally speaking, the smaller the channel length, the better the chip performance and the lower the power consumption.

However, this size couldn't be reduced forever.

First of all, silicon atoms had its own width, not to mention the quantum tunneling effects would become larger at smaller scales. This combined with various other factors severely limited silicon-based chip advancements.

However, humans' pursuit of new technology was endless.

Since silicon-based chips couldn't be further improved, other materials began coming into play.

According to the latest research, the use of carbon nanotubes and molybdenum disulfide and other materials had opened a new way for computer chip performance to improve. This allowed Moore's law to live on.

But things often didn't go according to plan.

Even though these two types of materials had the potential to replace silicon-based chips, they had their own respective shortcomings. Research institutes around the world were unable to break through some of the critical bottlenecks.

Which was, to use the groundbreaking materials to create transistors!

Back when Lu Zhou was researching graphene superconducting materials, he discovered that two sheets of single-layered graphene overlapped at a special angle displayed Mott insulator characteristics.

Not only did this major discovery lead to the breakthrough of carbon-based superconducting materials, but it also laid the foundation for the success of the Pangu fusion reactor.

Not just that, but Lu Zhou was also aware that this feature could be applied to the semiconductor world.

Of course, he wasn't a semiconductor expert. This was just his academic intuition.

Back then, he planned on partnering with Baosheng Group and investing in the project together. Unfortunately, General Manager Sun wasn't particularly optimistic about the project, so they did not participate.

However, Lu Zhou didn't care. He had plenty of money and human resources. After returning to China, he assembled a research and development team, pulling talents from the Institute of Computational Materials.

It had been nearly three years since the project was established, and they were finally able to see their project come to life.

Lu Zhou stood next to the experimental equipment and looked at the carbon-based chip transistor through a microscope. He couldn't help but exclaim, "Beautiful..."

The raw material was graphite, which was peeled into graphene layers. The transistor was like a finely crafted diamond, shining through the microscope.

Yang Xu couldn't wait any longer, and he quickly stepped up to the microscope and spoke.

"Let me see."

Lu Zhou smiled and stepped aside, giving the microscope to Yang Xu.

After looking into the microscope for a couple of seconds, Yang Xu spoke emotionally.

"This is better than diamonds... This is worth more than every single diamond in the world combined."

Lu Zhou laughed.

"That's a bit exaggerated... But I agree, it is better than diamonds."

They could trade the carbon-based transistor for an entire truckload of diamonds.

After all...

This small carbon-based transistor was the future...

Lu Zhou looked at the researchers standing behind him. He cleared his throat and said, "This is a huge breakthrough in carbon-based chip technology! Even though the transistor size is still a magnitude larger than the current silicon transistors on the market, carbon-based chips have almost unlimited potential!"

Lu Zhou couldn't even describe the potential of carbon-based chips.

The only thing he was sure, was that this would increase chip process technology by an entire order of magnitude!

It wasn't an exaggeration to say that this alone could make Professor Wu an academician!

"Good job everyone!"

Lu Zhou looked at the group of excited researchers and Professor Wu Tianqun. He paused for a moment and added solemnly, "Today, we made history!"

849 The Second Key to the Future

There was no point in giving an emotional speech.

Even though these were academic scientific researchers, they still needed to eat.

They had given everything to the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study and Star Sky Technology.

Lu Zhou had to give them something back.

Lu Zhou looked at the excited researchers and gave them all a week-long paid vacation. He also announced that everyone would receive at least a 100,000 yuan bonus, and a total of 20 million yuan in bonuses would be given out to outstanding researchers.

The researchers were already happy with the vacation...

When they heard about the bonuses, the entire laboratory erupted with enthusiasm...

...

When Yang Xu walked out of the laboratory, the cheers from the researchers echoed in his mind.

After the researchers heard about the 20 million yuan in bonuses, they began cheering at the top of their lungs. Fortunately, the precision equipment was in another laboratory. Otherwise, they would suffer millions of dollars worth of damage.

Lu Zhou was walking next to him, and he hesitated for a second before asking Lu Zhou, "Is 20 million too much?"

Other than large national projects or projects funded by large companies, 20 million yuan in research funding was extremely high for normal researchers.

Giving out 20 million yuan in bonuses, even if it was divided between ten people, was two million yuan per person.

Not to mention, there were only a couple of outstanding researchers.

Even Yang Xu, who worked at MIT, hadn't seen bonuses like this before.

Lu Zhou: "Well, 20 million is just a fraction of the value they created."

Yang Xu: "Theoretically, that is true, but I'm worried that other researchers from other projects might get jealous. They might want more compensation."

Lu Zhou smiled and replied nonchalantly, "If they're jealous, then they should work harder. Jinling Institute for Advanced Study provides them with a world-class research environment. This isn't a retirement home, this is a place of research."

"As for the bonuses being too high... Is that even a problem? If they produce even better results in the future, I'll buy them houses!"

"I want the entire academic community to know that, if they work hard for me, they'll be compensated fairly. As long as they produce valuable results, they'll receive just as much value in return."

Lu Zhou always believed that the people who expanded civilization's knowledge were the ones who were the most deserving of wealth.

This was why he splurged on things like a big house and nice sports car.

Even though people took photos of his house and posted it on the Internet, claiming he was hoarding resources, he never cared.

It seemed like every child wanted to be a scientist, but when they grew up, they wanted to be in the entertainment industry.

Lu Zhou felt like the public should value scientists over entertainers.

Even though Yang Xu was a little shocked by Lu Zhou's decisions, as the director of the Institute of Computational Materials and a member of the board of directors of the Institute for Advanced Study, he had to place the institute's interests first.

"Then what about theoretical research fields?"

"It's hard for theoretical research to produce valuable results. However, the Institute of Computational Materials wouldn't be where it is now without theoretical research.

"Do you know why the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Institute of Computational Materials Science was never established? Not because they are lacking money, but because they're too good at materials science! The nutty materials scientists all go to Silicon Valley!"

After hearing Yang Xu's words, Lu Zhou went silent for a while.

"You're right."

He contemplated it for a few seconds.

"Theoretical research should also be encouraged.

"If the result is significant enough, they should also be rewarded."

Yang Xu: "..."

Yang Xu was speechless...

...

Actually, Lu Zhou had always planned on setting up a special bonus fund specifically for theoretical research at the Institute for Advanced Study. This was for fields such as physics, mathematics, theoretical chemistry, and biology.

He had to find a way to spend his money somehow.

He could try to copy what Nobel did?

But it was too early to think about that kind of stuff.

He would have to wait until he was at least on the hospital bed.

Lu Zhou returned to his office and pulled out some paper from his drawer.

The carbon-based transistor breakthrough was a high priority, and he had to inform the relevant departments first.

Of course, what prompted Lu Zhou to write this letter wasn't just because of the carbon-based transistor breakthrough.

It was also because the value of carbon-based transistors was far more than just increasing the theoretical limit of chip manufacturing technology. It was also because the other properties of graphene, such as it being a topological insulator, was going to be integrated into the semiconductor industry.

According to theoretical calculations, energy Majorana fermions would be formed in the vortex core region between the three-dimensional topological insulator and the superconductor, and this might enable topological quantum computing.

What did this mean?

This meant that not only would carbon-based chips change the semiconductor industry, but it also brought the possibility of constructing topological qubits using Majorana fermions and Majorana zero modes!

In layman's terms, this would open a new door to quantum computing!

Lu Zhou, a scholar who had won the Nobel Prize in the field of materials, instantly recognized the potential value behind carbon-based transistors.

The transistor length reduction was just the icing on the cake. The realization of topological quantum computing would entirely revolutionize the computing industry and modern civilization!

Lu Zhou finished writing the two-thousand-word letter. He folded the letter into an envelope and placed it on the corner of his desk. He planned on giving it to Wang Peng and telling him to send it to Beijing.

If controllable fusion technology was the first key to the future, then quantum computing was the second key.

Lu Zhou felt very lucky.

Because he was the one who had this key.

850 Ah, I'm So Dumb

Star Sky Technology building.

Top floor office.

As usual, Chen Yushan was working. She meticulously reviewed the documents sent from various departments of the company.

Even though her life was a little fast-paced, for her, this was enjoyable.

Especially when she saw the impact of Star Sky Technology on the world, she felt like her life was meaningful and fulfilling.

Speaking of which, if it weren't for Lu Zhou offering her a job, she would have utilized her Wharton degree and her father's connections to work somewhere in Beijing.

Even though working for the government was also a fantastic job...

But she always felt like her MBA would have been a waste.

She stretched her back and was about to stand up. Suddenly, the phone sitting on the corner of her desk began to ring.

She picked up the phone and spoke.

“Hello?”

“It’s me.”

Chen Yushan instantly recognized the voice, and she smirked and jokingly asked, “Aren’t you on a retreat researching the Riemann hypothesis? How come you’re suddenly calling me?”

Lu Zhou: “Yeah, I was on a retreat, but that is over... Speaking of which, remember the carbon-based chip project I told you about a while ago?”

Chen Yushan couldn’t help but smile.

“I remember, did a result come out?”

Honestly speaking, she wasn’t very optimistic about the carbon-based chip project. Mainly because this concept was overhyped. Ever since 2018, Microsoft had claimed to have made significant research progress in this direction, but until this day, no actual results were seen.

But Lu Zhou was too stubborn.

If he wanted to burn money on this research project, no one could stop him.

Just like how he wanted to burn money on aerospace.

However, the reply from the other end of the office made Chen Yushan freeze.

“Yeah, they figured it out last night.”

Figured it out...

The phone line went silent.

Lu Zhou patiently waited for a while.

He began to wonder if the phone was still connected. Suddenly, he heard something falling to the ground.

Chen Yushan quickly picked up the phone and checked if she cracked her phone screen. She spoke in disbelief.

“Figured it out? What do you mean? Carbon-based chips? Are you sure?”

Lu Zhou coughed. “Yep, I’m sure... I’m not kidding.”

Chen Yushan sneezed.

She asked in a complex tone, “Do you know what this means?”

Lu Zhou was amused.

You kidding me?

He was the one who discovered the Mott insulator characteristics in graphene, and he was the one who made the SG-1 superconducting material.

Before Lu Zhou could speak, Chen Yushan said, “Carbon-based chips will lower the size limit of chip manufacturing. We can take at least 30% of the profits from each produced chip. We will become the new Intel of the chip field... Even Intel will have to bow down to us!

“Not only that... This is also a great opportunity for our country’s electronics industry to pivot. Do you know what this means? It means that we will receive substantial support from the state policies!”

Chen Yushan felt her mouth getting dry, so she grabbed her cup and took a sip of tea.

However, the tea wasn’t able to calm her down.

A slight cough came from the other end of the phone.

Lu Zhou said, “I already know all of this.

“Also, there’s one point you missed. Not only will this improve traditional computer chips, but the zero-energy Majorana fermions formed in the vortex core region at the interface between the three-dimensional topological insulator and the superconductor creates the possibilities for building topological qubits. Do you know what this means?”

Before Chen Yushan could reply, Lu Zhou smiled and added, “This means that quantum computers are no longer science fiction. We’ve found a material that can be used to build topological qubits!”

Chen Yushan froze. She was full of confusion.

“Wait a second, quantum computers? I don’t get it...”

She wasn’t quite sure how quantum computers were related to carbon-based chips. She obviously didn’t know what topological insulators and Majorana fermions were.

Ah, I’m so dumb.

Lu Zhou had a smug smile on his face as he said, “As for how carbon-based chips are related to quantum computing, we’ll talk about that another time. Basically, this carbon-based chip breakthrough is far larger than just computer chips.

“Also, I have sent a letter to Beijing regarding this matter. If everything goes well, the State Administration for National Defense Patent Office will give me a call. I need you to coordinate with the relevant departments and form a patent plan. If you can, send our expert patent team to the Institute for Advanced Study today.”

Chen Yushan nodded seriously and said confidently, “Don’t worry, I got this!”

Lu Zhou nodded with a serious expression.

“Okay then, thanks!”

Not only did they have to plan for the patents, but they also had to prepare many other things for this world-changing chip.

For example, they had to find a manufacturing partner, then develop a production process that could meet market needs, as well as further reducing the size of carbon-based transistors, surpassing the performance of silicon-based chips that had dominated the electronics industry for decades.

No matter how advanced the technology was, if it couldn’t be industrialized, it was useless.

But if they do achieve industrialization and successfully enter the market...

Then the market itself would push this technology forward.

When it came to technical matters, Lu Zhou knew what kind of experts to hire.

But when it came to business matters, he had to ask Chen Yushan for help...

851 The Power of One Letter

After Lu Zhou told Chen Yushan to handle the business side, he left this matter alone. He continued to research Riemann's hypothesis.

Pure mathematics problems and the "legendary" mission card were much more interesting for him than money.

He stayed at the office until late.

After Lu Zhou got off work, he sat in his car and gave Wang Peng the letter.

Wang Peng took the letter and raised his eyebrows.

"What is this?"

Lu Zhou: "Send it to Chang'an Avenue, Beijing."

Wang Peng: "Do I have to go myself?"

Lu Zhou shook his head and smiled.

"Not necessary, just find someone you can trust. Also, if you go, who's going to drive me around?"

Wang Peng nodded and didn't ask what was in the letter. He threw the letter into the passenger glove box.

After sending Lu Zhou back to Zhongshan International, he planned on going to the Ministry of State Security office, which was nearby, where he would find someone responsible for the delivery of this important document.

After Lu Zhou returned to his Zhongshan International mansion, he went to take a shower. He told Xiao Ai to make him a cup of warm milk, then went into the study room.

He had made some progress on the Riemann hypothesis. What he needed to do now was to continuously improve the mathematical tools he invented when

he researched the Quasi Riemann hypothesis while also reading theses that might inspire him.

He browsed through the Mathoverflow forum, specifically Professor Tao's page.

Unfortunately, Professor Tao had been rather quiet recently. He had not participated in any new discussions.

Professor Tao was probably still reading Lu Zhou's latest thesis.

“Is my thesis that difficult to understand?”

"I thought it would take him at most a day to finish reading it."

Lu Zhou smiled and shook his head. He continued to read some of the posts related to the Riemann hypothesis.

After scrolling for a while, he didn't find any valuable discussion posts. He yawned and closed the site.

[Master, your cup of warm milk is ready! ♪ (◡‿◡)]

“Thank you.”

The cup warmed up Lu Zhou's hands as he slowly took a sip.

After migrating into a quantum computer, Xiao Ai's intelligence level didn't seem to change much. The milk still tasted the same to Lu Zhou.

Of course, he might not be able to see the changes just yet.

As Lu Zhou stared at the draft paper on the table, a light bulb went off in his mind. He looked at Xiao Ai's drone and asked, "Xiao Ai, if I asked you to solve Riemann's hypothesis, how long would it take?"

Xiao Ai hovered there for two seconds silently.

After two seconds, the speaker on the drone replied.

“Master, Xiao Ai can only tell you that the first hundred trillion zeros of the Riemann zeta function are on the critical line... Can Master set an upper boundary for this problem? (°—° ”)

Lu Zhou was shocked.

It already finished calculating the hundred trillion zeros?

The best result published in the mathematical world was that the first ten trillion zeros of the Riemann zeta function were on the critical line. This result was jointly published by Gourdon and Demichel, two experts in analytic number theory and computing.

Lu Zhou remembered hearing in Princeton on how long these two experts took to calculate this result, but he didn't remember the exact time frame. After all, these experts didn't publish all of the details in their thesis, since the mathematics world wasn't interested in brute force calculations.

The only thing Lu Zhou was sure was that the number of calculations was way beyond what a normal computer could do, even using supercomputers would take a lot of time and money...

Lu Zhou was visibly astonished.

He didn't expect the X-1 quantum computer to be able to increase the "best result" of Riemann's hypothesis by ten times, in just two seconds...

What if I use this thing to crack Wechat pay passwords...

No, forget about Wechat pay.

This quantum computer would be able to solve any encryption built using a prime number architecture.

Xiao Ai: "Master? (°—° 〃)"

Lu Zhou heard Xiao Ai's question and replied.

He said, "Nothing, I'm going to sleep... Clean up the room."

Xiao Ai: "Okay! Xiao Ai's got this! (๑•̥̥̥•̥̥̥) ✨"

Lu Zhou looked at how enthusiastic Xiao Ai was and smirked.

Maybe he shouldn't worry.

But then again, this computer had the capability to destroy security, so he should try to be more careful...

...

It was late into the night.

While Lu Zhou was sleeping, that two-thousand-word letter was transported from Jinling to Beijing.

Two hours after the letter was delivered, the Communist Party of China immediately invited several senior officials into a conference room on Chang'an Avenue.

Many academicians in the field of electrical engineering were also invited.

Some people were already sleeping, but the phone call woke them up, and they headed back to work.

When they received the phone call, they already had a car waiting for them downstairs.

Similar situations had happened before.

The establishment of the controllable fusion project also disrupted Chang'an Avenue overnight.

After all, Lu Zhou had underestimated the influence of his letter.

Of course, it wasn't just Lu Zhou, Chen Yushan, Yang Xu, and even Professor Wu didn't expect such a huge response.

But then again, this response made sense.

Not only would the carbon-based chip technology have a huge impact on China, but it would impact the rest of the world in unpredictable ways.

China was relatively behind on the electronics process technology, and they tried to catch up to the likes of America, Japan, Europe, and South Korea.

But now, with the major breakthrough in the carbon-based chips, they could be at the forefront of the computer chip industry.

If they could utilize this advantage...

Then they would be the leader of the industry.

Scholar's Advanced Technological System - Chapter 852 - First Rejection in Life -

852 First Rejection in Life

Lu Zhou didn't expect to receive a reply from Chang'an Avenue the morning after he told Wang Peng to send the letter.

In the reply, in addition to commending him and the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study for the contributions, the state also asked for his opinion on the industrialization of the carbon-based chips.

Lu Zhou didn't have any strong opinions. The only thing that surprised him was how efficient Beijing was. They had a conference last night, and they sent him the letter the next day.

With the envelope in his hand, Lu Zhou asked, "That quick?"

Wang Peng was sitting next to Lu Zhou, and he replied, "Letters at this level are all sent by air. It takes half an hour to reach Jinling from Beijing. I received a call at four o'clock in the morning, informing me that the letter has arrived at the Jinling Ministry of State Security department."

"That's not what I meant... Never mind, forget about it." Lu Zhou put away the letter and said to Wang Peng, "Take me to Jin Ling University."

Wang Peng nodded and opened the car door for Lu Zhou.

"Okay, get in."

...

Lu Zhou put the carbon-based chips matter aside.

After Lu Zhou arrived at Jin Ling University, he went to his office as usual and sat down at his desk.

Because he received the mission rewards yesterday, he got off work early and went to the Institute for Advanced Study. Then, he was caught up in the carbon-based chip breakthrough, so he hadn't had a chance to continue his research.

Lu Zhou pulled out the half-written piece of draft paper from yesterday and spent 5 minutes reviewing what he had written. He then found a pen and started to quietly finish his calculations.

The hour hand on the wall went from 8 o'clock to 9 o'clock.

Suddenly, the office door was opened. Luo Wenxuan walked in excitedly with a stack of A4 papers on his hand and a smile on his face.

"A while ago, I dug up Dyson's thesis and read it, guess what I found out?"

Lu Zhou was used to Luo Wenxuan not knocking. He looked up and jokingly replied, "Dyson? That physicist who switched to writing science fiction?"

"Incorrect, he's not just some science fiction writer, he is one of my idols!" Luo Wenxuan waved the stack of A4 papers in his hand and said confidently, "I found something interesting in his thesis, I'm sure you will be interested as well!"

Lu Zhou was just joking about the science fiction part. He obviously knew that Dyson wasn't just a "fiction writer". Dyson's "Spin wave theory" was one of the most outstanding physics results in the 1950s.

However, just like Hawking, because of Dyson's fame in the science fiction world, his academic abilities were often overlooked. After all, in the eyes of the public, academic researchers were either genius scientists, or nerdy freaks...

Luo Wenxuan's excitement didn't faze Lu Zhou, Lu Zhou said, "Right now, I'm only interested in the Riemann zeta function. If you're talking about quantum chromodynamics research... I suggest you talk to the physics department of the institute."

"It's not quantum chromodynamics, I am talking about the Riemann zeta function!"

“Oh really?” Lu Zhou put down his pen and looked intrigued. He said, “Tell me then, what did you find in his thesis?”

Lu Zhou didn't believe that Dyson had studied the Riemann hypothesis before.

Even though physics and mathematics were closely related, the gap between theoretical physics and analytic number theory was too big.

Luo Wenxuan placed the stack of A4 papers on the table and spoke energetically.

“Precisely speaking, this is a diary that is apparently written by Dyson himself. An old man from the Firestone Library gave it to my friend... You know who I'm talking about, right?”

“That old guy who wears a robe and looks like a wizard?”

“That's right, him... Of course, that's not the point. The point is that we found this.” Luo Wenxuan grabbed his phone and showed Lu Zhou a photo. “In Dyson's diary, we found a transcript of a conversation between him and Montgomery.”

Lu Zhou raised his eyebrows.

“And?”

Luo Wenxuan excitedly said, “They were talking about Riemann's hypothesis. Even though Dyson isn't a mathematician, the results were extremely shocking! Can you believe that the Riemann zeta function's zero-point density function coincides with the pairwise correlation function of the Hermitian matrix.”

When Lu Zhou heard about the Hermitian matrix, he was intrigued.

Luo Wenxuan noticed Lu Zhou was interested, so he patted the stack of A4 papers on the table.

“Then, I found his thesis published in Physical Reviews... Are you still not interested?”

“Let me have a look.”

Lu Zhou stood up from his chair and began reading the stack of A4 papers.

When he got to the second page, he had a serious look on his face.

“I’m so surprised. I’ve never heard anyone who is researching the Riemann hypothesis talk about this thesis.”

Luo Wenxuan sat on the corner of the desk and smirked as he said, “That makes sense. Have you ever seen anyone on Mathoverflow talk about using a critical line proof? This thesis has been around for half a century, with no new developments.”

“You’re right...” Lu Zhou looked at Luo Wenxuan and asked, “Can you sit on a chair?”

“Oh, my bad.” Luo Wenxuan got off from the table and said, “I’m used to sitting on my own desk like this.”

Lu Zhou placed his focus back onto the thesis, and the more he read, the more shocked he was.

Not because of Professor Dyson’s own research results, but because of the mysterious phenomenon Dyson found.

Which was, the distribution density of the eigenvalues of an N-th order random Hermitian matrix was $P(\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_N) = C \exp[-\sum_i \lambda_i^2] \prod_{j < k} |\lambda_j - \lambda_k|$. By analyzing the distribution density, using the Wigner semicircle distribution law to perform a scalar transformation of the eigenvalues, and then normalizing the average interval of eigenvalues to $\Delta\mu \sim 1$, one could obtain the correlation function $P_2(\mu_1, \mu_2) = 1 - [\sin(\pi |\mu_2 - \mu_1|) / \pi |\mu_2 - \mu_1|]^2$.

What did this mean?

This was the non-trivial zero-point correlation function of the Riemann zeta function!

It wasn’t just similar, the functions were exactly the same!

“Very... interesting.”

Lu Zhou rubbed his chin. He was more intrigued than ever.

Actually, he wasn’t just intrigued, he was in disbelief!

Why was a purely mathematical function, such as the non-trivial zero distribution of the Riemann zeta function, related to an applied linear algebra function, used in quantum systems, disordered media, and neural networks?

Where did this mysterious relationship come from?

Lu Zhou's eyebrows furrowed.

He had a gut feeling that this relationship was important.

But how could he apply this relationship?

Suddenly, Lu Zhou received an email notification.

While Lu Zhou looked at the computer, Luo Wenxuan asked curiously, "What now?"

"New email... I think it's from the Annual Mathematics editorial department." Lu Zhou clicked on the notification and began reading the email.

Luo Wenxuan paused for a second and then asked, "Approved?"

The entire office was silent now. They were all listening in on the conversation.

Especially He Changwen, who was sitting nearby.

Lu Zhou stared at the email and went silent for a while.

Then, he spoke with an uncertain tone.

"Not approved?"

The office went silent for a few seconds.

After a while, everyone looked muddled.

Luo Wenxuan: "...?"

He Changwen: "...?"

Assistants and students: "... ???"

853 Persuade Them Then!

What the hell is not approved?

Luo Wenxuan and the students weren't the only ones who were surprised, even Lu Zhou himself couldn't believe what was in the email.

After Lu Zhou carefully read Professor Faltings' review, he had a rough understanding of what Faltings meant.

Professor Faltings believed that there were major problems in some parts of the thesis, which led to serious proof fallacies in the core part of the thesis. Faltings believed that Lu Zhou's thesis did not prove that when ϵ approached infinitely small, there were no non-zero trivial points in the region of $\text{Re}(s) \geq 1 - \epsilon$.

Honestly, this was Lu Zhou's first thesis rejection.

Luo Wenxuan stood behind Lu Zhou and also read the review comments. He gulped and said, "There's a problem with the proof?"

Lu Zhou shook his head and said, "It's too early to judge. Let me look over it again."

He Changwen, who was secretly listening to the conversation, almost dropped his pen.

Wow...

When most people's theses get rejected by peer review, they just quietly make the necessary changes. But Lu Zhou seems to disagree with the review result...

He Changwen couldn't help but think.

Lu Zhou really is a god...

If only I become as nutty as him one day...

Lu Zhou didn't care what his students were thinking.

Lu Zhou bent down and pulled out his manuscript, the one that proved the Quasi Riemann hypothesis. He began checking Faltings' comments line by line.

Luo Wenxuan had no idea what was going on as he wasn't an expert in analytic number theory. He stood behind Lu Zhou, muddled, pretending like he understood Lu Zhou's thesis.

Ten minutes passed by.

Just as Luo Wenxuan was yawning, Lu Zhou suddenly closed his manuscript and threw the stack of thesis on the table.

Luo Wenxuan asked curiously, "So?"

Lu Zhou shook his head.

"I don't think there is a problem."

Luo Wenxuan paused for a second and said, "Then... was Professor Faltings wrong?"

Luo Wenxuan wasn't confident that Lu Zhou was right.

After all, that was Professor Faltings, the godfather of mathematics.

His influence in mathematics was greater than Luo Wenxuan's mentor, Edward Witten.

However, Faltings had a bad temper, he wasn't as well-liked in the academic community as Witten.

"It's too early to debate who is right and who is wrong." Lu Zhou stood up from his chair and paused for a second, and he said, "I will talk to Professor Faltings about this."

"It might be difficult to communicate with him... He usually doesn't change his opinions, also..." Luo Wenxuan hesitated for a second and said, "You might be ridiculed by him."

"I don't care about that," Lu Zhou said. "If he is right, I'll make the necessary corrections. If I am right, I won't change my thesis at all."

Luo Wenxuan said, “What if you can’t convince one another?”

This type of situation was actually quite common. When two people in the academic community had similar rankings, it was very difficult for one to convince the other.

After all, the deeper the research was, the more nuanced things would become. Sometimes, two different scholars would argue for a long time about who was correct.

Of course, this was the beauty of mathematics.

An argument couldn’t last forever. There would always be one side that was correct. Even when a new proposed theorem could destroy the entire foundation of mathematics, there was always a way to resolve the situation.

“If neither of us can convince the other...”

Lu Zhou paused for a second and spoke nonchalantly.

“Then it’ll depend on who can convince the public.”

...

All secrets would eventually become known, one way or the other.

On the night Lu Zhou received his thesis review from Annual Mathematics, something major happened on Mathoverflow.

Someone posted that Lu Zhou’s Quasi Riemann hypothesis, which was submitted to Annual Mathematics, was rejected by reviewer Faltings.

Once the news broke out, the entire forum was discussing this matter.

[Professor Lu was rejected? This is impossible!]

[I told you, there are mistakes in his proof. You guys didn’t believe me. I’m not the only one who thinks so, even Professor Faltings agreed with me, dumba*ses!]

[Rejection is pretty common, right? Even top scholars make small mistakes.]

[This is not a simple rejection. Didn't you see the screenshot? The wording of the rejection implies there are major defects in the thesis. See how it said, "there are major flaws in the core argument"? Generally speaking, this means that, if Lu Zhou can't make the necessary changes, the thesis would be thrown into the trash bin!]

[This is so unusual...]

[It's not unusual. After all, the reviewer is Faltings.]

[...]

Strictly speaking, the review process should be confidential. However, somehow, the screenshots of the reply were leaked out.

After the Annual Mathematics editorial department found out about the screenshots, they immediately contacted the administrators of the Mathoverflow forum. The Mathoverflow admins agreed to delete the posts, but nothing on the Internet was ever truly deleted.

Not to mention that the mathematics academic community loved to gossip. Besides, this kind of news would cause intense discussion in the entire community.

After all, Faltings and Lu Zhou were two big names in the mathematics world, and they were debating about the most important problem in mathematics...

The controversy lasted for three full days, and neither party made a response.

Faltings didn't have a Mathoverflow account, while Lu Zhou, who had an account, didn't like posting on forums.

While the people were discussing what Lu Zhou and Faltings would do, Jin Ling University suddenly made a post on the school website.

The post was very short, it was only a couple of paragraphs.

However, the information contained was huge.

[On December 18th, our school will conduct an academic report on the "Quasi Riemann hypothesis" in the old campus auditorium. Questions regarding the proof will be answered. Registrations are currently open. Those who are interested in participating, please register before December 7th.

[Presenter: Lu Zhou (Academician)]

On the day this news was released...

The mathematics world exploded!

854 Attacking Me?

Hosting a report session?

Impressive!

It seemed like Lu Zhou didn't give up just yet.

The people on Mathoverflow were all mathematicians, and even though they weren't as impressive as Terry Tao, they were still respectable scholars.

This was their first time hearing someone stand up to a reviewer of Faltings' caliber.

People had begun speculating exactly what would happen between Faltings and Lu Zhou.

[Is he going to face Faltings one on one?]

[It seems like Annual Mathematics is tied up in this mess.]

[Professor Lu used to work as a part-time editor for Annual Mathematics, I'm sure Annual Mathematics is fine with this.]

[Maybe they've been having academic discussions?]

[I've already registered! Already booked the hotel and flights to Jin Ling City! I have a feeling this report is going to be quite exciting!]

[Are they going to fight? I'd bet Professor Lu will win the fist fight (smile)]

[Professor Faltings might not even attend. I do think this is an important report, especially for scholars in the field of analytical mathematics. Regardless of who is correct, a report hosted by Lu Zhou is worth attending.]

[Did you guys know, the Jin Ling University website is down. The report tickets are going for US\$1000 apiece on Ticketmaster.]

[WTF?!]

In fact, an hour after Jin Ling University announced the report session, their mathematics department website shut down due to traffic overflow.

The university didn't exactly have the best servers. It could barely handle the students selecting their timetables, much less traffic from all over the world.

No one expected this academic report to be so popular.

Even though the computer science department had made preparations for this, they still couldn't handle the uptick in visitor traffic. After they found out about the ticket resellers, they had to shut down the registration website. Each ticket request was now manually reviewed and required passport identification.

In other words, one would have to enter their passport details to register.

However, even then, the situation didn't improve much.

Not just that, but the prices of tickets on Ticketmaster became even higher.

Most professors were muddled.

They had never seen this happen before.

Whenever it was their turn to host a report, they would barely sell any tickets.

They had never heard of report session tickets being sold out!

Dean Lu looked at the busy computer science professor, who was working on the servers. With a vacuum flask on his hand, he suddenly said, "Old Qin, our mathematics department is insane!"

Dean Qin: "Yeah..."

Dean Lu said, "Last time was in the auditorium as well, right? That wasn't nearly as bad as this time."

Dean Qin: "Yeah..."

Dean Qin didn't know what else to say.

"The servers are fixed, we can restart at any time," the computer science professor said. He had been working for the past five hours. He wiped the sweat off his forehead and said, "But judging by the traffic, I don't know how long will it last."

Dean Qin went silent for a second. He then sighed and said, "It should be fine... After the registration is finished, we'll close the portal."

"Okay."

The computer science professor turned around and walked back into the server room.

On the other hand, at the Max Planck Institute for Mathematics in Germany.

Professor Faltings was in the director's office. He quietly finished reading Lu Zhou's invitation letter.

As a well-known scholar in mathematics, he obviously didn't have to scalp for tickets online. Not to mention, over the past three days, he had been having intense online debates with Lu Zhou. He was the person Lu Zhou wanted to see the most at the report.

A smile gradually appeared on Faltings' face.

Even though this smile was full of arrogance, it was still a smile.

A bearded German PhD student was sitting across from Faltings, and he said, "Professor..."

"I feel like, that person doesn't respect you enough?"

Fletcher, the PhD student, was proud to be Faltings' student.

After all, everyone who had graduated under Faltings had become a great mathematician. From Shinichi Mochizuki, who proved the ABC conjecture, to Zhang Shiwu, a well-known Chinese mathematician...

There was no doubt in Fletcher's mind that Faltings was the greatest mathematician alive.

Especially since Grothendieck was no longer alive...

"It's fine, Fletcher, once you get even close to his level, you won't care about this kind of stuff." Faltings closed his email and pushed his glasses up slightly as he slowly said, "I understand what he's saying. If neither of us can convince one another, then we'll have to see which one of us can convince the public."

Fletcher's eyeballs nearly popped out of his socket.

WTF?

I'm on your side, old man!

Why are you attacking me for no reason?

This is not the first time you've done something like this...

Faltings didn't notice that he had offended his student. He continued, "Of course, I understand what he's saying, but there are serious flaws in his argument. That won't change. Apologies in advance, but I will have to embarrass him in public."

Faltings stood up from his chair and adjusted his collar.

When Fletcher saw his boss walking out of the office, he quickly asked, "Professor, where are you going?"

"I'm going to sit at the cafe for a while, it's time for afternoon tea... Oh yeah."

As if he had forgotten something, Professor Faltings looked at his student and said, "Remember to buy me a ticket to Jinling, China."

Fletcher looked at his boss in disbelief.

"You plan on... going?"

"Why not?"

Faltings looked at his student and spoke nonchalantly.

"Like I said, he's going to pay a price for his inexperience and arrogance."

855 More Intense Storm

Lu Zhou didn't expect the mathematics world to have such a dramatic response.

What baffled him was that there were hundreds of tickets that were being resold online.

Not to mention they were being resold at a much higher price.

If he didn't have more money than he knew what to do with, he would start "trading" these tickets himself.

"The number of registrations reached 20,000, and it's only the third day," Dean Qin said to Lu Zhou. While sitting in Lu Zhou's office, Dean Qin said, "This is scary, people might think we're hosting the International Congress of Mathematicians here in Jinling."

Lu Zhou smiled apologetically.

"Sorry for the added trouble."

Dean Qin waved his hand and said, "This is not trouble! Host as many reports as you want, I don't mind! You have no idea how jealous Kai University is. Old man Wang Shicheng keeps coming to ask when we will host a report at their university. We have the venue, we have the money, where's the trouble?"

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "You're right, thanks in advance."

"You're welcome." Dean Qin smiled and said, "Oh yeah, there are more than a hundred tickets being sold online. Now that we have changed our registration system, should we cancel these tickets that don't have a passport attached?"

Lu Zhou thought for a bit and shook his head.

"There's no need, we're the ones who sold the tickets, so we shouldn't cancel them."

If Jin Ling University wanted to establish itself as a world-class mathematical institute, they shouldn't do this kind of unethical thing.

Not to mention, Lu Zhou was curious about what kind of people would buy these tickets.

After his last report, the old campus auditorium was extended, and it could now accommodate two to three thousand people.

In addition to the 200 invitees, there were more than 2,000 spots available. As long as someone was academically qualified, they could obtain a ticket by registering.

Any scholar in the number theory field could attend this report.

After all, there were probably less than 2,000 scholars who were researching the Riemann hypothesis, let alone the unpopular “critical line” and the Quasi Riemann hypothesis areas...

Suddenly, Lu Zhou thought of something.

Maybe...

These people are coming because of me?

Lu Zhou smiled and touched his handsome cheek.

Oh, they're too kind...

Dean Qin: "...?"

...

The discussions on Mathoverflow were still going strong. Especially the debates on whether or not Lu Zhou's Quasi Riemann hypothesis proof was legit. They were also discussing the report that was going to happen in a week at Jinling.

The people who had doubts about Lu Zhou's thesis were brave enough to speak out, largely thanks to Faltings' review. They began to debate with the people who supported Lu Zhou...

What the Mathoverflow admins didn't expect was that, because of the controversy over the Quasi Riemann hypothesis, the Mathoverflow visitor traffic had quadrupled.

This website was mostly visited by younger scholars. Some of the older, more stubborn scholars didn't have the habit of using forums.

But now, it seemed like some of the older folks also registered Mathoverflow accounts, becoming keyboard warriors...

The registration portal was closed.

After selecting the suitable attendees, Jin Ling University sent out invitation letters for the report.

The prices of resold tickets online were as high as \$5,000. This made the other attendees feel like they were getting a good deal.

Lu Zhou made some preparations for this report.

Faltings was a powerful scholar, and he was highly ranked in terms of popularity and ability. People often compared him to Grothendieck.

Convincing him wasn't going to be easy.

Unless he made his argument impenetrable!

While Lu Zhou was preparing for this report, an unexpected visitor came to Jin Ling University.

This visitor was none other than...

Professor Zhang Shouwu, a great Chinese scholar, one of Faltings' students. His research on the Gross–Zagier theorem was quite outstanding, and he even won the Chinese equivalent of the Fields Medal—the Morningside Medal of Mathematics.

Dean Qin introduced Lu Zhou to Professor Zhang.

The two sat down in front of the coffee table, and after some small talk, they soon began to talk about the forthcoming report.

“Are there any misunderstandings between you and Faltings?”

Lu Zhou, who was drinking tea, was surprised by this question. He smiled and replied, “Of course not... Why do you ask?”

“Not me, the entire mathematics community is also wondering.” Professor Zhang shook his head and said, “You guys are both pillars of the mathematics world. If there really is a misunderstanding between you and Professor Faltings, then I hope you guys can resolve the issue and maintain the harmony between the Chinese and international mathematics community.”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Professor Zhang, you’re mistaken... Those are just rumors, there are no misunderstandings.”

Professor Zhang paused for a second and said, “It’s not my place to say this, but don’t you think... the timing of your report is a bit rushed?”

Lu Zhou shook his head.

“I don’t think there’s a problem with my proof. Faltings thinks there is a problem. If that’s the case, then we should debate about it at the report.”

Zhang Shouwu said anxiously, “But what if you lose? Not only will it tarnish your academic reputation, but it will also tarnish the reputation of the entire Chinese mathematics community. Have you thought about that?”

Lu Zhou smiled and replied, “Who cares if I lose?”

Professor Zhang went silent for a while. He then sighed.

