

Superstar 1241

Chapter 1241: The advertisements will roll out soon!

In the car.

The Heavenly Queen's agent called to that Heavenly Queen.

She said: "We didn't get it."

A very nice-sounding female voice at the other end of the line said: "Who got it then?"

She sighed and said: "Zhang Ye."

The voice on the other end said: "How did we lose it?"

She said: "It was my fault."

After giving a simple explanation of the entire story.

The other end of the line: "OK, I understand. Forget it then."

Yes, they could only forget it. If not, what else could they do?

They'd already gone as far as praising the toilet as a hero and a friend!

But what about them? Surely they couldn't hug the toilet and shout, "You're so awesome, my dearest brother," could they? They could only swallow this and find a chance to regain what they'd lost another time!

...

The next day.

The sanitary ware brand's contract agent and lawyer flew to Beijing with Ha Qiqi to sign an official two-year endorsement deal with Zhang Ye.

"Happy to be working with you, Teacher Zhang."

"Happy to be working with you too."

"Could we quickly start on the production and recording of the commercial?"

"Sure, I'll leave the arrangements to you all."

"You're the director, so why would you need to leave the arrangements to us?"

"Well, alright then."

"We'll support you with funding and manpower. As for the production work, we'll leave all the decisions to you."

"Sure, that won't be a problem."

After he was done over here, Zhang Ye hurried to the television station.

...

Four.

Five.

Six.

On this day, Zhang Ye's team closed six long-term endorsement deals.

Among these contracts, some of them went quite smoothly, others not so much. The crossing of swords and clashes between these celebrity teams was something better off not mentioned to an outsider. The infighting between celebrities was always like this, fighting with their popularity, fighting with their qualifications, and fighting with their image. Such fights were generally bloodless but were even more bloody and terrible than bloodbaths.

In the morning.

Zhang Ye received a call from Zhang Yuanqi's manager.

The moment it went through, Fang Weihong said with a laugh: "Teacher Zhang, you're snatching endorsements now?"

Zhang Ye said: "No, I'm not."

"Save it, I've already received news on my side." Fang Weihong wondered: "I heard that you've snatched two endorsement deals that a Heavenly King and Queen were very confident of getting? How did you do it?"

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "Personal charm probably?"

Fang Weihong half-jokingly said: "I'm telling you now, don't you dare think about those endorsements that Sister Zhang has on hand."

Zhang Ye said: "Well, of course. In any case, I couldn't get them even if I wanted to."

"Then I have nothing to worry about." Fang Weihong asked: "But I am really curious about how you did it. How did you secure the top sanitary ware brand's endorsement? Your team is really quite capable. There's something that I found a little strange as well. Two days ago, I bumped into that Heavenly Queen's management team at the bar that Teacher Zhou runs. There were a few young ladies who seemed to have drunk too much and were cursing at something. They mentioned something about a toilet, something about a hero, and what's that about a toilet being a good friend? Man, that scared me and I had to turn around while pretending that I didn't know them. Have those people gone crazy? What kind of a hole did you push them into? It looked like they were having a mental breakdown? They even called a toilet their friend? Isn't it just a sanitary ware ad? Did they really have to be so professional in their work?"

Zhang Ye was really amused. "Who knows what they were thinking?"

Fang Weihong said: "You should stop bringing harm upon others."

Zhang Ye said: "It has nothing to do with me, Sister Fang."

That song was called "Toilet," and was a very classic song back in Zhang Ye's previous world. The singer was the world-famous Andy Lau, Wah-zai! Back then, the song was also specially written for a certain sanitary ware brand in the market and proliferated through China. It wasn't common for an advertisement's song to get too popular, but "Toilet" was one of those that did. So when the mention of a sanitary ware endorsement came up, this song immediately came to Zhang Ye's mind.

Naturally, this news couldn't be contained.

The media gradually became aware of it.

"Zhang Ye's team takes a reader app endorsement deal!"

"Zhang Ye lands a deal to endorse one of the top three dairy brands in the industry!"

"Zhang Ye's team seizes a large share of the endorsement market!"

"The largest jewelry brand in the country has announced its next celebrity spokesperson—Zhang Ye! "

"A Heavenly King and Queen's teams are outdone by Zhang Ye's team in a battle of endorsement deals!"

"According to rumors, Zhang Ye's jewelry brand endorsement fee is valued at 10 million RMB per year!"

"Zhang Ye to hold his wedding within the year? A jewelry brand signs him on at all costs!"

"A Heavenly Queen's team misses out on the biggest sanitary ware brand's endorsement!"

"The most popular sanitary ware brand lands Zhang Ye!"

"A storm is brewing in the endorsement market!"

"Will Zhang Ye be the king of endorsements this year?"

"Stealing food off the plates of a Heavenly King and Queen?"

The industry was quite startled.

"Zhang Ye?"

"Why did he snap up so many endorsements?"

"What is Zhang Ye up to?"

"It's rare to see anyone take so many endorsement deals within 10 days!"

"Even a Heavenly King and Queen could not outdo him?"

"That isn't right, Zhang Ye should not have the ability to compete with those S-list superstars! How could so many of the major endorsements be taken by him?"

"No one grows fat in one sitting 1. Taking so many endorsements at once, can he manage them all? If the ads are rolled out too closely, it could counteract the effect, unless the quality of those ads are really good. But with so many endorsement commercials to shoot, no matter how famous he is in the advertising industry, he shouldn't be able to make them all classics, right?"

"Yeah, he's biting off more than he can chew."

After meal topics such as these were widely discussed across the industry.

However, Zhang Ye's team was still continuing to take more and more endorsements, as though they were never-ending!

Countless industry insiders were watching helplessly as many of the recognized quality endorsement deals got taken away by Zhang Ye's team one by one. At first, everyone was only feeling shocked but did not think much of it. But as it carried on, everyone could no longer sit still!

Isn't this too much?

Aren't you fucking taking way too many deals, bro!

Do you intend to leave anything for the other celebrities?

Without a doubt, this year's endorsement king would be Zhang Ye. Be it the number of brands that he was endorsing, or the total sum of endorsement pay he stood to receive, or even the number of endorsement deals he had signed, Zhang Ye was far ahead of the other celebrities. Even the people in the top seven spots of the entertainment industry did not have more endorsement deals than him!

There were voices of doubt everywhere!

Some of the A- and B-lists celebrities came forward as well.

On the Weibo of A-list film star, Jiang Hanwei: "Greed: The original sin." You might wonder if he was mocking Zhang Ye in his post.

There was also an agent of a B-list celebrity whose endorsement deal was snatched away by Zhang Ye who publicly criticized him. He didn't put it too offensively since he just said it to soothe his anger.

But Zhang Ye's fans blew up!

His troll army rushed over to that person's Weibo!

"Who are you criticizing?"

"Who the hell are you!"

"We're the only ones who can scold Zhang Ye! Who do you think you are?"

"It's all fair competition, what are you being so sour about!"

"My large saber is again again again again again again again again again again again again again again again again again again again unable to endure the thirst!"

Even Big Saber Bro made a flashy appearance!

It has been too long since there was a fight and the hordes of fearless fans were all crying out in excitement of an impending scolding battle. Some of them couldn't wait for it to start, but nothing happened in the end!

Zhang Ye replied to that person almost immediately on his Weibo as well.

Zhang Ye's temper had become much better these days. He bluntly said to that agent: "Are you sure you want to have a go at me?"

A scolding battle?

A challenge to a fight?

When it came to arguing?

Even a seven-year-old child picked up off the streets would know that Zhang Ye had never lost one before!

Two minutes after Zhang Ye's reply, that B-list celebrity's agent sneakily deleted his Weibo post and made no mention of it anymore. It seemed he understood how powerful Zhang Ye's mouth could get. There had always been people in the entertainment industry having a go at Zhang Ye, but the only celebrity to have never lost in any scolding battle was Zhang Ye!

The agent admitted defeat.

So Zhang Ye did not carry it on.

Tongues in the industry were set wagging, while the other celebrities could only look on in envy. But with this minor episode, several of the brands that had signed endorsement contracts with Zhang Ye started to get a little worried.

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That dairy brand's manager.

"Teacher Zhang."

"Yes?"

"Aren't you taking a few too many endorsements?"

"It's not that many."

"Will it affect the production of our commercial?"

"It won't."

...

The brand-name jewelry company.

"Director Zhang, can you give us a guarantee that the quality of our commercial will not be affected?"

"Don't you worry about it."

"But with just one line for the ad's catchphrase, isn't it a little too casual?"

"For a ten-second commercial, one line is more than enough."

"I'm just afraid that with all the endorsements you're taking, it'll affect the attention given to our brand."

...

All of the brand-name companies were feeling very unsettled.

Zhang Ye's team could only reassure them one by one.

Just how would Zhang Ye's commercials end up looking? This was something that no one knew. His studio staff could not predict it, and neither could the brand-name companies!

Only Zhang Ye knew that it wouldn't be a problem!

The commercials that he was going to make for them were market tested back in his previous world. Every one that he was going to bring out was a resounding classic of the advertising industry. It might not look outstanding and could even be billed as simple-looking, but the actual effects that it would bring were definitely on the level of a weapon of mass destruction like an atomic bomb. Simply tossing out one into the market would get it written into the annals of the advertising field. But Zhang Ye couldn't tell them that.

The commercials were about to get broadcast on the widest possible scale.

Once these commercials were rolled out to the market, all their doubts would be cleared up.

Chapter 1242: Attack of the advertisements!

On this morning.

The alarm was buzzing.

Zhang Ye climbed up from bed and shouted outside his room.

"Mom, turn on the television."

"Why?"

"It's broadcasting soon."

"What? It's today?"

"That's right."

"For which brand?"

"The mineral water brand."

His parents were watching the TV in anticipation.

After the morning news, Zhang Ye's first commercial played.

This was a commercial for one of his many endorsement deals. It was one of the last ones that they had taken but took the shortest time to produce. The mineral water company's commercial spots had been

scheduled long ago, so they just needed to deliver the final product for broadcast. As such, this was the first commercial to get released. This was still a pretty good time slot as there were people who had just woken up and turned on their televisions, while some others might be packing their children's bags to get ready for school, and others who watched the news while eating breakfast. After the news broadcast, the image onscreen switched to the commercial. When everyone saw Zhang Ye on television, many of them were slightly taken aback.

It opened on a classroom, and Zhang Ye was teaching a class. He was writing on the blackboard when a mischievous student sneakily opened a water bottle under the desk to have a drink of water. The squeaking of the plastic cap made Zhang Ye very angry and he chided the student. But after the class was over, Zhang Ye unexpectedly took out a bottle of the same mineral water, looking like he couldn't wait to drink it.

An advertising message appeared.

" Family Spring 1 , a rather sweet thing."

The advertisement ended.

Then the next commercial played.

His mother was stunned.

His father was dumbfounded.

Zhang Ye said with a grin, "Dad, Mom, what do you think?"

His mother pointed at the television. "Was that it?"

"Yeah." Zhang Ye said, pleased with himself, "It's quite good, isn't it?"

His mother was floored and said, "What crap is this?"

His father smacked his lips. "Family Spring's mineral water is a well-known brand. I've drank it too, but how is it sweet?" His expression then changed as he looked at his son and said, "Did you add sugar to it?"

Zhang Ye was floored!

What the!

Why would I add sugar to it!

Whatever, I really can't communicate with you two!

