

## **Superstar 1551**

### **Chapter 1551: The battle of the grand champions begins!**

On this day.

It was the day of the battle of the grand champions.

In the afternoon, at a kindergarten.

“Sisi, over here.”

“Daddy, my daddy is here.”

“Come on, let’s go home.”

“Daddy, carry me.”

“Hur hur, you clingy little girl.”

At the front gate of the kindergarten, Zhang Ye had come to pick Sisi up from school.

The teachers were all very surprised to see him. Next to them, quite a few of the other children’s parents crowded around them. They couldn’t understand why Zhang Ye was in the mood to come to school to fetch his daughter.

His daughter’s form teacher asked anxiously, “Aren’t you taking part in the competition tonight?”

Zhang Ye was carrying his daughter and said with a smile, “Yes, it’s happening tonight at around 8 PM.”

“Then why are you still so leisurely coming around to pick your daughter up?” one of the children’s parents asked.

Another teacher asked dumbfoundedly, “Don’t you have to prepare for the competition tonight?”

Zhang Ye replied, “Of course I’m going to prepare for it. But I can’t forget about my child either. Hur hur, no matter how important work may be, my daughter is much more important to me.” He then lowered his head and gave Sisi a peck on the cheek. “Right, my dear?”

Sisi nodded hard. “Yes, Sisi is the most important!”

Everyone could only take their hats off to him.

They suddenly felt that Zhang Ye was no longer the same person. For a moment, everyone felt even more pessimistic about Zhang Ye’s battle tonight. Being tied down with a family, how could Zhang Ye possibly win? Could he still press forward without a care like the younger male idols of the entertainment industry these days?

...

On Weibo.

“What time does it start?”

“There are still two more hours to go.”

“Let’s see who will be the first to perform.”

“Haha, my Ququ will definitely sweep everyone aside.”

“Qiqi will definitely be victorious!”

“Haihai is the best!”

“Supporting Zhang Ye.”

“Previous poster, get lost!”

“What does a banned artist have against the might of our older brothers?”

“When Teacher Zhang was famous, those hunks weren’t even around yet!”

“That’s such old news, isn’t it?”

“Yeah, that’s right. Who isn’t more popular than Zhang Ye now?”

“He will surely be the first to get eliminated!”

...

At Beijing Television.

There was one hour left until the live broadcast began.

Although Zhang Ye was already running late, he still walked over at a leisurely pace.

The other contestants had already arrived. Immediately, all of them looked at him.

Xiao Lu was panicking badly. “Brother Zhang! My dear brother! Where on earth were you? I even had to call you twice before I could get through? The live broadcast is almost starting.”

Zhang Ye smiled. “I was cooking dinner, so I must have missed your call.”

Guan Xue said in a speechless manner, “You cooked dinner today?”

Zhang Ye said calmly, “I even picked up my daughter from school. That’s why I got delayed for a bit.”

Xiao Lu facepalmed. “I really have to give it to you.”

Zhang Ye laughed and said, “I’m not the same as you. Having been separated from my family and home for those few years, I have a lot of regrets. So I can only slowly make it up to them.”

Qi Liang looked at him.

Qu Dong was at a loss for words.

Hai Yifei was also rather taken aback.

Pick up his daughter?

Cook dinner?

Don't you know what day it is today?

This is I Am a Singer's battle of the grand champions, the culmination of the five seasons of the show! Whoever wins this honor would surely be sent directly to the top of the Chinese entertainment circle to stand alongside the big brothers and sisters!

Xiao Lu quickly said, "We're going to begin immediately. I'll brief you once more regarding the procedures. Everyone will first have to draw lots, then—" She went through the instructions very quickly.

Zhang Ye nodded. "Understood."

Xiao Lu subconsciously said, "You must bear that in mind." After saying that, she suddenly realized who she was speaking with and couldn't help but blush in embarrassment. She tried to cough it off. This show itself was thought up by Zhang Ye in the first place, and it was he who successfully produced and directed it. When Zhang Ye was doing the live broadcast arrangements back then, Xiao Lu was just a member of his team. So when she finished saying those words, she couldn't help but feel a little embarrassed about it.

But Zhang Ye said, "OK, I'll remember it."

Xiao Lu chuckled and said, "Come off it. I had better stop all that bullshit in your presence."

Zhang Ye smiled. "You're the executive director now, so of course I have to listen to you."

In fact, Xiao Lu was very nervous today. She had served as the executive director of I Am a Singer for two years now. Previously, it had always been Hu Fei who was in this role. But when Hu Fei was promoted to become the Deputy Station Head, Xiao Lu couldn't have expected that Brother Hu would hand over the star show of the station to her. She could still remember the exact words that Brother Hu said to her at that time. He told her that this show was left behind for them by Teacher Zhang, so she mustn't screw it up and disappoint him. Those words remained very clear in her mind, so when she learned that Zhang Ye was going to join the finale competition of the show, she couldn't help but feel perturbed. She felt even more nervous than when she first took over the reins as the executive director of the show. This was because she wanted to hand in the best possible answer that she could to Zhang Ye. She wanted to let him know that the show he had brought into this world had not been screwed up by her, and that she had not disappointed him!

The scheduled time was fast approaching.

The preparations for the broadcast were all in order.

After Xiao Lu had arranged everything, she suddenly went to Zhang Ye on her own and said to him, "Teacher Zhang, there's something that I've always found very regretful."

Zhang Ye was startled. "What is it?"

Xiao Lu looked at him. "Back on the first season of I Am a Singer, you didn't win as the grand champion because we had forced you to save the day after the role of the host was vacated. But as the executive director of the show, and for the sake of the station, you made many sacrifices on your part. We at

Beijing TV, as well as the people, all of us owe you the title of grand champion. You're not the executive director today, and you don't have any responsibilities for Beijing TV either, so you can finally sing as you like. It's time that you took home the title of grand champion. It belongs to you anyway, or at least, you should've been crowned as the grand champion four years ago."

Zhang Ye smiled and patted her head in response. "The grand champion was voted on by everyone, and nothing should ever be taken for granted. In this current day and age, do you still think that I can become the greatest champion?"

Xiao Lu said, "Of course."

Zhang Ye shook his head and laughed.

...

At Zhang Ye's maternal grandma's house.

The whole family had gathered in front of the television.

"Has it started yet?"

"It's beginning soon."

"Bro, you can do it!"

...

Old Chen's house.

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli were both sitting quietly before their television.

"It's about to start."

"I'm feeling a little nervous."

"Why would you be nervous?"

"I'm nervous for Zhang'er, of course."

...

At Yao Jiancai's house.

"Dad, hurry up!"

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

"It's blown up all over the Internet. Today's viewership ratings of I Am a Singer are gonna be heaven-defying!"

...

At Old Wu's parents' courtyard house.

Wu Changhe and some members of his family had gathered around to wait in front of the television.

“Will Little Ye be able to do it?”

“Who knows?”

“I wonder how popular he still is.”

...

Dong Shanshan’s house.

Several of their old classmates had gathered here today.

“Comrade Yu Yingyi, why have you only arrived?”

“Aiya, I was caught in traffic.”

“Shanshan, increase the volume of the TV.”

“What song do you guys think Zhang’er will sing today?”

“It’s probably going to be an old song?”

“He’s not writing songs anymore?”

“Who knows if he can still write them. Having spent so many years in jail, his talents might have dried up. Hai, I feel such pain for our Zhang’er!”

...

At home.

Wu Zeqing was carrying Sisi and sitting down on the sofa.

“Mommy, where’s Daddy? Where’s Daddy?”

“Daddy will be out soon.”

“Mommy, can Daddy win?”

“If your Daddy wants to win, he will not lose. It’s been like this in the past, and it will be like this in the future.”

...

The countdown started.

Three.

Two.

One.

The live broadcast began!

**Chapter 1552: Taking to the stage!**

On TV.

The live broadcast was being shown.

The host was someone called Cui Na. Ever since Dong Shanshan stepped down from her role as a Beijing Television host, Cui Na took over the hosting responsibilities of I Am a Singer. She was one of the new generation of popular hosts.

The host said, "Hello, everyone! This is Beijing TV, and welcome to the finale competition of I Am a Singer. Today, we've invited the representatives of the past five seasons' contestants to hold a never before seen battle of the grand champions in the music industry. The five contestants are all very talented singers of the music scene, and they'll be coming together on the same stage for a versus competition in a bid to be crowned the greatest champion of the show. I believe that all of our viewers watching TV and the live audience at our venue cannot wait. Now then, we're only 10 minutes away from the official start of the competition. Everyone, follow me to the backstage to have a look at the drawing of lots. Who will be the first contestant to take to the stage today? Let's take a look."

Backstage.

There were a total of five waiting rooms.

Room One was Zhang Ye.

Room Two was Guan Xue.

Room Three was Hai Yifei.

Room Four was Qi Liang.

Room Five was Qu Dong.

The room order was based on which season the grand champion had emerged from.

The female host came to the door of the first room. She spoke excitedly to the camera with a smile, "We'll be knocking on the door of Room One soon. I'm quite nervous. The teacher in there was once a legend of the entertainment circle, as well as my school senior. Returning to the industry after so many years, he has once again stepped onto the stage of I Am a Singer. This is a phenomenal stage that he had helped to build back then, so I believe his mood is a little different."

Knock knock.

A voice came from the inside. "Who is it?"

The female host cautiously tried to push the door open. "Senior, we'll be starting the competition soon. How are your preparations coming along?"

The man on the inside said, "So-so, I guess."

The female host pushed at the door a second and third time, then said, "Eh, why is it locked?"

The man laughed and said, "I'll see you guys later onstage."

The female host whispered into the camera, "I believe a lot of people are quite curious about how Teacher Zhang looks like now. Has he gained weight? Or did he become thinner? Ever since Teacher Zhang's return, I haven't met him. The last time I saw him was four or five years ago when I was still in my fourth year of university. It was a lecture that Professor Zhang had given at Media College, so Teacher Zhang is an industry senior, a school senior, and also a teacher to me. Since Teacher Zhang wants to leave his first meeting with everyone until he gets onstage, we'll respect his wishes. Come on then, let's go to the second room to have a look."

