

Superstar 1511

Chapter 1511: People from all over descend upon the research institute!

The next day.

Dawn had just broke.

A loud propeller could be heard in the sky above the research institute, along with the constant buzzing of engines arriving. It was so noisy that many of the researchers who were still deep asleep got woken up.

“What’s with all that noise?”

“What is happening?”

“What time is it?”

“What is Professor Zhang up to this time?”

“It doesn’t feel like it’s Professor Zhang today!”

“Listen to that? Isn’t that the sound of a helicopter?”

“Ah? Wake up, quick!”

“I’ve not had a good night’s sleep yet this new year.”

No one knew what was going on. Everyone came out of their rooms grumbling about the commotion.

At this moment, they heard Zhang Ye being woken up as well. His window opened and they saw Zhang Ye shouting out of it with drooping eyes, “Who is that! Are you driving an excavator or something? It’s so early in the morning and you’re not letting people sleep! Can you be any more inconsiderate than this! People these days, why are they so rude and classless!”

After shouting all that, he closed the window with a loud bang and probably went back to bed.

The researchers were floored at his words!

Just how much more shameless can you get?

You’re the most unqualified person here to say those words!

You’re saying that they’re inconsiderate? Aren’t you the one who’s always opening your windows every morning and singing “Tears Behind Prison Bars”? Weren’t you the one who made so much noise early yesterday morning and then woke everyone up again late at night? It’s not like the commotion that you’ve been causing every day is any less than what is going here! And you dare to criticize other people?

Fellow Chi and the others also came out at this time.

Fellow Zhou asked, “Old Chi, what’s going on?”

Fellow Chi also wondered and said, "I don't know."

Two helicopters came.

And seven or eight vehicles.

Updates were being reported back bit by bit as well. When everyone heard who had come, they were all confused by what was going on.

The military?

The Chinese Academy of Sciences?

The Chinese Aeronautical Establishment ¹ ?

The Chinese Aero Engine Control System Institute ² ?

These four groups of people had arrived at the research institute out of the blue?

Chi Xue said nervously, "Dad, could something have happened?"

Fellow Chi looked very serious. "Something must have definitely happened!"

"And it must be something major too!" Fellow Zhou added.

Then they saw several groups of people striding towards them from afar. When they saw the person leading the groups, everyone from the research institute froze.

President Fu?

The president of the Chinese Academy of Sciences?

Why had President Fu come down here personally?

Fellow Chi and the others hurriedly went up to welcome him. "Old Fu, what's the situation?"

Privately, the relationship among them was very good, with both Fellow Chi and Fellow Zhou being long-time veterans of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. So there wasn't really a distinction based on their ranks, and they would often address the academy's president as Old Fu.

President Fu walked over with a great big smile and pointed at them. "Good on you, Old Chi! And you too, Old Zhou! You guys have kept the secret well!"

Fellow Zhou stared blankly. "What did we keep a secret?"

President Fu belly laughed. "Go on, keep pretending!"

Fellow Chi and Fellow Zhou looked at each other, completely confused at what was going on.

All of the others at the research institute also did not know what it meant.

From the other side, a military leader said loudly, "If this project has been completed, you will all have rendered a great merit. A great merit for us! And a great merit to benefit the future generations!"

Fellow Chi said, "Old Li, what do you mean by us rendering a great merit to benefit the future generations?"

General Li said excitedly, "Aiyo, Fellow Chi, don't pretend anymore!"

President Fu also laughed and said, "Old Chi, you've really done our Chinese Academy of Sciences proud this time. In these recent years, we had thought that no one would dare get involved with this project, but who would've thought that you all had yet to give up on it and even managed to come up with such great results. Bravo! Well done! We researchers need to have a strong mind like you all to not give up so easily. You guys have really taught me a lesson this time. You've taught all of the scientific research institutions in China a very valuable lesson this time!"

Fuck, why is this talk getting so serious?

What project are you talking about?

Who did we give a lesson to?

Chi Xue froze up. She tugged at her father aside. "Dad, could it be that project?"

Fellow Chi was startled. "Surely not, right?"

Fellow Zhou was also dumbfounded. He just remembered the incident which happened last night. "Old Chi, Old Li, is this about the information we sent out last night?"

President Fu smiled and said, "You were the ones who sent it over. Why are you asking me about it?"

Huh?

So it's really that?

Fellow Chi said, "That project isn't feasible, right?"

President Fu rolled his eyes. "Why is it not feasible? Aiyo, we're already at this juncture, so why are you all still trying to keep a low profile? What's there to be humble about? Don't you know how large of a stride you've made? This is virtually unprecedented! It's a step no one has managed to take in several decades to close to a century! We've already seen the material that you sent over. At two in the morning, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Chinese Aeronautical Establishment, the Chinese Aero Engine Control System Institute, and many other departments all called for emergency meetings in the dead of night. Hundreds of doctors, professors, scholars, and researchers studied them all night and finally managed to verify the material and proposal that you sent over as feasible! This will be a brand-new page in the history of Chinese aircraft engines! You've all scored a great merit! I'm proud of every one of you! So that's why I brought the team here today. I wanted to see for myself what our heroic researchers looked like!"

Surely not, right?

That had actually worked out?

Everyone at the research institute was dumbfounded by what they heard!

Chi Xue was stunned while Fellow Chi had a shocked look on his face.

President Fu looked at them with a smile. "Old Chi, was it you who came up with the proposal?"

Fellow Chi waved it off. "I'm not that capable."

President Fu laughed and pointed to Fellow Zhou. "Then it must be you, Old Zhou!"

Fellow Zhou gave a wry smile. "Me? It wasn't me."

"Hmm?" President Fu was taken aback. Then he looked at someone else. "Dr. Chen, is it you then?"

Doctor Chen wiped off his sweat. "It wasn't me, it wasn't me."

President Fu said in anticipation, "Then which heroic researcher was it? Old Chi, Old Zhou, quickly get that person to step forward so that we can see who it is!"

The people from the Chinese Aeronautical Establishment were looking around.

The people from the military were also looking around.

Only those from the research institute were looking at one another.

Finally, Chi Xue raised her head and shouted upwards at the building beside them. "Professor Zhang, the leaders are looking for you. Get your ass down here!"

A shout responded from the window, "I'm sleeping!"

Everyone looked up.

President Fu was a little stunned as well.

Fellow Zhou hurriedly said, "What are you still sleeping for! Get down here!"

The male voice said impatiently, "Who's looking for me?"

Fellow Zhou shouted, "Get up already! We're all waiting for you!"

"Alright, alright."

After shouting all that, Fellow Zhou quickly explained, "Professor Zhang has been very busy lately. He's been—he's been working on this research deep into the night. That's why he still isn't up yet. He usually wakes up very early."

President Fu laughed and said, "It's all for the project, so that's very understandable!"

General Li asked, "Which Professor Zhang is it? Professor Zhang Yi?"

Fellow Zhou said anxiously, "No."

President Fu guessed again. "Professor Zhang Hanlei?"

Fellow Zhou still did not know how to put it. "It's not him either."

Fellow Chi sighed. "You all will know when he gets here."

President Fu was pleasantly surprised. "You mean we all know him?"

Fellow Chi nodded. "Yes, all of you should know him."

Everyone turned to look at the stairway exit of the building.

Under the anticipating and excited gazes of countless people, the figure of a young man appeared.

Then, everyone was dumbfounded!

"What?"

"Eh?"

"Zh-Zhang Ye?"

Chapter 1512: The youngest research fellow in the history of the Chinese Academy of Sciences!

The group of people were dumbfounded.

Zhang Ye strolled up. "Who's looking for me?"

President Fu looked at Fellow Chi. "Old Chi, what's going on here?"

Fellow Chi said, "The project you all were talking about was basically handled by Professor Zhang Ye."

"What?" General Li was stunned.

President Fu and the group of people behind him were also dumbfounded.

Zhang Ye?

He did what?

How is that possible!

There's absolutely no link at all!

Many of those who were here knew that Old Chi's research institute had only loaned Zhang Ye out of prison because they wanted to overcome a problem with the design of a mathematical algorithm. They also knew very well what Zhang Ye's skill in mathematics was like. In the entire Chinese field of mathematics, there shouldn't be anyone who was better at math than Zhang Ye. This was something that everyone agreed on. But this aircraft engine research project was a completely different matter. It was two entirely different concepts.

Dynamics ¹.

Mechanical engineering.

And even materials science.

None of those had anything to do with mathematics!

President Fu said in surprise, "Oh, Professor Little Zhang, you even about know this subject?"

Zhang Ye smiled. "I'm not bad, I guess? I know a little."

Ten minutes later.

In a large conference room at the research institute.

Zhang Ye was standing behind a podium and speaking confidently, "What are the difficulties faced in our nation's aircraft engine manufacturing process? One of them is the main bearings component, a key part of an aircraft engine. A military aircraft engine requires the bearings to have a durability lifespan of 3,000 hours and above, while a civilian aircraft engine requires an even higher standard at up to 10,000 hours. Not only does it have to rotate at high speeds of over tens of thousands of revolutions per minute, it also has to tolerate various forms of stress and compression forces, friction, as well as ultra-high temperatures. In addition, for general structural parts, it must remain safe to use even when there are slight cracks—this is known in the industry as damage tolerance levels. But for key transmission parts such as the aircraft engine's main bearings, no damage tolerance is allowed at all. Cracks and other forms of damage are not allowed to occur in the process of usage. Therefore, that is the first difficulty we're stuck at. We have completed aircraft engine designs, but questions remain on them as their rate of failure is too high, being at least ten times greater than what other models are known for. This clearly makes them impractical for use in actual combat."

President Fu said from the audience, "Right, this is a technical difficulty we've been trying to tackle."

But Zhang Ye said, "Actually, there's no need to tackle it. I can tell you that we already have the technical capabilities to achieve it. Our current scientific technology is fully capable of achieving it."

On the blackboard, he wrote and drew.

Zhang Ye was giving his speech on a stage, while a bunch of experts and professors who specialized in dynamics and mechanical engineering were listening in the audience.