At the same time, two of the largest online video hosting sites in the industry started pushing out the Family Spring commercial. As long as anyone played the movies or videos on their website, there would be 30-60 seconds of unskippable video ads that were pre-rolled, with the first ad being the Family Spring commercial that lasted for 15 seconds. The television stations also repeated showings of the commercial at 8 AM, 10 AM, 12 PM, and at intervals of every two hours!

The commercial had been rolled out!

The volume at which it was played during the first day was extremely high!

The people of the advertising industry all had their attention on it, as did the competitors in the bottled water industry.

Zhang Ye was already one of the legendary figures of the advertising world. Not mentioning the few public service announcements he produced, just talking about the Brain Gold commercial alone, it was a real miracle. His commercial had launched a near-dead health supplements supplier into a leading corporation with the largest share of the health supplements market. Simply calling it a miracle of the Chinese advertising industry would be an understatement, since it was actually much greater than a miracle. And with this halo, Zhang Ye could command a much higher endorsement fee than his market value, which allowed him to fight the Heavenly Kings and Queens for the endorsements!

Now that he had come up with a new advertisement?

Who wouldn't want to gather around to analyze it!

As such, those people from the advertising industry and field of marketing all rushed over to watch it. But when they saw the commercial, they were all somewhat speechless. Their reactions were just like how Zhang Ye's mother had reacted!

What?

Was that it?

It was that simple a tagline?

What about that brainwashing technique that you used in your Brain Gold commercials? Where has that gone? What kind of a commercial is this? Isn't this just a normal TV commercial?

Some people were feeling disappointed.

Some people rewatched it over a dozen times.

But there was no sense of shock!

It was not amazing!

For a commercial like that, they could easily write ten such advertising proposals within a minute!

Some discussions were going around on Weibo.

"It's Zhang Ye's new ad!"

"Have you guys watched it?"

"I saw it this morning!"

"A rather sweet thing? Bullshit! It's not sweet at all!"

"Hahaha, yeah, I purposely went out to buy a bottle to try it just now and didn't find it sweet."

"How is it not sweet? I found it to be somewhat sweet after I had a sip of it."

"Yeah, I bought a bottle too and found it to be a little sweet as well."

"Get lost! Where on earth can you find bottled water that is sweet! That's juice!"

"Taste it carefully, it's actually sweet!"

It was originally a random thread but nearly turned into a fight. No one could have expected that when a poll was posted the two groups of people would get locked in a fierce struggle over whether Family Spring's bottled water was really sweet or not. The poll results also surprised a lot of people as 30% of the voters said that Family Spring's bottled water was actually rather sweet. In fact, it really did seem that it was slightly different from the other brands of bottled water. And just like that, this advertisement went viral!

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At a small supermarket in Beijing.

A couple were on their day off today and had come out to the supermarket to do some shopping.

"Darling, we don't have any more water left at home."

"Let's get a pack then."

"Eh, Family Spring? Isn't this the water that Zhang Ye was advertising this morning?"

"Yeah, it is. Everyone says that it's a little sweet."

"Let's get this then."

"Sure, let's buy it and have a taste."

So the couple called out to a supermarket employee for help. "Do you have a pack of Family Spring Bottled Water? We'd like to buy it."

The supermarket employee apologized, "The packs are sold out."

The wife said, "Ah?"

The employee said, "We only have individual bottles left."

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At a streetside stall.

A teenage girl skipped over. "Auntie, give me a bottle of Family Spring."

The lady boss said, "Family Spring? We're out of stock."

The teenage girl said in surprise, "But I just saw you stocking up on it yesterday."

The lady boss was puzzled too and said, "I'm also not too sure why. But all morning, anyone who came to buy bottled water almost exclusively bought Family Spring. Only one other brand has been sold."

The teenage girl asked, "Is the water really sweet?"

The lady boss thought for a moment. "I think it's a little sweet, tangy sweet."

...

At night.

At the studio.

Zhang Ye had just returned to the office after filming a commercial.

Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the others were all feeling perturbed and were talking among themselves. They didn't even notice Zhang Ye had stepped in.

"The commercial's been broadcast."

"Yeah, I wonder what the reception is like."

"It's pretty good. There's been quite a bit of discussion online."

"By reception, I mean the product sales."

"I really don't know about that. The commercial did seem a little too simple, ahem."

"They paid Director Zhang quite a bit for the endorsement, a premium sum even. If the commercial was not done well and causes their sales to drop, it would really look bad on us."

"That's true, we're only afraid of that happening."

Everyone was whispering among themselves.

Zhang Ye laughed from behind them. "Don't be worried about that."

"Aiyo."

"Director Zhang, you're back?"

Zhang Ye said, "Let's just do whatever we can do. There's still a lot of endorsement projects that we have to shoot. Is the advertising proposal that I wanted ready yet? Let me have a look at it."

Zhang Zuo brought it over. "Here, Director Zhang."

Everyone busying themselves again.

All of a sudden, the studio's phone rang.

Ha Qiqi was the closest to it, so she picked it up. "Hello, this is Ha Qiqi."

The person on the other end of the line sounded jubilant. "Manager Ha, it's me!"

Ha Qiqi's heart skipped a beat. "Oh, it's AGM Li. Hello, how are you?"

AGM Li was the assistant general manager of Family Spring. "You guys did it! You guys really did it!"

Ha Qiqi did not understand. "What's the matter, Manager Li? What do you mean?"

AGM Li exclaimed: "It's only the first day, but our products all across the country have practically sold out! Sales increased by 42% compared to the same timeframe last year!"

"Ah?" Ha Qiqi was stunned.

Sold out?

Could the sales figure have increased by that much?

Surely not, right?

AGM Li belly laughed. "Just how did you all do it? You guys are astounding! You must thank Teacher Zhang for me. Our GM called for an urgent meeting earlier and was saying that he wanted to add another year to the endorsement contract with Teacher Zhang. There's still room for discussion about the pay, so just name however much you all want!"

Ha Qiqi said: "AGM Li, didn't we just sign a two-year endorsement deal?"

AGM Li said: "How are two years enough? From now on, our company's endorsement won't be using anyone other than Teacher Zhang. We wouldn't mind signing an 18-year contract with him either!"

The call ended.

Everyone asked, "What's the matter, Sister Ha?"

Ha Qiqi swallowed before announcing, "Family Spring's mineral water has sold out!"

"Ah!"

"Really?"

"This is great!"

"Sold out on just the first day?"

"Fuck! Could it be any godlier than this?"

"But that water isn't sweet at all!"

Hearing their weird comments, Zhang Ye also laughed.

The commercial broadcast on television was originally from Zhang Ye's previous world and was a very old commercial for Nongfu Spring on Central TV. It was also after this commercial that Nongfu Spring became popular all over the country! If there was a ranking for the classic advertisements of Zhang Ye's previous world, this advertising tagline of "XX Spring, a rather sweet thing 2" would surely be in the top ten. It was a marketing legend that was on par with the Brain Platinum commercials of his previous world!

Simple?

This advertisement was not simple at all!

Just those words in that tagline alone were worth ten thousand taels of gold each!

Chapter 1243: The ad upgrades!

The next day.

A lot of people were waiting to see Zhang Ye make a joke of himself. Those from the celebrity teams who had had their endorsement deals snatched away by him, Family Spring's competitors in the industry, his foes, and even many of the insiders of the advertising and marketing world did not have any optimism regarding Zhang Ye's endorsement this time.

"He has taken too many endorsements."

"Yeah, that's why the quality isn't there."

"If the first ad is so average, I wonder how bad the rest are going to be?"

"Hai, Zhang Ye's reputation is going to get crushed."

"He asked for it by being so greedy."

"Family Spring is going to crash and burn."

"Yeah, what's the use of giving Zhang Ye such a high endorsement pay?"

"This advertisement is really too crappy. It's like something an intern would churn out."

However, the opportunity to see this joke happen did not come to pass. What came instead was an ear-ringing slap!

A lot of media outlets published news.

"Family Spring Bottled Water all sold out yesterday!"

Zhang Ye continues writing the legend of his ads!"

"Reporter's research: Family Spring Bottled Water sells like crazy!"

"Is Family Spring Bottled Water really sweet?"

"The phenomenal effect of Zhang Ye's new advertisement!"

"Family Spring's sales soar!"

"Family Spring to become the best-selling brand of bottled water in the fourth quarter?"

The other bottled water brands were stunned!

The people in the advertising world were stunned!

What was happening?

Sold out?

Are you fucking kidding me?!

A bottled water advertisement with only one sentence claiming that it was a rather sweet thing had helped it sell like crazy? Going by this logic, wouldn't an advertisement selling salted duck eggs just need a "rather salty" to take its sales figures to the moon? This didn't make any sense at all! This was nowhere in line with what they had learned from their advertising experience and logic!

Based on what?!

They simply couldn't believe this!

Meanwhile, the competing brands were starting to get anxious as if facing a formidable enemy. As similar bottled water brands, if Family Spring could sell one extra bottle of water, that would mean one bottle less of sales for them. This was unlike a health supplement product like Brain Gold. It wouldn't mean that anyone who bought a Brain Gold product would not buy other health products to supplement their iron or calcium intake. But the bottled water industry was different. This was the most direct kind of market war there was!

The netizens were amused.

"Pfft!"

"The legend continues?"

"It's like I saw a trace of Brain Gold in it from a few years back!"

"Family Spring has earned big bucks this time."

"The money they spent on Zhang Ye was not at all wasted!"

"I kinda liked that ad. 'Family Spring, a rather sweet thing.' That image and aftertaste immediately come to mind when you hear it. I even went out and bought two packs of it last night."

"I couldn't manage to get any yesterday."

"This bottled water has become really popular."

"The key is that it has a good taste. It's really quite nice."

"Haha, I bought it because of Zhang Ye. Can't help it, I'm a diehard fan of his. I'll buy whatever he endorses."

With that advertisement, he once again shocked the industry!

And that wasn't all. On the third day of the advertisement run, it received an upgrade!

Family Spring probably had some leftover stock of bottled water and needed to clear everything before introducing the ones with new packaging. Over the past two days of crazy sales, they cleared out most of their leftover stock. When the new packaging was introduced, in addition to Zhang Ye's picture on the labels, there was something new. The television commercial also had an additional line at the end.

"Family Spring, a rather sweet thing.

"For every bottle of Family Spring Bottled Water purchased, one cent will be donated to children in poor, rural areas."

All the other advertising content remained the same, except for the addition of this advertising tagline. On the product labels, details of this public welfare activity were printed in small text. As a result, even after Family Spring increased their bottled water shipments, they sold out again in just one night. All of this left everyone in disbelief and shock. It was as though Zhang Ye had used some sort of sorcery to achieve it!

No one had ever used such a move in the past!

It wasn't even something that the advertising industry had thought of!

After they saw this commercial, many of the advertising industry insiders were dumbfounded!

So it could even be made this way?

So an advertisement could actually be made this way?!

The public reception was great.

"Not bad!"

"They're a brand with a conscience!"

"This is it, I'm only going to drink Family Spring Bottled Water from now on!"

"Yeah, we can even do charity while we're at it."

"Right, it's the same no matter what we drink. Besides, this water really does taste slightly sweet."

It sold like crazy in Beijing!

It sold like crazy in Shanghai!

It sold like crazy in Shenzhen!

All over the country, sales soared!

