

Superstar 121

Chapter 121: This World has another Millennial Impossibility!

Such a simple five-word couplet?

Zheng Anbang laughed out, “Just this?”

“The mood is not bad, but...” Big Thunder also said.

A youth from the Writers’ Association was brimming with confidence, “What’s so hard about this? I’ll match it with Rain falls...”

But before he finished speaking, Zhang Ye had already written his couplet on the computer in front of him.

Immediately, a staff member did something to project the couplet onto the big screen, letting everyone see it clearly!

When the youth from the Writers’ Association saw the couplet, he held back his words after saying, “Rain falls”. With a cough, he stopped speaking. He just realized how humorous the “What’s so hard about this?” he said was.

When the surrounding people saw it, they were stunned!

Every word contained one of the five elements in its left radical!

Your grandmother!

How did you think up of such a tricky couplet?

And the five elemental radicals matched so well?

Who said that Zhang Ye couldn’t come up with a question!?

Big Thunder lowered his head to ponder over it. His lips were constantly muttering, clearly trying to match the couplet.

Zheng Anbang and several people from the Writers’ Association also began to silently try matching it.

Seeing them work so hard, Zhang Ye was amused. He hugged his shoulders as he watched the show.

Yes, this couplet was tricky with the five elements Fire (火), Metal (金), Water (水), Earth (土), and Wood (木) in the radicals, but it did not look very difficult. Anyone who knew a bit of couplet culture would think that they could match it given enough time. They just needed to find an appropriate word. From the audience’s expression, they were clearly having such thoughts.

But only Zhang Ye knew that no one could match this couplet!

In Zhang Ye’s world, it was precisely proven. Some couplets might look difficult, but they were not as hard as people expected when it was matched. For example, using a top radical to make a couplet like (hé huā jīng ǒu péng lián tái, moss of the lotus flower, lotus root, lotus fruit). It looked extremely complicated at first glance, as their top radicals were all 艹, but with some careful thought, they were all

plants, so matching it with (fú róng sháo yào rǔ fēn fāng, scent of the buds of the hibiscus and peony) would not be a problem. It could be matched with other words, too.

But some couplets might not appear to have any tricks behind them, and looked about the same as any other couplet, making you think that you could understand it at a glance, but even a lifetime of effort would not allow you to match it!

(yān suǒ chí táng liǔ, Willow pond locked in smoke) was a couplet that no one could match even in a few lifetimes!

This couplet's history was quite long. In Zhang Ye's world, it had been passed down as a Millennial Impossibility. Nearly a thousand years had passed with people succumbing to it. As for this world, they must have never heard of it.

Some people matched with (pào zhèn hǎi chéng lóu, Sea tower rocked by cannons).

The television series "The Eloquent Ji Xiaolan" had previously used this verse. Many people thought this was the match to the couplet, but in fact it wasn't. (pào zhèn hǎi chéng lóu, sea tower rocked by cannons) could only be considered as "corresponding", but not matched. The flaw in the second half was not only in its mood, but also in its order.

Firstly, in its tone pattern, with the prosody of its first, third, and fifth words not considered, the second, fourth, sixth were to be distinct. The first and second verses' second and fourth words were both oblique tones and did not match well.

Secondly, in terms of mood, the first half was simple and elegant, while the proposed second half was boorish and rough. Although one was like a scholar, the other was like a warrior, it was not coordinated and there was a lack of overall harmony.

That was why this second verse, which many people believe to be the standard answer, was actually not good enough.

There were also matches of (děng shēn cūn sì zhōng, the bell echoes in a distant dimly-lit temple) and (fēng xiāo jí sāi hóng, the smoke signals an unfulfilled desire), which matched well in prosody, but did not match the elemental order of the words.

In that world, the best accepted match was (táo rán jǐn jiāng dī, peach blossoms scorch the Jinjiang dyke).

However, even this second verse had a problem.

Its strong point was in matching the prosody of the first verse, with a profound mood, especially with "rán" being used extremely well. The radicals were also in the right order.

The only weakness was that "jǐn jiāng dī" was a proper noun, while the other was a common noun. "Jǐn jiāng" and "chí táng" were not similar. In that aspect, there was still a gap.

From a prosody view, the first verse was level-oblique-level-level-oblique, so in order not to violate the "lone level" rule, the second verse has to be level-level-oblique-oblique-level or oblique-level-level-oblique-level or level-level-level-oblique-level, of which the level-level-oblique-oblique-level combination was the most ideal.

Of pity, the “jiāng” in this verse was of a level tone, failing to match as an oblique tone to the level tone of “táng” in first verse.

Hence, there was no solution to the first half, giving it the name of a Millennial Impossibility!

“Big Thunder, did you match it?”

“Just a bit. Almost, almost.”

“I think I’m almost there, too. I already have some thoughts.”

“There’s still time right? I think I can also try. I’m lacking just two words. A word with a fire (火) radical...fire radical...”

With the champion decided, the competition had already come to an end. So these people began to have exchanges in whispers and things were not as strict anymore.

The few judges ignored them, too. They were writing on their tables, trying to match Zhang Ye’s couplet, too.

Seeing them frowning in thought, Zhang Ye silently smiled. Go ahead and match it. If any one of you can really match it, this bro will chop off his head and give it to you. This couplet had been passed down for more than a hundred years, maybe even a thousand years in his world, and yet no one could succeed. Do you think that just ten minutes would allow you to match it?

Ignoring this bit of time, even if a hundred years were given to all of you, no, even if this world was given a hundred years or a thousand years, no one could perfectly answer this couplet.

Forget it; I won’t inform you. Torture yourselves. I’ll take this opportunity to rest.

Five minutes passed.

Ten minutes passed.

This was a live broadcast, so they could not just wait and do nothing. The two hosts were trying to regulate the mood.

“This first half seems to not be simple?” the male host said, while looking at the screen.

The female host laughed, “It’s far from not simple. It might look common, but the difficulty is there. Just the Metal, Wood, Water, Fire, and Earth radicals would stop many people in their tracks. Furthermore, there is still the tone pattern one has to match. These two must be combined together to result in a correspondence. The key to the problem is its mood. Teacher Zhang’s first half’s mood is far and distant, like an ethereal picture, bringing with it full of life. Trying to match this would not be easy.”

She knew a bit after all.

However, it was just a bit.

The second judge had a headache as a result of thinking. Throwing down her pen, she said, “I can’t do it. I’ll let you do it. I feel like there should be a solution, but no matter how hard I try, I can’t. It just doesn’t correspond!”

The third judge threw up his arms. He had given up, too.

The male host blinked and thought, “No one could match it? Even the judges couldn’t? That can’t be! Isn’t it just a couplet!? There were so many famous experts here! There was strength in numbers!”

He looked towards an area where the Couplet Organization and the Writers’ Association were. Those people were also silently trying to match it. Looking at the audience, all of them were focusing on the couplet. Each one refused to have their beliefs shaken, as they tried to solve it!

But after a long while, no one spoke!

Finally, Elder Qian threw down the pen in his hand. He raised his head and said, “Let’s call it a day.”

Big Thunder refused to throw in the towel as he quickly said, “Elder Qian, just give me a bit of time. I’m almost getting it.”

“That’s right; I’m just a word short. I just can’t think of a single word.” Another person from the Beijing Writers’ Association said.

Elder Qian interrupted them and issued the most authoritative opinion, “There’s no need to think further, nor do you need to try matching. No matter how much time is given, no one can match it!”

Zhang Ye was surprised as he glanced at Elder Qian. Eh?

There really was someone wise?

“Impossible regardless of how much time?” Big Thunder refused to believe, “Why?”

Elder Qian smiled bitterly and said bluntly, “Because this is a Millennial Impossibility!”

“What?”

“Impossibility?”

“Millennial Impossibility?”

“Impossible! There must be a solution!”

“Right, how can it be an Impossibility!?”

“Elder Qian, did you make a mistake?”

The contestants were all puzzled and none of them acknowledged it

What was a Millennial Impossibility?

In simple terms, it was a couplet no one could match!

Back in the preliminary round, Elder Qian had came up with “hai shui chao chao chao chao chao chao chao lu”. To many people, wasn’t it considered an Impossibility?

Actually, no. It was just considered a miraculous couplet. At best, it would be considered a Millennial Miraculous Couplet, but it definitely was not a Millennial Impossibility. This was because this miraculous couplet had been matched by Zhang Ye neatly. Furthermore, Elder Qian himself had come up with a

passable second half. He could match it himself, so there was a solution, so in no way was it a Millennial Impossibility!

Big Thunder's couplet from before?

That didn't count either!

It was even slightly worse than a miraculous couplet. It was, at most, considered a wonderful couplet!

And it had been matched by Zhang Ye!

It was solved!

None of those counted!

But 烟锁池塘柳 (yān suǒ chí táng liǔ, Willow pond locked in smoke) was?

No one was convinced as they waited for Elder Qian to give an explanation.

Elder Qian said, "I know what all of you are thinking. I had the same thoughts as you. I was thinking that as long as I had time, I would be able to solve this first half. But after I tried several times, I discovered that this first half is unsolvable. The radicals from five elements, and the order of the elements, the level tones, the mood, to match all of them, you cannot miss a single one of the five. It is easy to match one, and matching two would not be bad. If you want to match three, it is nearly impossible, not to mention matching all five perfectly. 烟锁池塘柳 (yān suǒ chí táng liǔ, Willow pond locked in smoke), even if this was placed in ancient times, it would have definitely been a Millennial Impossibility that would shock the world. I can be absolutely sure in telling everyone that this first half will definitely be unsolvable in a hundred years! It can only be left for people of the future!" Saying that, Elder Qian sighed with regret.

Unsolvable in a hundred years?

It really was a Millennial Impossibility?

Elder Qian was very famous in the circle, and he was one of the most accomplished few in the country's couplet literary culture. With him saying that, everyone had to believe, even if they didn't!

And so what if people refused to agree?

They really could not match it!

The second judge gasped, "It's really an Impossibility?"

"I'm very sure." Elder Qian said with a firm tone.

The third judge looked at Zhang Ye, who was not far away. He gave a wry smile, "What sort of person has come to this year's Couplet Competition? This is no longer how each new generation excels the last one! This lad has smacked to death all the predecessors and seniors in the profession on the beach! Or am I just an old ignorant man? When did our country have such a spectacular genius?"

The old granny laughed, "In a while, read his 'Shuidiao Getou'. No, it's best if you listen to the version he recited live. Then, his performance today would not seem that strange. That, too, was a melody poem that would last the ages!"

What was the concept of a Millennial Impossibility?

Saying it just like that might not be easy to understand, but giving an example would make it very clear.

A Millennial Impossibility was equivalent to a few mathematical conjectures in the field of mathematics. They were also the most difficult problems in the world of mathematics. Everyone knew there was a solution, and everyone knew it was possible to come up with a solution, but no one could provide it!

There were a few major conjectures in the world of mathematics.

And in the world of literature, there were only about 5-6 Millennial Impossibilities!

But starting today, this world had another Millennial Impossibility. The Impossibility's first half was

Chapter 122: Face Smacking Specialist is Back!

Grand Hall.

"Judges?"

"Alright, the finals is over."

"Alright, the score has already been tallied."

"I announce that this year's champion for the Beijing Couplet Competition is...Teacher Zhang Ye!"

As the host finished announcing, the audience erupted into applause. There were even screams of praise; it was a very lively scene. Onstage, many of those participants, who had lost convincingly, stood up to applaud Zhang Ye. Some even gave him a thumbs up! There was no other way, Zhang Ye had garnered all the praises. This had been the strangest couplet competition in recent years. Why strange? Does it need to be explained? All the questions had been answered by Zhang Ye alone. That's why Zhang Ye was the only winner. There was no 1st runner-up or 2nd runner-up. All the other 49 contestants had 0 points!

Doesn't this deserve all the applause?

Doesn't this deserve all the respect?

Only Big Thunder did not move; he did not applaud!

Zheng Anbang and the others from the Beijing Writers' Association were not looking so good. None of them applauded Zhang Ye, but instead lowered their heads and did their own things. They were too petty!

When Zhang Ye saw this sight, he smiled coldly.

The female host smiled. "Let's invite Teacher Zhang up onto the stage to receive the award."

Zhang Ye stood up, went around the side and proceeded towards the stage. He smiled at both of the hosts.