Knock knock.

Room Two's door opened.

"Sister Guan, I'm here!"

"Nana."

"Today is the first round of the competition. Are you confident?"

"No, I have no confidence at all."

"Ah?"

"Hur hur, the youngsters these days are too strong. I can only do my best and hope that I won't get eliminated in the first round."

Room Three.

"Teacher Little Hai, are you nervous?"

"I am, in fact."

"What song have you prepared? Can you reveal it to us?"

"Haha, that, I have to keep a secret."

Room Four.

"Teacher Liang-liang, we haven't met in a long time."

"Sister Nana, you've gotten prettier again."

"Haha, thank you! We'll be drawing lots soon. What order would you like to appear onstage?"

"I don't ask for much, but it would be good if I were to appear third or fourth."

Room Five.

"Teacher Qu, you're the favorite to win as the greatest champion. A lot of people are very optimistic about your chances. Besides, as we know, you've just won as the grand champion half a month ago on the fifth season of I Am a Singer. So are you going to make a push for it as well this time and take the title of the greatest champion of the five seasons?"

"Of course I would like to win, but everyone is very strong too, so it won't be easy at all."

"We're looking forward to your performance. All the best."

"Thank you."

The interview ended.

The highly anticipated drawing of the lots began.

...

On Weibo.

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

"Let's see who'll be the first to take the stage."

"Who's gonna draw lots first?"

"Qi Liang is drawing first. Wow, it's number three, not bad."

"Hai Yifei is going first?"

"Haihai won't fear that. He tends to sing the more powerful type of songs, so going first is an advantage for him."

"Guan Xue is going second."

"Qu Dong drew fourth!"

"Why hasn't Zhang Ye revealed himself yet?"

"There's no need to do that. Everyone else has drawn their lots. He's going to appear last."

"I haven't seen Guan Xue in two years. It seems like she's put on weight."

"Yeah, I wonder what Zhang Ye looks like now."

"It doesn't matter what he looks like now. He wasn't handsome in the past."

"Our Ququ and Qiqi are still the most handsome. Haihai is also quite good-looking as well."

"I've already decided to give my vote to Ququ."

"Damn, they haven't even started performing yet."

"Perform what? Who cares as long as they're handsome. For the old generation of singers, just leave them to be forgotten in time."

...

Zhang Yuanqi's house.

Ning Lan said, "Zhang'er's luck is quite good."

Zhang Yuanqi said indifferently, "That won't help."



Ning Lan said, "True, it still depends on what song he sings."

...

At Yao Jiancai's house.

Yao Jiancai said, "It's starting soon."

Yao Mi replied, "I've already told my classmates to vote for Uncle Zhang."

"How many people did you get?"

"It's depressing. Only two of them responded positively to me. The others are all saying that they will be voting for Qi Liang and Qu Dong. To think that they graduated from Peking University. How could they forget how much they liked Uncle Zhang back then."

"People change."

...

At Zhang Xia's house.

Her daughter asked, "Is Teacher Zhang already in grave danger in the first round?"

Zhang Xia said, "Yes, everyone is saying that he'll likely be eliminated in the first round."

Her daughter said, "Then what's going to happen?"

Zhang Xia said, "That depends on him."

Her daughter said, "Do you believe in Teacher Zhang?"

"Actually, I don't know either. I haven't heard him sing in many years."

...

The drawing of lots ended.

There were only five more minutes before the competition began.

The host had returned to the stage to mingle with the audience. Backstage, all of the staff and contestants were getting ready.

On Weibo.

In the forums.

In everyone's Moments.

Today, at this moment, everyone was crazily posting and checking out the news online.

The trending popularity of I Am a Singer's finale battle of the grand champions kept growing. An increasing amount of people were turning on their televisions to catch the live broadcast, and there was a continuous stream of people going onto Weibo to cheer on their favorite singers. The topicality of the show had shot through the roof. From the looks of it, it could only be imagined how glorious the

viewership ratings would turn out. The entertainment circle had experienced a generational change. Many of the old variety shows from four, five, or six years ago were no longer around. For example, King of Masked Singers, Talk Show, as well as Do You Remember. Only I Am a Singer had firmly survived the changing times, and it even managed to become more popular.

...

At the venue.

The countdown was getting closer and closer.

The audience was screaming in excitement.

“Haihai!”

“Haihai, you can do it!”

“Haihai is the best!”

“Supporting Haihai!”

Glow sticks and LED light boards were being waved around by Hai Yifei’s fans at the venue.

The next moment, when the stage lights dimmed and the spotlights focused onto the moon gate, the crowd blew up. Countless people stood up and started shouting.

“He’s coming on!”

“Haihai is coming on!”

“Ahhh, he’s so handsome!”

“Haihai, I love you!”

“Come on!”

The competition began!

Hai Yifei was the first contestant to take the stage!

He bowed.

And gave his thanks.

Amid the applause of the crowd, the music played.

A song from Hai Yifei’s album that came out last year played onstage.

“Don’t Say You Love Me”

“I’ve always tried to hide.

“Not knowing how to face you.

“I’ve always tried to leave.

“Recalling the past’s melody.

“Don’t say you love me!

“I can only be silent!

“Don’t say you love me!

“I know, it was my fault!”

Today, Hai Yifei had uncharacteristically belted out a love song.

It was very tender.

It was very touching.

Quite a few people in the audience looked like they were enchanted by the performance.

When this song finished, the applause and screams nearly brought the roof down!

The faces of several young ladies were streaming with tears. Their voices had all gone hoarse from shouting!

...

Online.

“Let’s vote!”

“I already did!”

“It’s too good!”

“Haihai is great!”

...

Backstage.

There was no camera set up in Zhang Ye’s waiting room.

He was alone and watching the live performance from the venue on the television.

So this was a hot, young male star of this world?

And he wasn’t even the most popular one?

Even if it were the Heavenly Kings and Queens of his previous world, they would probably just be able to attract this level of screaming and shouting that was heard here. This was the first time Zhang Ye had come face to face with the popularity and appeal of the young studs of this world. No wonder his old friends were so pessimistic about his chances. No wonder his parents had not wanted him to join the competition. No wonder the people and netizens all felt that he would get eliminated in the first round. This was an era where the explosive popularity of male idols was unstoppable. Everyone had witnessed similar situations like this happening countless times in the past few years, and all of them were already used to it.

No one could understand why Zhang Ye would choose to come here.

Everyone felt that Zhang Ye was asking to be humiliated.

They had such a high level of popularity and such passionate fans supporting them. Some of these fans could even have been his fans in the past. However, people changed; people moved on. It really wasn't going to be easy to seek what he had lost.

Zhang Ye, how will you respond?

Can you continue standing on a stage like this?

### **Chapter 1553: 'The Ordinary Road'!**

The second contestant came on!

Guan Xue quietly went onstage amid scattered applause.

Compared to Hai Yifei's onstage appearance, it was an entirely different reaction.

A melodious voice floated out.

"Where is the piano?

"Where does the sound drift?

"To the heavens maybe?

"Can this be fate?"

Guan Xue sang with all that she could.

She hit the high notes.

She sang in falsetto.

She incorporated portamento into the song.

She was constantly switching between different techniques.

But not many people in the audience was taking her seriously.

...

Online.

The voting window had opened.

Even before some of the singers had taken the stage to sing, the fans were already voting crazily for them.

"Haihai shall be victorious!"

"Damn, let me give my vote to Qiqi first."

"I've already voted for Qu Dong."

"He hasn't even performed yet, big sis."

"So what? I'll just vote first."

"Guan Xue sang quite well too."

"Yeah, I've voted for her."

"Has everyone already voted? Why aren't you all saving your votes until they finish singing? There are still three more contestants."

"Zhang Ye is in real danger."

"It was expected that he would be the first to get eliminated."

"Actually, a lot of people here were Zhang Ye's fans in the past, but there really aren't too many of them left."

"No matter what, he's still a former Heavenly King. How can he get eliminated in just the first round? That would be so embarrassing."

"He asked for it for not admitting that he has become old and insisting on coming to compete with the hunks."

"Actually, I really wanna know what song Zhang Ye will sing."

...

On the stage.

Qi Liang went onstage.

The cheering was deafening.

"Qiqi!"

"Qi Liang!"

"Qi Liang!"

"Let's go!"

"He's so handsome!"

"Qiqi, I'll love you forever!"

Many girls started crying the moment they saw Qi Liang.

The extent of chasing after a star like that could only simply be described as feverish!

Today, Qi Liang had chosen an English song to sing. It was also a genre that he was very adept at performing. The moment he opened his mouth, many people in the audience stood up!

Compared to Hai Yifei, he had even more fans!

Qi Liang's popularity was much higher than Hai Yifei's!

...

Backstage.

In Room One.

An employee knocked on the door and entered.

The employee said, "Director Zhang, Teacher Qu Dong will be going onstage next. Please get ready for your turn."

Zhang Ye laughed. "Don't address me as Director Zhang anymore."

The employee scratched his head in embarrassment. "Hai, I'm used to calling you that."

"I've ready and can go at any time," Zhang Ye said.

The employee said, "Alright then, have some water. We'll bring you over in another two minutes."

Zhang Ye nodded and figured that he might as well turn off the television. The room was suddenly plunged into silence, although the shouting from where the stage was could still be heard. There wasn't a lot of time left. He then lowered his head to look at his hands and discovered that they were actually trembling. It had been four years, four years without meeting the audience, four years without standing on a stage to perform. Will they still acknowledge me? Can my voice still move them?

Zhang Ye did not know.

He only knew that he had a lot of things that he wished to say to them. He really had a lot to say.

I'm back.

But are you still here for me?

Do you guys still remember my story?

The employee said, "Teacher Zhang, let's go."

"Alright." Zhang Ye stood up and went with him.

As they got closer to the stage, the shouting in the venue became clearer.