It was as though Family Spring had suddenly risen above two of its largest competitors and occupied the entire market overnight!

Zhang Ye had created a legend once more!

Yet another advertising miracle was born!

The staff of Family Spring were all laughing like crazy!

The brands and companies that had worried if Zhang Ye had taken too many endorsements were now feeling reassured. They were increasingly looking forward to their own advertisements releasing to the market. There was only one thing left that they wanted to say: Teacher Zhang really lives up to his name!

...

After several days.

The advertising industry had come back to its senses.

In a lecture hall, a very experienced advertising director stood at a lectern, giving a lesson to nearly a hundred interested fellow professionals. "I'm sure that everyone here has seen this commercial that was just played. I believe that all of you have watched it maybe ten, twenty, or even thirty times over."

The seated audience nodded.

Only that?

Some of them had even watched it more than forty times!

The advertising director laughed and said, "When a lot of people see this commercial the first time, they find it to be very ordinary and possibly even quite unprofessional. It doesn't introduce the branding culture of Family Spring, nor does it mention how good the quality of their water is. Instead, it just says that it's 'a rather sweet thing.' Isn't that totally nonsensical?"

The crowd nodded again.

Yes, in what way was this advertisement any good?

Then the director said, "Then I can tell you all right now. 'A,' 'rather,' 'sweet,' 'thing'—just these four words are worth 15 million each!"

The audience burst into an uproar!

"Huh?"

"15 million?"

"Fuck!"

"Each word is worth 15 million?"

"Isn't that too much of an exaggeration?"

"The credit should go to Family Spring for having good quality water. It does seem to taste a little sweet."

When the director heard that, he couldn't help but burst out laughing. "Is the water seriously a little sweet? For that reason, I specially consulted with some experts in the water industry. I can clearly and confidently say that sweetness only comes from the presence of sugar. But for all of the bottled water brands in the country, including Family Spring, it's impossible that there could be any sugar or substitute sweetener in them. Zero, zip, zilch, there's not a single trace of sweetness to it!"

The people in the industry all looked at one another.

The director said, "After watching the commercial, I also went to buy a bottle of Family Spring Bottled Water to have a taste. It did seem to have a teeny bit of sweetness to it at the time, and I'm sure that everyone here also had a similar experience to mine. But in fact, that was just a bias we had, the most basic kind of psychological suggestion that we fell for. Family Spring's mineral water source comes from the Jade Lake, which is a basin fed by the mineral water that passes through the mountains around it. It is a naturally occurring mineral water that is collected through the self-cleaning and purification processes of the Jade Lake. Zhang Ye must have seen this information back then and thought of this:

'How can we let the consumers intuitively become aware of the origin of Family Spring's mineral water and learn about the brand? How can we form a beautiful impression of a sweet spring? How can we turn that image they have into consumption?' To achieve that, it would require a simple visual marketing concept to spread the idea. And Zhang Ye is really worthy of being hailed as the smartest person in the world. He very quickly came up with an idea using those four words—A! Rather! Sweet! Thing!"

Someone questioned, "Isn't that false advertising then?"

The director waved his hands. "You can't look at it that way. Sweetness does not equate to sugar content. Sweetness does not require the water to have sugar in it. Describing water as sweet is just synonymous for it being good quality water. Just like how stinky tofu is very smelly, but there are many people who say that it smells really good. Would that be considered false advertising too? Sweetness doesn't only convey the idea that this is a product of quality, it also makes the people think of the sweet and refreshing taste of mineral water. As such, one would naturally find it somewhat sweet after drinking. Therefore, there was no introduction of Family Spring's branding in their commercial, no mention of how clean their water is, nor how much better they are than the other brands out there. This is because there isn't a need for any of that. Just by using 'a rather sweet thing,' it covered all of those points!"

Carefully thinking about it, everyone gasped in realization of the message behind it!

A copy of a report with some figures was placed on the projector.

The director pointed at it. "I did a rough calculation of the sales and net profit for Family Spring. This is the miracle that Zhang Ye's ad has created over the past few days!"

Everyone was startled!

"That much?"

"This...this..."

"Their sales nearly doubled?"

The director said, "So do you all still think that those four words are not worth 60 million in total?"

The industry's professionals could only smile bitterly.

Worthy!

It was way too worthy of that sum!

The four words being valued at 15 million each was even sounding a little too low now!

The director looked at the people in the audience. "After the ad got an upgrade, there was an additional line in the advertising tagline saying that a cent would be donated to children in poor, rural areas for every bottle of water purchased. Zhang Ye can even think of that way to advertise? Is one cent a lot? What's the value of one cent these days anyway? Besides, that money wouldn't be contributed by Family Spring at all. They won't have to run those public welfare activities, just like the other major corporations that donate several million yuan to keep up their public image. In fact, Family Spring does not even have to fork out a single red cent. They're just using the money in the consumers' pockets to

do charity. For every cent the consumers donate, it increases the profits of Family Spring. The greater the sales, the greater the donations, the more they earn. Zhang Ye is really too smart of a person, and he's really too good at this. This is not just some simple ad that he's made! You all think that it's simple because you all are not on the same level as Zhang Ye!"

Some people were taking notes.

Others were looking up and listening to the lecture in earnest.

Chapter 1244: The battle for the advertising field's top spot

At Tianxi Purified Water's headquarters.

The company's upper management called for an emergency meeting to discuss countermeasures on how to deal with Family Spring's domination of the market. There were looks of worry and anger on everyone's faces.

The issue had developed too quickly and they'd suffered a heavy loss in recent days. Their market share has fallen dramatically, and going by this trend, it meant their net profits for the year would fall drastically. This was something that they and their shareholders couldn't let happen. And the reason for all of this was not due to their product having a quality issue. Every other bottled water supplier was still selling the same products as before, but Zhang Ye's endorsement advertisement had created a shocking reversal of trends in the industry! The most depressing thing was that Zhang Ye's team had actually come knocking on their doors. They were even approached first as their company's endorsement deal was expiring. However, they felt that Zhang Ye's asking price was too high and thought that he didn't really have a good reputation, so they ignored it and did not even meet with them. Instead, they renewed Jiang Hanwei's contract as their celebrity spokesperson.

8 million RMB a year?

And you even want to call the shots on the advertising proposal?

Anything that we say will not be taken into consideration?

Do you think that you're an S-list celebrity!

Even an A-list big name like Jiang Hanwei was only asking for 3 million a year, and he was willing to do as they said and wouldn't order them around like Zhang Ye had wanted. Although that decision put them in a rather complicated mood, they did not regret it.

"It has been so many days, haven't we thought of any ideas?"

"Family Spring's momentum is too strong!"

"We can't steal the market share away from them!"

"Zhang Ye's advertisement was too good!"

"Boss, what do we do now?"

"You're asking me? I should be asking you! Am I paying you all to do nothing? Our new ad will be on the air soon. Have you all thought of an advertising strategy yet?"

"We did, but none of them work."

At this moment, someone knocked on the door and came in.

"Boss, we've convinced her!"

"You've managed to convince her?"

"Yeah, she's downstairs."

"Quick, invite her in!"

"Boss, who is it?"

"Haha, Li Xiaoxiao has been headhunted by us."

"What?"

"That famous Ms. Li?"

"Wasn't she with BMW China?"

"She left that job."

"She's a god-tier person! A god-tier person of the advertising industry!"

Li Xiaoxiao, female, 32 years old.

—A legendary marketing planner of the advertising field. She handled over a dozen advertising accounts of medium to large corporations in the country and had a proven track record that would amaze anyone. A lot of the advertisements she spearheaded were classics, and she was recognized as the best person in the advertising industry. Of course, that opinion was with the exclusion of Zhang Ye, who was not considered a professional in the industry.

Countless companies had tried to headhunt her, and even many overseas brands had thoughts of getting her to join them. She was a talented individual who was highly sought after by all in the world of advertising. Therefore, no one could understand why she would choose to join Tianxi Purified Water. They knew where their company stood, at least, and didn't think that their advertising director role would be more attractive than BMW China's. If they really had to come up with a reason, then there could only be one possibility!

She wanted to pit herself against Zhang Ye!

She wanted to compete in the same product market with Zhang Ye to determine who was better!

...

Two days later.

As the advertising industry was still worshiping and learning from Family Spring's advertisement, and just as Family Spring was continuing its expansion in the market, something unexpected happened!

Jiang Hanwei's commercial was broadcast on television!

"Six levels of filtration!

"Eight stages of processing!

"Eleven steps of purification!

"Tianxi, the clearest, purest water there is!"

On this day, Tianxi Purified Water came out crushing everything in its path. The advertisement took only a day to boost Tianxi Purified Water's sales by a large extent all over the country. 10%, 15%, 20%, the sales kept climbing until it even rivaled that of Family Spring's!

This was too sudden!

So sudden that even the industry's personnel and Family Spring were stunned!

The advertising field burst into an uproar, but also simultaneously went crazy from the excitement!

"Who came up with Tianxi's ad?"

"It's amazing!"

"They broke down the purification process into numbers? That's had a great effect on the brand's image!"

"I heard from somewhere that it was Li Xiaoxiao!"

"What? It's her?"

"Aiyo, no wonder!"

"The number one goddess of the advertising field has defected to Tianxi?"

"Is she crazy? She could have taken her pick from so many of the other big companies that were after her!"

"Yeah, Tianxi doesn't seem to be the best choice for her to make."

"Unless she wants to try her hand at competing against Zhang Ye?"

"Oh damn, that might be possible!"

"How exciting! This is definitely something to keep our eyes on!"

"Quickly come and see, the gods of the advertising field are fighting! The two greatest gods have finally matched up!"

It was yet another phenomenal advertisement!

Normally, it was very difficult to have one phenomenal advertisement per year, so who could have expected that two such advertisements would make an appearance within the same week of each other? Further, these two advertisements were even for competing brands. This was truly something major!

Zhang Ye vs. Li Xiaoxiao?

The two gods of the advertising field were going to face off against one another?

Instantaneously, the excitement in the entire industry peaked!

"Who do you guys think will win?"

"I don't know."

"Li Xiaoxiao has the advantage. She's a professional."

"That's true. Zhang Ye's just someone who meddles around in every industry that he wishes to. But that's also an achievement in and of itself!"

"Going by results, Li Xiaoxiao has a lot of successful projects to her name."

"But going by effect, Zhang Ye's has had much greater success."

"Let's not blindly analyze this. We're not at that level yet, so it doesn't matter what we say here. Li Xiaoxiao has made her move, so let's just see how Zhang Ye will respond."

...

At Zhang Ye's Studio.

Family Spring's advertising team's manager and team members all came over.

"Teacher Zhang!"

"Have you seen Tianxi Purified Water's ad yet?"

"Please give us some ideas on how to deal with it!"

"The sales of Family Spring Bottled Water have already taken a hit!"

Taken a hit?

How was that possible?

Zhang Ye had been kept busy with work these few days and had too many things on his mind, so he didn't pay much attention to such matters. So he said, "Slow down, what ad are you talking about? Let me watch it first."

Ha Qiqi and the others came over and sit down.

When the advertisement played, Jiang Hanwei's figure appeared.

After watching, Ha Qiqi and the others were all secretly in awe of it. This advertisement was incredible!

Simple!

And back to the basics!

This was definitely not the work of just anyone!

