

Superstar 1491

Chapter 1491: Good night, Beijing!

Ten minutes later.

The door was closed.

The high-ranking leader left in anger. The team that was the pride of their Internet Surveillance Bureau, from its leaders to its subordinates, were all full of lies! Check them, check all 16 of them! Actually, everyone knew that it was only a matter of time before they found out who it was. The most dangerous hacker in the world was definitely one of those 16 people.

“Who could it be?”

“If they don’t find the person, we won’t be able to go back?”

“Don’t do that. Teacher Zhang’s first concert will be starting in a few days.”

“Yeah, and I’ve already bought tickets too.”

“As if you bought them with your own money? Didn’t you get them for free from Teacher Zhang?”

“Didn’t you also get yours from Teacher Zhang!”

“Hai, forget about the concert, none of us will be able to go and watch it.”

“Why do I feel like their investigations are heading in the wrong direction?”

“Yeah, that’s what I actually think as well. All of us have worked together for so long, so surely we’d have a sense of how good each of us is? We definitely know everything about each other. If you say that there’s a hacker among the 16 of us, I’d believe that. We all have the technical skill for that. But if you say that one of us is the world’s best and most dangerous hacker, I won’t believe that no matter what. Have a look at each other. Which of us looks like we’re a legendary hacker? None of us! Therefore, didn’t they get something wrong?”

Everyone sized each other up.

He looked at her, she looked at him.

Then they nodded in unison. None of them looked like one.

But who could it be?

Could there really be other suspects then?

But there weren’t any. It was only the 16 of them.

Even at this point, they did not think of Zhang Ye. The war had occurred so long ago most of those at the First Department had forgotten about it. At that time of the Sino-Korean Hacker War, it wasn’t only the people from their department who were present in the office. Someone else was with them.

...

The next day.

Shanghai News.

“The Public Security Department is actively investigating the matter and have already locked on to the possible suspects.”

...

On the third day.

Beijing Television.

“There is now global attention on the identity of Hacker 2. We’ll be bringing you the latest updates surrounding the case.”

...

On the fourth day.

Central TV Department 1.

“Zhang Ye’s ‘The Final Concert’ will be held at Olympic Stadium tomorrow evening. With Fan Yingyun, the leader of Zhang Ye’s Fan Club, the main suspect in the hacking case, the attention surrounding Zhang Ye’s debut concert has been soaring.”

...

Online.

“The concert is approaching!”

“I’m so looking forward to it!”

“Haha, I’ve already gotten my hands on the tickets!”

“Previous poster, you’re such a showoff! I didn’t manage to get any tickets!”

“It was too difficult to buy them.”

“I’m on the train from Xining to Beijing to catch the concert. I’m a true fan!”

“The Final Concert, this name really gets to you.”

“Yeah, those who don’t know might even think that Zhang Ye is really going to bid farewell to the entertainment circle for good.”

“What farewell? Isn’t he just staying home to wait for his wife to give birth? He’ll only be gone for a while. After that, this fellow will definitely reappear and stir up trouble again!”

“Pfft, everyone seems to understand Teacher Zhang so well?”

“Of course, that guy’s always been this way.”

"I hope tomorrow arrives quickly. I can't wait much longer!"

"Have the investigations into Hacker 2's case reached a conclusion yet?"

"I doubt they can find him. He's such an awesome and legendary hacker. Unless he steps forward by himself, no one can find him."

...

In the evening.

A lot of places received a letter.

It was Zhang Ye's resignation letter.

When the people of Peking University saw this resignation letter, they were dumbfounded.

What was going on?

What was this about?

Resignation?

Dean Pan of the School of Mathematical Sciences immediately called Zhang Ye on his cell phone.

"Professor Zhang, what's with that? Why are you resigning?"

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "You received the letter?"

Dean Pan said in a speechless manner: "Don't joke around."

"I'm not joking." Zhang Ye said: "I'm going on a break for some time, so I've decided to resign from all the positions that I hold."

Dean Pan said: "You didn't come to lecture at Peking University all this while anyway. Just go on your break and keep the position at the school."

Zhang Ye said: "That won't do. I cannot be a dog in the manger."

Soon after, a vice president from Media College also called.

"Professor Zhang, what's going on here?"

"President Sun, it's a personal decision."

"No, I won't agree to it."

"I've already decided, so please just allow me to go on break."

"You can go on your break if you want, but why do you have to resign? Are you really thinking of staying home all your life to take care of your child? Isn't it only going to be for several months? Or at most a year?"

"President Sun, I thank my alma mater for the trust it has in me. But I've really come to a decision. I've been working so hard all these years, so please do a good deed and allow me to relax a little."

“Come on, this is way too sudden!”

Then the Asian Charity Association called.

One call.

Three calls.

Five calls.

On this day, Zhang Ye had resigned from all the positions that he held.

Without an exception, he submitted his resignation for all of them.

In fact, he was quite reluctant to do so. Math Department professor, Chinese Department professor, the Asian philanthropic ambassador, all of these roles held very precious memories for Zhang Ye. But this was a decision that he had to take, and it was also something that he had considered for some time. Even the hardest decision had been made, so what else was there that he couldn't do? This matter was something that Zhang Ye had to take responsibility for by himself. He couldn't drag down others for what he did. Tomorrow was going to be the final concert. After that, Zhang Ye could do what he needed free from anguish. He could leave his worries behind.

The news broke.

The news spread.

The people were also stunned and bewildered.

“What?”

“Zhang Ye resigned?”

“He resigned from both Peking University and Media College?”

“What is he trying to achieve?”

“Is he really going to stay at home to take care of his child?”

“I'm wondering about that too. If it's just taking care of his child, surely there isn't a need to resign from all of his roles, is there? I heard that this fellow has never lectured at Peking University and Media College anyway.”

“Who knows what Zhang Ye is thinking.”

“That fellow has relapsed again.”

“Haha, ignore him, he often gets convulsions like this. We're used to it.”

There was just one day remaining.

Only 24 hours left.

His staff.

His family.

His work.

He had done all that he could for them.

Everything that needed to be arranged had been arranged.

With all of his burdens unloaded, Zhang Ye felt completely relaxed. He did not go back home to his parent's place, nor did he go to Old Wu's place. The closer he was to saying farewell, the more he did not know how to face them. Zhang Ye went out onto the streets and walked aimlessly. He wandered around in the alleys.

He walked very slowly.

Without a purpose.

The streets in the common places of Beijing were not very nice. A lot of trash, old buildings, and illegally parked cars were everywhere. But Zhang Ye felt very peaceful and calm.

Lightly I leave,

as lightly I came;

I gently wave goodbye,

to the rosy clouds in the western sky.

Quietly I leave,

as quietly I came;

I flutter my sleeves softly,

not taking any wisps of the clouds away.

Good night.

Beijing.

After tomorrow's farewell, let's meet again another day.

Chapter 1492: The concert begins!

The next day.

In the evening.

Olympic Stadium was crowded with a sea of people.

"What a grand stage!"

"Jesus, this is gorgeous!"

"So this is the Olympic Stadium?"

“Is it starting soon?”

“It’s almost time.”

“Zhang Ye!”

“Zhang Ye!”

“Zhang Ye!”

The tens of thousands of people at the venue had already started shouting Zhang Ye’s name.

The stadium’s crowd was even doing the wave.

Backstage.

Zhang Ye was currently having his makeup put on.

Ha Qiqi shouted, “Do one more round of checks on the equipment! The concert is about to begin!”

Little Wang said excitedly, “The crowd outside is making such a big commotion!”

Little Zhou also said excitedly, “What a grand sight! It’s so spectacular!”

“How can it not be? This is a venue holding close to a 100,000 people!” Wu Yi said, “No one in Asia has ever held such a large concert before! We’re the first to do so!”

Zhang Zuo asked, “Has the livestreaming camera been set up yet?”

Tong Fu said, “It was set up very early on. Everything is ready to go!”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Great job, everyone.”

The makeup artist said, “Don’t smile, I’m doing your makeup.”

Ha Qiqi asked, “How’s your throat today?”

Zhang Ye replied, “It’s great, never been better!”

Ha Qiqi smiled and said, “Then you must definitely sing well tonight. Who knows, we might just get to the summit of the Asian entertainment circle after today. If that happens, it would really be a success after all the hard work we’ve put in. When you return from your half a year or yearlong break, we can finally take a proper shot at the international entertainment circle. The domestic scene was our first step, followed by the Asian region. Our end goal is still to make your name known throughout the world. Let’s work together towards that, everyone!”

Zhang Ye was very happy to hear that. “Alright.”

...

At Zhang Ye’s parents’ house.

His father urged, “It’s starting soon. Quickly get the livestream up.”

His mother said, “What are you rushing me for? There’s still 10 minutes to go.”

His father said, "Can't you put it on first?"

...

At Old Wu's parents' house.

Li Qinqin said, "I had wanted to go to the venue to watch it live."

Wu Changhe harrumphed, "That Little Ye! He kept insisting that we not go."

Wu Zeqing smiled. "Let's just watch it at home."

...

At Old Yao's house.

Yao Jiancai said, "This fellow has all the glory today."

Yao Mi giggled, "Uncle Zhang is mighty!"