Qu Dong was still singing.

Zhang Ye was in the holding area now.

From where he was, he could see a portion of the audience and the stage. It was a very familiar sight and something that he missed greatly. This was the same stage as the one he helped to design. After five seasons, there wasn't too much change. For a moment, Zhang Ye lost his focus. He suddenly remembered many things, such as the explosive popularity of "Small Apple," how plaza dancing took the

country by storm, and his finale song, “The King of Karaoke.” All of that was part of his story on this stage those years ago.

After four years, he was back.

Time really went quick.

All of a sudden, thunderous clapping and roars pulled him back to reality.

“Qu Dong!”

“Qu Dong!”

“Qu Dong!”

The onstage performance had ended.

The audience couldn’t contain their excitement.

Madness!

Screams!

Yells!

All of the applause was for Qu Dong!

Zhang Ye knew that it was time for him to go onstage.

...

On Weibo.

“Ququ is invincible!”

“This song was performed in such a godly manner!”

“Qiqi’s song was quite good too.”

“The greatest champion of the five seasons can only be a fight between Qi Liang and Qu Dong. Even if the others can sing in such a fantastic way, there isn’t much hope of them winning.”

“Yeah, their popularities are entirely different from these two.”

“Who’s the next singer?”

“Ah, it should be Zhang Ye’s turn, right? Next is the last one.”

“I don’t hold any hope for him.”

“Hai, he shouldn’t have joined at all.”

“I don’t even feel like listening to this blacklisted artist perform.”

“Right, with such a tainted history, he thinks that he can challenge Qiqi and Ququ?”

“He’s probably gonna get eliminated in the first round.”

...

Old Chen’s house.

Chen Guang was startled. “It’s Zhang Ye’s turn!”

Fan Wenli actually became nervous. “Will he be alright?”

“Let’s watch,” Chen Guang said.

Fan Wenli said, “He had better not get eliminated in the first round!”

...

At Zhang Ye’s maternal grandma’s house.

His cousins were making a ruckus.

“It’s our brother’s turn!”

“It’s finally our brother’s turn!”

“This is suffocatingly tense!”

“What song will our brother be singing?”

“I don’t know.”

“It’s probably going to be an old song?”

...

At Old Wu’s parents’ courtyard house.

Wu Changhe asked, “Hai, why have some people started leaving their seats?”

Li Qinqin said, “I don’t know.”

Wu Mo said, “Damn, this is so uncalled for.”

Li Qinqin said, “Yeah, why are the audience members leaving right now?”

...

At Qu Dong’s Studio.

“Pfft.”

“There are people standing up to leave?”

“They probably want to visit the bathroom after watching the performances for so long.”

“Go to the bathroom when it’s Zhang Ye’s turn? His social relations are godawful then.”

“His current popularity is really no longer the same as before.”



...

Back at home.

Zhang Ye's mother roared, "What's the meaning of this?"

His father was stunned. "Why would they visit the bathroom right now?"

His mother said angrily, "I told him not to join the competition! See! What did I tell you!"

...

Dong Shanshan's house.

"What the hell!"

"Zhang'er is in a dangerous position."

"Yeah, judging by the atmosphere, it really doesn't seem like he stands a chance of going through."

"Let's see how Zhang Ye will handle this."

"Can he turn the tide?"

"Who knows!"

...

At the live venue.

In the audience, a lot of people were leaving their seats.

"It's been an hour already."

"Yeah, let's make use of Zhang Ye's performance to quickly use the bathroom."

"Yeah, there's still the second round to go after this."

"I'll be looking forward to seeing Ququ's performance in the second round."

"Qi Liang is very good too."

"Haha, they're both quite good. Our ears are gonna have a feast today."

"Look, Zhang Ye has come out onstage. He seems like he has put on some weight."

"That's because he was too thin in the past."

"It's been so many years since I've seen him."

"Let's go to the bathroom first. We'll see how he performs after we get back."

Over a dozen people were joking and laughing as they casually left their seats.

At this moment, on camera, Zhang Ye had walked out of the moon gate.

Some people were about to leave.

While some remained seated.

There was no applause.

There were no cheers.

The executive director, Xiao Lu, looked solemn. However, she was panicking badly on the inside!

How did it end up like this?

Why wasn't there any applause?

Have you all really forgotten about Teacher Zhang?

Zhang Ye slowly walked out and stopped in his tracks. He stood quietly onstage and looked into the audience. Looking at those people who were leaving their seats without even giving him a look, he did not say anything at all. There was nothing he could say anyway. All he did was hold his microphone as he slowly closed his eyes.

At this moment.

The entire nation's viewers were watching this scene on their televisions.

The entire nation's viewers were staring at him curiously.

Backstage, Qi Liang, who had finished performing, was shaking his head.

Sitting beside him, Guan Xue let out a small sigh.

This was a scene they had anticipated.

The music played.

But what no one expected that everyone would be stunned when Zhang Ye opened his mouth!

The spotlights were focused on Zhang Ye.

The melody of the music was gentle and melancholic.

Then Zhang Ye opened his mouth.

Under everyone's gaze, Zhang Ye gripped the microphone with his eyes closed. Standing on this stage that he helped build four years ago, he lightly sang.

This was his first time singing a song in an official setting since his return.

There were no high notes.

There were no techniques.

He was just singing <sup>1</sup> in a calm and quiet manner:

"As you waver on the pathway

"Will you move forward? Via, via.

"Fragile, arrogant.

"That's how I used to be as well."

In the audience.

The people who had left their seats froze!

Zhang Ye sang gently.

"Impassioned, apprehensive.

"Where are you going? Via, via.

"Silent as a puzzle.

"Are you listening to my story?"

The people who were leaving stopped in their tracks!

They looked at Zhang Ye in surprise!

Xiao Lu was stunned!

The live audience members were dumbfounded!

The people watching TV were staring in shock at their screens!

Zhang Ye opened his eyes.

He looked at the stage.

He looked at the audience.

He looked at everyone.

He sang.

"I've traversed mountains and the seas,

"And cut through crowds of people.

"Once upon a time, I had it all.

"But it was all gone in the blink of an eye.

"I'd lost and was beyond hope, and even lost all direction.

"Until I saw that being ordinary was my only solution."

Listening this, Xiao Lu's eyes reddened!

...

At Yao Jiancai's house.

"He can still write songs?"

"It's a new song!"

...

Old Zhang's house.

"This fellow is amazing."

"So he can still sing."

...

Dong Shanshan's house.

"How has Zhang'er been living his life these past few years?"

"To have a home that he couldn't go back to, to have a child that he couldn't see. Just tell me, how did he live through all of that?"

...

At the venue.

Zhang Ye sang lightly.

"While you are still fantasizing

"About your future, via, via.

"Will it improve, or worsen?

"For me, it's just another day."

The crowd fell silent.

The people who hadn't been paying attention to him earlier were now dumbfounded.

Zhang Ye reached out and clutched his chest. His grip tightened as he sang.

"I once destroyed everything I held dear,

"So I had to leave for good.

"I once fell into endless darkness.

"I struggled but failed to get out.

"I've been like you, like him, even like weeds and wildflowers.

"I'm desperate and yearning, I cry and laugh, but stay ordinary."

This was Zhang Ye's story.

These were his experiences over the past four years.

...

At Zhang Ye's parents' house.

His mother was crying. "Son!"

His father's eyes were a deep red.

...

Back at home.

Sisi asked, "Mommy, Mommy, what's wrong?"

Wu Zeqing said, "Mommy's fine."

"Mommy, don't cry."

"OK, Mommy won't cry."

...

Onstage.

Zhang Ye sang.

"Move forward, keep going, even if you were given over.

"Move forward, keep going, even if you were robbed.

"Move forward, keep going, even if you miss out.

"Move forward, keep going, even if you—

"I've traversed mountains and the seas, / And cut through crowds of people.

"I've asked all around the world, / But have never gotten an answer.

"I'm just like you, like him, even like weeds and wildflowers.

"As I face the unknown, this is the only road I will take."

Xiao Lu was crying.

Many of the Beijing Television staff were crying.

Zhang Ye's old classmates were crying.

Fan Wenli was crying.

When many of the audience members at the venue realized it, tears were already dripping from their eyes. They couldn't even wipe them dry or get them off their faces.

Zhang Ye lowered the microphone.

Then he raised it again.

"Time flies by, and just like that.

"Tomorrow is here. Via, via.

"The wind blows, the road ahead is still long.

"How far am I into my story?"

The song ended.

There was still no applause.

There were still no cheers.

There were still no screams.

But Qu Dong froze.

Qi Liang, Hai Yifei, and the others also found it a little unbelievable.

They discovered that many of the staff and audience members at the venue were crying.

Those who had stood up to leave their seats, those who did not anticipate listening to Zhang Ye sing, all of them had thought that after so many years, Zhang Ye would have become a memory to them. They had thought that even after seeing Zhang Ye again, that passion in them from years ago would not get stirred up. They believed that they had all grown up and changed, that all of them had already moved on. But they didn't expect that when faced with Zhang Ye again, upon hearing him sing again, they would still burst into tears!

His story from years ago had appeared in front of them once again!

**Chapter 1554: The contestant to be eliminated in the first round is—**

The singing stopped.

The music stopped.

When the live audience was finally able to react, Zhang Ye was already quietly retreating from the stage. All they could see was his receding figure.

In the audience.

A child asked, "Mommy, why are you crying?"

His mother wiped away her tears and said, "Mommy doesn't know either."

The child asked, "Who is that uncle?"

His mother looked in the direction of Zhang Ye's departure. "He was Mommy and Daddy's favorite celebrity in the past."

A wife was wiping her tears away. "Teacher Zhang's got wrinkles on his face."

Her husband made a noise in acknowledgement.

The wife said, “Hubby, have the times changed, or is it us who have changed?”

The husband replied, “Maybe it is everything that has changed.”

“B-But I realized that I still like him. Hubby, what about you? Do you still like him?”

The husband did not answer.

The wife turned to look at him and was stunned by what she saw.