Processing, purification, and many levels of filtration had been put forward, yet how many people would really understand the inner workings of such things? Was this really that difficult? In the water purification industry, how many were not able to achieve this? There could even be others who had a more complicated process than theirs. But that's just how advertisements worked. If you said so? Then people would believe you. Once the public saw it, they would think your purified water was the cleanest of them all and be very reassured. This was the power of advertising.

And it even looked a little familiar?

This commercial was just like Robust Co.'s 27 1 levels of filtration commercial back in Zhang Ye's previous world. The core message was essentially the same.

Zhang Ye looked up and smiled. "Who made this?"

Someone from Family Spring said, "Li Xiaoxiao, a godly person in the advertising field. This ad has impacted our sales greatly, so much so that the higher-ups are unable to sit still. They had us come over to look for you to see what you could do about it. Are we just going to compete normally, or will we fight back, or should we adopt a different strategy altogether? A lot of people in the industry are guessing that Li Xiaoxiao joined Tianxi because...because she wanted to challenge you!"

Challenge me?

Why would she challenge me!

Zhang Ye didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

It was very competitive in the advertising field!

This was a brutal war without smoke, fire, or blood. Everyone would pass each other by, and if you weren't careful, you might just suffer a terrible defeat. It was a place where only the best could survive!

In truth, Zhang Ye already had a "script" in place for Family Spring. Their sales were soaring, and even if Tianxi Purified Water were to come in to take a share of their market, it wouldn't do much to hurt Family Spring. Family Spring's branding had been built up, so it wouldn't matter even if they ignored them. At most, they would just sell fewer bottles of water and lose out on several tens of millions to hundreds of millions of yuan. Zhang Ye didn't have to bother himself with this at all. He had already done a great job for them, as well as fulfilled his part of the agreement with Family Spring.

But he didn't ignore it. He decided that he had to do something about this.

Li Xiaoxiao?

Challenging me?

If I don't respond to the challenge, wouldn't that be uncharacteristic?

Alright then.

As you wish.

Chapter 1245: We're only the porters of nature!

The trend in the market for bottled water in recent days could only be described as ever-changing. At times, Family Spring's sales experienced a surge; at other times, Tianxi was pushing aggressively in the market. The two brands were going all out for their television commercials while fighting each other for the market share. It was like a close swordfight with sparks flying all around!

The common folk had headaches.

"Which one should I buy?"

"Both of them seem to be pretty good."

"Their commercials are being played all over the place."

"I still prefer Tianxi. It's cleaner since it goes through so many levels of processing!"

"Are you saying that Family Spring's water isn't clean?"

"It's not as clean as Tianxi's water."

"But Family Spring's water has a sweetness to it."

"They added sugar in it."

"Pfft, previous poster, please don't make me laugh."

"Zhang Ye and Jiang Hanwei are once again on opposing sides."

"Ah, I've only just realized it now that you mention it!"

"Those two have been fighting way before this. At Xiaodong's birthday party, Zhang Ye even crashed into his car on purpose. I even heard that Jiang Hanwei was chased away by Zhang Ye's female agent at the party? I wonder if that was true. Then, on King of Masked Singers, when Jiang Hanwei appeared on the show to support Flowing Time, he clashed with Zhang Ye again. And now these two foes have met again. Is there a clash in their eight characters of birth? They keep ending up going against each other wherever they go? This time, they've been matched up in the ads that they star in!"

"Hahaha."

The people were only here to enjoy the show.

It was the industry insiders who really knew what sort of a level this contest was at. It was a matchup between Zhang Ye and Li Xiaoxiao, a competition between Family Spring and Tianxi Purified Water, and also a challenge between mineral water and purified water! Whoever was the number one person in the advertising industry would be revealed very soon!

At Tianxi's headquarters.

In the advertising department's office.

Li Xiaoxiao was seated, looking as confident as could be.

"Director Li, that was amazing!"

"The sales for yesterday have been released. They've increased by 20%!"

"We're gonna catch up to Family Spring soon!"

"With you here, everyone's feeling much more confident!"

"You're the true number one person in the advertising field! That's for sure!"

"Yeah, what is Zhang Ye anyway? He's just a broadcast host who hasn't learned anything about advertising, so how can he possibly compare to a trained professional like you!"

Everyone was in a good mood.

Li Xiaoxiao said calmly, "Don't be happy too early. Family Spring might still have some tricks up their sleeves. If they increase the promotion of their public welfare activities, or if they increase the donation amount per bottle, we will use plan A to handle them. If they emphasize promoting the 'sweetness' of their water, we will execute plan B in response..."

There were four plans in total!

To handle every possibility they had worked out!

Li Xiaoxiao was very meticulous. Otherwise, she couldn't possibly be sitting in her current position. She had thought of everything that the opponent might try, then drew up plans to respond to each of them.

She was now waiting. She was waiting for Zhang Ye to make his move!

The advertising field was also waiting. They were waiting for the curtains of this grand battle to raise!

Jiang Hanwei also started updating his Weibo more frequently with promotional posts of him giving out Tianxi Purified Water to his celebrity friends!

...

The next day.

The sun was shining brightly.

The day was a peaceful one.

At 10 AM sharp, Family Spring started their commercial run on the television stations.

No one had expected that an advertisement that would soon be written into the annals of the advertising industry would appear so suddenly!

Quite a few industry insiders had gathered around anxiously to watch!

"It's here!"

"The new commercial is here!"

"Zhang Ye has made his move!"

"Quick, come and watch, it's beginning!"

"Let's see what he can come up with."

"I reckon there's nothing he can do."

The advertising field was watching.

The public was watching.

The people from the other brand name companies were also watching.

The commercial had changed!

In a valley.

In the woods.

There was a creek.

Ethereal music played.

Zhang Ye's voice slowly drifted out of the television.

"Water is the source of life.

"The quality of water dictates the quality of life.

"We don't produce water. We're only the porters of nature!"

The advertisement ended.

It was just a short 15-second spot.

Those who saw this commercial the moment it came on were dumbfounded. They could not react at all for a full few seconds!

"Holy shit!"

"This..."

"This commercial..."

"Oh my God!"

That classic advertising tagline of Tianxi Purified Water's commercial had instinctively popped into their heads!

Processing?

Filtration?

Sifting?

Handling?

Purification?

But Family Spring just said, "No, we do not produce water, we're only the porters of nature!

Face-smacking!

The ultimate kill!

A headshot!

This commercial was just too goddamn ruthless!

So this was Face-smacking Zhang!

This was that Face-smacking Zhang who had left countless fellow peers gnash their teeth in hatred of him!

...

At Tianxi's headquarters.

Everyone from the advertising department was speechless!

Li Xiaoxiao was stunned!

Tianxi's CEO had a shocked expression on his face!

There were even a few female employees whose eyes reddened as they started crying in distress.

"They...they...How could they do that!"

"Director Li!"

"Director Li, what should we do?"

"This...this!"

Li Xiaoxiao looked at them and suddenly picked up pen and paper. She lowered her head and started writing.

Everyone was filled with hope!

She still had a plan?

Right! We must fight back!

Director Li is the best advertising professional in the industry!

However, Li Xiaoxiao looked up and handed that piece of paper to the deputy CEO of Tianxi. Everyone panicked at what she said. "Sorry, I've lost. This is my resignation letter."

There was no plan at all!

They had nothing left up their sleeves!

This was checkmate!

This was a knife plunged into them in "extra time"!

They had no way of turning this around to counterattack!

...

Soon after.

News of Li Xiaoxiao stepping down from her position at Tianxi Purified Water spread throughout the industry. Everyone was extremely shocked and were finding it hard to accept or believe!

That was Li Xiaoxiao they were talking about!

A godly person who made her way through the ranks of the advertising industry!

"What's going on!"

"How did it turn out like this?"

"Holy shit!"

"I don't even know what to say!"

"Even Goddess Li couldn't slay him?"

"It would be acceptable to us if there's no one in the variety world who can win against him, but there's even no one who can rival him in the advertising field? I really can't believe it! How can it be like this! If Li Xiaoxiao had fought Zhang Ye over the course of many rounds and they'd pushed each other to the limits before she conceded, I would probably be able to accept that. After all, they're both elites in the industry. But what about now? They only crossed swords once! Just that once!"

"Hai!"

"I'm kneeling!"

"Family Spring's commercial was simply too awesome!"

"Not only was it awesome, it was also goddamn face smacking!"

"Speaking from emotion, I'll definitely side with Li Xiaoxiao since she's my senior. But from a professional point of view, Family Spring's commercial was indeed incomparable. Just based on that advertising tagline alone, I'm convinced!"

"The waters of this industry run so deep."

"Yeah, after seeing these two gods clash, I realize that I still have a lot to learn!"

Just this single face-off!

Without even needing a second move from Zhang Ye, his opponent had already lost!

All because of that nuclear bomb of an advertising tagline: "No, we do not produce water, we're only the porters of nature!"

With just this simple tagline.

It made Li Xiaoxiao genuflect!

It made Tianxi Purified Water genuflect!

It made all the other brands of drinking water genuflect!

It made everyone in the entire Chinese advertising field genuflect!

They were all convinced!

So convinced that they could do nothing other than prostrate!

Chapter 1246: All the advertisements roll out!

The next day.

In the morning.

On the way to the studio, Zhang Ye received an unexpected call.

"Hello, who is this?"

"Hello, Teacher Zhang, I am Li Xiaoxiao."

"Li Xiaoxiao?"

"You might not know who I am."

"But Teacher Li, I do know you."

"I'm honored."

"Sorry about the advertisement issues. I was just entrusted with the duty since I receive pay from Family Spring, so I had to do my best."

"Teacher Zhang, you don't have to say that. If anyone has to apologize, it should be me. I was the one who threw down the glove, and the media was also guessing why I had suddenly joined Tianxi Purified Water. I can tell you right now that I did so because of you. I've long heard about you and was hoping to pit my skills against yours. The results have proven that Teacher Zhang is still a level higher. I've lost, and I've lost convincingly too. There's nothing else I can say to that."

"Teacher Li, you're too modest."

"Shall we have dinner some day you're free?"

"Sure, I would be more than happy to."

"Then it's agreed. I must really get some guidance from you, Teacher Zhang."

"You're too generous with your praise."

"Are your other ads going to roll out soon?"

"They'll be released throughout the day."

"Alright, I'll wait for them then. I quite anticipate them, actually."

Li Xiaoxiao was a big shot in the advertising field, so Zhang Ye was pretty polite when speaking to her. He knew that she was a very capable woman and had true skill to back her up. He never expected she would call him. She even spoke to him in a very calm manner and didn't confront him over the advertisement face-off between the two of them. A person of such character was surely going to gain the respect of Zhang Ye. She was not like him. Even if she said that she would like to get some guidance from him, Zhang Ye didn't dare think he could do so. He wasn't up to the task of dishing out advice to a big shot like Li Xiaoxiao. Because nobody here knew that Zhang Ye was actually the biggest porter in this world!

He wasn't a porter of water.

This guy would port anything he could!

...

At the studio.

Ring ring ring, ring ring ring.

The phone was almost blowing up from the constant calls! All kinds of endorsements had found their way here. There were thirty Chinese companies seeking a deal, and even three foreign ones approached them. This wasn't strange at all. Family Spring's advertisement had gotten really popular, and anyone with eyes could see why. Zhang Ye's reputation for his 15 million RMB per word had spread all over the industry. Even if the common folk could not see this, how could the major brands not notice?