...

Spring Garden's studio.

Xiaodong called out, "It's about to begin!"

Amy harrumphed, "I'm not gonna watch!"

Li Xiaoxian smiled and said, "Are you still angry about that?"

Amy said, "Of course! No one stands people up like he did."

Xiaodong said, "Alright then, I'll just watch it with Xiaoxian."

Amy grumbled, but she still glanced at the livestream.

...

The livestream had already started.

In the livestreaming channel, the viewership numbers shot up like crazy!

10 million!

20 million!

30 million!

50 million!

It kept soaring!

It was increasing by close to a 100,000 people each time!

In the end, even before the concert had begun, the number of people in the livestreaming channel had already broken past 100 million people. What kind of a concept was that? No one knew. Because in all

of the streamed concerts that had taken place in the past, none of them had ever reached 100 million concurrent online viewers before!

The media.

The industry peers.

The citizens.

Zhang Ye's family and friends.

Those who could attend the concert live were here at the venue, while those who couldn't make it were currently waiting for the stream to begin.

...

Counting down!

Five!

Four!

Three!

Two!

One!

Bang!

The lights at the venue blazed to life!

Stunning stage effects exploded at once!

The audience, be it those at the venue or those watching the livestream, were immediately thrilled!

At this moment, the music played. It was the strum of an electric guitar!

"Here he comes!"

"It's Zhang Ye!"

"It's starting, it's starting!"

"Lord Zhang is so full of spirit!"

"Teacher Zhang, I love you!"

"Ahhh!"

Screams resounded through the stadium.

The entire venue was up on their feet, and everyone was crazily waving the glow sticks in their hands!

A glamorously dressed Zhang Ye was standing on an elevator platform as he made his appearance in the middle of the stage. Looking at the view in front of him, seeing the hyped crowd of people, he felt at this

moment that he had a lot of things to say. If there were still time, he still had a lot would like to do. However, he did not have the luxury. He was only left with the next two hours. This was the final bit of time that the Heavens had afforded him. Zhang Ye treasured it very much, so he wanted to give a perfect closing.

Thank you.

Thank you all for coming.

“Zhang Ye!”

“Zhang Ye!”

“Zhang Ye!”

Amid the shouting, Zhang Ye lightly raised his microphone.

The entire venue’s audience fell silent!

Zhang Ye closed his eyes as a lot of images appeared in his head.

From his birth.

To his graduation.

To his debut in the entertainment circle.

The experiences he had on this journey were flashing through his mind.

Opening his mouth, he sang ¹ in a hoarse voice.

“Whenever I walk on any of these streets,

“My soul can never seem to be at peace.

“Apart from the roar of engines and the buzz of electronics,

“I think I hear the heartbeat of its soul.”

Zhang Ye sang in a low voice.

“I have belly laughed here, and I have cried here.

“I have lived my life here, and I will die here.

“I have said my prayers here, and I’ve been at a loss here.

“I’m searching here for what I lost here.

“Beijing.

“Beijing.”

The audience screamed with excitement!

It was a new song!

A new song!

It was so nice to listen to. They knew he would come out with a new song!

However, no one knew what sort of a mood Zhang Ye was in as he performed this song. Perhaps only Wu Zeqing understood.

...

Watching the stream.

Wu Zeqing was still smiling, but her eyes had reddened.

...

At the venue.

Zhang Ye continued singing.

"The three blocks between the coffeehouse and the plaza,

"Feel like the distance between the neon lights and the moon.

"In the struggle through life, people comfort and hug each other.

"Searching and pursuing, clutching at shattered dreams."

All of a sudden.

Zhang Ye raised his voice.

"If one day I have no choice but to leave!

"I hope people will bury me here!

"I can feel a sense of belonging here!

"I'm attached to so many of the things here!

"I have belly laughed here, and I have cried here.

"I have lived my life here, and I will die here.

"I have said my prayers here, and I've been lost here.

"I'm searching here for what I lost here.

"Beijing, Beijing.

"Beijing, Beijing."

Cheers were ringing out through the venue!

The audience went wild!

This opener had pumped up the crowd!

...

Old Zhang's house.

Fang Weihong sighed and said, "Teacher Zhang's got such exceptional talent."

But Zhang Yuanqi said, "Don't you find him to be a little different today?"

Fang Weihong was taken aback. "No, not really? What's wrong with him?"

"Nothing, I probably just got the wrong impression," Zhang Yuanqi replied.

...

Old Xu's house.

Xu Meilan's expression was one of total appreciation. "What a truly good song."

Her agent said, "It's a new song! This is amazing!"

A female assistant said, "Just the opener alone is so good. It's stunning!"

...

Old Chen's house.

Chen Guang said, "The effects at this venue are awesome!"

Fan Wenli said, "The choice of song was a good one too."

...

Before this, some people were still worried that Zhang Ye would only perform his old songs at the concert.

But now, everyone was relieved after this opener.

Zhang Ye was still that Zhang Ye they knew!

Chapter 1493: Zhang Ye's 'Eternal Summer'!

The atmosphere was one of excitement!

With "Beijing, Beijing," the crowd was pumped!

This was the result of two months of planning and preparation by Zhang Ye's Studio. All the audio and lighting equipment at the venue were either rented, borrowed, or bought for use in the concert.

Professional teams were then brought in to design and set up the venue with the best equipment available in China, or even in the whole of Asia. For the past two months, this was the only thing they did to turn Asia's largest concert venue into a stunning musical stage!

Lighting!

Sound effects!

It was like a fantasy!

This was Zhang Ye's final performance stage.

He was very satisfied with it.

"Zhang Ye!"

"Zhang Ye!"

"Zhang Ye!"

"Zhang Ye!"

The crowd started shouting his name again!

Zhang Ye raised his microphone and looked at the people in the audience. He scanned around him in all directions. Surrounding him was a sea of people. "Thank you, thank you. Thank you for coming to my 'Final Concert'!"

When the audience heard that, they laughed!

"Hahaha."

"Final?"

"This is the first concert you're holding."

"You're speaking like you won't be coming back in the future!"

"If you really don't come back, the entire Asian entertainment circle will celebrate wildly for three whole days and nights by setting off firecrackers!"

"Hahahahaha!"

Everyone laughed.

Zhang Ye also laughed. "By convention, I should be giving an opening speech for the concert. All of you know that I can speak quite well. I've hosted so many shows that I don't even know how many there were. I have given so many speeches on countless occasions that I've lost count of them. But before coming up onstage, my mind was a total blank. I didn't know what to say, because I'm beginning to feel more and more unqualified to speak."

The audience quieted as they listened silently.

Zhang Ye said, "I'm not a qualified artist; you guys know that. You can mention any artist out there, and they should be more qualified than I am. The things that I represent are generally not positive, which is why a lot of people dislike me and criticize me for my actions. I can accept all of that, because I've never done what was expected of me as a public figure. Sometimes when I think about it, I feel quite guilty too."

Ha Qiqi looked at the stage.

Zhang Zuo kept his eyes on Zhang Ye.

The studio's staff were all silent.

Zhang Ye said, "I've also thought about it these past few years. Tolerance, acceptance, civility, grace, and some of the better values and morals. It would have been better if I had conveyed such an image to the people. Then, perhaps, my popularity would be better as a result, and I would also have more friends surrounding me. I wouldn't have fallen short of my family's expectations either. When my family mentioned my name, they would have done so with more pride. When you all talk about me, it would be with more appreciation. When the media reports about me, it would be with more praise—I would really like to experience how that feels." He smiled and closed his eyes, thinking for about three seconds, then opened his eyes again with a smile. "That would definitely be a very good feeling. Yes, it is definitely a good one."

Then, Zhang Ye continued, "But—"

But?

But what?

But what?

The audience looked at him.

Everyone watching the livestream was watching him. They also realized that something a little different with Zhang Ye today!

At this moment, the music played.

Zhang Ye smiled for a brief second. Yes, that would be a really great life to live. In the image that came to his mind, Zhang Ye would not be holding this final concert of his, nor would he have made that decision to give up everything. He would definitely have had a good life with Old Wu, witnessed the birth of his child, accompanied it as it grew up, celebrated its first birthday, second birthday, and third birthday. Whenever the child's teachers mentioned Zhang Ye, they would say that he was a great celebrity, and the child's classmates would all be envious of it for having such a cultured and refined father. The child would also proudly introduce Zhang Ye as its father during the parent-teacher conferences to its classmates. The greatest father in the world—it was a very beautiful scene, so beautiful that it kept lingering in Zhang Ye's mind.

But.

He did not regret it.

He owed his family.

He owed his child.

If he could apologize, he would say sorry to Old Wu a 1,000 times. He would say sorry to his child 10,000 times!

But—he did not regret it!

The Korean hackers?

The Japanese hotel?

He would take them on each time they came!

He would beat them up twice if they came twice!

He would send them packing ten times if they came ten times!

He would never regret his actions!

There would forever be no room for negotiation on such matters!

Zhang Ye gently brought the microphone up ¹.

“I proudly destroy

“the mediocrity I hate.

“Before remembering those were my favorites.

“Let summer have its fun,

“take the brutal future,

“And toss it light-years away.