“It seems like you have made up your mind.”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Professor Zhang, you came here all this way just to convince me not to go through with the report?”

Professor Zhang nodded, then shook his head. He sighed and spoke softly.

“I planned on convincing you, but now, I decided not to.

“Maybe you’re right, academic reputation is something that doesn’t matter. A scholar should pursue something he believes is correct.”

He suddenly smiled and spoke with admiration.

“I finally understand why you’re able to accomplish so much.”

Lu Zhou: “...?”

I don't really know what he's talking about.

I guess...

I'll just smile...

856 Another Storm

While the mathematics world was going through a thunderstorm, the electronics industry was also hit with a 2,000-word letter.

The C-suite executives worth billions of dollars could sense that things were about to change. However, even though they tried to use their connections to find out what was going on, they weren't able to obtain any information.

Some people said that the country was going to introduce a new semiconductor industry support policy, other people said there was a breakthrough in 7nm lithography technology, while some other people said that the state planned on advancing semiconductor technology to become the fifth largest country in the world for semiconductor manufacturing.

The last rumor was very close to the truth.

After the news of graphene transistor technology came out, the first item of discussion in the Beijing conference room was to centralize and manage the current semiconductor companies.

This was done for both confidentiality and practicality reasons.

Of course, the specific content of the meeting was only disclosed to high-level government departments. Everyone who attended the meeting signed a confidentiality agreement and agreed to be put under supervision for one year.

Many industry leaders could smell something was going on, but the rumors floating around were a bit suspicious, as if the state deliberately released the rumors to cover something else.

Huawei's CEO Wang Zhengfei was one of the C-suite executives.

His instincts told him that the semiconductor industry was brewing up a storm. However, only God knew what the result would be after the storm.

While everyone else was waiting for this storm to come, a conference invitation from Chang'an Avenue appeared on this CEO's desk.

As Wang Zhengfei looked at the conference invitation, the knot in his heart was finally untied.

At last, it's finally here!

...

Beijing, Chang'an Avenue.

The grand conference room was filled with people.

Wang Zhengfei found his seat and sat down. He looked around and found that his old boss, Li Zixuan, was also here. Li Zixuan was from Huaxing Group.

CEO Li noticed him as well.

The two looked at each other and forced a smile.

F*ck!

Who made the seat arrangements!

"Oh, CEO Wang, I didn't expect you to receive an invitation as well."

Wang Zhengfei smiled.

"Yeah, I was busy, but I took some time out to come."

Li Zixuan smiled and didn't say anything.

Too busy to come?

What a joke.

Like you would ever refuse to come to a state conference meeting.

The two didn't talk anymore. They sat there quietly and waited for the conference to begin.

Wang Zhengfei used this time to look around at the other conference participants.

He noticed that all of them were big names in the semiconductor or electronics industry. This gave him a sense of what the conference would be about.

However, a strange expression appeared on his face.

Wait a second, not only are these people from the electronics industry, but all of them also have money.

Maybe the aerospace industry needs funding?

They're not going to take our money, right?

The attendees arrived one after the other. Soon after, it was time for the conference to begin.

The participants sitting in their seats stopped talking and looked straight ahead. An old man with a serious face walked up the stage.

When Wang Zhengfei saw this old man, he was shocked.

Head of the National Development and Reform Commission!

I can't believe he's the one hosting the meeting!

He had a serious look on his face as he subconsciously took out a notebook and pen.

It seems like today's meeting is going to be very important!

"My apologies for interrupting your busy work schedules. I assembled you here today to talk about something.

"Before the meeting begins, I have to emphasize that the content of this meeting must be kept strictly confidential. All topics discussed in the meeting are not to be discussed with anyone outside the conference.

“If any information is leaked, we will conduct an investigation. The person will be charged with espionage and treason.”

There was a commotion in the conference room.

These charges, especially espionage, were quite scary to them.

The old man looked around the conference room and made sure that his message was clear. He paused for a second before continuing, “Then, let’s talk business.”

The old man nodded toward the staff member next to him.

A PowerPoint slide was soon projected on the screen.

When Wang Zhengfei saw the title of the PowerPoint, he froze.

Not just him, but the Huaxing Group CEO sitting next to him, as well as the electronics executives sitting in the room, they were all shocked after reading the title.

“Carbon-based... chips?”

Li Zixuan pushed his glasses up slightly and sat forward, trying to get a better look at the slide.

When he was sure that the slide really did read carbon-based chips, he couldn’t help but mutter, “What kind of joke is this?”

Wang Zhengfei, who was sitting next to him, took a deep breath and tried to calm himself down.

Carbon-based chips?

What?

This joke is too ridiculous.

It’s so ridiculous I don’t even know where to begin.

These two CEOs were obviously not the only ones who were shocked.

Whispers were heard around the conference room.

Carbon-based chips!

They were all familiar with the concept. Every so often, people used carbon-based chips as an investment pitch. They had seen plenty of poorly-made PowerPoint slides, promising the future of carbon-based chips.

However, everyone knew that investing in these projects was the same as burning money.

Forget about it, even Microsoft, Google, and Intel couldn't even figure out this technology.

Not everyone was as insane as Lu Zhou!

However, this was no investor pitch...

This was a conference hosted by the Communist Party of China, and sitting here were the leaders in the electronics and semiconductor industry. Standing on the stage was the head of the National Development and Reform Commission. The topic of discussion was the future of China's semiconductor industry...

Therefore, the words "carbon-based chips" meant something entirely different.

The meeting continued.

The PowerPoint presentation continued.

Wang Zhengfei was becoming more and more astonished, and his hand was slowly trembling.

This was a chance for Huawei to stand on the top of the world! This was the opportunity of a lifetime!

He held his breath and clenched his fists.

He had to take advantage of this opportunity!

Huawei had to take advantage of this opportunity!

He would regret it for the rest of his life if he didn't...

857 Share of the Pie

Actually, Wang Zhengfei wasn't the only one with this thought.

CEO Li, who was sitting next to him, as well as every CEO sitting around him, all held their breaths and stared intently at the projector screen. They didn't want to miss any details.

The head of the National Development and Reform Commission didn't tell them who developed this technology. Otherwise, they would have gladly rushed out of the conference room and try to poach whichever research institute that developed this technology.

As for the technical side of the carbon-based chips, the PowerPoint only included a transistor microscope image. After all, the CEOs sitting here didn't understand the science behind all this.

The application of the carbon-based chips to quantum computers was a top-secret, so there was no need to speak about it at this conference.

The second half of the conference was mainly focused on policies formulated by the Communist Party of China, as well as how each department planned on coordinating the development of the semiconductor industry. The state wanted the major semiconductor companies to industrialize the carbon-based chips.

In order to allow the entire industry to move forward at an efficient pace, and to prevent internal competition, China decided to set up a "semiconductor processor upgrade task force". They would be responsible for helping various enterprises transition into the carbon-based chips.

Simply put, they wanted everyone to get their fair share of the pie. Then, everyone would take this technology to the global market.

At the end of the conference, the head of the National Development and Reform Commission said in a clear voice, "After we ramp up carbon-based chip production...

"We will become leaders of the global semiconductor industry!"

This meant that, after the carbon-based chip technology had matured and was market competitive, they would go full force in bringing the carbon-based chip technology to the market.

The conference ended.

Wang Zhengfei closed his notebook and retrieved his phone and Bluetooth headset from the staff members. He adjusted his collar and stood up.

Li Zixuan, the boss of the Huaxing Group, also closed his notebook. He muttered to himself at a volume high enough for Wang Zhengfei to hear, “I wonder which industry leader invented this stuff... Even Qualcomm will have to bow down to carbon-based transistors.”

Even though Wang Zhengfei knew Li Zixuan wasn’t talking to him, he couldn’t help but chuckle and reply, “Oh yeah.”

Li Zixuan looked at him and smiled.

“CEO Wang, do you have any clues? You’re not going to run off with the technology, right?”

“Why would I have any clues?” Wang Zhengfei shook his head and said, “Before the meeting, I didn’t even know why there were rumors floating around the semiconductor industry.”

Li Zixuan stared at this old man for a while.

I guess if CEO Wang does have more info, he’s not going to tell me...

It’s not like I can force him to tell me...

...

After CEO Wang left the conference room, he got into his car.

Wang Zhengfei sat in the back seat and didn’t say anything. He looked at his secretary, and without explaining anything, he asked, “I want to talk with Academician Lu in person, can we do that?”

The secretary froze and said, “Academician Lu? You mean...”

Wang Zhengfei: “That Jinling Nobel Prize laureate... I have some stuff I want to talk about with him.”

Even though Huawei was working with Star Sky Technology in the battery industry, they were still separated by Zhongshan New Materials.

Not to mention that Professor Lu didn't seem to be interested in “sleazy” businessmen. Most of the company's business side was managed by the female CEO. Lu Zhou was rumored to either stay in the library or the laboratory all day. Even his neighbors rarely saw him.

Wang Zhengfei felt a little annoyed that his connections couldn't get him a meeting with Professor Lu.

As for why he wanted to see Academician Lu...

The reason was obvious.

He wanted to talk about the carbon-based chips with him!

Even though there was no evidence the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study was behind the carbon-based chips, his instincts told him that this was definitely an invention by the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study!

A long time ago, he asked his people to analyze the published research from the Institute of Computational Materials and had them graph each research area category. It was obvious that the Institute of Computational Materials was heavily involved in carbon materials research.

Not to mention, the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study was the world's strongest carbon material research institute. He was 80% confident that Lu Zhou was the person behind all of this.

Cooperating with the Communist Party of China was fine, but if he could establish a relationship with the scientist behind the technology and that they could cooperate, then the profits would be unimaginable.

Not to mention Lu Zhou was an amazing scholar. Even if it weren't for the carbon-based chips, it was beneficial for this CEO to have a chat with him.

The secretary froze. He didn't expect his boss to make such a request. He didn't know why his boss suddenly wanted to talk with Academician Lu?

However, he quickly put on a professional face and tried to find the best solution.

“Apparently, there is going to be a Quasi Riemann hypothesis report at the Jin Ling University, and the presenter is Academician Lu.”

Wang Zhengfei’s eyes lit up, and he asked, “Can we get a ticket?”

The secretary nodded.

“There are some being sold on Ticketmaster.”

Wang Zhengfei immediately replied, “Buy me two.”

All he needed was five seconds with Lu Zhou. He didn’t care about the report content at all.

The secretary nodded with a strange expression.

“Yes, sir.”

Wang Zhengfei noticed his secretary’s weird facial expression, and he frowned.

“Is there a problem?”

The secretary shook his head and smiled awkwardly.

“No! I’m just wondering how to connect you with Academician Lu...”

Buying the tickets is easy...

I can just buy it from Ticketmaster, and if they’re sold out, I can just call Jin Ling University. I’m sure they’ll be happy to give the CEO of Huawei a seat.

But...

It’s not like you can understand his report, so why are you going?

Wang Zhengfei said, “Don’t worry about that, just get me the tickets. This is extremely important!”

The secretary nodded.

“Yes, sir.”

The car began to move.

The secretary looked at his excited boss. He was curious, but he decided to shut his mouth.

I guess pigs are starting to fly.

My boss wants to talk with Academician Lu about academic problems?

When did you become interested in mathematics problems...

Maybe I should learn some mathematics to impress him?

However, when the secretary thought about the complicated equations, he decided to give up.

858 Moving World of Mathematics

The entire industry was looking for the research team that came up with the carbon-based chips. On the other hand, the Ministry of State Security already spoke with Professor Wu's team on keeping this confidential. The 20 million yuan bonus from the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study was also given to the researchers.

Of course, due to confidentiality reasons, the 20 million yuan bonus was given in a low-key manner. Lu Zhou felt quite unfortunate about this.

The whole reason for him giving out this hefty bonus was to motivate the other research departments.

But then he realized that this didn't matter.

Such a large bonus amount was difficult to hide. Even if the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study didn't explain what was going on, anyone could guess the reason behind the bonus.

Before China completed its industrialization plan for the carbon-based chips, they had to keep this all confidential.

The Jinling Institute for Advanced Study would also cooperate with intelligence departments and try to divert the attention.

The timing of Lu Zhou's Quasi Riemann hypothesis report was perfect. The entire world was focused on Professor Lu researching the Riemann hypothesis...

The days quickly went by. It was soon mid-December, and the atmosphere in Jin Ling City became somewhat unusual.

First, there was a banner at the airport, welcoming mathematicians from all over the world.

Then, there were fire and sanitation inspections throughout the city, and everywhere, from the airport to the Jin Ling University, had its appearance totally changed.

The entire vibe of the city improved quite a bit.

The city council and the old folks from the China Mathematics Society wanted to leave a good impression on the international scholars.

However, what they probably didn't expect was that these mathematicians from all over the world couldn't care less about these trivial matters. All of their attention was placed on the report that was happening in two days.

Molina dragged her suitcase and walked through the airport terminal. She went through customs with the report invitation letter in her hand, and she looked a little clueless.

This was her first time in Jinling.

Also her first time in China.

Suddenly, she noticed someone who looked familiar walking nearby. She couldn't remember why the person looked familiar, so she walked up to him and asked, "Hi... How do I get to Jin Ling University's old campus?"

The person smiled and replied in a friendly manner, "Sorry, I'm not from here. I plan on taking a taxi... Are you going to Professor Lu's lecture?"

Molina: "Yeah... You're not from China?"

“Australian born Chinese, living in Los Angeles.” Tao Zhexuan smiled and looked at the letter in his hand as he said, “They’ve already booked a hotel for us. Apparently... We just have to show the driver this letter.”

The second Molina heard the words Australia and Los Angeles, her pupils widened. She immediately recognized the person in front of her.

“You’re... Professor Tao?”

“Indeed, may I ask...”

Tao Zhexuan smiled. He was about to ask for Molina’s name.

However, he suddenly noticed a man in a trench coat and black hat, walking out of customs.

His eyes widened, and he temporarily ignored the lady as he waved at his acquaintance with a smile.

“Professor Faltings? What a coincidence, didn’t expect to run into you at the airport.”

Faltings glanced at Tao Zhexuan. He nodded and replied, “You’re here as well?”

Tao Zhexuan smiled and said, “How could I miss such an important report?”

Faltings’ eyebrows furrowed, and he smiled with his lips closed and said, “Oh yeah? You’re a smart bloke, so I’m sure you came prepared with questions... Who do you think is correct?”

“It’s too early to say. I do have some questions regarding his thesis. Even now, I’m still trying to understand it... but,” Professor Tao shrugged and said, “he’s not entirely incorrect.”

Professor Faltings wasn’t happy with this ambiguous answer. He was about to say something, but Molina stepped forward and spoke excitedly.

“Mr. Faltings...”

Faltings raised his eyebrows and looked over at her.

He didn’t recognize her, so he politely asked, “Who are you?”

“Molina Abel, student of Sophie Morel...” Molina nervously reached out her hand and said, “It’s a pleasure to meet you.”

Sophie Morel?

That name sounded a little familiar to Faltings. Faltings remembered Sophie as a Fields Medal candidate. However, a Fields Medal candidate was nothing impressive for Faltings.

There were only three scholars on Earth who deserved his attention, and he only paid attention to one of them.

“Daughter from the Abel family? I think I’ve met your father before.”

Molina didn’t expect her idol to remember her father, so she spoke energetically.

“When I was little, my father always praised your achievements in algebraic geometry...”

“Oh really? Unfortunately, I don’t really remember him.” Faltings looked bored as he said, “Looks like other than that prestigious surname, nothing else of value was inherited.”

Molina stood there. She was muddled.

What do you mean nothing else of value?

Why would you say that?

Tao Zhexuan noticed the awkwardness in the air, and he coughed and tried to mediate the situation.

“Not everyone is good at maths, it’s fine...”

Molina: “...”

Not good at maths...

F*ck you guys!

Jesus Christ!

Molina's self-esteem was being attacked by two geniuses. She was about to have a mental breakdown. On the other hand, tens of kilometers away, at the old campus auditorium of Jin Ling University.

Professor Deligne, who arrived in Jinling one day ago, walked beside the garden while chatting with Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou gave his supervisor a tour of his workplace. The two didn't talk a lot about the upcoming report. That was until they walked to the entrance of the auditorium, where the old man from Belgium asked, "Are you ready?"

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "Of course, I'm more than ready."

"Faltings is one of the most outstanding scholars after the late Grothendieck. Even I can't compare with him. He must be fully prepared to refute your thesis. Make sure you are armed and loaded."

Lu Zhou responded with a question, "Do you think there's something wrong with my proof?"

Deligne looked at a historic building in the distance and went silent. He placed both of his hands on his bald head.

"I've read your thesis, I think you are correct. But I am not certain. Let me ask you, you used the non-commutative cycle cohomology theory to describe the isomorphic class of flat φ -modules... Did you use Étale's homology method?"

Lu Zhou nodded and said, "Correct."

Deligne looked relieved.

"When I was researching Weil's conjecture, I thought of a similar proof. To use cohomology theory to define a Fourier transform layer derivations. However, I should remind you that this is where the debates are likely going to be centered around."

Lu Zhou contemplated it for a moment and nodded.

"Thank you."

"Noted."

859 Battle of Jinling?

The day of December 18th.

The old campus auditorium of Jin Ling University was packed with people of all different races and ages groups.

Rarely did this school attract so many foreign visitors, so this naturally caught the attention of the students.

In order to maintain order and to ensure the safety of the participants, the Jin Ling city council even mobilized armed police forces.

It was extremely rare for a scholar to receive this amount of attention.

But then again, this did make sense.

There were more than 2,000 internationally renowned scholars who were attending this report. There were even thousands of people who weren't able to get the report tickets, but they still flew to Jinling with their supervisors. These people, often PhD and master's students, paid out of their own pocket just to know the result of the report as soon as possible.

This type of attendance was comparable to top conferences such as ICM and ICPAM.

There were two master's students standing at the old campus entrance. They were probably persuaded by their teachers to stand here as volunteers. They looked around in awe.

"This has to be the world mathematics summit!"

"Not a summit. There are only two main characters in this report, so it's more like a boss battle..."

One was the youngest Fields Medal winner, a king among the young scholars, and the other was one of the founding fathers of algebraic geometry.

The two master's students stared at the crowded auditorium entrance. They only recently stepped foot into the mathematics world, so they couldn't help but stand there in silence.

They only had one thought in their minds...

This is what a Fields Medal winner is like!

Xu Chengyang, a professor from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, happened to walk by, and he heard the conversation between the two students. He almost laughed out loud.

Boss battle?

Interesting analogy.

Suddenly, he noticed a familiar-looking person. He quickly walked to him and said hello.

"Brother Zhang! Haha, long time no see!"

Zhang Shouwu, who was walking toward the auditorium, looked back and saw Xu Chengyang. A surprised expression appeared on his face.

"Brother Xu? What a coincidence, you're here as well?"

"It's the battle between two bosses, of course I have to come." Xu Chengyang smiled and said, "The Riemann hypothesis has dominated the analytic number theory world for many years. Even Mr. Grothendieck was no match for this beast. But now, Academician Lu claimed to have made progress on this conjecture. I'm sure most people won't want to miss this grand event."

As a leader among the young Chinese scholars, he obviously received an invitation from Jin Ling University. But then again, even if he didn't receive an invitation, he would have paid out of his own pocket to attend this report.

After all, this was a once in a lifetime opportunity.

It would be a shame if he missed it.

Zhang Shouwu smiled and said, "Haha, you're right, but the situation seems a bit intense."

Xu Chengyang smiled and asked, “Why, you’re not optimistic about Academician Lu?”

“It’s not about whether or not I’m optimistic, it’s just that Faltings is a difficult guy to deal with.” Professor Zhang sighed, as if he began to recall the past, and he slowly said, “When I studied at Princeton, the first thing I did was to go to Faltings’ office and ask for a research project.”

Xu Chengyang: “What did he say?”

“He said, ‘I have solved the easy problems, the rest of them are difficult, like Riemann’s hypothesis.’,” Zhang Shouwu said. He looked at the international mathematicians entering the auditorium, and with a vacuum flask in his hand, he said emotionally, “It’s been so many years since I left Princeton. But one thing I am still certain of is that there is no one on this planet that understands Riemann’s hypothesis better than him...”

“If he thinks Professor Lu’s thesis is wrong...”

“Then I’m afraid Professor Lu is going to get taught a lesson.”

Professor Zhang had quite a pessimistic view of the situation.

But his argument made sense. A lot of people in the mathematics community thought Lu Zhou was the one who was wrong.

If Faltings really thought Lu Zhou’s proof was fundamentally flawed...

Then it was very likely that Faltings was correct.

However, after hearing Professor Zhang’s words, Xu Chengyang smiled warmly and spoke nonchalantly.

“I met Professor Lu at the mathematicians conference in Brazil. I talked briefly with him. Even though it was just about the Navier–Stokes equations and partial differential equations, he made a hell of an impression on me.”

Zhang Shouwu frowned and asked curiously, “What kind of impression?”

“He’s a person who creates miracles.”

Xu Chengyang paused for a second and continued, “He has this ability to find clues, no matter how small the clue is, even if the clues are hidden for everyone else...”

“I think he might create another miracle.

“And this, is why I came here all the way from America.”

...

The crowd was sitting inside the auditorium.

Anyone in the mathematics field would be shocked by this sight.

Almost half of the world’s best mathematicians were sitting here, and these included mathematicians from all branches of mathematics.

If someone threw a bomb in this lecture theater, the development of mathematics would be delayed by half a century...

Lu Zhou stood below the podium, wearing a suit and leather shoes. He took a deep breath and tried to calm himself down.

Even though he hadn’t hosted a report in a long time, he was no stranger to this rush of adrenaline.

It was as if there were a mysterious force flowing in his veins, and this force made him more focused and alert than ever.

He clenched his fists and was about to go through his report speech again. However, an old man in a black trench coat came over.

The old man trembled as he walked with a cane. He stood there and stared at Lu Zhou.

After a while, he suddenly had a genuine smile on his face.

“Are you ready?”

Lu Zhou nodded.

“I’m ready.”

Professor Faltings grinned.

However, this time, there wasn't an ounce of authenticity in his smile. It was as if Faltings were an eagle, staring down his prey.

"I sure hope you're prepared. This question impacts the entire mathematics world, so I won't show any mercy."

"I hope not," Lu Zhou said. "We should maintain the rigor of mathematics."

"Ah."

The old man adjusted his hat and replied, "I would have done so regardless."

860 I Have a Problem!

Auditorium entrance.

All of the attendees had already arrived.

A staff member in a black suit was standing at the entrance. He looked at his watch and saw that it was about time for the report to begin. He gestured to his colleague to begin taking away the security stands.

Suddenly, two men in formal suits hastily jogged over.

Wang Zhengfei quickly took out two tickets as he gasped for air and smiled apologetically at the security member.

"Hi, these are our tickets."

The security guard clearly didn't recognize Wang Zhengfei. He looked at the tickets and spoke with a blank expression.

"You guys are late."

Wang Zhengfei looked apologetic as he explained in a sincere manner, "I'm really sorry! There was traffic here from the airport. I've been looking forward to this report for a long time. Come on, man, just let us in."

The security guard didn't say anything. He looked at the two men, then stamped their tickets.

Wang Zhengfei smiled and nodded as a show of thanks. He then looked at his secretary and gestured him to quickly walk into the auditorium.

"Boss, why are we wasting our time with a security guard?"

The secretary looked perplexed.

After hearing this, Wang Zhengfei grinned.

"You want to know why?"

The secretary paused for a second and quickly nodded.

Wang Zhengfei smiled and pointed at the entrance.

"Those guys are from the Ministry of State Security, they're the real deal."

...

The report was going to begin in a few minutes.

Wang Zhengfei found the corresponding seat on his ticket and sat down. He could tell there was something unusual about the ambiance of the venue.

This was the power of a world-class scholar.

Both the scale and the enthusiastic atmosphere of the report didn't seem like an academic report at all. It was almost like a symphony concert.

And Lu Zhou was going to perform the opening act...

Wang Zhengfei, as a layman, didn't know why his heart rate was increasing. His palms were sweaty, and his knees were weak. It was as if the mysterious mathematical symbols had some kind of magical attraction power...

"He's really only in his twenties?"

His secretary paused for a second and nodded.

"That's what it says on the pamphlet..."

Wang Zhengfei nodded and didn't say anything.

After a while, he pointed forward with his chin.

"Oh yeah, do you understand that stuff?"

Seeing that the secretary had a blank look, Wang Zhengfei spoke first.

"Nevermind, pretend I didn't ask."

...

The report officially began!

The auditorium became dead silent.

The thousands of pairs of eyes focused on one person on the podium.

Lu Zhou walked on stage and looked around the venue. He then looked at the projector screen behind him. He then slowly said, "I'm sure most people have read my thesis already."

"The main purpose of this report is to answer the questions surrounding my proof of the Quasi Riemann hypothesis.

"Of course, I will still give a general summary.

"I might go through this very quickly, and it will take around twenty minutes. I hope you pay attention to it."

Lu Zhou turned around and walked to the closest whiteboard next to him. He picked up a marker and wrote down the most important line of the report.

$$[\zeta(s) = 2^{-s} \cdot \pi^{-(s-1)} \sin(\pi s / 2) \Gamma(1-s) \zeta(1-s) \dots]$$

The moment this line was written on the whiteboard...

Two people in the crowd frowned.

"Interesting." Tao Zhexuan rubbed his chin and looked at the line of equations on the whiteboard as he said, "Introducing the Γ function... He is planning on using its continuity construct? If so, he might have to reduce his thesis length by two pages."

Faltings was sitting next to Professor Tao, and he said emotionlessly, “How can that be? The core part of the proof is incorrect. Even if he uses his little tricks, that can’t change the fact that the core argument is incorrect.”

Tao Zhexuan: “Not necessarily.”

Faltings looked at him and said, “Oh really?”

“In the beginning, I thought the same as you. On page 27, there is a problem with the coherence method used on line 3.” Tao Zhexuan paused for a second and said, “But now, I kind of understand what he’s trying to say.”

Faltings glanced at him and didn’t say anything.

There was no point debating right now.

All they had to do now, was to wait.

The marker moved rhythmically as it filled the whiteboard with equations. The thousand-people venue stayed surprisingly quiet.

On stage.

In front of the whiteboard.

Lu Zhou was holding a marker in his hand, and he had totally forgotten about the outside world. He spoke his thoughts out loud as he slowly unraveled this puzzle.

Fifteen minutes went by.

Lu Zhou stopped writing and took a deep breath. He then took two steps backward.

The proof was over.

He had already defeated this mountain a month ago, so re-writing it was nothing difficult.

The real difficult part was about to come.

This problem was the foundation of the entire mathematics building, and Faltings didn’t plan on being lenient at all.

The moment Lu Zhou turned around to face the crowd, was when the real battle began.

However, Lu Zhou wasn't nervous at all.

Rather, he was looking forward to this.

His opponent was one of the remaining gods of mathematics, known as the second-best after Grothendieck. On the other hand, Lu Zhou was challenging the Riemann hypothesis, something Faltings was deeply familiar with. Not to mention that the mathematical tools Lu Zhou used originated from *Éléments de géométrie algébrique*, which was also Faltings' expertise.

Lu Zhou took a deep breath and put down the marker.

He turned around and faced the silent lecture hall. He then said with a calm voice, "That's basically it.

"Next is the Qu0026A session."

The moment he finished speaking.

The moment Lu Zhou's words traveled throughout the venue...

A trembling, skinny hand rose in the air.

Even though the hand seemed fragile, it still caught the attention of the entire auditorium.

Professor Faltings took off his hat and stood up.

"I have a question.

"With regards to page 17, line 11, could you please explain this in detail?"

861 Confrontation!

Line 11 on page 17?!

Tao Zhexuan paused for a second.

Not just Tao Zhexuan, but Professor Deligne, Molina, and even Schultz, who was hiding in the corner and chewing gum, they were all surprised.

“I thought the problem was on line 5 page 21...”

Schultz muttered to himself as he took out some paper. He quickly drew some mathematical symbols that only he could understand, and began running calculations in his brain.

“Line 5 on page 21?” Akshay Venkatesh said. He was sitting next to Schultz. After contemplating it for a second, he said, “I thought the problem was on page 31, line 11.”

Just like Schultz, Akshay was also considered a world-class mathematician.

In addition to his achievements in the fields of representation and number theory, he was also the only Australian who had won medals in both the International Physics Olympiad and the International Mathematical Olympiad...

Not to mention, he won both of them when he was twelve years old.

Schultz took out a crumpled piece of thesis paper from his pocket. He took a glance at page 31 and seemed to be intrigued.

“It seems like Professor Lu is facing more trouble than I had imagined.”

Akshay didn't say anything. He slowly closed his eyes.

Three different scholars found three different problems in the proof.

This showed that, not only was there a problem with the core proof, but there seemed to be a systematic problem with the entire proof.

Even though Schlutz felt sympathetic toward this Fields Medal medalist on stage, there was nothing he could do.

Everyone made youthful and arrogant mistakes. He hoped that Lu Zhou could come out of this stronger than before.

Otherwise, it would be a huge loss for the mathematics community.

Schultz frowned and went into deep thought. Akshay, on the other hand, already knew the outcome of this report. Xu Chengyang, who was nearby, had a serious look on his face.

Zhang Shouwu, who was sitting next to Professor Xu, noticed that Lu Zhou had stopped talking. Zhang Shouwu couldn't help but ask.

"Why isn't he talking?..."

Even though Faltings was his past supervisor, he was still a Chinese, so he was obviously on the Chinese side.

Lu Zhou was the face of the Chinese academic community.

That was why Zhang Shouwu supported Lu Zhou, even though he wasn't optimistic about Lu Zhou winning against Faltings...

After all, it was a lot easier to find a logical fallacy than to create a robust argument. Not to mention, creating counter-arguments on the spot was even more difficult...

When Wiles proved Fermat's last theorem, he spent an entire year fixing the loopholes and answering all of the reviewers' questions.

But now, half of the mathematics world had their attention on Lu Zhou. Most people wouldn't even be able to think clearly in a situation like this...

"Line 11 on page 17?" Lu Zhou turned the pages and found the line, and he steadily said, "I used the Stirling table for the $\Gamma(s)$ function. Equation (2) is simplified into $J(\delta) = \sum d(k+1)(n) I(n) + \Delta(\delta) \dots$ "

"I obviously know that," Faltings interrupted Lu Zhou. He then said, "The Stirling table used on the $\Gamma(s)$ function was a clever method, it saved you a lot of trouble. But even though you transformed $\text{Re}(s) = 1 - c / \ln[|\text{Im}(s)| + 2]$, you still can't change the fact that there are no non-trivial zero points on the right limit side."

Zhang Shouwu held his breath; Professor Deligne clenched his fists; Schultz stopped writing; Tao Zhexuan looked excited; Molina bit her lip...

"Here we go..." said Xu Chengyang.

Xu Chengyang, who was sitting beside Professor Zhang Shouwu, sighed.

Most of the people sitting here already knew what Faltings was about to say.

The old man wearing a black trench coat spoke with a steady voice.

“No matter what kind of hyperelliptic curve you choose, you can’t get around this fact.

“This is the most flawed argument in your thesis, and the right boundary from $\operatorname{Re}(s) = 1$ extends the left by $\operatorname{Re}(s) = 1 - \varepsilon$ ($\varepsilon > 0$) doesn’t make logical sense... I spoke about this in my first email to you, but you didn’t seem to take my advice.”

The auditorium was dead silent.

One could hear a pin drop in this venue.

This question was like a sharp dagger, digging deep into the thesis.

Professor Deligne unclenched his fists and sighed softly.

I guess Faltings is still the best.

Deligne didn’t want to admit this, but ever since Grothendieck passed away, Faltings was the closest person to solving the Riemann hypothesis.

Molina sighed in relief.

She was relieved to see that Lu Zhou had failed as this meant one less competitor for the Riemann hypothesis, but unfortunately...

This defeat meant that the Quasi Riemann hypothesis was yet to be solved and that the proof of the critical zone boundary could no longer be applied...

First Grothendieck.

Now Professor Lu.

Countless geniuses had been defeated by the Riemann hypothesis dragon.

Rumor had it that the Riemann hypothesis was like Gödel’s incompleteness theorem in that it could neither be solved nor disproven...

Molina couldn’t help but panic.

What if the answer she had been searching for didn't even exist...

Then what was the point of all this work?

Meanwhile, on the other side of the venue.

Schultz looked at Lu Zhou and smiled. He spoke to Akshay.

"Akshay, my friend? Do you know that sometimes, I wonder if the Riemann hypothesis is cursed? Think about how many talented geniuses have been defeated by the Riemann hypothesis... At least that's what happened to Sir Atiyah."

Akshay crossed his arms and shook his head.

"I don't believe in curses."

"That's because you don't get it." Schultz shrugged and showed a charming smile as he said, "You know, apparently, before Grothendieck left home to live in France, Grothendieck was obsessed with the idea of the devil. He believed that the devil changed the numerically beautiful speed of light, from 300,000 kilometers per second to the irrational 299792.458 kilometers per second. He believed the devil made the simple Riemann's hypothesis into something unsolvable..."

Akshay felt a little uncomfortable, and he tried to end this conversation.

"Okay, enough."

Schultz smiled and ignored Akshay's reply.

"Also, apparently, before Grothendieck disappeared, and even before Weil's conjecture was proven, Grothendieck tried to solve Riemann's hypothesis. In 2010, Grothendieck, who had disappeared for 10 years, suddenly wrote a letter to his student. Guess what was in the letter?"

Akshay didn't want to hear these legends, but he still asked out of curiosity, "What..."

Schultz spat out his gum on a wrapping paper and spoke.

"He wrote that, whoever can take the crown of Riemann's hypothesis from the devil, will accomplish something people have tried for thousands of years..."

He paused for a second and continued, "Which is, the unification of algebra and geometry!"

...

Lu Zhou stood quietly on stage.

For a long time.

Just as Faltings began to wonder if he was too ruthless toward this young scholar, Lu Zhou suddenly said, "The reason you asked this question is that you didn't understand my proof at all."

The moment he finished speaking, there was a huge commotion in the auditorium.

People were surprised, shocked, and even... angry!

Lu Zhou could sense the change in the atmosphere. He took a deep breath and stared at Professor Faltings, who was standing in the distance.

He glanced at the old man's look of disbelief and added, "My apologies for putting things bluntly.

"But after hearing your question, I finally realize where our differences are."

He originally thought he didn't convey his proof well enough.

But now, it seemed like that wasn't the case.

The dispute between the two wasn't like a tied knot, but it was rather like two parallel lines.

Lu Zhou felt a weird feeling.

It was surprisingly wonderful.

All of the doubts in his mind had disappeared.

Lu Zhou sighed in his heart.

He felt like there was only one person on Earth who could truly understand his thesis.

And that person wasn't in this venue today.

"I'll show you the proof."

Lu Zhou turned around and faced the whiteboard.

"You probably remember the equations on the whiteboard, so I'll rub them off..."

After wiping the whiteboard, Lu Zhou picked up the marker.

"First of all, I'd like to thank my student. Without her, none of this would have been possible."

Lu Zhou turned around and looked at Faltings seriously.

After that, he glanced over and stared at the very back of the crowded venue.

"Then, let's begin with the basic part... The tool that made the whole thesis possible."

He picked up the marker and wrote down a line on the whiteboard.

[Hyperelliptic curve analysis]

The moment he finished writing...

The atmosphere in the venue exploded!

862 The Dust Settles

"... Hyperelliptic curve analysis?"

What do you mean to begin with the basic part?

Do you plan on giving a lecture to all these great mathematicians?

Molina had a weird look on her face as she stared at Lu Zhou like Lu Zhou was a lunatic.

This isn't a Princeton number theory lecture!

There are more than a dozen Fields Medal medalists sitting here, not to mention Abel Prize winners...

This guy is crazy!

Sitting nearby was Tao Zhexuan. He had a completely different look on his face. His look of enthusiasm had turned into excitement. He quietly muttered to himself, "I see, I see..."

Molina looked over and couldn't help but ask, "What do you mean?"

"He's correct!"

Tao Zhexuan had finished figuring it out. He loosened his shoulders and leaned back in his chair. He had a confident smile on his face, as if he were born with a 230 IQ...

"If you're curious, just continue watching."

Actually, Tao Zhexuan didn't have to say this.

Because Molina was already watching.

Not just Molina, but Schultz, who was sitting on the other side of the lecture hall, also watched intently.

Ever since Lu Zhou erased the whiteboard and wrote down the first line of text, his attention was fully focused on the whiteboard.

"Hyperelliptic curve analysis?"

Akshay, who was sitting next to him, frowned. He had a dignified look in his eyes.

"What is he doing?"

"He's promoting his weapon to us." Schultz stared at the whiteboard and grinned as he said with a smile, "It's like he's an arms dealer."

"I know, but..."

It was almost like there was a cotton ball stuck in Akshay's throat as his pupils expanded. His eyes looked surprised.

Schultz looked at his friend and smiled. He then voiced out his thoughts.

“Turning a topological space classifying tool into an algebraic geometry finite field cluster... Algebraic geometry is incredible, isn’t it?”

After a long time, Akshay nodded.

“Yeah...”

Maybe he was wrong.

Lu Zhou wasn’t the youthful and arrogant one at all...

That marker on the whiteboard was like a torch, lighting the way for a maze that had been untouched for 2 centuries!

Dark clouds gathered in the sky outside the auditorium.

There was nothing but silence in the auditorium. Other than Lu Zhou’s explanations, nothing else could be heard.

After a while, Lu Zhou stopped explaining. However, everyone still watched him write on the whiteboard.

Lu Zhou was completely immersed in the world of numbers and operators, and he totally ignored anything besides himself and this whiteboard.

The lines of calculations began to flow like a river, and thousands of streams from the river poured into the audience’s laps...

Outside the auditorium.

Wang Peng felt something on his nose.

He looked up and saw the cloudy sky.

‘It’s raining.’

“Yeah...” Yang Guangbiao, who was leaning against a wall with his hand in his pocket, nodded and said, “I looked at the weather forecast yesterday, it’s going to rain heavily.”

Wang Peng: “Did the People’s Liberation Army General Staff Department find any suspicious activity regarding the report?”

Yang Guangbiao: “No, what about you guys?”

Wang Peng: “Everything is normal.”

Yang Guangbiao: “... Normal is great.”

“Yeah...” Wang Peng lit up a cigarette and blew out a circle of smoke. He then said, “That makes me feel a little better.”

Wang Peng was obviously relieved to hear that everything was fine.

Even though he didn’t understand mathematical problems very well...

He could tell that this report was very important to China’s academic community.

Therefore, it was also important to him.

A couple of minutes later, the rain began to pour.

Thousands of raindrops splashed on the brick floors of the auditorium entrance.

The striking thunder sounded like a bell, echoing throughout the silent auditorium.