At the side, Elder Qian and the other two judges also walked up. The trophy was prepared beforehand, but they had prepared three trophies to be brought up. Elder Qian held one in his hands; the other two

were not of use anymore. Honestly, this was the first time that they had to present an award for such a dominating performance. One person had dominated and finished off all of his opponents. This was an unprecedented happening in all of the competition's history.

"Teacher Little Zhang, congratulations." Elder Qian handed him the trophy.

Zhang Ye accepted it and said, "Thank you for the affirmation of the Teacher judges."

Elder Qian smiled. "It is not our affirmation. This is the glory of your victory. And I believe without me saying, this is a Couplet Competition where the victor is known without any suspense!"

The audience laughed. Yes, this was really was one without any suspense!

The female host said, "Teacher Zhang, say a sentence or two for your acceptance speech?"

"Well, are you sure you want me to say it?" Zhang Ye blinked his eyes.

The male host was surprised. What was there to be sure about? Doesn't every winner of an award say an acceptance speech? Thanking friends, thanking leaders, thanking parents, stuff like that?

But the female host knew the meaning behind Zhang Ye's words, "This..."

"Alright then, I'll say something." Zhang Ye turned to face everyone, and paused for a moment. He said, "I recall.. that someone said I cheated?"

Everybody laughed, treating it as a joke.

Only the people from the Beijing Writers' Association had ugly expressions. They were thinking, "Aren't you done? Why do you still mention the past? Why are you so petty?"

But in fact, Zhang Ye was a petty person. The more people did not want him to mention something, the more this fellow would mention it. "I want to know who reported me, and I want to ask the comrade from the Beijing Writers' Association who came on stage a while ago saying I cheated. The judges and comrades from the Couplet Organization had not investigated, and had eventually allowed my participation, but why did you say it in such a certain fashion that I cheated?" He stared at the youth from the Writers' Association offstage, "Shouldn't you apologize to me? This is just the most basic respect, right?"

The youth stared at him with a darkened expression. F**k, apologize, me? Based on what!?

A woman from the Couplet Organization looked at him, "Little Wu, you should really apologize."

"Apologize, Little Wu." Yet another person from the Couplet Organization said. "This is a live broadcast. Everyone is watching. What you previously said onstage was indeed inappropriate. It was too arbitrary and it impacts Teacher Zhang's reputation. It is only because Teacher Zhang Ye reversed the situation, proving that he did not cheat, that the outcome has not become disastrous. Just a few words of yours was enough to destroy a person!"

The youth named Wu did not move. He shut his eyes stubbornly.

Zhang Ye laughed, "Since it's a Couplet Competition today, it's alright if you don't apologize. I'll give you a couplet."

Give a couplet?

Why are you giving a couplet now?

Everyone was stunned and was curious as to what Zhang Ye would say.

The next moment, Zhang Ye said, "Mice, old or young, we call them 'old' (老, lǎo)." Because they are all called mice (老鼠, lǎoshǔ)!

With the next verse, Zhang Ye smiled. "Turtles, male or female, they are surnamed Wu (乌)!" Because they are all called turtles (乌龟, wū guī, also used as a vulgarity, like bastard)!

The youth whose surname was Wu nearly vomited blood! Grand Uncle Zhang Ye! You are too f**king ruthless! He was so angry that he nearly cried out! His face was green! This is a live broadcast program! There were hundreds of thousands of people watching! He scolded him in public? The youth wanted to bury his own head somewhere! He had thought that if he had just refused to apologise, nothing could be done about it.

But he had forgotten that this person was not any ordinary person. This was that Zhang Ye who had publicly scolded his Leaders at the Silver Microphone Awards! Venomous person! Venomous mouth! His heart was the most venomous! At this moment, the youth really felt regretful. He was numb. If he had known, he would have gone forward to apologise!

The male host was stupefied, "Teacher Zhang!"

The female host, in turn, was not surprised at all. She knew of Zhang Ye's misdeeds before, so she quickly gave him a nudge on his shoes with her feet and whispered, "Teacher, you....."

The audience was also stunned!

But Zhang Ye still had more to say, "This year, I was invited by the Beijing Writers' Association to participate in this competition. To be able to win it, I would like to thank them, too. Thank you for always supporting me, Writers' Association. I also have a couplet for you all." After saying all that, he immediately said, "A bull's head hopes to grow a pair of dragon's horns."

This sentence was quite usual; no one had a problem with it.

But Zhang Ye's second verse nearly made everyone faint, "But have you ever seen elephant tusks growing out of a dog's mouth (when have you seen a mean fellow speak of nice things)!"

The Beijing Writers' Association's Leader and members, "....."

People from the Couplet Organization were covering their mouths and laughing; this was too interesting. The scolding was too wicked!

Of course, Zhang Ye wanted to scold. From the moment he participated, it could be seen that none of those from the Beijing Writers' Association had pure intentions. They had made it difficult for him from the beginning, resorting to all sorts of tricks. If not for Zhang Ye's wit, his reputation would have been wrecked. His career path would have been cut off. If the accusation of cheating was not proven

otherwise, then he wouldn't have been able to clear his name at all. Didn't this justify his revenge? He naturally wanted to take back what was his!

Scolding others?

It's not like I f**king never scolded!

So what if it was live? You are the people I'm cursing!

At this moment, the Beijing Writer's Association's Vice-President Meng Dongguo had come forth from the backstage. He had heard Zhang Ye publicly scolding their Writers' Association. In his moment of rage, he didn't care that this was a live broadcast anymore. He snatched a microphone and argued with Zhang Ye, "Zhang Ye, you are good at couplets, aren't you? Then I will give you a question, too. Listen up! Two apes breaking branches deep in the forest; a little monkey dares to have seen it, too?" This was a homonymic first verse. 'Seen it too' was equivalent to matching a couplet; he was scolding Zhang Ye!

Zhang Ye was overjoyed. This first verse was also remembered when he was searching his memories. He immediately retorted, "Then you listen up, too! A horse steps into dirty mud; how can the old beast (bast**d) raise its hooves!" Raise its hooves was equivalent to giving a question!

"Alright!"

"So beautifully matched!"

"Hahahaha! I'm so amused!"

"Teacher Zhang Ye is a god!"

The audience could not help but laugh out loud!

Meng Dongguo, "...&%#@*) *&@! ! !"

Vice-President Meng's couplet-matching skill was not that deep, otherwise he would have taken part. He could not match Zhang Ye at it, which is why he lost the moment he attacked!

But Zhang Ye did not let him off, "Since you gave me a question, then I shall give you a question, too. 1-2-3-4-5-6-7!"

Eh?

What's this question about?

There were rarely couplets that stopped at 7. If he wanted to give the first verse, shouldn't it be 1-2-3-4-5-6-7-8? Why did he forget about the 8?

Zhang Ye then looked at him, "Can't match it? Then let me give you the second verse. Xiào tì zhōng xìn lǐ yì lián (filial piety, respect, loyalty, trust courtesy, uprightness, honesty)!"

That was not right!

The second verse was not correct either!

Xiào tì zhōng xìn lǐ yì lián (filial piety, respect, loyalty, trust courtesy, uprightness, honesty)? What about shame? Why is shame not in there?

But who can be a fool for long? A few contestants thought for a moment and quickly analyzed the metaphor of this couplet, “The first verse had forgotten about 8? The second verse lacked a shame? This is.... forgetting 8 lacking shame (bast**d with no shame)? F**k!”

Bast**d?

No shame?

Meng Dongguo nearly exploded with anger! Zhang! You are scolding people now?

The male host, nervous with sweat, hurriedly tried to talk them out of an argument, “Our two Teachers, the two of you, say less, say less. The cameras are still....” This is what you called literary people! Their scolding didn’t even have any vulgarities in them!

Meng Dongguo didn’t care anymore. He said directly to Zhang Ye, “In such a setting, you publicly scolded the Beijing Writers’ Association, insulted our Writers’ Association’s staff, insulted the people who invited you? Well, well, now I can put it clearly here: a person like you, even if you are a talent, our Beijing Writers’ Association will never have you!”

Isn’t this the pot calling the kettle black?

And you act like everything about you was correct?

When you wanted to step on me, you just stepped! When I fought back? All of you began using reasoning to press me down? Just because you are the authoritative body? So that makes you reasonable? What the heck!

Zhang Ye was extremely bemused, holding the microphone, looking at all those angry and speechless Beijing Writers’ Association’s members. He said his last words, a doggerel. Its origins were from a famous crosstalker in his previous world – Guo Degang. Guo Degang’s doggerels were considered one of a kind, with them being highly controversial. The one that he used to scold the Beijing Radio Station’s Leader had especially attracted all sorts of criticisms from industry insiders. But today, Zhang Ye had selected another one of Teacher Guo’s doggerels. It was written by Guo Degang after he was uninvited by the New Year’s Gala organizers. It had a very special feel and was also very meaningful.

“Madness and ailing grass, difficulty in discerning. The plum blossoms seemed trimmed, coldness outside the walls. The icy sky is like jade, the silver branches seemed buried as dust. Pushing the blanket into the snow, open your eyes and stop acting nice, returning after traveling the Jiang province, with the poem done and alcohol drunk, the world seems small.”

Up to here, many had not understood it.

What poem was this? Was it a doggerel?

Zhang Ye even knew doggerels? This was really the first time they had heard about it!

But after hearing the final part of Zhang Ye’s poem, they finally understood and laughed out loud, “Embracing beauty, lamenting how life is all about fame and fortune.” At this point, Zhang Ye narrowed

his eyes and looked towards Meng Dongguo and the people from the Writers' Association. "Open your drunken eyes slightly. No matter how you succeed or fail..." With a laugh, "It's not like I'll come!"

It's not like I'll come?

They said that they were not going to invite him into the association! And he came up with such a doggerel?

Hahaha! What a good "it's not like I'll come"! A lot of the audience members were tickled by this!

Chapter 123: This Time, His Reputation has Really Gone Bad!

This year's competition was fully broadcasted live. The video feed could only be switched among the different camera angles to prevent any wrong or unwanted footage from being shown. But the audio feed could not be cut off. When Zhang Ye scolded, it caused the cameramen in the auditorium to become extremely busy. According to past experiences and rules, it was needless to say that they definitely had to avoid a troublemaker like him. The effect was too negative.

The champion was making trouble at the couplet competition?

Zhang Ye cursed at the Beijing Writers' Association?

If such a headline had spread, it wouldn't look good!

While they were busy making sure the cameras did not capture the wrong things, an internet video website's supervisor received a call from his manager.

"Old Wang!"

"Leader, the situation now is....."

"I know! Don't cut off the camera!"

"Ah? If I don't cut away, what should I do? Just face it straight at them?"

"Of course! Such a hot topic only happens once in a hundred years! Hurry, hurry, hurry! Live stream the whole event! Don't cover up anything!"

"Is that... Is that really okay?"

"Why is it not okay? We are not an actual television station, just an internet live stream site. We don't have so much to think about. Whatever comments or opinions come, we can handle it! Let me tell you, Old Wang, the amount of people watching online now has already surpassed 1 million. Although this is the Beijing Couplet Competition, the people watching are not limited to only the Beijing area. People from all over the country are viewing it now. This is a 1 in a million chance. Are you still going to shift the camera away? This is a 1 in a million chance! Just follow my instructions! Record the cursing, too! If anything goes wrong, I will be responsible!"

"Alright, Leader. I understand!"

.....

So, the viewers over the internet didn't miss anything. The camera not only recorded the whole scene, Zhang Ye and Meng Dongguo were both given feature shots. Their back and forth exchange of couplets reached a climax and almost made the web audience jump up and cheer!

"Oh, my God!"

"A simple couplet can be used to curse in such an earth-shattering manner?"

"Hahaha! Come and see!"

"Those who did not watch the live broadcast will regret this for sure!"

"It's too delightful! Teacher Zhang Ye is too delightful! Wahaha!"

"Such a great bull's head hopes to grow a pair of dragon's horns!"

"I feel the ultimate was 'A horse steps into dirty mud; how can the old beast (bast**d) raise its hooves!'!"

"That 'it's not like I'll come' doggerel was too good. Teacher Zhang is as splendid as ever with his words. A doggerel was also written so interestingly!"

"Support Teacher Zhang! They don't want us? We are the ones who don't want the association!"

"That's right! No matter how you succeed or fail, it's not like we'll come!"