“But for now—

“Let go of the rules, indulge in love.

“Throw caution to the wind and forget about the future.”

Zhang Ye looked at everyone. He had no hesitations or any regrets.

“I won’t veer off.

“I won’t veer off.

“I won’t veer off.

“I won’t veer off.”

The audience was stunned!

All of the viewers watching the livestream were also stunned!

In the blink of an eye, countless people were extremely pumped up!

...

At Zhang Ye’s parents’ house.

His mother said, “Little Ye, he’s—”

His father said, “What happened to him?”

...

At Old Wu's parents' house.

Wu Changhe asked, "What's with Little Ye?"

Li Qinqin asked, "What does he mean by all that?"

Wu Changhe said, "Is something the matter? Has the kid gone insane again?"

But Wu Zeqing just smiled without answering her parents. She said to herself, "That's my husband!"

...

The venue was pumping with excitement!

Screams and cheers were mixed into the singing!

Zhang Ye's live singing was also getting louder and louder as though he was going to turn the entire venue upside down!

"I want to go crazy, I want to love!

"Means I want to go crazy, I want to love!

"Thousands of MP3s!"

"Thousands of crazy loves!

"Cannot extinguish this tiny loneliness!

"I want to go crazy, I want to love!

"Means I want to go crazy, I want to love!

"A wild party in the summer brings us here to light-years away!

"Is growing up the decay that must happen to us all?

"Let go of the rules, indulge in love!

"Throw caution to the wind and forget about the future!"

Standing at center stage.

Standing in a venue that held a 100,000 people!

Zhang Ye raised his microphone up and clutched his shirt at his chest. He let out a loud howl:

"I won't veer off!

"I won't veer off!

"I won't veer off!

"I won't veer offffffff!"

What a good “won’t veer off”!

What a good “I won’t veer off”!

In this moment, all of the audience members went crazy!

In this moment, all of them stood up!

Some of them started crying!

Some of them frantically waved their arms about!

Some of them followed Zhang Ye’s lead and howled along to the singing!

That “but” statement that Zhang Ye did not finish saying had been answered by this song. Zhang Ye was still that Zhang Ye they knew. He would always be!

Zhang Ye was right; he wasn’t a qualified artist. Whether it was in speech, in action, his character, or his résumé, he wasn’t a good artist no matter how you looked at it!

They knew that!

Everyone knew that!

But—

They still liked him all the same!

They did not know why either; they just liked him!

Chapter 1494: An email from Hacker 2!

At night.

The Internet Surveillance Bureau.

Zhang Ye’s singing was ringing out from the livestream playing in the office. The staff of the Internet Surveillance Bureau who were working overtime and quite a few others were watching the livestream of Zhang Ye’s “The Final Concert.”

“This is awesome!”

“I like him so much!”

“Teacher Zhang has always been my idol.”

“It’s a pity that Fang Xiaoshui and the others can’t watch this.”

“Our comrades of the First Department are so unlucky.”

“They still haven’t found out who 2 is?”

“All 16 of them have been investigated, including Director Dong, but it doesn’t seem to be any of them.”

“Hai, I wonder how more many days we’ll have to work overtime like this. It’s a good thing we have Teacher Zhang’s concert to watch tonight and kill our boredom.”

Out of the blue, an alert sounded on the computer.

It was the sound of a new, incoming email.

“Eh, an email?”

“What email?”

“I don’t know. This account shouldn’t have been activated yet?”

“Is it an internal inbox?”

“It’s an internal backup inbox.”

“Who sent this out on accident?”

“Let me have a look at it first.”

But the moment they checked, all of them got a shock!

“Hurry, hurry, go get someone!”

“Get the leaders!”

“Something big has happened!”

“Yeah, it’s an email from Hacker 2!”

“This is bad, it’s a virus!”

“No, it doesn’t look like it!”

“Quick, get someone!”

The entire Internet Surveillance Bureau descended into chaos at once!

In the isolation room.

The atmosphere inside was very gloomy.

Meng Yi said, “The concert has already started!”

Fang Xiaoshui cried out, “I can’t get to watch my Teacher Zhang anymore!”

A female employee said, “I wonder how many songs he’s already sung.”

“Why are you guys still going on about Teacher Zhang at a time like this?” An employee said, “We can’t even save our skin, and we haven’t been home in three days already.”

At this moment, some action was taking place outside the room.

Director Dong was startled. “What’s happening?”

The others turned to the gate. From the light seeping in through the gap under the door, they could see that people were running back and forth. One, five, ten people, it felt like it was very chaotic out there.

After some ten minutes.

The door opened and a leader came into the room with a solemn face. "Old Dong, come over here."

Director Dong immediately stood up. "What exactly is happening?"

The leader said something shocking. "2 sent us an email."

Everyone was dumbfounded. "What?"

2?

He's appeared?

The group of people hurriedly went outside and had a look around. Almost everyone from the Internet Surveillance Bureau had come back, and the entire office was crowded with scores of people.

The director of the Second Department shouted, "Old Dong, get over here!"

Director Dong went up to him. "Old Bai, what's the situation?"

The Second Department's director hurriedly said, "Those years ago, it was you guys who followed up on the case of the Panda Burning Incense virus, right? Come and have a look at this."

On the computer screen was a file. It was a computer virus file the internal software had flagged.

Director Dong got scared. But upon clicking it open to have a look, he was stunned. "Step aside." He nudged Director Bai of the Second Department aside and sat down in his spot. Then he went through the document line by line. Fang Xiaoshui, Meng Yi, and the others also gathered around. When they saw it, they were all stunned.

Soon after, Director Dong gasped and said, "This is the source code of the Panda Burning Incense virus!"

That leader said, "Can you confirm that?"

Director Dong nodded. "I'm a 100% sure."

Fang Xiaoshui said in a dumbfounded manner, "How did we get our hands on it? Such source codes should only be available to the creator."

The Third Department's director gave a wry smile. "It was sent to us by 2 himself. There's another document attached that was named CIH. We analyzed it and think that it might be the latest computer virus that wreaked havoc. Right now, we have the source codes of both of the most destructive computer viruses known to us in the world."

Everyone fell silent.

Then they shivered in fear.

Fang Xiaoshui could not understand what was going on. She said, "What is 2 thinking?"

Meng Yi said, "Why did he send us the source codes?"

The Second Department's director pointed at the computer. "Come and see this."

The email from 2 had a lot of information in it. Other than the Panda Burning Incense and CIH viruses' source codes, 2 also left a message for them. This was what it said: "I know that you're all looking for me. But the direction of your investigations on the suspects has been wrong from the very start. I don't have any intention of hiding, nor will I hide. I will be responsible for what I did, so don't make things difficult for the comrades of the First Department. You all should realize that 2 cannot be amongst them if you gave the matter some thought. Does any of you know what the name, '2,' represents? If you know, then come and get me. You will know where to find me."

What was the meaning of this?

A lot of people did not understand.

Director Dong was very confused as well. "The direction of our investigations was wrong?"

The Third Department's director asked, "What do you all make of this message?"

Fang Xiaoshui said, "It just means that none of us are 2, so can we go home yet?"

Meng Yi said excitedly, "Yes, that's exactly what it means."

The leader was speechless.

As was everyone else.

Director Dong mumbled to himself, "What does '2' represent?"

The Second Department's director said, "We don't know either, that's why we asked you all to come over."

A staff of the Third Department said, "What does he mean by saying that we know where to find him?"

A female staff of the Second Department said, "Yeah, how could we possibly know where he is at?"

2?

2?

A lot of people became lost in thought. They put out their hands and made twos with their fingers.

What did it mean?

What could a single number represent?

At this time, a director trotted into the office. He had rushed back after being informed about the matter. "Eh? Did you all catch 2 already? That's great! How did he get captured?"

Director Dong looked at him. "Who told you that we've captured him?"

That director was taken aback and pointed at them. "Then why did you all make a victory sign?"

Director Dong said in a speechless manner, "We were just wondering what '2' represents.... Wait, what did you say?" He was stunned. "What did you just say?"

That director stretched out two fingers in confusion. "Isn't this a victory sign, like 'yeah'?"

When he said that, the entire office fell silent!

2?

Victory?

Yeah?

Ye?!

Fan Yingyun's expression changed!

Fang Xiaoshui said dumbfoundedly, "This—"

The leader was also stunned. He said loudly, "Old Dong, when was Teacher Zhang attached to your department?"

Director Dong said in shock, "It was during the time of the Sino-Korean Hacker War!"

The leader said angrily, "Then why didn't you mention it before?"

Director Dong said in a confused state of mind, "But no one asked us. What we were asked was who had served with the First Department during that period, and Teacher Zhang was not part of our department at all. Furthermore, I don't think he's that skilled with the computer, and his English is very bad too. We didn't even think in that direction!"

Meng Yi slapped his forehead. "My God!"

The Second Department's director said, "So that's what he meant when he said we'd know where to find him!"

The Olympic Stadium!

The livestream that was being broadcast nationwide!

All of the country's citizens knew where Zhang Ye was at this moment!

2 was Zhang Ye?

How could that be possible!

Could they have gotten it wrong?

Fang Xiaoshui started panicking. "Th-Then what do we do now?"