Suddenly, the marker flowing on the whiteboard stopped.

Everyone in the audience held their breath and quietly waited.

Gradually, a smile appeared on Lu Zhou’s face.

“Time to wrap up,” Lu Zhou muttered to himself.

As if the marker were a thunder striking through the clouds, he wrote down a single line.

Professor Faltings’ attention was on the whiteboard as he furrowed his eyebrows.

“Using the Plancherel formula for the Heisenberg group...

“As well as...Étale cohomology!

“No, it’s different... So this is why hyperelliptic curve analysis is? I see...”

Suddenly, a thought appeared in his mind.

For some reason, he saw Lu Zhou resemble someone that he knew...

“No wonder...”

The old man in the crowd muttered to himself, “No wonder that person chose him to inherit his legacy.”

Everything was over.

Like playing the last key of a piano symphony, Lu Zhou wrote down the last character.

The moment he finished writing, the entire venue seemed to be frozen, like in an oil painting.

The only thing that moved was the clock on the wall...

Lu Zhou looked at the whiteboard and broke the silence.

“Hyperelliptic curve analysis... That’s what I named this.”

He turned around and looked at the shocked faces. He paused for a second before saying, “Of course, I came up with this name on the spot. Maybe I’ll rename it once I think of a better name.”

He placed the marker on the whiteboard stand and walked back to the podium. He then placed his hands gently on the podium.

“I’m sure, with your abilities, it is not difficult for you to understand this theory. Professor Faltings, I’m sure you wouldn’t have asked that question if you understood this theory.”

Lu Zhou looked at Professor Faltings.

Lu Zhou waited for a couple of seconds, but the old man didn't respond. He looked around the venue and continued, "The critical line method is an interesting proof idea, and the hyperelliptic curve analysis method is the tool that actually solved the problem. Just like the binary search algorithm that we all learned in high school, we can reduce the value of ε gradually approaching our goal... Finally allowing $\text{Re}(s) = 1 - \varepsilon = 1/2$.

"I just proved the existence of ε . I hope that answers your questions.

"That is my entire theorem."

After that, Lu Zhou shut his mouth.

The auditorium was dead silent.

No one moved, no one spoke.

Everyone was waiting for Faltings to answer.

No one understood Riemann's hypothesis better than Faltings, so Faltings was the best person to make a conclusion.

Faltings loosened his shoulders, then tightened them again.

With the entire auditorium watching him, Professor Faltings stood silent for a long time.

After a while, he raised his right hand and put on his black hat.

"You're correct."

His words traveled through the auditorium.

Those words echoed in everyone's mind.

Lu Zhou nodded toward the old man and smiled sincerely.

"Thank you."

After that, he bowed to the audience and announced the end of the report.

The moment he turned away from the podium...

Deafening applause filled the entire auditorium!

863 We Won!

Clap clap clap!

The applause was endless.

Even after Lu Zhou walked off the stage, the applause was still going on. People frantically rushed to the front of the auditorium, trying to get a closer look at the whiteboard. Some even took photos of the whiteboard.

Dean Qin watched this unravel from afar, and he lowered his voice as he spoke to the staff member next to him.

“Don’t erase the whiteboard, I plan on keeping it... It will be a historical relic in a couple of decades!”

The staff member gulped. He was muddled.

“Okay...”

He wasn’t confused.

Instead, he was just in shock. After working at the auditorium for this many years, he had never seen anything like this.

On the other hand, Professor Zhang Shouwu still sat in his seat. He looked at the crazy crowd and the whiteboard. He was totally in awe.

“Unbelievable...”

“I can see glimpses of Grothendieck’s style from his work, but it’s also something entirely different.

“Isn’t he supposed to be... not good at algebraic geometry?”

Xu Chengyang, who was sitting next to Professor Zhang, grinned and replied, “Didn’t I tell you, he’s a man who creates miracles.”

On the other side of the venue, Professor Akshay stood up. He didn't care for the crowd. Instead, he turned his back and was about to leave the venue.

Schultz noticed his movements and smiled.

"My friend, where do you plan on going?"

Akshay adjusted his glasses and said, "The hyperelliptic curve analysis method is a very unique mathematical tool. I think there's still value in researching epsilon's value, so I plan on doing some research at the hotel... Are you not interested?"

"It's not that I'm not interested, but there's no need to hurry." Schultz shrugged and said, "I'd be willing to bet the value of epsilon will change within the next ten days."

Akshay contemplated it for a second and nodded.

"I agree."

"So my friend, what's the point of doing that kind of trivial and repetitive work? Just to publish a couple of theses? Forget about it, see what Professor Lu is doing?" Schultz smiled and said, "There is room for development in regard to the epsilon value, but let other people do it. We'll take over after they're stuck."

Akshay paused for a second. He then closed his notebook with a smile.

"You're right... Should we go and eat something? I don't really like the hotel buffet."

Schultz smiled and said, "My physics professor came here for a report, and he said there's a nice roast duck place nearby, we can try it..."

The back row of the venue.

Wang Zhengfei, who was half asleep, woke up to the thunderous applause. He suddenly looked around and saw the crowd rushing to the front of the podium. He sniffled and asked, "It ended?"

His secretary nodded.

"I think so."

Wang Zhengfei quickly spoke.

“So?”

The secretary gulped.

“I think, we won?”

The secretary didn’t know why he used the word won.

After all, he had no idea what was going on.

However, he could tell from the applause that Lu Zhou seemed to be the winner.

The countless pairs of ecstatic eyes seemed to tell the same story. Which was that someone had defeated Faltings using logic, thus earning the respect of the mathematicians of the entire world...

From now on, this story would be added into the legends of mathematics, for it to be passed on for generations.

The entire world would remember Lu Zhou.

However, his boss didn’t give him the time to fully appreciate this moment.

When Wang Zhengfei saw that Lu Zhou was walking toward the entrance of the venue, he quickly stood up from his seat.

“Hurry, let’s go!”

The reason why he came to the report was to form a relationship with Lu Zhou.

He finally survived the “boring” report, it would be a shame if he didn’t get a chance to talk to Lu Zhou!

...

The sound of the crowd gradually disappeared.

Lu Zhou slowly walked toward the auditorium resting lounge. He was about to change out of his suit when he heard a familiar voice from behind.

“Teacher!”

He turned around and saw Han Mengqi jogging over with a plastic bag in her hand.

Her ponytail bounced up and down like a little squirrel.

Lu Zhou looked at her and smiled

“What?”

“Nothing... I’m just worried that you’re hungry.” Han Mengqi handed over the plastic bag and said, “Here, I got you some barbecued meat on rice.”

Lu Zhou: “Cumin flavored?”

“Yeah!” The little girl nodded and said, “It’s raining outside, so you probably don’t want to walk all the way to the cafeteria. I thought you would be hungry after the report... So I bought it for you.”

“Thank you.”

Lu Zhou took the plastic bag from her.

“Oh yeah, have you eaten yet?”

Han Mengqi lifted another plastic bag in her hand and smiled.

“Not yet, let’s eat together.”

The two went into the auditorium lounge.

Lu Zhou placed the barbecued meat bowl on the table. He looked at his suit, then looked at Han Mengqi, who was happily opening her disposable chopsticks. He decided to change out of his suit after eating.

This report consumed a lot of his mental and physical stamina, and it was time for him to recharge.

Lu Zhou opened the chopsticks and was about to eat.

Suddenly, the lounge door was opened. An old man in his seventies walked in with two staff members.

Lu Zhou felt like this man looked familiar, but he couldn't recognize him.

Fortunately, the moment Lu Zhou showed a confused expression, the old man smiled and introduced himself.

"Academician Lu, nice to meet you! I'm the CEO of Huawei, Wang Zhengfei. I'm sorry to disturb you, but the report was just too captivating! I wonder if I can treat you to..."

Wang Zhengfei was about to ask Lu Zhou to grab a bite when he noticed Lu Zhou's rice bowl.

You're worth billions, are you really eating rice bowls?

He changed his tone and asked, "That's what you're eating?"

"Barbecued meat and rice, I like it," Lu Zhou replied nonchalantly. He looked at this old man and asked, "CEO Wang, you've researched Riemann's hypothesis before?"

Lu Zhou was definitely above average fitness. Even if he ate junk food all day, he would still be in decent shape.

What Lu Zhou was more interested in was why CEO Wang decided to show up at his report.

Is that what the social elite is doing nowadays? Instead of clubs and concerts, they're going to boring academic reports?

"I haven't researched it, but it is my hobby... haha," Wang Zhengfei said awkwardly with a smile.

He originally planned on pretending to know a little about mathematics, but he remembered that Lu Zhou was a Fields Medal medalist. The vast majority of people would look like complete mathematics fools in front of him...

It was better for him to just admit his inexperience.

Lu Zhou knew what CEO Wang's ulterior motive was, so he smiled and asked, "So what's the real reason you're here then?"

Wang Zhengfei stopped pretending and smiled.

“I guess you saw through me.”

Lu Zhou smiled and sighed.

“I know, there are many other attractive qualities I have, like my handsomeness.”

Wang Zhengfei: “???”

Secretary: “... ???”

Staff member: “???”

Han Mengqi, who was ravaging through her food, suddenly choked on a piece of meat. With tears in her eyes, she began to look for some napkins.

Lu Zhou noticed the reactions, and he coughed and said, “Just kidding.”

Wang Zhengfei smiled awkwardly.

“Academician Lu, you’re quite the comedian.”

F*ck sake!

What kind of joke is that!

Lu Zhou looked around and said, “Okay, this is not the place to talk, let’s arrange an appointment?”

CEO Wang quickly said, “Whatever suits you!”

Lu Zhou thought for a bit.

“We’ll meet in three days then.

“Three days later, at the Purple Mountain Hotel.

“We’ll discuss that thing you’re interested in.”

864 Mining Gold

Lu Zhou and his student were happily eating their meals together. They didn’t know that the auditorium was in chaos.

Scholars who were normally quiet and reserved turned into blood-hunting sharks as they all rushed to the front of the auditorium.

Even though only half of the scholars were going crazy, that was still a very large number of people.

Dean Qin saw that the situation was getting out of hand. In order to prevent anyone from getting injured, he asked the safety staff members for help.

These people weren't employees of the school; they were from the state security department.

They quickly handled the situation.

Right after that, Dean Qin walked through the crowd with a security team and "snatched" the whiteboard from a group of scholars.

Dean Qin was relieved to see that the whiteboard wasn't damaged.

He wasn't worried about the mathematicians stomping on each other, after all, he only knew a few big names in the mathematics academic community.

However, this whiteboard was a cultural relic, and it would be a huge loss if it was damaged in any way...

...

Ten minutes after the report.

The forum discussions regarding this report on Mathoverflow went crazy.

The most popular post was one from Terry Tao.

[This is the most exciting report I have been to in the past three years... The last time I felt this way was at the International Congress of Mathematicians. I am honored to have been able to witness the proof of the Quasi Riemann hypothesis. We are one step closer to capturing this crown of mathematics. :)]

The last time Professor Tao posted on Mathoverflow was two weeks ago, when the thesis was first released.

Back then, he had some doubts about the thesis and needed some time to think. People waited a long time for Professor Tao to comment on Lu Zhou's thesis.

The post instantly went on the Mathoverflow trending page.

[So Professor Tao is saying that... Professor Lu's proof is correct?]

[Wait a second, Professor Tao should be at the Jin Ling University report, so does that mean... Professor Faltings also thinks it's correct?]

[Impossible! We all know how arrogant and stubborn that German guy is.]

[It's not impossible, his stubbornness and arrogance come from his academic achievement and his respect toward academia. Do you really think he will put his attitude over academic integrity?]

[We all read Professor Lu's thesis, it's clearly debatable!]

[Is anyone there? What is it like? I just want to know the result?!]

People on the forum were in disarray.

For the people who weren't researching the Riemann hypothesis, they weren't interested in the intricate details. They only wanted to know if the Quasi Riemann hypothesis was solved and who won the "boss battle" between Professor Lu and Faltings?

Fortunately, they didn't have to wait for long.

Five minutes after Tao Zhexuan's post, many scholars who were at the scene posted photos to their blogs, Facebook, and other forums.

Thirty minutes after the report, someone uploaded a footage to YouTube, which was instantly shared to the mathematicians on Mathoverflow.

Immediately after the video was uploaded, the discussions regarding the Quasi Riemann hypothesis exploded!

When people heard Faltings say, "You are correct", their eyeballs almost popped out of their sockets.

[Professor Faltings is... admitting defeat?]

[What do you mean defeat? Academic debates aren't a competition... But this is still quite amazing. Professor Lu's argument is so strong that Faltings can't find a single mistake?]

[There is one possibility... Which is that Professor Lu's mathematical tool, which he introduced at the end, was perfect. My research area is not algebraic geometry, can anyone tell me what hyperelliptic curve analysis is?]

[Regardless, a new era has just begun.]

[God Lu is insane!]

While the discussions were rising in popularity, a big name in the area of algebraic geometry suddenly submitted a post.

[I don't know if you guys noticed, but the hyperelliptic curve analysis tool that Professor Lu invented while studying the Quasi Riemann hypothesis is quite interesting. Not only did he prove the existence of epsilon, but it also shows that epsilon can be further enlarged!]

Surprisingly, after this post was released, the amount of discussion on Mathoverflow significantly decreased.

But then again, this did make sense.

The YouTube videos clearly showed the mathematical side of the hyperelliptic curve analysis tool. Scholars gradually absorbed this new knowledge and finally realized why Faltings was so easily convinced. They also found out that there was a gold mine in front of them.

They could be the ones to further enlarge the value of epsilon!

There was still room for further exploration in regard to the critical line proof!

The hyperelliptic curve analysis was like a pickaxe.

Not only did Professor Lu make this pickaxe, but he delivered a pickaxe to each and every one of them.

It would be a shame if they didn't seize this opportunity...

...

[Congratulations, the report was so good!]

Lu Zhou was sitting in the lounge and drinking tea. He looked at Chen Yushan's text message and smiled. He typed a reply on his phone.

[Thank you.]

Han Mengqi noticed Lu Zhou's smile and asked curiously, "Who are you talking to?"

Lu Zhou replied, "Your sister."

"Oh..." Han Mengqi put her and Lu Zhou's food packaging into a plastic bag and said, "I'll grab that for you."

Lu Zhou answered, "Thank you!"

Han Mengqi pouted and walked away. She didn't know why she was feeling a little blue.

Coincidentally, when she opened the door, Dean Qin was walking in.

Han Mengqi looked at the dean and politely greeted him.

"Hello, Dean Qin!"

"Hello hello..." Dean Qin nodded and looked at Lu Zhou, who was behind her.

He walked up and smiled.

"Why are you here? I've been looking for you."

Lu Zhou: "It's raining outside, so I ate here... Why?"

Dean Qin: "The school committee booked a buffet at noon at a five-star hotel. There was a problem with the reservation, and they just informed me about the buffet. I immediately came to look for you, but it seems like you already ate."

Lu Zhou smiled and spoke.

"Perfect, I don't like banquets anyway, so you can just go instead."

“I knew you were going to say that.” Dean Qin sighed and said, “There’s still a banquet at night, and you should go for that. After all, half of these scholars came here to see you. You should be a good host.”

Lu Zhou: “Fine, I’ll go at night... Oh yeah, what about that whiteboard?”

“I put it away, what, do you want to take it home?”

Lu Zhou looked at how nervous Dean Qin was and looked at him with a strange expression.

“Not taking it home, but I need it for something. Most of the calculations were done on the spot, and I haven’t sorted them out yet. I plan on copying the things on it, then write a separate thesis and submit it to Annual Mathematics.”

“Okay, good...” Dean Qin sighed in relief and said, “I’ll ask them to bring the whiteboard over.”

He turned around and quickly left the lounge.

As Lu Zhou looked at him walking away, he tilted his head and muttered to himself, “Why is he acting so weird?”

Lu Zhou shook his head and took out his laptop from his backpack.

The Quasi Riemann hypothesis proof was finally finished.

And the hyperelliptic curve analysis tool was completed thirty minutes ago.

He only had three things to do.

First, he had to convert the “hyperelliptic curve geometric analysis” tool into a thesis.

Then, he had to tell his co-author, Vera, about this good news.

As for the third thing...

It was to continue where he left off...

He had to extend the value of ε to $1/2$ and find a proof for this century-old proposition...

865 Magical Effect of the Energy Medicine

The proof of the Quasi Riemann hypothesis opened a new possible path for the critical line proof. It was almost like Professor Lu built a ladder to climb the fortress of the Riemann hypothesis.

However, for some reason, Lu Zhou himself wasn't interested in enlarging the value of ϵ .

Almost every scholar in the fields of analytic number theory and algebraic geometry were researching the value of epsilon.

This was almost like when Professor Zhang Yitang first proved the weak form of the twin prime conjecture and introduced the large sieve method, attracting half of the analytic number theory scholars...

A five-star hotel near Jin Ling University's old campus.

Because this hotel was nearby and had good public transportation, it was often used to host various domestic academic conferences. The report dinner was also set here.

More than two thousand people attended this dinner banquet.

Some of the scholars didn't show up. They decided to lock themselves in their room and research Lu Zhou's hyperelliptic curve analysis tool. Even then, the number of guests that showed up was still a huge number.

After some intense preparations, the dinner party began.

At the dinner party, an old balding professor clearly had a bit too much to drink. He stood up with a full glass of red wine in his hand. He held the table to maintain balance as he joked around with his friends.

"The food here is wonderful... God, how come they've never thought about holding the mathematician congress here? I propose to hold the next mathematician congress here!"

Nearby, a drunk professor from Moscow said, “The next Congress of Mathematicians is going to be in St. Petersburg. That’s the result of the vote, I clearly remember you voting!”

“There was a vote? Oh, I guess I did indeed vote...” The professor laughed and said, “Okay then, I propose the next International Congress of Mathematicians to be in Jinling!”

Surprisingly, this old man’s drunk proposal resonated with a lot of people.

“Haha, I agree!”

“I agree as well! This is a beautiful place, I haven’t had enough yet.”

“I don’t care...”

“To my friends in Jinling! This is a beautiful city, especially that auditorium. Oh my, you can feel the academic atmosphere the moment you walk in.”

Dean Qin listened to the drunken mathematicians kissing his a**, and he could feel his heart rate increasing.

Holding the congress of mathematicians in Jinling?!

Forget about the congress of mathematicians, having the Chinese Mathematicians Conference here would be enough.

Judging by the number of people who were qualified to conduct a 45-minute report at the IMO conference, it seemed like the Chinese mathematics community had only just joined into the big family of international mathematicians. Even though they had an excellent scholar like Lu Zhou, Lu Zhou was just one person.

If Jinling could host the next International Congress of Mathematicians, it would be extremely beneficial to the Chinese mathematics community!

...

The hour hand reached nine o’clock. The banquet slowly came to an end. The guests gradually left the venue and returned to their hotels, in hopes of sleeping off the alcohol.

Actually, both Lu Zhou and Jin Ling University didn't expect all of the thesis doubts to be answered in the report.

Even without the other big names in mathematics, Faltings alone was a tough opponent.

If Professor Faltings' questions were too tricky, Lu Zhou might have to spend a day or two to come up with an answer. Therefore, Jin Ling University booked a two-night hotel stay for all of the guests, in case of a second report.

However, everything went surprisingly well. The report didn't even go overtime. Even Lu Zhou was shocked by his abilities, and he actually answered all of the questions in time.

The report was over...

But the mathematicians who came to Jinling weren't in a rush to leave.

After all, the money for the hotel booking was included in the registration fee. It would be a waste for them to leave now. Not to mention this kind of conference was often reimbursed by their respective institutes. It would be a shame to give up this travel opportunity.

Not to mention, most theoretical researchers loved to travel. This was obvious from the locations chosen in the past ICM conferences.

The locations chosen were all tourist and vacation hotspots.

The next morning, some people rented a mountain bike and rode up Purple Mountain with their backpacks and water bottles. Other scholars weren't interested in physical activities. They decided to organize an academic conference in the hotel lobby. They exchanged research ideas while sitting on the hotel sofas.

After all, it was rare for so many big names in various research fields to be gathered in one place.

They happened to also be spontaneous people.

If Lu Zhou knew about this, even he would never miss this opportunity.

Unfortunately, he pulled an all-nighter last night. He was busy organizing his thesis as he wanted to upload his hyperelliptic curve analysis thesis on arXiv as soon as possible.

This was mainly because there was a lot of misinformation online.

For those knowledgeable experts, they obviously wouldn't be affected by the misinformation because they could easily identify the problems. But for those less experienced, it would be a waste of time for them to study a wrong method.

Lu Zhou typed out the final words and leaned back in his chair.

"It's finally done!"

Lu Zhou sighed in relief and rubbed his dark eye bags. He took out an energy medicine from the system space and took a sip.

The sweet liquid spread across his taste buds, while the minty scent traveled up his nose.

Lu Zhou took out his phone and pointed the camera at himself. He couldn't help but notice that his eye bags were gone.

"That's pretty magical."

Unfortunately, this item was the same as the nitrogen shield, in that it couldn't be reverse-engineered. Otherwise, Lu Zhou would have gladly taken this thing to the Institute of Biochemistry for further research.

Lu Zhou looked at the bottle gradually turning into dust. He shook his hands and placed his attention back onto his computer.

He had completed the thesis. All he had to do now was to upload.

He first went to arXiv and uploaded the preprint. Then, he wrote an email and attached the thesis. The email title was "Supplementary notes on the Quasi Riemann hypothesis".

He sent this email to the editorial department of Annual Mathematics, with Vera's name written down as his collaborator. Lu Zhou stretched his back and stood up from the office chair.

Even though he had just pulled an all nighter, because of the energy medicine, he was full of energy. His body was overflowing with adrenaline.

He was planning on exercising at the gym and sweating it out, but he suddenly received a call.

Lu Zhou picked up the phone.

“Hello?”

“It’s me, Faltings... Are you free right now?”

“I am, why?”

“I heard the view from the Purple Mountain is quite nice... I know it’s nearby, but I don’t have a car here... so...”

Faltings seemed like he didn’t want to admit that he didn’t know the way, so the phone call went silent for a while.

However, in the end, the stubborn old man coughed and awkwardly asked, “How do I get there?”

Lu Zhou nearly laughed out loud.

We’re living in the 21st century.

How do you not know how to use Google?

What about Uber?

Lu Zhou shook his head and cleared his throat.

“Okay then, wait for me at the school gate.

“I’m free this afternoon, I’ll take you.”

Chapter 866 It’s Good to Be Young

It was December, which meant winter in Jinling.

The red and yellow leaves that once covered the mountain had fallen to the ground. However, far away in the distance, the green taiga forests still thrived.

Because this mountain was close to Lu Zhou's house, he liked to put on his sports clothes and come here for a run.

This was like his back garden. He knew this place like the back of his hand. The only people who knew this place better than him were probably the security members who were responsible for his safety...

"I think the attendees of the conference organized a mountain biking event, why didn't you go with them?"

Faltings: "Why would an old man like me hang out with those young folks?"

Lu Zhou said, "I'm a young folk."

Faltings went silent for a second and said, "Right, I totally forgot."

Lu Zhou: "..."

Old people were generally out of shape. Halfway up the mountain, Faltings was feeling a bit tired. He unbuttoned his jacket and took off his hat. He looked around and spoke while gasping for air.

"How come... there's no one here?"

"It is December." Lu Zhou stopped walking and rested his hands on his knees. He took out his water bottle and took a sip. He wiped his lips and said, "It's so cold, plus it's not a holiday, there aren't many tourists. The best time to visit Purple Mountain is in early October. The mountain is filled with golden leaves."

Faltings raised his eyebrows and looked surprised.

"It seems like you come here often?"

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "My mansion is nearby."

Faltings: "..."

Even though he was the director of the Max Planck Institute for Mathematics, his income was obviously not enough to buy a mountain-side mansion...

However, this didn't matter to him.

When someone reached his age, materialistic things didn't matter anymore.

After a short break, the two continued to walk.

After a while, Faltings began panting. Even though he seemed like he didn't want to give up, considering his physical condition, Lu Zhou decided to stop the hike here. He convinced the old man that there was nothing to see at the top of the mountain.

Lu Zhou found a familiar restaurant on the mountainside and asked the restaurant owner for some grilled fish and beer.

The two sat on the stone table, eating fish while chatting.

"The fish here is better than the one at the hotel... What is it called?"

"It's not called anything." Lu Zhou opened a bottle of beer and said, "You can find it in many Chinese restaurants. It's usually called grilled fish or barbecued fish. The recipe is usually the same, and it pairs well with beer... Speaking of which, are you allowed to drink?"

Faltings smiled and opened a beer.

"What kind of German doesn't drink? It's not that easy to find a supermarket in my small hometown, but you can definitely find a pub to drink."

Lu Zhou shrugged and smiled.

"Oh really? How come I didn't notice your drinking culture in Berlin?"

"That's a big city, and it's not a place for enjoying life." Faltings took a sip of the beer and wiped his mouth. He looked at the city view from the mountain.

The sun was slowly setting, giving the city a red-yellowish glow. Faltings looked at the beautiful scenery and took a picture with his phone.

"Speaking of which, how far is the top of the mountain?"

Lu Zhou thought for a second and replied, "With our speed, two more hours."

Faltings went silent for a while. He then sighed.

“Looks like I’m not going up there then.”

Lu Zhou went silent for a second.

He didn’t know what to reply, so he tried to comfort Faltings.

“It’s fine, there are still opportunities in the future. Next time, we’ll leave earlier.”

However, Faltings didn’t seem to notice Lu Zhou’s display of kindness.

He stared at the setting sun for a while and shook his head. He spoke slowly.

“Time doesn’t wait for people, especially for those who have very little time left. When you reach my age, you’ll be counting the days you have left.”

When it came to time, everyone was equal.

Whether it was the king or the farmer, they all had to face death one way or the other.

After about thirty seconds, the old man looked away from the sunset and stared at Lu Zhou.

“Right now, you’re the closest person to God... Or the closest person to universal truth. Ever since Mr. Grothendieck passed away, I have always felt like there could be someone else like Grothendieck on Earth. Someone who knows the answer to all the questions.”

Lu Zhou: “... You’re too kind.”

“Not kind, it’s more like... advice.” Professor Faltings looked at Lu Zhou and said, “Regardless of whether I can witness that day or not, I hope you won’t give up. If there’s anyone who can solve this problem, it is you.”

The old German, who was usually sneerful and sarcastic, suddenly smiled and joked.

“If I’m gone by then, please leave a thesis copy on my tombstone. But don’t make me wait too long, or else I might have to climb out and knock on your door.”

Lu Zhou, who was drinking his beer, suddenly smiled and said, “Forget about the tombstone, I promise you won’t have to wait too long... Three years, I can definitely solve this in three years.”

“Three years?”

Faltings was amused, and he laughed out loud.

He shook his head and looked at the scenery far away. After a while, he said, “It’s good to be young.”

867 Professor Faltings“ Notes

Three years to solve the Riemann hypothesis...

Countless people have said similar words.

Faltings could recall at least a dozen people claiming the same thing.

One of them had even passed away.

That person was called Weil, the person who proposed the famous Weil’s conjecture.

Apparently, in his younger years, he tried to challenge the “zero-point distribution of the ζ function for algebraic curves over a finite field” problem, which in turn created the Weil’s conjecture. He optimistically thought that this might be true for the real Riemann’s conjecture as well.

He even made a plan, that if he found the proof of Riemann’s conjecture, he would deliberately postpone the publication of his thesis to the outside world until 1959... which was the 100th anniversary of the Riemann hypothesis.

However, his optimism soon disappeared.

In the 1970s, Professor Deligne finally proved Weil’s conjecture, but the Riemann hypothesis was still far out of reach.

Faltings could still clearly remember that during Weil's final days, he was still hoping to see the proof of the Riemann hypothesis in his lifetime, even though it was highly unlikely.

Three days quickly went by.

The academic conference came to an end, and scholars from all over the world began their return journeys.

During these two days, Professor Faltings didn't ask Lu Zhou to take him up the mountain again. He spent his time at the Jin Ling University campus.

According to the university forum posts, this old professor went to the library, and he even attended a mathematics lecture at the new campus... Even though he didn't understand Chinese, he could still understand the symbols on the blackboard.

On the final day, Lu Zhou asked Wang Peng to send Professor Faltings and some of his other mathematician friends to the airport. Wang Peng had to find a larger car to accommodate all of these people.

Even though Professor Deligne was supposed to be in Wang Peng's car, unfortunately, Deligne left soon after the report. When Lu Zhou called his phone, Deligne was already back in his Princeton office...

Lu Zhou decided to be a good host and went into the airport with them.

Before boarding the plane, Faltings suddenly handed him a notebook. Without saying anything, he took his suitcase and walked away.

Tao Zhexuan asked, "Hey, let me see, what's in there?"

Tao Zhexuan watched Faltings walk away and excitedly tried to grab the notebook from Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou didn't stop him. He let go of the notebook.

Molina wanted to read the notebook as well, but she didn't want to look weak in front of her "competitor". Therefore, she tried to secretly glance at the notebook, which was in Professor Tao's hands.

Lu Zhou noticed her movements and smiled.

“It’s fine, just read it, it’s not... any secrets. If it inspires you, I’m sure Faltings will be happy.”

Molina turned red and took a deep breath to calm herself down.

“Thank you.”

After that, she began reading the notebook with Tao Zhexuan.

She knew she couldn’t keep up with Professor Tao’s reading speed, so she took out her phone and began taking photos.

Lu Zhou didn’t stop her. He walked to the vending machine nearby and bought three cans of coffee. After giving a can of coffee to each of them, he sat down at a bench nearby.

A couple of minutes went by, and he was half-finished with his coffee. Professor Tao closed the notebook and looked at Lu Zhou with an excited expression.

“The things written here are very interesting! Most of them are Faltings’ own thoughts regarding the Riemann hypothesis. They are more like research ideas, where some are proven, and some haven’t been touched. I recommend you to read through it seriously, it might inspire you.”

Lu Zhou nodded and smiled.

“I was going to do that anyway.”

“Okay then, it’s time to say goodbye,” Professor Tao said while looking at the time on his watch. He smiled at Lu Zhou and said, “My flight is about to start boarding. I hope I can see you at the mathematician congress next year. I look forward to your 60-minute report.”

Lu Zhou: “Well, it looks like I have a lot of work to do then.”

Tao Zhexuan smiled and waved goodbye. He then grabbed his suitcase and said one last thing before leaving.

“Haha, I believe in you!”

He disappeared into the security check crowd.

Molina stared at Lu Zhou for a while. She put her phone back into her bag and said nervously, "Thank you... Even though you helped me, I won't be merciful."

Lu Zhou grinned and said, "Please don't, I don't care who solves this problem, I just want it to be solved."

If someone can solve the Riemann hypothesis with this notebook alone, why doesn't Faltings just solve it himself?

Lu Zhou didn't think this notebook would help Molina solve Riemann's hypothesis.

The reason why Professor Faltings gave him this notebook was because Faltings hoped Lu Zhou could be inspired by his notes.

The content in this notebook wasn't even worthy of publication, and very few people could find value from this notebook.

And clearly, Molina Abel wasn't one of them.

Even though her thesis on the critical line theorem was impressive, it was nowhere near groundbreaking.

Otherwise, she wouldn't have published in a journal such as Mathematics Chronicle. Instead, she would have published in Annual Mathematics.

Molina looked satisfied, as if the pictures on her phone were a treasure map. She wanted to fly back to Princeton as soon as possible and organize the photos. Lu Zhou went silent for a second before saying, "Can I give you some advice?"

Molina looked at Lu Zhou with a nervous expression.

"What advice?"

Lu Zhou looked at her and said, "Don't have high expectations for the notebook, see how Professor Tao only briefly read through it and gave it back to me without writing anything down."

Molina paused for a second and frowned.

"So you're saying... that the stuff in this notebook isn't important?"

Lu Zhou gave her a strange look.

“No, Professor Faltings’ research is important, there’s no doubt about that. I’m just saying that... This thing is only useful in the right hands.”

Molina: “...”

F*ck sake!

This a**hole!

I’m so close to slapping him in the face!

The controversy regarding Lu Zhou’s Quasi Riemann hypothesis proof finally came to an end. After the editorial department of Annual Mathematics received Lu Zhou’s “Hyperelliptic curve analysis” thesis, they immediately sent him an email.

In that email, the editorial department of Annual Mathematics first informed him that his thesis was in the peer review stage. Also, the Annual Mathematics would publish a special edition, solely for his thirty-page Quasi Riemann hypothesis proof and other mathematical tools used in the proof, such as the hyperelliptic curve analysis.

Generally speaking, one would have to publish a major mathematical proposition breakthrough for one of the big journals, such as Annual Mathematics, to publish a special issue.

The Quasi Riemann hypothesis was undoubtedly worthy of this honor.

Because the hyperelliptic curve analysis method was extensively used in the Quasi Riemann hypothesis proof, the editorial department decided to publish these two theses together at once.

Lu Zhou didn’t really care about the publishing plans, whether or not they were published together didn’t affect him at all.

The discussions surrounding the Quasi Riemann hypothesis would slowly die down by the beginning of next year, and maybe by then, the mathematical

community would have a rough understanding of the tools he used to prove the Quasi Riemann hypothesis.

However, for Lu Zhou, this proposition was over; it was in the past.

Not to mention that after he submitted his thesis to arXiv, more than half of the mathematics community had downloaded and read his thesis. That was all he wanted.

What he needed to do now was to expand his Quasi Riemann hypothesis results to the real Riemann hypothesis...

It was worth mentioning that, during the three days after his thesis was uploaded, many people had made breakthroughs in regard to the value of ϵ .

That number went from infinitesimal to having a finite value.

According to the data on arXiv and Mathoverflow, the value of epsilon was being updated every day, and it slowly approached $1/2$.

So far, this number had been updated to one over 60 million.

While the mathematics community was going crazy over the epsilon value, something hilarious happened.

Everyone knew that theses were time-sensitive projects.

Whoever completed their research first would get all of the credits. However, due to the academic process of a journal, the review cycle often took a long time. Therefore, many people had the habit of uploading preprints.

But uploading a preprint didn't solve all problems. For example, if your preprint expanded epsilon to be 0.01, and someone else later expanded it to 0.1 before your thesis was accepted into a journal, then your research would become unworthy of publication.

This was a good thing for the mathematics world, but for PhDs trying to graduate, it was a disaster.

Therefore, after uploading their results on arXiv, some people tried their best to get their theses into publication. They even chose to publish in journals that had a worse reputation but a faster review process.

Unfortunately, most of these theses referenced the hyperelliptic curve analysis method, which was proposed by Lu Zhou. But that thesis itself hadn't even passed peer review yet.

What?

You're referencing Lu Zhou's preprint thesis on arXiv?

Most journals and reviewers were very stubborn, and they often rejected people who cited preprints that hadn't been peer-reviewed. However, if they didn't cite the arXiv preprints, they might be flagged for plagiarism.

This was a ridiculous situation.

Everyone knew Lu Zhou's thesis was correct, but they couldn't use his tools.

Most people had no way of submitting their theses, and they could only upload them as preprints. They paid close attention to the latest Annual Mathematics publication, hoping to publish their own thesis once Lu Zhou's thesis passed the review.

This was probably the first time where the speed of scientific research theses was faster than the journal review speed...

...

On the other hand, after bidding farewell to his old friends, Lu Zhou sat in Wang Peng's SUV and went back to his Zhongshan International mansion.

It was as if someone threw a nuclear bomb in the mathematics community. There were countless scholars in all fields trying to further increase the value of epsilon. However, Lu Zhou wasn't interested in the value of epsilon.

If epsilon couldn't be increased to $1/2$, then the result would be the same as the twin prime conjecture. No matter how clever someone used the hyperelliptic curve on the complex plane, it would only approach $1/2$, but it would never reach it.

During this time, he occasionally checked arXiv to see if anyone used his hyperelliptic curve analysis method to create some groundbreaking results. The rest of his time was spent using Jin Ling University's resources to find any literature on the Riemann hypothesis.

His research was in a bottleneck, and oftentimes, it was beneficial for him to read as many sources as he could, or talk with other scholars, in hopes of being inspired.

This was why Professor Faltings' notebook was so valuable...

Lu Zhou went into his house and sat in his study room. He immediately took out that notebook and placed it on the table.

Like Tao Zhexuan had said, the notebook contained many interesting ideas.

One of them had been tested by Professor Faltings himself to be unfeasible. Some of the other ideas might be feasible, but Faltings didn't have the time to try them.

If anyone else had this notebook, it would look like nonsense to them.

But this was exactly what Lu Zhou needed the most!

Lu Zhou read through the notes, and his eyes gradually became more and more exhilarated. However, after flipping a page, he suddenly froze.

Unlike the previous fragmented notes, the words on this page were neatly written. Also, it was written in German.

Lu Zhou didn't know German, but thankfully he had Xiao Ai.

With Xiao Ai's help, he easily translated the notes.

Unexpectedly, this page wasn't about a mathematical concept, it was instead a...

Diary?

[When I studied Professor Hilbert's theses, I found an interesting proposition in his work. Let the non-trivial zeros of the Riemann zeta function be written as $\rho = 1/2 + it$, then the t corresponds to the eigenvalues of a certain Hermitian operator. If this proposition holds, then the Riemann operator should be a special random Hermitian matrix.

[During afternoon tea, I spoke with Professor Klitzing from the Max Planck Institute of Physics. We were both amazed by our findings.

[Surprisingly, a pure mathematical function like the Riemann zeta function actually has a connection with quantum mechanics! Afterward, I talked with Edward Witten through email, but unfortunately, nothing came of it.

[If only I took some quantum mechanics classes... It would be too late for me to start learning physics now...]

Lu Zhou's finger gently swiped over the texts. He put down the notebook and had a look of revelation.

So it's not just Professor Montgomery and Professor Dyson...

Professor Faltings, who is all the way in Germany, also noticed the relationship between the Riemann zeta function and quantum dynamics. He even talked about it with Professor Klitzing and Witten.

Unfortunately, even though they also found this connection, they weren't able to solve the puzzle.

What does this mean?

If the non-trivial zero points of the zeta function correspond to the energy level of a certain quantum mechanical system, such as the energy spectrum of a quantum mechanical system, if we say the Hamiltonian of this system is the Riemann's operator, and if Riemann's hypothesis holds... What does that mean for the quantum system?

In contrast, if we can find a Hamiltonian operator whose total eigenvalues correspond to the non-trivial zeros of the Riemann zeta function, does that mean we can find the proof of the Riemann hypothesis from a science perspective?

Lu Zhou looked more and more intrigued.

Even though he preferred to reveal the physics side of the Riemann hypothesis through pure mathematics, this didn't stop him from being shocked at this unknown mystery.

These two concepts, half a century apart, somehow were connected together.

Back in the 19th century, the concept of quantum mechanics didn't even exist...