"What did I say? What did I say? The Face Smacking Specialist has returned once again!"

"Hehe, don't they know what happened at the Silver Microphone Awards? They actually dared to get Teacher Zhang to give an acceptance speech in public? 'Face-smacker Zhang' is a person with past ('criminal') records!"

"Here it comes! I knew Teacher Zhang would not say anything nice!"

"This time sure is interesting. Back then, Teacher Zhang was banned by the radio station. This time, he will be banned by the literature circle. Teacher Zhang is too good at causing incidents, but... Haha. I like it. I love a Teacher Zhang who dares to speak up and act! He is my lifetime idol!"

"This is a godly curse!"

Some people were still unclear of what was going on, "Why did this person scold so ruthlessly?"

A person below him said in a despising manner, "Bro, did you just get onto the internet today? This isn't the first time Teacher Zhang has scolded others. Search online for this year's online slangs. About half the top 10 slangs for cursing were created by Teacher Zhang Ye. It's not weird!"

That person went to check, "Eh? I bought a watch last year was an original creation of Teacher Zhang? I just learned about it!"

"Bros, in the future, join our Teacher Zhang's troll army. It gives you meat to eat, and girls to meet!" The person began recruiting. There was reason to believe that after today, Zhang Ye's popularity would definitely have another explosive increase!

.....

Peking University.

Couplet Competition venue.

After Zhang Ye said the last doggerel, no one dared to challenge him to a quarrel anymore!

Meng Dongguo stopped speaking. Big Thunder also shut up. The people from the Beijing Writers' Association could only stare angrily, as they could not do a thing. It was hopeless, for they were completely no match for Zhang Ye. Saying anything more would just bring ridicule to themselves. A pair of couplets from Zhang Ye was enough to feel like curses were raining down on them. Meeting a prickly person who did not care about anything would only cause headaches!

Zhang Ye surveyed the surroundings. Seeing that no one made a sound, and seeing that they were all stunned because of him, he placed the microphone back onto the rack before walking off the stage. He left Meng Dongguo and the people from the Beijing Writers' Association the view of his back!

The three judges were also looking at each other with wry smiles. Couplets were one of the traditional cultures of China, and it was also an important piece of Chinese literature. They knew that although people felt that couplets were mostly quite proper, there were couplets that embedded mockery in them. There was no doubt that the couplets Zhang Ye had used to curse were some of the best amongst mocking couplets. Zhang Ye was the first person that they had seen that was able to use mocking couplets in such a masterful way and say it so impressively.

Every one of them was good!

Every one of them was flawless!

From their point of view, this young man, Zhang Ye, had completely researched what there was to couplet culture. He was probably more knowledgeable than old scholars who had been immersed in it for decades!

Elder Qian suddenly had a yearning for talent, "Hai, I suddenly feel like taking in a disciple."

The third judge laughed, "Old man Qian, aren't you not taking in disciples anymore? You still want to take him in? Besides... What can you teach him?"

Elder Qian was helpless, "Indeed, it is precisely that I do not know what to teach him. In literature, it seems that he is more accomplished than me."

The old granny said, "And he is quite a prickly person. After what he did today, he would most definitely be known in the literature scene. However, there will be even more people doubting him. Just like a few old fools I know, they are predecessors who enjoy teaching juniors to be respectful of their elders. They would definitely attack him."

"Then I won't take him in as a disciple." Elder Qian said, "I'll help him."

The third judge said, "Elder Qian, why do you think so highly of this youth? There are many people who are talented. But most of them are young and aggressive and would fall to nothing early on, with no

accomplishments. There are so many of these kinds of youths. They are uncountable, but how many of them can last until the end? You think he can make it?"

Elder Qian was very determined, "Those people you mention just have average talent, but Zhang Ye is different. He definitely can. I think he definitely can." Saying that, Elder Qian looked at his two old friends in a joking manner, "No one from China has gotten a Nobel Prize in Literature. What if at some time in the future, when China really gets this highest honor... Will it be him?"

The old granny said surprisingly, "You really have such thoughts?"

"Elder Qian, isn't your evaluation of him too high?" The third judge was shocked as he said, "There are so many literary scholars in the country who have failed. No one has reached the top after all these years. He is just a 20+-year-old lad. Nobel Prize in Literature? You think too highly of him!"

The old granny also didn't think so highly, "Zhang Ye is still far from that."

Elder Qian laughed, "At least he is closer than us. Now, all he needs is time and experience. He is the best seedling that I have ever seen!"

Chapter 124: "Facing the Sea with Spring Blossoms"!

Sunday.

Zhang Ye was resting.

Early in the morning, eldest little sister Cao Dan had woken him up, "Brother, you are famous again. I went to the newspaper stand this morning. A few local newspapers had you in them. Only after reading did I know that you took part in yesterday's Couplet Competition and won! You are really great, Brother."

Zhang Ye tiredly said "So-so, I guess."

"Pass me the phone. Pass it to me." It was mom's voice on the other end.

Zhang Ye was a little stunned, "Mom, you are around, too? Are you at Grandma's home?"

His mother said fiercely, "You rascal, why did you make such a mess again! Such an important competition... You were just onstage to collect your award and you scolded people? You.... You are 'fantastic'. That was all broadcast live. I heard from your sister that the internet is discussing about how many of the authors and literary people are criticizing you!"

Zhang Ye sighed, "It will be fine."

"How can that be fine?" his mother said angrily.

"It's not like it's the first time; don't make a big fuss." After being through worse before, Zhang Ye was calmer, "How big could it be? After all, it was them who started the dirty tricks. You know me; I'm not the type to mess with others, but others also shouldn't mess with me. If they do, then they will pay for it. That is my style!"

"You, you!" his mother said disappointedly.

“Mom, I am going back to sleep.” Zhang Ye hung up.

To others who could fall asleep after such a big incident, they would be worried about this and that, or thinking of the consequences. But to Zhang Ye, he was already used to this. Every two or three days, he would get into some sort of trouble. He no longer put it at heart. Wasn't this just the usual? Zhang Ye honestly just took his lazy naps and didn't care much about the issue.

Being scolded?

Being doubted and criticized?

When someone scolded him the first time, Zhang Ye raged. When they scolded him the fifth time, Zhang Ye was angry. When they scolded him the tenth time, Zhang Ye was humbled. But now, Zhang Ye was invulnerable. If and when someone scolded him with an interesting phrase, Zhang Ye would even smile.

.....

After he woke up.

Zhang Ye went downstairs to buy a few newspapers and bring them home to read.

The first copy was The Beijing Times. This newspaper was considered an acquaintance of Zhang Ye's. When Zhang Ye had first appeared in a newspaper, it was them who had reported on him. The paper's article was considered to be more objective, as it reported the details of yesterday's couplet competition. It mentioned Zhang Ye's scolding situation, but mentioned more about Zhang Ye's dominating performance and award, as well as the more than ten couplets that were said. The focus was on the couplet that Elder Qian described as an Millenium Impossibility, which was praised to the skies by the paper. Overall, the report gave recognition to Zhang Ye.

As for the second and third newspapers, they were generally critical of him.

A newspaper had mentioned that Zhang Ye had been reported for cheating from out of nowhere, and it also wrote at the end that he should not have used a couplet to scold others at such a situation, regardless of what had happened. This was a problem with his quality of person. It criticized Zhang Ye for not having the bearing of a scholar and was overly petty!

Zhang Ye let it pass and turned his attention to Weibo.

On Weibo, just as his sister and his mom had said, many people were criticizing him, “Having literary talent, but not having a good heart!”

But there were also many supporters of Zhang Ye!

“Who are the ones without good hearts? It's you people from the Beijing Writers' Association!”

“If they had not said that Teacher Zhang Ye had cheated, would Teacher Zhang have scolded them?”

“I'm neutral. But anyone with eyes could see what had happened yesterday. I support Zhang Ye on this matter!”

“It's the Beijing Writers' Association who deserves to be scolded! Who can they blame?”

“Still criticizing Teacher Zhang Ye? Your asses sure are crooked!”

“Back at the Silver Microphone Awards, I did not agree to Teacher Zhang’s recital of ‘Dead Water’, as I think he went beyond bounds. But yesterday, I don’t think Teacher Zhang did any wrong. Those of you who are criticizing Teacher Zhang Ye, I want to ask you: If it was you who was being maligned by others, to the point where your job would be lost as a result, and you would not be able to survive in this industry anymore, would you treat it as if nothing had happened? Will you carry on being a grandson of the Beijing Writers’ Association? Hur Hur. Maybe you can do that, but Teacher Zhang can’t do it. He isn’t a wimp like you! Because his name is Zhang Ye!”

The Beijing Writers’ Association’s official Weibo also publicly launched an attack on Zhang Ye. From the posting time, it had just happened a few minutes ago, “Just like how Vice President Meng said, a person like Zhang Ye would not be accepted by our Writers’ Association, no matter how accomplished he is or how talented he is. How can a person with such a questionable character be any good at literature? Our Writers’ Association focuses not only on talent for taking in members, it also greatly focuses on a person’s character and moral standing!”

Below the post, many people were still cursing!

“What a joke!”

“You dare to talk about morals?”

“Hahaha. All of you are too humorous!”

“You do not want him, but it’s not like Teacher Zhang will go!”

Just as everyone was having a debate, the official Weibo of the “National Writers’ Association” suddenly expressed their position, “After the National Writers’ Association’s Committee Member Qian’s and other Writers’ Association’s members’ recommendation, after an inspection, we invite Teacher Zhang Ye to join our National Writers’ Association!”. With this statement out, the discussion became even more explosive!

“Holy sh*t!”

“The National Writers’ Association has given their statement!”

“Haha! Face smacking! The Beijing Writers’ Association’s face has been smacked senseless!”

“That’s right. The Beijing Writers’ Association just said that they would not want a person like Zhang Ye, but in the end, the National Writers’ Association has invited Teacher Zhang Ye. Their faces are swollen now!”

“Elder Qian recommended Zhang Ye?”

“He really wants Zhang Ye to enter the National Writers’ Association?”

“Support! Teacher Zhang has finally obtained the recognition of the mainstream literature world!”

“Do you think that Teacher Zhang Ye will enter the National Writers’ Association?”

“I guess so. After all, it’s one of the most authoritative literature units in the country.”

"I guess not. There are so many authors in the country scolding Teacher Zhang. Teacher Zhang might not even bother about being a part of them. With Teacher Zhang's temper, it's something he would definitely do!"

Many people were quite delighted to know what the outcome was.

Some of the older elders of the National Writers' Association raised their objections.

"Mr Qian, why are you recommending such a hooligan into the association?"

"This is the National Writers' Association. If we let that Little Zhang in, wouldn't that cause the atmosphere to turn foul!?"

"I don't support it. He doesn't even know the basics of respecting one's elders. He can't even mind his mouth. What can such a person do? Mess things up?"

"This Zhang Ye has no standards!"

ZhangYeNumber1Fan expressed, "Teachers, all of you may be predecessors, but I don't think any of you have the qualifications to say that. If you have the ability, then match the 烟锁池塘柳 (yān suǒ chí táng liǔ, Willow pond locked in smoke) Teacher Zhang gave. Only then will you have the qualifications to criticize Teacher Zhang for his literary standard! If not, anyone can say 'what standards does Zhang Ye have'. If you want to reject him, why don't you show some of your abilities?"

After this was said, many people stopped speaking.

ZhangYeNumber1Fan said, "No one can match it? Then don't say anything!"

Actually, since yesterday, 烟锁池塘柳 (yān suǒ chí táng liǔ, Willow pond locked in smoke) had become a hot phrase on the internet. It was extremely popular for a while. Some famous people did not believe it in the beginning and thought that they would be able to match it. Someone even declared so. But after a day, those people who had made the declaration that it was not some Impossibility had shut up and disappeared!

Are you scared?

Why hasn't any person matched it!?

This was a Millennial Impossibility! Many authoritative people in the profession had begun to acknowledge it!

.....

At home.

After seeing that Weibo message, Zhang Ye only felt touched. Zhang Ye had only spoken a few words with Elder Qian, but he had stood up for him when almost everyone in the profession was criticizing Zhang Ye. He had even recommended that he be invited into the National Writers' Association, and had held out an olive branch for him. As long as Zhang Ye nodded, and as long as Zhang Ye gave a call or simply left a reply on Weibo, he would enter the Writers' Association. And it was not just a provincial-level Beijing Writers' Association, but the biggest National Writers' Association!