Meng Yi said, "Teacher Zhang is still in the middle of holding his concert!"

No one knew what to do!

Because this matter had blown up far greater than they expected!

It was so major that they didn't know how to handle it!

They immediately informed the higher-ups. When the higher-ups saw it, they were also dumbfounded. And then, they hurriedly informed the higher-ups above them. This was escalated to further and further up the chain!

The Internet Surveillance Bureau was buzzing with activity!

One by one, cars started arriving!

One by one, the executives came down personally!

A lot of people could not believe this news. They all had to see the evidence for themselves!

One of the executives shouted at the group of Internet Surveillance Bureau's leaders immediately upon arrival, "Are you kidding me?" He pointed at the nearby computer currently showing Zhang Ye's concert. "This is a nationwide livestream, he's a Peking University professor, a Media College professor, the Asian philanthropic ambassador, a famous host, a world-class mathematician, a literary scholar, a famous author, a famous calligraphy master, the husband of the SARFT's Chief Wu, and you're telling me that you want to apply for an arrest warrant for him? You're telling me that Zhang Ye is that legendary hacker, 2? Do you all know how serious the consequences will be if we arrest the wrong person? Don't talk about you all taking responsibility for it, no one will be able to take responsibility for it! Not even me!"

Everyone knew just how earth-shattering this news was!

If the evidence were found to be true, then this would be the biggest news story to ever break in the history of the entertainment circle!

Chapter 1495: Let me run wild on this stage!

At the concert venue.

One song!

Three songs!

Five songs!

...

"I'm ugly.

"but I am so tender.

"Cold on the outside, passionate inside.

"That's who I am!"

...

"Tonight, I saw snow drift through the cold sky

“With a cooled off heart, I drifted far away.

“Chasing you in the storm.

“Can’t tell shadows apart in the fog.

“You and I in these vast horizons.

“Can we change?”

...

“I planted a seed in the earth.

“And it finally bore fruit.

“Today is a glorious day.”

...

The concert was already halfway through.

Zhang Ye had performed over a dozen songs. There was a mixture of new songs and old songs. As he was too focused and did not have any guest artists supporting him, Zhang Ye had stayed on the stage by himself so far. His voice was already starting to show strain and had turned hoarse under the continuous high-intensity singing.

He finished performing another song.

The elevator platform beneath Zhang Ye’s feet descended.

The costume designer and makeup artist immediately gathered around him.

Little Wang quickly twisted open a bottle of water. “Hurry up and have a sip!”

Zhang Ye took it from her and drank from it.

Ha Qiqi said worriedly, “Please rest for a while.”

Zhang Ye shook his head.

“It will be too tiring if you go on like this,” Zhang Zuo added.

Zhang Ye smiled. “I can still hold up.”

The costume crew suddenly said, “The hat? Where is the hat?”

Little Zhou said, “Ah? It was still here a moment ago.”

The makeup artist was holding the makeup kit and saying, “Touch up the makeup first!”

It wasn’t very coordinated, and the costume change still wasn’t finished after half a minute.

The continued shouting from the venue could be heard from below the stage.

“Zhang Ye!”

“Zhang Ye!”

“Zhang Ye!”

Zhang Ye looked at Ha Qiqi and the others. “I’m going back up.”

Ha Qiqi was taken aback. “Don’t, the costume change and makeup aren’t done yet!”

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “There’s no need for that, I’ll just go on like this.”

Zhang Zuo said anxiously, “But—”

Before he could finish speaking, Zhang Ye had already cut him off by saying, “Bring me up!”

Everyone rushed to follow his orders.

Little Wang asked in a whisper, “Why is Director Zhang in such a hurry?”

Ha Qiqi said, “I don’t know.”

Zhang Zuo wondered for a moment and recalled something. “Have you all realized something? Director Zhang seems to be very anxious in everything that he does these days. It’s like there’s something chasing after him.”

Wu Yi said, “I’ve felt that too.”

The makeup artist was anxious but said helplessly, “He still shouldn’t just leave his makeup half-done like that. Teacher Zhang is an Asian superstar, and for a celebrity, their image should be of the utmost importance. Who does something like during their own concert?”

Makeup?

Outfit?

Zhang Ye did not need any of those anymore because he was out of time. The Internet Surveillance Bureau should have received the email he scheduled to be sent out. The people over there should have guessed the true identity of 2 by now. Zhang Ye knew that his concert could be interrupted at any moment and was something that he couldn’t stop. Whatever had to come would still come, so he wanted to sing. He wanted to use this last bit of time to sing as many songs as he could. He wanted to continue singing all the way until the last moment.

The elevator platform was raised.

Zhang Ye returned to center stage.

The fans in the venue immediately screamed. Then everyone realized that something was wrong. The viewers who were watching the livestream also realized this.

“Eh?”

“Why is he still wearing that same outfit?”

“He didn’t change it?”

“His makeup wasn’t touched up either?”

“What’s going on? Why did he come back in such a hurry?”

The music started.

Zhang Ye was smiling.

Come on!

Let’s sing!

As long as you all want to hear it, I will keep singing for you!

Suddenly, Zhang Ye behaved in a way that made everyone scream senselessly. In the midst of hard rock accompaniment, he took off his top and flung it aside!

He did not need any makeup!

He did not need any costumes either!

He only wanted to sing!

He wanted to run wild on this final stage of his!

Zhang Ye raised his microphone and sang hoarsely ¹ .

“Stripped to the waist, I greet the blustering snow!

“Running down the road from the hospital I escaped!

“Don’t try to stop me, I don’t want any clothes either!

“Because my sickness is that I have no emotions!”

At this moment, everyone’s blood surged and screams exploded!

Zhang Ye roared.

“Give me a bit of flesh! Give me a bit of blood!

“Replace my iron will and steely resolve!

“Please let me cry, please let me laugh!

“Please let me run wild on this staaaaage!”

The fans in the audience were howling like crazy.

“It’s rock ‘n’ roll!”

“Zhang Ye!”

“Zhang Ye!”

“This is so awesome!”

“This is exhilarating!”

“This is what a fucking concert should be like!”

“Ahhhh!”

“What a great feeling!”

Everyone stood up!

Everyone followed along and screamed as one!

Zhang Ye sang loudly.

“I’m not wearing any clothes or any shoes!

“Yet can’t feel the force and intensity of the nor’wester!

“I don’t know if I’m walking or running!

“Because my sickness is that I have no emotions!”

He pointed diagonally upward.

“Give me a little stimulation, my good doctor!”

The audience shouted, “Oh!”

“Give me a little love, my sexy nurse!”

The audience shouted, “Oh!”

“Please let me cry, please let me laugh!

“Please let me run wild on this stage!

“Yee, yeah! Yee, yeah!

“Because my sickness is that I have no emotions!

“Yee, yeah! Yee, yeah!

“Please let me run wild on this staaaaage!”

The people backstage were really enjoying this performance!

The audience at the venue was really enjoying this performance!

The viewers watching the livestream were also really enjoying this performance!

They had not seen Zhang Ye sing like this in a very long time. They had not seen Zhang Ye act so wildly in a very long time. But it was very satisfying. Their bodies were all surging with excitement!

Zhang Ye shouted to the audience, “Have you heard enough?”

Everyone shouted together, “Not! Yet!”

Zhang Ye laughed loudly, "Then let's do it again!"

The audience shouted, "Alllllright!"

Zhang Ye said, "Everyone, sing it with me!"

"Yee, yeah! Yee, yeah!"

"Because my sickness is that I have no emotions!"

"Yee, yeah! Yee, yeah!"

"Please let me run wild on this staaaaage!"

"Yee, yeah! Yee, yeah!"

"Because my sickness is that I have no emotions!"

"Yee, yeah! Yee, yeah!"

"Please let me run wild on this staaaaage!"

Once!

Five times!

Ten times!

Zhang Ye's voice went hoarse!

The audience's voice also went hoarse!

This was an Olympic venue that could hold a 100,000 people! The entire venue was singing with Zhang Ye and shouting with him. This was such a spectacular scene. The entire concert venue felt like it was about to explode with every voice thundering. This was a scene that no one had ever witnessed before!

This was one of Cui Jian's songs.

"Wild in the Snow"!

The song had its lyrics changed by Zhang Ye and was performed in this world for the first time. He had also never sung a song in such a way before. Those regrets, that unwillingness to part, the negative emotions he had, all that seemed to have disappeared in an instant. He raised the microphone and said, "I prepared fifty songs for today. I will sing however many songs you all want to hear. I will sing whatever songs you want to listen to! Do you want to listen to 'The Internationale'?"

The audience roared, "Yeeeeeeeeeees!"

Zhang Ye laughed loudly. "Let's sing it together!"

"Arise! ye pris'ners of starvation!"

"Arise! ye wretched of the Earth!"

The concert was finally reaching a climax!

Chapter 1496: The legendary hacker's true identity is revealed!

30 minutes!

1 hour!

2 hours!

The concert had already gone past its closing time. But at center stage, Zhang Ye was still holding his microphone and howling into it. One by one, the next song's music came on immediately after he finished singing the previous song. There were no costume changes, no guest appearances, and no breaks. Not even a single minute of them!