Suddenly, Lu Zhou's phone on the corner of the table began to ring, and this interrupted Lu Zhou's train of thoughts.

Lu Zhou picked up his phone and connected the call.

He was about to say hello, but the other end of the phone spoke first.

The man on the phone coughed and spoke somewhat awkwardly.

"Um, Academician Lu, do you still remember me?"

Chapter 869 Big Name in the Industry

Not only did that voice sound awkward, but there was a hint of helplessness.

Lu Zhou instantly remembered who it was.

"Oh, CEO Wang, hi... What's wrong? Why are you calling me?"

Wang Zhengfei: "???"

What do you mean why?

Three days ago, we said we would talk, did you forget already?

If it were anyone else, he would have hung up the phone.

But he had no other choice...

He convinced himself that Academician Lu was busy with research and that Academician Lu wasn't trying to offend him...

Wang Zhengfei felt a lot better. He cleared his throat and spoke politely.

"Academician Lu, here's the thing. We met at the report three days ago, right? We said that we would eat at the Purple Mountain Hotel. Of course, if you're too busy, we can postpone the meeting."

We made plans?

Lu Zhou suddenly remembered that had indeed happened.

Not just that, but he remembered that he was the one who suggested eating at the Purple Mountain Hotel.

“Oh, sorry, I’ve been quite busy...” Lu Zhou coughed and said, “Where are you now?”

Wang Zhengfei: “I’m at the Purple Mountain Hotel.”

You’re there?

“Then... Wait for ten minutes, I’ll be right there.”

After that, Lu Zhou hung up the phone.

Lu Zhou wasn’t very interested in talking with these industry executives. First of all, he didn’t have high emotional intelligence; secondly, most of these people couldn’t benefit him.

Money?

That was just a number for him.

Unlike other academic professors, his academic reputation went far beyond just academia. He was even at the level for help making high-level government decisions that would change the course of history.

For the cheaper projects, he spent his own money, and if he didn’t have enough money, he would ask the Communist Party of China to help him with funding.

Star Sky Technology had steady cash flow, with an abundance of patents. Not to mention Lu Zhou had his East Asia Energy shares and various other assets. The only companies more profitable than Star Sky Technology were banks and real estate developers.

However, this time, Lu Zhou decided to change his mind and talk with CEO Wang from Huawei.

Even though Star Sky Technology had good research and development capabilities, it had an obvious weakness, which was manufacturing and production.

For the controllable fusion technology, they collaborated with the China National Nuclear Corporation, and for the aerospace projects, they received help from the two state aerospace companies. Most of the time, Star Sky Technology was the brain behind the project. Whenever they needed to turn their research into a product, they would have to outsource their manufacturing.

Of course, from a market economy perspective, this wasn't a weakness, it was actually an advantage.

Rather than being a jack of all trades, it was better to focus on what Star Sky Technology did best. Not to mention that the patents held by the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study were enough to turn Star Sky Technology into an industry titan. That was what Chen Yushan said.

However, Lu Zhou's focus wasn't money.

That number in his bank account was meaningless for him. He was more interested in revealing the secrets behind the high tech system. The carbon-based chip was the key to the future, whether it was the paused "Control of Earth and Moon" mission or the "artificial intelligence" technology branch, these were all ways he could reveal the mystery behind the system.

If possible, Lu Zhou wanted to control this industry chain by himself. After all, the requirements for leveling up Xiao Ai to level 4 was to collect sufficient data from human activities.

However, the word "sufficient" was an understatement. For him, it meant an astronomical number...

All in all, now that Star Sky Technology wanted to enter the computer chip field, they had to find an appropriate ally to quickly convert its technology into products. This way, they could capture and lead the market.

Fortunately, China was great at production.

...

There were only a few places near Purple Mountain with fantastic scenery and transportation. The Zhongshan International community was one of them, and the Purple Mountain Hotel was the other. The two were a kilometer apart.

Before Lu Zhou left his study room, he called Wang Peng and asked him to get the car. He then changed into a set of clean clothes and left his house.

His Electric Purple was already parked at his front gate.

Lu Zhou got in the car and said, "Purple Mountain Hotel."

"Ok."

Wang Peng nodded and began driving.

The electric motors whistled quietly and brought Lu Zhou to his destination.

There was a man in a suit waiting at the Purple Mountain Hotel entrance. When he saw the one-of-a-kind Electric Purple car park at the hotel entrance, he immediately walked up and enthusiastically greeted Lu Zhou.

"Hello, Academician Lu, I'm CEO Wang's secretary, you can call me Li Yang."

"Hi, I've been a bit busy recently, sorry for keeping you guys waiting." Lu Zhou shook his hand and said, "Let's go meet Mr. Wang."

Secretary Li made an inviting gesture.

"No problem, this way please."

They walked through the hotel lobby and arrived at a rustic hotel room. Lu Zhou opened the door and saw CEO Wang sitting there, drinking tea.

The second the door opened, Wang Zhengfei stood up from the sofa and greeted Lu Zhou with a smile.

"Academician Lu, you're here!"

Lu Zhou nodded toward Wang Peng, signaling him to wait outside. He then looked at the old man and reached out his hand.

"Nice to meet you, sorry to keep you waiting."

"No worries, it's my pleasure." Wang Zhengfei shook Lu Zhou's hand and said politely, "Come, please sit."

The two sat at the table.

The hotel waiter poured each of them a cup of jasmine tea before leaving the room.

Wang Zhengfei looked at the rising vapor and smiled. He began trying to make conversation.

“I asked the waiter to give us some tea, do you have any preferences?”

“Nope.” Lu Zhou shook his head and noticed that Wang Zhengfei wanted to have some small talk. He then said, “CEO Wang, I’m sure you’re a busy person, so let’s skip the small talk.”

Wang Zhengfei was stunned. He wasn’t used to this kind of interaction.

However, this wasn’t his first time dealing with people in academia, so he quickly adjusted his attitude.

He put down the cup of tea and had a sincere and serious look on his face.

He looked at Lu Zhou and said, “Well, okay then.”

“There’s no one else here anyway, so I’ll get straight to the point. The carbon-based chips... was that your research?”

Lu Zhou slowly put down the cup of tea and looked at Wang Zhengfei, whose face was full of anticipation. Lu Zhou cleared his throat and replied, “Nope.”

Wang Zhengfei: “???”

Chapter 870 I Want HiSilicon

Nope?

Nope?!

Wang Zhengfei was stunned by Lu Zhou’s reply, and he didn’t respond for a while.

Lu Zhou saw CEO Wang’s look of disappointment. He sipped some tea and said, “Graphene transistors are not my research direction. There are other

scholars in this area. I only solved some problems regarding graphene Mott insulators. I guess it's a small theoretical contribution."

Calling it a small contribution was underselling it. After all, the theoretical calculations made during the Mott insulator research played a decisive role in the research of graphene semiconductors.

Therefore, it definitely wasn't just a small contribution...

It was more like a medium contribution.

Nevertheless, the graphene transistor was the work of Professor Wu. Even though Lu Zhou, as the head of the institute, had the right to claim this research as his own, Lu Zhou would never do something like that.

Wang Zhengfei looked at Lu Zhou with a muddled expression.

After a while, he nervously smiled and asked, "Sorry... I don't understand what the insulator is... Is that related to the carbon-based chips?"

Lu Zhou was too lazy to explain. He knew that the CEO wasn't interested, so he just nodded and replied, "Sort of."

Suddenly, Wang Zhengfei's eyes lit up again.

Who invented the technology wasn't important. That wasn't what he was concerned about. Even if he did know the inventor, he wouldn't risk his lithium batteries contract just for this new technology. Not to mention the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study had the patents.

In the academic world, theses were the king, but in the industry, patents were the king!

Whoever had the patents had the right to establish a relationship with a production company.

Wang Zhengfei raised his teacup and said, "Academician Lu, on behalf of my colleagues in the Chinese semiconductor industry, as well as all of my employees, I would like to thank you! Cheers to you!"

Lu Zhou was stunned.

He wasn't surprised by CEO Wang's compliment. After all, Lu Zhou was well aware of how nutty his technology was.

However...

This a** kissing caught him off guard.

"CEO Wang, you're too kind." Lu Zhou coughed and raised his teacup as well. He said, "The carbon-based chip breakthrough was the cumulative work of the entire project team... Also, didn't we say we'd only talk about business?"

"Haha, I couldn't help it." Wang Zhengfei awkwardly rubbed his head and said, "Let's talk business."

Even though Lu Zhou knew CEO Wang was putting on an act, he decided to ignore it.

He paused for a second and continued, "We all know the impact carbon-based chips will have on the semiconductor industry. This is our best choice for entering the semiconductor field. If all goes well, graphene will provide a function similar to lithium-sulfur batteries. Beijing should have already held a meeting on how to properly develop the carbon-based semiconductor industry. I'm sure the National Development and Reform Commission has already made plans."

Wang Zhengfei had a look of surprise.

"You know this already?"

Lu Zhou sipped some tea and said, "I was the one who proposed this plan."

Of course, when it came to the centralized management implementation, market penetration plan, and other specific policies, those were created by the National Development and Reform Commission, the State Administration for National Defense, and other government departments.

After all, the Chinese capital industry didn't give them a good impression. The situation always became a swarm and scramble, where the winner would take all and the loser would take none.

Carbon-based chips were the future of the Chinese semiconductor industry. The high-level leaders didn't want this technology to be dominated by one company.

Wang Zhengfei was shocked by Lu Zhou's words.

He had heard rumors about Professor Lu, the Nobel Prize and Fields Medal winner. He heard that even the Communist Party of China listened to his suggestions.

However, he didn't expect Lu Zhou to be this strong...

The entire semiconductor industry...

This means hundreds of millions of investment and financial allocation, as well as hundreds of thousands of jobs! Especially since the semiconductor industry is labor-intensive!

Wang Zhengfei really wanted to ask where this industry cluster would be, but he didn't ask.

What's the point of asking?

What am I, going to buy land there?

Who would dare to do that?

It's better to stay safe and not ask.

Lu Zhou paused for a second before asking, "CEO Wang, you want to talk about carbon-based chips with me, right?"

"Yeah..." Wang Zhengfei nodded and said, "You have strong research and development capabilities, whereas our industrialization capabilities in the semiconductor and electronics industry are world-leading. I hope to be able to cooperate with you on carbon-based chips production. This is a win-win for both of us."

Lu Zhou nodded and continued, "I agree, but it seems like you don't really know what graphene chips are."

Wang Zhengfei smiled and asked, "Oh? Why do you say that?"

CEO Wang was in disbelief.

He didn't know a lot about mathematics, that was true.

But when it came to graphene chips, he had consulted with numerous industry experts. He wasn't an expert himself, but he knew a lot more than the average person.

The next words that came out of Lu Zhou's mouth shattered CEO Wang's confidence.

"Carbon-based transistors can be used to build more than just carbon-based chips. Have you heard of Majorana fermion?"

"Majorana fermion?"

Lu Zhou nodded.

"Yeah, it's a unique type of fermion. Its antiparticle is itself. Doesn't that sound interesting?"

CEO Wang didn't think it was interesting at all, but he still put on a curious face.

Wang Zhengfei smiled and continued, "It does sound interesting... Where is it on the periodic table?"

"It might be a little difficult to find it on the periodic table." Lu Zhou smiled and said, "It only exists in superconductors in the form of quasiparticles."

Wang Zhengfei: "???"

What the hell?

He began to wonder if Lu Zhou was just toying with him.

Lu Zhou knew that there was no point continuing. He didn't want CEO Wang to keep pretending to be interested.

Lu Zhou sighed and took a sip of his tea.

"I know you're not interested."

He paused for a second and continued, “Forget about Majorana fermions... What about quantum computers?”

Wang Zhengfei: “...?!”

Quantum computers!!!

The moment he heard the words come out of Lu Zhou’s mouth, Wang Zhengfei held his breath.

His eyes were filled with excitement, and he stared at Lu Zhou as he said with a trembling tone, “Quantum computers... You’re saying... that kind of quantum computer...”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about, but the quantum computers I’m talking about are called topological quantum computers. I think Microsoft is doing research on it, but unfortunately, even though they have made some progress on algorithms theory, they haven’t been able to find a suitable material.”

Wang Zhengfei instantly realized what was going on.

Forget about the fermions and quasiparticles...

Lu Zhou is trying to tell me something!

“So that material is that...”

Lu Zhou gave him a look.

Wang Zhengfei subconsciously stopped talking.

He finally realized what was going on.

The reason why the Communist Party of China took this matter so seriously wasn’t just because they wanted to create industry clusters, but also to go against the laws of the market, to centralize and impose closure on the industry clusters...

“Graphene is the most suitable material ... It might not have been that way before, but it is now. A zero-energy Majorana fermion forms in the vortex core region of the interface between the three-dimensional topological insulator and superconductor. The existence of the nanofermions creates the possibility of constructing topological qubits.

“If someone can master carbon-based chips production, not only will they dominate the semiconductor industry, but they will also have control of the future computing industry.”

Lu Zhou drank some tea and looked at him.

“Do you want to work together then?”

Wang Zhengfei was excited at Lu Zhou giving him this opportunity, but he quickly calmed down.

He realized what Lu Zhou was doing.

The reason why Lu Zhou was rambling on about scientific stuff wasn't to humble brag... Instead, Lu Zhou was placing all of his chips on the table, and he wanted to ask for something in return.

If he spoke first, he would be the sucker.

But...

He couldn't refuse the things Lu Zhou was offering.

He didn't want to give this opportunity to his competitors.

Wang Zhengfei unclenched his fists and took a deep breath. He suddenly loosened his shoulders.

He put on a warm smile on his face and took the initiative.

“What do you want?”

With Lu Zhou having the absolute advantage, there was no room for him to bargain.

Even if Lu Zhou wanted a significant part of the Huawei shares, he would have to consider the proposal seriously.

As long as he kept his board voting powers...

Fortunately, Lu Zhou didn't seem to be interested in Huawei shares.

However, the academician's request made this decision even more difficult.

“I want HiSilicon.”

Chapter 871 I Have It Now

HiSilicon's history could be traced back to Huawei's ASIC design center in 1991. It had been one of Huawei's centerpieces in the electronics industry.

In most people's minds, HiSilicon was a supplier of mobile phone processors for Huawei. However, HiSilicon's business expanded far beyond mobile processors.

Accurately speaking, Huawei's HiSilicon company provided home networking, communication, and other wireless chip solutions. Basically, they designed and made mobile phone chips, mobile communication system equipment chips, transmission network equipment chips, home digital equipment chips, etc. They even had a 90% market share in the security prevention and control industry.

Because HiSilicon was fully owned by Huawei, one could say that Huawei was HiSilicon and HiSilicon as Huawei. They were inseparable.

If Star Sky Technology had shares in HiSilicon, then it would mean Huawei would lose its total control over HiSilicon.

This was unacceptable for Wang Zhengfei.

However...

HiSilicon also desperately needed Star Sky Technology's technology.

Therefore, after hearing Lu Zhou's request, Wang Zhengfei had a dignified look on his face. He sat there in silence, seemingly lost in deep thought.

Lu Zhou wasn't in a hurry. After he conveyed his requests, he picked up his cup and took a sip of the hot tea. This helped him moisten his dry throat.

He used this time to look at Wang Zhengfei's facial expression, trying to see if he could read any thoughts.

Unfortunately, CEO Wang had been around the block. Lu Zhou couldn't read a single ounce of information from his face.

Emm...

Did I ask for too much?

He talked about this with Chen Yushan before coming here. She helped him with the equity allocation and technical cooperation plans, but honestly, Lu Zhou, who wasn't a great negotiator, didn't know if his demands were too high.

Lu Zhou began to think.

Looks like CEO Wang isn't going to agree.

But then again, I can cooperate with Unisplendour instead. Even though that company is mainly involved in low-end processors and isn't backed by Huawei's industrial chain, it might work?

Lu Zhou opened his mouth.

"Let's leave this aside, you can make a decision later. Anyway, I didn't bring a contract, and I'm sure you need more time to think this through. We should discuss this at a more formal occasion."

CEO Wang loosened his shoulders and shook his head.

"There's no need."

Lu Zhou sighed in relief.

Even though they didn't reach an agreement, this boring negotiation was finally over.

As expected, Lu Zhou wasn't good at negotiating.

He planned on letting Chen Yushan negotiate with Unisplendour.

"I don't have to think this through. I've already made up my mind. I trust my instincts and I trust Academician Lu won't let me down."

Wang Zhengfei stood up and reached out his hand as he solemnly said, "... As the CEO of Huawei, I accept your proposal. I hope we can work together in this new era of carbon-based chips and achieve greatness!"

Lu Zhou: "...?"

Does this mean...

He agrees?

...

Even though they reached an agreement, when it came to important matters such as equity transfer, Wang Zhengfei couldn't make this decision alone.

Especially since Star Sky Technology wanted to invest in HiSilicon, and HiSilicon was one of Huawei's most important subsidiary companies. He had to ask the opinions of the board members. Whether the board members would agree with this proposal was still up to chance.

Especially because of the confidentiality agreement, where many things had to stay secret.

He was worried about how to convince the company board members without mentioning the carbon-based chip technology.

Star Sky Technology didn't need Huawei as they had many other choices. But if Huawei wanted to become the king of the Chinese electronics industry, they needed Star Sky Technology...

Even during dinner time, Lu Zhou was still thinking about what happened.

He had no idea how he was able to convince the CEO.

Actually, there was no convincing going on at all. It seemed like after CEO Wang listened to Lu Zhou's requests, he just went silent for a few minutes before agreeing.

Maybe... Luo Wenxuan is interested in Professor Lu?

I'm actually a business genius who has been distracted by mathematics?

Lu Zhou smiled awkwardly.

If it weren't for this fantastic negotiation, he would have never realized how much of a business tycoon he was...

After the dinner was over, Wang Zhengfei bid farewell to Lu Zhou and got into his black car parked at the hotel entrance.

Another Huawei executive was sitting in the backseat, and he couldn't help but ask CEO Wang, "Sir, do you really think it's a good idea to give them absolute control over HiSilicon?"

Sitting next to CEO Wang was a C-suite executive of HiSilicon. This person was also invited to the secret Beijing meeting.

That was why he came here with CEO Wang to Jinling.

Even though he had a lot of respect for CEO Wang, he had to admit that letting Star Sky Technology take control over HiSilicon was not a good idea. HiSilicon was Huawei's bread and butter, and it seemed like a horrible idea to let an outsider step in.

Not to mention that Star Sky Technology demanded quite a lot of share equity...

Wang Zhengfei stared at this executive and smiled.

"Does HiSilicon have a carbon-based transistor research and development team?"

The executive went silent.

Even though HiSilicon had research projects on new semiconductor materials, they weren't involved in the field of graphene research. Instead, they were more focused on molybdenum disulfide, which was another material that the academic community deemed to have promising potential.

However, these research projects were only being done to keep up with other companies. There were many key issues that had yet to be resolved. It would take at least a decade before they could try using molybdenum disulfide as a transistor material.

The executive hesitated for a bit before answering, "No."

Wang Zhengfei looked at the executive and smiled.

"Well, now you do."

Executive: "..."

Chapter 872 Is He Ok?

Wang Zhengfei was indeed a savvy businessman.

He had never thought about negotiating with Lu Zhou. However, when he was about to speak, he was able to gather information from Lu Zhou's facial expressions.

It seemed like Lu Zhou didn't want to work with them anymore, and he was even ready to cooperate with other Chinese semiconductor companies.

For example, Unisplendour, which had the same production capacity as HiSilicon.

At that moment, Wang Zhengfei made a decision.

If Star Sky Technology cooperated with Unisplendour or another semiconductor company, the key to the future of carbon-based semiconductors would be out of their hands.

If Huawei still wanted to join in on the carbon-based revolution, they would have to buy these chips from semiconductor companies for a much higher price. Even though they would have total control over HiSilicon, it wouldn't mean anything.

HiSilicon was Huawei's top-performing subsidiary, but if they couldn't keep up with the times, they would be overtaken by other companies.

On the surface, it seemed like Huawei made a compromise, but that might not be the case.

They did have to pay for an upfront cost, but the returns on this investment would make HiSilicon even stronger. Huawei's product would be even more competitive in the international market...

This was far more valuable than having total control over a company that could become obsolete in the future...

Wang Zhengfei, who felt a little down, suddenly felt a lot better.

The reason why he made this decision wasn't that he was trying to please Academician Lu.

It was for the greater good!

...

After Molina left Jinling, she didn't immediately fly back to Princeton. Instead, she went back to her hometown in France for a week-long vacation.

Everyone needed to rest sometimes, to recharge the brain and relax a little.

Molina was no exception.

Even though her career was also her hobby, her career didn't always make her happy.

Especially since she had to compete with other scholars...

This trip to China totally exhausted her brain energy.

She felt like her mathematics career was going nowhere, and she began to feel an existential crisis about her life.

If it weren't because of Professor Abel's portrait hanging in her grandfather's house, she might even give up her mathematics career.

An old man wearing pajamas knocked on Molina's bedroom door. He opened the door and saw his granddaughter sitting at her desk. He spoke with a hint of distress in his eyes.

"Are you still thinking about that problem?"

"No, that's for when I return to Princeton." Molina shook her head and said, "I'm not going to think about any mathematics problems for this week."

Old man: "Your father is teaching at École Normale Supérieure, and you rarely get to see him. Why don't you come and live here?"

Molina said without hesitating, "Princeton's environment is more suitable for me. There are a lot of excellent scholars there. Even a cup of afternoon tea can inspire me."

The old man said, "But there are many excellent scholars in École Normale Supérieure as well."

Molina said with a poker face, "But I don't like Paris. Paris is full of rubbish."

Not to mention, she didn't want to see her father.

Not because she had a problem with him, but they were just not emotionally connected. She and her father were both similar people; people who devoted their entire lives to mathematics.

From a very young age, she lived in the suburbs of Paris and grew up in her grandfather's house. That was until she went to Princeton for her university studies.

The only thing left here for her was a bit of nostalgia.

The old man looked at his granddaughter's stubborn face and sighed.

"Okay... Molina, regardless, I hope you are happy. Mathematics is not everything."

"Maybe." Molina looked at the portrait of Abel on the wall and said, "But it is for me. It has accompanied me throughout my entire life. I want to... do something you guys couldn't."

A flash of pain appeared on the old man's face.

He sat down on the sofa and sighed. He spoke in a persuasive tone.

"Some things require talent, especially when it comes to art... Even painters who have studied under the same teacher would see the world in different ways. Mathematics is like an art, do you get what I'm trying to say?"

"I don't get it." Molina shook her head and looked at the portrait on the wall. She then said with a confused expression, "I don't get it, I'm related to Abel, how come I don't get any share of his intellect?"

The old man looked at Molina's eyes and hesitated for a bit.

"Molina, there's something else... I don't know if I should tell you."

"Yeah what?"

The old man opened his mouth. He then shook his head.

“Nevermind, forget about it.”

Molina: “...”

...

The week-long holiday quickly went by.

Molina felt like her brain had recovered. She got on a flight and arrived at New York airport. She got into a taxi and checked arXiv on her phone.

She saw a bunch of preprints on the numerical proof of the value of epsilon. It seemed like someone had pushed the value of epsilon to one over ten thousand.

It took the mathematics community seven days to push the number from one over sixty million to one over ten thousand. This was quite an improvement.

They were slowly approaching the finish line, and the hyperelliptic curve analysis research path was becoming more popular than the critical line research path.

Molina couldn't help but feel a sense of urgency.

She didn't want to admit that, within a month's time, Lu Zhou threw years of her research out of the water. However, she had to admit that the hyperelliptic curve analysis method was sophisticated enough to impact the entire analytic number theory field...

Even though she had a different approach to researching the Riemann hypothesis, she should still read his thesis...

Molina convinced herself that she just wanted to know where her opponent was, and even though Lu Zhou's research results were good, she didn't want to give up the critical line proof method.

Yeah, I'm just doing research...

After Molina got back to Princeton, she put her luggage into her room. Without wasting a second, she went to the library nearby. She found the meeting room that she and Vera had reserved.

However, when she opened the door, she saw Vera sitting there, daydreaming.

“Are you okay?” Molina asked.

Vera’s cheeks were pale, and her blonde hair seemed to have lost its brightness.

Vera noticed Molina, and she gave her a weak smile.

“I’m fine, I just have a cold.”

Molina wasn’t convinced at all.

Molina grabbed Vera’s shoulders and rested her forehead on Vera’s forehead.

Molina’s forehead felt a burning sensation, and she immediately stood up.

“I’m taking you to the hospital.”

“It’s fine, I already went.” Vera avoided eye contact and said, “The doctor gave me some medicine... I’ll be fine.”

Molina looked at her suspiciously. She let go of her shoulders.

“Really?”

“Yeah.”

Vera felt an itch in her throat. She grabbed a tissue and began coughing.

Molina wasn’t sure, but she felt like she saw a trace of blood on Vera’s tissue.

Is she really okay?

Molina started to become more and more worried.

Vera wasn’t just her co-worker. They had become close friends.

Vera didn’t want Molina to worry about her, so she forced a smile and spoke.

“Forget about me, tell me how Jinling was.”

Molina sighed and opened her mouth.

“What do you want to know?”

The girl replied nervously, “Anything about him.

“He’s been away from Princeton for so many years, is he doing okay?”

Chapter 873 Joining Forces

24th of December.

On the day before Christmas in 2021, the semiconductor industry had an extremely unusual day.

A special research and development fund with a value of 100 billion yuan fell into the pocket of the semiconductor industry. This was almost like a gift from Santa.

Not just that, but the semiconductor industry cluster group was also set in stone.

According to the latest released documents, the semiconductor industry cluster was going to be set in the central region of China!

With Jiangcheng and Xingcheng as the center, the five semiconductor industrial bases were spread out on the map. Dozens of semiconductor and electronics companies with more than tens of billions in market cap value had begun settling in.

Unlike the past, only a few leading companies in the semiconductor industry were located in the Hubei province. Companies such as Huawei, Unisplendour, and Changdian Technology. These companies had also been banned from accepting foreign capital investments.

This was quite unusual.

Especially since there were plenty of advanced semiconductor companies such as Samsung and Intel, in which the local executives would love for them to invest.

Not only did the presence of a giant semiconductor company provide a large number of jobs, but it also improved their economies of scale.

However, this time was different.

The residents living nearby saw a six-lane highway being constructed in the middle of nowhere. Right after that, corporate trucks being escorted by military vehicles passed through various checkpoints and headed toward the industrial base.

It was like the companies involved were all clockwork gears, operating in an efficient and orderly manner.

A huge movement like this obviously attracted the attention of the outside world.

Foreign media outlets had speculated that China was uniting the high-tech companies to develop a powerful electric weapon. Other people had speculated that China had discovered huge lunar mineral reserves, and they increased their subsidies on semiconductor companies to maintain their lunar advantage.

There were even more ridiculous rumors, such as China received alien signals and was secretly building an alien spacecraft...

The rumors spread like wildfire, and it was difficult to distinguish the true ones from the false ones.

Regardless, the Chinese semiconductor industry was the center of attention...

...

Jin Ling University.

The offices were more lively than usual.

A young professor with black-rimmed glasses sat at the corner of his desk. He gave orders to the students, who were hanging up Christmas decorations.

Luo Wenxuan looked at the half-decorated office, and he suddenly said, "I think we should add a fireplace, you can't have a Christmas without a fireplace."

A noob researcher moved in a cardboard box of decorations and said, “But Professor, we’re running out of our budget.”

“Running out?” Luo Wenxuan frowned and rubbed his chin. “But I remember there’s a lot of research funding left, right?”

The noob researchers in the office were muddled.

Using research funding to decorate the office...

This was fine a few years ago, but recently, the research funds had been closely monitored...

Suddenly, they heard the office door open.

Everyone in the office looked at the person in front of the door.

Lu Zhou looked around the decorated office, and he paused for a second before making eye contact with Luo Wenxuan.

Lu Zhou went silent for a while and placed his hand on the doorknob.

“Oh sorry, bad time.”

Lu Zhou was about to close the door when Luo Wenxuan walked up and opened the door.

“No no no, it’s fine, you came at the perfect time! I was just about to give you a tour of my office...” Luo Wenxuan looked at the notebook in Lu Zhou’s arms and asked curiously, “What’s that?”

“Professor Faltings’ notebook, he gave it to me before leaving.”

Lu Zhou wasn’t going to hide anything.

He opened the notebook and found the page he wanted. He then said to Luo Wenxuan, “The discovery you mentioned wasn’t an accident. Dyson isn’t the only one who noticed the connection, even Professor Faltings noticed the relationship between the Riemann hypothesis and quantum physics.”

“Let me see...”

Luo Wenxuan looked at the notebook excitedly, and his curious face soon turned into disbelief.

“Incredible...” Luo Wenxuan’s eyes were glued to the page as he excitedly said, “Even Professor Faltings thinks the Riemann hypothesis can be solved using physics methods? My hypothesis was correct!”

“No, Professor Faltings didn’t think that. But my point is that, maybe this could work, but it will be much more difficult than going by the mathematical route. We have no idea what the eigenvalues of random Hermitian matrices are, let alone its quantum system values.”

Lu Zhou shrugged and continued, “But I am curious as to why the Riemann zeta function non-trivial zero-points are related to the eigenvalues of a random Hermitian matrix. They seem to be closely correlated... Do you have any idea why?”

Luo Wenxuan went into deep thought.

After a while, he spoke.

“I don’t know, the Riemann zeta function is beyond my research field... but what you said reminds me of the BGS conjecture, whereby the quantum system described by a random Hermitian matrix corresponds to a classic chaotic system under the classical limit.”

The BGS conjecture was also known as the Bohigas–Giannoni–Schmit conjecture. It was one of the more important problems in the field of nuclear physics and theoretical physics. This conjecture was supported by various numerical calculations, but so far, it had yet to be rigorously proven.

Luo Wenxuan stared at the notebook for a while. He then looked at Lu Zhou and asked, “What about you? What do you think is behind the Riemann hypothesis?”

“I think it might correspond to an unknown quantum system. It’s definitely different from the familiar classic chaotic system... We might be able to use it and find things outside of the standard model.”

Lu Zhou paused for a second. He then asked, “Do you want to work together?”

Chapter 874: Carry Me

Lu Zhou didn't have to wait for long.

He even began to wonder if this guy had even thought about it or not.

The moment the words left Lu Zhou's mouth, Luo Wenxuan nodded excitedly and replied, "Yes!"

"I think this has potential... A lot of potential!"

"We might even discover a new physics theory!"

Regardless of what the real situation was, this clue was worth pursuing by any theoretical physicist.

Even if Lu Zhou didn't invite him to work together, he would have pursued this clue on his own. But now this Nobel Prize and Fields Medal big name was asking him to work together, he obviously had no reason to refuse.

In fact, he was more than happy to collaborate!

Lu Zhou looked at the flash of excitement in Luo Wenxuan's eyes, and he was a little startled.

After realizing that Luo Wenxuan wasn't joking, Lu Zhou spoke.

"Then I'll begin by giving you work... You'll be responsible for working on the theoretical physics side. I'll be working on the Riemann zeta function side."

Even though Lu Zhou had dabbled in theoretical physics before, his research was more focused on the calculations side. Also, researching the Riemann zeta function took up the majority of his time, not to mention he was still the chief designer of the Lunar Orbit Committee. He just didn't have any time to work on theoretical physics.

"Great..." Luo Wenxuan fist-bumped Lu Zhou and said, "You're going to carry me."

“What do you mean carry, you’re going to put your fair share as well!” Lu Zhou looked around the office and said, “Anyway... You plan on making your office a theme park or what?”

Luo Wenxuan smiled and said, “I’m just decorating, haven’t you heard that quote from Einstein? Adding surprises to your life regulates your mood and can inspire you.”

Lu Zhou: “I’m certain Einstein has never said those words before.”

Luo Wenxuan laughed and said, “Regardless of who said it, just remember that it’s true.”

Even though Luo Wenxuan seemed like an unreliable person at times, he was quite a talented individual.

After all, he was a student of Witten. Even though he took a long time to graduate, that was because Witten’s requirements were too tough, plus he was immature back then.

As for his academic achievements, he had four PLR and one Science published theses, which was impressive considering his age.

Not to mention that it was difficult to produce research results in the field of theoretical physics, as opposed to something like condensed matter physics. Even without his qualifications from Princeton and CERN, his experience alone could get him into the Changjiang Scholars Program.

Lu Zhou left Luo Wenxuan’s office and went back to his own office.

Compared to Luo Wenxuan’s office, his office still had an academic ambiance. His students and assistants were always working hard, at least when he was there.

However, even though the academic ambiance was richer, he felt like...

It wasn’t as dynamic as Luo Wenxuan’s office?

Lu Zhou sat at his desk and recalled what Luo Wenxuan said. He looked around his lightly-decorated office, thought for a second, then suddenly spoke.

“It’s the holidays.”

The office was unusually quiet.

No one seemed to know what Lu Zhou was trying to say, so they didn't respond.

Lu Zhou paused for a second before asking, "Should we... decorate the office?"

Lu Zhou was asking for reassurance.

However...

The office still stayed quiet.

With no one responding to him, Lu Zhou felt a little embarrassed. He put his notebook into his drawer, packed his things, and went out to get some food instead.

However, the moment he stepped out of the door, the office was no longer quiet.

"Did I hear him correctly, Professor Lu wants to... decorate the office?" said a master's student. Her eyes were wide open.

Sitting next to her was a graduate student wearing box-shaped glasses, and he said, "Yeah, pigs are starting to fly! I didn't expect Professor Lu to be the festive type."

"That's because you don't know him well enough," Lin Yuxiang said as she put down the pen in her hand. She proudly continued, "Even though Professor Lu doesn't seem like he cares about the small things in life, after you get to know him, you'll find out that he's actually a fun and festive person."

Kong Jie, who was nearby, rolled her eyes.

All you've done is brought him food.

Why are you making it sound like you're very close to him?

However, the new female master's student was gullible, and she asked curiously, "Like what?"

"Like when he's ordering takeout."

“Takeout... I’m worried about Professor Lu’s health, eating out all day is not good.”

“Yeah yeah, he should just find a girlfriend to cook for him.”

The three women began to gossip. One second they were talking about Professor Lu’s eating habits, the next second they were talking about Professor Lu’s type.

Zhao Huan, who was normally quiet, looked at the three girls chatting. She suddenly looked up and said, “Um...”

Lin Yuxiang looked at her and said, “What?”

Zhao Huan: “I feel like all the basic girls I know talk about Professor Lu’s type...”

Everyone: “...”

The conversation died.

The office became quiet again.

No one talked about Professor Lu’s type or plans on decorating the office.

Han Mengqi, who was sitting at her desk, didn’t participate in the conversation. She sighed and twirled the pen in her hand.

Speaking of which, it’s almost Christmas...

Even though she wasn’t a festive person, when she saw pictures of her friends with their boyfriends, she couldn’t help but feel a little jealous.

“So frustrating...”

Han Mengqi scratched her head and sighed.

Sometimes she didn’t know exactly what was frustrating, she just felt annoyed.

I wonder if sis will hang out with Lu Zhou on Christmas Day.

Even though this had nothing to do with her, she still wanted Chen Yushan to get with Lu Zhou. This way, Lu Zhou would be her brother-in-law.

But when she thought about this, for some reason, she became even more frustrated...

Chapter 875: Genetics

The thing that frustrated the little girl didn't happen.

At night, she lay in bed awake, struggling to fall asleep. She decided to take the initiative and message Chen Yushan. They made plans to watch a movie tomorrow.

Lu Zhou, on the other hand, didn't have any plans for Christmas. Like usual, he sat in his office and did what he was supposed to do.

Back when he was living in Princeton, he used to celebrate Christmas, but he stopped that tradition ever since he returned back to China.

However, that might be because he didn't have anyone to celebrate with.

Most of these "foreign" festivals were treated as another Valentine's Day. People who didn't have a significant other generally stayed inside.

However, he suddenly saw a movie ticket appear in front of him.

"Wanna watch a movie together?"

Lu Zhou looked up and saw Luo Wenxuan with the ticket in his hand. Luo Wenxuan had a smile on his face, as if he was suggesting something.

Lu Zhou paused for a second.

I feel like he's trying to...

Tell me to say no?

Lu Zhou spoke with a hint of uncertainty.

"I'm not... free?"

“Ah, you’re not free? I even bought two tickets, I wanted to go with you.” Luo Wenxuan scratched his head and looked around the office for Assistant Kong. He said, “So unfortunate...”

Lu Zhou: “...”

I can’t take this anymore...

I’m going to puke.

It’s not like this guy is 15 years old, why is he being so cringed? Even I’m embarrassed for him.

Assistant Kong, who was sitting near the window, didn’t react at all. She didn’t even notice what was going on. Luo Wenxuan was about to give up when Assistant Lin happened to walk in.

“Midnight showing?” Lin Yuxiang said while she read the ticket. She looked at Luo Wenxuan suspiciously and said, “You’re asking Professor Lu to watch a movie... at midnight?”

“Two guys watching a movie at midnight, it’s not even the premiere...”

Lu Zhou, who was drinking tea, nearly spat out his tea.

Jesus Christ, this guy is a savage!

Midnight showing on the first date?

Luo Wenxuan, who was standing by Lu Zhou’s desk, quickly began to explain.

“No, um... The midnight showing is cheaper.”

However, his explanation wasn’t believable.

Not to mention this explanation didn’t make sense.

A scientific research professor with tens of millions in research funding, cared about a movie ticket price?

Forget about it!

Assistant Lin recalled that Luo Wenxuan always came to Professor Lu's office without any intentions. At most, he would drink some tea.

Maybe... Luo Wenxuan is interested in Professor Lu?

Luo Wenxuan regretted speaking the moment the words left his mouth.

However, it was too late.

He noticed that a few people in the office began looking at him.

Assistant Kong's reaction hurt him the most. Her look of surprise was like an arrow that pierced through his heart.

Nothing is wrong with swinging the other way, but I'm not that kind of person!

Lin Yuxiang said, "You spent all that money decorating your office, but you can't spend a little more on a movie ticket?"

Luo Wenxuan: "..."

He didn't want to say anything.

When Lin Yuxiang saw that Professor Luo went silent, she suddenly smiled.

"How about this, I'll buy the tickets off you, I'll go watch the movie with Professor Lu."

Luo Wenxuan just wanted to clarify the situation, so he immediately responded, "Sure! No problem!"

Han Mengqi: "?!!!"

Lu Zhou looked around the office and coughed.

"You guys... haven't asked me yet."

Lin Yuxiang's eyes were shining with anticipation as she looked at Lu Zhou. Her hands were held together in front of her chest.

"Um..."

Lu Zhou: "Don't have time, not going."

Lin Yuxiang: "..."

Kong Jie, who was sitting near the window, laughed out loud.