A mathematician giving them a lesson in their field of specialization made everyone feel a little strange. However, it was also a lesson that left them very surprised.

For two full hours.

Everyone raised their questions while Zhang Ye answered them.

At the end of the meeting, excited looks were on everyone's faces.

President Fu grabbed Zhang Ye's hands and said, "Professor Zhang, you're a genius! You're really a genius! It is truly our country's blessing to have a scientist like you!"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "President Fu, please don't put me on a pedestal. Just tell me, are we going ahead with this project?"

"Of course! Of course we are!" President Fu said, "I have come here on the instructions of the higher-ups. I'll immediately go and seek their approval to let you handle this project. All of the design, research, and testing will be wholly in your care. You'll be given all the authority on this matter. Furthermore, we will also have you assume command for the project to design the new generation fighters. After all, the aircraft and its engine's design process will have to be unified."

General Li immediately asked, "Professor Zhang, what do you need?"

Zhang Ye said, "Money, manpower, and facilities."

President Fu agreed without even thinking. "Alright, that won't be a problem. We will assign however many people you need and approve however much funding you require. For the facilities you want access to, we will do our best to get whatever we have for you as long as you ask for it!" With a pause, he said in seriousness, "But we also have one request. It has been so many years, so it's about time we fulfill our nation's dream for an aircraft engine. The country and its citizens have been waiting far too long for this to happen!"

Zhang Ye smiled. "Don't worry, leave it to me."

President Fu turned around and instructed, "Old Chi, Old Zhou, the two of you are to cooperate closely with Professor Little Zhang. We must get this project successfully completed no matter what, even if it means giving our lives to it!"

Fellow Zhou smiled and said, "Alright, we will give our fullest support to Professor Little Zhang."

Chi Xue said with a laugh, "Well, alright, looks like Professor Zhang has become our new boss."

Zhang Ye phonily said, "Hai, what boss? This is all for the people."

President Fu suddenly asked, "Old Chi, what title does Professor Zhang have at your institute?"

Fellow Chi shook his head. "What title can he have? We even had to borrow him secretly, so it's not like we can arrange for him to take a role here, can we?"

President Fu said, "That won't do. Since Professor Zhang will lead the project as the project lead, he'll need to have a title. We can't let him assume command as a civilian, right?"

Zhang Ye corrected, "I'm not even considered a civilian now. I am just a prisoner."

Everyone rolled their eyes.

President Fu looked at him. "Professor Zhang, are you interested in taking a role with our Chinese Academy of Sciences?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "What role?"

President Fu said with a smile, "Just a basic position as a research fellow."

Everyone broke into a sweat.

A basic position?

How could a Chinese Academy of Sciences research fellow be considered as a basic position?

That was the highest title granted to a scientist!

But Zhang Ye asked, "Are there any benefits to that?"

President Fu said in amusement, "What kind of benefits are you looking at?"

Zhang Ye said, "Something like one or two months of home visit per year?"

President Fu laughed and said, "There isn't something like that. Your status with us is a special one, and this project is also classified as top secret, so it's impossible for us to allow you to go home. That's definitely out of the question. However, there are still a lot of benefits that you will enjoy. If you accept the appointment, you will become the youngest ever research fellow of the Chinese Academy of Sciences since its establishment, as well as the youngest superstar scientist in history. When your sentence is complete, we will also give you the necessary recognition in public. I know that your mind is not on scientific research and that you still care more about the entertainment industry. So all the more that you should join our Chinese Academy of Sciences family. There are many titles in the entertainment circle, like being the best actor or actress, the king of singers, and so on and so forth. But even with all the titles that they've got, they would never be able to land the title of being a research fellow with the Chinese Academy of Sciences all their lives. You are the only person who could achieve that."

President Fu was quite artful in the way he dealt with people. Their Chinese Academy of Sciences had already tried to invite Zhang Ye to join them on more than one occasion. But their invitations to him were all turned down, and he showed no interest in joining them at all. Therefore, this time, President Fu put it to him in a different way. Their Chinese Academy of Sciences really needed a research fellow like Zhang Ye. Be it his achievements in mathematics, or his knowledge in physics, they were all irreplaceable.

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Since you put it that way, I really can't seem to find an excuse to reject you."

President Fu said, "Alright then, we'll get you to fill out an application form and approve it in a later meeting."

Zhang Ye said, "Thanks."

However, the researchers around them all sighed when they heard.

An elite, world-class mathematician!

An expert who was even proficient in dynamics!

One of the youngest elite scientists in China, even the entire world!

Yet his mind did not rest on research? Wasn't this too great of a waste! If anyone had just a bit of your talent, they would surely be able to walk all the way til the end on the path of scientific research. How great of an achievement and glory would that be? But you? Why would you be so single-mindedly focused on only making it in the entertainment industry?

Two days later.

The appointment was passed.

Zhang Ye was officially inducted as a research fellow (Division of Mathematics and Physics ²) of the Chinese Academy of Sciences

Zhang Ye had officially taken command as the manager of the Chinese aircraft engine project, as the assistant chief designer of the new generation fighter (unnamed) project, as well as a host of other appointments.

The manpower issue was resolved.

The funding arrived.

The facilities were in place.

This was going to be a tough battle!

And it was a tough battle that had to be won!

Zhang Ye was very eager and excited. He was going to give 110% to fight this battle!

Old Wu.

My daughter.

Wait for me. This bro will be able to go back home once I pull off this job!

The entertainment circle.

My old friends.

Wait for me. When this bro gets out, let's again take on the world together!

Chapter 1513: Three years later

Three years later.

It was the second morning of the Lunar New Year.

Another Lunar New Year was here again. At a military airbase in Sanya ¹, a military aircraft had just arrived. The aircraft slowly landed on the runway and came to a stop. When the cargo hatch was opened, the first group of people to come out were some military personnel. Behind them, a man around the age of 30 walked out, squinting. As the sun was shining too brightly, he used his hand to block the glare above his forehead while his other hand took out a pair of sunglasses. Then, he put it on with a reminiscing smile on his face.

Blue skies.

White clouds.

And freedom.

It has been more than three years, but this bro is finally back!

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "I'll be going then."

One of the soldiers asked, "Fellow Zhang, do you really not need us to send you off?"

Zhang Ye curled his lips. "There's no need."

Another soldier said, "But the world has seen such great changes in these past few years."

Zhang Ye waved it off. "No way, I've been dealing with you all for three years already. Even if you're not sick of me, I'm sick of you guys. Now that I'm finally out, please stay as far away from me as you can."

The few of them gave wry smiles.

Then Zhang Ye smoothed his clothes and strode forward.

Behind him, the voice of a young soldier rang out.

"Attention!"

"Salute!"

Shuffle.

Shuffle.

Shuffle.

The military personnel stood at attention and respectfully saluted Zhang Ye as he walked off into the distance. Even when he was 50 meters away from them, they still did not put down their hands. This wasn't some perfunctory farewell they were giving him, but one that was done with the deepest of respect. This was because every one of them knew what Fellow Zhang had done for them, China, and the citizens over the past three years plus.

Outside the military airbase.

This was a suburb situated quite far from the city.

Zhang Ye kept walking straight along the road. After 20 minutes, there was still no sight of any cars, let alone a cab. Finally, when a tourist bus passed by, Zhang Ye quickly put out his hand and hailed it. The bus drove past him and then came to a sudden stop about a 100 meters away.

Zhang Ye ran over and caught up. "Driver, can I get a ride please?"

The driver said, "Call for one with your cell phone."

Zhang Ye said, "Hai, my cell phone is dead."

The driver said, "You won't be able to get a ride here. There are too few vehicles passing by this place. I have to send these people somewhere, so I suggest that you wait for another vehicle instead."

At the back of the bus were over a dozen young boys and girls who looked like they weren't even 20 yet.

Chen Qiqi asked, "Where are you headed?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "I'm going to Yalong Bay ²."

Chen Niannian, who was beside her, said, "Eh, we're going to Yalong Bay too. It's on the way."

Zhang Ye was pleased to hear that. "That's great then."

Huo Yan blinked and said, "Are you a Beijinger?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "You guys are from Beijing too?"

Huo Yan said, "Yeah, we are."

Thus, Chen Qiqi said, "Driver, let him come on board with us."

The driver naturally did not object to that. This bus was rented by them, after all.

And so, Zhang Ye boarded the bus. He said to the teenagers, "Thanks, guys, I won't take the ride for free. Let me share a part of the cost with you." He then took out a 100-yuan bill from his wallet.

The teenagers were stunned when they saw it.

Zhang Ye was startled for a moment too. What? Do you think it's not enough?

In the end, Chen Qiqi said something that dumbfounded Zhang Ye. She looked at the 100-yuan bill in Zhang Ye's hand and said, "Big Bro, isn't this bill a little old?"

Zhang Ye shook the bill in his hand. "Ah? This isn't that old. It still looks quite new, doesn't it?"

Chen Niannian also said in a speechless manner, "This version of the RMB has stopped circulating since three years ago. The banks recalled them, and we've been using the new version for a long time. If you pay others with this money, I doubt that they'd even accept it. Why are you still keeping it around? Unless you want it as an antique? Are you a collector?"

Ah?

The currency version has changed?

Damn, why didn't anyone tell me?

Zhang Ye could only put the money away in embarrassment. "Looks like I'm getting a free ride then."

Chen Qiqi said, "It's alright, this bus was rented by Teacher Tian anyway. We didn't spend a cent on it. So did you come to Sanya on vacation?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "You can say so. My parents, wife, and kid are vacationing in Sanya. I came here to look for them. What about you guys? Is it a group tour?"

Huo Yan said, "It's our Qiyuan's vacation trip."

Zhang Ye was taken aback. "Qiyuan?"

Chen Qiqi declared proudly, "It's the China Qiyuan."

Zhang Ye looked at them in surprise. "You're professional players?"

Huo Yan laughed and said, "Of course. I'm a Xiangqi³ player while Qiqi and Niannian are both Go players."

Professional Go players?

These female twins?

Zhang Ye had never heard of their names before. "Is Xiang Rong still the world number one in the Go world?"