"Director Zhang!"

"You're finally here!"

"This is the list of companies that approached us; take a look."

"There's really too many of them!"

"Are we going to accept their offers?"

Zhang Ye flipped through it and didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

Accept their offers? Accept, my ass!

If he really took all of these projects, his schedule would be booked all the way until next year!

But with so many endorsement projects being offered to him, it was quite a pity not to take them. As such, the studio staff got busy again and started sifting through all the leads. Of the offers that could support the bottom line of their fifth step in the "Reach the Summit" plan, they selected three top corporations in the Chinese market and accepted their endorsement deals. As for the smaller enterprises and brands, Zhang Ye could only reject them for the time being. He really could not take those projects. Sometimes, it wouldn't be helpful to take too many endorsements since such deals were more about quality over quantity. Zhang Ye already had so many endorsements that not even the top three Heavenly Kings and Queens could beat him by combining their endorsement deals.

So that would be it. He would not be taking any more of them.

He would have to make do with the endorsements he had on hand.

After that, following Family Spring's advertisement, Zhang Ye's other endorsement advertisements were gradually released into the market!

...

On the same day.

In the Beijing subway.

The billboards on the waiting platforms were replaced.

A poster showed Zhang Ye holding a cell phone as he smiled while reading a book on it. Beneath him were several sentences making up the advertising message:

"Reading a book is like reading oneself. The more you read, the better you understand yourself.

"I've taken a liking to a character because what he says reminds me of myself."

In the Shanghai subway.

"Reading a book is like reading oneself. The more you read, the better you understand yourself.

"Reading about and understanding the protagonist's every hesitation, I feel as though I can calmly make better choices at the crossroads in my life."

Shenzhen.

Tianjin.

Nanjing.

Every poster was different.

The passengers would all stop in their tracks as they passed by to read them.

Some passersby uploaded pictures of the advertisements online.

"Wow, Zhang Ye's new ad has arrived all over the subway stations!"

"Line 1 has fallen!"

"Line 5 has fallen!"

"It's everywhere in Line 13 as well!"

"It's even on the outdoor advertising light boxes!"

"Damn, Beijing, Shanghai, and Shenzhen's subways have all been invaded by Zhang Ye!"

"The guy's picture in the ad actually makes him look pretty classy. He really has the air of a man of culture."

"Extra, extra! Teacher Zhang has taken an endorsement for the number one reader app in the market!"

"This ad is pretty good. It's really quite classy!"

"Haha, I'll use this app to read my books from now on."

"I've just realized that Lord Zhang doesn't look that bad. In fact, he's looking more and more charming!"

The advertising world was very certain of one thing: Endorsing a reader app was extremely difficult. But Zhang Ye had managed to do it in a new and refreshing way. For such a boring and rigid thing like a reader app, Zhang Ye had managed to bring out the elegance and feel of a book. It raised the classiness of the reader app. Although this reader app's market share was already the top in the industry, that was just a statistic. Zhang Ye added a lot of value to the brand that it never had before!

And this value was precisely what money couldn't buy!

...

At night.

Beijing Television.

After the broadcast of an episode of a hit spy-thriller, a dairy commercial was shown.

It was a very gentle scene with a beautiful, scenic backdrop.

The blue sky overlooking the vast plains.

Zhang Ye, a piano, and a little girl.

A piano melody was playing in the background as Zhang Ye lovingly soothed the little girl.

There were no spoken lines. Right at the end of the commercial, an advertising tagline appeared onscreen: "Not just any milk can be called Jiali Milk."

On Weibo.

This tagline was instantly mentioned everywhere.

"Pfft!"

"Such showmanship I give full marks!"

"Is it really that good?"

"It doesn't look bad!"

"It's so full of warmth. I'll give it a Like!"

"It's yet another classy commercial!"

It was shared like crazy!

It was parodied!

Everyone was having fun!

This commercial was very weird in a sense. Even those people in the advertising field who saw it could not figure out what made this advertisement so good after analyzing it for a very long time. There was just nothing in it that they could pinpoint as good. But the response of the market still let everyone know that this was yet another phenomenal marketing advertisement!

Because on this day, Jiali Milk was sold out all across the country!

The people were shocked and astonished.

"Fuck."

"I can't get it anymore!"

"Why are they out of stock?"

"I wanted to try it!"

"Is this milk really that good?"

"Whatever Zhang Ye endorses, it always ends up getting sold out!"

"So impressive!"

"I'm utterly convinced!"

...

A picture of elegance.

The greenery of the grass.

A pure white wedding dress.

Zhang Ye was holding a woman's hand and putting a ring on her finger.

"A Diamond is Forever 1."

The jewelry commercial was rolled out.

A heated discussion took place on Weibo.

"Is Zhang Ye really getting married?"

"Who is that woman?"

"She can't be seen; they only showed her hand!"

"A second after I watched this commercial, I noticed my fiancée staring at me deeply and realized—the 100,000 RMB that I have left in my bank account is gone!"

"Zhang Ye, I hate you! My wife is now saying that she wants this brand of diamond rings! Your sister! The cheapest one-carat diamond ring already starts at the upper end of tens of thousands of yuan!"

"This commercial is too ruthless!"

"A Diamond is Forever? As a woman, I was instantly taken by that sentence! I will definitely buy this brand in the future when I get married!"

"This commercial is really too lethal on a woman!"

"My wife has fallen!"

"Ditto."

"Ditto +1!"

...

At a school.

In the laboratory.

There was a doctor.

And a microscope.

"You can wash away the visible stains.

"But can you wash away the invisible germs?

"Scientific research has shown..."

This was a commercial for a brand of soap!

It was inspired by Safeguard 2 's soap commercial back in Zhang Ye's previous world.

It got boisterous again on Weibo.

"The fuck!"

"My hands are still so dirty even after I've washed them?"

"Is that really how it is?"

"I'm so scared that I quickly went to buy a box of it to wash my hands with!"

"Haha, luckily for me, I'm already using this brand at home!"

...

In a rather large bathroom.

A set of clean-looking sanitary ware was on display.

Zhang Ye's singing came on.

"Every single toilet is a hero.

"With just a simple flush,

"It can flush away all of your sorrows.

"No matter how much your pain,

"No matter how deep your loss,

"For you, it will take all of it away!

"Every single toilet is a friend.

"You can trust it with all your heart.

"You can't do without it in your life."

The sanitary ware commercial made its shocking debut!

This was the first time that Zhang Ye's new song was released in the form of a commercial. Moreover, there was also a full version music video commercial that could be viewed on the official website of the sanitary ware company and on the various major online video hosting sites.

When this commercial was rolled out.

The industry was dumbfounded!

The public was stunned!

"A toilet is a hero?"

"A toilet is a friend?"

"Laughing out loud!"

"Genuflecting to the thickness of Zhang Ye's skin!"

"A hero? Fuck, why don't you just present the toilet with a war medal! Why don't you just present the toilet with a Red-Banner Pacesetter 3 award!"

"Hahahahaha!"

"I was really made to kneel to this commercial!"

"That was way too unconventional!"

"Just based on Zhang Ye's total lack of shame, I've got to buy one of those!"

"My large saber is again again again again again again again again again again again again again again unable to endure the thirst! Buy! Buy! Buy! Anything that Zhang Ye endorses, I'll buy!"

On this day, sales of the sanitary ware brand's products surged!

However, the most amazing thing was that this totally unconventional new song named "Toilet" that Zhang Ye had created actually managed to chart on the largest Top Chinese Music Chart in the country. It charted at number 10 for the day even though it was just a song for a commercial! At a time when I Am a Singer and Sing! were the most popular singing shows being broadcast, the daily top 20 spots on the chart were basically monopolized by songs that were performed on the shows. For a sanitary ware's

commercial song to actually get into the top 10, just what kind of a concept was that? Even those from Beijing Television and Central TV nearly vomited blood when they saw the music charts!

What is this!

This fellow really has too many tricks up his sleeves!

One...

Five...

Ten...

One after another, the advertisements were dropped onto the public's consciousness like a carpet bombing run!

For the next few days, all of Zhang Ye's endorsement advertisements continued being shown!

Zhang Ye was appearing in all kinds of different styles and looks on television, in the subway, at the bus stations, on the online video hosting sites, etc. At different times, he would look refined and suave, dashing, or charming.

The advertisements blew up!

The products sold out!

Zhang Ye's name was once again getting heard all over the country!

Chapter 1247: A sprint to the S-list!

On this afternoon.

His mother was munching on melon seeds while watching a television drama.

His father did not enjoy watching soap operas, so he sat beside her reading the papers.

Just as the television drama was getting exciting, the image onscreen suddenly switched. Zhang Ye's voice gently came from the television, "You can wash away the visible stains, but can you wash away the invisible germs?"

Wash, your sister!

How many days have they been showing this!

My skin is peeling from washing my hands so much!

His mother said in an impatient manner, "Why are they showing commercials at such an important moment!"

15 seconds went by very quickly.

Just as his mother was looking forward to the drama returning, Zhang Ye's face appeared again. "At important times! How can you catch a cold?"

Pfft!

His mother said, fuming mad, "Why is it another commercial!"

His father said with a smile, "Can't you watch something else then?"

So his mother changed channels to Zhejiang Television.

"A Diamond is Forever."

Change channels!

"There could be a gold bar inside when you open your Brain Gold gift box!"

Change channels!

"Every single toilet is a friend...."

Change channels!

"Family Spring, a rather sweet thing."

Change channels!

"I Am a Singer is brought to you exclusively by our title sponsor, the leader in health products, Brain Gold..."

Advertisements!

Advertisements everywhere!

And coincidentally, every channel was currently showing the commercials with Zhang Ye in them during this time!

His mother got mad. "I'll just stop watching TV, will that do? I'll use the computer instead!"

As she spoke, she powered on the computer and launched the Internet browser, wanting to read some news. However, instead of reading the news, a pop-up appeared. Zhang Ye's smiling face appeared onscreen. "Our goal is—No! More! Tooth! Decay!"

No more tooth decay?

I'll beat you up until your teeth decay!

His mother went into his room angrily and dragged Zhang Ye out of bed. "Why is it all your ads?"

Zhang Ye said in a speechless manner, "Mom, I was sleeping."

"Get up! What are you still sleeping for?" His mother said, "When I turn on the TV, you're on it. When I power on the PC, you're on it again. You're on the cell phone browser pop-ups, you're there too when I'm taking the subway, just how many endorsements have you taken? Those who know will understand it's just ads, but those who don't will think that you've taken over the planet!"

Zhang Ye exclaimed, "Aiya, that's because the brand name companies have just renewed their endorsement deals and launched the new ad campaigns. They're definitely going to advertise harder

and more frequently at the beginning. It's just going to be for a month or so since this is the only time that they can really build on their brand names. When they've established their brand's presence, the advertising frequency will surely drop. Enough, Mom, I'm not talking anymore. I've been so busy filming commercials these days, and when I can finally get some rest, you're shouting and keeping me awake. I'm going back to sleep now."

If even Zhang Ye's own mother was feeling this way, how would the public feel?

...

Online.

The netizens were all complaining!

"Your sister!"

"I'm going to have a mental breakdown!"

"Me too. The moment I switched on the TV this morning, I changed channels five times and every channel was showing fucking Zhang Ye's face on them. Oh my God!"

"This scammer!"

"Yeah, I keep seeing him wherever I go!"