That laugh blew away the awkwardness in the room.

The office finally quieted down. Luo Wenxuan stood frozen in front of Lu Zhou's desk. Lu Zhou looked at him and shook his head.

This guy...

Should just give up...

...

Lu Zhou wasn't going to watch the movie.

Much less a midnight showing.

Other than mathematics, there was nothing he would stay up to 12 o'clock in the morning for. Maybe other than physics.

Lu Zhou kept working until sunset. Most of the people in his office had left since then. Lu Zhou stretched his back and stood up.

The moment he stood up, he received a WeChat call.

He glanced at his phone and picked up the video call from Xiao Tong.

The moment the call was connected, he saw that familiar face on his phone.

"Brother! I miss you!"

Xiao Tong was in her pajamas, and she excitedly put her phone in front of her face.

They hadn't seen each other in over a year.

She looked a little skinner, but other than that, she looked exactly the same.

Lu Zhou looked at his sister through his phone and smiled.

“If you miss me, just look into the mirror. We don’t look alike, but we do come from the same genes.”

Xiao Tong: “Yeah, but I have better genes!”

Lu Zhou smiled and didn’t say anything.

There wasn’t any point arguing with her. Lu Zhou knew well in his heart who had better genetics.

“So, why are you suddenly calling me?”

Xiao Tong paused for a second. She then put on a pouty face.

“Brother, it’s New Year’s Eve soon.”

“Yeah.”

“I want a present!”

“No problem...” Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Go on, what do you want, nothing too expensive.”

“Haha, okay then, I’ll send you my wish list.”

Suddenly, Lu Zhou saw a notification on his phone. Xiao Ai’s text message popped up.

[Master, you have mail. ~(๑•̀๑)✧]

How long is her wish list?

Long enough to send it through email I guess...

However, Lu Zhou wasn’t worried. Forget about clothes or purses, he could easily buy her a house or two without putting a dent in his bank account.

Lu Zhou clicked the email and saw the email title.

However, the second he saw the attachment in the email, he froze.

[Study on the Impact of Welfare Policies on Macroeconomics Based on the Bewley Model]

He had heard a little bit about the Bewley model before. When he was in Princeton, a Nobel laureate in economics told him about it. Apparently, it was one of the hardest and most quantitative economics concepts.

Using Fortran 90 to run a Krusell & Smith Bewley model could easily take hours. Designing the mathematical model could often take years.

Compared to these macroeconomic models, the mathematical modeling competition seemed like a child's play, easy.

However, Lu Zhou didn't know a lot about Bewley's model at all. After all, most of his friends at Princeton were in the pure mathematics field, and they weren't interested in money.

At most, they were interested in spending money...

Lu Zhou suddenly realized what was going on. He looked at his phone and said impatiently, "Do your own homework!"

F*ck sake!

Asking a Fields Medal medalist to write a master's student homework, what a joke!

"But brother!"

Lu Zhou said, "Don't pout, it won't work."

Xiao Tong frowned and said, "This is too difficult, I'm not a mathematics major... I didn't know I was going to be assigned such a difficult research project, just help me please."

Lu Zhou didn't believe her. He shook his head and replied, "How hard can a master's thesis be."

"Look at the attachment! You'll see how hard it is."

Lu Zhou couldn't stand Xiao Tong's nagging anymore, so he sighed and looked at his computer. He reluctantly agreed to take a look.

However, after he downloaded the attachment, he had a strange look in his eyes.

Even though he didn't know a lot about economic theory, the mathematical model shown in the project was definitely beyond the abilities of a master's student.

Even his student He Changwen from Jin Ling University would take a while to tackle this model.

"What a supervisor you have... Anyone who hasn't done functional analysis would have a hell of a time mastering the model."

Xiao Tong said, "I told you, this is impossible!"

Lu Zhou: "Are you sure your supervisor gave you this assignment?"

Xiao Tong nodded and said, "Yeah! Why would I choose such a difficult topic for my graduation thesis?"

Lu Zhou thought for a second and said, "How about this, I can't write it for you, this is your thesis. But I can co-author it with you. You can do the economics theory side, and I'll do the mathematics side."

"Really? You agree?! Fantastic, there's still hope! Love you!" Xiao Tong kissed the phone screen and lay on her couch as she smiled and said, "You're the best!"

"Ok enough, also, I have one request."

Xiao Tong stood up from the couch and said, "Go on, I'll do anything, do you want a girlfriend? The office next door has plenty of chesty blondes."

"No need for that," Lu Zhou said. "You have to submit the thesis after it is completed. I don't care about being the first or second author, but I have to be the corresponding author."

When Xiao Tong heard Lu Zhou's request, she paused for a second. She suddenly frowned.

"But... I'm worried my supervisor won't agree. I'm about to graduate, what if he doesn't let me graduate?"

When it came to academia, the students were slaves to their supervisors.

The supervisors were usually the communicating author.

Xiao Ai was scared she wasn't going to graduate.

Lu Zhou knew Xiao Tong would say this, but he didn't seem to be concerned.

He smiled and replied, "Tell him to do it and see what happens."

Chapter 876: Done in an Hour

Even though Lu Zhou wasn't familiar with economics, at a place like Princeton, any field of study related to mathematics more or less would be studied by mathematicians.

Especially when it came to economics.

It was very difficult to create novel economics theories using traditional research methods.

Therefore, if one wanted to create outstanding economics research, mathematics was their only way. Even though traditional economists had criticized this approach, it had helped countless students graduate with a degree.

In fact, mathematics was a life-saving tool for any field that required quantitative analysis. It could extract value from seemingly useless data. It all depended on how well one applied mathematical tools to their own area.

Hence, even though Lu Zhou wasn't interested in economics, whenever he was at the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study cafe, he would talk about some of the more simple mathematics problems with economics professors.

After being at Princeton for many years, Lu Zhou had interacted with countless big names in economics.

Not only had he talked with Nobel Prize laureates, but he was even friends with Nature and Science editors.

Anyone with a normal IQ wouldn't want to piss off Lu Zhou by withholding a master's student's degree...

As for why Lu Zhou wanted to be the corresponding author...

Not because he cared about his name on the thesis, he just didn't want Xiao Tong's supervisor to take advantage of her.

Even though Xiao Tong was still a little worried, seeing how confident her brother was, she didn't argue anymore. After talking about their parents for a while, Lu Zhou felt hungry and hung up the phone.

Lu Zhou closed his laptop and took out his phone to order take out. He then opened Xiao Tong's unfinished thesis and began reading it.

"Let me have a look..."

Even though he wasn't very familiar with the Bewley model, anything related to mathematics was a piece of cake for him.

After all, no matter how complex the model was, it was less complicated and chaotic than a plasma turbulence system. The Bewley model was much simpler compared to the Navier–Stokes equations and the plasma turbulence system.

Lu Zhou could confidently say he was the world-leading expert on functional analysis.

Occasionally thinking about simpler problems was good for his research.

His takeout hadn't arrived yet, so he decided to kill this time by doing some relaxing problems.

With a pen in one hand and a mouse in another, Lu Zhou quickly read through the thesis and began writing down calculations.

"It's an easy question, but interesting... Who did I talk to about this problem? I don't remember.

"Why is she using the Lagrange multiplier method to optimize each processing step?" Lu Zhou said as he read through the calculation part of the thesis.

A few seconds went by.

"Just use the endogenous grid method..." Lu Zhou muttered to himself as he wrote down a line of calculations.

“The endogenous grid method is a little cumbersome. Optimizing the original mathematical model can save at least 20% of the calculations... Maybe even 25%.”

This problem wasn't even considered a problem.

Lu Zhou was inspired right at the finish line.

He wrote down the last line of equations and leaned back in his chair. He directed his laptop camera to his notes.

“Xiao Ai, tidy this for me.

“Also use the Bewley model to compile a new algorithm for my model.”

Xiao Ai: [Okay~! (✿◡◡)]

Xiao Ai was just as fast as Lu Zhou, it scanned the notes and soon sorted out the mathematical model. It even corrected some of the mistakes Lu Zhou might have made.

Lu Zhou looked at the LaTeX, and once he made sure there were no mistakes, he nodded at the computer.

The model was then uploaded to the quantum computer located underground at the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study. A few seconds later, the quantum computer finished calculating.

Xiao Ai: [Algorithm compilation complete! (๑•̀ㅂ•́)و✧]

Xiao Ai: [Using 12,777 sets of random parameters, the numerical calculation results of the improved mathematical model are consistent with the original model. Dispersion is reduced by 13%, computing efficiency is increased by 21%. ♪ (^ ▽ ^ *)]

He didn't know what dispersion meant, but the 21% increase in computing efficiency was what he had expected.

Is it kind of cheating to use a quantum computer on a master's thesis?

Screw it, who cares.

It's for my sister.

Besides, electricity is cheap anyway...

Lu Zhou looked at his computer and said, "Send an email, attach the mathematical model and algorithm."

Xiao Ai: [Okay, Master! (๑•̀ㅂ•́)و✧]

Lu Zhou looked at the string of texts and suddenly remembered something. "Oh yeah, remember not to use emoticons in the email, just send it normally."

Xiao Ai: [Σ (っ°Д°;) っ]

Lu Zhou: "...?"

Even though Lu Zhou didn't know what this emoticon meant, he didn't want to ruin his handsome and reliable image by sending his little sister an emoticon.

Five minutes went by.

He received a reply from Xiao Tong.

The email was very short, it only contained three symbols...

[? ? ?]

Lu Zhou looked at the three symbols and smirked.

Xiao Tong probably didn't expect me to solve her problem in one hour.

"Oh yeah, it's been an hour, where is my takeout?"

Lu Zhou rubbed his stomach and took out his phone. He was about to call the delivery driver when he saw that his takeout was delivered twenty minutes ago.

The f*ck?

Who took my takeout?

He was so concentrated on the problem he didn't look at his phone at all.

Lu Zhou was muddled. Suddenly, he heard the office door knock. Wang Peng walked in with a plastic bag.

“Your orange chicken on rice,” Wang Peng said as he placed the plastic bag on the table. He sighed and said, “Can we talk about something? If you want to eat anything, I’ll buy it for you. Stop ordering take out, you’re just giving me more trouble.”

“It’s just easier to order on my phone.” Lu Zhou took out the styrofoam box from the plastic bag and said, “Speaking of which, why did you pick up the food?”

Wang Peng: “It’s safer this way.”

Lu Zhou: “So, my security level has increased again?”

Wang Peng nodded.

“Yeah.”

Wang Peng had no reason to lie about this.

When the controllable fusion reactor research was at a critical stage, the local military increased the security level for Lu Zhou’s house. That didn’t go away until the Pangu fusion reactor was connected to the power grid.

Even though this situation wasn’t as extreme as the controllable fusion reactor, the carbon-based chips determined the future of the Chinese semiconductor industry, so they were being extra diligent.

While opening the disposable chopsticks, Lu Zhou looked at Wang Peng.

Wang Peng was a little confused by this look, so Lu Zhou coughed and asked, “You didn’t... test it by... taking a bite, right?”

Lu Zhou was a little germaphobic...

Sharing food like hotpot was fine, but outside of that, he wasn’t comfortable with people touching his food.

“Of course not!” Wang Peng was astounded, and he said, “It’s the 21st century, who does that anymore? Don’t worry, Doctor Yan did a simple test on it, it’s definitely safe.”

Lu Zhou: "..."

F*ck sake!

You did a germ test on my food?! No wonder it took so long to get here!

I was so close to leaving the driver a bad review!

After hearing Wang Peng's explanation, Lu Zhou didn't know what to do.

Doctor Yan did test it...

But she's done dodgy things in the past...

Lu Zhou still remembered when she asked for a sip of his coke a year ago.

Actually, she didn't ask, she just took it.

Lu Zhou looked at the styrofoam box and began to think.

Should I eat it or not?

What do I do...

Chapter 877: Growth

Finally, faced with a grumbling stomach, Lu Zhou made a decision. He decided not to think about what happened to his takeout. He finished eating in no time.

The orange chicken on rice was delicious.

The contrast between sweetness and sourness was wonderful. Lu Zhou's stomach was totally satisfied.

While Lu Zhou was eating his delicious meal, Xiao Tong, who was all the way at the University of Oxford, was looking at the mathematical model and algorithm sent by her brother.

She ignored the strange emoticons in the email...

The mathematical model was totally beyond her understanding of functional analysis and statistics, and it completely subverted her understanding of the Bewley model.

It was difficult to describe this type of feeling.

It was as if she thought everything regarding this subject was contained in a house, but she suddenly discovered a back door that led to a whole new world.

What shocked her more was that Lu Zhou did this all in an hour...

She heard footsteps from outside the office.

After knocking on the door twice, a woman in her thirties opened the door and walked in.

She was wearing a gray and black professional attire. Judging from the way she entered the office, she clearly frequently visited this office.

Her name was Ansley, and she was also researching under Professor Forster. She received her master's degree last year and was now doing her PhD.

"Tong, Professor Forster told me to ask you if you can submit the thesis before the Christmas break is over?"

Xiao Tong was still staring at the computer screen, and she nodded blankly.

"I can..."

What else am I supposed to say?

I just have to tidy up the thesis and submit it, I might even be able to go home for New Year's Eve...

If I can still buy a flight ticket...

"Can you really?" Ansley looked surprised, and she quietly said, "He also specifically said that, if you can't do it, you can consider finishing it as your PhD project..."

Xiao Tong woke up from her daydream and realized what Ansley was trying to say. She hesitated for a bit before shaking her head.

“Tell Professor Forster I said thanks, even though I want to continue down the path of academia... I want to go to a higher place.”

Xiao Tong could tell that Professor Forster didn't want her to leave.

Professor Forster had tried many times to convince Xiao Tong to do a PhD under him.

As for the reason...

The reason was simple, it was because of her brother...

Ansley sighed and tried to persuade Xiao Tong.

“But I think Professor Forster is an excellent macroeconomics researcher. Besides, you know how it is, a lot of times it's not because Forster is lacking in ability, he just needs the right opportunity.”

Xiao Tong took a deep breath and said, “You know who Lu Zhou is? He's my brother.”

The conversation froze.

The office went quiet for a few seconds.

“I... know.” Ansley opened her mouth and shrugged. She then said, “I admit, you have an excellent brother, a lot better than my brother, who only learned how to cook pancakes last year. But why are you bringing him up?”

Xiao Tong answered with a little frustration in her tone, “As long as I stay in the Oxford campus, people will go, look, that's Lu Zhou's sister. Even legislators call me Lu Zhou's sister...”

She took a deep breath and looked at the ceiling as she rolled her eyes and said, “And those fangirls, listening to them makes me want to vomit.”

This type of situation didn't just happen at Oxford, it was the same at Jin Ling University.

Even though she was grateful to those who were kind to her, all of her success seemed to come too easy, and it didn't make any sense.

Because of her brother, it was like she was cheating at life. She would get any scholarship, student exchange, or conference that she applied to.

All it took for her to get into the University of Oxford was a recommendation letter. All of the professors wanted her.

This was obviously a good thing.

She knew how lucky she was.

However, even though she was grateful for everything her brother did for her, she didn't want to live under his umbrella for the rest of her life.

Even though it sounded easy and comfortable, it would mean that she could never grow as a person and feel truly fulfilled.

That wasn't the life she wanted.

Ansley opened her mouth and didn't know what to say.

She suddenly felt like Xiao Tong was a stranger, as if she had never met Xiao Tong before.

After a while, she spoke with an uncertain tone.

"Maybe... You're too sensitive?"

Xiao Tong stared at Ansley and said with a stern voice, "I'm not, Professor Forster accepted me to study a master's degree with him, is that because of me? No! He probably barely knows my name, but he'll never forget my brother's name."

"I want to achieve something that can be recognized by other people. At least for them to stop calling me Lu Zhou's sister. For them to call me Miss Lu!"

Ansley looked at Xiao Tong's determined face and knew she couldn't be convinced otherwise.

Honestly speaking, Ansley was impressed with this young girl.

However, she didn't know what Xiao Tong meant by a higher place.

Wouldn't it be the same at any other university?

The economics world was closely related to the mathematics world. Even if she left Oxford and went to Cambridge, it would be the same.

“But... Other than Oxford, where else do you want to go?”

“Princeton!”

Ansley looked stunned, so Xiao Tong added with a confident manner, “I hope that one day, I can be like him, with my name in the Hall of Fame!”

Chapter 878: Fireplace

The day after Christmas, it started to snow in Jin Ling City.

The snow made Lu Zhou think back to when he was in Princeton, of the fireplace in his old house. Whenever it used to snow in New Jersey, he would study in the living room instead. His back would be against the sofa, and he would sit on the ground while facing the fireplace.

Even though he was far from the age of being nostalgic...

When he saw the snow falling outside the window, he couldn't help but miss his old life.

He was sitting in the living room. He grabbed a dumpling, dipped it in vinegar, then stuffed it in his mouth. He looked at the white pine trees outside his window and suddenly said, “I want to install a fireplace here.”

Wang Peng looked around the living room and asked, “Is it not warm enough?”

Lu Zhou looked at him with a strange expression and said, “It's not cold, I just want one.”

Wang Peng paused for a second and said, “Okay then... Do you need me to do anything?”

Lu Zhou said, “No, unless you know how to lay bricks.”

Lu Zhou was joking. He didn't expect Wang Peng to take it seriously. Wang Peng contemplated it for a while and answered, "The General Staff Department has people in that expertise."

Lu Zhou: "Are you a genie?"

Why do you have everything?

Wang Peng: "...?"

In the end, Lu Zhou didn't ask the People's Liberation Army General Staff Department to build a fireplace for him. Instead, he contacted the design company that originally constructed the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study.

After all, using state resources for his little fireplace was a little overkill.

Lu Zhou didn't like two things, one was to ask others for help, and the second was to overreact over small matters.

Other than being handsome and smart, he didn't think he was better than others in any way. He didn't need special treatment.

Instead, he would feel more comfortable if other people treated him normally.

That was one of the reasons he was still single.

The construction company took Lu Zhou's phone call very seriously.

Even though compared to nine-figure projects, a small fireplace was a drop in the ocean, the construction company still had the highest level of professionalism. The next day, they sent a team of designers to Lu Zhou's home. By night time, they sent the design drawings and asking price to Lu Zhou.

Some were Victorian style, others were modern minimalistic style, and there were even some that were of the classic retro red brick style. There were a total of 15 designs, all of which were made according to Lu Zhou's living room layout. Each design even included a set of handmade wool rugs.

Lu Zhou looked at the price and began to wonder if the company was even making money on this project.

The asking price was 5,000 yuan, including the carpet. Lu Zhou couldn't help but want to increase the price.

"Are you sure about the price?"

The sales lady put on a professional smile and politely replied to Lu Zhou, "It's fine, don't worry, you're an important client for our company. Giving our clients the best price has always been the company's leading philosophy."

Lu Zhou was baffled. He looked at the design plans and pinched his eyebrows as he said, "My math might be wrong here... But why does this come with a rug that is worth four times the asking price?"

The sales lady smiled and said, "This is our VIP discount."

Lu Zhou: "..."

Discount my a**!

Lu Zhou wasn't going to stop them from saving him money. He hesitated for a bit and chose his favorite design.

"We'll go with this one then."

The sales lady circled the design Lu Zhou wanted and asked politely, "Okay then, we'll install it for you as soon as possible. What time is convenient for you?"

"Anytime is fine, preferably the afternoon..." Lu Zhou looked at Wang Peng, who was standing next to the sofa. He then asked, "Are you free this afternoon?"

Wang Peng gave the same answer he always gave him.

"I am available 24 hours a day."

Lu Zhou nodded and looked at the saleslady.

"We'll do two to six every afternoon... How long will it take?"

The saleslady gave him a glamorous smile.

"Three days at the latest."

Actually, Lu Zhou didn't have to wait for three days. The fireplace was installed on the night of the second day.

Lu Zhou politely declined the offer from the saleslady to install floor heating pipes for free. After Lu Zhou paid the 5,000 yuan fee, he bid farewell to the construction people. He then immediately ignited the smokeless charcoal he bought and made a fire in his fireplace.

Lu Zhou sat on his new wool rug, leaning against his sofa. He listened to the fire crackling and felt the warm fire on his body. He yawned and felt sleepy.

"So nice..."

He stretched his back and was about to fall asleep. However, his phone suddenly rang.

When Lu Zhou saw the caller ID, he immediately picked up the phone.

The other end of the phone spoke first.

"Sweetheart, how are you?"

"I'm doing good, Mom, not as busy as last year," Lu Zhou said with a relaxed smile on his face. He paused for half a second before asking, "How are you and Dad doing?"

Fang Mei's face lit up the second she heard the word "Mom". She had a hearty smile on her face as she spoke.

"Don't worry about us, we're doing good. Your dad is retiring in a few years, so he doesn't have to do much at work these days. All he does is drink tea and read the news. If it weren't for me making him exercise, I couldn't even imagine what he would be like. I just called to see how you're doing, I didn't interrupt your work, right?"

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "Of course not, you're more important than work."

Fang Mei said, "Don't say that, your career is growing, don't focus on me and Dad. We don't need you to worry about us. But I just hope you don't burn out, health is always the most important... Oh yeah, are you busy after New Year's Day? If you are, your dad and I can come to look after you."

Lu Zhou didn't want to give them more trouble, so he said, "No no, it's fine, I'm good! I'm not busy this time of the year, so I'll go back home instead."

Fang Mei sighed and said, "You're such a good kid, just too polite."

Lu Zhou was perplexed.

"Mom, what are you talking about... I'm not being polite, I just haven't been home in so long, and I miss you guys. Anyway, don't come to Jinling, I'll drive back home this year."

Even though his research was important, it wasn't as important as his family.

Not to mention that the Riemann hypothesis wasn't something he could solve overnight. He had just finished solving the Quasi Riemann hypothesis, so he needed some time to chill out and relax his mind.

Of course, more importantly, his parents were getting old. Lu Zhou wanted to spend as much time with them as possible.

Also, everything at the lunar orbit project was going according to plan, so he, as the chief consultant, didn't have to do anything.

If the plan needed to be changed or something unexpected happened, he would obviously stop his scientific research and go fulfill his duties.

Fang Mei could tell that Lu Zhou really did have time to go back home this year. She finally relaxed and smiled.

She obviously wanted her son to come home. Even though her son had a big mansion in Jinling, she had lived in Jiangling her entire life. Jiangling was her roots, and all of their family friends were in Jiangling.

This was why they never agreed to move to Jinling, even with Lu Zhou asking many times.

"Good good, I'll make you some dumplings, don't think about work all day... Sigh, I used to tell you to study hard so that you would have a good future. Your dad and I never thought it would be like this. We just hope you're not in a laboratory all day eating takeout. Go out sometimes, meet some new people."

Lu Zhou coughed and said, "I'm trying to change, also don't believe everything you see on documentaries. Whether it's mathematics or physics research, everyone has to meet new people."

The stereotype of the loner scholar didn't exist anymore.

Even Lu Zhou couldn't cut all outside contact with the world and lock himself in a room. He needed at least arXiv and some other theses databases.

Fang Mei: "Anyway, I just hope you're happy. Your dad and I just want a grandson. That's all we want."

Lu Zhou said, "Um... We'll talk about that later, there definitely will be one."

Fang Mei didn't seem to believe Lu Zhou, but she still smiled and spoke as if she was comforting herself.

"I hope so..."

Lu Zhou: "..."

Even though Lu Zhou knew his mom wasn't trying to give him pressure, he still felt like his heart was just stabbed...

Chapter 879: Special Issue

Nothing exciting happened around Christmas. The only thing that made Lu Zhou happy, other than his new fireplace, was a reply from Annual Mathematics.

In the reply, Professor Sahn, the editor-in-chief of Annual Mathematics politely told him that, the two theses he submitted, the Quasi Riemann hypothesis proof and the hyperelliptic curve analysis method, had been published.

Just like they had originally planned, the two theses, which were 51 pages long combined, were going to be published in a special issue.

Since Professor Faltings changed his opinion and the two theses were officially published, the preprints on arXiv began to flood into analytic number theory and complex analysis journals.

Everyone wanted their theses to be reviewed as soon as possible.

They wanted to publish their theses before someone else came up with a better result.

After all, once a stronger conclusion had been reached, and had been peer-reviewed and published, the weaker conclusion would no longer be eligible for publication.

Therefore, in order to be the first to publish, many PhD students and unknown scholars submitted their theses to crappier journals. On the other hand, the journals set up a special “fast review option”, which meant more thesis processing charges.

Because of this, these journals were ridiculed on Mathoverflow. Some big names in mathematics even publicly stated that these journals didn't have any integrity.

While half of the mathematics world was busy submitting their journals, Jin Ling University hung up a big red banner at their campus entrance. This was to celebrate Academician Lu's Annual Mathematics special edition publication. As well as celebrating Academician Lu for solving another world-class problem.

Now that the Quasi Riemann hypothesis was solved, the value of epsilon was slowly increasing.

People wondered, how far was the mathematics world from solving the Riemann hypothesis?

People began to speculate that it would be solved within their lifetime.

Jin Ling University, mathematics department.

The office at the end of the corridor.

After knocking three times, Dean Qin opened the door and walked into the office.

“Lu Zhou, congratulations! I've never heard of anyone being able to publish two special edition theses in Annual Mathematics! I'm afraid you're the first professor in history to receive this honor.”

Lu Zhou wasn't excited at all.

What's so amazing about publishing two special editions...

Nothing to be proud of.

When Lu Zhou saw Dean Qin sit on the sofa, he put down the pen in his hand and sighed. He looked at Dean Qin and said, "Thanks... Can we talk about something? My banner is always at the school entrance. If you really don't know what else to hang on there, can I sell it as advertising space?"

Dean Qin nearly spat out his tea.

He coughed and put down the cup. He stared at Lu Zhou with his eyes wide open.

"Come on! Look at how rich you are!"

The income of all Jin Ling University professors combined wouldn't even add up to Lu Zhou's income.

Forget about everything else, just the East Asia Energy shares alone had increased by ten times since Lu Zhou bought them.

Not to mention that, when one was at Lu Zhou's level, money was just a number.

Lu Zhou made a helpless gesture and said, "I'm just saying, we should be more lowkey. An Annual Mathematics thesis... really isn't worth this much publicity."

Dean Qin shook his head and said, "Why would you say that, the Annual Mathematics is one of the big four mathematics journals. It's more rigorous than Science and Nature. Forget about the special issue, I would be bragging if our mathematics department could publish even one thesis in Annual Mathematics."

Dean Qin smiled and said, "After all, you're a role model for countless Jin Ling University students. This is very important! If you're embarrassed, just pretend like the banner doesn't exist. It doesn't hurt you anyway."

Lu Zhou shook his head and didn't say anything.

He was definitely embarrassed, and it was almost revolting.

Dean Qin probably thought that Lu Zhou wouldn't mind his face being plastered around the school, that was why Dean Qin was humble bragging so much.

Dean Qin: "Speaking of which, how's your research on Riemann's hypothesis going? If you can't tell me, just pretend like I didn't ask."

"I have nothing to hide. It's just that I can't give you an accurate estimate." Lu Zhou thought for a while and said, "I can say that it will be solved within three years."

Three years was a little too long.

Lu Zhou felt like he could solve it in a year or two.

However, that sounded too much like bragging, so he conservatively said three years.

But he didn't realize that, for most people, claiming to solve Riemann's hypothesis within three years totally counted as bragging...

"Within three years, I see. Hopefully, I won't be gone by then," Dean Qin jokingly said. He suddenly changed the topic of conversation. "Speaking of which, you received an invitation for the ICM next year, right? Do you plan on speaking there?"

"I haven't decided yet," Lu Zhou replied. "If I'm going, it'll probably be a report on Riemann's hypothesis."

The ICM 45 and 60-minute reports didn't have to be about a thesis. It could just be a presentation on what the scholar was working on for the past four years.

Regardless of whether or not the scholar had published a thesis, people could talk about anything at the report and exchange opinions with their colleagues.

The Fields Medal medalists were always invited, and some scholars who had produced outstanding results in the past four years were also invited to do a report.

Generally speaking, it was a casual and relaxed conference.

It was perfect for scholars who focused on attacking big propositions, who didn't often publish theses.

However, Lu Zhou still hadn't decided on whether or not he was going to go.

After all, he had no idea what he would be doing in half a year's time.

Dean Qin smiled and asked, "Speaking of which, at the St. Petersburg University ICM, there's going to be a vote for the next ICM venue, right?"

Lu Zhou: "Yeah... Why?"

"Nothing, just asking..." Dean Qin smiled and said, "What did you think about the report we held in Jinling last time? Did your friends give you any feedback?"

"The feedback was pretty good..." Lu Zhou closed his notebook and moved away from the draft paper on his table. He sighed and said to Dean Qin, "Just give it to me straight."

"Haha, I knew you'd notice." Dean Qin scratched his head and said, "Here's the thing, the city council and I had a discussion, and we think mathematics is very important for scientific research. Even though it is a basic science subject, it shouldn't be ignored. In order to create an academic..."

Lu Zhou: "Cough!"

Dean Qin stopped talking and got straight to the point, "Could you maybe, ask around, and see if the next ICM can be held in Jinling?"

Jin Ling University wasn't as good as Aurora University or Yan University. Even though the return of Lu Zhou and the establishment of the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study improved the situation, they had only caught up to Kai University.

Even though there were many Jin Ling University professors who had connections with the international mathematics community, the only person with enough influence to affect the ICM conference was Lu Zhou himself.

After the previous report ended, Lu Zhou had a feeling something like this would happen. But he didn't expect Dean Qin to actually go through with the plan.

“That’s a little difficult, I’m not a member of the ICM board, and I’m not even friends with them...”

Dean Qin slapped his thigh and sighed as he said, “Ah, I’m going to retire in a few years. I just want to help my alma mater in these last couple of years. In a few decades, no one will remember me. But they would remember that the 2026 International Congress of Mathematicians was held in Jinling, and that’s all I want. Can you help me? At least give it a shot...”

“If that’s all you want...” Lu Zhou smiled and sighed at the same time. He said, “I can’t promise anything, I’ll... try to help.”

Dean Qin was overjoyed. He stood up and shook Lu Zhou’s hand.

“Thank you so much!”

Chapter 880: Invigilate

Dean Qin helped Lu Zhou a lot in his undergraduate years. Even though Lu Zhou would have been successful even without Dean Qin’s help, his journey wouldn’t have gone so smoothly.

Therefore, even though Lu Zhou wasn’t certain he could convince the ICM board, he was still willing to give it a try.

Speaking of which, what confused Lu Zhou the most was what gave Dean Qin the confidence to host the ICM conference. However, the conference would greatly benefit the Jin Ling University mathematics department.

...

Because Lu Zhou promised his parents that he would go back home for New Year’s, he decided to finish his next month’s work before the end of the month. The university also went into exam week, so he became busy again.

Usually, the exam week was arranged at the beginning of the year, some time after New Year’s Day. Rarely was it arranged before New Year’s Day. Students nor the teachers were happy with this arrangement.

This year was a little special. The Ministry of Education policy that was invented a while ago wanted to increase academic culture and confidence doctrine.

The person from the Ministry of Education might have misread the document from the Communist Party of China because they simply interpreted confidence doctrine as “no foreign festivals”.

Therefore, forget about the Christmas decorations, even New Year’s Day parties and gala were suspended.

There were very few people like Luo Wenxuan, who still celebrated Christmas.

Not just that, but this year’s exams were done around Christmas day. Even though the single loners were happy, the teachers who had vacations planned now had to go back to school to invigilate and mark the exams.

Even though Lu Zhou didn’t really care about the festivals, he didn’t like this arrangement.

There was no reason to be so petty over a festival.

This felt wrong.

However, Lu Zhou didn’t have time to care about such a trivial matter.

It wasn’t like he could write a letter about it.

That would be ridiculous.

When Lu Zhou was eating at the cafeteria, Dean Lu from the mathematics department sat down across from him and asked with a smile, “Um... Lu Zhou, are you free tomorrow?”

Lu Zhou knew the dean wanted something from him, so he suspiciously looked at the dean.

“What?”

Dean Lu smiled and said, “Um... We still need someone to invigilate the exams, do you think...”

Lu Zhou shook his head.

“No, no, too tiring.”

Invigilating exams was horrible.

The teachers had to sit there for hours, watching and listening in all directions. Even though Jin Ling University had a pretty good exam culture overall, that didn't separate the couple bad apples from the tree. He could just sit there and not care about anyone cheating, but morally, he wouldn't do such a thing...

In short, Lu Zhou wasn't interested in watching a bunch of undergraduate students doing brainless exam questions. He was even less interested in catching those idiot students who would try to cheat on these brainless exams.

Dean Lu quickly explained.

“No no, you're mistaken. I'm not asking you to invigilate. It's just that we don't have enough people. The school wants each office to send someone, at least one person. You have a lot of students under you, just bring two of them to the exam. Of course, it's fine if you don't want to, I'll just inform the school board.”

Lu Zhou wasn't going to let Dean Lu inform the school board over such trivial matters, so he sighed and said, “Okay then, I'll send a student over, just send me the exam information.”

Dean Lu smiled and said, “Okay okay, no problem, I'll send it to you later... Thanks.”

Lu Zhou: “You're welcome.”

The invigilation was thus settled.

After Lu Zhou finished eating dinner, he gave He Changwen a call. After telling him about the invigilation, he got up and returned to his office.

However, when he returned to his office, he saw that He Changwen was not there.

“Where is He Changwen?”

"I don't know," Lin Yuxiang said. "But I just noticed he went to the toilet a couple of times. Maybe he has food poisoning?"

Food poisoning?

Lu Zhou had a bad feeling.

Then...

It turned out his feeling was correct.

On the morning of the next day, Lu Zhou received a phone call from this guy sitting on a toilet.

"Professor... I tried my best."

Lu Zhou paused for two seconds before replying, "What do you mean... you tried your best?"

He Changwen spoke in a shameful tone, "I got food poisoning from lunch yesterday, and I was on the toilet all night, I'm still on the toilet... I might not be able to invigilate!"

Lu Zhou quickly said, "How are you how? Is it serious? I can get someone to send you to the hospital."

"No no, I'll be fine..."

The phone call disconnected, but Lu Zhou could hear the toilet flushing before then.

Lu Zhou looked at his blank phone screen and went silent for a while.

There's nothing you can do about diarrhea.

It's not like I can make him bring a toilet to the exam room.

What a show that would be...

Lu Zhou looked around his office and saw that student Han Mengqi was the only one who did not go on holiday. Mengqi looked at Lu Zhou with an innocent face.

Lu Zhou hesitated for a bit before he sighed and stood up with his notebook.

She was the only good student who came into his office during the Christmas holidays, so he wasn't going to give her a hard time.

It was just one exam.

He would do it himself.

The moment Lu Zhou entered the exam room, the quiet exam room went into chaos.

"F*ck me! Is that God Lu..."

"Nutty, academician invigilating us! F*ck, my phone is in my bag, I want to take a photo."

"Sh*t, my cheat sheet..."

Lu Zhou looked at the classroom and paused for a second. He looked at the classroom number and then looked at the muddled teacher on the podium.

"This is number theory, right?"

The teacher nodded and spoke in a respectful tone.

"Yes!"

"Oh, so I'm at the right place." Lu Zhou stepped onto the familiar podium and looked at the students. He then looked at the other invigilator teacher and said, "The exam is about to begin, start handing out papers."

"Okay!"

"..."

Lu Zhou didn't know why, but he felt like his co-invigilator seemed to be a little too excited...

The test papers were soon distributed.

After the bell rang, the number theory exam officially began.

Because Academician Lu was invigilating, the students and even the teacher were on “extra alert mode”. They all sat there with perfect posture.

Lu Zhou looked at the nervous students and wanted to laugh. However, he didn’t want to interrupt the exam.

The time quickly passed by as the clock on the wall ticked away.

Lu Zhou began to feel bored. He yawned and took out his notebook from his pocket. With a pen in his hand, he continued to research where he left off yesterday.

As expected, solving problems yourself was more interesting than watching other people solve problems.

Lu Zhou was in the zone, and he totally forgot that he was in an exam room.

Time passed by quickly when someone was doing something that they loved.

Without knowing it, an hour had gone by.

Lu Zhou stopped writing and was surprised to see that the exam was almost over.

Lu Zhou looked at the invigilator at the back of the classroom.

I’m the only one distracted.

If the other invigilator is also not doing their job, then it wouldn’t be fair to those students who studied hard for the exam.

Lu Zhou was about to stand up and move his stiff arm when he suddenly saw something unusual.

He saw a pretty young girl, who was sitting next to the window with her head down. Her arm leaned against her head and her hair acted as a curtain, creating a blind spot.

Lu Zhou’s experience as a student told him that this person was up to no good.

Even though Lu Zhou had never cheated before, he had seen plenty of cheaters.

He quietly stood up from his chair and began walking toward the girl.

Lu Zhou quietly walked behind the girl and looked at her table.

As expected...

The screen from her phone was more obvious than a lighthouse at night.

He could even see her little finger swiping through the phone.

There was nothing else to say.

Lu Zhou gently coughed.

“Ahem.”

The female student was like a frightened rabbit. Her shoulders tensed up, and she nearly dropped her phone on the ground.

The moment she made eye contact with Lu Zhou, her face turned white as she stuttered, “Te, Teacher... um, it’s not like that.”

It’s not like that?

What are you, watching SpongeBob during an exam?

“Sigh...” Lu Zhou shook his head and said, “I only gave you guys a few lectures this semester, but this is a little too excessive.”

The pretty student was scared, and she almost started to cry.

The other invigilator noticed the commotion and began walking over.

The young teacher mercilessly took away her phone and spoke in a stern manner, as if he was trying to impress the academician.

“Cheating in an exam, zero marks! Punishment recorded!”

The girl replied with tears in her eyes, “Teacher, can you not record it? My mom is very strict, she will kill me over this. Sir, let’s talk outside...”

She stood up and grabbed Lu Zhou’s arm, trying to walk outside. However, Lu Zhou stood there, frozen.

He quickly reacted and retracted his arm.

“Student, my mom is very strict as well!”

However, for some reason, the classroom burst into laughter.

The female student turned bright red, and she tried to explain but didn’t know what to say.

Lu Zhou looked at the chaotic classroom and began to think.

F*ck sake!

This year’s exam is too easy, that’s why these people are laughing.

Maybe...

I’ll just mark it harshly.

Chapter 881: Ruthless Man

Once someone was caught cheating, they were bound to receive a zero. There was no room for negotiation.

The students that laughed in the exam room were scolded by the other invigilator.

The final exams finished on December 30th. The Jin Ling University staff members could finally relax a little.

Even though He Changwen escaped from being the invigilator because of his food poisoning, he couldn’t escape the exam marking job.

He Changwen had a pile of exam papers on his desk. Lu Zhou looked at him and laughed in his heart.