Everyone was at a loss for words again.

Huo Yan asked, "Master Xiang?"

Chen Niannian said, "What old history are you basing that off of?"

Chen Qiqi replied, "Master Xiang retired two years ago."

Zhang Ye said, "Huh?"

Chen Qiqi said, "The best in Go is Teacher Tian."

Zhang Ye asked, "Teacher Tian? Who's that?"

Chen Qiqi said, "Teacher Tian Weiwei of course!"

Zhang Ye was startled to hear that. "Little Tian?"

Of course he knew who Tian Weiwei was. Back then, he had been hailed as the successor of Xiang Rong and was the hope of the Chinese Go world. The only problem was that Tian Weiwei's skill level at that time had not matured yet, so he was unable to perform consistently in his games. Who could have thought that in just a few years' time, Little Tian, who used to be a crybaby, would reach the top?

Chen Qiqi said, "What Little Tian? You're addressing him as though you know him."

Zhang Ye laughed. "And why can't I know him?"

Chen Niannian didn't believe him. "You can play Go too?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "A little."

Chen Qiqi clasped her hands in glee and said, "That's great! Let's play a game right now. My sister and I were worried about how we had nothing to do on the bus with Yalong Bay still so far away from here."

Since Zhang Ye had nothing to do either, he said, "Sure thing, what are your ranks?"

Chen Niannian bragged, "I'm a 5-dan and my older sis is a 4-dan."

Chen Qiqi rolled her eyes. "Go to hell. Why do you keep bringing that up."

"Sis, mind your language. You're a professional Go player, so you have to have manners." Chen Niannian giggled.

Chen Qiqi harrumphed, "Don't be so proud yet. I just didn't perform to my potential last year. I'll definitely get to 5-dan this year." She then took out a travel Go set complete with magnetic stones so that the bumpy road wouldn't be a problem. After setting it up, she even said to Huo Yan, "Put on some music, put on some music. I'm about to start a killing spree!"

Everyone gave her a look of contempt.

"Qiqi, that's enough."

"Pfft, a killing spree?"

"Please remember that you're a professional Go player."

“Oh you, always looking for a chance to bully amateurs.”

Huo Yan took out his cell phone and played some music.

Since he would be meeting his family again soon, Zhang Ye was in a great mood. He hummed to the music and remarked, “This song is not bad. Who sings it?”

Everyone looked at him like he was a fool.

Huo Yan said, “That’s Guan Zhaohua.”

Zhang Ye nodded and said, “Is he a newcomer?”

Chen Qiqi was floored. “A newcomer?”

Chen Niannian was disgusted. “Uncle, that’s a domestic Heavenly King you’re talking about!”

Zhang Ye froze. “Ah? A Heavenly King?”

Chen Qiqi facepalmed and said, “Don’t you watch television?”

Zhang Ye said, “Not really.”

Chen Qiqi said, “You don’t watch the Spring Festival Gala either?”

Zhang Ye said, “I’ve been too busy in these past two years, so no.”

Chen Qiqi sighed and said, “Then you’re really a hermit. You don’t even know who Guan Zhaohua is? That’s my idol, alright? He’s my Prince Charming, the hottest hunk around right now. My God, how could anyone in China or Asia not know who Guan Zhaohua is? Uncle, you’ve really changed my perception of things.”

Zhang Ye wondered, “When did this person become a Heavenly King?”

A professional Xiangqi player gave up and said, “Could your impression of the entertainment circle’s Heavenly Kings and Queens have stopped at the time of Zhang Yuanqi and Zhang Ye?”

Zhang Ye said, “Yeah.”

Huo Yan said, “That’s such old news. If you didn’t mention Zhang Ye or Zhang Yuanqi’s names, I would have forgotten about them. The world’s entertainment circle is moving too rapidly these days, and eras are changing almost every half a year, so don’t mention what can happen in two years. Or three years. All that is too far away to predict.”

Chen Qiqi called out to him, “Come, come, let’s start playing.”

Everyone had been “amazed” by this young man who boarded the bus halfway through the journey.

Using out of circulation RMB notes?

Talking about celebrities who had faded in time?

Which remote mountains did this person just come out from? Why does he not know anything at all?

Chapter 1514: You guys still can’t beat me!

As the tourist bus traveled to its destination.

The Go board was set up.

All of the Qiyuan's teenagers were very interested in this game that was about to be played. They were chattering as they crowded around, ready to watch Chen Qiqi's game with that youth.

Zhang Ye was, of course, familiar with China Qiyuan. Be it his relationship with those people involved in the "war between humans and machines" or with his father-in-law, he had always had an inextricable link with the Qiyuan. But he had not met any of these teenagers in the bus before, nor had he heard of them either. He was very sure that these teenagers had turned professional recently in the past year or two. They were all newcomers who obviously did not know about him. Although Zhang Ye had a pair of sunglasses on, he had still been an Asian Heavenly King. Hai, perhaps he had been away for so long that everyone had forgotten about him.

Chen Qiqi asked, "How many stones handicap do you need?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "There's no need for that yet."

Huo Yan said, "Big Bro, our Qiqi is a professional player."

"I'm not too bad either," Zhang Ye said.

Chen Niannian asked in surprise, "What rank are you?"

Zhang Ye replied, "9-dan or so."

Chen Qiqi obviously did not understand this correctly. She said in surprise, "Yoho, an amateur 9-dan? That's about the same level as our professional 3- or 4-dans then?"

Chen Niannian said, "Then there really isn't a need for any handicap."

Thus, Chen Qiqi said, "Come, come, let's guess the stones ¹."

An amateur 9-dan?

Zhang Ye didn't say anything to that.

They guessed the stones. Chen Qiqi was to go second while Zhang Ye would start with black.

Zhang Ye placed his first stone in a rather casual manner.

But the moment Chen Qiqi picked up her stones, it felt as though she had changed into a completely different person. Her playstyle was very solid, and it felt quite different from her personality. She prioritized playing a defensive style and adopted a careful and steady approach. On top of that, her positioning of the stones and opening strategy were all played to perfection and in a very professional manner. Just one look and you'd know that she had had professional training before. Further, Zhang Ye found this approach and playstyle to be very familiar. He kept thinking that he had seen it somewhere before. It was as if he had played a similar opponent before.

Zhang Ye couldn't help but ask, "Who's your teacher?"

Chen Qiqi looked up. "My aunt."

"Your aunt?" Zhang Ye was taken aback and suddenly thought of someone. "Chen Ying 8-dan?"

Chen Qiqi exclaimed, "How did you know?"

Zhang Ye said, "Your approach and playstyle are exactly like hers."

Chen Niannian gave Zhang Ye a few more glances. "Impressive, Big Bro, you can even guess something like that? But I need to correct you. My aunt has been a 9-dan since two years ago."

9-dan?

That's good.

Zhang Ye was very happy to hear the name of a familiar old friend.

"In the field of Go, is China still number one in the world?"

"I suppose so."

"What do you mean by you suppose so?"

"If we're comparing Japan and Korea, then we are."

"Aren't China, Japan, and Korea the countries that are best at Go?"

"That's only true if you don't count artificial intelligence."

"Ah? Artificial intelligence?"

"Don't you know about PeterGo?"

"I know, but didn't someone already win against it four years ago?"

"But two years ago, PeterGo reappeared again after getting some modifications and upgrades done by the Americans."

"Did no one challenge it?"

"We did. But in the end, all of our human Go players were thrashed by it. For two whole years, everyone, including Teacher Tian Weiwei, my aunt, and many others, all lost to it. All of the top 100 human Go players couldn't beat it, including the amateur Go players. During the entire two years, PeterGo's match records were a thousand wins, zero losses. My sister and I also challenged it. PeterGo is online 24 hours a day on the Go server. Anyone is welcome to challenge it anytime, but we still lost all the same. To be honest, it's not even on the same level as a human. PeterGo's Go ability has already far surpassed the reach of humans."

"Surely someone can beat it, right?"

"That's what everyone had thought as well, but two years have gone by without anyone even winning once, much less winning two games out of three as per the victory conditions. In this past year, there isn't anyone who can challenge PeterGo. That's because everyone knows that they can't win, so they might as well just give up trying."

Five minutes.

Ten minutes.

They talked and he listened.

Zhang Ye found out about a lot of things from their conversations and realized that so much had changed in the world. Three years made a world of difference.

Zhang Yuanqi had retired from the entertainment circle?

The young bloods ruled the industry?

A change of the guard among the Heavenly Kings and Queens?

PeterGo had made a comeback?

Zhang Ye sighed. Then he placed a stone down.

Chen Qiqi smiled and said, "So, you should watch more television when you have the time. Otherwise, your news will be too outdated. And you'll end up getting eliminated from society." Chen Qiqi then looked at the Go board and froze. She yelped as though someone had stepped on her tail. "Oh damn, y-you played the Cosmic Flow?"

Chen Niannian was dumbfounded!

Huo Yan was also very surprised!

Everyone looked like they had witnessed some sort of novel thing.

"The Cosmic Flow?"

"It's really the Cosmic Flow!"

"Damn, how many years have we not seen this!"

"There are still people who use the Cosmic Flow?"

"Uh, this is already such an outdated way of playing!"

Everyone was speechless and sighed at how the style of play was really a reflection of the person. This was such an old way of playing!

But Zhang Ye said, "What's wrong with the Cosmic Flow?"

Chen Niannian said, "After that earth-shattering war against the machines, the Cosmic Flow became the prevalent playstyle in Go. Be it the professionals or the amateurs, almost everyone adopted this style of play. I don't remember when it started, but the Cosmic Flow became overplayed and researched, so just about every variation of it got studied to the point where there could be no more secrets behind it. Therefore, almost no one uses it these days. It's a style that has virtually been eliminated from play."

But Zhang Ye just smiled and said nothing.

Huo Yan said, "But Qiqi, you're really in danger this time."

Chen Niannian also said, "This big bro is very strong."

Chen Qiqi said dejectedly, "I was distracted and didn't notice that he was playing the Cosmic Flow. Otherwise, I wouldn't have played the way that I did. There are so many ways of countering this playstyle."