Zhang Ye went crazy with his singing!

Below stage, the fans went crazy from screaming!

The audience viewing the livestream went crazy from watching!

If they had to describe it, 99% of people would say: This was a crazy concert!

Everyone sang together!

Everyone went crazy together!

Every screamed together!

Even the audience members' voices went hoarse in the end!

Whenever a song ended, screams would immediately come from the audience.

"Another one!"

"Sing us another one!"

They were all afraid that Zhang Ye would announce that the concert was over!

They hadn't heard enough!

It wouldn't be enough no matter how many songs they listened to!

Zhang Ye laughed heartily, "Alright! Another one!"

The music played again!

The fans were all cheering!

...

At Old Wu's parents' house.

Li Qinqin said worriedly, "Why is he still singing?"

Wu Changhe scoffed, "That rascal will surely die from exhaustion!"

...

Spring Garden's studio.

Amy said dumbfoundedly, "He's still singing?"

Xiaodong said, "How many songs does Teacher Zhang intend to sing?"

Li Xiaoxian said, "I've counted. He's already broken the record."

...

At Old Rao's house.

Chenchen asked, "Aunt, what is with Zhang Ye?"

Rao Aimin said with some suspicion, "This kid is not behaving normally today."

...

Backstage.

Ha Qiqi was panicking. "We have to get Director Zhang off the stage!"

Zhang Zuo gave a bitter laugh. "It's not like you're unaware of Director Zhang's temper."

Little Wang said, "Yeah, no one can persuade him to get off the stage."

"His voice has already gone hoarse. How can we let him go on like this!" Ha Qiqi said, stomping her feet in frustration.

...

At the venue.

Quite a few fans were also feeling sorry for Zhang Ye.

"That's enough!"

"Teacher Zhang, that's enough!"

"You can continue singing in the future. Rest for now!"

"Right, there are still a lot of chances in the future. Even if we didn't get enough of listening to your songs, we can still wait for your next concert!"

On the stage.

The makeup on Zhang Ye's face was a mess. To sing this many songs continuously, even an ironman would find it unbearable. The audience sitting in the front row could clearly see the sweat beads on Zhang Ye's forehead dripping down. And with the heat from the strong spotlights, even those sitting further away could see how messy Zhang Ye's makeup had become. Without any rest, without touching up any makeup, there had never been a celebrity who looked so miserable at a concert. It was only Zhang Ye who was like this!

Why?

What on earth had happened?

Did he want to finish singing all of the songs today?

Couldn't he do that another time?

Perhaps only Zhang Ye himself knew that he might not have the chance to do so in the future. He would also have liked to sing to everyone all the songs that he wished to sing, but there was really no more time left! So it didn't matter even if his voice had gone hoarse, nor did it matter that his makeup was a mess. He didn't care about any of that anymore!

All of a sudden, a rock and roll melody played!

Zhang Ye closed his eyes ¹.

"If there's a tomorrow!

"How would you mask or make up your face?

"If there's no tomorrow,

"How do you say goodbye?"

Everyone was stunned!

Tomorrow?

Goodbye?

What did he mean by that?

Zhang Ye sang.

"If you see my hesitation,

"Don't you want to also ask me:

"Exactly how many things haven't you done

"If there's a tomorrow?"

"If I can really get another tomorrow,

"I might finish singing all of my songs.

"Maybe everything might vanish away

"If there's no tomorrow."

At this moment, even a fool could sense that something was wrong!

If there's no tomorrow?

Why wouldn't there be a tomorrow?

What had happened?

Just what on earth had happened?

Zhang Ye sang loudly.

“If there’s a tomorrow!

“How would you mask or make up your face?

“If there’s no tomorrow!

“How do you say goodbye?”

Suddenly, the emergency exit door at Zone A was opened, and over a dozen police officers filed into the stadium.

Followed by the one at Zone B.

Then Zone C.

Then at another two of the exits used by the staff as well.

A dozen exits were filled with police officers.

Director Dong, Fan Yingyun, Fang Xiaoshui, Meng Yi, and the others were also part of the groups.

The concert staff did not realize anything was wrong at the beginning.

Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the rest received this news very quickly before looking in dumbfoundedness at several of the exits.

Little Wang said in a panic, “What’s going on?”

Little Zhou said, “Why are the police here?”

Ha Qiqi’s heart skipped a beat as a sense of unease suddenly built up.

...

At the venue.

The audience also gradually realized it.

“Why are there so many police officers?”

“What are they here for?”

“Is there a big case going on?”

“What big case could there be at this place?”

...

On the livestream.

When the camera swept across, a lot of people also realized it.

“The police?”

“What’s up?”

“Heavens, why are there so many police officers there?”

“There are also armed police officers?”

“They’re blocking off all of the exits?”

“Who are they here to arrest?”

...

Back at home.

“The police?”

“Why are they heading towards the stage?”

His mother was stunned.

His father was becoming anxious.

...

At Old Yao’s house.

Yao Jiancai jumped to his feet.

Yao Mi asked anxiously, “Wh-What’s going on?”

...

At Old Wu’s parents’ house.

Li Qinqin grabbed her daughter. “What on earth is happening?”

Wu Zeqing did not say a word.

Wu Changhe shouted, “Quickly tell us! What the heck is happening there?”

...

Onstage.

He had just finished performing “If There’s a Tomorrow.”

Then Zhang Ye also saw a few of his old friends coming over from afar. He smiled and looked up into the night sky, then took another look at the densely packed audience at the venue. His grin got even wider. He raised his microphone and said, “Tonight was such a good night. I’ve never sung like this before and have never felt so good and satisfied before. Although there are still a lot of things I would like to say,

although there are still a lot of things I have yet to do, thank you for coming to my concert. Thank you for accompanying me while I sang.”

Many of the audience members stood up!

The people watching the livestream were stunned!

Over a 100 million people around the country had their eyes on him at this moment. They all knew that something had happened, and it was a major event.

After a pause, Zhang Ye smiled and said, “I’ve actually been thinking in recent days how I should say ‘goodbye’ to everyone. Should I do it with a smile and casually say it? Or should I shout it with a serious face? Or perhaps I can be a little artistic and do it with a poem? Until now, I still hadn’t thought of how I should say it. I’ve come to realize that I’m unable to say this ‘goodbye’ to everyone—so let’s just leave it like that. This is pretty good too.”

Goodbye?

Why goodbye?!

At this moment, the ringtones of cell phones could be heard!

There were calls!

There were texts!

Beep, beep, beep!

Ring, ring, ring!

A girl looked at her cell phone in shock!

A young man was reading the news on his cell phone in bewilderment!

“Hurry! Check the news!”

“What’s the matter?”

“Look it up!”

“It’s an arrest warrant!”

“Teacher Zhang! He’s...he’s—”

The entire venue blew up!

The outside world also descended into chaos!

All across the country, no one could believe what they had just seen. This was because it was too shocking! How could this be possible? How could it be Teacher Zhang?!

Chapter 1497: Zhang Ye’s final song!

The venue went quiet!

The entire country fell silent!

This was such a bombshell!

This was news enough to shock the entire world!

The legendary Hacker 2, the world's best hacker, the creator of the Panda Burning Incense virus, and the creator of the CIH virus, had actually been standing in front of their eyes all this time?!

"Impossible!"

"Why is it him?"

"How could it possibly be him!"

"Zhang Ye is Hacker 2?"

"Are you fucking kidding me?"

"Teacher Zhang is the world's best hacker?"

"Based on what are they arresting him!"

"No, please don't!"

"Damn! Who dares touch Teacher Zhang? Try it!"

"Right, who dares touch Zhang Ye!"

Instantly, the entire venue exploded!

...

Back at home.

His mother was stunned!

His father blanched!

...

At an event's venue.

Chen Guang's eyes reddened as he looked at his cell phone!

Fan Wenli was shouting loudly beside him!

...

Spring Garden's studio.

Amy fell to the floor and sat down!

Li Xiaoxian had a look of panic on her face!

...

Backstage.

Little Wang yelled!

Ha Qiqi clenched her fists tightly!

Zhang Zuo held his phone in a daze!

...

At Old Rao's house.

Yang Shu was dumbfounded!

Chenchen was getting anxious!

...

At Old Wu's parents' house.

Li Qinqin grabbed her daughter and cried out!

Wu Changhe loudly questioned the meaning of this!

But Wu Zeqing still did not utter a word.

...

At the venue.

In the rest of the world.

His family.

His friends.

Everyone was caught in a state of shock!

Why did Zhang Ye invite Spring Garden to be his guests at the concert at first and then cancel it midway? Why did Zhang Ye give money to Yang Shu to start a martial arts training hall and give out bonuses to his staff in advance like he was making arrangements in case something were to happen to him? Why did Zhang Ye resign from his roles at Peking University and Media College, as well as his role as the Asian philanthropic ambassador? Why did Zhang Ye place so much emphasis on this concert and even called it "The Final Concert"? Why did Zhang Ye keep singing on stage like he had gone crazy, not even wasting any time on changing his outfit or touching up his makeup? What did that "I'm won't veer off" really mean? What did that song, "If There's a Tomorrow," really mean?

They finally understood all of it now!

They finally understood everything that had been going on!