She discovered that her husband was crying too.

After so many years, a person from the past had returned. “The Ordinary Road” brought tears to countless people.

Many memories flooded through in an instant!

Zhang Ye, who fought a Korean celebrity to stand up for the average person.

Zhang Ye, who went bankrupt in order to save his fan by lending her money to treat her disease.

Zhang Ye, who typed out the words “whoever offends the mighty nation of China, however distant, shall be destroyed” for his country.

He was back. That fellow who had caused them to fall madly in love with him, that fellow who had left them gnashing their teeth in anger, that fellow who had made them howl with laughter—he was back. He had changed. His hair had become shorter, and he had several more wrinkles on his face. However, he could still sing like before.

That was an indescribable sense of nostalgia.

A lot of people at the venue and watching television were lost in their thoughts at this moment.

...

At Old Yao’s house.

Yao Mi broke down crying.

Yao Jiancai sighed “It has really not been easy on Zhang’er these past few years.”

Yao Mi sobbed, “Uncle Zhang!”

...

Dong Shanshan’s house.

“Why isn’t anyone clapping?”

“What’s with everybody?”

“Have they really forgotten all about Zhang’er? There were so many events, so many memories, how can they just forget him like that!”

...

At Zhang Xia's house.

"Mom, Teacher Zhang can still sing!"

"Yes."

"But will everyone acknowledge him?"

"Little Zhang is back, and he's still the same Little Zhang that we knew. But I wonder if the people are still the same?"

...

Zhang Yuanqi's house.

"'The Ordinary Road'?"

"This fella has made me cry again with his singing."

"He has changed quite a bit."

...

In the holding area.

When Zhang Ye got back here, he bumped into Xiao Lu.

Xiao Lu was crying. "Teacher Zhang!"

Zhang Ye smiled and went up to give her a hug. "What are you crying for? Did I not sing well? I thought it was quite satisfactory as I've managed to sing out what I wished to tell everyone. It was pretty good."

"But the audience, they—"

Zhang Ye said, "It's fine."

...

Backstage.

The contestants who had finished performing had returned here.

Zhang Ye was the last person to arrive.

Guan Xue stood up. "Teacher Zhang."

Qi Liang also stood up. "That was a good performance."

Qu Dong also complimented him.

How many years had Zhang Ye been in the entertainment industry? He could easily tell who was being sincere and who was not. He simply returned a smile and said thank you to them.

Actually, Qu Dong, Hai Yifei, and Qi Liang were all very surprised that so many people had cried after hearing Zhang Ye sing. In their opinion, "The Ordinary Road" had a very flat melody, without any high



notes and didn't require any techniques to sing it well. Although they had never heard this song before, possibly because it was a newly composed song by Zhang Ye, the song still had the "vibes" of an old song and had a completely different melody and rhythm from the contemporary pop music they were used to. Furthermore, be it the singing or technique, there was nothing special about Zhang Ye's performance, so why did the audience react in such a way? Instead, the only normal thing was the lack of cheers and applause from the audience at the beginning and the end of his performance. From this point alone, they knew that Zhang Ye would definitely be out of luck for this first round of competition. If there were no surprises, he would surely be the first one to be eliminated.

They had never seen such a peaceful performance before.

A performance that didn't even get applauded. So how many votes could he possibly get?

It looked like it was just as everyone had expected. Zhang Ye would be the first person to lose his qualifications to become the greatest champion of I Am a Singer, and in that, they would have one less opponent.

...

Zhang Ye's fan group #7.

"Teacher Zhang!"

"Damn, I'm crying!"

"I cried too. I feel so terrible!"

"Is there no one supporting Teacher Zhang anymore? There wasn't even any applause for him?"

"Motherfucker, vote!"

"Right, let's quickly vote!"

"Where is everyone? Where did everyone go!"

"Teacher Zhang has returned! Where have all of you gone? Where?!"

"Are there only the few of us left?"

"After listening to this song, how can you guys sit still or do nothing?"

"Stop shouting. They won't hear you."

"Hai, the people from back then have gone their separate ways."

"Eh, wait."

"Admin, what's the matter?"

"What the hell!"

All of a sudden, several of the administrators were stunned.

Di di di!

Di di di!

Notifications of people applying to join the group exploded!

Group #7.

Group #8.

Group #15.

Group #37.

All the formerly dead fan groups of Zhang Ye's blew up with alerts!

"LittleGrass55 reporting in!"

"To our dear admins of Zhang Ye's fan group #9, I'm back!"

"ChiChi is back!"

"OldChu520 is back!"

"Open up, I'm back!"

"ZhangYeFanNumber55 is back!"

"I'm sorry, I left the group due to some family issues. But I'm back now!"

"Motherfucker! Now that Teacher Zhang is taking on the industry again, how can I not be a part of it!"

"I've been busy with work, and my wife is really strict with me. I wasn't supposed to come in here, but when I heard Teacher Zhang's song today, motherfucking hell, I decided to check in again even if it means my death!"

"DriftingSnow is back!"

"HeJiale is back!"

Familiar faces!

Familiar nicknames!

10 people!

A 100 people!

A 1,000 people!

The eyes of the group administrators welled up!

Big Saber Bro scolded everyone the moment they entered the groups. "You bunch of idiots, why did you just respond? Hurry up and vote!"

"Spare us, Big Saber Bro!"

"We'll immediately vote!"

“My cell phone has been confiscated by my wife. I can’t vote!”

“Old Knife, why are you still so afraid of your wife?”

“Damn, I won’t let you say that about me. Watch how I take my cell phone back!”

“Old Knife, you can do it! He’s risking his life just to vote, haha!”

“Hahahahaha!”

...

At the venue.

Watching TV.

Everyone was getting very anxious as they waited for the final result.

The host, Cui Na, had come back out onto the stage. “The first round of voting has ended. I believe that everyone has used the most practical of actions to show their support for the contestants they like the most. But unfortunately, of the five contestants in the first round, one of them will have to leave our stage. The voting results are in my hands. I won’t be announcing the rankings of the first round. However, I will be announcing the name of the contestant that has been eliminated. So then, the contestant who will be leaving us in the first round of the culmination battle of I Am a Singer is—”

The crowd fell silent.

It was all quiet in front of the televisions.

In the contestants’ zone backstage, no one made a sound.

Cui Na looked at the camera and recited, “—Guan Xue.”

At this moment, a lot of people were dumbfounded!

...

At Zhang Ye’s maternal grandma’s house.

“Ahhh!”

“Our brother has advanced into the top four!”

“Hahahaha!”

...

Old Chen’s house.

“The kid has made it, huh!”

“He actually advanced?”

...

Dong Shanshan's house.

"Aiyo, that scared the hell out of me!"

"I was so scared too. I thought that Zhang'er would become the first contestant to leave the show!"

"Yeah, there wasn't any applause earlier!"

...

Backstage.

Qi Liang was surprised at this result. How?

Qu Dong was shocked. Shouldn't it be Zhang Ye?

Hai Yifei was also astonished. Zhang Ye managed to remain in the competition? How was this possible? There wasn't any applause. How did he manage to stay on? Just how on earth did he manage to stay on? Were people still supporting him? What spot did he take?

Zhang Ye was also startled.

But Guan Xue wasn't surprised at this result, nor did she reveal a disappointed look. Instead, she just smiled, stood up, and gave a hug to every contestant to bid farewell.

Hai Yifei said, "Sister Guan, I can't bear to see you go."

Guan Xue smiled and said, "I'm leaving now. Do your best, everyone."

With the camera around, everyone was exchanging pleasantries.

It was only when Guan Xue hugged Zhang Ye that she whispered, "All the best. Do be careful in the second round. I hope you can go all the way and give us something to cheer about."

Zhang Ye only said one word in reply: "Alright."

#### **Chapter 1555: A song called 'Immense World'!**

On TV.

The live broadcast continued.

Guan Xue had been the first contestant to get voted off the stage. However, no one was lamenting this as the second round of the battle of the grand champions was about to take place immediately. Another contestant was going to get voted off. That would cut down the number of competing singers for the culmination battle to three people. The drawing of lots began.

Who would stay on?

Who would advance to the top three?

Who would get a chance to compete for the title of greatest champion the following week?

It would all depend on this next round.

Backstage, the staff had already brought out the little balls representing the order of appearance.

Many people were watching the proceedings nervously on TV.

Hai Yifei picked a ball.

Qi Liang picked a ball.

Qu Dong casually picked a ball as well.

The remaining ball was given to Zhang Ye.

Opening them up, the order of appearances was determined.

Zhang Ye was going to sing first.

Hai Yifei was next.

Qu Dong would be third.

And Qi Liang would go last.

Seeing this outcome, the trio of Qi Liang, Hai Yifei, and Qu Dong heaved sighs of relief. When Zhang Ye didn't get eliminated, they were all rather surprised. Neither could they understand why that had happened, just like how the people of Zhang Ye's generation could not understand how this era belonged to the hot, young male stars, and vice versa. Furthermore, being so well-known back then, and with so many legends about him in the industry, they were naturally more wary of Zhang Ye. This time, with Zhang Ye performing first, there was clearly no chance that he could compete with them. Only with this arrangement did they feel relieved. It looked like the climactic battle of the grand champions next week was going to be a fight between the three male idols. In their opinion, this was how it should have been in the first place.

But Zhang Ye didn't seem to mind and was looking rather indifferent on camera.

...

At Zhang Ye's maternal grandma's house.

His three sisters were all getting anxious.

"Oh no, oh no!"

"Our brother is going to perform first?"

"This is not good!"

...

Dong Shanshan's house.

"He didn't draw a good lot."

"This is the worst order of appearance for him."

“Zhang’er has just finished singing and didn’t get enough rest.”

“Yeah, and his remaining opponents are all hunks!”

...

In Zhang Ye’s fan groups.

“What the hell!”

“Old Zhang is too unlucky!”

“Did he not wash his hands before drawing lots?”

“He’s in danger this time.”

...

Old Chen’s house.