"Zhang Ye has propped up half of the entire country's endorsement deals all by himself!"

"Half? You must mean all!"

"There really isn't anyone else who can get so much exposure like he is!"

"There shouldn't be any person in the country who doesn't know who he is, right?"

"That's right. I traveled back to my family home in the countryside two days ago. The moment I stepped into town, I saw a huge billboard that was newly built with the words 'Family Spring, a rather sweet thing' written on it. My place is just a small town, so I was really shocked to see that. Can you guys imagine how many grass mud horses galloped through my mind at that moment? This ad has spread into cities and villages across the country!"

"I've been seeing that commercial about having no tooth decay these days while watching the TV series on Shanghai TV. It always gets shown when they head into the commercial breaks. I've been forced to watch it more than 20 times already. I don't even have any tooth decay to begin with, but whenever I see that commercial, I can feel a fucking toothache in my mouth!"

"Hahahaha!"

"I'm cramping up from laughing!"

"Zhang Ye, that guy, has really angered the masses!"

But even if they scolded and shouted about this, the facts proved that even with this level of advertising intensity, the people were still able to accept it. Moreover, even if it wasn't Zhang Ye's commercials being shown at that time, it would still be impossible for the ad spots to stay empty. Some other

commercials for some other brands would still be shown, so wouldn't it be all the same no matter whose commercial they were going to see? Further, every one of Zhang Ye's commercials was ingenious. There were profound ones, elegant ones, exquisite ones, brainwashing ones, and unconventional ones. If it was impossible to escape from the advertisements, then everyone would rather watch some interesting advertisements.

The ones who were kept the busiest were those in the advertising industry.

In recent days, the professionals in the advertising field were holding meetings almost every day to study and research Zhang Ye's advertisements!

...

In a classroom.

"Here, everyone have a look at the projector. Let us talk about Zhang Ye's latest endorsement for the toothpaste product. We mentioned previously that we would be talking about the sanitary ware commercial today, but after we had a quick discussion about it after we went back yesterday, we've decided not to talk about that anymore. That's because it's a commercial that cannot be replicated at all, not even by Li Xiaoxiao. She doesn't know how to write songs, and neither would the professionals in the advertising field know how to write such songs. Since only Zhang Ye can make a commercial like that, we'll skip talking about it."

...

At a gathering in the advertising industry.

"Everyone, have a look at the information in your hands. Let's first analyze that diamond ring commercial of Zhang Ye's. 'A Diamond is Forever'—this advertising slogan is amazing!"

...

At a university.

In an upper-level advertising and marketing class.

"Students, we will not be referring to the textbooks today. Instead, let's talk about the ten endorsement ads of Zhang Ye's. If anyone told me in the past that there was a god in the field of advertising and marketing, I will definitely scoff at them. But today, I suddenly have some hesitations. If there really were a god in the world of advertising, then in this age that we live in, Zhang Ye is probably the one who is closest to it."

...

Zhang Ye's advertisements had created a huge commotion!

The common folks only wanted to watch the buzz, but those in the industry were all crazily researching and learning from the ads!

If the two Family Spring advertisements had awed them, then the series of Zhang Ye's advertisements that rolled out afterwards would make the entire industry go crazy over them!

The toothpaste advertisement?

The industry was knelt to it!

The cold medication advertisement?

The industry was knelt once more!

The toilet advertisement?

The industry fell to both knees!

The attitude of the advertising field towards Zhang Ye was no longer just admiration. It had turned into worship!

If he only occasionally came up with a classic advertisement, everyone wouldn't think much of it. That was because there would always be several such classic advertising and marketing cases every year. But to continuously come up with phenomenal advertisements one after another, and they were even for the most explosively marketed products in the industry, there were no other creatives who could do something like this, be it domestically or overseas!

It was only Zhang Ye!

Only Zhang Ye could achieve something like that!

...

The news was spreading all over!

"No more tooth decay has become a popular catchphrase!"

"An advertising slogan was all it took for a diamond ring to become the standard accessory for weddings!"

"Jiali Milk goes out of stock again!"

"Zhang Ye reaches the pinnacle of the advertising endorsement field!"

"Zhang Ye—The leader of this year's advertisement endorsements!"

"Zhang Ye's endorsement pay surpasses that of the S-list celebrities'!"

A refreshing breeze in the advertising world!"

"Zhang Ye: Advertisements are also a form of art!"

"Is Zhang Ye's wedding date imminent?"

"Breaking insider's news: Zhang Ye currently preparing for his wedding!"

"Why is Zhang Ye's endorsement pay exceeding his market value? It's all down to those unique advertising proposals!"

"A brand name's evaluation of Zhang Ye: Zhang Ye is the most dedicated and professional celebrity in the industry. We are honored to be working with him!"

"Zhang Ye's advertisements 'flood' the entire country!"

"An exposure rate that defies the Heavens! Zhang Ye's popularity soars again!"

Everything was going smoothly!

With this, the "Reach the Summit" plan's fifth step was complete!

However, the next task was to return to step four and carry it out well—the recording of I Am a Singer. If luck would have it, he would very soon be able to make his first attempt at those seven spots of the S-list!

Chapter 1248: Xiaodong can't host anymore?

Wednesday.

Later that morning.

The barrage of advertisements finally came to an end. The volume of over a dozen of Zhang Ye's endorsement advertisements had finally normalized and were no longer shown as often as before. With that task complete and the popularity gained, Zhang Ye turned his attention back to I Am a Singer. In recent days, he had been too busy taking various endorsement deals and filming their commercials. That was too much of a distraction for him, so with that task complete, he had to get back to producing the show properly.

At Beijing Television.

Zhang Ye arrived at work.

"Director Zhang."

"Morning, Director Zhang."

"You're here already?"

"Have you eaten yet?"

"Director Zhang, do I get a discount for the diamond rings if I mention your name?"

The moment Zhang Ye came back, everyone was laughing and happily joking around with him.

The advertisements were also brought up by a lot of them. They teased him for a long time, but Zhang Ye didn't get angry and even played along with them.

Hu Fei also arrived at the office. "Director Zhang, you're here?"

Zhang Ye nodded and said, "Brother Hu, shall we start the meeting?"

Hu Fei nodded. "Alright, is everyone here?"

Zhang Ye turned to Xiao Lu and said, "Go and gather everyone up."

"Got it." Xiao Lu obeyed.

Five minutes later, the conference room was fully seated with the staff of the program team. The new episode's recording was scheduled for tomorrow, and the program team would always hold a meeting prior to it so they could communicate any issues and establish a direction for the recording. This was standard practice here. The atmosphere in the meetings was always good, with Zhang Ye usually assigning the roles and tasks while Hu Fei would add on with whatever was necessary. Everyone else would take notes and record the meeting, have discussions, and raise questions while Zhang Ye answered them.

Today was no exception.

Zhang Ye said, "Everyone has been working hard these days. I Am a Singer's recording is already halfway done, and we've achieved very good results so far. Let's have a look at the projector. These are the viewership ratings for our show against Sing!'s after their broadcast time was changed."

I Am a Singer:

Episode Four's viewership rating: 3.08%

Episode Five's viewership rating: 3.22%

Episode Six's viewership rating: 3.19%

Sing!:

Episode Four's viewership rating: 1.58%

Episode Five's viewership rating: 1.62%

Episode Six's viewership rating: 1.55%

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "As all of you can see, Sing!'s viewership ratings have obviously gone up after they changed their broadcast time. 1.5% is a very outstanding result in the industry and would also deserve quite a good ranking in the all-time historical viewership ratings. But compared to us, they're still lacking by far. With them stepping aside, we don't have anyone competing with us in the same time slot. Our viewership for every episode is now at a stable 3% or above, but I think that we can still do better."

Hou Di said, "But, Director Zhang, we've already broken the record."

Xiao Lu clicked her tongue and said, "Take it even higher? Wouldn't that be very difficult? It feels like we're already at the limit."

However, Hu Fei replied, "In the past, no one thought that current TV variety shows could surpass the 2% mark. But Director Zhang did it. After that, when everyone thought that the 3% mark could not be broken, Director Zhang did it again. There has been a general consensus lately in the industry that 4% has to be the limit and that it is definitely the ceiling for variety shows. But I don't believe that's true. I'm of the same mind as Director Zhang on this; I feel that we can still take it even higher."

Hou Ge analyzed, "Then we can only seek to increase the excitement of the show. The audience is starting to become used to the rules and routine of our show, as well as getting familiar with the seven singers onstage, so they might be beginning to experience short-term fatigue with regard to our show."

In the previous episode, we just completed a knockout round with the latest replacement singer getting eliminated immediately. He has a large fan base, so it actually affected our show quite a bit. As such, the viewership ratings for episode six were slightly weaker, even though it was still basically the same as episode five's viewership ratings. If we really want to push it another level higher, the choice of the new replacement singer for the next episode will be critical."

Dafei said, "So who do we get for the replacement singer?"

Han Qi said, "We don't have that many options in our hands."

This was a difficult choice.

Who should they send first?

Who should they keep for later?

All these decisions had to be weighed carefully.

The singers on the current stage were divided into two tiers now.

The first-tier group: Chen Guang, Zhang Xia. This was the most solid group, and the two of them were consistently ranked in the top three. They were truly excellent singers. Xiaodong could probably be considered as part of the first-tier group as well since she also occasionally got rather good results. But that was still rather dependent on the songs she sang. She was not exactly solid in this area.

In the second-tier group, there were Huang Cheng, Zhao Wuliu, and Amy. Huang Cheng was someone who went by the artistic route, so the style of his songs was more niche. During the episode he first joined as the replacement singer, he got a very good ranking. However, his later songs only received lukewarm responses, with his results fluctuating. Like him, Zhao Wuliu's results were also very rocky, with him ranking high at times and low at other times. This was not a problem with their singing but because there were too many good singers on this stage. Everyone were bringing out their best tricks as they fought each round with their all, so the results were more across the board. It was really difficult to pinpoint who was better than the other.

Surprisingly, Amy was the most solid performer of all. Her steadiness came from the fact that she was always ranked in the last two places, either sixth or seventh. Every time she was faced with the knockout round, she would always be the one in the most danger. However, she was always able to return from the dead and survive to the next round. As such, after three knockout rounds so far, Amy was still around even though she was part of the starting list of singers for the show. As the show progressed, this also became a highlight of the show that the viewers were delighted to see.

Hu Fei gave it some thought and said, "For the new replacement singer, we will require a truly skilled singer. I hope that this replacement can break into that first-tier group and create some competition for the others."

Zhang Ye nodded. "That's what I feel too. Looking at the list of replacement singers, I would probably be more inclined to..." As he was speaking, a phone rang. It was Zhang Ye's cell phone. He had forgotten to silence his phone and did not intend to answer it since they were in a meeting. But just as he was about to reject the call, he saw the caller ID and was slightly taken aback. He really had to answer this call, so he said, "Sorry, I'll have to take this call."

Hu Fei said, "It's fine."

He exited the conference room.

Zhang Ye pressed the answer button and said: "Hello."

It was Wu Zeqing's secretary, Bai Li, on the other end.

"Teacher Zhang, are you busy?"

"It's OK, Secretary Bai, just speak."

"There's something that I need to give you a heads up on. Chief Wu is currently in a meeting and can't get away, so she got me to give you a call. Someone has reported your show."

"A report? Who?"

"It should be someone from Central TV Department 1."