Zhang Ye had made arrangements for everything since some time ago!

He was going to leave!

He already knew that!

A young man shouted, "Teacher Zhang, don't go!"

A teenage girl nearly collapsed. "Don't go! Don't go!"

A young girl shouted, "I want to listen to you sing! We want to listen to you sing for the rest of our lives!"

What would an entertainment circle without Zhang Ye look like? They simply could not imagine that!

Some people were shouting.

Some were crying.

Seeing this scene, Zhang Ye started welling up. The stage was the place he loved the most. His fans were the people he liked the most. And then, there was the night sky, in which the stars looked especially brilliant tonight. Thank you, everyone, thank you. Years later, I wonder if you all will still think of me and remember this night? However, I will never forget this night for the rest of my life because I have you accompanying me. You've shouted with me and sung along!

Then let's have one more song.

Let's have one more final song.

He jerked his microphone up to his lips and slowly sang in a cappella.

"I gently look back on the nights we belonged to each other.

"You are still the rosy, bright sun that warmed my heart.

"I hope you can understand and forgive me if I shed silly tears.

"The road ahead may be lonely and long after parting with you tonight."

Everyone looked at the stage!

Everyone watched Zhang Ye on the livestream!

Fan Yingyun, who was at the venue, was clenching her fists so hard that her fingernails were digging into her flesh.

Fang Xiaoshui was the first one to break down. The moment the singing started, she sobbed, "Teacher Zhang!"

In front, a police officer was thinking of stepping up onto the stage. He already had his handcuffs out in preparation to make the arrest.

But Fan Yingyun grabbed hold of him and stared icily at him.

The police officer was startled. "Officer Fan?"

Fan Yingyun said, "Let Teacher Zhang finish singing the song!"

Director Dong also said coldly, "Let Teacher Zhang finish singing!"

Zhang Ye smiled and sang on.

"Suddenly, I have so much I want to say.

"Regrettably, we'll soon be apart.

"So I'll treasure this moment deep inside me."

The moon was very round.

The stars were very bright.

Under the night sky, Zhang Ye was singing loudly.

"Even if someday thousands of romances

"get blown into my path and land!

"Even if someday thousands of stars

"shine brighter than the moon tonight!

"They won't compare to this evening's beauty!

"Nor would I enjoy them any more!

"Ah! 'Cause you are singing with me tonight!"

Those lyrics were lashing out ruthlessly at everyone's hearts. It hit them so hard that their faces were strewn with tears!

Backstage.

Ha Qiqi said, "Play the music!"

Little Wang cried and said, "But Director Zhang, he's—"

Ha Qiqi repeated in an even louder voice, "Play the music!"

The music played.

A mournful melody drifted out and filled the Olympic Stadium.

Zhang Ye smiled and looked at everyone in the audience.

"As our separation nears, I realize the allure of grief.

"All because of you, I made many lasting memories.

"When and where can we meet again, just like tonight?

"Let's gaze into each other's eyes, and see where our mutual feelings stand.

"When the raindrops tap on your windows,

“When the wind blows your thoughts into chaos.

“Can you take the time to remember my familiar face?”

One!

Ten!

A 100!

A 1,000!

A lot of people were covering their mouths and crying!

At this moment, they remembered a lot of things.

In the past, Zhang Ye had rushed to the hospital to prevent a fan from attempting suicide by forking out a sum of money and giving his support, saving her from certain death. Back then, it was Zhang Ye who came forward to stand up for a Chinese fan when she was knocked over by Lee Anson. Back then, Zhang Ye’s Talk Show had made countless people in the country laugh hard at their computers. When the Sino-Korean Hacker War happened, Zhang Ye caused a great stir in the country with his “whoever offends the mighty nation of China, however distant, shall be destroyed.” And those songs Zhang Ye sang in the King of Masked Singers had astonished many people as well.

He had given them laughter.

He had forced them to cry.

His name was Zhang Ye.

He looked very ordinary.

But this was a face they could never forget!

They would never forget it for the rest of their lives!

Zhang Ye sang loudly.

“Even if someday thousands of romances

“get blown into my path and land!

“Even if someday thousands of stars

“shine brighter than the moon tonight!

“They still won’t compare to this evening’s beauty!

“Nor would I enjoy them any more!

“Ah! ‘Cause you are singing with me tonight!”

Once!

Twice!

Thrice!

Suddenly, a little girl in the audience cried and sang along with him. "Even if someday thousands of romances!"

A young man loudly sang, "Get blown into my path and land!"

A middle-aged woman wiped away her tears. "Even if someday thousands of stars!"

A teenage girl yelled, "Shine brighter than the moon tonight!"

Some people did not know how to sing it!

Some people were going off-key!

Some people who did not know Cantonese shouted along in Mandarin!

Everyone joined in the singing!

The nearly 100,000-strong crowd at the venue sang loudly with Zhang Ye.

"They still won't compare to this evening's beauty!

"Nor would I enjoy them any more!

"Ah! 'Cause you are singing with me tonight!"

It was moving!

There were tears!

There was unwillingness!

There was reluctance!

All of those feelings were present within this song!

Everyone was straining their voices to sing.

"They still won't compare to this evening's beauty!

"Nor would I enjoy them any more!

"Ah! 'Cause you are singing with me toniiiiight!"

While the music still played, Zhang Ye broke into a smile. "This song is called 'Thousands of Songs,' and I will only sing it this once in my lifetime. Thank you, I'll be going then."

A song.

A concert.

And a simple "I'll be going then."

—This was Zhang Ye's farewell.

Chapter 1498: Zhang Ye reaches the summit of Asia!

The music stopped.

The livestream was cut off.

The concert was over.

Zhang Ye felt very relaxed as he said with a smile to Director Dong and the others, "Let's go."

A police officer produced an arrest warrant. It did not bear the seal of the district or city's public security bureaus, but instead bore the impressive stamp of the Ministry of Public Security. "Zhang Ye, we are officially informing you that we are starting formal investigations into you as a suspect. Come with us," he said as took out handcuffs.

Fan Yingyun shouted, "Who dares to handcuff Teacher Zhang!"

Meng Yi, Fang Xiaoshui, and the others from the First Department glared daggers at him!

The police officer said, "Officer Fan, we're just going by routine, you—"

Director Dong spoke at this time. "Put away your handcuffs!"

That police officer hesitated for a moment before stowing his handcuffs.

Then Director Dong walked up to Zhang Ye with a complicated expression. "Teacher Zhang, we were not supposed to handle your arrest this time. But as you've worked with us at the First Department before, that makes us fellow colleagues and comrades. I didn't think you would want it to be anyone else in the end, so I requested permission from the leaders for us to be here."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Thank you."

They left the venue.

And got into the police vehicle.

Then Zhang Ye left.

He left in a carefree and dashing manner.

This concert was destined to go down in history because no one had ever held a concert at such a large venue before, nor had any celebrity ever bid farewell in such a way before. This was who Zhang Ye was. Even if he were going to leave, he would go out with a bang. Even if the curtains had to fall, he would bow out in a soul-stirring manner!

...

At this moment.

The outside world was in an uproar!

All of Asia blew up!

Everything had happened so suddenly that no one was prepared for it. Zhang Ye's family and friends, his studio, the Chinese entertainment industry, and all of the Asian media outlets were in chaos at this moment. Some people were even staring blankly at their monitors on which the livestream had been disconnected, unable to accept the news they had just found out about. This was the biggest concert to happen in Asia. This was supposed to be Zhang Ye's most glorious moment! A lot of people could not accept this!

"Zhang Ye gets arrested by the police!"

"Hacker 2's true identity!"

"Shocking! Zhang Ye turns out to be the hacker with the highest bounty in the world!"

"The biggest 'earthquake' in the history of the Asian entertainment circle!"

"Police disclosure: Zhang Ye turned himself in!"

"Lawyer analysis: Zhang Ye could face many years of jail time!"

...

On Weibo.

"He's about to become a father!"

"Based on what are they arresting him!"

"Back then, the Korean hackers got what they deserved!"

"Release him!"

"Release him!"

"Let's start a petition!"

"Yeah! I'll write the petition!"

"Count me in!"

...

The Japanese Internet was in an uproar!

"Zhang Ye?"

"Hacker 2?"

"So it was him?"

"W-Wasn't he the one who made those comics?"

"Isn't he a host?"

...

At Shōnen Publishing.

“Oh my god, Hacker 2 is him!”

“How does he know everything!”

“Just what kind of a person is this fellow, really?!”

“After the comics were castrated, he went on to meddle in the hacker industry?”

...

Korea.

The citizens were dumbfounded!

“How could it be him?”

“Why is it him again?”

The Panda Burning Incense incident was actually caused by him?”

“Heavens!”

“Why does he have to keep latching onto us!”

“The two biggest public enemies of Korea, Zhang Ye and Hacker #2, are actually the same fucking person? How can that be! Can this fellow be any more ruthless than this!”

...

At Central TV.

“This—this—”

“Teacher Zhang, he’s—”

“He’s going away just like that?”

“How can it possibly be him!”

...

At Zhang Ye’s Studio.

“What do we do!”

“Sister Ha, Brother Zuo, what should we do now?”