Zhang Ye said kindly, "Then let's not count this game."

Chen Qiqi resigned and conceded the game. "Let's play another game."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Sure."

This time, Chen Qiqi played in a more serious manner.

But not long after the game started, everyone exclaimed again.

"What?"

"It's the Cosmic Flow again?"

"Big Bro, just which era do you hail from?"

But Zhang Ye played on as usual.

Soon after, Chen Qiqi admitted defeat in the middlegame. "Aiya, I made a mistake!"

Although Huo Yan was a Xiangqi player, he also knew how to play Go. "Qiqi, you could've won."

Chen Qiqi thought so as well. "Yeah, I made the wrong move."

Chen Niannian giggled, "Sis, why don't I play instead. I've never lost against the Cosmic Flow. I figured out that outdated style of playing when I first picked up Go."

Chen Qiqi pursed her lips and said, "Alright, alright, it's your turn."

Chen Niannian sat over. "Big Bro, I won't be going easy on you."

Zhang Ye smiled. "No problem, let's just play normally."

Chen Niannian smiled. "Alright then! I'm gonna show you why the Cosmic Flow has been eliminated from play. You should really change to a new style of play."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "We'll see about that after you've won."

Chen Niannian said, "Alright!"

Huo Yan said, "You can do it, Niannian."

Another teenager said, "We're professional Go players, so don't you embarrass us."

Huo Yan said, "Niannian will be fine."

In their group, Chen Niannian's standard of play was the highest, and her ranking was also the highest. The opponent was only an amateur 9-dan, which was equivalent to a professional 3- or 4-dan. But playing against a professional 5-dan player like Chen Niannian was going to make a difference.

Furthermore, the opponent was using the outdated Cosmic Flow, so that would make it really easy to play against. They did not think that Chen Niannian would lose, and neither did Chen Niannian think so.

However, after just a few moves in the opening, Chen Niannian looked suffocated. It was as though she could not muster any strength.

Zhang Ye smiled.

Eliminated?

Outdated?

He had already heard those words too many times today.

I might really have fallen behind.

And I might really be outdated too.

Perhaps times really have changed.

However—

Zhang Ye raised his hand to place the final stone.

Across from him, Chen Niannian's game had already collapsed!

Chen Niannian was stunned!

Chen Qiqi was dumbfounded!

Everyone looked at Zhang Ye in astonishment!

Zhang Ye grinned.

But you guys still can't beat me all the same.

Chapter 1515: I'm back!

Throughout the journey, despair enveloped the group.

This was a group of professional Go players who had just begun their careers. They were supposed to be at their most successful and glorious peaks right now, yet in the end, an amateur who seemed to be out of touch with this era had used the eliminated Cosmic Flow from yesteryear to crush the group of them once over. Every game was played using the Cosmic Flow, and every game followed the same standard approach!

But they just could not win against it!

The Tian Style that Teacher Tian Weiwei had founded?

The Turtle Style¹ that Chen Ying had created?

They were all ineffective!

None of them could win against the Cosmic Flow!

What was with this situation?

Who the hell was this person?

Wasn't this amateur a little too strong for his ranking?

For a moment, the group of teenagers had a suspicion. It felt like this young man sitting across from them was the professional, while they were the amateurs!

Chen Niannian was convinced at her loss this time. "We've encountered an expert today."

Huo Yan said, "There's that saying about how talents walk among the common folk. I didn't used to believe it!"

Chen Qiqi shouted, "Big Bro...Uncle, you call this standard of yours amateur? You wouldn't have a problem even if you played professionally. Why don't you join our China Qiyuan?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "I'm someone who has fallen behind in time, so I'd better not be a bother to you guys."

Chen Qiqi rolled her eyes. "Why are you so petty?"

Zhang Ye laughed. "Haha."

Huo Yan rolled up his sleeves and said, "Looks like you guys need me to get called into action."

Chen Niannian curled her lips and said, "With your Go skills, I think you can forget about it."

Huo Yan chuckled. "I'll be playing Xiangqi with this big bro."

Everyone gave him looks of contempt.

"Get lost."

"He's a Go expert."

"Yeah, why would he play against a professional Xiangqi player like you?"

But Zhang Ye said, "We're stuck in traffic anyway, so why not play a game?"

Huo Yan said excitedly, "Alright, come on!"

20 minutes later.

The bus arrived at Yalong Bay.

When the coach reached the westernmost zone of the resort where the villa hotel was located, Zhang Ye glanced out the window before lowering his head to play the last piece. "Checkmate." Then he said to the driver with a smile, "Driver, don't drive any further. You can drop me off at the curb. I'll be getting off here, thank you."

He stood up and walked towards the exit.

The group of teenagers were left behind on the bus in disbelief!

“Holy shit!”

“You can even play Xiangqi?”

“Oh my God!”

The bus stopped and the door opened.

Zhang Ye smiled and said, “Thanks for giving me a lift. I’ll be going then.”

Chen Qiqi shouted outside, “Master, who exactly are you?”

Chen Niannian also said, “Don’t tell me you really know our aunt?”

Zhang Ye got down from the bus and waved at their outstretched hands. “Send my regards to your aunt and Little Tian.”

Chen Qiqi asked, “Send what regards?”

Zhang Ye laughed. “Just say that I’m back.”

Zhang Ye took his leave as his figure disappeared into the villa hotel.

Everyone on the bus looked at one another.

Huo Yan said in astonishment, “Could he really know Master Tian and Sister Chen?”

Chen Qiqi said angrily, “Who knows? He doesn’t even make himself clear and just says ambiguous things like ‘I’m back’? So who the hell is he?”

All of a sudden, a teenager said, “Hey, don’t you guys find him a little familiar?”

Huo Yan said, “Do you?”

“Ah, now that you mention it, it really feels so!” Chen Qiqi exclaimed.

Chen Niannian was also stunned. “He does look a little familiar!”

Chen Qiqi said, “But as his face was mostly covered up by the sunglasses, I couldn’t get a clear look at him!”

Huo Yan said, “In any case, the hotel he got off at isn’t that far from where we’re headed. Who knows, we might just bump into him again over the next few days.”

A girl said, “He’s staying at the No. 1 Villa Hotel? He must be really rich.”

...

The sun.

The sea.

The sand.

Zhang Ye's mood was lifted by the blowing sea breeze.

In front of him, a single villa stood close to the sea. Such standalone villas that faced the sea weren't particularly abundant in the entire hotel. So there weren't that many people to be seen on the private beach. Some tropical and subtropical plants stood in the villa's yard and created a large shady region. The environment here felt quite comfortable to live in.

One step.

Two steps.

The closer Zhang Ye got, the harder his heart thumped. He was a little excited and a little scared at the same time.

It had been more than three years. How was his family doing?

Were his parents doing well?

Were there wrinkles on Old Wu's face now?

Would his child not acknowledge him?

In a split second, Zhang Ye started imagining all kinds of scenarios. The next moment, he heard two very familiar voices that nearly made him cry.

A middle-aged woman's voice rang out. "Let's go and swim."

A middle-aged man's voice sounded. "You're like lead in water. Why would you want to go swimming for?"

"Zeqing spent so much money to bring us here to Sanya for a vacation. What a waste it would be if we didn't go swimming."

"I'm too lazy to move. I'll just lie down here in the yard. Hai, how much longer do you reckon it'll be until Little Ye comes home? Why aren't we allowed to visit him anymore?"

"The sentence was for six years, so there are still three more years to go."

"It's the Lunar New Year again. Don't you miss our son?"

The middle-aged woman harrumphed and said, "Don't mention him. I've almost forgotten that he exists."

Outside.

Seeing his parents out there in the yard, Zhang Ye was almost unable to control himself. But when he heard those words come from his mother, he couldn't help but roll his eyes. He harrumphed and strode over, exclaiming, "Who have you forgotten about?"

When his voice blared, it dumbfounded the couple in the yard!

His father looked over, startled!

His mother turned around in shock!

Zhang Ye gave them a smile. "I'm back!"

His father stood up at once. "Son!"

His mother also shouted and rushed up to him. "Damn, what are you doing out here, kid? Did you break out of prison?"

Zhang Ye saw red. "Why would I break out of prison!"

His father said excitedly, "So what's going on?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "I've made contributions to the country and received a sentence reduction."

"So you mean that you've earned an early release?" his mother asked.

Zhang Ye replied, "Yes."

His mother said, "Has the formal paperwork been processed already?"

Zhang Ye rolled his eyes. "Of course."

His father yelled out thrice, "Good, good, good!"

His mother held his hand and did not let go. "Quick, let me take a good look at you. How were you in prison? Did you suffer? Did they make you perform hard labor?"

Zhang Ye said happily, "No."

"You must have suffered. Let me see if you became thinner." His mother pinched his cheeks and squeezed his shoulders, then remarked in a speechless manner, "Hey, why does it seem like you've put on weight instead?"

Zhang Ye said, "The food inside was pretty good."

His mother said, "How did you know that we were here?"

Zhang Ye said, "I naturally have my ways of finding out."

His father said, "Whatever it is, it's just good to have you back! It's so good to have you back!"

His mother smiled and said, "Zeqing will be so happy. They will return very soon. You haven't met your daughter yet, right?"

Zhang Ye said, "I saw her photo right after she got born."

"The girl is very adorable," his father said with a smile.

His mother said happily, "I can only say this: It seems like fortune favors the foolish when it comes to you."

Zhang Ye was also unable to wait any longer.

At this moment, an inflatable beach ball bounced several times and rolled towards the beach that was just beyond the villa's yard. Then a little girl around three years old stumbled over to pick up the ball. She looked eagerly at Zhang Ye, who was standing in the yard.

Zhang Ye was stunned!

She's so adorable!

She's so cute!

Tears nearly rolled down his cheeks. Then he strode over in a hurry and picked the child up. "My daughter, my dear daughter, let Daddy have a good look at you. Did you miss Daddy? Did you? Aiyo, I missed you so much! Come, let Daddy pinch your cute little face."

Someone tugged at him from the side.

Zhang Ye looked up in shock and saw a woman in her 20s standing beside him.