You think you can stand me up?

This is what you get!

He Changwen looked at the terrifying stack of papers, and he knew that his New Year's holiday was over. He frowned and asked.

"Professor, can you... ask someone to help me..."

"No," Lu Zhou said without any hesitation. "Reviewing basic content will help you understand the more esoteric and difficult things. This is good practice... Oh yeah, finish marking the exams before New Year's Day. This year's schedule is a little tight, and everything has to be done before the 22nd semester week."

Then why don't you get someone to help me?!

Faced with Academician Lu's orders, He Changwen nodded and spoke.

"Okay, professor."

Lu Zhou was worried that this guy was going to do a bad job, so he said, "Mark it seriously. I will be checking."

"Yes, sir..."

He totally gave up on his holiday plans...

...

The day before New Year's Eve.

Luo Wenxuan wanted to return to his hometown for the holiday. He just received his paycheck, so he decided to buy Lu Zhou food at the grilled fish shop near the school.

Speaking of which, this grilled fish restaurant had been there for a long time. Lu Zhou often came there when he was still doing his bachelor's degree, eating and drinking with his roommates.

And now, his roommates were getting married, doing Phds, and starting businesses... He was the only one who still stayed in Jinling.

The shop owner recognized Lu Zhou, so he gave them two bottles of beer for free as a show of thanks for regularly bringing him business.

Thanks to Lu Zhou's frequent visits here, the business was booming, and the owner was about to start a second shop.

After chatting with Lu Zhou for a while, the owner went into the kitchen. The owner's daughter walked into the restaurant with a backpack.

A few years ago, this kid was tiny, and she would sit on a little bench in front of the restaurant and do her homework every night. But now, she was already in high school.

She instantly recognized Lu Zhou and smiled.

"Hello, Uncle!"

Lu Zhou: "... Ah, hello."

Lu Zhou's mood was ruined by the word "uncle".

Lu Zhou put on a fake smile until the girl disappeared. He looked at Luo Wenxuan and spoke.

"Don't laugh, I'm at least a millennial. Laugh at me again, and I'll call you uncle."

Luo Wenxuan coughed and said, "Come on, that's ruthless... Wait a second, uncle doesn't sound that bad... Okay, call me uncle then."

This guy... is ridiculous.

Lu Zhou pondered for a second before asking seriously, "Do I look old?"

"Old? No..." Luo Wenxuan stared at Lu Zhou for a while and said, "Actually, I always find it funny how you've looked the same since I first saw you. You don't look like a mathematician at all... Seriously, are you getting treatments?"

Lu Zhou sighed and said, "You might not believe it, but just like my looks, my hair is all natural."

"F*ck off... Wait a second, I found it," Luo Wenxuan said as he looked down at his phone.

Lu Zhou glanced at him and curiously asked, "Found what?"

“The photos from when we first met... Look!” Luo Wenxuan looked at Lu Zhou, then at his phone. “It’s true, you haven’t changed at all in the past few years.”

The picture on the phone was taken in the Princeton lecture hall.

Lu Zhou was standing on the lecture hall podium, giving his first-ever academic report to professors and students. The whiteboard was filled with his proof of the twin prime number theorem.

Lu Zhou could never forget this event; this was the starting journey of his academic career, one of the best moments in his life.

What surprised him the most was the photo of himself.

He wasn’t bragging, but...

Like Luo Wenxuan had said, he hadn’t changed at all over the past few years.

It was almost like he time traveled seven years...

When Luo Wenxuan saw that Lu Zhou was speechless, he suddenly spoke with a strange expression on his face.

“This reminds me of a story.”

Lu Zhou: “... About Riemann’s hypothesis?”

Luo Wenxuan looked at Lu Zhou with a surprised expression.

“You’ve heard of it?”

“According to legends, whoever proves Riemann’s hypothesis will live forever... I’ve obviously heard about it, but I’m surprised that you have,” Lu Zhou gave Luo Wenxuan the phone back and said, “Don’t believe this urban legend, we’re scientific researchers, it’s a bit ridiculous.”

Maybe the systems’ metabolic capacity increase also delayed my aging?

Or is it because of other factors?

Regardless, Lu Zhou hadn’t changed much ever since puberty. If it weren’t for Luo Wenxuan’s photo, he wouldn’t even have noticed.

“Yeah.” Luo Wenxuan smiled and looked at the fish on the table as he said, “How was the exam? I saw on my friends’ news feed that something happened?”

Lu Zhou sighed and grabbed a piece of fish into his mouth. He shook his head and spoke.

“Don’t mention it, I swear that was my last time invigilating an exam.”

“Met a creative student?”

Lu Zhou: “You could say so.”

After the exam, the girl went to find Lu Zhou again, hoping to get the cheating incident off her permanent record.

In the end, Lu Zhou caved in, and he promised that he would talk with the academic affairs office.

But, if she was caught cheating again, then she would be expelled. If she could study hard and graduate smoothly, she might be able to wipe it off her record.

“Really? But that was your first time invigilating...” Luo Wenxuan stared at Lu Zhou and said, “This is just the tip of the iceberg.”

Lu Zhou paused for a second and put down his chopsticks.

“There are even more creative ones?”

Luo Wenxuan laughed.

“Of course! I caught one yesterday, and this girl wore a skirt in winter and wrote down her notes on her thigh.”

Lu Zhou: “...”

Jesus!

If I were the one who noticed her, I wouldn’t even expose her.

It’s not like I can lift up her skirt, right?

Forget about lifting up anyone's skirt, some teacher would be too embarrassed to even look at the girl's thigh.

Luo Wenxuan took a sip of beer and ate some fish. He continued speaking, "There are also more male teachers in the physics department, and the other invigilator in the exam room was also a male. That girl was ruthless."

Lu Zhou: "So you just let her go?"

Luo Wenxuan smirked and said, "Of course not, I would not bow down to the devil."

Lu Zhou: "... So who exposed her?"

Luo Wenxuan: "Me."

Lu Zhou: "..."

Lu Zhou didn't know why, but he felt like Luo Wenxuan was proud to be the one exposing her...

Chapter 882: 2022 New Year's Day

Even though Lu Zhou was curious about how Luo Wenxuan exposed the cheating girl, he was too embarrassed to ask.

The two continued to eat while talking, and somehow they went from talking about their New Year's Day plans to talking about Riemann's hypothesis.

"I am certain that, as long as we solve the Riemann hypothesis, we will be able to find out the hidden secrets behind the Riemann zeta function. Even just thinking about it makes me excited. These concepts are centuries apart, but somehow, they're connected!"

"Do you think there's a possibility that Riemann was actually a time traveler? Otherwise, how else do you explain the pairwise correlation function of the eigenvalue for the random Hermitian matrix is consistent with the non-trivial zero points of the Riemann zeta function? Quantum mechanics didn't exist in the 18th century!"

Lu Zhou laughed at Luo Wenxuan's joke and casually spoke.

“Then how do you know that our past is actually a modified future? Changing the past doesn’t change the present.”

“So, if the past were changed by a time traveler, does that mean the past is actually our future?” Luo Wenxuan said. He suddenly stood up and said, “I have an idea, I’ll do it after New Year’s... Or should I do it now!”

Because his voice was too loud, the people around him started to give him looks.

Lu Zhou awkwardly coughed and signaled him to calm down.

“Calm your a** down.”

Luo Wenxuan realized that he was in a public setting, so he awkwardly sat back down.

However, his embarrassment only lasted for half a second.

He placed his hands on the table and looked excitedly at Lu Zhou.

“Do you know what I just thought of?! I can guarantee you’ll be surprised by my idea! I’m a f*cking genius!”

Lu Zhou looked at Luo Wenxuan and sighed.

“... No matter what the idea is, I hope you don’t include my name in the thesis.”

Luo Wenxuan had a smug smile on his face.

“You’re going to regret that.”

Lu Zhou chuckled.

“Haha, I bet I won’t.”

The time-traveling stuff was obviously a joke.

Lu Zhou was certain that plenty of people have written theses on the paradoxes of time.

That was how theoretical physics research was.

First, they would assume that string theory could work, then they would create a new theory. After that, they would assume that string theory couldn't work, and they would explain why the new theory couldn't work as well.

This type of self-affirmation and self-denial research was becoming more and more common.

This showed that Einstein was a genius.

He predicted the nature of black holes, as well as the existence of gravitational waves.

All of the achievements made by the physics community since his death hadn't deviated from his theoretical framework.

Even to this day, the experimental physics community hadn't been able to fully test his theories. These scholars had been stuck, with nowhere to go...

Wait a minute...

Lu Zhou suddenly began to contemplate.

Einstein wasn't the only person like this.

Time-traveling was obviously a joke, there wasn't enough evidence to support its existence.

But, how could Lu Zhou prove that the history he was familiar with wasn't the result of time travel?

There's no way to prove it...

Suddenly, he thought about the system.

Emmmm...

"Interesting..."

Lu Zhou rubbed his chin and began to think of all of the possibilities. He muttered to himself as he was lost in thought.

"... Hm, I heard what you're trying to say. Interesting, do you want to work together?" Luo Wenxuan said to Lu Zhou.

“You must have heard wrong.” Lu Zhou tried to act unfazed as he said, “As for working together... Let’s do that after we’re done with the Riemann hypothesis.”

“Okay,” Luo Wenxuan said. “Should I celebrate then? You didn’t refuse.”

Lu Zhou immediately said, “Just pretend like I did then.”

Luo Wenxuan: “...”

...

On the 2020 New Year’s Day, the light from the Pangu fusion reactor illuminated the future of controllable fusion.

On the New Year’s Day of 2021, China’s first ion thruster propulsion system spacecraft “Skyglow” achieved its first successful test flight. This paved the way for China’s subsequent landings on the Moon.

The New Year’s Day of 2022 was rather boring. Other than the entire semiconductor industry being disrupted, as well as the Quasi Riemann hypothesis proof, nothing revolutionary happened.

On the first day of the new year.

An unexpected visitor came to Lu Zhou’s house.

Because Director Li from the State Administration for National Defense had some work to do at the Jinling high-tech zone and high-tech aerospace industrial area, he came to visit Lu Zhou.

Director Li happened to come around lunchtime, so Lu Zhou ordered some food from a hotel nearby. He opened a bottle of wine with this old companion of his.

The international news was being broadcasted on TV.

Coincidentally, the content of the news broadcast was the same as what the two were talking about...

“... According to separate announcements from NASA and the White House, NASA will launch their Lunar Gateway project this year.

“The project is part of the lunar exploration plan NASA announced in 2018. According to the disclosed plans, NASA will launch propulsion and launch devices into lunar orbit in early 2022. These components will be the first components of the Lunar Orbital Platform Gateway plan.

“However, the most optimal orbiting track is occupied by the Moon Palace space station, thus NASA is considering using an elliptical orbit with a larger orbit radius.

“Reports show that the project was approved by the Congressional Budget Office in 2021 and has now entered the launch preparation. According to a statement released by a NASA spokesperson, just like the Moon Palace, the Lunar Gateway would serve as an international space station. According to analyses from international relations experts, this project is an attempt from the White House to regain their aerospace dominance...”

Due to the success of the Skyglow spacecraft, NASA had actually been preparing for this project since the middle of last year.

However, because of the Ares program, the public began to distrust NASA. Over the past six months, NASA, Space-X, and other aerospace companies had been keeping it lowkey.

Now that the new year was here, it was time for a new beginning.

Lu Zhou obviously didn't believe that one mistake should end America's aerospace ambitions; otherwise, this fight would be too boring.

The US would learn from their failures and become even stronger. This competition had only just begun.

“The Americans really don't want to be behind,” Director Li said while watching the TV. He ate some braised duck and sighed.

“No one wants to fall behind, and this type of competition is healthy.” Lu Zhou smiled while looking at Director Li. He said, “Speaking of which, why did you suddenly decide to visit me? Are you not busy with work?”

“I am, but I still have time to see my good friend.” Director Li smiled and said, “I heard that you are planning to go back home for Chinese New Year, so I decided to visit you in advance. I hope I didn't bother Mr. Chief Designer?”

When Lu Zhou heard the words from his good friend, he felt a little weird.

They had been working closely ever since the controllable fusion project, but there was a big age gap between them.

He felt the same way when he talked with Professor Faltings. It was as if older people treated him as the same age.

I'm still a lot younger than you, okay?

I'm not even in my thirties...

Lu Zhou coughed and casually said, "Of course not. I still have time to celebrate New Year's Day."

"Good, I just didn't want to disturb your work. I hesitated for a long time before I decided to come." Director Li put down his cup and looked at Lu Zhou. He said in a solemn tone, "I'm sure you know that I came to Jinling with a purpose."

Lu Zhou nodded and said, "Someone told me about it."

Director Li nodded and continued, "The US' Lunar Gateway program has already begun, and according to NASA, that their budget is more than US\$100 billion. This is far larger than the original estimate of US\$21 billion.

"Experts from the Chinese Academy have analyzed that the White House's plan isn't as simple as we think. Their true intention is to reunite their allies through economic and diplomatic means, to separate the countries into two sides. This is similar to what happened in the Cold War."

As for why the US was doing this, it was obvious that the US was trying to rebalance China's rising dominance.

China finally gained its international advantage due to the controllable fusion energy and aerospace breakthroughs. This was going to be a new challenge for them. Even though the semiconductor industry clusters were going full speed ahead, Lu Zhou could sense that the focus over the next decade was definitely going to be the aerospace field.

Lu Zhou began to think as Director Li spoke solemnly.

“The United States has opened the door to us and invited Chinese aerospace companies to participate in this US\$100 billion project. Do you think we should export our aerospace services to them?”

This was an interesting problem.

If they decided to export their services, this meant that Star Sky Technology, as well as the two giant state-owned aerospace companies, would participate in the construction and launch of the Lunar Gateway program.

Lu Zhou contemplated for a while and asked with a smile, “If Huawei had the opportunity to sell Apple computer chips, would you stop them?”

“Of course not.” Director Li smiled and said, “As long as they’re willing to buy it for the right price, we’ll do anything we can to let Huawei sell to them.”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Yeah, the only problem is if Apple doesn’t pay the right price.”

Director Li understood what Lu Zhou was trying to say. He nodded.

“I understand what you mean.”

Lu Zhou smiled and continued, “The Lunar Gateway isn’t a big threat to us. It’s just a space station. The real competition isn’t in their space stations or spacecraft, but rather the ability to launch these devices into space.

“If we can take over the launch missions from Space-X, Blue Origin, Boeing, etc., we can weaken their market competitiveness in the long run and further expand the gap.”

Ever since the opening of the Jinling high-tech aerospace development area, as well as the successful development of the Magpie Bridge, China’s aerospace transportation technology was on a whole new level. Their lunar transfer orbit launching cost was at least a magnitude lower than other countries.

This meant that, for every price Space-X was offering, Star Sky Technology could reduce that by 10 times.

Therefore, Star Sky Technology could steal a giant piece of the pie that originally belonged to American aerospace companies.

“... Maybe in the future, their colony in a distant galaxy will need our spacecraft to send supplies. Even if they send their space station to Mars and their colonists to the edge of the solar system, they will still need our help.”

Director Li was a little doubtful, and he said, “What if the White House knew about this? Why do you think they’re asking us to work on the Lunar Gateway project?”

“Maybe to balance their costs... Even if they wanted their local companies to fill the demands, the local companies can’t fill the demand,” Lu Zhou said with a smile. He then continued, “This is good, this means they’re aware of how crucial we are.”

We’re getting closer and closer to complete space domination...

Chapter 883: Having a Nutty Brother

Translator: Henyee Translations **Editor:** Henyee Translations

What was it like to have a brother who was a big name in academia?

Or rather, a brother who was a Nobel Prize laureate as well as a Fields Medalist?

Xiao Tong was probably the only person in this world who could answer this question.

She stared at the email from the reviewer and rubbed her eyes in disbelief.

After double-checking that she read it correctly, she clicked on the email. She carefully read the reviewer’s comments, trying to contain her excitement.

She was obviously surprised.

This was one of the top nine economics journals—Econometrica!

This was like the Annual Mathematics of mathematics or the Physical Review Letters of physics!

Even her mentor, Professor Forster, would have a hard time publishing in this journal. After all, it was difficult to produce research results in macroeconomics.

However, after she submitted the journal three days after Christmas, she received a reply from the reviewer not long after New Year's Day. This had never happened to her before.

For a newcomer in the world of academia, this was unbelievable!

Normally, reviewing theses was a type of volunteer work. It didn't really benefit the reviewers.

Especially for well-known scholars who had nothing to gain from reviewing theses. They would only review theses when they had a lot of free time.

Xiao Tong was prepared to wait for six weeks, but instead, she received a reply from the reviewer in the second week.

Xiao Tong looked at the review comments.

[The mathematical model used in the thesis is interesting, but there are some flaws in the theoretical economics part...

[Review comments: Modifications might be needed.]

"... My brother is too strong."

Xiao Tong's mouth was wide open, and after a while, she sighed.

This was the fastest thesis review response she had ever received...

She thanked her brother in her heart and gave herself some encouragement.

One day, she was going to be an outstanding scholar.

Just like her brother...

Having a role model was a powerful thing.

With a goal in mind, Xiao Tong didn't even take a break. She began modifying the thesis based on the reviewer's comments. She kept the

mathematical model unchanged and uploaded the thesis after making some changes.

“This should be fine, right?”

Xiao Tong sighed and took out a graduation application form from her desk. She hesitated for a bit before making up her mind and walking to Professor Forster’s office.

Even though having a reliable brother was a good thing, she still wanted to do some things on her own.

There was one thing she and Lu Zhou had in common.

Which was, they never wanted to bother other people.

Of course, when they encountered something they couldn’t do, they wouldn’t hesitate to ask for help.

However, they would often return the favor.

There was a knock at the door.

Professor Forster stopped writing and looked at the student who walked into his office. He smiled gently and asked cheerfully, “How are you? Have you thought about it?”

It seemed like Ansley didn’t snitch on Xiao Tong. She gave Xiao Tong the chance to tell Professor Forster the bad news.

However, it didn’t really count as snitching...

After all, Xiao Tong already made up her mind.

Xiao Tong stood in front of Professor Forster’s desk and took a deep breath.

“I’ve already completed my graduation thesis and submitted it to Econometrica.”

Professor Forster was baffled. He didn’t expect Xiao Tong to complete the graduation thesis at all. Forster spoke with his eyes wide open.

“Wait a second... You finished it? Are you sure you did it using my...”

Xiao Tong nodded and looked at Professor Forster.

“I did it using your hypothesis. I used the Bewley model to analyze the macroeconomic impact of welfare policies... But I used an improved model.”

Professor Forster stared at his student, and he suddenly felt a little nauseous.

When he arranged this research project for her, he was hoping that she wouldn't be able to complete it. He didn't expect her to actually finish it.

He knew she was going to ask Lu Zhou for mathematics help...

But he was surprised at her economics theory abilities.

“Did you compile the algorithm? Whether it's Econometrica or other journals, you will have to run the model on your own computer. Are you sure the data you calculated is...”

“I've done the calculations,” Xiao Tong said as she interrupted Professor Forster. “I passed the academic review. It's in peer review now...”

Having to modify the thesis wasn't a big problem.

The reviewer was obviously interested in her research; otherwise, they wouldn't have replied so fast.

Professor Forster played around with a pen in his hand and calmed down. He was a little annoyed.

“The review process for Econometrica is very long. It takes at least six weeks. Unless you're a well-known scholar, you would have to wait for a long time. I'm not saying it's a bad idea to submit to Econometrica, but why didn't you ask for my opinion...”

If this were any other student, he would have started to scold them.

But this student was different.

It wasn't like he was scared of her; he just didn't want to offend her...

“You don't have to worry about that...” Xiao Tong hesitated for a bit. She had to tell him the truth sooner or later, so she said, “The corresponding author is Lu Zhou.”

Lu Zhou was the corresponding author.

Lu Zhou certainly counted as a well-known scholar.

But this spot originally belonged to Forster...

The office suddenly had a tense atmosphere.

Professor Forster's smile disappeared.

"Sorry... I didn't hear you clearly, what are you saying?"

Xiao Tong: "He's the corresponding author. After all, he did the mathematical model and algorithm."

Professor Forster took a deep breath and looked at his student.

"What are you trying to do..."

"I'm not trying to do anything." Xiao Tong shook her head and said, "That was his request."

Professor Forster calmed down.

His request...

She obviously meant Professor Lu.

"The thesis is in peer review, and I received a reply from the reviewer this morning and made some minor modifications. The revised thesis should be accepted." Xiao Tong looked at Professor Forster and took a deep breath. "I'm sorry I couldn't write you down as the corresponding author, but Professor Lu did say that it's up to me who is first and second author."

Xiao Tong paused for a second and looked at Professor Forster.

"As long as you let me graduate, I'll put you down as the first author for my Econometrica thesis... What do you think?"

Scholar's Advanced Technological System - Chapter 884 - I Want It All -

Chapter 884: I Want It All

Professor Forster obviously wanted to say this out loud, and according to the unspoken rules of academia, both the corresponding author and first author was his. There was no negotiation to be done about this.

He would only give the first author to his best-performing students.

He didn't want to let go of such an excellent scientific research result, not to mention Lu Zhou was also involved.

However...

"... Do what you want."

After a moment of silence, Professor Forster picked up the pen and signed his name on the graduation application.

He looked up at Xiao Tong and smiled as he said, "Do you want a recommendation letter?"

"If you can, thanks."

No one would refuse a recommendation letter. Even though she had a recommendation letter from her brother, a recommendation letter from her master's supervisor would help her with her PhD.

Even though she had little to do with Forster.

Xiao Tong politely bowed and accepted the graduation application with a smile.

In any case, she learned quite a lot from this professor over the past two years.

Of course, on the other hand, she also helped the professor in return.

Professor Forster didn't assign her the project for noble reasons, it was just for her to help Forster "produce" more theses.

Now that his name was on an Econometrica thesis, he was happy.

After all, Forster himself would have to spend at least a year or two to write a thesis like that...

Professor Forster smiled in a relaxed manner and leaned back on his chair. He then said nonchalantly, "You're welcome. I wish you the best in your future endeavors.

"If you decide on which university and professor you want to do a PhD under, tell me. I'll send you the recommendation letter."

This was the best option.

Even though Forster couldn't retain Xiao Tong, he didn't want to offend her. It would be better to let her go and keep a good relationship.

After being in academia for so many years, he was well aware of who he should not offend.

The person standing in front of him was one of them.

He had a feeling that he would meet Xiao Tong again in the future.

They might even work together.

Professor Forster looked at the door and sighed.

"Damn, Lu Zhou... F*ck, how come I don't have a Nobel Prize laureate brother?

"If I did... I wouldn't have to f*cking worry about receiving some Royal Academy of Science grant."

He shook his head and put down his pen.

I guess pigs are starting to fly.

I'm actually jealous of a master's student...

...

I'm going to graduate!

Finally!

I'm so happy!

After returning to her dorm, Xiao Tong began to jump up and down in joy. She jumped on her bed and took out her phone. She then called Lu Zhou, who was on the other side of the planet.

The call was connected, and she immediately spoke with joy,

"Brother! I graduated! Hahaha, mua, I love you!"

Lu Zhou heard her excited voice and smiled.

"You got your diploma?"

"Yeah!" Xiao Tong sat on her bed and hugged a pillow. She began telling Lu Zhou what happened.

After hearing Xiao Tong's story, Lu Zhou nodded.

"Nicely handled.

"I hope you remember one thing. No matter what field of study it is, whether it's applied or theoretical, there is always a hierarchy. However, there is one thing that doesn't change; someone that produces good research will never be ignored."

Xiao Tong nodded.

"I understand."

"Good, when you encounter an unsolvable problem in the future, I'll be there for you." Lu Zhou smiled and said, "Oh yeah, one other thing, if you plan on going back for Chinese New Year, just go back to Jiangling. I'll be going back soon, so I won't be in Jinling."

Xiao Tong happily said, "Sure, I haven't been back in a long time."

“Okay then, talk to you later.”

Lu Zhou was about to hang up the phone when Xiao Tong suddenly spoke.

“Wait a second.”

“What?”

“If this were you, how would you have done it?”

“If I were being stopped from graduating?” Lu Zhou rubbed his chin and said, “Difficult question... I’ve never worried about graduating.”

When he was doing a master’s degree, Academician Lu was clearly fond of his talents and wanted him to stay, but he still let Lu Zhou graduate. Professor Deligne, on the other hand, gave him a lot of freedom and even allowed him to choose his own thesis project.

Most supervisors didn’t want to let go of talented students.

However, if someone was truly talented, a supervisor wouldn’t be able to keep them for long...

Xiao Tong: “...”

She knew she shouldn’t have given Lu Zhou the chance to humblebrag.

After Lu Zhou hung up the phone, he put his phone into his pocket.

Luo Wenxuan walked next to him and casually asked, “Your sister?”

Lu Zhou nodded and said, “Yeah, studying a master’s degree in economics at Oxford.”

Luo Wenxuan was suddenly interested.

“Introduce me to her someday?”

“F*ck off.”

Luo Wenxuan shivered and quickly tried to explain.

“Wait, what are you thinking about, I already have my target, I just want to get to know her... Wait, don’t go, the idea I talked about with you last time, do you want to look at it?”

He quickly gave Lu Zhou a stack of printed thesis papers.

“Just read it, I won’t write your name down!”

When Lu Zhou read the thesis title, he nearly laughed out loud.

[On Time Travel in Minkowski Space...]

“If you can publish this on PRL, I’ll eat a table.”

Luo Wenxuan coughed and scratched his head.

“Don’t say that! What if it gets approved, what will you do then?”

Lu Zhou shook his head and ignored Luo Wenxuan. He began walking back to his office, and Luo Wenxuan followed him.

However, when Lu Zhou was walking through the corridor, he saw a stylish girl with bangs standing by his office door. She was nervously looking through the office windows.

Luo Wenxuan noticed the pretty girl, and his eyes lit up as he put on a charming smile.

“Are you looking for Professor Lu?”

“Yeah...” The girl looked at Luo Wenxuan. She then noticed Lu Zhou who was standing behind Luo Wenxuan. Her eyes lit up as she asked, “Are you Professor Lu?”

Lu Zhou nodded and answered, “Yes, what do you want?”

“Um... Can we speak in private?” the girl hesitantly said as she looked at Luo Wenxuan.

“Okay then.” Luo Wenxuan gave Lu Zhou the thesis and waved goodbye.

Lu Zhou looked at the nervous lady.

“Let’s talk inside then.”

Because it was the holiday season, there wasn’t anyone in the office.

Lu Zhou opened the office door and placed the thesis on the coffee table. He then sat down at his desk.

Lu Zhou looked at the girl who followed him into the office and spoke.

“Please sit, do you need anything?”

The girl hesitated for a bit and decided not to sit on the sofa. She bit her lip and walked toward the desk.

“Um... Professor, there’s something I want to ask you.”

Lu Zhou: “No problem, I would be happy to help with any math problems, just nothing exam related.”

“Um... It is exam related. I was very busy this semester as I had to do my level 6 English exam and had student union obligations... so I didn’t have time to study.” The girl walked forward and said, “Please, professor, please don’t fail me, I’ll do anything.”

Failing a class meant no scholarships.

It could also mean not getting into a master’s program.

Therefore, the girl was willing to make some sacrifices...

When Lu Zhou stood up from his desk, the girl nervously clenched her fists.

She tried to prepare herself mentally.

This was her first time doing something like this, and she didn’t expect this to progress so fast.

Is he not going to buy me dinner first?

Lu Zhou walked next to her and stared at her for a second.

“Anything?” he asked.

The girl blushed, and she nodded quietly.

When Professor Lu walked up to her, her heart was pounding out of her chest. Professor Lu then spoke again.

“Then how about studying hard and preparing for the supplementary exam.”

Girl: “???”

Lu Zhou looked at the muddled girl and sighed.

He had done so much for the Jin Ling University undergraduate system. Even though the Jin Ling University mathematics department wasn't world-class, there were plenty of students.

Why did he always get the idiot students?

I guess we still have to work hard on improving the education system...

885 Holy Land of Aerospace

The third day after New Year's Day, the festive atmosphere faded from Jinling and the workers returned to the high-tech aerospace industrial area.

The doors of various factories were open; logistics trucks of all sizes drove on the spacious highways. Some trucks were filled with raw materials, others were filled with various parts. The trucks were like blood cells, filling the industrial area with nutrition, making China's aerospace industry stronger.

Located in the center of the entire industrial park was the boxy and spacious Jinling aerospace assembly center.

Inside the factory was a spacecraft metal skeleton, which was broken up into three pieces.

This place was like a sanctuary for the aerospace industry. The metal spacecraft skeleton was like a coffin, attracting the attention of astronauts all over the world.

Companies like Boeing, Space-X, and Airbus, companies that had done well in their respective fields, were willing to pay tens of billions of dollars to cooperate with Space-X. This was just to let their engineers take a look at the assembly center.

A group of foreign experts was standing beside the Magpie Bridge skeleton as they whispered to one another and pointed at things with a surprised look on their faces.

“Jesus Christ... How do you plan on sending it to space?”

The Chinese engineer standing beside them didn’t respond. He merely stood still with his hands behind his back.

The foreign expert obviously wasn’t satisfied, so he deliberately spoke in a provocative and sarcastic tone.

“This type of cuboid-shaped skeleton has a bunch of fatal flaws. Have you thought about what would happen if it gets hit by a meteorite? What about the cold metal welding effect in space? The huge amount of thrust will definitely magnify all of these risks.”

The engineer with a hard hat still stood there with a polite smile on his face, and the foreign experts were a little annoyed.

The foreign experts weren’t able to extract any information from the Chinese engineers, and they began to look a little disappointed.

The bearded expert who previously mentioned the cold welding effect was especially annoyed. He angrily complained, “Damn it... Aren’t you going to argue?”

Suddenly, the quiet engineer spoke.

“Nothing to argue about. The spacecraft speaks for itself.”

“ ... ”

Director Li, who was also touring the warehouse, looked at the group of disappointed foreign experts and asked his assistant, “Who are these people? What are they doing?”

His assistant's English was pretty good, so he explained, "Those foreign people... are trying to find mistakes?"

"Mistakes?" Director Li raised his eyebrows. He chuckled and said, "They have the audacity to try and find mistakes here?"

If this were before, he wouldn't have been so confident. After all, a couple of years ago, China's aerospace industry wasn't strong enough to ignore the opinions of foreign experts.

But now, they were the only country in the world with controllable fusion technology, as well as ion thruster propulsion spacecraft. Why should they listen to anyone else's advice?

What a joke.

"The main reason they're here is to gain information on our technology. However, their tactics aren't that clever, and provoking us is useless."

Hou Guang, the director of the Aerospace Research Institute at the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study walked over and shook Director Li's hand with a smile. He said, "Director Li, welcome to the aerospace assembly center. We look forward to your guidance. You should have told me you were coming, I would have made some preparations."

"What guidance? I'm just a layman, so I can't give you any valuable advice. I didn't want to disturb the work here, so I didn't tell you guys I was coming," Director Li said as he shook Hou Guang's hand. He was a little worried about the foreign experts, so he said, "If you know they're here to extract information, why did you let them in?"

"That was a request from our partners. They want to ensure that our safety practices are up to standard. We're not going to lock them outside just because of this." Hou Guang smiled nonchalantly as he said, "Any technology that can be reverse-engineered just by looking at it isn't worth anything. Our core technology is at the Institute for Advanced Study. Forget the fact that they're not allowed in there. Even if they're watching us doing experiments, they probably wouldn't know what is going on."

In fact, this annoyed the competitors the most.

They spent a ton of money just to come here in the name of “safety inspection”. However, all they saw were piles of metal scraps.

Yes, even though these metal scraps were valuable, they weren’t able to extract any technical information.

After all, they weren’t able to create a miniaturized version of controllable nuclear fusion themselves.

As Director Li looked at the jealous and resentful faces of the foreign experts, he sighed and said, “I never would have expected to see other people try to steal our technology.”

Hou Guang smiled and said, “Yeah, sometimes it feels like I’m in a dream.”

The group of foreign experts looked like tourists, moving from one attraction to the other. Hou Guang paused for a second and spoke.

“So far, we are currently bidding for NASA’s 500-ton lunar transfer orbit mission. If everything goes well, our offer should be 20% lower than Space-X’s offer. After discussing with experts, this is the most suitable bidding scheme. If the bid is successful, we’ll be able to receive US\$10 billion in transportation revenue, but...”

Director Li: “But what? You can ask me anything outside of technology, I’ll try my best to help.”

“No, you’re mistaken, everything is going fine. I was just going to say that, but unfortunately, Academician Lu’s attention is focused on mathematics.” Hou Guang sighed and said, “Honestly, I miss the days of being on the front line with Academician Lu. We’d exchange data and ideas, and he often inspired me.”

Director Li sighed and spoke.

“There’s nothing we can do about that. Academician Lu has his own priorities. We can’t always ask him to sacrifice for us.”

“You’re right, we shouldn’t rely on him.” Hou Guang nodded and said, “Looks like we have to try our best. Academician Lu tried his best to give us this advantage, we shouldn’t let it go to waste.”

Director Li smiled and nodded.

“Yeah, I’ll go look around. If you see Professor Lu, make sure to say hi for me.”

“Okay.” Hou Guang waved his hand and put on his hard hat.

After Hou Guang walked away, Director Li looked at the nearly-complete Magpie Bridge, and he looked relieved and fascinated.

China’s aerospace industry was going full force ahead, and everything was going in the right direction.

I can’t believe I’m able to witness this during my lifetime.

I won’t have any regrets when I die.

886 Rejected!

Not being able to continue fighting side by side in the aerospace industry was unfortunate for Hou Guang. Hou Guang felt like his time working with Lu Zhou made him grow.

His growth wasn’t only limited to his academic abilities, but also his leadership and management skills of a scientific research team.

Lu Zhou had plenty of experience in being a leader.

As the chief designer of the Chinese controllable fusion project, he was well versed in this area.

However, this skill couldn’t be transferred to other people through teaching, only through experience.

Hou Guang sometimes thought that maybe the reason Lu Zhou decided to retreat from the front line was to give himself more room to grow.

Every time Hou Guang thought about this, he couldn’t help but shed a tear.

People in the academic community that gave opportunities to the less fortunate was a rare sight.

However, Academician Wang Zengguang, the chief engineer of the China National Nuclear Corporation, had a totally different opinion of Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou cared about other people?

Maybe a little bit.

But that's not the main reason!

Lu Zhou just isn't interested in power, and he's lazy!

Anyone who knew Lu Zhou knew that Lu Zhou never stayed in one field for long. Even when it came to mathematics, which was his favorite, he would often immediately jump into another field when his research came to a bottleneck.

This was obvious from his letter to the Communist Party of China, back when he was still the chief designer for the nuclear fusion project.

Lu Zhou clearly portrayed that, once controllable nuclear fusion was figured out, he would move onto something else.

Lu Zhou was too tired of being chief designer...

...

"Achoo!"

On the highway.

Lu Zhou was sitting in the backseat, admiring the view.

Wang Peng, who was driving the car, looked in the rearview mirror and spoke.

"Is it too cold?"

"No, it's fine..." Lu Zhou rubbed his nose and turned his attention back to the printed thesis on his lap.

This thesis was the one Luo Wenxuan showed him last week.

However, even though it was the same thesis, he received this thesis from someone else other than Luo Wenxuan.

In fact, Lu Zhou didn't want to read this thing; just from the abstract, he could tell that this was nothing more than a theoretical conjecture that didn't solve any real-life problems. It couldn't explain any unknown phenomenon and had close to no research value at all.

However, he didn't expect Luo Wenxuan to actually submit it to PRL; moreover, PRL actually asked him to review the thesis.

Because of the double-blind review process, Luo Wenxuan didn't know that his thesis was being reviewed by his boss.

Despite the possible conflicts of interest, Lu Zhou still accepted the review invitation from PRL. He printed out the thesis and began reading it on his drive back to his hometown.

Strictly speaking, even though there was still a week or two before Chinese New Year break, Lu Zhou planned on returning to his home town in a couple of days.

However, over the past few days, people often came to his office. Some were asking about exam marks, and some were giving him gifts. All these annoyed him.

Because this year's exam was scheduled to be before the holidays, he had more visitors than usual.

Not to mention there were some faculty members who wanted to work for him.

Lu Zhou told He Changwen to mark the rest of the exam papers and decided to go home early for Chinese New Year.

As for why he was driving?

Having a car during the holidays was more convenient.

Actually he wanted to drive his sports car, but the small car really wasn't suitable for the long journey. Per Wang Peng's suggestion, they took the black sedan instead.

The sedan was much more comfortable and Lu Zhou could even lie down in the back. It was perfect for long distances. The Electric Purple was pretty useless, other than for showing off.

“He has a good understanding of Minkowski space theory, but his mathematics skills are... Is this guy really Witten’s student?”

It wasn’t just the mathematical calculations, but the thesis also had logical problems.

In the field of theoretical physics, mathematics was very important, but it wasn’t crucial.

Even scholars who only used basic mathematical tools could create new theories. For example, Frank Wilczek, who worked with Lu Zhou in the past, did profound research in the field of quark particles without a deep understanding of mathematics.

Physicists like Edward Witten, who created mathematical tools themselves and won the Fields Medal, were of course the minority.

Not only was the mathematics in Luo Wenxuan’s thesis incorrect, but it also contained logical fallacies. It was a miracle this thesis even went into the peer review stage.

Lu Zhou smiled and shook his head. He then wrote down a line on the bottom of the paper.

[Rejected]

Do you really think I would accept this thesis?

In your dreams.

Forget about all the problems in the thesis...

I said I would eat a table if this thesis was accepted; obviously, I’m not going to do that to myself.

Lu Zhou placed the thesis aside and looked at the view outside the window. He suddenly spoke.

“Where are we?”

Wang Peng, who was holding the steering wheel, replied, "We're 10 kilometers from Jiangcheng."

Lu Zhou nodded and suddenly remembered something.

"Speaking of which, the semiconductor industry cluster is in the suburbs of Jiangcheng, right?"

Wang Peng paused for a second and didn't know why Lu Zhou was talking about this.

However, he still nodded and replied, "Yeah... I think it's in the eastern suburbs of Jiangcheng."

Eastern suburbs of Jiangcheng?

That's where the new silicon valley is...

Lu Zhou remembered that Chen Yushan told him that the Huawei carbon-based semiconductor production and research center was near here. He suddenly said, "Let's go take a look."

"Ok."

Without asking any questions, Wang Peng skillfully changed the lane and began driving toward the highway.

After driving Lu Zhou around for so many years, he was familiar with his personality.

Lu Zhou was always unpredictable.

Whether it was his research or his lifestyle.

Just like how he didn't give Wang Peng any notice before he decided to go home early for the holidays.