“He just made his comeback, and his popularity hasn’t recovered. It’s indeed a very difficult situation for him to be performing first.”

“I wonder how many fans he still has left at this point?”

“No one knows.”

...

At Xiaodong’s house.

“The remaining contestants are all male idols.”

“How is he going to fight this battle?”

“Come on, Teacher Zhang, show us if you’ve really become old!”

...

On TV.

The host, Cui Na, said, “Next, we’ll be going into the second round of the performances.”

Everyone watched intently.

Countless people were holding their breaths.

The lights flicked off and the moon gate was illuminated.

The figure of a person slowly walked out.

The audience was still as quiet as before, just like how it was when Zhang Ye appeared on stage earlier. Some people had raised their hands to clap, but they suddenly put them down again. Some people were already standing up and getting ready to shout, but they sighed and sat back down again. Nobody knew

how they should be reacting. Right now, everyone was experiencing very complex emotions. They were all still intoxicated from the earlier song and by their memories of Zhang Ye.

Zhang Ye's return had come too suddenly.

The war between humans and machines.

Announcing his comeback.

Producing a television drama.

Taking to the stage of I Am a Singer.

A lot of people were not mentally prepared for this, and they didn't know how to face this man they had nearly forgotten about, whom they had once loved and hated so much. Time could be a terrifying thing sometimes. Just a few years were enough for them to forget about many things. Back at Zhang Ye's final concert, many of them had shouted and declared that they would wait for Zhang Ye to return, that they would always support him. But it wasn't until now that they realized they hadn't fulfilled their old promise.

Shame.

Regret.

Guilt.

It was extremely quiet at the venue.

Many of these people were gritting their teeth.

Many of their eyes had reddened.

Many of them were balling up their fists.

Then the strings of a guitar disrupted the silence.

Rock?

Was this rock 'n' roll?

They looked in shock at Zhang Ye, who was onstage. They realized that he was looking back at them. He was looking at everyone in the audience.

He raised his microphone.

Zhang Ye sang <sup>1</sup>.

"Are you tired yet?

"Will you put out your hands?

"If you want a hug, how can you clench your fists?

"We still have a lot of dreams to achieve.

“And many tomorrows to travel.

“We want to let the world hear our song.”

In the audience, a married couple suddenly started crying. They couldn’t control their emotions anymore!

Qi Liang was stunned!

Hai Yifei was stunned!

This—

This song—

Zhang Ye looked at everyone and sang.

“Are you ready yet?

“Time doesn’t flow back.

“There’s no reason for wanting to fly.

“The ends of the world may get lonely,

“But you will have me by your side.”

All of a sudden, his voice went higher. “We’ve said before that it doesn’t matter how immense the world gets!”

That’s right!

They had said it before!

That they would stay with him all the way!

That they would support him forever!

Why had they forgotten?

Why?

A young stood up in tears!

A young woman stood up with her fists clenched!

Zhang Ye sang loudly.

“Let’s fly to the place highest, furthest, and freest!

“Embrace in the most beautiful moment!

“I wanna see who will stay friends with me to the very end!

“You are the one I hope seeing the most!”



I am back!

I know that you all are still around!

I know it!

It has been four years. I am standing on this stage today because I want to tell all of you that I am back! Perhaps, this is a little headstrong of me. But all those stories that we haven't finished writing, I really hope that we can complete them together. This journey that we haven't completed yet, I really wish that we can try again to complete it together!

Will you guys come along with me?

Are you still willing to accompany me on this final journey?

Zhang Ye clutched his chest and sang loudly.

"We can get into trouble, stay quiet, and walk together!

"We can soar together and land together!"

Please let me see all of you again!

Please let me hear all of you again!

I can still fight!

I can still sing!

My passion hasn't cooled!

But what about you guys?

Have you turned cold?

He opened his eyes and clutched his chest tightly. He shouted.

"Stay with me no matter how immense the world gets!

"Stay with me and roar together!"

At this moment, the crowd erupted with excitement!

At this moment, everyone watching television could feel their pulse racing!

A commotion followed!

All of the audience members shot to their feet!

They crazily stretched out both their hands!

And shouted out like crazy!

Xiao Lu had her right hand held up high!

Tears were streaming from Han Qi's eyes!

A lot of people were crying and singing with him!

Screams!

Shouts!

Howls!

They had all gone mad!

Everyone was in a craze!

The entire stage seemed to have combusted!

Zhang Ye howled.

“Let’s storm to the place highest, furthest, and vastest!

“Let’s finish singing the most touching song!

“I won’t let go without seeing that immense world for myself!

“Because I have friends that I really want.”

The music stopped.

The accompaniment stopped.

One second.

Two seconds.

Zhang Ye sang lightly, “You are the friend that I want the most.”

With that, he put down the microphone and looked at the audience. Seeing those passionate and excited faces, he smiled. He smiled, grinned in delight, almost to the point of tearing up.

Hello, everyone.

I trust you’ve been well?

**Chapter 1556: The eliminated contestant of the second round!**

...

At Zhang Xia’s house.

“Mom! Teacher Zhang, he’s—”

“He’s amazing!”

“Yeah! I’m so pumped!”

“That kid is amazing!”

...

Dong Shanshan's house.

The old classmates were clamoring!

"He's so fucking awesome!"

"Those high notes, those vocals!"

"That's what you fucking call singing!"

"My blood is racing with excitement! What should I do!"

...

At Xiaodong's house.

"Xiaoxian, why are you crying again?"

"I can't help it."

"This is the real Zhang Ye! He's really come back!"

"I wonder how many people are still willing to accompany him on his journey!"

...

At a male idol's studio.

"How could this happen!"

"H-He's still so good at singing?"

"Hasn't he been in jail all these years?"

...

At an entertainment company.

"Who said that he can't write songs anymore?"

"I don't know. Someone claimed so on the Internet."

"Utter crap!"

"I have a hunch that Zhang Ye will start something big again now that he's back!"

"Surely not, right? Everyone admittedly knows that the entertainment industry is now in the age of the male idols, right? Ning Lan, Zhang Yuanqi, Zhang Xia, Yao Jiancai, all of them have already taken a step back, haven't they?"

"But he's not the same."

"Ah? How is he different?"

“Because he’s Zhang Ye!”

“Even if it’s him, in this day and age, he can’t win against the male idols, right?”

“Who can say for sure?”

...

Backstage.

In the respective rooms of the three hot, young male stars, there was applause all around.

“Well done!”

“This is such a nice song!”

“What a great song!”

Cameras had been placed in all of their rooms.

However, their mood right now couldn’t be in a more tumultuous state.

So this is Zhang Ye?

This is the most legendary celebrity of that era?

When Zhang Ye was calling the shots years ago, they hadn’t even debuted yet. Naturally, they knew who Zhang Ye was, had listened to his songs and watched his variety shows, and even read his novels and poetry as well. But to deal with him face to face, this was really a first. Honestly, they were all quite shocked. If they were a little unsure because of Zhang Ye’s first song, then his second song had truly scared them!

It was truly amazing!

For the celebrities of that era, none could emerge from the rest of the competition without having some real skills!

However, they still did not think that the current Zhang Ye could compare on this stage with them. After all, the level of popularity between him and them was too different.

They were very popular currently.

While Zhang Ye had been away for too long and was in the twilight of his popularity.

Zhang Ye might enjoy a greater popularity than Guan Xue, who was also a has-been singer. At her peak, Guan Xue was only a domestic A-list frontrunner, while Zhang Ye had peaked at the summit of Asia once before. If they thought about it that way, all of this would feel more acceptable. But compared to them, Zhang Ye’s current popularity was clearly far from theirs. The three of them and their teams, as well as their talent agencies, all firmly believed it to be that way.

An employee entered.

“Teacher Little Hai.”

“Yes?”

“It’s your turn.”

“OK.”

Hai Yifei took a deep breath and gave a confident smile before he strode out of the room.

...

Zhang Ye came backstage.

He was the first to finish performing in the second round, and he was alone in the room. He sat down and had a drink, then looked up at the television as he slowly waited for the other contestants to take the stage. He had already done all that he could do. He had no regrets. All he was waiting for was the results. It wasn’t because Zhang Ye placed a great importance on winning or losing, but that he wished to know how many people were still willing to accompany him for the rest of his journey after listening to his song.

That was much more important to him.

That was way, way more important to Zhang Ye.

...

On the live broadcast.

Hai Yifei’s singing drifted out.

On Weibo, Hai Yifei’s fans were canvassing for votes from wherever they could.

“Let’s vote!”

“Vote for Haihai!”

“He sings great!”

“Wow, he even rapped in his song!”

“This is the critical period where only three out of four will advance! Hurry up and cast your votes!”

...

Next.

It was Qu Dong’s turn to perform.

It became even more boisterous on Weibo.

“What the heck was Hai Yifei singing? I still find Ququ to be a better singer!”

“Don’t listen to Zhang Ye and get cheated of your tears. Give your votes to Qu Dong!”

“Haha, surely our Ququ doesn’t need our canvassing of votes, right? He has so many fans, so even if only two out of ten fans were to vote for him, he would still have more votes than the other contestants, right?”

“Yes, yes!”

“Ah, I was actually thinking of voting for our Ququ too. But when I heard Zhang Ye perform his song just now, I don’t know what came over me, and I ended up giving him my vote instead.”

“Fuck, me too.”

“The previous two posters, can you get a hold of yourselves?”

“We know we were at fault, but Zhang Ye sang really well.”

...

Finally.

Qi Liang took to the stage.

“Qiqi’s performance today is so awesome.”

“Yeah, his singing has always been among the best in the music industry.”

“Indeed, it’s really awesome. B-But I still gave my vote to Zhang Ye.”

“What? Shuishui, you’re a senior member of Qi Qi’s fan club, how could you!”

“\*cries\* Actually, I was Zhang Ye’s hardcore fan four years ago. When I heard those two songs by Teacher Zhang today, I just couldn’t hold back my tears anymore. \*kneels\* Please forgive me!”