“Enough talking, let’s head to Director Zhang’s house first. Director Zhang’s parents must have just found out about this as well. They’re old and won’t be able to accept this. Little Wang, go and get the car!”

...

At Old Rao’s house.

“How dare you all arrest my senior bro? I’ll go and get him out!”

“Little Yang, come back right now!”

“But my senior bro is—no, I have to save him!”

“With those lowly skills of yours, who do you think you can save? You’d only be causing more trouble if you go there. With his martial arts level, if he wishes to leave, do you think they would be able to stop him?”

“But! But—”

...

Dong Shanshan’s home.

Several of Zhang Ye’s old classmates were gathered here.

“This fellow is such a bastard!”

“He’s going to leave the entertainment circle just like that?”

“How carefree of him! But has he spared a thought for the others!”

...

Xu Meilan’s house.

“Sister Lan, this—”

“Hurry up, I want you to head over to Zhang Ye’s Studio immediately.”

“Alright!”

“Help them out with whatever is necessary.”

...

At the Internet Surveillance Bureau.

“What will happen to Teacher Zhang?”

“It’s still debatable for the CIH virus since there was a global alert put in place for it, and it didn’t spread. But for the Panda Burning Incense virus—”

“Actually, by arresting Teacher Zhang first, it should be a form of protection for him by the higher-ups. The Koreans and Americans are all asking for his head, but we definitely cannot let them get their hands on him. It seems like the higher-ups have already reached an agreement on that internally.”

“But—”

“Handling it like this is the best that the higher-ups can do.”

“B-But I really like him.”

“Me too, Zhang Ye is such a special person.”

...

People cried.

People scolded.

People shouted.

And there were those who wanted to attempt a prison break.

This night was destined to not be a quiet one. All of Asia had been plunged into chaos over a single name!

Zhang Ye!

Zhang Ye!

And still, Zhang Ye!

Japan.

Korea.

China.

This name and his story were being gossiped about all across Asia.

Even many of Zhang Ye’s foes had mixed emotions at this moment. This name had caused them to grit their teeth in hatred countless times in the past, but when they found out that Zhang Ye was going away, when they heard that this name would no longer be in the entertainment industry, they still sighed. At the same time, they were a little envious of him. The largest concert held in Asia, with a 100,000-strong crowd sharing the stage with him, was livestreamed nationwide in China. With all of Asia’s attention on him, he had chosen to end his entertainment career at this time. Indeed, he was still the Zhang Ye from before. At the very end, this fellow still managed to leave in such an earth-shattering manner. At the very end, they still could not outdo him even once.

There had never been such a celebrity in the entertainment circle before!

Not in the past!

And definitely not in the future!

...

On this night.

Amid the commotion, the Asian Celebrity Rankings Index was updated!

When the Chinese citizens checked it, they were immediately stunned!

When some of the Korean citizens saw it, their faces paled!

When some of the Japanese citizens went to have a look, they were also left dumbfounded!

“The Asian Celebrity Rankings Index has been refreshed!”

“Quickly go and have a look! It has been updated!”

“How’s it look?”

“S-list!”

“He’s on the Asian S-list rankings!”

“Teacher Zhang has reached the summit!”

“Teacher Zhang has reached the summit of the Asian entertainment circle!”

On this day.

On this night.

Zhang Ye’s almost crushing popularity catapulted him from third place in the Asian A-list rankings directly into the Asian S-list rankings. He had become the newly-crowned Asian Heavenly King. This was the highest honor in the Asian entertainment industry. The goal that Zhang Ye had been working so hard towards was finally realized on the day of his departure from the entertainment circle!

Ha Qiqi wept!

Many of the staff at Zhang Ye’s Studio also teared up!

Director Zhang, you’ve reached the summit!

You’ve finally reached the summit in both China and Asia!

Are you seeing this?

Do you know what has just happened?

Chapter 1499: The game ring gets an upgrade!

A month later.

In the morning.

In a prison.

This was a single occupancy cell. The facilities in it were very old, but the place was kept relatively clean. There wasn’t anyone else in it except for Zhang Ye. This was already Zhang Ye’s third day here. There was no one to disturb him, no television to watch, and no Internet to browse, so it was way too fucking peaceful in here. The only drawback was that his days were becoming a little monotonous. For the past few days, he had nothing better to do than sleep. He did not know how others would feel about this, but for a person like him who got restless the moment he didn’t get into the occasional fight or argument, this was indeed quite boring.

News?

Fans?

The media?

The outside world was isolated beyond the prison bars.

Zhang Ye found activities to keep himself busy and would often sing a little when there was nothing else to do.

Just look, this fellow was doing exactly that right now ¹.

“Iron gates, iron bars, and iron manacles.

“Gazing out with my hands clutching these bars.

“How wonderful life is on the outside.

“When can I return home again?

“When can I return home again?

“All of these shackles that locked me up.

“Dear friend, won’t you listen to me sing—”

Outside, a young prison guard walked over, not knowing whether to laugh or cry. “Teacher Zhang, why are you singing this song again? Can you change it to something else? I’ve heard it more than 20 times over the past few days.”

This was a popular song from the ’80s in Zhang Ye’s previous world. It was called “Tears Behind Prison Bars,” and the prison guards were all getting tormented by it every day.

Zhang Ye threw up his hands in boredom. “What else can I do besides sing?”

The young prison guard said excitedly, “Why don’t you write a novel? Or a TV series script? You have nothing to do anyway, and I especially like reading the things that you write.”

Zhang Ye acknowledged and said, “I can consider writing a TV series script.”

The young prison guard said excitedly, “What do you intend to write about?”

Zhang Ye asked, “Eh, has anyone made a drama based on breaking out of prison before?”

The young prison guard nearly faceplanted. He said nervously, “I think it’s better that you stick to singing ‘Tears Behind Prison Bars!’”

“Haha, just kidding.” Zhang Ye was amused.

The young prison guard opened the cell door. “Don’t scare me like that. There’s someone here to visit you. Please get ready.”

“Who is it?” Zhang Ye roused himself at the words.

The young prison guard smiled and said, “It’s your parents and in-laws.”

Zhang Ye waved it off. "Then I'm not going."

The young prison guard gasped, "Huh?"

Although that was what he said, Zhang Ye still got up and exited the cell. "Hai, how could it be anything good if it's them? I bet you it'll end up as a major lecture for me!"

The young prison guard laughed. "Teacher Zhang, honestly speaking, you've got the best mentality of all the prisoners that I've come across in my time. A lot of those who get sent here end up changing greatly. I've never seen anyone who sings every day and keeps themselves entertained the way you do. No wonder you're my idol."

Zhang Ye rolled his eyes. "I'm singing a song like 'Tears Behind Prison Bars,' and you call that having a positive outlook? Come on, let's go."

Outside.

After turning left and right multiple times, they finally reached the visitation room.

Zhang Ye could see his family from afar.

There wasn't any shouting or yelling.

Nor was there any hugging and crying.

It had been a month since the incident, and everyone was at peace with what had happened.

His mother was already harrumphing at her son without waiting for him to sit down. "Mess around, keep messing around. I want to see how you can still fight with others now. Show me!"

Zhang Ye strolled over and sat down. "Who can I fight with now? Just wait until I get released."

"Ah?" Wu Changhe said angrily, "You mean you're still thinking about fighting other people?"

Zhang Ye asked, "Dad, where's my wife? Why is it only you four who came to visit?"

Wu Changhe said in annoyance, "So you mean you don't want us to come?"

Well, of course.

However, Zhang Ye would never say that out loud.

Li Qinqin said, "Zeqing said she wanted to come."

His father stared at him. "Zeqing is going to give birth soon, so how can we let her move around so much at such a time? We stopped her from coming."

"Is she feeling OK?" Zhang Ye asked in concern.

His mother harrumphed, "Other than you, all of us are doing quite well."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Then I'm relieved."

Li Qinqin criticized, "Oh you! You've really worried us so this time. Only Zeqing is gracious enough to not get anxious over anything at all. Do you know how worried your parents and I were? A media outlet

even wrote that you might be sentenced to life in prison before the court gave its sentence. That scared us so much that we couldn't get a good night's rest for two days."

Zhang Ye asked, "Mom, which media outlet wrote that? Tell me. When I get released, I'll go and look for them. What life in prison? It's not like I slaughtered and burned. What I did was a chivalrous act by fighting for my country and its citizens. You've all gotta think of this in a positive manner. If this incident didn't happen, could I have reached the summit of the Asian entertainment circle? Even if I could've, it might've taken a year or two, or even three to five years for that to happen. This is what we call spending on credit. For the next few years, I'm just gonna stay here and rest up. I'll recharge. When I get out of here, I'll take a shot at reaching the top of the international entertainment circle!"

His mother curled her lips and said, "Stop bragging."

Li Qinqin looked at her watch. "Are visiting hours almost over?"

"Mom, feel free to talk as long as you want." Zhang Ye waved his hands and said, "I know the people here, and they won't interfere even if we talk for a few more hours. But in the future, don't come here for no reason. It's an important time for Old Wu. If you're all here, Old Wu is at home all by herself. Go back earlier. I'm doing rather well, so don't worry."