Wang Peng was used to it.

However, even though Wang Peng was used to this, some people weren't...

On the Jiangling highway exit, which was more than 200 kilometers away, a group of people waited in the cold while trembling in the wind...

887 Welcome

Jiangling highway exit.

Wu Dingrong stared hopelessly at the highway exit, and the breezing wind made his eyes hurt. Fortunately, it wasn't snowing today; otherwise, his stubble would have been covered in snowflakes.

He couldn't take it anymore and turned his stiff neck toward his assistant before asking, "Are you sure Professor Lu is coming back today?"

"The transportation department said he's coming today. Surely he's not still driving? It's only 500 kilometers... Mayor, what if you wait at the toll booth? I'll give you a call when the Highway Department notifies me."

Assistant Sun Xiaofeng, who was standing next to Wu Dingrong, was also confused.

When he saw a glimpse of irritation on the mayor's face, he started to become even more anxious.

He was the first person to hear that Lu Zhou was going back to Jiangling, and he immediately notified the mayor as soon as possible.

When the mayor heard that Academician Lu was coming back, the city council immediately held a conference and arranged the welcoming ceremony. They even set up a banner at the highway exit.

Normally speaking, an academician wasn't worthy of being greeted by the city council leadership team. Even though academicians received special treatment, they didn't have any political power.

But Academician Lu was different.

Not only was he involved in many national projects, but he was the winner of the Ling Yun medal award!

Forget about the local mayor, even the state department team had to bow down to him. Now that this big name was coming back home, Major Wu obviously put Lu Zhou on his highest priority.

However, there seemed to be a hiccup...

Logically speaking, after a seven-hour drive, Academician Lu should be arriving at the highway exit. But he was nowhere to be found.

“No...” Wu Dingrong shook his head and stared at the road as he said, “Academician Lu is a national hero, and he’s the pride of Jiangling. We have to let him feel warm and welcome. Do you think waiting in a toll booth is being warm and welcome?”

You came all the way out here just to greet him, is that not enough?

Assistant Sun stared at the stubborn Mayor Wu and tried to persuade him.

“But... you can’t just stand outside like this! It’s freezing out here; what if you catch a cold?! Academician Lu would feel horrible.”

In fact, Wu Dingrong wanted Lu Zhou to feel sorry.

Of course, with all the cameras and reporters surrounding him, he would never say that.

“I don’t care about some cold. Academician Lu went into a coma for our country. Who cares about a cold? I’m in great health!” said Wu Dingrong as he shook his head. He continued, “This conversation is over. If you’re cold, feel free to leave.”

Even though Assistant Sun wanted to leave, he didn’t dare to.

If he went home right now, he would be out of a job by tomorrow.

All he could do right now was to wait in the cold with the mayor and the city council leadership team.

Sun Xiaofeng looked at the mayor’s fur coat, then looked at his thin blazer.

All he wanted was for Academician Lu’s driver to drive faster.

The mayor might not get a cold, but he definitely would...

...

Unfortunately, Assistant Sun’s wishes didn’t come true.

The entire Jiangling city council didn't expect Lu Zhou to go on a field trip before returning to his hometown.

After Wang Peng got off the Jiangcheng highway, he set his navigation destination to an unmarked area on the map. They soon arrived at the edge of the Jiangcheng high-tech zone.

This was where the newly established semiconductor park was.

The medieval tall concrete walls surrounded the entire park. There were only six checkpoints at the car lanes used for importing and exporting goods.

Wang Peng slowly drove the car to a checkpoint and rolled down the windows. He showed his ID to one of the soldiers and was soon let in.

Lu Zhou looked at Wang Peng's ID and curiously asked, "Can you go anywhere with that ID?"

"Of course not," Wang Peng shook his head and said, "you have to apply for approval and write a report. You have to write what you did, who you met, how long you were there."

What a hassle.

"But I didn't see you apply for anything."

Wang Peng smiled and said, "Someone applied for me. After all, I'm not the only one in your security team."

"Oh, I see... Thanks so much."

Lu Zhou realized that his security team couldn't celebrate Chinese New Year and felt a little guilty.

However, Wang Peng didn't seem to care.

"No problem, your safety is our first priority."

Lu Zhou made a suggestion.

"Don't you want to go home for the holidays? Shouldn't you switch shifts with someone?"

Wang Peng smiled.

“As a soldier, the country is my home. Everywhere I go, I’m home.”

The car slowly drove into the industrial park.

The six-lane roads were lined with rectangular white factories, and occasionally, they could see logistics trucks going in and out of the factories.

This place wasn’t very lively, and the factories and research centers were like robots that quietly did their jobs.

Lu Zhou looked outside the window and felt shocked.

It’s been less than two months.

The research institutes and factories are nearly done with construction...

This is a miracle.

Wang Peng stared at Lu Zhou and asked, “Where are we going?”

Lu Zhou thought for a second before replying, “Let’s go to Huawei’s HiSilicon.”

Wang Peng nodded.

“Okay.”

The black sedan drove down the six-lane street toward the building located at the center of the park.

This was the newly established HiSilicon semiconductor research and development building, as well as a semiconductor processing base.

Of course, it was too early to label this as a semiconductor processing base. They were still focused on the research and development side. After they turned the carbon-based transistors into a viable product, then they could talk about production.

Because Star Sky Technology invested in HiSilicon, the Jinling Institute for Advanced Study sent a team of carbon-based semiconductor researchers to help the engineers with industrialization problems.

The car drove into the parking lot as Lu Zhou called Chen Yushan. He told her that he was at the Jiangcheng semiconductor base. He then got out of the car and walked toward the factory.

However, when he was walking toward the entrance, a staff member wearing a hard hat walked over and stopped him.

“Stop! Which department are you from, why are you here... Oh sh*t, Lu Zhou?!”

When Lu Zhou saw the person, he was astounded.

“Guangming?!”

F*ck!

Huang Guangming?!

This was Lu Zhou’s roommate in college.

Why is he here...

This...

Is such a coincidence!

888 Meeting an Old Friend

Huang Guangming took a second look.

He was sure this was Lu Zhou.

Huang Guangming was about to turn around and leave but Lu Zhou grabbed his shoulder.

“The f*ck? Why are you leaving...”

Huang Guangming stood there and sighed.

“I’m embarrassed to see myself like this, just let me go...”

Lu Zhou couldn't help but interrupt him.

"No, screw that!"

F*ck sake!

I haven't seen this a*shole for years, and he treats me like this...

Long gone was the cocky and obnoxious Guangming... Lu Zhou felt a little distant now.

When did my brother become like this?

Especially that hairline...

Lu Zhou nearly didn't recognize him.

After a moment of silence, Huang Guangming spoke.

"You look like you're surprised, in a bad way."

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "Of course not! I'm just a little emotional. I haven't seen you in six years, and you've changed... a lot."

Huang Guangming sighed and said, "... It's been six years, and you still don't know when you're being offensive."

Wait.

Am I?

Lu Zhou thought about it and didn't know how he was being offensive.

Wang Peng closed the car door and walked over.

"You know him?"

Lu Zhou was in a good mood, and he responded, "Yeah, an old friend of mine."

Huang Guangming looked at Wang Peng and said, "And you are?"

Lu Zhou was about to speak, but Wang Peng spoke first.

“Wang Peng, driver.”

“Nice to meet you.” Huang Guangming took off his safety hat and asked, “Why do you have a male driver?”

Faced with this weird question, Lu Zhou said, “... Have you ever seen a CEO with a female driver?”

Huang Guangming thought for a second and said, “I guess you’re right.”

Lu Zhou looked at the factory as he asked, “You’re working at... HiSilicon?”

“Yeah...” Huang Guangming awkwardly scratched his head and said, “I switched majors. I was too embarrassed to say, but I didn’t switch to finance; I switched to automation instead.”

“... Why didn’t you tell me?” Lu Zhou sighed and said, “I would have persuaded you otherwise.”

“... Forget about it, bro.” Huang Guangming sighed and said, “It’s in the past.”

Automation workers received little pay and had to work harder than programmers.

Huang Guangming was doing pretty well for himself, and he had a pretty good master’s supervisor. Even though his academic abilities were average, and his major wasn’t popular, he was still given an opportunity to work at Huawei.

However, Huang Guangming was the type of person who was average at everything he did.

This was an advantage when he was doing his master’s. His supervisor didn’t ignore him, nor did his supervisor pay too much attention to him.

But that blabbering mouth...

His friends might think it was funny, but his colleagues thought otherwise.

All in all, he earned a couple of grand in RMB per month, doing a highly stressful job. Even though he wasn’t even in his thirties yet, his hairline was clearly receding.

“Honestly, if I knew it was going to be this stressful, I wouldn’t have changed majors.”

Lu Zhou wanted to say mathematics wasn’t easier either, but he still couldn’t help but ask, “Then why did you switch majors?”

Huang Guangming sighed and said, “My mom told me to. She said she has a cousin in a car factory. She heard that the factory workers have easy jobs, and they all majored in automation.”

Huang Guangming went from an automation major to being a factory safety officer.

His mom didn’t have the slightest clue what automation was, but Huang Guangming should have at least did some research himself.

“... By the way, why did you study mathematics in the first place?”

“My mom made me.” Huang Guangming sighed and said, “Remember? I had a cousin in accounting, and she studied mathematics, so my mom made me major in mathematics as well...”

Lu Zhou: “...”

Okay then.

Everything makes sense now.

After all, this was Lu Zhou’s roommate, so he still wanted to help him.

Lu Zhou felt bad seeing him like this.

Lu Zhou went silent for a while and asked, “Want to go back to school?”

“Forget about it, I know what you’re going to say...” Huang Guangming shook his head and said, “I’m not smart enough to be in academia. I’m just happy you still remember me. If I go back to school, I’m going to do horribly, and people are going to blame you... I can’t do that to you.”

Lu Zhou understood what Huang Guangming was thinking, so he nodded and said, “No one will blame me. You’re overthinking this, but it’s your life, so I won’t make your decisions for you. It’s just that if you want to go back to school... Tell me.”

Huang Guangming was a little hesitant, but he soon smiled and said, “Haha, thanks in advance then... Want a smoke?”

“I don’t smoke... You’re allowed to smoke here?” Lu Zhou looked around and tried to look for a non-smoking sign.

“Not in the factory, but you can smoke outside. I came out here for a cigarette break and happened to bump into you.” Huang Guangming took out a cigarette and said, “Most people aren’t allowed inside. There’s even a 100,000 yuan reward for catching a corporate spy. But since you’re an academician, you can probably visit. Do you want me to take you?”

Lu Zhou was about to reject his offer when the factory door slowly opened. A group of people in suits walked out of the factory.

Huang Guangming looked back and immediately threw his cigarette on the ground.

The person leading the group was the head of the HiSilicon semiconductor industrial factory, Meng Zhongbiao.

Lu Zhou: “Who is that?”

Huang Guangming gulped and spoke.

“... Factory manager.”

Being caught slacking off...

I can forget about my salary bonus...

889 I Have Half

When Huang Guangming saw the factory manager walk over, he began to mentally prepare himself. However, when the manager walked over, he completely ignored Huang Guangming and spoke to Lu Zhou instead.

“Academician Lu, what are you doing here, my friend? If you told us you were coming, we would have prepared to give you a tour!”

“No, no, it’s fine,” Lu Zhou looked at the factory manager and said, “I don’t want to disturb your work. I mean, look at the group of people behind you, I already feel bad for intruding.”

Lu Zhou obviously wasn’t going to tell him that the real reason he was here was that he decided to go back to his hometown early this year, mainly because of the annoying people visiting his office.

“Don’t worry about me, just let this guy give me a tour of the factory.”

Lu Zhou patted Huang Guangming’s shoulder, who then forced a smile on his face.

Meng Zhongbiao finally noticed the person standing next to Lu Zhou. He didn’t recognize Huang Guangming but could tell that Huang Guangming was a factory staff member.

“Okay then... Then, will you please take care of Academician Lu. Give him a tour of the factory,” Meng Zhongbiao said as he gave Huang Guangming a friendly smile. Meng Zhongbiao secretly looked at his assistant, who was standing next to him.

His assistant quickly knew what was going on. He took out his phone and took a photo of Huang Guangming. He then sent the photo to the factory Wechat group and sent a message.

[Who is this? I need details!]

“Okay, yes, sir!”

Huang Guangming didn’t notice the assistant’s movements. He nodded at the factory’s “big name”.

Based on Huang Guangming’s years of experience in the field, he could tell that Factory Manager Meng was Lu Zhou’s acquaintance. Huang Guangming was just glad his bonus was safe.

After all, when it came to the computer chip industry, other than the manager or the deputy manager, most of the staff members were doing repetitive work. The only difference was that the staff members were stuck in cubicles, while the assembly line workers were on the front-line.

His salary was enough to pay off his mortgage and car lease, but without his monthly bonus, he would have to eat sleep as his dinner this month.

After the leadership team walked away, Huang Guangming sighed a breath of relief before thanking Lu Zhou solemnly.

“Thanks, bro! Thanks to you, my bonus is still safe.”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Stop slacking off at work. I can save you this time, but what about next time?”

“I told you, I’m not slacking off, I’m just taking a cigarette break... It’s not like I can stay in the office for eight hours a day.” Huang Guangming rubbed his head and said, “I’m a hard worker...”

“Forget about it, give me a tour inside.” Lu Zhou looked at the large factory and grinned as he said, “I heard HiSilicon used to be supplied by TSMC. They finally have their own factory now, so I’m curious what it looks like inside.”

“Actually, it’s nothing special, just come with me... What about this guy?” Huang Guangming said as he pointed toward Wang Peng.

Wang Peng: “I am responsible for Academician Lu’s safety. Just pretend like I don’t exist.”

Huang Guangming nodded and said: “... Okay then.”

The three people walked into the spacious factory.

Lu Zhou followed Huang Guangming’s footsteps and looked around the factory building. He visited various processing stations and learned about the production process.

Lu Zhou stared at the empty chip processing area, paused for a moment, then spoke.

“How come there’s no equipment here... No workers either.”

“Because the most important... Because the technology is still a secret,” Huang Guangming said. He nearly spoke out loud about the carbon-based transistors, but fortunately, he stopped himself. He then said, “I can’t tell you the specifics since it’s a state secret... Hope you understand.”

“It’s fine, I get it.”

Lu Zhou smiled and nodded his head.

Looks like Guangming is quite a professional; he won’t even reveal secrets to me.

Too bad he doesn’t know that I’m the one who set the guidelines on keeping carbon-based transistors a secret.

Huang Guangming started to speak a little more cautiously.

“I heard you worked in nuclear fusion, then aerospace. How do you have connections in semiconductors?”

“Connections?” Lu Zhou frowned and said, “Not really, I don’t really know a lot of people in the semiconductor field...”

Wang Zhengfei was one of them, but Lu Zhou wasn’t that close to him. Other than that, Professor Wu Tianqun, the head of the carbon-based transistor project, was the only other one.

These were the only two.

“Okay, fine, forget about it...” Huang Guangming glanced at Lu Zhou in disbelief. “If you’re not friends with the factory manager, why would he let you in?”

“Oh, that’s what you’re talking about. I actually don’t know him; I don’t even know his name.” Lu Zhou smiled awkwardly and said, “But I do have half of... HiSilicon’s shares.”

Huang Guangming: “???”

...

On the other hand, at the manager’s office for the production and research center.

Meng Zhongbiao sat in front of his desk and picked up his vacuum flask. He glanced at his assistant.

His assistant knew what the manager wanted, so he looked at his phone and spoke.

“I did some research. That technician’s name is Huang Guangming, and his resume is quite satisfactory. Nothing particularly amazing, but no bad records. He studied at Jin Ling University, and he was Academician Lu’s... roommate.”

“Room-roommate?!” Factory Manager Meng paused for a second and said, “They’re in the same class?”

The assistant nodded.

“Academician Lu is in Jin Ling University’s class of 2013... They didn’t graduate at the same time, but they were in the same class.”

Same class?!

How come one of them is an academician, and the other is...

Meng Zhongbiao contemplated for a second and said, “Um... Invite Huang Guangming to my office.”

The assistant nodded.

“Yes, sir.”

The fact that the manager used the word “invite” instead of “bring” was quite telling.

After the assistant found Huang Guangming, he politely brought the technician to the manager’s office, then closed the office door and left.

The atmosphere in the office was quiet.

Huang Guangming stared at Manager Meng, who was sitting behind his desk. He was a little confused.

If Lu Zhou told him that he had East Asia Energy’s shares, he would believe him. But Huawei’s HiSilicon... He thought Huawei maintained total control over HiSilicon?

It’s not about making money...

If he were the Huawei CEO, even if it meant losing billions, he would never sell HiSilicon's shares and let other people stick their hands into the pie. Not to mention, even if Huawei wouldn't lose billions, they were still competitive in the fields of security monitoring and automation.

However, Lu Zhou didn't explain anything to him. Lu Zhou just asked him to finish the tour, then they bid their farewells.

When he got back to his cubicle, he was immediately called into his boss' office...

Huang Guangming stared at Manager Meng and asked, "Manager Meng?"

No response.

The manager didn't even acknowledge him.

Huang Guangming didn't dare to speak again.

They quietly sat there as the clock on the wall slowly ticked by. After a minute, Meng Zhongbiao finally nodded.

This kid is a bit goofy, but he's a good student. But he does come in a dime a dozen, but...

He does have training value.

I guess I'll promote him to safety officer, then deputy safety director, then maybe management...

Of course, he might not be fit for the job.

I'm giving him the opportunity, but if he doesn't perform well, I'm sure Academician Lu won't want a team dragger.

While Factory Manager Meng was contemplating, Huang Guangming got the chills. Factory Manager Meng's arrogant smile gave Huang Guangming goosebumps.

The f*ck, this guy isn't interested in me, right?

I don't swing that way!

While he was hesitating on what to say, Factory Manager Meng finally said, “From now on, you’ll be responsible for the safety of the research and production center.”

Huang Guangming: “...?”

890 Unexpected Things

After Lu Zhou left HiSilicon’s semiconductor production and research center, he didn’t immediately get in his car. Instead, he and Wang Peng walked around the industrial park.

Lu Zhou looked at the buildings and suddenly spoke.

“Wang Peng.”

Wang Peng: “What?”

Lu Zhou smiled and said, “Nothing, we’ve been walking around here for a while, what do you think?”

Wang Peng went silent for a second before replying, “It’s impressive.”

Lu Zhou looked at him.

“That’s all you have to say?”

“I don’t really know how to describe it.” Wang Peng looked at the large rectangular semiconductor factories and said, “It’s... also a bit unexpected.”

Due to the globalization of the market, every country had its own position in the global industrial chain, and they had their own areas they were competitive at. However, the ability to produce and the willingness to produce were two different things.

Intel moved its US factory to Saigon because of the expensive US labor costs. It wasn’t because of the decline of the US’ chip manufacturing abilities.

If Intel wanted to, they could move the production back to America at a moment’s notice.

Semiconductor was China's electronics industry forte. Semiconductor was located in the upstream of the chip manufacturing field.

But now, semiconductors were set aside, giving Wang Peng a surreal feeling.

Are the carbon-based chips really that magical?

Honestly speaking, Wang Peng wasn't convinced.

However, he wasn't a scientist, so he had nothing to say.

"A ton of unexpected things are going to happen in the future, just get ready..." Lu Zhou smiled and said, "Speaking of which, I feel like I learned a lot just from walking around here."

"Like what?"

"Like production safety." Lu Zhou smiled and said, "The production process of carbon-based chips and silicon-based chips are completely different. Carbon fibers and carbon dust generated in the production process are flammable. Forget about prohibiting flames inside the plant; they have to be careful of things outside the plant as well."

Wang Peng: "Then what are they going to do?"

"Obviously ban smoking throughout the entire park... Why?"

"Nothing..." Wang Peng smiled and touched his pack of cigarettes as he said, "I just think... It'll be a pain in the a*s."

He had been smoking for many years; not so much over the past two years, but he still smoked whenever Lu Zhou was not around.

Banning smoking throughout the entire park would be torture for those nicotine addicts.

Lu Zhou shook his head and said, "I don't know what's so hard, can't they just quit?"

Wang Peng smiled and changed the subject as he asked, "Is there anywhere else you want to visit?"

“I’ve seen most of the places I want to visit.” Lu Zhou glanced at the buildings and said, “Let’s head back.”

“Okay, just wait here, I’ll bring the car to you.” Wang Peng nodded and started to walk away.

...

Lu Zhou wasn’t very familiar with the production process. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have had to buy half of a semiconductor company just to solve the industrialization problem.

However, even though he wasn’t familiar with the industry, he could still give out constructive opinions from a scholar’s perspective.

Because of this, even though Lu Zhou was engaged in theoretical research, he still visited all of the necessary facilities.

For example, he learned a lot from this trip.

In addition to the basic safety measures, there were a lot of areas that could be improved in the HiSilicon production and research center.

If it weren’t for his visit, these problems would be buried in the long production process. The technicians and workers in the factory could take years trying to find these problems. Instead, Lu Zhou was able to find the root of the problem.

Even though Lu Zhou might not be able to come up with a solution, he could at least point out the problem.

He wrote down these problems and sent it to Chen Yushan. He also sent a copy to Director Li.

He was certain his letter would be immensely useful...

Lu Zhou continued to embark on his journey back home. Dozens of kilometers away, Mayor Jia Yuanping sat at his Jiangcheng office. He meticulously read the document in his hand.

Suddenly, he heard footsteps from outside the office. His office door was pushed open as his assistant walked in.

“Mayor!”

“What?” The mayor put down his pen and said, “Why didn’t you knock?”

The assistant didn’t explain why he didn’t knock; instead, he immediately spoke.

“We just received news from the traffic bureau that Academician Lu just got off the highway at the Jiangcheng exit.”

Mayor Jia immediately stood up. He was more anxious than his assistant.

“Go!”

The assistant was a little shocked.

The mayor spoke.

“Go there right now!”

Mayor Jia didn’t inform the province of the news; instead, he brought his staff members to the scene.

The group of people soon arrived at the semiconductor industrial base entrance. A soldier standing at the checkpoint was muddled.

The soldier standing at the checkpoint nervously looked around and reported the situation to his superiors.

After a while, he received a reply from his superior, telling him not to worry.

The assistant walked up to him and spoke in a friendly tone.

“Hey there, we’re from the city council, did you happen to see a black sedan?”

The soldier looked at this man.

“Identification, sir.”

“Here,” Mayor Jia said. He took out his red ID and said, “We’re from the city council, and we heard Academician Lu is here? Can you tell us where he is?”

The soldier looked at the red ID and made sure it was real. He did a salute and gave the ID back to Jia Yuanping.

“If you’re here for Academician Lu, I suggest you leave.”

The assistant anxiously said, “We’re in a hurry...”

The soldier interrupted the assistant and said, “Academician Lu left twenty minutes ago...”

891 I Guess I’m Quite Important?

Suddenly, the situation became awkward.

Both people from the city and the provincial council were here, and the reporters from the TV station were ready. However, in the end, they waited futilely at the semiconductor industrial base entrance.

But there was nothing they could do.

After all, they didn’t make an appointment, nor did they have Academician Lu’s phone number. It wasn’t like they could chase him on the highway and bring him back?

That wouldn’t end well.

Lu Zhou was already on the highway, back to his hometown, Jiangling.

When his car approached the Jiangling highway exit, he was shocked when he looked at the toll station.

Several large searchlights were placed on top of the toll booths, shining white laser beams into the sky. It was something out of a concert or sporting event.

Lu Zhou wasn’t the only one who was shocked; Wang Peng was also surprised.

“Why are there signal lights at the toll station?”

Fortunately, the lights were aimed toward the sky instead of the highway.

Otherwise, a few car crashes were bound to happen.

“ . . . ”

Lu Zhou looked at the toll station for a while before finally realizing that the lights weren't aimed toward the sky. Instead, they were illuminating a banner above the toll station.

He looked closely and was astonished.

His name was on the banner.

"Should we go through another entrance?" Lu Zhou said; he was a little embarrassed.

Wang Peng awkwardly coughed.

"We're already here, how else are we supposed to get in?"

Even though Lu Zhou was reluctant, this was his only option.

Wang Peng drove that black sedan toward the highway exit. A group of people in suits stood next to the toll booths in the cold.

The moment they saw the black sedan, Sun Xiaofeng all sighed in relief.

Sun Xiaofeng looked at the mayor and quickly said, "Mayor! That one!"

The people around him sighed in relief as well.

They had been waiting here since noon, and it was already nighttime. Fortunately, they didn't have to wait overnight.

The group of people began to whisper quietly.

"Is that Academician Lu's car?"

A veteran government official who was about to retire spoke with an envious look in his eyes, "Black sedan with a red flag... Not bad, Beijing probably gave him the car."

"Have you watched the news?"

"No sh*t, which politician doesn't?"

"Then you probably don't pay enough attention."

“Why do you say that?”

“Just look at the car model.”

The group of people quietly exclaimed.

Another young official couldn't help but ask, “I heard he has a one of a kind sports car? How come he didn't drive that?”

Another person began to explain.

“Driving a sports car is too much publicity. This sedan was given to him by the state, and it's much more lowkey. It's also more spacious, more suitable for long drives. Seems like Academician Lu isn't sloppy, and he's quite a careful person.”

Mayor Wu happened to overhear the conversation, and he said, “What do you mean sloppy, of course he's not sloppy!”

“Yes, sir, my bad...”

The person lowered his head and shut his mouth.

The black sedan drove over and passed the toll booth. It then drove toward the parking space near the toll booth.

Wu Dingrong walked over with his team behind him as he enthusiastically reached out his hand.

“Academician Lu, it must have been a long journey!”

“No, no, it was fine.” Lu Zhou got out of the car and looked at Mayor Wu. He shook the mayor's hand and said, “I'm just coming home for the holidays, no need for all the formalities...”

“This is our duty.” Wu Dingrong shook Lu Zhou's hand and said, “There are only 17 academicians in Jiangling, and you're the youngest and most accomplished of them. You're the pride of Jiangling, the pride of the country. We're just showing our appreciation to our hometown friend.”

The mayor had quite the speech prepared.

Even though Lu Zhou was a little embarrassed, he still appreciated the kind words.

However, he was still a little remorseful.

Not only did this welcoming ceremony waste his time, but it also wasted a bunch of other people's time.

After Lu Zhou let go of Mayor Wu's hand, he spoke in a serious manner.

"Mr. Mayor, please don't do this in the future. We're all Jiangling people here, so no need to waste the taxpayers' money on me. It's making me feel bad for coming back."

After some small talk, Lu Zhou euphemistically declined the mayor's offering for sending him home. Lu Zhou was finally able to get rid of the city council people and returned to his black sedan.

Lu Zhou sat in the backseat and sighed.

"Finally got rid of them."

Wang Peng started the car and said, "The low-level leadership team is quite enthusiastic."

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "The city council isn't low-level. right?"

"You might not realize it in Jinling, but after you stay in Beijing for a while, you'll realize that..." Wang Peng shook his head and said, "The mayor of a city is such a small role."

Lu Zhou thought for a second and realized Wang Peng was right.

Everyone he met in Beijing was a higher level than a city mayor...

Lu Zhou suddenly remembered something and spoke.

"Then, which level am I?"

When Wang Peng heard this, he nearly crashed the car.

"You don't know?"

“... I never thought about it.”

Lu Zhou stayed in his university office most of the time, and occasionally, he handled some work for the Lunar Orbit Committee. As the chief designer, he was mainly responsible for decision making and research rather than delegating specific tasks.

Apart from attending some conferences with the Lunar Orbit Committee and the State Administration for National Defense, Lu Zhou didn't really interact with anyone from the state. He spent the majority of his time in his laboratory.

He remembered hearing a long time ago about the treatment for various government administrative levels, but he didn't really care about that stuff and forgot about it a long time ago.

Wang Peng realized that Lu Zhou wasn't joking with him, so he looked in the rearview mirror and spoke.

“The Lunar Orbit Committee is directly controlled by the Communist Party of China. There are more than a dozen military members guarding your home. The car we're in right now... What level do you think you are?”

Lu Zhou went silent and began thinking.

Emmmm...

He had never paid attention to this stuff before; he just knew that academicians received special treatment.

But now, he suddenly realized...

I guess I'm quite important?

892 Returning to Home

When Lu Zhou arrived in Jiangling, it was already late at night. Even though he wanted to go home, he remembered that his parents were probably asleep. Thus, he decided to get a hotel room in the city and asked Wang Peng to drive him back home the next day.

The doorbell began to ring.

Lu Zhou heard the footsteps get closer, and the door was soon slammed open.

When Fang Mei looked at Lu Zhou's familiar face, her eyes were filled with tears of excitement and joy.

"Son! You're finally back!"

"Mom!" Lu Zhou gave his mother a hug and saw his father walk to the front door. Lu Zhou took a deep breath and spoke with a slightly trembling voice, "Dad, I'm back!"

When was the last time I was here?

It was either three or four years ago; Lu Zhou couldn't remember.

Lu Bangguo looked at his son and said, "Fantastic, how was the drive? Come, sit down... This is?"

Lu Zhou moved half a step to the side and said, "He's Wang Peng, my driver. You guys have met before."

"Oh, oh, yeah, I remember. Damn, my memory is getting worse day by day..." Lu Bangguo smiled and said, "Come on in, guys."

The two walked into the living room as Lu Bangguo politely brought over a cup and teapot.

If it were just his son, he wouldn't be this polite. However, he had a guest in his house. Even though Wang Peng repeatedly said to pretend like he didn't exist, Lu Bangguo just couldn't leave him alone.

"So much has changed..."

Lu Zhou took a sip of the tea and looked at the renovated house.

The TV was replaced with a 48-inch flat-screen TV, and the clock on the wall had been changed.

Lu Zhou even saw some garlic and chive plants sitting on the window ledge.

Almost everything he remembered had changed.

The only thing that didn't change was the familiar smell of home.

Fang Mei smiled and said, "You and your sister aren't around, so dad and I decided to renovate the house. Most of the pieces of furniture are new, but I didn't touch your and your sister's rooms."

"Oh, really?" Lu Zhou smiled and said, "Perfect, I was planning on seeing what my old room looked like."

Lu Bangguo looked at Wang Peng, who sat solemnly on the sofa. He smiled and said, "Wang Peng, how about you stay for dinner? I'll go buy a fish from the market."

"No, no." Wang Peng politely waved his hands and said, "I have some work to do, I won't disturb your family reunion."

Lu Zhou asked, "Work to do?"

Wang Peng coughed and said, "I have some forms to fill... and other things."

Without asking about the specifics, Lu Zhou nodded.

"Okay then, I'll send you out."

Wang Peng was walking out of the house when he rubbed his eyes.

Lu Zhou noticed his movements. He paused for a second and asked, "What's wrong?"

"Nothing..." Wang Peng shook his head and said, "Just... a little sad. You have sacrificed so much for this country, for science."

Wang Peng's voice suddenly began to choke up.

Lu Zhou didn't know what to say.

"..."

Actually he wanted to tell Wang Peng that he was happy with himself, but seeing how emotional Wang Peng was, he decided to keep quiet.

It's fine, I'll just leave him to be.

Lu Zhou changed the subject and said, "Are you looking for a place to stay? I'll reimburse the accommodation..."

Wang Peng: "No need, I'll live in a hostel nearby."

Lu Zhou shook his head and said, "No, don't do that. It's fine, it barely costs anything anyway. It's better for you to get some rest, and I'll also feel safer with you behind the wheel."

Wang Peng coughed and said, "I think you have the wrong idea... The conditions there are pretty nice, and they give us three meals a day, so don't worry about it."

Most importantly, because of his military background, he wasn't used to fancy hotels. He would much rather live in a safer, more secure place...

Lu Zhou didn't try to persuade him otherwise. They said goodbye and went their separate ways.

...

After Lu Zhou watched the black sedan disappear from his driveway, he turned around and went back into his house.

His mom already started to cook lunch, while his dad was out buying groceries. Even though he wanted to help his mom cook, his mom told him not to.

Lu Zhou was bored out of his mind, so he took his computer bag and went into his room.

Even though he told himself he wasn't going to work over the holidays, there really was nothing else to do.

He wasn't the type of person to chill out and do nothing.

Lu Zhou took out his computer and placed it on his worn-out but clean desk. He looked around and couldn't help but feel nostalgic.

Just like his mom said, nothing had changed.

Everything was exactly the same as he left it. The only difference was that the spotless surfaces were obviously frequently cleaned.

Lu Zhou picked up the photo frame on the corner of the desk.

Inside was a photo of his high school graduation.

Pictured were his best friends, his teachers, girls that he had a crush on, girls that crushed on him... And of course, himself.

He looked at his younger self in the photo and smirked.

Back then, he was clueless and naive, but that feeling of carefree happiness was rather unforgettable.

Everyone lost something in the pursuit of success.

After reminiscing for a while, Lu Zhou put the photo aside and focused his attention on his laptop.

“I’ll finish this before lunch.”

Lu Zhou began to type on the keyboard.

[Recommendations and Improvements on the Jiangcheng Carbon-Based Semiconductor Industrial Park (first draft)]

After typing down the title, Lu Zhou began tapping his index finger on the table. After gathering his thoughts on the carbon-based semiconductor industrial park, he began writing.

The time quickly ticked by, and five pages were soon filled with words.

After Lu Zhou double checked for any mistakes, he opened his email and sent a copy to Chen Yushan as well as the State Administration for National Defense. Finally, he leaned back on his chair and sighed in relief.

“That should do that job.”

He was about to turn off his computer and leave his room when he suddenly received an email.

Lu Zhou didn’t recognize the sender’s email address.

Paul Robin Krugman... from Princeton's economics department?

Lu Zhou stared at this name for a while as he frowned.

Emmmm...

Who is this?

893 Doing a Master's

Lu Zhou occasionally communicated with some economics scholars during his time at Princeton, but he wasn't familiar with most of the economics department at Princeton.

It wasn't like he could remember everyone's name?

Not to mention, Princeton was a huge school, and since he only stayed there for a few years, it was likely that he never interacted with this person before.

Lu Zhou tried to remember if he had ever talked with this person, but he couldn't remember anything. Thus, he decided to go online and search for this person's academic background.

It turned out this guy was quite a big name.

Krugman!

2008 Nobel Prize in Economics laureate!

Expert in international trade, exchange rate, and macroeconomics!

His most glorious academic achievement was his 1994 successful prediction of the Asian financial crisis, which happened in 1997. This prediction became wildly popular in various fields of economics after the Asian financial crisis, which led to him winning the Nobel Prize in 2008.

Lu Zhou felt strange why this guy was emailing him.

The subject of the email was asking if Lu Zhou had any time to talk about some academic topics.

Even though Lu Zhou wasn't interested in economics, after pondering for a while, he wrote a reply.

[I'm available at 8 pm tonight, Beijing time. We can chat then if you like.]

After all, he had to give some respect to a Nobel Prize scholar.

It wasn't like he had anything else to do anyway...

...

8 pm at night.

Krugman's face appeared in the video call.

The professor skipped through the small talk and self-introduction. The second the call was connected, he spoke aggressively.

"You have no idea how important your research is!"

Lu Zhou was a little startled, and he said, "I'm not sure which research you're talking about... Can you be more specific?"

Krugman took a deep breath and explained.

"The Bewley model is on the cutting edge of macroeconomics... Your improved model... I'll call it the Lu-Bewley model for the time being. Not only does it reduce the cumbersome calculations, but it also reduced the random error of the model!"

Bewley model?

Oh, he's talking about Xiao Tong's thesis...

After hearing Professor Krugman's explanation, Lu Zhou had a look of realization on his face.

However, he wasn't nearly as excited as Professor Krugman.

Seeing how Lu Zhou didn't respond, Professor Krugman thought that Lu Zhou didn't know what was going on. Thus, Krugman cleared his throat and continued, "Let's put it this way, putting aside the complicated models, there are two goals of economics—one is to optimize the efficiency of resource

allocation and the other is to coordinate all of the interests of society! If we have an accurate model, or even an approximation, we can maximize the efficiency of resource allocation! We can even predict future economic activities!”

Lu Zhou finally had a reaction. He leaned back on his chair and said, “Sounds quite impressive.”

Lu Zhou smiled and looked at Professor Krugman through the screen as he said, “I don’t know a lot about economics, but when it comes to chaotic systems... it seems like there has never been a 100% accurate mathematical model. For example, how can you predict the invention of controllable fusion technology? How can it predict its impact on the global economy?”

“I can’t answer that, but it’s not the main point.” Krugman shook his head and said, “I can tell you that technological advancements are correlated to research and development funding, GDP ratios, etc. These parameters are included in the model. Regardless, this is a Nobel Prize level research! If you continue to perfect the Bewley model, the next Nobel Prize in economics is yours!”

“But... I already won the Fields Medal,” Lu Zhou shrugged and said, “and a Nobel Prize.”

The atmosphere in the video call became a little awkward.

Professor Krugman coughed and spoke.

“You don’t want another? This is a Nobel Prize...”

“Nobel Prizes just aren’t that attractive for me.” Lu Zhou sighed and said, “You know what? Opposed to the meaningless awards, I’m more interested in the problem itself. Do you know what I’m saying, Professor Krugman?”

“ ... ”

Krugman didn’t want to say anything.

He wanted to throw his laptop out of the window.

This stupid millennial was telling him that the Nobel Prize was meaningless!

This is infuriating!

He took a deep breath and tried to persuade him.

“Is the Bewley model not interesting enough? This is an important problem! I can guarantee you that it will change the world more than any pure mathematics research—”

“Maybe not,” Lu Zhou interrupted Krugman. He then said, “Plus, the improved version of the Bewley model... Or as you call it, the Lu Bewley model, only took me an hour to do. It doesn’t seem difficult or interesting at all.”

One hour...

Krugman froze.

His instincts told him that this was impossible, but the person on his screen didn’t seem like he was joking or lying.

Why would he lie?

But spending just an hour to perfect the Bewley model...

That’s unbelievable!

“Okay then,” Lu Zhou said. Seeing how Professor Krugman was speechless, Lu Zhou looked at his watch and yawned. “My apologies, but I can’t help you. There are many excellent mathematics professors at Princeton. Maybe you can bring my model to them and ask for help.

“Goodbye.”

The video call ended.

Krugman stared at the black screen and stayed motionless for a long time. His fingers trembled as he took off his glasses.

His student, who sat beside him watching the whole thing unfold, suddenly murmured, “Professor?”

Krugman sighed and shook his head.

“I have to think of another way.”

There were many excellent mathematics professors at Princeton, but most of them weren't interested in economics, especially those in theoretical research. They looked down upon those in applied disciplines and thought economics was a waste of time.

But now, a world-renowned scholar had done some research in economics, so Krugman wasn't going to give up.

Krugman began to think, and he suddenly had an idea.

He suddenly remembered that there was another author on the thesis.