Zhang Ye thanked Elder Qian in his heart, but... He suddenly did not feel like entering the Writers' Association. This 'small organization' was not very powerful and was very complicated. The experienced predecessors were stuck in their ways. Euphemistically speaking, they were overly traditional. But without mincing one's words, they were overly pedantic. It did not match Zhang Ye's temper in any way. He could already predict that if he joined, there would be even more of such similar events like yesterday. All of that made Zhang Ye uncomfortable, so why would he join? Asking to be rebuffed? Zhang Ye didn't think that he was that free!

Others didn't like him?

Hur, this bro doesn't even wish to enter!

However, Zhang Ye did not want to give too cruel a rejection after Elder Qian's painstaking effort, as it would have been not knowing what was good for himself. Hence, he thought of a roundabout method that rejected it, but did not end things badly.

"Thank you Teacher Qian. Thank you for the National Writers' Association's acknowledgement," Zhang Ye replied.

"Ah! Quick, take a look!"

"Teacher Zhang has said something!"

"Haha. Let's see what Teacher Zhang will do!"

Netizens on Weibo gathered over. Many professionals and people from the National Writers' Association and other provinces also moved their attention. They were waiting for Zhang Ye's reply. Those who cursed him, those who supported him, and even those who were neutral paid attention. Before Zhang Ye posted the next message, that Weibo message had been forwarded a thousand times. This showed how much attention was placed on this matter! There was no other way about it. After all, Zhang Ye was now famous. He had said "Dead Water" at the Silver Microphone Awards, and he had scolded using couplets at the Couplet Competition. Everything Zhang Ye said would gain the attention of others. This was also the temporary fame brought from the Couplet Competition!

Zhang Ye paused for a while before expressing his stance:

"Starting tomorrow, I will be a happy man;

Feed a horse, split logs, travel the world.

Starting tomorrow, I will care for crops and vegetables.

I have a house; it faces the sea, and flowers bloom in spring warmth.

Starting tomorrow, I will contact every relative

to tell them about my happiness.

As that lightning bolt of happiness told me,

I will tell each and every person.

Give every river and every mountain a warmhearted name.

As for strangers, I wish you happiness, too.

I wish you a glittering future.

I wish you a lover who becomes a spouse.

I wish that you obtain happiness in this world.

I wish only to face the sea, where flowers bloom in spring warmth."

.....

"It's a poem?"

"A modern poem that Teacher Zhang is best at?"

"What's the meaning of the poem? What does Teacher Zhang want to say?"

"Why do I have goosebumps reading this poem!? It's too beautiful!"

"Haha, I got it! He is indeed a cultured person! Even when rejecting, Teacher Zhang can reject in such an artistic manner! This poem was written too nicely!"

Many people could not understand.

But many people knew it well.

Amongst them was a literary author who wasn't that famous. He dissected it, "Starting tomorrow, Starting tomorrow, Starting tomorrow. This was said three times, which makes the meaning very clear. What Teacher Zhang means is that tomorrow, or in the future, he might be able to melt the grievances like ice and not fuss about the problems in the past. Tomorrow, or in the future, he might be able to give his well wishes to those who criticized or hated him, wishing them a good journey ahead..." Upon saying that, the author gasped in admiration, "But today, but now, he wishes only to face the sea, where flowers bloom in spring warmth!"

A simple poem from Zhang Ye had caused great acclaim once again!

Below, a person from the Couplet Organization gave his evaluation, "Mr Zhang is so talented. I bow in deference!"

Elder Qian, the Committee Member of the Writers' Association also replied later, "Since Little Zhang has made his decision, then we can only respect it. But I have something to say. I will say it now, and I will also say it again in the future. It is not your loss that the National Writers' Association doesn't have you, but it's our Writers' Association that has suffered!" After that, he added on, "Teacher Little Zhang, I wish to wait for tomorrow, where you can still face the sea, and can also let the flowers bloom in the National Writers' Association. The Writers' Association's invitation to you will be effective for life!"

The matter was settled.

However, there was no end to the discussion. Zhang Ye had thrown out a poem to once again shock the modern poem arena!

“This poem is really good! It’s so good, it’s explosive!”

“Face Smacking Specialist has made another production! Come gather around!”

“I have a feeling that this poem will be more popular than ‘Flying Bird and Fish’!”

“Haha, it’s already popular. Look at the forwards. It’s already exceeded 4000! This is almost defying the heavens! Everyone is ‘Facing the Sea with Spring Blossoms’!”

.....

Switching off the computer, Zhang Ye felt relaxed. He wanted to give Teacher Qian a call to apologize again, but he decided against it. Why? Because there were two reasons. Firstly, there was no need to say anything more. They were considered good friends despite the great difference in age. They had not interacted much, but one poem and one couplet was enough as the most profound interaction. So there was no need to mull over it on the phone. It would instead make it more corny. The second point was... Your sister! Because he did not have Elder Qian’s telephone number! The first point was actually not important at all!

Forget it!

He was not entering the Writers’ Association, so there was nothing to worry about!

Literature was not important for Zhang Ye’s development. It could be considered a tiny tributary towards his goal. It was nice to have it, as it added brilliance to the existing splendor. If he had the opportunity to develop this further, Zhang Ye would not let it go. But the main goal was not this. This was not the most important thing, so it was alright if he did not enter the Writers’ Association.

Then what was his goal?

What was his goal all along?

Was there a need to ask? His goal was of course not to have decayed teeth!

Chapter 125: Countless Lottery Draws!

+3200!

+12676!

+6981!

His Reputation kept increasing!

When it hit 9 P.M. at night, Zhang Ye looked into his game ring’s Reputation points. It had reached 1.4 million. Zhang Ye had been staring at the display for the whole day, and with every Reputation point gained, it felt like a promotion. Zhang Ye was very excited because these points could let him play the lottery to gain items to prevent tooth decay..... Rather, to help him further his dreams of being a superstar. Secondly, with every Reputation point gained, it meant that another person knew of him and admired him.

The points gained decreased slowly, likely to be coming to an end. After all, the couplet competition, the Millennium Impossibility and "Facing the Sea with Spring Blossoms" could not gain him Reputation points forever. It was all for the moment, and it was reaching its limit. Zhang Ye had never had such a quick increase in Reputation, nor had he reached such a level of Reputation points before. He had to be content for now, as it afforded him a lot of lottery chances now.

Time for the lottery!

Buy a chance at the draw!

Without a thought, Zhang Ye added an Additional Stake, not more, to try his luck.

The needle spun fast and stopped at the Skills Category in his first draw. A Treasure Chest (small) appeared and Zhang Ye immediately opened it up.

A flash of light!

A skill book appeared!

"Lock Picking Skill Experience Book" (2): Upon reading, increase the lock picking skills of the gamer.

A skill book. As there was no use in storing it, Zhang Ye flipped open the books one by one. After consuming the two books, he felt slightly giddy. With new memories filling up in his mind. Looking sideways at his closet and drawer, Zhang Ye had felt a sense of thievery instincts and, without any basis of logic, he knew that he could pick that lock open. All he needed were some tools.

F**k, what a wretched outcome!

Why did I even get such a skill for? Luckily, he did not stake too much on it!

Zhang Ye was wondering if the game ring had known that his nickname was called "Instant Noodle Hero"? And therefore gave such a skill to him, to see if he could carry a pack of instant noodles out of a place? Thus ensuring the glory of being nicknamed "Instant Noodle Hero"?

Forget it, and continue to draw!

It's always better to have a skill. After all, having many skills did not burden the body!

For the second round of lottery, Zhang Ye also added an Additional Stake, spending 200,000 of his Reputation. He observed as the needle spun!

1 round!

2 rounds!

3 rounds!

The needle stopped at the Consumption Category!

Zhang Ye immediately opened up the Treasure Chest (small) and the items appeared!

"Save" (2): Saves a record. This save file can only be stored for half an hour.

This Save Crystal was already familiar to Zhang Ye. It was the first item he'd had, which he had gotten from his first lottery draw. It had helped him a great deal during his interview for his job back then. Even though the record could only be saved for 30 minutes, it was enough to solve many problems. Zhang Ye regretted a little; if he had known that he would get this item, he would have added ten additional stakes! What a pity.

He put the Save Crystal away.

At the third draw for today, Zhang Ye did not use additional stakes temporarily. He waited until after the needle was coming to a stop before opening up the Additional Stakes menu. This was to let him analyse a little first, as there were two categories ahead. The needle was currently at the Stats Category, and further in front was the Skills Category.

To add or not to add?

How many stakes to add?

These two categories had items that were quite good. After thinking it through, and with the earlier experience of the Save Crystal, Zhang Ye bet all his remaining reputation with the use of the Additional Stakes. Whatever will be, will be. In his earlier two draws, he had spent a total of 200,000 each time. Now that he had 1 million points left, deducting the 100,000 he spent on the third draw, he could add nine additional stakes. And so he bet all of it!

The draw continued!

The needle continue moving!

At this time, the needle, as if giving all its strength, slowly moved forward!

Since Zhang Ye was not concerned with which of the two categories the needle would land on, it was a bet anyway, so he closed his eyes and waited quietly. When the game ring indicated that the lottery had ended, Zhang Ye slowly opened his eyes narrowly to peek at the lottery board – It was the Skills Category!

Ten Treasure Chests (Small) opened up!

This was Zhang Ye's biggest bet ever, so he was nervous!

He feared that if the game ring had gotten him a "How to Cook the Most Delicious Instant Noodles" Skill Experience Book, then his heart would have just died!

Let's open them!

After removing the ten Treasure Chests from the inventory, they all piled up on the ground.

Zhang Ye once again went to the bathroom to wash his hands, this time with shampoo. A pleasant aroma floated around as he took a deep breath and opened the first chest. It was a book, different looking from the "Lock Picking Skill Experience Book" and the "Calligraphy Skill Experience Book". The book cover was newer and all white, so it didn't look too ancient.

Consecutively, he opened ten of the chests, all containing the same book. He then held up a book to take a look.

"Taekwondo Skill Experience Book": Upon reading, raises the player's Taekwondo skill experience!

Taekwondo? Something of the Koreans? Zhang Ye eyes showed some disdain, but he still smiled from ear to ear. He immediately flipped open the book to gain the experience!

1 book!

5 books!

10 books!

With a single breath, he consumed all of the skill's experience!

Although as a nationalist, he did not like things from the Koreans, nor did he like fighting techniques like Taekwondo, this was at least a skill that allowed one to throw one's weight about. Once he knew it, Zhang Ye did not need to be afraid of anything else. When he saw larger-sized elementary school students, he, too, would be able to put up a fight!

Cross kick!

Side kick!

Inverted kicks.... Alright, there's no such move!

Zhang Ye raised his leg to try some moves. It felt powerful. His leg kicks were very standard. Steady, accurate and relentless, you could feel the wind with each kick. But alas, Zhang Ye's physical fitness was poor, and his strength and stamina were lacking. Usually seated in front of his computer and lacking in exercise and training, after seven to eight moves, he felt like he had already pulled something and was in pain. F**k, looks like the Skill Experience Book could only let him learn by gaining knowledge of the techniques. It did not improve his physique to that of those who had trained for many years. He was lacking in stature and strength, so he could not fully utilize it.

But it's okay. This was good enough!

At least now, he had the ability to beat up the those in the Southern Mountain Old Folks Home and then trample on the Northern Seas Kindergarten School!

What's more, Zhang Ye was most excited by the possibilities of the existence of this Taekwondo skill. Does that mean that there will be a Muay Thai skill? Could there be an Eight Trigrams Palm or a Jeet Kune Do skill, too? Zhang Ye believed that those definitely existed. It was just that he had not managed to get draw them. If he could really obtain the unlimited right to buy these Experience Books of various international martial arts in the Special Category, he would one day become invincible with enough Reputation!

Judo is good, too!

Tán Tuǐ isn't bad, too!

If ten books were not enough, he would consume a hundred!

If a hundred was not enough, then he would consume a thousand!

If a thousand was not good enough..... 10,000 books should do it, right?

At that time, the whole world's top martial artists could have a go at him. Who could defeat him by then?

He would go and challenge all the martial arts schools, and challenge the whole world. Martial artists were also considered celebrities in this world. They could become famous and gain reputation, too!