“This is so depressing. Shuishui has betrayed us!”

“Can’t blame Shuishui for that. I also gave my vote to Teacher Zhang. There are some things I thought I had forgotten about, but when I saw Teacher Zhang again, I realized that I wouldn’t be able to forget those things all my life.”

...

The second round of performances came to an end.

Hai Yifei, Qu Dong, and Qi Liang had all returned backstage.

Hai Yifei smiled and said, “Teacher Zhang, I’ll have to seek some pointers from you in the future.”

Zhang Ye smiled back. “Sure, sure.”

Qi Liang also said, “Brother Hai, you sang really well.”

Hai Yifei said, “Thank you.”

Qu Dong said, “This is so stressful.”

Hai Yifei said, “What’s there for you to be stressed about? I should be the one who’s stressed.”

Zhang Ye didn't really say anything.

It was mainly the three young men who were exchanging pleasantries. At least on the surface, it looked like they all had mutual respect. But as for what they were thinking, only they themselves knew. But from this exchange, one thing could be verified. The three of them still acknowledged each other, while there was some level of subconscious ostracizing of Zhang Ye. Perhaps they had judged early on that Zhang Ye wouldn't qualify for the culmination battle of the grand champions next week.

The contestants gathered and sat waiting for the final result.

They were all looking at the television.

The live audience was looking at the host.

The viewers were also staring fixedly at their TVs.

...

Host Cui Na stepped out onto the stage.

Cui Na said, "I hereby announce that the voting for the second round of I Am a Singer's battle of the grand champions has ceased, and the final results have been sent to this tablet in my hand. So then, let's have a look." She lowered her head to take a look and was slightly taken aback. Very quickly, she hid her expression and looked up again. "Next, I'll be announcing the name of the contestant who will be leaving in the second round. Unfortunately for him, he will also lose the qualification rights to take part in the culmination battle next week."

It was quiet.

A lot of people did not even dare to breathe.

In the media.

Among the celebrities of the entertainment circle.

At the various celebrity studios.

At the entertainment companies.

Among the public.

Countless people pricked their ears up.

They heard Cui Na say, "The contestant that will be leaving our stage after the second round is—" With a long pause, she finally read out the name. "Hai Yifei!"

...

At Zhang Ye's maternal grandma's house.

His three sisters were jumping with joy!

"Ahhhh!"

“Our brother has won!”

“Hahahahaha!”

...

Dong Shanshan’s house.

“Holy fuck!”

“Zhang’er has advanced into the top three!”

“Heavens!”

“This fucker has actually defeated one of the young guns?!”

...

Chen Guang’s home.

“Holy shit!”

“I didn’t hear it wrong, did I?”

“No, you didn’t! Hai Yifei has been eliminated!”

“Zhang’er is too fearsome!”

...

At Xiaodong’s house.

“Awesome! Th-This is so awesome!”

“This is the first time I’ve heard of a celebrity from our time defeating a male idol!”

“Yeah, this is the first time it’s happened!”

“Teacher Zhang has really advanced?”

...

Hai Yifei’s studio.

“How is that possible!”

“This, this—”

“How can Haihai possibly lose to Zhang Ye in terms of popularity! How is that possible?!”

...

Online.

Countless netizens were also dumbfounded!

“Wasn’t Zhang Ye supposed to be the one to get eliminated?”



“How can this be?”

“Just how many fans does Zhang Ye still have!”

“That is too surprising!”

“That’s one of the most popular hunks around! And he actually won against him?”

### **Chapter 1557: Predicting the champion!**

Monday.

In the morning.

The rebroadcast from that day was replaying on television.

“So then, with the final list confirmed, the three contestants who will be competing for the title of the greatest champion of I Am a Singer’s culmination battle are—”

“Qu Dong!”

“Qi Liang!”

“Zhang Ye!”

“Let us look forward to their performances next week!”

“Let us look forward to the finale night of the battle of the grand champions!”

“Who will get crowned as the greatest champion?”

“Please stay tuned and catch us again next week at the same time!”

There was also a bombardment of news.

“I Am a Singer’s viewership ratings are out!”

“I Am a Singer once again takes first place in the nationwide viewership ratings!”

“I Am a Singer breaks the variety viewership ratings record again! ”

“Zhang Ye fights his way out of a predicament! ”

“Zhang Ye advances as the final three. Experts express incredulity! ”

“Hai Yifei is unexpectedly eliminated! ”

At the entrance of the kindergarten.

Zhang Ye’s car arrived.

Instantly, over a dozen reporters sprang out and rushed over from nowhere. It was as though they had just appeared out of thin air. They came out from behind the doors, the bushes, and every nook and cranny to surround Zhang Ye.

“Teacher Zhang, I am from the Beijing Times!”

“Teacher Zhang, can you please take an interview from us!”

“Did you make a comeback this time to take back your spot on the Heavenly King’s throne?”

“How confident are you of becoming the overall grand champion of I Am a Singer’s culmination battle?”

“Do you think that you can really win against the fresh meat celebrities?”

“Teacher Zhang, please give us an exclusive interview with you!”

“How have you made it through all these years? What was life in prison like for you?”

The male reporters and female reporters were all pushing their cameras and microphones up at him.

When Zhang had just announced his comeback, no one paid any attention to him at all. But overnight, after I Am a Singer was broadcast, Zhang Ye’s name was once again being tossed up by everyone. The media reporters also came in droves to wait for him. It was too unexpected and they found it really surprising. No one could have expected that a has-been celebrity like Zhang Ye would actually be able to stand up so well against the most popular contemporary fresh meat celebrities. He had actually advanced into the finals of the competition!

Zhang Ye laughed and said, “Will you all please let me drop off my child first?”

A female reporter asked anxiously, “Please say a few words to us before that.”

Zhang Ye smiled. “Actually, I don’t know what to say either.”

That female reporter chuckled and said, “With that mouth of yours, all of us here wouldn’t be able to out-talk you at all. If even you are not sure of what to say, then the entire world’s population should just be dumb and mute.”

Zhang Ye was amused. “Sister Zhou, I have just returned to the industry, but you’re already making fun of me so soon?”

That female reporter exclaimed, “Oh my, you still remember me?”

“We’re already such old friends, how can I forget?” Zhang Ye looked at the others and saw that there were two of them whom he remembered as well. “Old Hu, Old Sun, how long has it been already? Why are you all still out on the frontlines doing field reporting?”

The few of them laughed in embarrassment. “I guess that’s our lot in life.”

Zhang Ye quipped, “It’s because you all keep ambushing me like this that you’re unable to get a promotion.”

The few of the reporters: “Pfft, is that how it is?”

All of the reporters were amused when they heard that.

However, Zhang Ye’s words warmed their hearts up. As a former Asian Heavenly King who had bid farewell to the entertainment industry for the last four years, he was still able to recognize every

reporter who had interviewed him back then and could even affectionately call them by their names. They were willing to bet that no other celebrity could do what he had just done. Zhang Ye was truly different from the others, he was really different from the other celebrities of the entertainment circle— On this point, four years on, this feeling was further reinforced.

A lot of reporters hated Zhang Ye.

Four years ago, it was so. Four years later, it was still the same.

A lot of reporters liked Zhang Ye.

Four years ago, it was so. Four years later, it was still the same.

Zhang Ye carried his child and spoke with the reporters for quite a while before heading into the school.

In the kindergarten.

The teachers and parents of the students were all thrilled to see him.

“Aiyo, Teacher Zhang is here!”

“You sang so well!”

“Those two songs which you performed yesterday had really left me in tears.”

“Me too. It has been so long since I’ve heard anyone sing like that.”

“Congratulations, Teacher Zhang!”

“What are you planning on singing this week?”

“Yeah, reveal a little bit to us.”

“I’m so looking forward to it. You can do it, Teacher Zhang!”

Zhang Ye said gratefully, “Thank you, thank you.”

Sisi was feeling so proud that she walked around with her head held up really high.

...

In the morning.

At the studio.

It had been a long time since Zhang Ye dealt with the media and he was almost unable to cope with handling them anymore, having become quite unfamiliar with how to deal with such situations.

When he pushed open the studio’s door, he got yet another fright.

Bang!

Bang!

The confetti streamers came flowing down!

All of the staff at the studio were cheering and clapping!

“Director Zhang!”

“You’re so awesome!”

“Congratulations on winning your opening battle, Director Zhang!”

“You won it so beautifully that day!”

“You left me crying so raucously at home!”

Ha Qiqi gave him the thumbs up.

Zhang Zuo was also laughing out heartily.

They were all really happy for him from the bottom of their hearts. Back then, when they knew that Zhang Ye was going to participate in the competition and challenge the fresh meat celebrities, many of them objected to it. They really did not want Director Zhang to start a war against those people so quickly upon his return. Some things just wouldn’t stand up well to comparisons, and that applied to one’s popularity as well. But who could have thought that Director Zhang would be so fearsome? He had actually managed to stay on until the finals even though he was at such a disadvantage? Although Hai Yifei was not the most popular one amongst those three, although he was still a level below Qi Liang and Qu Dong, it still left everyone extremely surprised. Zhang Ye had been away from the entertainment circle for four years prior to this!

At this moment, there was the sound of knocking on the door.

At the next moment, the door was pushed open by someone.

A man and a woman both walked in with a smile. “Where’s Zhang’er?”

Zhang Ye turned around to look at them and was stunned for a moment. Then, he broke into a smile and said, “We’ve rare guests!”

Ha Qiqi said, “Teacher Chen Guang?”

Zhang Zuo was surprised to see them as well. “Teacher Fan Wenli?”

“What rare guests!?” Chen Guang went up to give him a hug. “Kid, you didn’t even treat us to a meal since you came back and we had to come here personally to look for you?”

Zhang Ye laughed and said, “I was busy.”

Fan Wenli waved and said, “Hi, Director Zhang.”

Zhang Ye waved back. “Old Fan, you still look the same.”

Fan Wenli gave a bitter smile. “I’ve become older already.”