The woman did not know whether to laugh or cry. She said, "Bro, that's my child."

Zhang Ye was dumbfounded. "Ah?"

The woman bent down to pick her daughter up and hurriedly carried her away.

Zhang Ye nearly fainted onto the beach.

Behind him, his mother clutched her forehead and said, "Can you embarrass yourself any more than that?"

Zhang Ye said angrily, "Why didn't you tell me then?"

His father said, "You rushed over to her before we could even react."

Zhang Ye was a little embarrassed.

At this moment, another little girl came walking over from the beach.

Zhang Ye immediately fixed his eyes on her. "Daughter!"

His mother anxiously pulled him back. "That's not her either!"

Chapter 1516: The couple reunites!

On the beach.

Zhang Ye was claiming every little girl that he saw as his daughter.

His parents quickly pulled him back into the villa. "Zeqing brought the child out to play in the water. I think they went to take a ride on a speedboat. But since your dad and I get seasick easily, we didn't go with them. I assume they'll be back soon. Rascal, don't you go out to the beach and create any more trouble. Other people might just mistake you as a child trafficker if you keep doing that."

His father said, "After three years in prison, your mom and I thought that you would have changed for the better and learned how to calm down. But just look, you're still the same as before."

Zhang Ye exclaimed, "Aren't I just anxious and looking forward to seeing my wife and daughter?"

His father said, "What's the use of being anxious?"

Zhang Ye urged, "Give Zeqing a call, quick."

His father said, "But she didn't bring her cell phone with her."

So Zhang Ye paced around in the living room, looking outside occasionally. "What do you two think I should say when I see Old Wu and my child later?"

His mother said in amusement, "You're asking us that?"

Zhang Ye was very perplexed.

There was so much to say, but when the time came for a reunion, he ended up feeling extremely nervous. In these past three or so years, Zhang Ye had been looking forward to this day when he was finally able to come home. He had imagined this scene on countless occasions, thinking about what his first words would be when he saw Old Wu again.

—I'm back?

—Thank you?

—How have you been?

Just what should he say?

And how should he say it?

Suddenly, Zhang Ye looked at the corner of the living room.

"Eh, there's even a piano in the villa?"

"It was probably placed there by the hotel. There's one in every villa."

"Hai, I haven't touched the piano in so long."

...

Half an hour later.

On the beach.

A beautiful woman was holding the hand of a little girl around the age of three and slowly walking over.

Other parents had also brought their children out onto the beach as well. When they saw this little girl, all of them immediately took a liking to her.

"Yo, this child is so beautiful."

"Yes, she's just like a porcelain doll."

"Big Sis, is this your child?"

"Do be careful around here. The beach is a little dangerous at the moment."

“Yes, that’s right. A man nearly carried away my daughter just now, and all of that happened in broad daylight too.”

“Aiyo, I met that crazy person as well. When he saw my child, he kept calling her his daughter. That gave me such a scare. In the end, her father heard it in the distance and even took it up with me by questioning me about who the child really belonged to. He even insisted on getting a paternity test done. Just tell me, how was I supposed to argue against that with logic? I don’t even know what happened.”

“Hahahaha.”

Wu Zeqing had a pair of sunglasses on. She smiled and said, “Alright, we will be more careful as well.”

The little girl had taken this opportunity to loosen herself from Wu Zeqing’s grip. She squatted down alone on the beach and used her little hand to clumsily write something in the sand. It looked like she was trying to write her own name. From the looks of it, she must have just started learning how to write since she wasn’t good at it yet. A simple “Zhang” character was written very crookedly, and it looked ugly.

Wu Zeqing patted her head and said, “Let’s go, Nana and Pops are waiting for us.”

The little girl did not listen and insisted on continuing to write.

Wu Zeqing smiled and said, “Let your daddy teach you how to write it next time.”

Only then did the little girl look up. “My daddy knows how to write?”

Wu Zeqing smiled. “Does he know how to write? Of course he does. Your daddy is the best in the nation when it comes to calligraphy. His semi-cursive is the best in the world too. Mommy can’t compare to him at all. When he gets back, I’ll have him teach you properly. He will surely teach you better than Mommy has taught you.”

The little girl said, “Oh, when will Daddy get home?”

Wu Zeqing held her hand and said, “Soon.”

The little girl asked again, “Is Daddy really very, very awesome?”

Wu Zeqing gave a wide smile and said, “Yes, your daddy is really amazing. He’s the most impressive host in China, and the best calligrapher, mathematician, and Go master in the world.”

The little girl said in a childish voice, “The pre-school teachers also talk about my daddy a lot.”

Wu Zeqing led the child back in the direction of the villa. “Your daddy’s legend is everywhere. Be it in the hosting field, in the music industry, in the calligraphy world, in the field of mathematics, or in the Go world, your daddy is someone they will never be able to escape talking about no matter how long has passed. If you want to listen to the things that your daddy has done in the past, Mommy will slowly tell you about them. I could tell stories about him for over a year and not tell them all.”

Up ahead, they had almost reached the villa.

All of a sudden, the keys of a piano rang out.

Several of the men and women who were out on the beach to sunbathe turned to look in the direction of the music.

“Eh, who’s that playing ‘Legend’¹?”

“There are still people listening to such an old song?”

“It’s a classic nonetheless.”

“It’s a classic alright. That’s a song of its time.”

“Yeah, a song of its time.”

The singing drifted out.

“Because I took a second glance at you in the crowd.

“I could never forget your face.

“Dreaming that one day we’ll bump into each other again.

“Since then, I’ve been yearning for you.”

Wu Zeqing wore an expression of reminiscence.

The little girl exclaimed, “It’s Daddy’s song! It’s Daddy’s song!”

Wu Zeqing smiled and said, “Yes, it was the song that Daddy sang for Mommy at our wedding. He has only sung this song one time in his life, but the impression I had of it was so deep. It was even the first time that I saw your daddy crying, and Mommy cried that day too.” Then, she led her daughter into the villa’s yard. “Nana and Pops must be thinking of your daddy too. That’s why they’re playing his song.”

She pushed open the door.

Zhang Ye’s parents were standing there.

Wu Zeqing said, “Dad, Mom, are you the ones playing the song?”

Zhang Ye’s mom smiled.

As she finished speaking, Wu Zeqing froze. This was because she had suddenly discovered after she came in that the piano sound did not come from the TV or the computer. The television wasn’t even on, and the computer was not booted up either. The piano was seemingly right beside her. It was very close, very, very close!

Wu Zeqing was taken aback. Her eyes fell at once to the corner of the living room!

The little girl was also stunned. She stood there stupefied, watching that man sitting there and playing the piano.

“When I think of you, you appear on the horizon.

“When I think of you, you appear before my eyes.

“When I think of you, you appear in my mind.

"When I think of you, you appear in my heart."

Zhang Ye played and sang at the same time. His eyes had already reddened!

"I like to think we promised each other in a past life.

"And that the story of our love won't change in this life.

"I'd rather spend my whole life waiting for you to find out.

"That I've always been at your side and never far away."

Wu Zeqing smiled and then she cried.

Because of his excitement, Zhang Ye's hands that were playing the piano were trembling.

"I like to think we promised each other in a past life.

"And that the story of our love won't change in this life.

"I'd rather spend my whole life waiting for you to find out.

"That I've always been at your side and never far away."

He had only sung this song once in his life, and that was during his wedding to Wu Zeqing where he played and sang for her. This song contained so many of Zhang Ye and Wu Zeqing's stories and carried so many of their feelings for each other. Today was the second time that Zhang Ye was singing this song. All he wanted to say was spoken through this song.

In prison.

At the research institute.

At the military airbase.

No matter where Zhang Ye had been, his heart had never left her; it had never been far away.

Chapter 1517: Daughter!

By the beach.

"Eh? This song doesn't sound right?"

"Yeah, it doesn't sound like the original version?"

"Yup, some parts of the song sound different. The piano melody isn't right either."

"But there's only one version of 'Legend.' That man has only sung it once before."

"It's probably a cover by someone?"

"Could it be an impersonator singing?"

"Now that you mention it, this voice really sounds like that guy's."

“Right, it’s too alike.”

“The contestants in the impersonation shows these days are amazing.”

After listening for a while and chatting about it with laughter, everyone dispersed and went back to their own activities like swimming or playing with their children. No one really took it seriously. But no one could have thought that this song was actually being sung by Zhang Ye himself. No one could have thought that Zhang Ye had actually returned!

No one outside could have expected it!

And neither could those who were inside!

In the villa.

Zhang Ye and Wu Zeqing stood face to face.

After more than three years, their family was finally reunited.

He looked at her.

She looked at him.

She asked, “You’re back?”

He said, “I’m back.”

This familiar face was still as gentle and beautiful as ever.

Zhang Ye sniffed and said with a smile, “Why do you still look the same?”

Wu Zeqing also smiled. “You’ve not changed either.”

“That’s for sure.” Zhang Ye laughed and said, “I’ve been eating and sleeping well. Mom even remarked that I seemed to have put on weight.”

Wu Zeqing said, “Why were you released three years ahead of schedule?”

His mother said, “He said that he made some contributions to the country, so he got a sentence reduction. Who knows what he has been doing? This kid is always blowing smoke and never speaks truthfully.”

Wu Zeqing smiled and said, “It’s good that you’re back.”

His father also said happily, “Right, it’s good as long as you’re back!”

His mother suddenly slapped her thigh. “We have to quickly inform your grandpa and grandma. And your uncles, cousins, and aunts. Everyone misses you so much!”

Zhang Ye hurriedly waved them off. “Mom, don’t do that yet. We’ll be going back to Beijing in some days anyway, so I’ll definitely go and pay them all a visit. Don’t tell anyone about this yet. If the news gets out, I won’t have a moment of peace. I still wish to spend this holiday happily with you all.”

His mother scoffed, "Kid, don't be overthinking things. If the news gets out? Do you still think that you're the same old Heavenly King? You've left the entertainment circle for more than three years. Do you know what the world has become? Do you know how advanced technology has become? Do you know that the entertainment circle has been turned upside down? There are too many celebrities these days, and most of them are young hunks. The media can't even handle the number of newcomers entering the industry these days, so who would care about you?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "True that."