All roads lead to Rome!

Zhang Ye could finally see a clearer path forward!

Chapter 126: The New Segment is Going on Air!

Monday.

Slightly cloudy.

Beijing Television Station. Zhang Ye came early to the unit once again. After he put down his stuff, he was prepared to do some cleaning.

"Eh?" He suddenly realised that someone else was in the office, "You are?"

It was a fifty-something-year-old middle-aged man, who was almost fully bald, and who looked older than others his age. Upon seeing Zhang Ye, the middle-aged man curled his lips. He was holding a broom behind the door and was sweeping the floor, "You are Teacher Zhang?" You can just call me Old Wei. Hur hur. I am an editor of the Arts Channel. Everyone calls me Editor Wei or Old Wei."

Zhang Ye said, "Yo, then why are you doing the cleaning? Please leave it to me."

"It's fine." Editor Wei replied, "The cleaner is on leave today and I wasn't doing anything anyway."

"That won't do. I am younger; how can I let you do the work?" Zhang Ye tried to snatch the broom from him, "Besides, you are not from our team. You don't need to."

But Editor Wei did not let him take the broom. He just laughed and took out a small book, "Just help me by signing this. I am your fan and like your poems very much, especially that "Facing the Sea with Spring Blossoms" from the other day. My daughter had found it online and showed it to me. To be honest, I read it ten times and still can not recite it by heart. There aren't many good works like these now in modern poetry."

Zhang Ye was a little embarrassed, "Then an autograph won't suffice. Since you like it, then it's my honor. I will write out this poem and sign it for you."

Editor Wei was very happy, "That would be the best.. if it's not too troublesome?"

"It's not troublesome." Zhang Ye quickly took a pen and paper. Since it was a modern poem, a pen would be good enough. There was no need for brush and ink.

The poem was written.

He signed on it.

Zhang Ye then gifted it to him.

Editor Wei shouted his praises, "Good poem, good poem!"

At this time, the twins Hou Ge and Hou Di arrived at work. When they entered the office, they saw Editor Wei. Hou Ge panicked and rushed over, "Uncle Wei, why are you doing the cleaning again?"

Hou Di also rushed over, "Give me, give me!"

Editor Wei couldn't argue with them, so he just took the rubbish out from their office and went back.

When he left, Zhang Ye asked curiously, "Who is that Editor Wei?"

"You must have thought he's a cleaner, right?" Hou Ge sighed, "When I first came, I also thought so, too. I always see him cleaning the place or clearing the trash in the various offices or changing the water cooler's water. I heard from other colleagues from other departments that Uncle Wei even sponsors several students who can't afford school. He's a very kind uncle. Everyone respects him a lot. But apparently, he previously offended our Arts Channel's boss, Director Wang Shuixin. Although his job title is an Editor, he doesn't get one bit of bonus. He doesn't have any responsibilities and has been repressed all this while. Since he has no jobs to do usually, he would help clean the place and change the ink cartridges. Hai."

Director Wang Shuixin?

Zhang Ye's "This is also Everything" had previously also offended him, so he knew that he was not a magnanimous person.

Xiao Lu came into the office following that, in high spirits. Seeing Zhang Ye, she laughed, "Teacher Zhang, why aren't you feeding the horses, splitting logs and traveling the world? I thought you wouldn't come to work today and will be facing the sea, watching the flowers bloom in spring warmth."

Hou Ge also recalled and gave a big thumbs up, "Yesterday, that poem on Weibo was amazing. Did you not see what happened on the web later? It was spread like mad!"

Xiao Lu laughed, "My own tagline has changed to the name of your poem. I wish only to face the sea, where flowers bloom in spring warmth? What grows on your brain? How can everything you write be so deep?"

Zhang Ye chuckled, "My brain doesn't have anything growing. But at least there's something underneath my feet."

Dafei also arrived at the unit. Hearing that, he asked, "Underneath your feet? What's there underneath your feet?"

Zhang Ye said, "I am standing on the shoulders of giants."

At the door, Hu Fei strode in and happened to hear their conversation, "Haha. Amazing. What an amazing 'standing on the shoulders of giants'. Little Zhang's words are always pearls of wisdom!"

Xiao Lu and Hou Ge were also impressed.

The shoulders of giants? They had never heard of such a metaphor!

This expression was attributed to his world's Newton; however, they would forever not understand what Zhang Ye really meant. The giants were not giants. Zhang Ye was not referring to the greats of this world, but the sages of his world. Of course, he would definitely not explain this. This was a secret of his. He would not tell a second person as long as he was alive, regardless of who it was.

After some chatting.

Hu Fei suddenly clapped his hands. "Alright, let's get down to business. Stop standing and take a seat. Just listen to what I have to say, and ask if you have any question." He sat at his own desk. His office was also there and had the same treatment as the rest. Hu Fei did not have a lone leader office for himself. It was just that he was usually busy, so he would be away at meetings and various other affairs. Sometimes he would have things outside of the office, so he was seldom around.

Zhang Ye and company waited for him to speak.

Hu Fei seemed to be in a good mood as he laughed, "Yesterday, I obtained a message that our segment will begin soon. The program at the same time slot has been decided by the station to be axed this Friday. So our segment will officially begin on Saturday. If we are recording, it has to begin tomorrow or the day after tomorrow. We need to finish recording it at the latest on Friday, to make it in time for the Saturday afternoon broadcast. So for these few days, we won't be able to rest easy. It's time to busy ourselves. I hope that no one grumbles when we work overtime. I will work overtime with everyone."

Xiao Lu chuckled, "Look at what you are saying, Brother Hu. What's there for us to grumble about? We will work overtime if need be. We've been relaxing for so long, so we can't wait to busy ourselves!"

Hou Ge also said, "Right. We will definitely do our best to help Brother Hu!"

Hou Di said, "Brother Hu, it's alright if we work overtime. If you need to rest, please rest. We will do everything well for you!"

Dafei said, "You invited us because you trusted us. We also trust you. As long as you say it, I would be fine working overtime for an entire week!"

Hu Fei nodded feeling relieved, "Then I'll thank everyone first." Saying that, he looked towards Zhang Ye, "Actually, the person who will be working the hardest will be Teacher Little Zhang. I have already gotten the approval from the higher-ups. Little Zhang will officially take on the role of our segment's host. He will be responsible to work with the lecturer and the guests, as well as interact with the audience. This role of his is very important. I do not have any script. The lecturer has been confirmed, and what is to be talked about has been fixed. The only thing is that the content and order of the lecture hasn't been confirmed. We might need to have some discussions during the recording, so the workload on Little Zhang would be even higher and more difficult." He was also not very sure, for Zhang Ye had no experience being a television host. "Little Zhang, is it fine without a script?"

Everyone looked towards Zhang Ye.

Zhang Ye was amused, "Leader, go to my previous unit and ask, and you will know. Even if it's a live broadcast, I have never used a script. I just say whatever is on my mind. I actually might not be able to say anything if you give me a script. I'll just improvise on the spot."

Hu Fei was relieved, "Alright, I was just waiting for you to say that!"

Xiao Lu chuckled, "With Teacher Zhang, one of him can handle two!"

Hou Di said, "Teacher Zhang would definitely not have any problems with his working abilities."

Hou Ge said with concern, "What's the name of our new segment?"

Hu Fei said, "It was also just fixed. It is tentatively called 'Musings of History'. If there is something more appropriate, we will change it later. It's a trivial problem. Well, with Zhang Ye as host, he will work with the lecturer. He will try to let the lecturer's knowledge be expressed to the fullest extent. Maybe a historical figure or historical event will be discussed. It might even be a novel. Anyways, it will be a spread of historical knowledge. We will then invite a few guests. The guests will supplement or examine the topic. They can even raise doubts. It's alright, even if they do not agree. This will largely be moderated by Teacher Zhang Ye. I believe that he will do it well, but the core is to listen to the lecturer's speech. The guests are just helping out. The main point is to accommodate the lecturer's point of view. The person that we invite is definitely a professor, and it one of the most authoritative ones. What he says can't be wrong. So the doubts by the guests will just be an interlude and not the main theme."

Zhang Ye nodded, "I understand."

Hu Fei said, "The time of the segment also has some minor adjustments. From today on, our segment will take over the Saturday and Sunday 1 – 2 P.M. time slot. There will be two episodes a week, and each will be an hour long. Hur Hur. Although this time slot can't compare to the primetime hours on the weekdays, it's actually pretty good."

Hou Ge snapped his fingers, "That's good."

"Are there any more questions?" Hu Fei looked at them.

Zhang Ye asked, "Have the higher-ups given any instructions on the ratings for our segment? For example, how high do the ratings have to be, to be passable? How much lower than a certain percentage will it be axed?" Amongst the colleagues, Zhang Ye was really the only professional. He was from a specialized major and had worked in the radio media for a period of time, so he knew a bit more. The others like Hou Ge and Xiao Lu, they were in no way part of this profession. They were, at best, technical staff.

"Ah? There's a possibility of being axed?" Xiao Lu asked with a dumbfounded expression.

Hou Ge said, "That can't be. Our station seems to think highly of our new segment."

Hu Fei smiled wryly, "No matter how highly they think of us, results still matter. Also, every program in the station is highly thought of. If not, would they even air the program? Is there a need to say anything else? Teacher Little Zhang asked a good question. I didn't want to talk about it initially, but it's okay if I say it. The Arts Channel set the lowest ratings for us that the first episode must get as at least 1.0%. If it is lower than that, it could be axed three weeks later."

"1%?"

"Seems hard."

“It’s not considered very high. It’s alright.”

Zhang Ye also felt it was manageable. It was not high at all.

People might say that the hottest variety shows in the country would be considered blockbusters if they broke 2%. Breaking 1% was considered pretty popular. So how could it be easy? Actually, it was not the same. Those were for the Central TV or other provincial satellite TV segments. They covered the entire country’s frequencies. Although it did not cover 100%, the signal was in basically all the major districts in the country. There were hundreds of millions of people. As for the Beijing Television Station’s Arts Channel, it only covered the area of Beijing. Even if everyone watched it, there were only tens of millions of people. The difference in audience numbers was huge, hence the ratings were not comparable.

For example, for the Beijing Television Station satellite TV segment, if a program could obtain 2% in ratings, there might be tens of millions watching. Then it would be considered to be hot.

But if it was the local channel with the Beijing’s Arts Channel, if a program could obtain 2%, the number of people watching was only about a million. It might even be 800,000-900,000 people. Zhang Ye could only estimate. He did not know the actual figures, as he was still new. However, what he was sure of, was that the ratings required were not considered bad, nor was it hot. It could be considered average, neither high nor low.

The difference was great!

Hence, a satellite channel’s ratings and a provincial channel’s ratings were completely different concepts!

If one wanted to really compare, it was like Zhang Ye at the Beijing Radio Station where despite being a provincial radio station with a short range signal, he had managed to use “Late-night Ghost Stories” to create history. His ratings had overtaken the ratings of the Central Radio Station, which broadcast to the entire country. Only then could it be said that the Beijing Radio Station’s program had exceeded a similar program of the Central Radio Station. The listenership and audience numbers were the most objective statistic. Only then could a provincial station compare with a satellite station. There was no point in looking at percentage ratings, for there was no way to compare them, as the way it was calculated was different.

Of course, getting back to the point.

Taking a provincial audience count to compare with a satellite channel’s? This was also impossible. It was fool’s talk!

Any satellite channel’s program would have a potential audience of hundreds of millions, but what about a provincial channel? The potential audience was just tens of millions!

The difference was nearly ten times!

How could they compare?

Only an anomalous person like Zhang Ye had done it previously. But that was in the radio system. There weren’t that many listeners, so the probability wasn’t that impossible.

Chapter 127: The Recording of the Segment’s First Episode!

Three days later.

Thursday morning.

Beijing Television Station recording studio.

"The rostrum should be here, yes, a little bit more." Dafei instructed the stage staff, "The guest seats should be placed on the opposite side of the rostrum."

"The lighting is not good enough; it's too dim." Hou Ge said.

Xiao Lu was preparing the guests and lecturer's introduction script, which were to be given to Zhang Ye.

Although they weren't exactly experienced yet, they were still experts in their fields. They did not fully understand the TV industry and its workings, but they were very professional and it was what they were good at, so there wouldn't be any hiccups.