Zhang Ye glanced in the direction of Chen Guang and said, “He does look much older now, but not you.”

Chen Guang rolled his eyes. “Get lost!”

“Haha.” Zhang Ye said, “How’s your throat?”

Chen Guang casually played it down and said, “Just like that, it’s no big deal.”

But Fan Wenli explained on his behalf, “He can still sing, but he can’t hit the high notes as strongly as before anymore. Otherwise, he would surely have grabbed at the chance to appear in this culmination battle of I Am a Singer. Do you think he’d have pushed it to you?”

Chen Guang laughed and said, “It was the correct decision to let Zhang’er go. Hurry up and bring the trophy back for our first season’s class of singers! Everyone is waiting for your victory report!”

Zhang Ye smiled. “That will be difficult.”

Chen Guang said, “You so talented, how could anything hinder you?”

...

On Weibo.

A lot of netizens were making their predictions about this week’s battle of the grand champions.

The live broadcast of the competition this time had garnered a much higher viewership rating than the grand finals of I Am a Singer’s fifth season, so just imagine how it was like. Almost everyone was watching it and discussing about it. It had already become the grandest occasion of the music industry. In the end, even the media and the entertainment circle’s industry insiders joined in the discussion. From the participants’ singing skills to their popularities, an in-depth analysis was carried out.

“Zhang Ye is really such a dark horse.”

“We’ve witnessed the glory of a Heavenly King again.”

“The overall grand champion should be Qi Liang, right?”

“Get lost, it will surely be our Qu Qu.”

“It’s possible that Zhang Ye might win too.”

“Zhang Ye has the least chance of winning it.”

“Hai Yifei’s elimination was purely accidental. This sort of surprise wouldn’t happen again, or that would be abnormal. It just wouldn’t be logical at all. I admit that at the peak of Zhang Ye’s popularity, Qi Liang and Qu Dong would both not be a match for him. But he has already been away for the past four years, so there’s no reason why his popularity wouldn’t have dropped. In any case, I wouldn’t believe that to be the case. Let’s just wait for the finals this week to find out whether he’s a mule or a horse.”

“Qi Liang, Qu Dong, and Hai Yifei’s popularity are absolutely on a different level from Zhang Ye’s.”

“Don’t underestimate Teacher Zhang. We have all witnessed his capabilities before four years ago.”

“Exactly, that was four years ago!”

**Chapter 1558: ‘The Same Moonlight’!**

One day.

Two days.

Time went by very quickly. In the blink of an eye, it was the day of the competition again.

But on this morning, there was a subtle change in the atmosphere. Zhang Ye's past deeds and "dirt" were suddenly dug out again by someone.

The Japanese hotel incident.

The flying kick to the Korean star.

Being held at the police station.

The scolding battles.

The comics getting castrated.

One after another, some people were listing the incidents.

Someone was clearly instigating them.

Soon after, some male idols Zhang Ye did not know stepped forward.

Yan Han's Weibo openly declared: "Brother Qi Liang, you can do it. We're at the final stage, so, everyone, please show your support. Thank you."

Little Xuan's Weibo: "This is the final push in I Am a Singer's climactic battle. Everyone, don't forget to give your votes to Ququ, my little godbrother."

Big Ci's Weibo: "The battle is about to begin, and this is going to be the final one. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone's support for Qiqi and Ququ in the live broadcast. These two youngsters haven't had it easy at all. They've been practicing their songs until early in the morning every day, so much so that the dark circles under their eyes are getting more and more pronounced. Hardworking artists who are willing to suffer like them are decreasing these days."

Five!

Ten!

Twenty!

The fresh meat celebrities were all calling for support and pulling votes for their friends. There was really a good sense of team spirit going on.

The netizens were talking about this as well.

"Yan Han is pulling votes for Qi Liang?"

"Little Xuan has spoken as well?"

"There are so many big names canvassing for votes for them?"

"Qu Dong and Qi Liang have so many friends."

“Yeah, they’re both extremely popular big names, so of course they’d have a lot of friends.”

“Isn’t this against the rules? The competition hasn’t even started yet and they haven’t even performed their songs, so how can they be campaigning for votes now? Are they still competing in singing this way? Isn’t this more like a popularity contest?”

“Yeah, it’s a little too much to do it like this.”

“This is where Zhang Ye loses out.”

“Yeah, that guy’s social relations have always been terrible.”

“Didn’t Zhang Ye’s friends help him canvass for votes?”

“His friends are all from the previous generation of artists and are either has-beens or retired. Even if they were to canvass for votes on his behalf, how great of an effect would it have?”

“The finals are too dependent on one’s popularity.”

“Then Zhang Ye doesn’t stand a chance.”

“I wonder how many people are still willing to accompany him on his journey.”

...

At night.

At the recording venue of I Am a Singer.

The audience had already arrived and gotten seated.

“Eh, Chen Guang is here?”

“Zhang Xia too?”

“And there’s also Zhao Wuliu? He Huan? Xue Kaiqi? There are so many contestants from the first season of I Am a Singer here today. Ah, over there! The contestants from the fourth and fifth seasons are here as well.”

“Beijing TV must’ve invited them to cheer the contestants on.”

“This is gonna be interesting.”

...

In the front row.

Chen Guang, Zhang Xia, and a few others were chatting.

“Did you all see what’s happening on Weibo?”

“Yeah, Little Zhang is at a huge disadvantage.”

“They’re campaigning for votes so fiercely on there. I wonder if Little Zhang can hold on if it carries on.”

“Should we help him to get votes too?”

“Forget that. Don’t you guys know Zhang Ye’s temper? He would never want us to do something like that.”

“That’s true.”

...

At Old Wu’s house.

In the villa.

The entire family had gathered here today.

Wu Zeqing, Zhang Ye’s parents, Wu Changhe, Li Qinqin, and the rest of the family were all sitting around the television, watching as they waited for the event to begin. They all knew how important this day was for Zhang Ye.

“Mommy, Mommy, where’s Daddy?”

“Daddy will be appearing very soon.”

“There are only three contestants left. Let’s see which spot he manages to pick.”

“The further behind, the better.”

“Yeah, the situation is very unfavorable to Little Ye.”

...

In the music industry.

At a party.

“Has it started yet?”

“Soon.”

“Let’s talk while we watch.”

“Who does everyone think will win?”

“Teacher Zhang should’ve been eliminated already.”

“That might not be true. Those two male idols can’t compare when it comes to singing.”

“But the problem is that Zhang Ye isn’t popular enough, isn’t it?”

“The real competition today will be on their popularities.”

...

At a media outlet.

It was past working hours, but several reporters had gathered together in the office to watch the show.



“It is the final battle today.”

“Do you all think that Zhang Ye can still call the shots like he used to?”

“Who knows!”

“I think this is where it ends for Zhang Ye. I do feel some sympathy for him as well. Leaving the industry for so many years and coming back to find out that it is no longer the same is such a terrible feeling for anyone.”

...

Online.

“It’s starting!”

“They’re about starting drawing lots.”

“Let’s see what order they will perform in.”

“Ah, Qu Dong is going third.”

“Qi Liang is second?”

“Zhang Ye is going first again?”

“This fellow is so unlucky.”

“Looks like it’s truly over for Zhang Ye then.”

...

The live broadcast began.

The first segment was drawing lots to decide the order of appearances in the third round.

Zhang Ye did not even move and just left it to the two youngsters to go ahead with picking their lots. Whatever remained would be his lot, and unfortunately, he was going to be the first to perform again.

The order was determined.

Zhang Ye smiled and got up to head to the holding area.

Over at the live broadcast stage, the host was interviewing the various groups of guests. “Everyone, do you have any words of encouragement or something that you’d like to say to the contestants?”

Season Five’s class of singers.

“Come on, Ququ!”

“You must win as the champion!”

“Bring the trophy back for our class of season five!”

Season Four’s class of singers.

“Qiqi, don’t be nervous and sing well.”

“Of course we hope that it will be Qi Liang who takes the title of greatest champion.”

“Qiqi is the representative of our season four singers. We are all very confident in him!”

At this moment, the microphone was handed over to season one’s class of singers.

Chen Guang did not know what to say and handed the microphone to the next person.

Xue Kaiqi shrugged and passed it on again.

Zhao Wuliu didn’t even take the microphone and pretended not to have noticed.

Eventually, the microphone came into Grandma Zhang’s hands.

Grandma Zhang Xia laughed for a bit, took the microphone, and said, “I don’t think there’s much for us to say. Little Zhang knows what he needs to do, so there’s no need for us to say anything.”

There was no canvassing for votes.

There was no unnecessary banter.

Cui Na gave an awkward cough before taking the microphone back and handing it to the fourth and fifth seasons’ singers. They were unlike the class of singers from the first season and were more fond of showmanship and talking. When the microphone was in their hands, they couldn’t stop chattering.

“Brother Qi, win it and treat us to a meal!”

“Ququ, prepare yourself well. We’re all here to cheer for you.”

“It’s all up to you today.”

“The title of the greatest champion will definitely be won by our season four representative.”

“Go away, it will be our season five representative who wins it.”

“Everyone, please remember to vote.”

Both of the groups’ guests were happily bickering with one another. Their groups mainly consisted of other male idols who were also very young. They had a very strong sense of variety and knew how to speak well.

A few minutes later.

Cui Na announced, “Next up, the third round of performances will begin. Let’s welcome the first singer onto the stage!”

The crowd fell quiet.

The TV viewers also hushed up.

The spotlights focused onto the moon gate.

Zhang Ye had been waiting there for a long time and heard everything that was being said onstage from where he was standing. Without saying anything, he slowly walked up onto the stage.

Everyone was looking at Zhang Ye.

They wanted to know what song he would be performing today.

There are all kinds of unfavorable news about you online.

Your opponents have also been canvassing for votes from everywhere.

This is no longer your era, so how can you still compete with them on popularity?

The entertainment circle is no longer the entertainment circle where you used to call the shots!

So what more can you do?

Zhang Ye nodded at the band.

The band members nodded back in acknowledgment.