The elders looked him over. Indeed, he did look rather good. He was even more spirited than when he was out. Before coming over, they were rather worried and afraid to find him in a state of dishevelment. But it seemed like they had worried too much. What storms and calamities had this kid not been through? Not too many things could rattle him. Just look, it had only been three days and he was already all chummy with the prison guards. In addition, his relationship with the prison warden was very good. When Zhang Ye had just been sent here, the warden even came out to personally receive him.

Pretty good.

Yes, he was doing pretty good.

...

In the prison cell.

After seeing his parents, Zhang Ye came back. He was touched.

He couldn't keep going on like that. He really had to find something proper to do. Otherwise, he might just be unable to keep up with the times upon his release. He had to accumulate experience and recharge. Zhang Ye had never once forgotten about his goal to reach the summit of the international entertainment circle ever since the day he debuted.

He couldn't get on the Internet?

He couldn't release any works?

But he could gain more skills!

Like lockpicking?

Like wall climbing?

He could use all of those skills after getting out—uh, actually it looks like those skills were only going to be useful in here.

Forget it, it's time for the lottery!

Even if he couldn't do other things, there was no problem with playing the lottery. Moreover, the total Reputation Points that Zhang Ye had accumulated in the game ring was more than enough for him to play the lottery for three straight days and nights!

Come on, come on, come on!

Lottery draw, lottery draw, lottery draw!

However, the moment Zhang Ye brought up the game ring's interface, he discovered a system notification. Having reached a specific Reputation Points level, the game ring was upgraded again. At the very beginning, the game ring only had the Lottery Draw (One) system in it and would dispense small treasure chests as prizes. Later, when it was upgraded, the Lottery Draw (Two) system was unlocked, and he was able to get medium-sized treasure chests. Now that the game ring had been upgraded again, the level three large treasure chests got unlocked!

Chapter 1500: Receiving a rare item!

The Lottery Draw (Three) was entirely different.

The lottery draw that gave the small treasure chests was a spinning wheel.

The lottery draw that gave the medium treasure chests was in the form of a slot machine.

Meanwhile, this lottery draw that gave the large treasure chests was a virtual platform made of an unknown material that resembled stone. The small platform of several meters had a concave space in the middle that was reserved for the treasure chests to be dispensed from. However, it was bare and empty at this moment with nothing in it. The feeling it gave was rather mysterious and intimidating.

However, Zhang Ye felt a pinch in his heart the moment he saw the system notification in the game ring that introduced this lottery system. He had not checked the game ring in a long time. It had reached the upgrade requirement a while ago, but he had only found out after he brought up the game ring's interface today. It was just like the previous time the system was upgraded from the basic level to the intermediate level. Once the game ring had reached the required Reputation Points, it would activate the upgrade. Meanwhile, as payment for the upgrade¹, his Reputation Points would be deducted from the game ring. As such, the Reputation Points that Zhang Ye had been accumulating for a long time was suddenly more than halved, leaving him feeling the pinch. It was a good thing there was some form of compensation for the upgrade. The moment he played the lottery draw for the first time after the upgrade, there would be a rare treasure chest with a 100% rate of dispensing, which made it very tempting.

Come on.

Let's give it a try.

Zhang Ye reached into the air and tapped. Then he was dumbfounded.

System Notification: You're about to spend 100 million Reputation Points. Please confirm.

100 million?

Each lottery draw attempt costs 100 million?

Do you fucking want to die!

This is highway robbery!

Zhang Ye nearly went crazy with hate. The basic lottery draw only costs 100,000 Reputation Points, while the intermediate lottery draw cost 10 million Reputation Points. Now that he had reached the advanced lottery draw, it required a 100 million Reputation Points to play?

But what could he do? He could only play!

Zhang Ye clenched his teeth and pressed "confirm"!

This time, he did not activate the Lucky Halo (Upgraded). First, because the game ring's rules had already specified that the first attempt at the upgraded lottery draw would always give a rare item treasure chest, so there wasn't a need for any luck. Second, all of the things that happened during this hacking incident had happened precisely because of the Lucky Halo (Upgraded). If it weren't for it, Zhang Ye would probably still have it good. He was only here because he had trusted it too much.

A bright glow erupted from the lottery draw's platform.

Zhang Ye was momentarily blinded.

One second.

Three seconds.

Five seconds.

The glow lasted for a short while before suddenly disappearing.

Zhang Ye opened his eyes and noticed that a large, golden treasure chest had appeared on the lottery platform. It was much bigger than the small and medium-sized treasure chests.

Here it comes!

Zhang Ye was looking forward to it.

He retrieved the treasure chest and opened it up.

System notification:

You have opened the chest.

[Congratulations, you have received a rare item!]

[Lucky Halo (Ultra): Dramatically increases the luck of the player.]

An ultra version?

Dramatically increase?

When Zhang Ye saw this description, he got extremely excited. He no longer trusted the Lucky Halo, but that was only the upgraded version. Since the beginning, the basic version of the Lucky Halo had failed quite a few times. The upgraded version had also screwed up at critical junctures, indicating that their effects were not strong enough. Having reached this point, Zhang Ye could no longer make any missteps. Taking this event as an example, it was a major incident the moment something went bad. He was after reliability and stability. The moment he required the Lucky Halo's effects, he would need it to be a 100% successful. Therefore, this ultra version of the Lucky Halo fit Zhang Ye's requirements nicely. The only drawback of it was—

Fuck me!

It would consume 1 million Reputation Points per second of activation?

This was too expensive!

However, Zhang Ye placed it into the Merchant Shop's interface nonetheless. The Special Category items were basically a purchasing right, just like how the game ring had received an upgrade the previous time and the older version of the Lucky Halo was replaced by the newer one. That made the lower tier version of the item unusable, so he couldn't use it even if he wanted to.

What else was there?

What else was different with the new lottery draw from the previous one?

Zhang Ye immediately gave it another try. He rubbed his hands together and took a deep breath before tapping on Lottery Draw (Three) again. He noticed there wasn't any option to place additional stakes in this advanced version of the lottery draw. This was also where it differed from the basic and intermediate versions of the lottery draw in that it could only allow him to draw one item at a time!

The lottery draw began!

He used up a 100 million Reputation Points!

Then that glow appeared again!

This time, Zhang Ye did not close his eyes. Instead, he squinted hard at it.

A moment later, the glow disappeared.

Then—there were no more thens!

After the glow dissipated, there was no trace of anything at all on the platform!

Zhang Ye was dumbfounded. Fuck, it can even end up like this?

He refused to have his beliefs shaken and still kept his Lucky Halo (Ultra) deactivated. He wanted to try the odds of this advanced lottery draw first in order to familiarize himself with it. So he attempted the

draw several times in a row. Although his Reputation Points were more than halved after the system upgrade, he still had a lot of Reputation Points left. He could still be considered “rich” in that sense.

...

The third lottery draw attempt.

The glow appeared.

The glow disappeared.

There was nothing.

...

The fourth lottery draw attempt.

The glow appeared.

The glow disappeared.

A large treasure chest finally appeared!

[Lockpicking Skill Experience Book] × 3: Increase the lockpicking skills of the player.

...

The fifth lottery draw attempt.

The glow appeared.

The glow disappeared.

There was nothing.

...

The sixth lottery draw attempt.

After the glow disappeared, another large treasure chest appeared.

When Zhang Ye opened it up, a system notification popped up.

[Congratulations, you have received a rare item!]

[Higher Mathematics Skill Experience Book]: Max out the Higher Mathematics Skill!

...

He tried it a total of six times.

In the end, Zhang Ye stopped playing it in shock. He was finally able to figure out how this advanced lottery draw worked. This was completely different from the previous two versions of the lottery draw, and there was a possibility of drawing any item from it. For example, the probability of drawing nothing at all was the highest, with it happening three times out of his six attempts. Or those three Lockpicking

Skill Experience Books that he had just received, they were what Zhang Ye had drawn at the very beginning when he could only access the basic version of the lottery draw. He even put this skill to use during the hijacking incident to open the cabin door, and those three books were exactly the same thing that he had gotten before. The moment Zhang received the item, he opened them up and learned. He could feel that his lockpicking skill had improved, but it was not by much. This felt like an item that should not have belonged in the advanced version of the lottery draw. Furthermore, he received of such books. It was as though the prizes were random and there was no logic behind what could be drawn.

It wasn't until a rare item had appeared, when that [Higher Mathematics Skill Experience Book] came out that Zhang Ye finally understood.

Mathematics?

A maximum level skill?

This was a godly skill!

He no longer had to get books from the basic and intermediate versions of the lottery draw in order to max out the skill? He could max it out straight away!

From the looks of it, this advanced lottery draw encompassed the full range of items that were available. The items he could get were random and could be of the basic or advanced levels. The quantities of these items that he would receive were also random. It might be one, two, or even three of them drawn in one go. Looking at this, it seemed like the payment and reward ratio wasn't proportional at all. After all, to spend 100 million Reputation Points and get nothing, or get a basic item which could be gotten with 100,000 Reputation Points in the basic lottery draw did seem a little shameful.

But there were rare items in this advanced lottery draw!

And these rare items could only be gotten here!

Uh, although the odds of getting them were relatively low.