"What was the report about?"

"That you've appointed an amateur host for the show."

"You mean Xiaodong?"

"Yes."

"That's just a guest role. She only has a couple of lines and shouldn't really be considered the show's host, right?"

"Strictly speaking, that is indeed not allowed. There's an article that was issued by the SARFT that prohibits an unlicensed host from hosting a show. It's just that this rule wasn't so strictly applied back then and was always something that we turned a blind eye to. Furthermore, the definition of 'host' is not that clear."

"Yes, I do know about that article."

"But the execs are watching this very closely because someone has reported you all. With the article brought up, Chief Wu can't really do much about it either. Because of your show getting too popular these days, the higher-ups are more cautious about how to handle it. They're currently holding a meeting to sort it out, but be prepared. The outcome should likely be decided by today, although it's already definite that I Am a Singer will no longer be allowed to have a guest in the host role. You'll probably have to change it."

"But we'll be recording tomorrow."

"Hai, I know."

"Is there really no room for discussion?"

"There isn't any. If there were, with the good relationship you and Chief Wu enjoy, do you think that she wouldn't speak up for you all?"

"Alright then, I understand. Thanks, Secretary Bai."

"You're welcome, Teacher Zhang."

After hanging up, Zhang Ye felt rather speechless. He understood quite well that this matter was indeed going to be difficult to handle. If the article had not been passed yet, Old Wu could certainly veto its passage. Or at least, she would be able to delay it until after I Am a Singer was finished since there weren't even that many episodes left to record anyway. But the problem was that the article already existed. It had been passed a year ago, although it hadn't been enforced and there were also no precedents. But they had been reported on now, and the whistleblower was even Central TV Department 1. Importantly, the head of Central TV was a party member of the SARFT. Even if he was not higher ranked than Old Wu, he was still a member of the SARFT's Party Committee. He still had the right to speak against some issues and would be able to use the article to make sure this issue did not get ignored.

Blame me!

If only I had considered this more carefully beforehand!

In the meeting room.

Zhang Ye returned.

Hu Fei said, "Let's carry on then."

But Zhang Ye said to the others, "Let's adjourn the meeting."

Everyone was stunned.

"Adjourn?"

"Why?"

"What happened, Director Zhang?"

Zhang Ye did not say anything to them but told Hu Fei, "Brother Hu, let's go to your office."

Hu Fei immediately knew that something must have cropped up, so he quickly left with Zhang Ye and headed back to his office.

In the office.

Zhang Ye said sternly, "I've just received news that Xiaodong cannot host the show without a 'license.'"

Hu Fei was surprised. "Where did you get the news from?"

"The SARFT." Zhang Ye said, "It was Central TV Department 1 that reported us. It seems the program team of Sing! hasn't admitted defeat yet, nor are they willing to take it lying down. We've already forced them to change their broadcast time, so now that they've managed to find something against us, they'll definitely try to counterattack and take us on again!"

Hu Fei said heavily, "Then what do we do now? How are we going to carry on with the recording tomorrow?"

Zhang Ye sighed. "I'm still thinking about it."

Hu Fei said, "Why don't I try to get the Station Head to talk to them?"

"That won't work." Zhang Ye shook his head. "Is our Beijing TV more powerful than them?"

Hu Fei said, "Or we can let Dong Shanshan take over the hosting role."

Zhang Ye said, "How can she? She still has the role of the host-manager to handle."

"Then let me get a host from the station."

"That won't do either, it's too abrupt. The original direction of the show was for it to have no outsiders and only for the singers to host it themselves and also perform. The viewers are used to that, and at the same time, it's our selling point for the show. If an unfamiliar face were to suddenly come in and take over the hosting as a professional host, even if we can carry on with the show's recording, what of the show's effect? The effects are going to be really bad, and then what of the viewership ratings? Will we still be able to aim for 4% if we do that? Our show's reputation will surely drop as well!"

Hu Fei said anxiously, "But there's no more time, we're recording tomorrow!"

Chapter 1249: What are you all looking at me for!

That same day.

There were still ongoing discussions about I Am a Singer on Weibo.

"They're going to record the seventh episode soon!"

"I'm really looking forward to it!"

"It was such a pity that He Huan got eliminated."

"Yeah, the results of the fourth episode were really too unexpected."

"Has the next replacement singer been revealed yet?"

"Not yet, no one knows who it is."

"I'm always most anxious to find out who the next replacement singer is after every knockout round."

"This show is a blast! Zhang Ye is really fucking amazing!"

"I Am a Singer's viewership ratings are through the roof. Sing! has completely been dismantled."

"Hurry up and get the new episode out. I can't wait anymore."

"Hahaha, let's see if Amy will get eliminated in the new round!"

"Amy is truly an undying goddess!"

"Pfft, everyone is always saying that she'll be eliminated soon, but she always manages to stay alive!"

"There's not going to be another show as awesome as this in the entire history of variety shows!"

It was trending #1 on Weibo, was the top searched term, and the songs performed on it filled the Top Chinese Music Chart! Counting all of the variety shows in recent years, there was really none that was more popular than I Am a Singer. The Voice was not, A Bite of China was not, King of Masked Singers was not, and Sing! was even more not so.

But at this moment.

The SARFT issued a shocking announcement!

—After investigating a report, Beijing Television's I Am a Singer was found to have flouted the rules of using a non-professional host according to Article 21. They are required to rectify this immediately, and all unlicensed hosts will be prohibited from taking any hosting roles on any variety shows moving on.

The announcement was very long, but that was the gist of it.

The SARFT was penalizing I Am a Singer!

At the same time, it was also sending out a warning to all the other variety shows in the industry!

With that, all the people in the country were alarmed!

"What?"

"Heavens! Immediate rectification?"

"So does that mean the show will be taken off the air?"

"How's that possible!"

"I know about that regulation! There was indeed something like that!"

"But why has it been fine until now? All the other shows were untouched?"

"Didn't you read what they said? Someone made a report! They got stabbed in the back!"

"Damn, do they have nothing better to do?!"

"Needless to say, it must be Sing!'s program team who made the report!"

"It's over, they're gonna get taken off the air!"

"Surely not, right? I love this show so much!"

...

Central TV Department 1.

Many of the people here went crazy at the news!

"Ha?"

"Immediate rectification?"

"Hahaha, serves them right!"

"This is such good news!"

"If their show gets suspended, our Sing!'s viewership ratings can definitely break 2%! It might even go higher than that!"

"This is what you call retribution!"

"We can finally enjoy seeing them in a predicament!"

"Hurry up and suspend them already!"

"They might not get taken off the air, but that should be enough to throw a spanner in the works."

"If they don't handle it well, their viewership ratings will surely drop like crazy."

...

At Beijing Television.

It was very chaotic.

Zhang Ye was on the line with Old Wu, who had just gotten out of her meeting. He brought up a suggestion to use loopholes to get past the order since something like that had worked in his previous world. "Old Wu, if we register Dong Shanshan as the host for our show, but only in name, and then continue letting the singers host in their capacity as guests or participants, would it work?"

"I'm afraid not."

He raised several more suggestions but all were rejected.

In the end, Zhang Ye felt rather hopeless when he realized that there were no loopholes that he could take advantage of. Or to be precise, he was left without any loopholes to take advantage of as everyone at the top had it in for him and his team.

Over there.

The calls also arrived one after another for Zhang Ye.

Xiaodong asked: "Zhang'er, what's going on?"

Zhang Ye said: "It is exactly what you see."

"So I won't be hosting for this upcoming episode?"

"Yeah, we're trying to think of ways to minimize the impact of this."

Zhang Xia also called.

"Little Zhang, are we going to be taken off the air?"

"No, that's not going to happen."

"Then what does the immediate rectification mean?"

"It's just on the matter of the hosting issue. I'll be able to handle that."

"Alright, it's been hard on you. Are we still going ahead with tomorrow's recording?"

"Of course. Everyone should prepare for recording per usual. We'll start at the agreed upon time after everyone is finished rehearsing. Nothing will be affected, don't worry."

"Alright."

Although Zhang Ye was telling everyone not to worry, the participating singers were still very worried. He was reassuring everyone but had not yet thought of a way to solve the problem.

Beijing Television was also trying their best to pull relations and even the Station Head had seemingly gone over to the SARFT and stayed there for a full two hours before stepping out. Later on, she didn't even say anything after she got back, so it could be assumed that there was not much hope. Even if Beijing Television was quite a major station, they did not exactly have much power or authority to speak of.

The singers were all waiting.

The industry was also waiting.

They were all waiting to see how Beijing Television would handle this.

I Am a Singer's program team was cursing and swearing now.

Xiao Lu shouted, "They better not let me find out which bastard made the report!"

Dafei said in a rage, "This is too sinister! They're so vicious!"

"Why couldn't they have just worked and improved on their own show? Why must they pull others down with them? Do they really think that if our show dies, their show could step up?" Hou Ge also said angrily, "It wasn't easy to have a variety show that could surpass 3% of the viewership in China. We haven't even managed to make a name for ourselves overseas and have already been backstabbed by one of our own!"

Han Qi scolded, "Villains!"

The program team's staff were all really mad!

Hu Fei said anxiously, "The deadline is tomorrow. Let's think of a way to deal with this first!"

So far, it looked like Zhang Ye was the one who was the most tolerant. It wasn't because he was big-hearted, but that he had been through too many of such incidents before. What kind of situation had he not seen before? There were many more incidents that were even more serious than what had just happened. So he said, "Yes, listen to Brother Hu. Everyone, calm down and try to think of a something first."

Xiao Lu said dejectedly, "There's nothing that we can do. If we bring in a new host, it will affect the show's quality. The singers we have don't have hosting licenses either, so they can't take the stage role. What options are we left with?"

Hou Ge said, "Yeah, if we don't want to affect anything and keep making the show as before. Unless the replacement singer for this week can host as well, we could let him do it. But wouldn't that be too far-

fetcher? Those singers who can sing well in the music industry are all professional singers. Like they'd have a hosting license as well! Why would they go and take the test to get a hosting license? Do they have nothing better to do? And even if we get a host to cross over, their singing won't be good enough for them to take to stage. So that's where the problem lies. There isn't anyone so wondrous that they would have both a hosting license and be a professional singer at the same...."

Hou Ge suddenly went quiet.

The entire program team office fell silent!

Hou Ge was stunned as he slowly turned around to look at Zhang Ye.

Hu Fei blinked several times and turned his head in the direction of Zhang Ye as well.

Xiao Lu looked over.

Han Qi looked over.

Dafei looked over.

Hou Di looked over.

Everyone was staring at Zhang Ye and did not say anything. They just kept looking at him.

Zhang Ye was dumbfounded!

What the heck!

What are you all looking at me for!

Zhang Ye flatly refused, "No! Absolutely not!"

No one said a thing as they continued looking at him.

Zhang Ye nearly fainted then and there. "Don't you all even think about that! It is absolutely impossible!"

Chapter 1250: Ah, I've been hacked again!

The atmosphere within the program team turned very strange. Everyone's gaze was now on Zhang Ye and their eyes had a weird and subtle look to them.

A professional singer?

One who had a professional host license?

There really was someone as wondrous as that!

And he was sitting right in front of them!

That's right! How could that have slipped their minds!

Hu Fei finally spoke, "Director Zhang, why don't we have a meeting?"

Zhang Ye immediately put his hand up. "I'm not going to have a meeting. Don't even think about it, Brother Hu!"