His father asked, "Now that you're back, are you still thinking of getting back to the entertainment circle?"

Zhang Ye nodded.

His father said, "But—"

Zhang Ye grinned and said, "We'll talk about it again in the future."

He did not want to talk about anything related to work right now. All he wanted to do was to take a break for a while and not do or think about anything at all. He just wanted to spend time with his family.

At this moment, Wu Zeqing suddenly remembered something.

His parents also facepalmed when they thought of an important matter.

The child! They had totally forgotten about the child!

Zhang Ye had never met his child before, and neither had his child met her father!

Wu Zeqing turned around and said, "Sisi, come here."

Sisi?

Zhang Ye swept his gaze to the corner where a little girl stood. She was so adorable. Her nose, eyes, and chin were exactly just like Old Wu's. She looked like she was an exact replica of her mother and seemed to have a very quiet personality. The cheeks on her little face were flushed and her large eyes were staring at Zhang Ye. Zhang Ye's heart melted. He could feel his legs turning to rubber. It was like he was floating.

This is my daughter?

This is my daughter?

Zhang Ye took two quick steps forward.

Seeing this, Sisi hid behind Wu Zeqing. She clutched her mother's long dress and pressed her little head against her mother's leg. She wouldn't come forward no matter what they said.

Zhang Ye stopped in his tracks. He was also extremely nervous.

Wu Zeqing caressed her daughter's head with the back of her hand. "This is Daddy."

Sisi looked down and stayed quiet.

Zhang Ye's mother said in amusement, "Heh, this child."

His father also said, "Aren't you always asking when your daddy will be back? Now that he is back to see Sisi, why don't you say Daddy?"

Wu Zeqing patted her head and said, "Quick, say Daddy."

Zhang Ye's heart was pounding. "Daughter."

Sisi's head poked out warily from the side of her mother's leg as she stole a glance at Zhang Ye. Seeing him also looking at her, Sisi got scared and quickly turned around not knowing what to do and ran back into the bedroom.

"Sisi!"

"Where are you off to?"

"Come back."

Zhang Ye's parents were calling for her.

Wu Zeqing said, "I'll go and get her to come out."

Zhang Ye said, "No need, no need, it will take time."

His mother pondered and said, "You're right. The child must be scared now that her father has popped up out of nowhere."

Zhang Ye said in a speechless manner, "What do you mean by popping up out of nowhere? Why would you put it like that?"

His mother laughed and said, "It's your fault for messing around and getting yourself locked up. Otherwise, if you had accompanied the child since her birth, would she not acknowledge you?"

Zhang Ye rolled his eyes and said, "Mom, did you keep talking bad about me in front of my daughter during these three years that I wasn't around?"

His mother said, "I was just speaking the truth."

Wu Zeqing smiled and said, "Sisi is just shy. I'll go and look at her."

Zhang Ye rubbed his hands together and said, "Alright, help me find out what's wrong, Old Wu."

He quietly followed behind but did not enter the bedroom. He stood outside the door and peeked in.

Sisi had burrowed herself under the bed's blankets.

Wu Zeqing turned around and shook her head with a smile at Zhang Ye, then lifted the corner of the blankets and had a look inside. "Sisi, what are you doing? Are you sleeping this early in the morning? Daddy has come back, so why are you running away?"

Zhang Ye's mother also went into the room. "Granddaughter, where are you?"

A voice came from under the blankets. "Nana, I'm under the covers."

Zhang Ye's mother said, "Oh, you're hiding under the covers?"

Sisi said, "Mhm."

Zhang Ye's mother said in amusement, "Is your daddy so scary?"

Sisi did not say anything.

Wu Zeqing reached her hand in and patted her daughter on the head. "Is it because you can't believe that Daddy is back?"

Sisi said, "Mhm."

Zhang Ye's mother said, "That's your daddy, your father."

Wu Zeqing said, "That's right, would Nana lie to you?"

Sisi said, "The teachers at preschool all say that my daddy is the greatest celebrity in Asia."

Wu Zeqing smiled. "Is it because he doesn't look great to you?"

Sisi said, "Mhm."

Zhang Ye was floored.

I'm not great?

I'm just keeping a low profile, alright!

When I'm great, I even scare myself with how great I can be!

Wu Zeqing smiled. "Silly girl, Daddy's greatness isn't something that you can see from his looks. When your daddy was calling the shots years ago, today's big shots were not even known. At that time, whenever your daddy's name was mentioned, even demons would shiver in fright."

Zhang Ye's mother echoed, "Even the monsters would avoid meeting with your daddy."

Eh?

Why does this sound like he was being scolded?

Zhang Ye saw red. Is this how you all have been introducing me to my daughter all these years?!

Monsters?

Demons?

It's no wonder my child is so afraid of me!

Even I would fucking panic if I heard something like that!

Chapter 1518: Old friends

Noon.

His mother had called to order a barbecue.

"Just place it here."

"Alright, Auntie."

"Oh yes, bring some more beer. It's a grand occasion today."

"Is someone celebrating their birthday?"

"It's not that. My son has just come back!"

Several of the hotel's staff carried the barbecue equipment and food over to the villa's yard. They also brought over a lot of cold beers and placed them on the table. As Zhang Ye was afraid that he would get recognized, he habitually put on his sunglasses again. This had become a reflex of his over the years ever since he started working in the industry. But he soon discovered that no one seemed to have noticed him at all, much less recognized who he was.

When the hotel staff left.

His mother laughed and said, "Was that necessary?"

Zhang Ye chuckled and said, "The sun was too bright. Can't I put on my sunglasses on for that reason?"

His father called him over. "Son, let's drink together today!"

"Whoa, it's so rare seeing you wanting to drink," Zhang Ye said happily.

Wu Zeqing brought their daughter out and said, "Our dad is just really happy today."

His father said, "That's right, I'm very happy today."

His mother said sarcastically, "What are you so happy about? Now that this kid is back, something big is surely going to happen again. Do you think he can give it a rest for even a day? Like I'd believe that!"

Wu Zeqing laughed.

Everyone got seated.

Sisi was sitting in Wu Zeqing's lap. Sometimes, she would give Zhang Ye a look, then steal another glance at him every now and then.

Wu Zeqing smiled and signaled to Zhang Ye with her eyes. She whispered, "Our daughter seems to be paying a lot of attention on you. Let her get used to it first and take it slowly."

Zhang Ye nodded.

His father said, "Come, let's toast."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Sure."

Wu Zeqing also raised her cup. "Cheers."

Zhang Ye said, "Dad, Mom, Old Wu, it's been hard on you these past few years. I'm not gonna say anything else, so lemme toast you. I'll drink first, and you can drink at your own pace."

He emptied the cup into his mouth.

His father sighed like he had a lot to get off his chest.

Only then did Zhang Ye ask, "How has everyone in the family been?"

His father said, "Your grandpa had some heart issues last year and underwent a heart stent procedure. He has recovered quite well since then. Your grandma still has the same old problems. She still has high blood pressure and cerebral thrombosis, but they're all under control. As for your mom and I, we're doing quite alright."

Zhang Ye asked, "Have we renovated the house yet?"

His mother laughed and said, "Renovate? We've already moved out from there."

Zhang Ye said, "Where did you move to?"

His mother said, "Some place not too far from where Zeqing is living. She has to go to work, so your dad and I take care of your daughter. Oh, and sometimes it's Zeqing's parents who take care of her."

Zhang Ye looked at Old Wu, "How're Mom and Dad doing?"

Wu Zeqing smiled. "Pretty good."

His mother said, "Yes, it's just that Zeqing's dad would put you down so often."

His father laughed and said, "That's only because our son did not live up to their expectations. Since there's some resentment, surely we can allow him some criticism."

His mother said, "About your return, aren't you going to let Zeqing's family know about it?"

Zhang Ye hurriedly waved his hands. "Please don't tell them. Wait until I return to Beijing so that I can go and apologize to them in person. If we tell them now, I'm afraid that Father-in-law will take the next plane and come for me in the afternoon."

Everyone laughed.

Wu Zeqing smiled and said, "Don't say that. I think it's actually possible that he would do something like that. Quite a few people from the China Qiyuan have also come to Sanya on vacation. If I remember correctly, they should be staying near our hotel. My parents had wanted to come as well, but they didn't as they don't really like flying."

Zhang Ye said, "I've already met the Qiyuan people."

Wu Zeqing said, "When did you see them?"

"On the way here." Zhang Ye said with a laugh, "I got a ride from them, but they didn't recognize me. I even played several games of Go with them."

His mom exclaimed, "You haven't touched Go in so many years. Can you still play?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Of course."

Wu Zeqing asked, "Did any of the newcomers catch your eye?"

Zhang Ye gave it some thought and said, "They're alright. They aren't too bad. I played some games with Chen Ying's two nieces and saw many ways of playing that I've never encountered before."

Wu Zeqing nodded and said, "In these years that you've been away, the Go world has undergone a lot of change. There are a lot more playstyles now, and many of them were innovated by my dad and those old comrades he retired alongside. They studied all the different ways of playing and came up with new ones in order to deal with the AI. But after two years, there is still no one who can beat PeterGo in a match."

His father sighed and said, "The Go world is in such a terrible state right now."

Zhang Ye said, "I've also heard a little about this."

Wu Zeqing smiled and said, "That's why my dad keeps putting you down whenever he's at home. He says that if you were around, there could still be a chance that humans could turn the tables on PeterGo."

Zhang Ye's eyes narrowed as he smiled and said, "Aren't I back now?"

Wu Zeqing said, "When do you intend to announce this to the public?"

Zhang Ye said, "We'll see about that. I haven't decided yet."

Out of the blue, Sisi said, "Mommy, I'm full."

Wu Zeqing nodded. "Alright, why don't you go and play by yourself?"

Sisi said, "I want to play Go."

Wu Zeqing smiled. "Why don't you play with Daddy then?"

Zhang Ye replied excitedly, "Yes, yes, Daddy will play with you."