Not Forster.

He had never heard of Forster before, and he thought Forster was probably some guy that stepped on sh*t.

But the second author...

Krugman's eyes lit up as he looked at his student and immediately spoke.

"Wisl!"

Wisl immediately responded, "Here... What do you need?"

"Write an email for me; I'll give you the address later. The recipient's name is Lu Xiao Tong..." Krugman paused for a second and muttered to himself, "If everything goes well, we should have enough time."

Even though Krugman spoke quietly, Wisl still heard the last sentence.

He paused for a second and spoke.

"Enough time for what?"

Krugman paused for a second and said, "Remember that paper I showed you? The groundbreaking side is the mathematics component, but the economics theory was also well done. Being able to make a mathematician do economics research is a rare quality in and of itself... If I'm correct, she hasn't decided on where to go for a PhD!"

Wisl paused for a second and proposed a scenario.

“But what if she doesn’t want to continue in academia?”

Krugman replied, “Impossible!

“Having written such an excellent thesis, there’s no way she isn’t going into academia! There’s no reason for her to write such a good paper just for her master’s!

“Just write the email.”

“Okay...” Wisl looked at his boss and nodded. He opened his computer and began typing.

This PhD student in his thirties couldn’t help but think.

Every graduation season, people are begging for recommendation letters, digging their brains out trying to get a good PhD supervisor. But this chick, forget about recommendation letters; she has a Nobel Prize laureate begging for her...

Who is she?

This was the first time Wisl heard something like this happen.

Wisl thought back to his initial years in academia, and he felt a sense of distaste in his mouth...

Goddamn!

I’m so f*cking jealous!

894 Lu Bewley Model

In fact, Xiao Tong did write that thesis just to graduate. She asked her brother to help with the mathematical model optimization, but the thesis ended up disrupting the entire economics field...

The improved Bewley model... or the so-called Lu-Bewley model, was far superior to the previous Bewley model, both in terms of computational

efficiency and the accuracy of calculation results. This greatly benefited the macroeconomists around the world.

And it wasn't just that.

What surprised people wasn't just the superiority of the Lu Bewley model, but it was also the fact that Professor Lu was doing research on economics!

And that he had already produced such an outstanding result!

The Bewley model had always been a state of the art model for the field of macroeconomics; it was one of the classical mathematical economics concepts.

But now, there was a more powerful model presented in front of them. How could they not be excited?

Even though Lu Zhou didn't officially name this model, the academic community named it for him.

Which was the Lu Bewley model!

This was Xiao Tong's graduation thesis, but the spotlight was entirely on her brother. However, she wasn't discouraged; instead, she was almost relieved.

She knew that she could have never produced this level of research on her own.

Because of this, at the bottom of the thesis, she clearly stated that the mathematical model was mainly completed by Lu Zhou, and that she was mainly responsible for the economic theory and data collection.

Maybe because she was a second author, because after the thesis was published, she didn't receive any unnecessary harassment.

As for her mentor, Professor Forster, who was named as the first author, his email was being filled to the brim.

This middle-aged professor was overjoyed.

Allowing one student to graduate in exchange for the first author on an outstanding thesis, this was one of the best trades he had ever done!

The only unfortunate thing was that his name wasn't included in the Lu Bewley model...

...

University of Oxford campus.

An office in the department of economics.

Professor Forster spoke in an angry voice toward a poor BBC reporter.

"I think the Lu Bewley model name is totally unfair! As a first author for this paper, I think my name should be in the model! This is outrageous!"

People like Professor Forster were never satisfied.

Even though Professor Forster knew this thesis was outstanding, he didn't think it would be this magnificent. He didn't expect the entire macroeconomics community to be raving over this paper. The paper even attracted the attention of several big names!

Like Krugman...

Forster often talked about Krugman's international trade economics theory in his lectures. He never expected Krugman to comment on his paper in the Science highlights section.

Indeed, the Lu Bewley model thesis was featured in the famous Science highlights section. This was the first time the Lu Bewley model name was seen. The entire economics world decided to adopt the name.

This made him excited, but also furious.

Nothing indicated that he contributed to the mathematical model!

The BBC reporter tried and failed to calm Forster down. He had no choice but to continue the interview.

"But Mr. Forster, according to an academician from the Royal Academy of Sciences, the essence of the paper is the mathematical side, which was independently completed by Professor Lu Zhou... What specific contributions have you done to the model?"

Professor Forster was stunned.

“Um... Contributions are often not reflected in the paper itself,” Professor Forster awkwardly said. “You know, when it comes to scientific research, especially the theoretical side, collecting and interpreting data are also very important. Being able to collaborate with a world-class scholar is also the job of a scientific researcher!”

He was correct.

Social skill was also part of scientific research.

There were even people who had substandard research abilities but were still able to produce good research results because of their connections.

After all, most scholars were relatively introverted. If someone could connect two scholars together, or even put two people in a room together, they might be able to create some friction.

For example, Montgomery, who studied number theory, and Dyson, who studied physics, had never interacted with each other prior to Princeton’s “master socializer” Giovala connecting them together.

However...

After the BBC reporter heard Professor Forster’s explanation, he had an awkward expression on his face.

“But according to our sources, the reason why Professor Lu participated in the research was that his sister Ms. Lu Xiao Tong was involved in the project.”

Professor Forster furiously said, “Enough! I’m her supervisor, and I was the one who brought her into the world of academia! Who do you really think contributed more!”

The interview continued in the office.

Even though the doors were closed, Xiao Tong could still hear the anger in Professor Forster’s words through the door.

If this were before, she would have been a little worried.

But now, she only felt relief and pride.

It was time for her to say goodbye to this place.

Ansley was also standing in the corridor outside, and she looked at Xiao Tong and said, "Congratulations on graduating... Sometimes I think your choice is correct, but there are things I can't say."

Xiao Tong smirked and said, "I know what you want to say."

Ansley shrugged and said, "Good, I feel like Forster argues like a little kid."

Xiao Tong brushed her hair and smiled.

"I couldn't agree more."

The two smiled at each other.

Ansley then said, "Have you decided on where you want to go?"

"Not yet, I just want to go to Princeton, but I haven't thought about which teacher to apply to." Xiao Tong paused for a second and said, "I'm not in a hurry; I still have the holidays to think about it. I'll probably read through some papers, see which research directions are interesting."

"I think you should think carefully, don't make decisions too soon," Ansley said. "Also, you should wait a while before asking him for a recommendation letter... He's not in the best mood right now, who knows what he'll do."

Xiao Tong casually said, "Actually, the recommendation letter doesn't matter, plus Professor Forster's personality... I have a better chance at winning a lottery than getting his recommendation letter."

She wasn't very worried about the recommendation letter.

Even though the letter was important, it wasn't crucial.

With an Econometrica thesis under her belt, most professors would strongly consider her PhD application, even without a recommendation letter.

Ansley smiled and said, "Looks like you have it all thought out, then I wish you... A happy Chinese New Year."

"Thank you."

Suddenly, the phone in her pocket vibrated.

“Wait a second... I think I received a notification.”

Ansley: “Go ahead, open it.”

Xiao Tong took out her phone and glanced at the email notification. She read the title and froze there.

Ansley noticed her expression and asked, “What?”

“I...” Xiao Tong calmed herself down and said, “received a letter from Professor Krugman.”

“Krugman? Paul Krugman from Princeton?” Ansley froze for a second and said, “Oh my gosh! Krugman! I read his paper a few days ago! What did he say?”

“He said...” Xiao Tong looked up in disbelief and said, “He asked me to study a PhD with him... That is, if I haven’t decided yet.”

Ansley: “...???”

895 Things Don’t Go According to Plan

Xiao Tong wasn’t the only one surprised at the popularity of her Econometrica thesis; Lu Zhou was also surprised. He had just returned to his hometown, preparing to cut off connection with the outside world and focus on solving Riemann’s hypothesis. However, before his holidays were even over, his mailbox was filled to the brim with emails.

Some of them were sent from his old friends in Princeton, others were sent from people he didn’t know, but it seemed like they were all scholars in the fields of macroeconomics and computational economics research. Many of them were quite famous.

These emails were how Lu Zhou found out that his mathematical model was gaining attention in the economics field. Apparently, there were several economics seminars held around the world regarding his mathematical model.

The general consensus of the economists aligned with Krugman's viewpoints, which was that they all hoped that Lu Zhou could continue researching the Lu Bewley model and bring macroeconomics and computation economics to a higher place.

Unfortunately, Lu Zhou wasn't interested.

In the beginning, Lu Zhou politely replied to the emails. But later on, more and more emails were coming on, so he asked Xiao Ai to handle them.

After that, Lu Zhou finally had some time to continue researching his mathematical model, the "hyperelliptic curve analysis method".

The day before Chinese New Year, noon time in London.

Xiao Tong was packing her bags while video calling Lu Zhou on WeChat. She told him about being invited to do a PhD under Krugman.

After Lu Zhou heard Xiao Tong's exciting announcement, he paused for a second and said, "Xiao Tong."

"Yeah?"

Xiao Tong was busy stuffing her clothes into her suitcase.

Lu Zhou paused for a second then continued, "Theoretically speaking, can an economics model... accurately predict the future?"

Lu Zhou nearly forgot what Krugman told him a couple of days ago, but Xiao Tong's sudden mention of Krugman made him remember what the Nobel Prize laureate had said to him.

Predicting the future...

Predicting future social activities and even macroeconomic political patterns...

Is that possible?

Xiao Tong paused for a second, tilted her head, and answered in a serious manner, "It's not impossible... But the use of economics isn't just for predicting."

Lu Zhou: "Then what's it for?"

“For efficient allocation of social resources... Or, I guess, developing a better future?”

Xiao Tong sounded a little uncertain. After all, she only received her master's a month ago. She still had a long way to go.

“Oh, I see...”

Lu Zhou nodded thoughtfully and didn't say anything.

Xiao Tong stared at the screen. Her brother seemed to be contemplating, so she curiously asked, “Brother, aren't you researching Riemann's hypothesis? Why are you asking me this?”

Suddenly, she happily asked, “Are you... interested in economics?”

“No, of course not, someone just asked me an interesting question,” Lu Zhou said. He smiled and changed the subject. “Speaking of which, when are you coming back?”

Even though this could be an interesting research project, it wasn't fascinating enough for Lu Zhou.

After all, the so-called predicting the future was nothing but a conjecture; even Professor Krugman wasn't very confident when he mentioned it to Lu Zhou.

Of course, he would gladly use his quantum computer to try and predict future economic activities.

Of course, he wouldn't use it to make money; it was purely to satisfy his curiosity...

Xiao Tong happily said, “I'm flying back tomorrow! I'll land in Shanghai first, stay for two days, then take the train back home!”

Lu Zhou nodded.

“Okay, we'll talk when you get home then... Oh yeah, do you have enough spending money?”

“Hey, I don't need your money, I get paid handsomely for my HSBC consulting work, at least a lot higher than when you were working part-time... Oh yeah, are you back home already?”

Xiao Tong was a little immature, but she didn't like to ask others for help, just like Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou smiled and replied, "Yeah, I got here yesterday."

"Ah, I'm so jealous... I'm going to get some lunch, talk to you later."

"Okay, see you soon."

After the video call ended, Lu Zhou looked at his watch and thought that his mom was going to ask him to eat dinner soon.

But just as he was about to get up and walk into the living room, a text bubble popped up on the lower right corner of his computer screen.

Xiao Ai: [Master, Xiao Ai received a special email. Shall Xiao Ai reply? ♪ (^ ▽ ^ *)]

Lu Zhou looked at the message and paused for a second.

"What do you mean by special?"

Xiao Ai: [It came from a woman named Vera.]

Vera?

Lu Zhou paused for a second and said, "I'll reply myself."

[Okay!]

Lu Zhou was curious about how Xiao Ai was able to classify this email as special. The artificial retard seemed to have gained some amount of emotional intelligence.

Just as Lu Zhou was about to open the email, he heard a knock on his door.

"Son, someone is looking for you."

Lu Zhou remembered that he didn't have any plans, so he asked, "Looking for me?"

“Yeah! You, apparently they’re from Jianghe University, all professors! One of them is an academician! They’re so polite; they waited outside and told me to ask you first.”

His mother’s voice was full of joy.

Not only was her son a successful scholar, but her son was being visited by other “big name” scholars. How could she, as a mother, not feel ecstatic!

Not to mention, Jianghe University was a famous university in Jiangling!

However, after hearing his mother’s words, Lu Zhou felt something was off.

He suddenly realized that it was unrealistic for him to avoid academia contact during the holidays.

“I guess things aren’t going according to plan...”

Xiao Ai: [(°—° ??)]

Fang Mei: “Son?”

“Nothing, I’m coming.”

Lu Zhou stood up and walked toward the door.

Why do I feel like...

I’m not going to have a relaxing new year’s at all...

896 I Have Some Ideas

When Lu Zhou first got back, he thought that he could finally relax in his hometown for a while. However, he was too optimistic.

A small town like Jiangling rarely had any visiting celebrities.

Lu Zhou returning to his hometown, even just for the holidays, was enough to make the entire town lively.

First was the city council politicians meeting him at the highway exit, then was the Jianghe University scholars knocking at his door.

After some small talk, Principal Feng and the heads of the mathematics department eagerly asked Lu Zhou if they could put Lu Zhou's name on the mathematics building.

This was quite a reasonable request.

A lot of rich people would spend tens of millions of dollars just to hang their names on university buildings.

However, Lu Zhou didn't need to spend anything.

However, Lu Zhou was still a little perplexed after hearing Principal Feng's words.

"Principal Feng... That's not the best idea, right?" Lu Zhou looked at the old man and said, "I was born in Jiangling, but I've never... been to Jianghe University. Naming a building after me seems a little inappropriate."

"How is it inappropriate?" Principal Feng said. Even though he knew Lu Zhou would respond this way, he still anxiously said, "You're Jiangling's top scholar, a role model for Jianghe University. You're not from our school, but we're all from the same hometown. How is this inappropriate?"

Lu Zhou didn't know what to say.

But is this really the best idea?

Seeing how Lu Zhou was still hesitant, the dean of the mathematics department wanted to say something, but he didn't know what to say. In the end, Secretary Li, who was sitting next to Principal Feng, pushed down his gold-rimmed glasses and made a suggestion.

"Actually, I have a solution."

Secretary Li smiled confidently and said, "Professor Lu, you went to Jiangling High, right?"

Lu Zhou said, "Yeah... Why?"

“Well, we spoke with Jiangling High, right? We asked them to be affiliated with us...” Secretary Li looked at Principal Feng and said, “They decided to be officially affiliated with us, so Professor Lu technically counts as our alumnus.”

Principal Feng was overjoyed as he said, “Perfect!”

Lu Zhou: “...?”

???

...

In the end, Lu Zhou accepted Principal Feng’s proposal.

Not because they were from the same hometown.

It was only because they were associated with Lu Zhou’s old highschool.

After all, it wasn’t like he had to do anything himself.

The Jianghe University people were just the first wave.

Later on, Lu Zhou’s high school principal also visited him, along with some of his old high school teachers. The city council committee came over as well; even his father’s factory executives came to his house.

This continued on until Chinese New Year’s Eve. Lu Zhou finally caught a break after Xiao Tong returned home.

Lu Zhou barely did any research during this time as he felt a little blue and worried.

I guess it’s not just Jin University...

I can’t even quietly study in my own hometown...

Night of Chinese New Year’s Eve.

Xiao Tong lay on the sofa playing Honor of Kings. Lu Zhou sat next to his parents, who were watching the CCTV New Year’s Gala. Lu Zhou, on the other hand, was going through his address book, sending New Year’s wishes to his friends.

If he didn't call them, they would call him anyway, so he decided to take the initiative.

"Being able to relax in a chaotic environment is a crucial skill. There's no one in academia that can teach you that, you need to strengthen your mind on your own..."

Lu Zhou heard Old Tang's wise words and smiled.

He sighed and said, "Maybe, but I'd rather stay busy. Doing meaningful things makes me feel like I'm not wasting my time."

Tang Zhiwei: "Don't sigh! You're going to sigh your luck away!"

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "Okay, sir... Speaking of which, how's life after retirement?"

"It's amazing..." Old Tang drank some hot tea and said, "What about you, have you made any progress on Riemann's hypothesis?"

Lu Zhou: "A little bit, but not much."

Old Tang nodded and spoke.

"I mean, it is the crown jewel of mathematics, so it's not going to be easy... But I heard Dean Qin say that you plan on solving it within three years?"

Lu Zhou did mention this to Dean Qin, but he didn't expect Dean Qin to spread the news.

Lu Zhou smiled and shook his head as he said, "That is indeed my plan, but now, it seems like solving it in three years is not up to me."

Before this, Lu Zhou was very optimistic, especially after he developed the hyperelliptic curve analysis method. He was certain that he could solve this problem within a year.

However, the deeper he dove into this problem, the more he realized things were not as simple as he had imagined.

Thanks to the mathematical tool he released at his report, the current value of epsilon was at $1/127$. However, it had stagnated there for a long time.

It seemed like no matter how the auxiliary complex plane curve was selected, there was no way to push this number to $1/2$.

Luo Zhou continued to chat with Old Tang about the academic world. He then hung up the phone. After that, he called Academician Lu, Chen Yushan, Luo Wenxuan, and gave them all Chinese New Year's greetings.

Xiao Tong, who was still playing her mobile game, yawned and spoke.

"Brother, you have so many friends."

Lu Zhou smiled and said, "Do I?"

Xiao Tong: "Yeah, but how come you don't have a girlfriend?"

Lu Zhou: "..."

Why the hell are you asking me?

It's not like you have a boyfriend.

Seeing how Lu Zhou ignored her, Xiao Tong smiled and continued, "Brother, play Honor of Kings with me, there's a lot of pretty e-girls on here."

"No, thanks, I'm not interested."

Lu Zhou suddenly remembered that there was still an unread email in his mailbox.

"I nearly forgot."

Xiao Tong curiously looked at Lu Zhou as he got up and walked back to his room.

He sat down at his desk and opened his laptop.

That unread email was lying quietly in his mailbox.

Even though Vera's beautiful and smooth handwriting couldn't be portrayed in the email, her gentle style of writing was still present.

After a while, Lu Zhou read to the last line of the email.

The most important part...

[I have some ideas for Riemann's hypothesis.]

897 Princeton's Snow

Princeton campus.

It was the coldest time of the year in New Jersey, white snowflakes danced outside the frosty windows, forming a thick layer on top of the roofs. The Oxford-style campus buildings felt like a fairy tale castle.

Vera sat quietly in front of her computer in a library room. The snow outside the window was so majestic it felt like a painting.

Vera's soft blonde hair rested on her shoulders, and her sapphire-like eyes gave off a sense of peace and determination.

Lu Zhou's reply was on the screen in front of her.

His email was concise, straight to the point.

[I read your email.

[The idea of using an irreducible unitary representation of the octal Heisenberg group, as well as incorporating Fourier transformations, is an interesting idea.

[Well done, the idea you came up with indirectly answered a question I had. Remember what I said a long time ago? Riemann's hypothesis is an analytic number theory problem, but its essence is still a complex analysis problem. We should be able to solve it using complex analysis, but we shouldn't limit our methods.

[My suggestion is to start with a Plancherel formula on a class of single-connected nilpotent Lie groups G_n and find the sub-elliptic properties of the left-invariant differential operator on G_n . You should be able to find something surprising.

[Oh yeah, I suggest you tidy up the things you sent to me and write a thesis. It also makes it easier for me to reference this way.]

“Not limited to complex analysis tools? You haven’t changed one bit.”

After reading the email, Vera gradually smiled.

However, her smile disappeared, and the little girl pondered for a long time. She then picked up a pen and wrote down Lu Zhou’s ideas.

She also implemented some of her own ideas.

Suddenly, the door was pushed open, and a woman in a big trench coat quickly walked in.

Molina brushed off the snowflakes on her body and hung her coat on the door. She walked next to Vera with two cups of coffee and sandwiches in her hand.

“Take a break, work after lunch. I brought you your favorite tuna sandwich. And a mint coffee. Also, who puts mint in coffee?”

“Thanks, Molina.” Vera grabbed the warm cup of coffee and smiled sincerely at Molina. She then said, “They don’t put the mint in the coffee. They dip it in mint leaves and take it out. Kind of like tea...”

“Regardless, I think it’s weird... What are you reading?”

“Professor Lu’s reply...” Vera blushed and said, “I was studying his hyperelliptic curve analysis method and it reminded me of the irreducible unitary Heisenberg group representation theory. Then I did some research... It seems like my research is coming in handy.”

Molina stared at the email and felt a little unhappy.

“Hey, don’t be a quisling! You should be on our side.”

“Professor Lu isn’t our enemy.” Vera stared at Molina bravely and said, “Why can’t we solve this problem together? Solving Riemann’s hypothesis isn’t something that can be done by one person alone.”

Molina looked at Vera’s stubborn face; she was speechless.

She knew that she was being petty and selfish, but who wouldn’t?

If they proved Riemann's hypothesis together, everyone would assume that Lu Zhou did 99% of the work.

It was just like how no one remembered Hardy's co-authors or Hilbert's co-authors.

Unless Hardy and Hilbert worked on a problem together.

Whenever there was a strength gap, people would always remember the stronger one and forget about the weaker, lesser-known person.

Mathematics was Molina's passion and hobby, but she had to let the Abel name live on.

However, seeing how Vera wasn't budging, she had nothing to say.

"What do I do with you..." Molina sighed and scratched her head as she said, "If you think it's that simple, then continue doing what you're doing."

"Thanks," Vera said with a smile.

"You're welcome... Speaking of which, is your body okay?" Molina stared at the trash can, which was filled with draft paper. "You were coughing all day yesterday, and you don't look great."

Vera shook her head and said, "I'm doing fine, no need to worry about me."

Molina hesitated for a second and said, "How about... I'll do the St. Petersburg report for you, you should get some rest."

"No, I'll have to go..." Vera blushed and shook her head. "He's looking forward to my report. I won't let him down."

Molina took a deep breath and finally asked, "Can I ask, what's really going on with your health?"

Vera's hands gently trembled as she shook her head and spoke softly, "Don't worry, I'm fine."

However, Molina wasn't convinced at all.

Molina started to get more and more worried.

She suddenly snatched the draft paper out of Vera's hand and grabbed her shoulder.

"Listen, you need rest! You need to rest if you—"

"I'm fine, give it back..." Vera grabbed the draft paper back from Molina and said, "I don't need rest, trust me, I know what I need."

There's not much time left...

I have no time to waste.

Molina finally compromised and let go of Vera's shoulder.

"I'm done with you!"

She turned around, grabbed her coat, and left the room.

898 Vera's Condition

"Stop giving her hope, it's unrealistic."

Molina was raging on the inside as she spoke coldly to the man in her video call.

Lu Zhou, who was sitting at his desk, put his pen down.

He looked at Molina on his screen and felt a little confused.

"Her? What are you talking about?"

Last night he received an email from her, asking to arrange a video call. But now he had no idea what she was trying to say.

Molina took a deep breath and spoke coldly.

"I'm talking about Vera Pulyuy!"

Lu Zhou frowned and began to realize this might be more serious than he had imagined.

“What’s wrong with Vera?”

Molina hesitated for a second and broke her promise on not telling Lu Zhou. She clenched her jaw and spoke the truth.

“She’s had a cough and a fever since last week, and it doesn’t seem like a normal cold! I don’t know if you two are working on a research project together or what, I don’t care, I just want to tell you... She’s overworking herself because of you!”

Molina stared at Lu Zhou through the screen and spoke in a serious manner.

“Please, I’m begging you, don’t overwork her.”

Molina reached over and grabbed the mouse before ending the video call.

“Wait a second! Did she hang up?”

Lu Zhou stared at the blank video screen with a confused look.

Molina’s words lingered in his mind.

What do you mean by don’t overwork her?

Lu Zhou repeated this sentence in his mind, asking himself if he had ever done such a thing.

However, he didn’t remember overworking Vera at all. He never even asked her to do anything.

F*ck!

Can’t you just explain what you meant!

What did I do?

Lu Zhou suddenly felt annoyed; he couldn’t explain why he was irritated, but he just was.

A string of text bubbles appeared on the lower right corner of his screen.

Xiao Ai: [Master, um... Do you want Xiao Ai to call her back?]

Lu Zhou took a deep breath and shook his head.

“It’s fine...”

There was no point.

Molina clearly hung up after saying everything she wanted to say. Calling her back would be meaningless.

It was unlikely Molina would clarify herself.

Lu Zhou leaned back in his chair and sighed as he muttered to himself, “If only I were in a quiet place, a place where I’m alone.”

A place where nothing will disturb my research.

It would be nice if time were frozen while I’m in that place.

That place seemed like heaven to Lu Zhou.

Lu Zhou closed his eyes and tried to escape from reality, but he suddenly shook his head and stood up.

No!

I can’t just leave her alone!

Regardless of whether or not it’s my fault, she is still my best student...

He couldn’t just stand aside and watch her destroy her body. After all, not everyone had his system enhanced metabolism pills. He hadn’t been sick in seven years and could easily stay up all night with no side effects.

Lu Zhou opened his email and carefully began to type.

[I heard you’re sick...

[Sorry, I’m not good at comforting people, nor am I a doctor. I just want to say...

[No matter how important your research is, I hope you can prioritize your health. You only have one body. Not to mention, you’ve never been in great health, so you should be even more careful.

[I'll be very sad if something happens to you.

[Make sure to drink more water...]

Lu Zhou went silent for a while and decided to delete the last line. He then clicked the send button.

After that, he quietly waited in front of his computer.

Even though he wanted to use this time to research mathematics, he couldn't concentrate at all.

Time slowly ticked by.

It had only been ten minutes since Lu Zhou sent that email, but Lu Zhou felt like it had been hours.

Lu Zhou stared at his empty mailbox and took a deep breath.

He was certain that Vera was still awake, with her computer in front of her.

"Is this my fault?

"But what did I do..."

Lu Zhou stared at his hand and anxiously shook his head, trying to remove the distracting thoughts from his head.

"Now is not the time to think about those things.

"I have to find out what happened to her!"

Lu Zhou opened his email and began typing again.

[... If you're in Princeton right now, please visit Vera Pulyuy for me. I heard from her colleague that she is ill. I am unable to reach her right now.

[If you can, please check up on her for me and ask what kind of illness she has. Thanks.]

Lu Zhou opened his list of contacts and sent it to another one of his students, Qin Yue.

Even though this guy generally stayed pretty quiet and reserved, he was actually quite a caring person. Qin Yue would definitely try his best at helping Lu Zhou.

Moreover, other than Qin Yue, Lu Zhou didn't have anyone else to ask.

After sending the email, Lu Zhou sighed and leaned back in his chair as he silently prayed in his heart.

"I hope nothing happens to her..."

If she really was sick, whether or not it was his fault, he would still feel immensely guilty.

What if she's hospitalized...

Lu Zhou didn't even want to think of the possibility.

899 Swiping Right?

Just like Lu Zhou had expected, Qin Yue didn't take long to reply. After Lu Zhou got up and went to the bathroom, Qin Yue's reply was already sitting in his inbox.

Unfortunately, Qin Yue didn't know much about Vera's condition. He just knew that Vera was working with Molina on Riemann's hypothesis. He wasn't sure about the rest.

However, Qin Yue said he would try his best and keep an eye on the situation. He said if there was any new information, he would tell Lu Zhou immediately.

As for Vera...

For some reason, she still hadn't replied to him.

Lu Zhou couldn't keep waiting around like this. Even though he was still worried, he decided to put this matter aside and continue research on Riemann's hypothesis.

Vera's research inspired him a lot, especially when it came to the representation theory for the irreducible octal Heisenberg group. He couldn't help but feel impressed; this was truly a sophisticated idea.

If he could make a breakthrough using the octal Heisenberg group and apply the hyperelliptic curve analysis method, he would undoubtedly make some progress on the value of epsilon.

He already had some ideas on how to enlarge the value of epsilon, he just needed some time to verify his conjectures...

It was worth mentioning that while Lu Zhou was researching Riemann's hypothesis, Professor Krugman was still after him.

That thesis on Econometrica continued to spread around the economics community. Krugman would harass him with emails every couple of days, occasionally attaching the latest research progress on the Lu Bewley model.

These latest research developments included papers from well-known scholars, reports from academic conferences, as well as Krugman's own research.

It seemed like this old professor wanted to let Lu Zhou know how important Lu Zhou's research was and to persuade Lu Zhou to continue researching in the field of economics.

However, there was no hope for this professor's wishes.

If a similar thing happened in physics or chemistry, that might entice Lu Zhou a bit. After all, Lu Zhou liked to see other people inspired by his research.

Unfortunately, he wasn't interested in money anymore.

He didn't want to waste his time making more money.

He didn't want to brag, but he really just had too much money...

Lunchtime.

The family sat by the dining table, happily eating lunch.

Now that the two children were back home, Fang Mei was as happy as a clam. She cooked all of Xiao Tong and Lu Zhou's favorite dishes. It was almost as if she wanted them to stay here forever.

Actually, Lu Zhou didn't really care about how much he ate. After using the system's metabolic enhancing agent, he could never gain weight.

But Xiao Tong, on the other hand...

She wasn't used to the food in England, and now, she was in culinary heaven. She ate so much that she even began tracking her calories.

Lu Zhou looked at his sister trying to restrain herself from eating, and he couldn't help but laugh.

Xiao Tong noticed Lu Zhou looking at her and suddenly remembered something. She put down her chopsticks and spoke.

"Brother, do you have a prejudice against economics?"

Lu Zhou didn't know why she would ask something like this. He paused for a second and shook his head.

"Prejudice? Not at all."

"Then why are you so resistant?" Xiao Tong scratched her head and said, "Professor Krugman is so enthusiastic about working with you, and this Lu Bewley model has a real chance of winning the Nobel Prize."

Just as Lu Zhou was about to explain the reason, his father spoke first.

"Hey, don't touch your hair, you're getting oil all over it. Come on, you're a grown woman now, no one's going to marry you if you keep doing this."

Old Lu didn't know about economics or some Lu model, but that didn't stop him from disciplining his daughter.

Xiao Tong heard her dad and put on a pouty face.

"Dad! What about this old loner right here! How come you're only targeting me!"

Old Lu snorted.

“Your brother... I have no hope for him. I’m counting on you now.”

Lu Zhou nearly choked on his soup. He put down his chopsticks and said, “What do you mean no hope? I’m so heartbroken. Also, how am I old? I’m in my twenties!”

Xiao Tong stuck out her tongue and didn’t say anything.

Father Lu, on the other hand, just laughed and sighed.

The mom sitting on the other side had enough, and she began to say, “Forget about it, our son has his own plans; when he is ready, he’ll start a family.”

Lu Zhou sighed and spoke.

“Mom, you get me!”

However, his mom continued, “However, you’re such a workaholic, you barely meet any girls! I’m not worried about you getting married, but you should at least have some experience. How about your father and I help you?”

“The girl from Auntie Wang’s house seems pretty good, how about I introduce you to her?”

Lu Zhou nearly choked on his food. “Like a blind date?”

“What do you mean blind date?” His mom awkwardly smiled and said, “It’s just to introduce you to each other.”

Xiao Tong frowned and suddenly asked, “Auntie Wang? The one upstairs? The one with the fat daughter?”

Old Lu put down his chopsticks and spoke.

“What do you mean fat? She’s just a little chubby, and she’s in her twenties. I think she’s pretty good.”

Xiao Tong smiled and said, “Are you swiping right?”

“F*ck off!”

Fang Mei didn’t know what her children were talking about.

“Swipe? Swipe what?”

“Nothing, Mom...” Lu Zhou coughed and said, “Forget about the blind date. I wanted to relax this holiday, but people kept asking for things from me. Can you guys just let me chill out? I’m fine being alone. I’m sure not a lot of girls will put up with my personality. Don’t put the poor girl through this.”

“What do you mean poor girl, look at how successful you are.” Old Lu coughed and said, “If this were the ancient times, an academician would be in the Hanlin Academy. You’re a catch.”

Xiao Tong smiled and said, “Dad, stop reading novels. Nowadays, girls don’t just want money, they want romance as well.”

Old Lu said, “What novel! I’m telling the truth!”

Lu Zhou shook his head and continued to eat his food.

Being grilled by his parents about his love life was the norm now. Anyway, his mom’s cooking was still delicious, so the food was probably his biggest motivation for coming back home.

The succulent red braised pork belly was as tender as tofu, as soft as jelly. Biting into it didn’t feel greasy at all; instead, it tasted like happiness.

Even though Lu Zhou had eaten at three-Michelin-star restaurants before, he could never forget his mother’s cooking.

While he was enjoying his meal, he suddenly heard a knock at the door.

“It’s probably someone here to greet us for the new year... I’ll go.”

Fang Mei put down her chopsticks and stood up.

She opened the front door.

A beautiful and familiar figure stood in front of her.

Fang Mei was greeted with a beautiful and blooming smile. A soothing voice traveled through the air.

“Hello, Auntie!”

Wait a second...

What is going on...

Lu Zhou looked like he just saw a ghost.

He and Xiao Tong were frozen...

900 Unexpected Visi

There was this saying.

Once you were single for long enough, 6's would become 9's.

Lu Zhou began to wonder maybe that was why his mom was so enthusiastic about Chen Yushan.

Her son was single for so long, every girl looked like a perfect match...

As long as they had two Y chromosomes, Fang Mei couldn't wait to abduct them as a daughter in law...

"Oh my, look at you," Fang Mei said to Chen Yushan.

Chen Yushan was unmatched in this small town when it came to appearance. Her outgoing and friendly personality made Feng Mei a little worried as she felt like her son's cold and awkward personality wasn't good enough for Chen Yushan.

"Oh auntie, don't say that," Chen Yushan blush and said.

"Oh it's fine, are you looking for Lu Zhou? Come on in! My son's a little introverted, don't take anything he says to heart. We're still eating right now; did you eat yet? How about... Old Lu, go get some chopsticks and a bowl!"

"Okay!"

Chen Yushan was a little baffled by Fang Mei's enthusiasm, and she euphemistically declined.

"No, no, it's fine, I already ate."

Lu Zhou sighed and put down his chopsticks.

Even though he still wanted to enjoy his food...

"Mom, I'm full."

"Already?"

"Yeah, and you... come with me."

With his parents and sisters watching, Lu Zhou brought Chen Yushan into his bedroom.

Lu Zhou closed the door and sat at his desk. He finally felt relieved.

He was finally away from his overly-excited family.

After Chen Yushan went into Lu Zhou's room, she curiously looked around.

"This is your room?"

"Yeah, but I only stay here during the holidays."

Chen Yushan suddenly noticed a framed photo sitting on the desk. She then said, "I see... Oh? Is this a photo of you in high school?" Her eyes lit up like she just saw a piece of treasure. However, before she could closely look at it, the "treasure" disappeared from her sight.

"I don't have time to clean up yet..." Lu Zhou said as he quickly stuffed the photo frame into a drawer. He said, "Please sit."

"Selfish!"

Chen Yushan looked around and saw that there wasn't another chair in the room, so she sat on the bed instead.

They were good friends, so there was nothing weird about this.

Lu Zhou couldn't help but ask, "Why are you here? Also, why didn't you tell me?"

"I told you, but you ignored me." Chen Yushan took out her phone and said, "Look."

Lu Zhou took her phone and looked.

Those emojis look like Xiao Ai's writing...

Lu Zhou took out his phone and secretly sent Xiao Ai a message.

[Why didn't you tell me to reply!]

Xiao Ai: [But Master, you told me to decline all visiting requests?]

This kid!

Just a few days ago, I was praising its intelligence, but now, it's gone full retard again!

Chen Yushan looked at Lu Zhou typing on his phone and tilted her head.

"Are you busy?"

"No." Lu Zhou put away his phone and said, "It's the holidays, why are you here... Don't you want to celebrate?"

Chen Yushan: "Holidays, my ass! Chinese New Year was three days ago. I flew here from Beijing."

Lu Zhou: "But it's still the holidays, aren't you going to stay with your family?"

"Can't stand them." Chen Yushan sighed and rolled her eyes, "As an unmarried woman in her mid-twenties, my family thinks everything I do is wrong. My dad arranged two dates for me the day after Chinese New Year's Eve. I had to escape."

Lu Zhou wanted to say that he was going through the same thing, but he felt a little weird sympathizing with her.

"What's wrong with a blind date? What if you like them?"

"I don't like it." Chen Yushan shook her head and said, "Having to spend the rest of your life with someone you've never met is worse than buying a lottery ticket."

Lu Zhou felt like, because of her father's background, the guys being introduced to her were all top-tier.

However, everyone had their own ideas about marriage.

After all, romance was only one part of life; there were more meaningful things to do.

For example, self-actualization.

That was far more meaningful than passing on one's genetics.

Chen Yushan smiled at Lu Zhou and said, "Whatever, I'm not here to harass you. I wanted to go back to Jinling, but I had something to do at the Jiangcheng semiconductor site. Plus I had some things I need to discuss with you in person, so I came here instead."

Lu Zhou: "What?"

"I've read your suggestion letter. I made some simple modifications. Of course, that's not why I'm here." Chen Yushan took out a document from her bag and placed it on the table as she said, "Look at this, I got this from my dad's connections. It's internal information."

"19+2 city group..." Lu Zhou looked at the document and frowned as he said, "Isn't this a policy from a long time ago?"

"Not the same," Chen Yushan shook her head and said, "Thanks to your shares in East Asia Energy, I heard that East Asia Energy plans on building a new fusion power plant in the Yangtze River Delta Economic Zone near Shanghai. This power station is likely going to serve the Yangtze River Delta city group!"

Lu Zhou curiously asked, "So?"

Chen Yushan smirked and said, "You do know I studied economics and management, so I have some experience in macroeconomics. The expansion of controllable fusion energy over the past three years will certainly accelerate the urbanization process of fusion power area coverage.

"After combing some information I heard from my father, I have a feeling that Beijing is actively trying to accelerate this process. They are going to start with the Yangtze River Delta city group!"

Even though Lu Zhou still had a ton of questions, he had a general idea of what Chen Yushan meant.

All in all, Chen Yushan speculated that the Yangtze River Delta could become a test pilot for building a modern city group, and this meant unlimited business opportunities.

Lu Zhou: "So, do you have any plans?"

"That's what I'm planning on discussing with you." Chen Yushan took out another document from her bag and placed it on the table. She smiled confidently and said, "Unfortunately, we're not in the real estate business; otherwise, I would definitely recommend you to buy the surrounding land in Shanghai. Fortunately, real estate isn't the only place to make money. After all, we are a high-tech company. We should focus on our own niche."

Lu Zhou curiously asked, "Like what?"

"Smart city." Chen Yushan's tender finger tapped on the document on the table as she said ambitiously, "Listen carefully, I'm about to tell you the core concept of this plan..."