Hou Ge said eagerly, "Director Zhang, I think it's better to have the meeting."

Zhang Ye didn't know whether to laugh or cry. "Why should we have a meeting? I'm telling you now, you guys are barking up the wrong tree. You guys are really barking up the wrong tree! Do you guys think that I'm superhuman? Do you really think that I can split myself up into that many of me?"

"But there's really no one else that we can choose from." Xiao Lu blinked.

Zhang Ye said, "Our country lacks everything but people."

Dafei said, "But a professional singer who also has a host license, there really isn't anyone other than you."

Zhang Ye rolled his eyes. "Impossible!"

Hu Fei coughed and said, "There really isn't."

Han Qi nodded in confirmation. "Yes, there's only you."

Hou Di added, "Whether locally or abroad, you're the only one."

Zhang Ye was speechless.

Hu Fei came over. "Director Zhang, let's chat."

"I'm not going to chat with you." Zhang Ye quickly said, "There is no room for discussion."

Hu Fei pretended to be heartbroken as he said, "Our show is facing such a difficult time, so how can you bear to stand there and do nothing? This isn't the Director Zhang I know."

Zhang Ye pointed at his own chest. "Don't say that. This is who I am and who you know, don't doubt that."

Hu Fei had no reply.

Han Qi also tried to persuade him. "Just do it, Director Zhang. With your skill, which of the other singers are your equal?"

Your sister!

Aren't you thinking too highly of me!

"Any of them can be my equal!" Zhang Ye said, "Grandma Zhang, Old Chen, Sister Dong, Old Huang, which of them are not top singers in the music industry? So why would I participate in the competition? I already said it clearly at the start: I will never participate in the competition. Besides the issue of capability, I'm also not allowed to take part in it. If I lose, my popularity will definitely drop. If I win, the show's popularity will definitely drop. I'm the executive director of the show and I oversee everything on I Am a Singer. From the rules to the voting process, all of those were planned and decided by me. As the guy who wrote the rules, even if I went on stage and competed, there's nothing to be proud of if I win."

The viewers would definitely say that it was corrupt. So I'd be in a really difficult position since I'm neither allowed to win nor lose. So tell me, how can I possibly participate in the competition?"

Hu Fei exclaimed, "We have to take it one step at a time, so let's get this issue resolved first."

Zhang Ye had almost gone crazy. He facepalmed and said, "Alright, even if I join against my will, I only have one head and one pair of hands. Oh, and I also have to oversee the entire show's planning as the executive director, announce the rankings, practice and rehearse the song, and compete as well." He stared with wide eyes and said, "Even if I grew another head and pair of limbs, they wouldn't be enough to do all that! Are you guys trying to exhaust me to death?"

Hu Fei smacked his lips and said, "Can't you put in some overtime?"

Zhang Ye said, "How is this putting in overtime? You're asking me to put my life on the line!"

Xiao Lu begged, "Teacher Zhang."

Zhang Ye said firmly, "I won't join."

"Teacher Zhang."

"Director Zhang."

"We're depending on you."

"There's no one other than you."

"Director Zhang."

"Please put in some overtime, please."

Everyone chimed in and kept begging him.

Zhang Ye was getting dizzy from hearing everything they had to say. He had joined a singing show before. Back on King of Masked Singers, it was he who put on a mask to participate anonymously and knew how it felt to be a contestant. That feeling of having no appetite because of the pressure, having to practice his songs over and over every day, having to change the song at the last minute due to being unsuitable, and then being required to rearrange the musical arrangement as a result, the rehearsals, and sound testing, there had never been a day where he could sleep soundly while competing on King of Masked Singers!

But now?

As the executive director?

The overall planner?

The vote counter?

The host?

And they still wanted him to become a contestant?

Are you guys fucking asking me to do everything?

Zhang Ye was having none of it. In fact, he got even angrier at Central TV Department 1. Fucking hell!

...

At night.

On Weibo.

"There's reliable info that it was Central TV Department 1 who made the report!"

"Are you serious?"

"I have a classmate working at the SARFT, so I'm sure of it!"

"Damn, I knew it had to be them!"

"They're too wicked!"

"Yeah, the thing is, Central TV Department 1 also used unlicensed hosts for two of their shows at the beginning of the year! So they can do it? But others aren't allowed to? What do you call that? It's obviously a double standard! So how could they report on others? They're using the authorities to slap their enemies? This is using public resources for their own gains!"

"They make me so angry!"

...

Central TV Department 1.

Everyone had gotten off work and were still talking about the matter on the way out.

"Was it really us who reported them?"

"I think so."

"Haha, well played."

"Let's see what I Am a Singer can do about it."

"How much do you think our viewership ratings will increase by?"

"If they really get taken off the air, we should be able to gain an increase of 1%, at least."

...

And right at this moment, a Weibo post from Zhang Ye sent shockwaves around the country!

Zhang Ye's Weibo: "Dropping a notice here for everyone. To comply with the SARFT's rectification request, there will be some changes made to I Am a Singer's time slot."

The day.

And broadcast time.

Were exactly the same as Sing!'s!

The industry exploded!

"Holy shit!"

"Has Beijing TV gone mad?"

"They're gonna broadcast at the same time again?"

"Looks like the fight is on! They're back at it again!"

"Hot damn! Beijing TV is so domineering!"

"This is Zhang Ye's reply to them!"

"Hahahaha, Central TV Department 1 is gonna cry!"

"They'd just managed to avoid I Am a Singer, but Beijing TV has come chasing after them again?"

Elsewhere.

Central TV Department 1 also blew up!

The calls were going out one by one!

"Hello, Boss?"

"Come back quickly!"

"Ah? Back where?"

"Back to the office, where else! Immediately!"

Many of those who had already knocked off from work were asked to come back to the office!

Then, when they found out that I Am a Singer was again going to broadcast at the same time as them after arriving back at the office, all of them paled!

"How is that possible!"

"Zhang Ye, that madman!"

"He's always been a madman!"

"Is he thinking of taking us down with him?"

"Aren't they going to continue aiming for the viewership ratings record? If they start broadcasting at the same time as us, true, I'll admit that we have more to lose, but they won't get away unscathed either. Then they won't have any more chances of breaking the viewership ratings record! That's totally not worth it. Anyone with half a brain would not do it like this! How can Beijing TV allow Zhang Ye to behave so recklessly? Even if they allow it, the advertisers would not take such a loss!"

"But Zhang Ye is really capable of doing something like this!"

"Right, you cannot determine what he'll do by using logic!"

"It's over! We're done for this time!"

"I Am a Singer was instructed to fix their problems immediately. They probably couldn't come up with any other way to deal with it, so they didn't want us to have it easy either! They'd rather we suffer along with them! And have everyone die together?"

"That fucking hooligan!"

"Zhang Ye is really such a goddamn hooligan!"

Everyone was running around like a chicken with its head cut off!

Especially the program team staff of Sing! They were nearly in tears!

It was starting again!

This nightmare called Zhang Ye had returned again!

Soon after, several key executives of Central TV Department 1 also returned to the office in a panic. They immediately called for an emergency meeting.

Jiang Yuan.

Jiang Naixiong.

Several of the directors were cursing and swearing at Zhang Ye during the entire meeting. They were all very familiar with Zhang Ye as he had spent a long time at Central TV Department 1. After such a long time, that fellow was still that same old bastard he was before!

The key personnel of Sing!'s program team moped. After the meeting, they immediately carried out the executives' instructions and reorganized some of the tasks for the new episode's recording. They could no longer do it as they had done before. There had to be some changes made so that their show could get a boost. Only in this way could they take on Zhang Ye's rage and not die too ugly a death for the coming episode. Along with those changes, they also began preparing themselves for another change in the broadcast time. But that was not the best way out. The previous change to their broadcast time had already taken them a great deal of effort to convince the higher-ups of the station. So if they were to change it again? That would really be too troublesome. Even if they applied to get it changed, it might not be approved. They couldn't always be the ones having problems like this!

But they still gave some foreshadowing of what to expect on their official website.

Before long, Sing!'s official Weibo posted: "Due to technical difficulties, Sing! does not rule out changing its broadcast time in the near future. We would like to remind everyone to stay updated with the latest news on our official website."

The netizens were stunned.

"Pfft!"

"Changing the broadcast time again?"

"They're changing it again?"

"Sing! is terrified again!"

It was very chaotic at Central TV Department 1!

Calls!

Overtime!

Meetings!

Discussing plans!

The industry was also alarmed by Beijing TV's decision!

However, the development of the matter did not turn out as everyone thought!

One hour after Zhang Ye's post on Weibo, and just as Central TV Department 1 had descended into chaos, even to the point that someone was already meeting with the higher-ups regarding another change to the show's broadcast time, and with Zhang Ye getting pushed into the trending searches and his Weibo post making it into the Weibo headlines, the post was suddenly deleted by him.

After that, he posted again.

Zhang Ye's Weibo: "Ah, I've been hacked again. The show's broadcast time won't be changed. Please do not believe the rumors, everyone. Go by your own judgment. Changing the broadcast time of a show is a very complicated process. We'd have to submit it to the station and the SARFT to get it approved before it takes effect, so how can we possibly just change it as we wish?"

Hacked?

Rumors?

The public was dumbfounded!

The industry was dumbfounded!

Central TV Department 1 was dumbfounded!

Someone at Central TV did not believe this and immediately called a friend at the SARFT.

"Hello, Old Xu!"

"What's the matter?"

"Did I Am a Singer change their broadcast time?"

"Change what time?"

"Didn't they submit an application for it?"

"An application for what? What are you talking about?"

"I....()%...%\$##@@!!!"

It was very clear now!

Central TV Department 1's people were all left cursing at someone's ancestors!

Zhang Ye!

Fuck your grandpa!

You're too fucking wicked!

When the netizens realized the truth, they were rolling on the floor in laughter!

"Aiyo, holy fuck!"

"Hahahahaha!"

"I can't take this anymore, I'm crying laughing!"

"Zhang Ye is such a trickster!"

"What a fucking bastard he is!"

"Hacked? Your sister! Only a fool would believe you!"

"Sing!'s program team has suffered a huge loss of face this time!"

"Yeah, I heard that everyone went back for overtime in preparation of taking on this formidable enemy. They even rushed out an application to the higher-ups to change their broadcast time. But in the end, they just got pranked by Zhang Ye!"

"This move by Zhang Ye is way too wicked! But it was so beautiful at the same time!"

"Yeah, to deal with such people, it's better to act more bastardly!"

"Only Zhang Ye can come up with such trickery! If it were anyone else who attempted that, they would surely be scolded to their graves and simultaneously offend the entire industry. Only Zhang Ye could come out of something like that unscathed, since everyone already knows what kind of a person he is! Besides, he doesn't have any more people that he can offend. Everyone who can be offended has already been offended!"

"My wife and I are laughing so hard!"

"What a comedian!"

"Things would get really boring without him in showbiz!"

"The funniest thing is that this fella even put on a show. He told everyone not to go around spreading rumors and go by their own judgment of things. Aiyo, my dearest Teacher Zhang, can you not be so hysterical?"

Quite a few netizens were praising him!

A lot of people in the industry were at their wits' end because they were angered to the point of laughter!

This weirdo!

This jokester!

This hooligan!

Holding the sun, the moon, and the stars in the palm of his hand!

There really was no other person like him in this world!