Zhang Ye arrived.

"Teacher Zhang is here?" Dafei greeted.

Xiao Lu had finished writing and came over immediately, "Teacher Zhang, for you. This is the introduction script. It's for today's lecturer and guests general information.

"That's good, I will memorise it." A lot of hosts who introduced their guests usually held a cue card. Some hosts even made a big issue and used teleprompters. But Zhang Ye never had this habit, he liked to do things to perfection and since he was trained in media, he put more emphasis on going off-script.

Half an hour later.

Hu Fei walked in quickly, "Is everything ready?"

"Everything is ready, Brother Hu." Dafei said. "I've already checked twice over."

Hu Fei laughed, "Good, I'm assured when you guys handle it." Looking at his watch, he said, "It's almost time. The audience will be arriving soon, have the guests and lecturer arrived?"

Xiao Lu said, "I didn't see anyone."

"Still not here?" Hu Fei was surprised, "I've informed them it's at 8 A.M., and it's already half past eight now."

"I will hurry them then." Xiao Lu was in charge of coordination. She immediately made a call. After speaking for half a minute, she hung up and said, "The teachers said that they will be arriving very soon."

Zhang Ye frowned. He had wanted to interact with the teachers beforehand for a short dry run, but it looked like there wouldn't be enough time now.

"Let's not wait any longer, let the audience in first." Hu Fei instructed.

Coordinating with the lecturer, planning for the program, communicating with the lecturer, all of these had been delayed for some time already. Today was already Thursday, and the scheduled broadcast was

this Saturday; it couldn't afford to be delayed any further. The recording had to be done by today, otherwise it would be too late.

The audience began to enter the studio.

Some of them had tickets, which were handed out by the station. Some of them were staff members of partnering units and didn't require any tickets.

"Little Zhang!"

"Haha, Teacher Zhang!"

Someone called out to Zhang Ye as he was reading his script.

The trio of Auntie Sun, Big Sis Zhou and Xiaofang had also come over.

"What are the few of you doing here?" Zhang Ye had not expected them and was a little happy.

Auntie Sun laughed, "This is your first time being a host, hosting a new program. Of course we had to be here to support you. We had to fight a long time for these tickets."

Big Sis Zhou pointed at him, "Please do well; I think very highly of you."

Zhang Ye guided them and said, "Then please take these seats at the front row. They are VIP seats. Hur Hur."

"That will be good. We will share some of your spotlight and enjoy the VIP treatment." Auntie Sun and the others took their seats on the first row, which were very close to the stage. The program's tickets were all handed out at the last minute, so it wasn't too formal and there were no seat numbers. After all, the recording studio was small, their program didn't have any fame and thus things were not too strict. Since there were no seat numbers, Zhang Ye could still call the shots on some matters, like seating the VIPs at the front. His old colleagues had come to support him. Zhang Ye was definitely touched by this.

The audience members were all now seated.

Former assistant Xiaofang laughed a little, then took out a piece of paper from her bag. It wasn't really a paper, more like a banner, and on it was Zhang Ye's name. They felt like groupies, holding the banner above their heads and swaying left to right.

Zhang Ye smiled bitterly. Surely that wasn't necessary?

Over there, Xiao Lu was anxiously stomping her feet, "Why are they not here yet!"

Hu Fei's expression did not look too good, "Call them again! Do they have any concept of time!"

Xiao Lu called them again, then told Hu Fei, "They seem to be coming over together and even said they will be here immediately."

"This immediately has taken half a day?" Hou Ge said unhappily.

"Their diva behaviour is even worse than the stars? They might have been invited to Central TV before, but what's the big deal!" Hou Di said.

After much discussion and research the past few days, Hu Fei and his program team had decided on presenting Romance of the Three Kingdoms on the first episode of “Musings of History”. Why? Because this was one of the Four Great Classical novels. This novel had been read by almost everyone, the audience base was large, and its influence was also great. As the pilot episode, its topic would interest a lot of people and help pull up the ratings. Otherwise, if they had presented about a lesser-known historical figure or novel, most people would not understand or know about it. In that case, the ratings would definitely not be good. The first episode was also the most important episode. Hu Fei and the team had to prioritize it over anything else. It would have to be done to the best of their ability!

So they had invite a Renmin University’s professor for this episode. He was called Ma Hengyuan. He was not a historical scholar, and neither was he a historian by profession. He was a literary scholar who researched some historical novels and literature works and was considered an authoritative figure in this field. His knowledge on “Romance of the Three Kingdoms” was considered to be very thorough and deep and he even appeared on a Central TV program to give a talk about the Three Kingdoms to a group of university students. It might not be considered a great achievement on the national level, but within Beijing, he was a famous professor. Hu Fei had spent a lot to invite this professor because he acknowledged his professional knowledge and reputation.

What about the guests?

They were also experts and hobbyists of the field, who were as good as the professor.

But who would have expected, these people were actually so late on the day of the recording. This also represented their attitudes and respect towards the program. Yes, Hu Fei admitted that their channel could not compare to Central TV, but they are also a well known TV station with considerable reach, so how could they do this?

Everyone was waiting for them.

The audience became impatient.

“Why aren’t you starting?”

“Wasn’t it supposed to start at 8 A.M.?”

“Yeah, it’s almost 9 A.M. now.”

Zhang Ye had no choice but to announce through the microphone, “Everyone, we are sorry, but the program recording might have to be slightly delayed. Let’s record the applause first. Thank you for cooperating.” Of course, natural applause would have been best, but in most circumstances, this effect could not be achieved. Therefore, for recording purposes, most TV stations would have their program crew record some applause or cheering to add to the program in post production, to improve the viewing experience.

Xiao Lu went over to lead the applause, “On the count of 1, 2, 3, everyone start clapping together.....”

After the applause and audience reaction were recorded, it was back to waiting for the arrival of the lecturer and guests.

A youth stood up and said, "Teacher Zhang Ye, since the recording hasn't started, can.. can you help me by autographing this?" He took out a copy of "Ghost Blows Out the Light" from his bag.

Zhang Ye smiled and walked over to him from the stage, "Of course."

"That's great. I came today just to see you!" The youth was very excited.

After Zhang Ye had given him an autograph, another teen girl ran up, "I want one, too. I want one, too!"

A moment later, an older sister asked him for an autograph, too, "My child really likes your fairy tales."

After signing three autographs, no one else bothered him. Since Zhang Ye wasn't that well known yet, most of those at the venue probably did not even know him. Not everyone who went on the internet would pay attention to his works and deeds. The amount of people who paid attention to him were still in the minority. This was normal.

"Who is this host?"

"I don't know."

"Is he famous? Why have I never heard of him before?"

"How could you not know Zhang Ye?"

Just as everyone were whispering and discussing, the lecturer and guests finally arrived!

From the backstage, a shadow emerged. The one leading the way was the Renmin University professor, Ma Hengyuan. He was a 50-something-year-old little man with a slightly sharp nose. One look and you knew that he was not an easy person to talk to. Following behind him were two men and a woman; they were today's guests. The men were middle-aged, and both were surnamed Xu. One was Teacher Xu from the Beijing Normal University, the other was Editor Xu, a deputy editor of a Beijing publishing house. The woman, younger than all of them, was called Ci Yan, and she was a newspaper reporter. She was in charge of the literary section.

Hu Fei was calm, "Professor Ma."

"Producer Hu." Ma Hengyuan smiled. "We were having some discussion on the way here, discussion about the program. That's why we were late."

Hu Fei did not mention it, "It's okay. Can we start now?"

"Yes." Ma Hengyuan said.

"Let me introduce to you." Hu Fei faced towards Zhang Ye, "This is Zhang Ye, the host. He will follow your lead on the set."

Zhang Ye put out his hand, "Professor Ma, how are you?"

Ma Hengyuan gave him a look, but ignored his hand. He nodded, "I know."

He did not want to shake hands?

What's the meaning of this?

Hou Ge, Dafei and the others wore a dark expression. You guys were late, yet your attitude is so arrogant?

That Teacher Xu and Editor Xu also pretended to not see Zhang Ye and only spoke with Ma Hengyuan. It was as if they had deliberately excluded Zhang Ye.

Only the newspaper reporter, Reporter Ci, held out her hand, "How are you, Teacher Zhang?"

"How are you?" Zhang Ye and Ci Yan shook hands, not taking the earlier events to heart.

They were not wearing their microphones yet, so the audience could not hear what they were saying, but surely they had eyes? When they saw that Zhang Ye had been ignored by the three of them, they all immediately started discussing. Auntie Sun and Big Sis Zhou were even feeling anger and injustice!

"What kind of people are those!"

"They were already given face!"

"Yet they are giving attitudes to Teacher Little Zhang?"

"So what if he is a professor? So what if they are experts? Are they really that full of themselves? Old bast**ds!"

Big Sis Zhou and the others were already scolding them. Zhang Ye's colleagues, Xiao Lu, Hou Ge and the others were very unhappy!

Why are they all so biased and treating Zhang Ye in this manner? With some thought, it was clear. Those people were probably the traditional literary professionals. Zhang Ye had scolded his unit before, scolded his Leaders and also at an event a few days ago, argued with the Beijing Writers' Association on a live broadcast. Even when the National Writers' Association had invited him to join, he did not agree. His name within the literary circle was now rotten. Many of those professionals had now blacklisted him.

Hu Fei whispered, "Little Zhang, bear with it."

"It's fine." Zhang Ye still had some grace. He had to put everyone's interest first. It was his first time as a TV host, so he could not mess this up!

Chapter 128: Let Them Get Lost. I'll Lecture!

The recording began.

A few cameras were already powered on.

Hou Ge, who was the field director, spoke into the microphone to Zhang Ye, "Teacher Zhang, everything's in place. If there's any mistake, we can re-record." He also knew that this was Zhang Ye's first time recording a TV Program. Thinking that Teacher Zhang could be nervous or pressured, he said some words to relieve him. Re-recording was not really an issue in TV programs. Some of the programs, which had very high standards, could take as long as four to five hours of recording for a one-hour program. It was done by having a lot of repeated re-recordings.

But Zhang Ye would not relax himself. He was very strict with himself. He treated this as a live recording, so that he would not make any mistakes, "Good day, everyone. This is a new program of the Beijing Arts Channel, 'Musings of History'. I am your host, Zhang Ye."

After the introduction of the program.

Zhang Ye started to introduce, "Today's lecturer is Renmin University's professor, Ma Hengyuan."

Ma Hengyuan stood behind the rostrum and nodded in acknowledgment.

Zhang Ye continued to introduce the other guests before going back to his seat beside the guest's sofa. This was the position for the host.

Ma Hengyuan was not overwhelmed by the stage. He had seen bigger occasions, like being on Central TV, "Good day, viewers and guests. I am Ma Hengyuan. Today, we will be speaking about the Three Kingdoms. Like a beautiful painting that presented the political situation, it was a time when power struggles were won through wars. It was a complicated time of political strife that lasted a century from the end of the Han dynasty to the Jin dynasty. It was an intense and sharp..."

He spoke for about five minutes.

Ma Hengyuan said, "Speaking about the Three Kingdoms, who do you like?"

The guest, Editor Xu chuckled, "Of course, it's Zhuge Liang."

Another host, the university teacher, Teacher Xu said, "I also like Zhuge Liang. Borrowing arrows with straw boats and the empty fort strategy are both amazing military strategies. It has left a legacy for us to learn from."

Zhang Ye laughed, "I like Zhou Yu."

The two guests named Xu gave him a stern look.

Ma Hengyuan also did not pay any heed to Zhang Ye. He ignored his words and smiled. "Well said. I also like Zhuge Liang. Speaking about the Three Kingdoms, the greatest impression many people would have of it would be of Zhuge Liang. He was an amazing man. Even the original text says that he was a miraculous person. What does being a miraculous person mean? It means that he was a person that did miracles..."

Zhang Ye's face did not betray his thoughts, but his heart was on fire!

Once was fine, twice was fine, but you did it a third time? You aren't even bothering about me?

Ignoring Zhang Ye's status in literature, for it was still controversial, so there was no point mentioning it, but he was still the host of the segment today. It was a very important role. As a lecturer, Ma Hengyuan was going to just treat him as if he did not exist? He treated the host, Zhang Ye, as thin air? What was the meaning of this? Xiao Lu and Dafei could no longer watch this any further. They were thinking, "Has Teacher Zhang provoked you? Are you f**king sick?"