Sisi was unwilling. "I want Mommy to play with me."

Wu Zeqing ruffled her hair and said, "Mommy isn't as good as Daddy. Didn't I already tell you that? Daddy is the greatest Go player in the world. Back then, there was no one in the entire world who could beat him."

Zhang Ye corrected, "What do you mean 'back then'? It's still relevant now."

Sisi whispered, "Is he better than Grandpa?"

Wu Zeqing said, "Of course."

"Hur hur." Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Even if there are ten of your grandpas, they wouldn't be a match for Daddy. He will always lose to me."

His mother rolled her eyes. "Will it kill you to brag less?"

Sisi did not believe that. She tugged at Wu Zeqing's sleeve. "Mommy, I want you to play with me."

Wu Zeqing could do nothing about it. "Alright then."

The mother and daughter set up the Go board nearby.

Zhang Ye asked his father. "My daughter can even play Go?"

His father laughed and said, "It was Zeqing's dad who taught her. He teaches her whenever she goes over to their place. He says that it would help with the early development of her intelligence. In fact, Teacher Changhe's teaching method is quite good. The girl is very smart too and doesn't play too badly. It happens that Sisi is also quite interested in the game herself."

She likes to play Go?

That is good!

This is an opportunity!

...

Meanwhile.

At Yalong Bay. In a hotel's restaurant.

A group of over 30 people were sitting together. Chen Qiqi and Chen Niannian were also among them.

"Have you all stowed your luggage in your rooms?"

"Yes."

"Alright, let's eat then. We'll assemble for training tomorrow."

"Ah? We're starting tomorrow?"

"Did you really think we're here on vacation?"

"Alright, we get it, Teacher Tian."

"We'll have one day of rest and start taking on PeterGo in batches from tomorrow onward."

"Ah? Please, no."

"What are you guys yelling about? This is the training schedule we planned."

Tian Weiwei lectured them with a stern face. He looked like he had matured a lot and was no longer the green teenager who was a crybaby several years ago.

Much had happened in these past few years. The artificial intelligence had dealt the Go world a bloodbath and a storm was raging. The former world number one of the Go world, Xiang Rong 9-dan, had quietly gone into retirement, while Li Yi 9-dan and the others gradually left the scene as well. The Go world was devastated, so a lot of people were forced to grow up quickly.

At this moment, Chen Ying came over from afar.

There were also a few others with her. They were all of the higher ranked professional Go players.

Chen Qiqi pulled a long face and said, "Aunt, are you all going to challenge PeterGo again?"

Chen Ying said with a smile, "Yes, you guys are the future hope of the Go world. What you have to do now is to study your opponent and familiarize yourselves with it. You have to believe that PeterGo is not unbeatable. There will come a day when someone will beat it. Teacher Tian and I, along with everyone else at the Qiyuan, are hoping that the person will be one of you. This is because you are the most outstanding players among the newcomers."

Chen Niannian gave a bitter smile. "What future hope of the Go world? Aunt, don't speak so highly of us already."

Chen Ying was taken aback. She said in amusement, "What's the matter?"

A girl said, "Hai, don't mention it."

A boy said, "While we were on the way here, we were crushed by someone."

Tian Weiwei was startled. "There's someone who can defeat you guys in Go?"

Chen Qiqi said dejectedly, "Yeah, it was an expert amateur player who beat us."

Chen Niannian added, "And he even uses that really old Cosmic Flow playstyle. It was such a bloodbath, and he also knows how to play Xiangqi."

An 8-dan Go player asked curiously, "Who is that person?"

Chen Qiqi shook her head. "I don't know."

Chen Niannian said, "Oh yes, I think he said that he knows Teacher Tian and Aunt."

Chen Ying and Tian Weiwei looked at each other. "He knows us?"

Chen Qiqi couldn't explain it. "The man is about this tall, and he was wearing a pair of sunglasses, so we didn't get to see his face properly. In any case, his Go skill is pretty impressive. He claims to be an amateur 9-dan, but I think he's higher ranked than that."

Chen Niannian interrupted, "He didn't say that he was an amateur 9-dan. Now that I think about it, he only said that he was a 9-dan."

Chen Qiqi rolled his eyes. "Like he would be a professional 9-dan? There are only so many professional 9-dan players in history. Would we not know if he was one of them?"

Chen Niannian said, "Well, that's true."

Tian Weiwei said, "Or maybe it was one of the retired Go players?"

Chen Ying said, "Where is he staying?"

Chen Niannian pointed west. "At No. 1 Villa Hotel."

Chen Ying didn't really take this matter to heart either. "I guess we'll know who it is if we ever bump into him over the next few days."

Chapter 1519: Zhang Ye, the first-time dad

The next day.

On the third day of the Lunar New Year.

It wasn't even 6 in the morning yet.

His parents were still in bed, and Old Wu and his daughter were still sleeping as well. Zhang Ye had already woken up and walked out of the villa to the beach. He laid down on a recliner and watched the sea from behind his sunglasses. Listening to the sound of the waves and enjoying the cool sea breeze, he felt particularly at peace.

Family.

Freedom.

This is what life is.

Zhang Ye was in a fantastic mood. This was one of the happiest days of his life in recent years. He didn't usually have any problems with falling asleep, but this time, he didn't manage to sleep much for the entire night. His mind was filled with the smiles of his family members, as well as that cute daughter of his. Although the little girl was still afraid of him and had not even called him "Daddy" yet, Zhang Ye was not bothered by it because he knew that he owed his family too much over the past few years. He knew that he had not fulfilled his responsibilities as a father yet, so he was looking to make up for everything that he had not done for his child since her birth.

Not far away.

Several teenagers were on their morning jog.

"Aiyo, I'm so tired."

"We have one lap to go."

"Qiqi, you can do it."

"How can Teacher Tian make us exercise so early in the morning!"

"We need to improve our mental and physical strength."

Hearing that, Zhang Ye looked over and broke into a smile. Laying down luxuriating, he waved at them, saying, "Hey."

The teenagers turned to look at him and were startled for a bit.

Chen Qiqi said in surprise, "Wow, it's Masterful Bro!"

Chen Niannian waved and said, "Master, why are you wearing sunglasses so early in the morning?"

Huo Yan stopped in his tracks. "We meet again."

Zhang Ye asked, "Are you guys doing morning exercises?"

Huo Yan sighed and said, "Yeah, it's included in the Qiyuan's training schedule. Actually, it's only the Go Association that has to do the training. But since Teacher Tian is the one leading the group, our Xiangqi Association's players were also rounded up and forced to follow their training schedule."

Chen Qiqi went over. "Master, we mentioned you to Teacher Tian and our aunt yesterday. My aunt is pretty curious as to which old friend you are and would like to meet with you. Why don't you go back with us later? It's only at the hotel at the east side of the resort, so it's not that far away."

Zhang Ye waved it off and said with a laugh, "Forget it. I'm not part of your Qiyuan, so I won't be going."

Chen Niannian said, "But you really do have the ability to play professionally. Even if you can't compare to Teacher Tian, you're pretty close to the level that we professional 4- or 5-dan players are at. If you train a little and learn some new ways of playing instead of sticking to that outdated Cosmic Flow strategy, you'll definitely become better at the game. Maybe you don't know this, but do you have an idea of who Changhe 9-dan is? Teacher Changhe has been working with us to innovate many new ways of playing Go over the past few years, and I think you should learn to play in those ways."

Changhe 9-dan?

How can I not know him? That's my father-in-law, alright!

Learn his style of playing?

Forget it! What sort of playstyles can he possibly create with that standard of his?

Chen Niannian asked, "What's your current job?"

Zhang Ye answered, "I'm temporarily unemployed."

Chen Qiqi said, "Eh, then why are you staying at such an expensive hotel?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "My wife is rich."

Chen Niannian criticized, "Uncle, you shouldn't be depending on your wife like that. A man has got to be independent. Come to our Qiyuan. It's pretty good money if you become a professional Go player."

Chen Qiqi took a stab at him and said, "It's just that you're a little old for it."

Zhang Ye didn't know whether to laugh or cry. "Is that so?"

Chen Qiqi said, "The acknowledged prime age in the Go world is around 20 or so. The older you are, the more likely your level of play will drop."

Zhang Ye smiled. "Alright then."

A female Go player said, "Hai, you have it pretty easy here. We still have to go and play against PeterGo later in the morning."

Chen Qiqi said pained, "Yeah, just thinking about it makes me so frustrated. Teacher Tian is making us take turns to play against PeterGo, then study the matches and write reports about them."

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Isn't that quite good? You can train yourselves that way."

Chen Niannian said sadly, "It's not good at all. Playing against PeterGo makes us feel so hopeless. It's hopelessness right from the start until the end, and that affects our confidence badly."

Zhang Ye said, "You're all young, so it's necessary to practice more."

Chen Qiqi harrumphed, "Would you enjoy it if you lost at Go every day?"

But Zhang Ye said, "I've never lost before."

When everyone heard that, they couldn't help but roll their eyes.

Never lost before?

How is that possible!

How can there be anyone in the world who has never lost a game before?

Can you not brag?

But unbeknownst to them, Zhang Ye had truly never lost before. He did lose some single games, but in the context of a match, be it two wins out of three, or three wins out of five, Zhang Ye had not ever lost once.

At this moment, a hotel employee came over. "Hello, sorry about this, but this beach is private property. We can't allow anyone who isn't staying here to come in."

Huo Yan said, "Alright, we'll leave right away."

Chen Niannian waved. "We'll carry on with our morning jog then, Masterful Bro."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "See ya around."

After they left, Zhang Ye had a look at his watch and got up to go back into the villa. Seeing that his parents and Old Wu were still not up yet, he started feeling a little sleepy again. So he laid down and returned to sleep.

Five minutes.

Ten minutes.

After some time, Zhang Ye's ears pricked up. He could feel that someone was by the bedside. He sneaked a peek through the slit in his eyes and saw something that made him very happy.

It turned out that it was his daughter standing by the bedside.

Sisi was holding a doll in her hands and looking curiously at Zhang Ye.

Zhang Ye pretended to have just woken up. He yawned and opened his eyes. "Eh, daughter?"

Sisi jumped up in fright and ran out of the room.

Zhang Ye was very happy, and sweetness was drenching his heart. Then he got out of bed.

Outside, he could hear Old Wu's voice.

"What's the matter, Sisi?"

"N-Nothing."

"Did you go and see daddy?"

"No."

"Why did you run out of the room then?"

Sisi was mumbling.

Zhang Ye came out. "Daughter, can Daddy pick you up?"

Wu Zeqing smiled and said, "Can Daddy pick you up?"

Sisi shook her head and hid behind her mother.

Wu Zeqing smiled. "Then why don't you get Daddy to teach you how to play Go?"

Sisi was undecided for a long time before finally nodding her little head.

Wu Zeqing looked at her husband. "Teach her with a game."

"Sure." Zhang Ye said excitedly, "Here, come with Daddy to play Go."

Soon after, his parents also got up. When the two of them came out of their room, they saw the father-daughter pair playing Go in the living room and looked at each other, all smiles.

Zhang Ye's mother smiled and said, "Sisi, you didn't allow your daddy to go into your room to sleep with you and Mommy yesterday, but you're playing Go with him today?"

Zhang Ye said proudly, "Don't you meddle in the matters between me and my daughter."

His mother harrumphed, "Alright, I won't get involved then. Will that do?"

Wu Zeqing smiled and said, "This little kid ran over to her father's room the moment she woke up this morning. She's paying quite a bit of attention to him."

His father said, "That's because blood is thicker than water."

Wu Zeqing nodded and said, "Let's leave them alone and let the two of them spend some time together. Our daughter is meeting her father for the first time, and Little Ye is experiencing what it's like to be a dad for the first time. There needs to be a process, but I believe that Little Ye can do well."

His mother gave them the side-eye and said, "I'm just afraid that this rascal will influence my granddaughter in the wrong way."

Wu Zeqing laughed. "That won't happen."

Chapter 1520: Zhang Ye vs. AI!

In the morning.

Zhang Ye's parents and Old Wu were preparing to head out.

Sisi was getting anxious. "Mommy, where are you going?"

Wu Zeqing patted her head. "Mommy is going out to buy some groceries with Nana and Pops."

"Don't go." Sisi tugged at her.

"Your daddy is a picky eater and isn't used to eating non-home-cooked meals. Mommy and Nana will cook something nice for you and Daddy later." Wu Zeqing smiled and said, "Mommy will be back soon, so why don't you play Go with Daddy and have him teach you? Be good and listen to Daddy, OK?"

Zhang Ye's mother instructed, "Keep your eye on the child."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "I got it."

His father added, "Don't let her run out to the beach by herself."

Zhang Ye said, "I know. Do you have to be so worried with me around?"

"It's precisely because you're back that we're worried," his mother muttered.

Zhang Ye rolled his eyes at her.

After they left the villa, Zhang Ye's father said, "Is it alright to leave them by themselves?"

Wu Zeqing smiled and said, "It'll be fine, Dad."

Zhang Ye's mother said, "Let's go. We'll be back in an hour or two anyway."

Zhang Ye's father thought about it and agreed. They would only be away for a short while, so no matter how unreliable their son was, what was the worst that could happen? With that thought in mind, he felt reassured. Actually, they were deliberately doing this because they wanted to let the father and daughter spend some time together, to see how they could get along and get to know each other better.

In the villa.

Only the two of them were left in here.

It was quite evident that Sisi was starting to panic. The little kid kept peering towards the door while playing Go with Zhang Ye and would ask questions every now and then.

"When is Mommy coming back?"

"In a while."

"When is Nana coming back?"

"They just left. It'll be a while."

Her childish voice and behavior were incredibly adorable.

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Why? Is Daddy really that scary?"

Sisi lowered her head and stammered, "A-Are you really my daddy?"

Zhang Ye said, "Of course I am. I cannot be more real than this, so why don't you believe it? Didn't Mommy tell you? Would she lie to you?"

Sisi still did not seem to believe him. Zhang Ye's return had really come too suddenly.

Zhang Ye smiled and asked her, "Then how did you imagine Daddy?"

Sisi suddenly became a chatterbox. "Mommy said that my daddy is the most amazing person in the world who knows everything. Mommy would tell me stories that Daddy wrote. I've heard the story of Snow White and the Seven Dwarves and the Emperor's New Clothes too. They were all written by my daddy."

Zhang Ye reminisced. "Daddy wrote those stories when he first debuted."

Sisi said proudly, "My daddy can also sing, and he's the king of singers. He can write too, and is a calligraphy master, so he's very, very awesome."

Zhang Ye bragged, "I'm not that awesome, I'm just better than most people, that's all."

Sisi blinked and looked at him.

Zhang Ye said, "I really am your dad. What can I do to make you believe me?"

Sisi asked, "C-Can you beat the robot?"

Robot?

Did she mean the artificial intelligence?

Zhang Ye chuckled, "That thing has lost to me before."

Sisi said, "You're lying. Only my daddy has beat the robot before."

Zhang Ye said with a smile, "But I am your daddy. Why don't you believe me?"

Sisi bit her lip and said, "My grandma said that if my daddy comes back, he'll definitely beat the robot. Then Grandpa won't be so unhappy every day." Sisi then made a face that was just like Old Wu's as she looked at Zhang Ye with big, puppy dog eyes, waiting for him to say something.

Zhang Ye gulped and hesitated.

Sisi was immediately disappointed. "If it's my daddy, he would win."

Zhang Ye said with a wry smile. "My daughter, it's not that I can't win. I just want to spend more time with you and your mommy. Be it the entertainment circle or the matters of the Go world, I don't wish to get involved now that I've just returned. Your daddy hasn't been in contact with society for three years, and the world has experienced such rapid changes. Daddy has become really outdated, so there are many things that I would like to understand before I decide what to do next." Taking a pause, he said, "However, since it's a request from my daughter, I don't see a problem with it. Alright then, let me try playing against PeterGo to see how it is. I would like to see how much that loser has improved over the years."

Sisi was in a daze.

Zhang Ye belly laughed. "Come, let's go and see Daddy fight the robot!"

Sisi also got excited. "Can you win?"

Zhang Ye chuckled. "Give me a kiss first. If you give me a kiss, I'll be able to win for sure."

Sisi wasn't willing to.

Zhang Ye crouched down and pushed his face towards her.

Sisi clamped her lips together and planted a kiss on Zhang Ye's cheek.

Zhang Ye was on cloud nine. He bent down and picked his daughter up, then planted a kiss on her tender cheek. "Hahahaha, let's go, Daddy is full of strength!"

In the study room.

Zhang Ye booted up the computer.

Sisi sat down beside him and stared at the computer screen without blinking.

Zhang Ye said, "Wait while Daddy looks for his account."

Sisi said, "Mmm."

Zhang Ye typed in his password several times to no avail. "Man, my old account is gone. It's been more than three years, so I suppose they've shut it down? This Go server also seems to have been updated. It's totally unlike the one that I used before. Never mind, I'll just register a new account. Daughter, what name do you think we should call ourselves?"

Sisi blurted out, "Hero!"

Zhang Ye said in amusement, "Why did you choose that name?"

Sisi said, "Mommy says that my daddy is a hero."

Zhang Ye said, "Alright, we'll use that then."

The account registration didn't accept Chinese characters and could only be made with English letters.

Zhang Ye typed "HEOR" into the registration field and then said to his child confidently, "This is how you spell hero in English. Do you know English? Yes, this is the word for hero."

He went on and on explaining to her, but this fellow didn't even know that he had actually spelled it wrong.

The account registration was completed.

They logged on to the Go server.

After three long years, this was the first time that Zhang Ye was touching a mouse. It was so nostalgic that he found the feeling of a mouse in his hand a little unfamiliar. Holding the mouse, he pressed it several times but did not manage to click on the correct place on screen.

Sisi said anxiously, "Over there!"

Zhang Ye said in confusion, "Where?"

"There." Sisi reached out and pointed it out to him.

Zhang Ye followed to his daughter's instructions and finally found where PeterGo was hiding. This was a competition zone that was specially segregated for the artificial intelligence. Zhang Ye browsed through the instructions and found that PeterGo could accept a challenge from anyone. Perhaps due to server constraints or other restrictions, PeterGo wasn't able to challenge multiple players at once and could only play against one person at any point in time. Zhang Ye thought that he would have to queue to play since there were so many Go enthusiasts around the world and only one of PeterGo. If there were three to five people waiting ahead of him, then it would take several hours of waiting at least, wouldn't it?

However, he discovered upon clicking into the match room that there was not a single person inside!

No one was challenging PeterGo!

No one was viewing any games in here!

It was quiet beyond imagination. The competition match room was totally empty except for Zhang Ye's "HEOR" account. The only other thing that existed in here was a series of shocking records!

7451 wins!

0 losses!

Zhang Ye narrowed his eyes and smiled. What an arrogant track record this was. He suddenly remembered the things that the people from China Qiyuan had told him about on the way to Sanya. Just the number of games that the professional Go players around the world had challenged PeterGo to numbered in the thousands. The records here probably included those matches as well, while the rest of it was probably contributed by the semi-professional players and amateur enthusiasts. In two years, it had recorded 7451 wins in total. This was indeed too arrogant!

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "It's been two years, so it's about time that someone puts it in its place."

He felt like he had returned to the time he took on the machine years ago.

PeterGo, do you remember me? You made a comeback the moment I left? Did you think that I wouldn't return? Or did you think you've studied the games that we played thoroughly? But you definitely do not know that there are still many classic Go strategies from my previous world that you've never seen before, right? Hur hur, then I'll show them to you. Humans are still different from machines.

...

Sanya.

In a seafood marketplace.

Zhang Ye's mother suddenly rubbed her eyes. "Why are my eyes twitching?"

Wu Zeqing asked, "Are you alright?"

His mother said suspiciously, "Why does it feel like something is about to happen?"

His father curled his lips. "Stop going on and on about that. Little Ye has just returned. What could possibly happen?"