The program continued.

Later on, Zhang Ye tried to mediate the situation twice to lead the audience.

However, every time he spoke, Ma Hengyuan pretended not to notice and ignored Zhang Ye's words. He did not think anything of Zhang Ye. He just spoke what he wanted to and interacted with the other hosts. In the end, Zhang Ye had been treated by Ma Hengyuan as a meaningless person!

Hu Fei was also angered. He walked to the side stage where Hou Ge was. He used the field director's microphone to speak to Ma Hengyuan, "Professor Ma, please cooperate with the host. Please cooperate with the host!"

Ma Hengyuan did not even blink as if he did not hear it. He still did what he wanted.

Hu Fei could no longer stand it any further. We invited you here with money, so you just needed to work, but what are you doing now? Eh? What are you trying to do?

"Hold on!" Hu Fei shouted loudly.

A few cameras turned off, "Executive Producer?"

Hu Fei said to Ma Hengyuan and a few guests, "Let's go backstage for a while." Then he strode away. He was not only dissatisfied with Ma Hengyuan's attitude, he was also extremely dissatisfied with the way he lectured.

.....

Backstage.

Everyone sat in a resting area.

"What's the matter? The audience is still waiting," Ma Hengyuan was quite unhappy.

Hu Fei asked, "Professor Ma, why aren't you cooperating with the host? Once or twice is fine, but so many times? I even told you through the microphone, right?"

Zhang Ye also looked at Ma Hengyuan.

Ma Hengyuan chuckled, "When I came, didn't you say that the host will cooperate with me? When did it become me cooperating with him?"

Hu Fei's rage was not trivial, "What does it mean to cooperate? It needs to be mutual!"

Ma Hengyuan looked at him, "I have always lectured like that. I do not like people messing things up or interrupting. If you think the program's atmosphere isn't good, then remove the host!"

The guest, Editor Xu, said, "For this, there really is no need for Little Zhang to be around."

"I think so, too." Teacher Xu smacked his lips, "He also doesn't know the Three Kingdoms, nor does he know history. He can be a bit redundant presently. Teacher Ma is right; I think it's best if he doesn't go on up. With a professional commentator of the Three Kingdoms like Professor Ma, and a few guests like us, it is meaningless to have a host!"

Xiao Lu turned nasty, "What are you saying?"

Hou Ge was also enraged, "You are trying to reverse the positions of host and guest?"

“This is my program! It’s our Beijing Arts Channel’s segment!” Hu Fei looked coldly at the three people, “Your opinion doesn’t count in the planning of the program!”

Ma Hengyuan stared at him, “Old Hu, aren’t you taking this a bit serious?”

Hu Fei said, “And I can tell you very clearly now that such a program would not work. It is not a fault of the host. It is a fault of yours!” He pointed to the stage outside, “Professor Ma, you gave an introduction to the Three Kingdoms just now, right? Some of it was the notes of the ancient scholars, and some were direct quotes from the work. There is nothing constructive or anything interesting. This sort of program will hardly get 0.5% in ratings, let alone 1%. Everyone has read Romance of the Three Kingdoms, so why would they need to hear you repeating it? And to repeat it on a television station? Is there any meaning to it?”

Ma Hengyuan sneered, “You want something fun? Then why aren’t you doing a variety segment. Why would you do a historical segment? History itself is not fun! It is boring!”

The guest, Teacher Xu, frowned, “That’s right. We have to respect the historical facts. So how can we talk rubbish? We are all in the business of learning. We are professionals, so there is no right for you to argue with us on this!”

Hu Fei laughed from extreme anger, “Historical segments can’t have fun? Who set the rule? If I wanted to tell everyone the story of the Three Kingdoms, then wouldn’t I just need to find a storyteller? Why would I need to invite all of you?”

The few people had a falling out. No one could accept the other’s way of thinking.

Zhang Ye also knew that the program could not go on like that. It would not have any ratings, so he stood forward and said, “Professor, Teachers, if you do not like me, or think lowly of me, I can reduce what I say onstage. I can even remain silent and you can enjoy your lecture and analysis. The Three Kingdoms you were lecturing is definitely not passable. If a good program and a good piece of history wants to attract people, it must not only be about history. It must be interesting and also topical. This is not disrespecting history, and it is because we respect this piece of history that we want to think of a way to spread this piece of history to everyone, so that they can deepen their understanding. What do we rely on? We aren’t relying on lengthy theories and evidence! We rely on factors that can absorb the audience and pull them in!”

Xiao Lu exclaimed, “Well said!”

Hou Ge said, “Teacher Little Zhang, how can a host like you not be present to speak. That’s not necessary!”

But even so, Ma Hengyuan still did not give Zhang Ye a direct look. He gave him a sideways glance, “I’m a professor in the Literature Department. Do I need you to teach me?”

Then there was no way to further negotiate!

These people were impenetrable!

“I also lectured in this way at Central TV.” Ma Hengyuan began to put on airs as he defiantly looked at Hu Fei, Zhang Ye and company, saying, “So? Is your Beijing Arts Channel better than the Central TV

station? Don't keep nagging at me, and I can tell you what to do. As long as I'm on the stage, then there will be a large audience watching. I can say it in any way that I want! That is my business, and not something laypeople like you should interrupt. Do you know history, or do I know history?" He was not only a professor in the literature department, he was also a famous professor online. He had no lack of fans, so when it came to anything professional, Ma Hengyuan looked down on anyone else. He did not think anything of the Arts Channel.

Hu Fei and Xiao Lu were extremely furious.

A member of the staff came running over, "Producer Hu, the audience has waited a long while and some have even left. This... Are we still recording?"

"Soon." Hu Fei said with a black face. He never expected to have invited such a bunch of old fools. If he knew earlier, he would not have invited them. What was he to do now? He had to finish recording the program today. It was too late to invite other lecturers. Even if another lecturer came, there was no script, so how was he to lecture? There was not a least bit of preparation time for them, forcing them to go onstage just like that!

Ma Hengyuan took his time to drink a mouthful of water. He then said a few words to the guests before slowly getting up, "Let's go. Let's continue recording!" It was as if he had become a mighty lord!

The moment they left, Hu Fei indicated for Zhang Ye and the rest to stay behind.

Xiao Lu said worriedly, "What do we do, Brother Hu? How can we have any ratings like this? Don't you see? The audience is nearly falling asleep! We need to think of something. If not, the moment the program airs, will it be axed the second day? Wouldn't the segment team then be disbanded? This bunch of old fools is destroying our livelihood! They aren't working for us, despite receiving the money, and are putting on airs. I'm pissed. Are they that good, to put on such airs?"

Hu Fei was also helpless, "Teacher Little Zhang, do you have any ideas?"

Zhang Ye looked at the receding back of Ma Hengyuan and company before taking a deep breath, "Brother Hu, I have an idea, but I'm not sure if you dare to do it!"

Hu Fei said seriously, "The program is going to be axed, so is there anything I don't dare to? Tell us!"

Hou Ge and Hou Di were waiting for Zhang Ye's proposal. Amongst them, Zhang Ye was clearly the most witty and most literate person. This was something everyone agreed upon.

Zhang Ye smiled. "We'll tell Ma Hengyuan and company to get lost!"

Hu Fei was stunned, "Asking them to get lost? Then who will lecture on the Three Kingdoms this episode?"

Zhang Ye straightened his shirt's collar, "...I'll lecture!"

Chapter 129: Little Zhang Creates "Lecture Room"!

Backstage.

Zhang Ye's words shocked people!

Xiao Lu stared, "You'll do it?"

"You are lecturing?" Hou Ge was also surprised, "How are you going to lecture?"

Dafei was quick to persuade, "Don't be rash. This is not a joke."

Hou Di also said, "That's right. You don't even have a script prepared. There's nothing at all. It's not that we don't believe in your ability, Teacher Little Zhang, but when lecturing about history, and especially when lecturing about the Three Kingdoms, one must at least have the experience and age. You might have outstanding literary talent that no one in Beijing can match, but when lecturing about the Three Kingdoms..."

Zhang Ye said indifferently, "Firstly, I do not need a script. I have never needed one in the past, do not need one now, and will not need one in the future. Secondly, I'm not being rash and am not joking. This is a matter regarding the survival of our new segment. It not only touches on our stay here, but also the responsibility of Brother Hu. I would not joke about such matters. Thirdly, the Three Kingdoms I lecture about will be real history. As for that self-righteous Ma Hengyuan and those guests, they are only talking about the novel, 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms'. It is not history at all. Do you know the Three Kingdoms just from reading 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms'? It's fine if a professor from a literature department talks about literature, but talking about the history of the Three Kingdoms? That's simply ridiculous! They don't know sh*t! They are only speaking rubbish! The point is that it would have been fine if they were speaking rubbish, but their rubbish can't even attract the audience!"

They don't know history?

What they said was all wrong?

Xiao Lu blinked, "That can't be! What they said was very clear. Everyone knows it. It's just lacking in interesting elements. How can this piece of history be wrong?"

Zhang Ye said amusingly, "It is not that the piece of history is wrong, it is them being completely wrong with what they said. If this program was really aired, many people will laugh at us!"

Hu Fei took a deep breath, "Are you sure?"

"I am 100% sure!" Zhang Ye said firmly, "Brother Hu, let's get them to pack up and leave. I'll do it. I don't dare to say how high or low the ratings would be, but if the first few episodes that I lecture go below 1%, causing our segment to be on the brink of being axed, then you will see my resignation letter the second day. I am confident and also have the ability to do a good job with this 'Three Kingdoms Lecture' for the segment!"

Everyone turned silent.

Hu Fei was in a dilemma, "Little Zhang, are you sure?"

"I am sure of it!" Zhang Ye's eyes were cold as he said, "If you believe me, then let me try. I guarantee that I will tell a different Three Kingdoms!"

Xiao Lu only had a wry smile, "Brother Hu, this..."

Hu Fei turned silent with his eyes closed. After a while, he suddenly opened his eyes and gritted his teeth, "Fine! It's on you! I can no longer f**king stand those bunch of old grandsons!" He actually cursed.

Hou Ge, "..."

Hou Di hurriedly said, "Leader, calm down, calm down!"

Hu Fei did not have any regrets after making a decision, "Let Teacher Little Zhang give it a try. I trust him. The reason why I headhunted Little Zhang over was also because of his knowledge and literary skills being able to help this segment at the critical moment."

Dafei wiped his sweat, "But the station has already decided. This..."

Hu Fei said categorically, "You don't have to worry about the responsibilities. I'll bear them!"

Zhang Ye immediately said, "Thank you, Brother Hu. I guarantee that I will not disappoint you or the audience. But I'm not sure if I should list some of my conditions. I want our segment to change names."

Actually, from the beginning, Zhang Ye was only focused on being a host. He only wanted to do his job as a host well, so he did not give it that much thought. Only after being treated that way by Ma Hengyuan and company did Zhang Ye begin to churn his mind. He recalled a very famous program from his world. It had went viral from North to South!

Three Kingdoms? I don't know!

But the greats from my world knew!

Historical education program? Ha! Is there any program that can be more popular than that program from his world? No! There was none in that world either! This world had never seen it!

Hu Fei asked, "Change the name?"

Zhang Ye laughed, "This is because 'Musings of History' has the meaning of certainty. We cannot bear that responsibility, nor do we have the authority. After all, there are many conflicts about many historical figures and events in the historical records. Some of them are even opposite of one another. No one knows the actual situation, so I think changing it to "Lecture Room" would be more appropriate. We are not musing about this piece of history to the audience, but with the word 'Lecture', it is just a personal view."

Hu Fei gave some thought before deciding, "This name is good! Heh, why didn't you say this earlier?"

"I didn't think of it earlier." Zhang Ye added on, "And I do not need guests or hosts. I alone would be fine." "Lecture Room" was a show with one lecturer and an audience.

Hu Fei said, "Alright!"

Zhang Ye nodded, "Then that would do. Shall we go onstage?"

Xiao Lu exclaimed, "You, you are going to lecture now?"

"Time is too tight. You didn't even have any preparations." Hou Ge was surprised.

Zhang Ye was confident, "There's no need to prepare. I can do it right now. Hur Hur. I'll drink some water first." Saying that, he sat down on a sofa in the resting area to drink water.

At the same time, Zhang Ye opened the game ring's Merchant Shop quietly. He used 100,000 Reputation points that he had slowly obtained over the past few days to buy a Memory Search Capsule before swallowing it.

.....

The scene changed!

Time was turned back!

He returned to a summer when he was still in high school of that world!

That day was a Wednesday. His parents had gone to work, leaving behind a bored Zhang Ye, who had just finished his final exams. He switched on the television and couch surfed. Suddenly, the Central TV's Channel 10's program's opening attracted his attention!

"Using stories to talk about figures."

"Using figures to talk about history."

"Using history to talk about culture."

"Using culture to talk about human nature."

"Lecture Room"? Professor Yi Zhongtian's "Analysis of the Three Kingdoms"?

This seemed to be a rerun? He had previously heard of its famous name. There was no other way, for it was too popular. It was as if the entire country's citizens had watched it!

Zhang Ye then began to watch it carefully. The first episode, "Great River Flows East".

The show talked about Zhou Yu, Zhuge Liang and the empty fort strategy. The content was very rich!

Zhang Ye thought in the beginning that it was just the Romance of the Three Kingdoms. Who had not read it, so what could be said of it? But after he heard what Professor Yi Zhongtian had to say, he was stunned. He immediately fell in love with this historical program. It was no wonder so many people watched it. No wonder the entire country was discussing "Lecture Room". This program had completely subverted all previous historical lecture programs. The show revealed its cards in unorthodox manners, but everything was proven in history! Especially, "Yi Zhongtian's Analysis of the Three Kingdoms" was one of the episodes with the highest ratings in "Lecture Room"!

Although the later episodes of "Lecture Room" declined over the years and the program was a husk of its former glory days, it was a program no other similar program could surpass in its heyday. It had created a legend!

.....

Memory transferred.

Soon, Zhang Ye's thoughts returned. Five minutes of the Memory Capsule was enough for him to watch three episodes of "Lecture Room" and remember everything about them. It was enough!

Chapter 130: "Lecture Room – Zhang Ye's Analysis of the Three Kingdoms"

The recording studio.

Ma Hengyuan and the others stepped onto the stage and waited. But after a while, Hu Fei, Zhang Ye and the others still had not come over. Ma Hengyuan just went ahead and signaled to the cameraman to turn on the cameras. He then stood behind the rostrum and got ready to begin speaking without the host.

The cameraman said, "The host is not back yet."

"There's no need to wait for him." Ma Hengyuan said straightforwardly.

"But the executive producer is not back yet, too." The cameraman, of course, would not listen to him. He was bothered by it, too, thinking, "Why was this guy acting like a big shot? Wasn't he just a professor? Did he think he was the Station Head!? To be commanding us like this? Do you think that the TV station is your family's business? Mental! Even if you were the authority on the Three Kingdoms, and even had some influence in Beijing, you still couldn't do this. You are looking down on others too much!"

Ma Hengyuan was frustrated, too. He looked at the cameras and asked, "Are we recording or not? I have something to do later!"

Ma Hengyuan thought that he was very famous. He had the pride of a scholar. But the audience did not approve of it.

"Who's that?"

"Why is he such a diva?"

"Ma Hengyuan? Never heard of him!"

"I do know about him. He had been on Central TV before. He was quite famous last year."

"Even so, he shouldn't be overriding the staff. He is even giving out instructions now? Isn't this the Arts Channel's program? Is he the station's Leader?"

"What's with the standard of this person?"

"Right. I almost fell asleep listening to him!"

"It was so uninteresting. He's pretty snobbish!"

Everyone had seen diva behaviour before, but that had been from the big stars. Regardless of whether such behaviour was right or normal, those were still stars who could afford to do so. But who the heck are you? A respected literary figure who was a professor from the university with a diva behaviour? This was an uncommon encounter!

At this time, Hu Fei and his team came out.

"Let's get started, Producer Hu!" Ma Hengyuan said impatiently.

Hu Fei was just about to speak, when Zhang Ye stopped him. He wanted to say this himself. Hu Fei understood, Little Zhang wanted to take the responsibility for offending them. He did not reject this after some thought, but just nodded. He and Xiao Lu, Hou Ge and Hou Di returned to their own respective positions. Zhang Ye wasn't afraid of offending anyone. He had already done so to too many people. There wasn't any more burden if he were to offend another one.

Ma Hengyuan ignored Zhang Ye and continued speaking, "Let's talk about Zhou Yu next. Although this person had been characterized in a very positive way in film and TV, in actual fact he was a very jealous person. He...."

"Professor Ma." Zhang Ye interrupted him without holding back.

Ma Hengyuan face sank, "I'm in the middle of a lecture! What are you interrupting for?"

Zhang Ye said very impolitely, "We don't need you anymore now. Get lost to as far as your learning goes!"

"What did you say?" Ma Hengyuan was stunned. His face has turned black, "Say that again!"

Editor Xu said, "You, this junior! How can you speak to Professor Ma this way? Eh?"

Zhang Ye said without a change in expression, "I will speak however the person speaks to me!"

Teacher Xu also furiously said, "Incorrigible! You don't need Professor Ma now? Then you will give the lecture?"

Looking at the two guests surnamed Xu, Zhang Ye said, "And to the two of you: we don't require you here, too. If you are willing to listen in the audience, then go there and listen. The production team will leave a few VIP seats at the front for you. But if you intend to make trouble onstage and affect our program, then I'm sorry, but I will still say the same. Get lost to as far as your learning goes. We do not welcome troublemakers and divas!"

As far as your learning goes?

Get lost as far as that?

Haha! This line was too good!

A simple line from Zhang Ye turned out to be a refreshing line to the people in this world. The audience was also stunned upon hearing this. Some of those who knew Zhang Ye's personality were reminded that many of the most popular curses online were created by him. They understood that this person who cursed at others without any worry for repercussions was clearly annoyed by Ma Hengyuan and company. Not only him, after all the events earlier, the audience also began to dislike Ma Hengyuan and company.

Big Sis Zhou said loudly, "Little Zhang, well said!"

Auntie Sun also added, "Go quickly. Everyone is working hard for the recording. You didn't intend to cooperate and even put on airs and made trouble! What kind of people are you! It's the first time I've seen people like you who took a payment and still showed an attitude to his boss! Do you even make sense?"

The two Xus clenched their fists!

Ma Hengyuan looked coldly at Zhang Ye, "Remember what you said today!"

Zhang Ye said with pleasure, "Don't you try to threaten me. Of course, I remember my words. I want to tell you another thing. Remember your face today!"

Hu Fei did not bother with them anymore, "Teacher Little Zhang, let's start."

Zhang Ye nodded and signalled to the staff to move the sofa away, "The sofa is not needed anymore. Please help to move it away." He turned to Reporter Ci and said, "I'm sorry. There will be some changes to the program. Please proceed to the VIP seats. You made a wasted trip today, so we will treat you to a meal as an apology." Reporter Ci wasn't bad. She had been very cooperative and had shaken Zhang Ye's hand earlier, too. Therefore, Zhang Ye was very polite to her.

Reporter Ci laughed, "It's fine." Then she went to her seat.

Ma Hengyuan finally understood the situation. He laughed angrily, "Don't tell me that you are going to lecture on the Three Kingdoms? You are just a young person. What would you know of the Three Kingdoms?"

Zhang Ye laughed, "Whether or not I know, you just have to listen to find out!"

"Okay. Then I will have a listen!" Ma Hengyuan laughed hysterically and walked off the stage to his seat in the first row.

The two guests named Xu also followed and sat beside Professor Ma. They were waiting to see Zhang Ye make a joke of himself.

Ma Hengyuan didn't leave. Of course, he actually had hoped to be on TV very much. Even though this was a local station, it was still located in Beijing, which had a strong viewership. He stayed behind as an audience member, as he thought he knew the program staff was fooling around. Let the host lecture about the Three Kingdoms? Let a 20-something-year-old host talk about history?

Isn't this an international joke! Like he'd know a fart! Like he could say a fart! When that happens, you all would still need to swallow your pride and beg me to do the lecturing! Hur. Ma Hengyuan had already thought about it. In a while, he would make Zhang Ye apologize to him in front of the audience, and make the whole program team apologize to him, too. Otherwise, he wouldn't help them!

The audience members were also in discussion.

"Let him lecture?"

"Does he even know about the Three Kingdoms?"

"This person is too young. He definitely can't do it."

"I know him. He's very good at literary works, and has written a few poems which were very good. But how could he lecture on history? Didn't he graduate as a broadcasting major? Isn't he a host?"

Xiaofang did not like what she heard, "Teacher Zhang can do it, right? Big Sis Zhou, Auntie Sun?"

Auntie Sun coughed, "About this, I don't know either."

Big Sis Zhou was also a little worried, "Hopefully, but the Three Kingdoms have already been discussed so many times. Everyone would have seen it before, too. This isn't too good to discuss about. And Teacher Little Zhang's history knowledge? I don't think we have heard of it before. We have not witnessed his talent in this field before."

As his old colleagues were worried about him, so were Hou Ge, Dafei and the other new colleagues.

The audience members were skeptical. A lot of them did not believe that he would be able to present it well.

As for Ma Hengyuan and the two Xu guests, they were just waiting for the show to start, so that they could gloat.

Only Zhang Ye was not affected by any thoughts. He waited for the staff to redecorate the stage settings before he stood back on it. He said a few things to them before testing his mic, "Sorry, everyone. Today's program has a few changes. There won't be any guests or a host. I will be the one to talk to everyone about the Three Kingdoms. The segment title will be called 'Zhang Ye's Analysis of the Three Kingdoms'. It cannot be said that this is a lecture, as it will involve some personal opinions of mine."

Xiaofang applauded. Big Sis Zhou and Auntie Sun also clapped. Everyone else in the audience did not really react. They stayed quiet. Some of them were not even paying attention.

Zhang Ye did not mind. He gave a thumbs up towards Hu Fei.

Hu Fei acknowledged, signalled to the cameraman and did a countdown on the mic, "Get ready. 3, 2, 1, start!"

Zhang Ye wore a smile, and then did an introduction which changed many of the audience's opinions, "Using stories to talk about characters. Using characters to talk about history. Using history to talk about culture. Using culture to talk about human nature. Hello, everyone, and welcome to 'Lecture Room'. I am Zhang Ye and I will be bringing to everyone an 'Analysis of the Three Kingdoms'. Let us talk about some of the things about the Three Kingdoms. The first episode's title is called 'Great River Flows East'!"

A strong opening?

He even wanted to talk about history through characters? Using history to talk about culture?

Ma Hengyuan and the two Xu guests looked at each other. They were all chuckling.

Zhang Ye then continued by saying, "What was it like during the Three Kingdoms period? It was a chaotic time. It was a time of hardship. But it was also a time of heroes. Cao Cao had even written a poem about this period of time: 'the bones were left to the wild, not a sound of chickens within a thousand Li'. At this period of time, a lot of people, for the sake of re-unifying the country, had contributed their intelligence and wisdom. For example, the heroic and talented strategist Cao Cao, the loyal and devoted Zhuge Liang, the graceful but not showy Zhou Yu, and the fortuitous Liu Bei. These were the heroes of those times!"

Eh?

This speech was very interesting!

Many of those who were not paying attention earlier were now listening attentively. They had not expected anything worthy of listening to being said by the host. But who would have thought that he had that up his sleeves?

Ma Hengyuan and the others were still dismissive. All of that was in the books. Did you need to say it? Who wouldn't know all of this!

But Zhang Ye's next lines were aimed directly at Ma Hengyuan. Actually it wasn't exactly aimed at him. Zhang Ye was just quoting directly from the show, "Firstly, let's talk about Zhou Yu. Those who have ever read Romance of the Three Kingdoms, heard about Romance of the Three Kingdoms reviews or watched any Romance of the Three Kingdoms shows, usually have the wrong impression, of Zhou Yu being a very spiteful person. Because we remember the story of the 'Three Infuriations of Zhou Yu', we remember the saying, 'If (Zhou) Yu were to be born, why must (Zhuge) Liang exist as well?'. What we remember was the saying, 'throw the helve after the hatchet'. All of these have become part of our daily pet phrases." He slowly explained, "But the real situation.. was not like this!"

Ah?

Not like this?

Then how was it!

Ma Hengyuan nearly laughed out loud. See! He was full of nonsense already and this was only the beginning!