In the next moment, the sounded.

The audience's eyes were all on him.

The guests were looking at him.

The executive director, Xiao Lu, had her fists clenched.

The TV viewers did not blink at all.

Zhang Ye raised his microphone and sang <sup>1</sup> in a low voice.

"When did my childhood friends distance themselves from me?

"When did the people close to me become unfamiliar?

"The push and pull of the crowd increased the distance between us.

"In the land of silence, I silently weep into the quiet night."

The class of Season Four was stunned.

The class of Season Five was shocked.

Zhang Ye averted his gaze from them.

He continued singing in a low voice.

"When did the croaking frogs and buzzing cicadas become memories?

"When did our hometowns turn into these crowded places?

"Skyscrapers tower over everything.

"Rainbows of neon have sullied the night sky with blemishes."

It had been four years.

Everything was different.

A lot of the old alleys had disappeared.

A lot of old friends had left.

Zhang Ye did not like the current crop of celebrities.

Zhang Ye did not like the current state of show business.

He sang.

“Who can tell me?

“Who can tell me?

“Is it we who changed the world,

“Or is it the world that changed you and me?

“Who can tell me?

“Who can tell me?

“Is it we who changed the world,

“Or is it the world that changed you and me?

“The same moonlight,

“Shines upon the lands as usual.

“The same winter,

“Brings icy rain as usual.

“The same dust clouds,

“Accumulate in the wind as usual.”

Inhibited.

Low spirited.

Melancholic.

A lot of people were affected by the mood of the song.

All of a sudden, the audience transformed!

Many audience members reached up and held out LED light boards spelling out Zhang Ye’s name. This instantly lit up the area where the audience was!

One!

Ten!

A hundred!

Everyone was on their feet!

Everyone was proudly holding up their LED light boards with Zhang Ye's name!

The expressions on those faces were spelling out either determination, calmness, tearfulness, or excitement—

The cameras quickly panned over!

This scene was earthshaking!

Xiao Lu was stunned!

Chen Guang was dumbfounded!

Qi Liang was shocked silly!

Qu Dong was also startled!

The contestants from seasons four and five all looked back in surprise!

Zhang Ye!

Zhang Ye!

Zhang Ye!

Zhang Ye!

Behind them, there was an incredibly dense showcase of Zhang Ye's name!

Zhang Ye also saw it.

He smiled.

His eyes reddened.

He sang with even more might.

"The same smiles!

"The same tears!

"The same days!

"The same you and me!"

Qi Liang and Qu Dong's fans were sitting in the audience as well. But when they saw the crazed crowd of people holding up Zhang Ye's name, they also felt very shocked!

Oh my God!

Why are there so many of them?

Why?

Just what is with all of these!

Zhang Ye sang loudly.

“The same smiles!

“The same tears!

“The same days!

“The same you and me!”

Chen Guang was smiling.

Zhang Xia was smiling.

He Huan and Xue Kaiqi looked at each other in astonishment and also broke into smiles.

They had not expected to see something like this!

Nobody had expected this!

Four years had passed, but this fellow still had so many fans around?!

#### **Chapter 1559: Who will win it all?**

It had been four years.

The smiles were still the same.

The tears were still the same.

The stage was still the same.

And the crowd was still the same.

In the outside world, many of those who were watching the live broadcast were stunned.

The scene that unfolded before their eyes did not feel unfamiliar.

On the same stage several years ago, they had witnessed something similar. That crazed crowd, that radiant singer, they had seen it all before. And on this day, a few years later, when Zhang Ye once again stood on the stage of I Am a Singer, no one had expected that the scene would appear again!

...

Back at home.

His mother was dumbfounded. “W-What’s going on!”

Li Qinqin said in surprise, “They’re all holding up Little Ye’s name?”

Wu Changhe said, “Damn, has this kid really lost any popularity?”

Wu Mo said in amazement, “That’s a ton of people!”

...

At Ning Lan’s house.

The few friends’ jaws had dropped.

“What’s with this situation?”

“Who knows!”

“Who said that he’s no longer popular?”

“This is kinda scary!”

...

At a newly crowned Heavenly Queen’s studio.

The roomful of people were all frowning.

“This—”

“This shouldn’t be happening!”

“Yeah, it doesn’t make any sense!”

...

On Weibo.

“My God!”

“Am I seeing things?”

“It’s already been four years. How can there still be a scene like that?”

“Qi Liang and Qu Dong’s fans have totally been outnumbered?”

“What the hell! This is too amazing!”

“Could Zhang Ye really have turned the tide?”

...

On the live broadcast.

It was Qi Liang’s turn to go on stage.

The moment Qi Liang stepped on stage, his heart was pounding. This was because he suddenly realized that everything had changed. The audience was still applauding and cheering for him, but it was

somewhat different from what he had experienced the week before. He discovered that the audience's applause for him was actually less than what they had given Zhang Ye!

What did this mean?

Qi Liang was afraid to even think in that direction.

Did most of the audience members today happen to be Zhang Ye's fans?

Did a lot of his fans happen to be here today?

Qi Liang could only think in this way.

Over there, the music was already playing.

Qi Liang knew that he had no choice but to bring out his trump card. This was a song he had prepared for over a month and was also the song that he could sing the best and was most confident about. The reason he decided to bring it out today at the grand finals was that he badly wanted to become the greatest champion.

He started singing.

He hit the high notes.

He sang with an abundance of emotion.

There was nothing to nitpick.

When he heard the thunderous applause afterwards, Qi Liang could finally heave a sigh of relief. He smiled and bowed before exiting the stage.

Then it was Qu Dong's turn.

Qu Dong was also a mixed bag of emotions right now. Regarding Zhang Ye's return, Qu Dong and many of the other newly minted celebrities of the entertainment industry were actually not very bothered by it. In their opinion, Zhang Ye was a has-been and did not have much popularity left. There was no way he could compete against the currently popular celebrities like them. But the facts had left Qu Dong and many others quite terrified. The scene that happened earlier left them in utter disbelief.

They couldn't take it easy anymore!

The stakes were real now!

Qu Dong's fighting spirit became stronger in response. He nodded at the band to signal that he was ready.

The music started playing.

Qu Dong started singing.

He was going all out!

Today, Qi Liang and Qu Dong gave it their all!



...

In the audience.

The guests gasped.

Season Four's class of singers.

"He's really giving it his all!"

"Brother Qi has pulled out all the stops for his performance."

"Yeah, it was precisely that tenor that led him to win as the grand champion of Season Four."

"His tenor is so unique. No one else in the music scene can sing in the same way as him."

Season Five's class of singers.

"Brother Qu has used his ultimate move."

"Great showing, that's really good!"

"Right, he will definitely advance to the next round!"

"But Qi Liang's performance was very good too."

"I'm still more optimistic about Qu Dong. This song was in his first album when he debuted. His fans will surely be convinced."

Season One's class of singers.

Chen Guang breathed a sigh of relief. "They've finally finished performing."

He Huan smiled and said, "So what do you think of this?"

Chen Guang said, "You mean their singing skills?"

He Huan said, "Who do you think sang better?"

Chen Guang laughed. "You're asking the obvious. Who else?"

Xue Kaiqi said, "In regard to singing skills, even Grandma Zhang isn't a match for him. This fellow is a natural-born singer. If there's a need to compete on singing skills, there's probably only Zhang Yuanqi who can match him. But now that Sister Zhang has retired from the scene, there isn't another person who can fight him in singing."

Zhang Xia said, "I'm just afraid that this isn't a competition of singing."

Chen Guang smiled. "The results will be out soon. We'll know for sure this time just how much popularity our Zhang'er has got left. Let's wait and see."

He Huan said, "Qi Liang and Qu Dong sang very well too."

Chen Guang acknowledged that too. "The youngsters these days are truly amazing."

...

The performance ended.

Online, the fighting had descended into a crazy state.

“Give your votes to Qi Liang!”

“Vote for Ququ!”

“Everyone, please vote!”

“The voting will close soon!”

“Vote for Zhang Ye!”

“Get lost, previous poster!”

“Don’t vote for Zhang Ye!”

The fans of the contestants were tussling.

Quite a few fans from the other fanbases also came to mess around. Everyone had a celebrity they supported, and there were countless people pulling for votes as they tried to fight for their idols to get the last two places in the grand finals!

...

One minute.

Two minutes.

Three minutes.

The voting ended!

The fans were getting nervous!

The media was in a state of anxiety!

The people from the entertainment industry were looking forward to seeing the results!

Who will it be?

Who will be the one who gets eliminated in this round?

Qi Liang’s heart was pounding. He wanted to win! He really wanted to win!

Qu Dong looked very calm on the surface, but he was in turmoil on the inside. He kept thinking back to his performance. Were there any mistakes? There shouldn’t have been any mistakes? It all depends on how everyone has voted. Surely Zhang Ye isn’t going to last any longer, is he? There’s no reason why he still remains in the competition! Qi Liang and himself had not given Zhang Ye any chance!

...

On TV.

Cui Na had already stepped out onto the stage.

For a moment, everyone was staring fixedly at her. The atmosphere became very tense.

Cui Na could also feel everyone's gaze on her. She took a deep breath and smiled. "The voting results of the third round have been sent to me, but I haven't looked at them yet. In fact, I'm as nervous as you. I dislike the arrival of this moment as well, because it means that another contestant has to leave us. But this is unavoidable. That's what a competition is about." With a pause, she said, "Now then, I'll be announcing the results."

She then lowered her head to look at the outcome of the voting that had been sent to the cell phone in her hand.

Cui Na was startled for a moment before she looked up again. "Honestly speaking, this is a little unexpected to me."

The crowd was going crazy with anxiety.

"Tell us already!"

"Who is it?"

"Who has been eliminated?"

The TV viewers were also on the edge of their seats.

"Your sister!"

"Announce it already!"

"Has Zhang Ye been eliminated?"

Then they heard Cui Na announce, "The contestant who will be leaving us in this round is...Qi Liang! That means Qu Dong and Zhang Ye will be heading into the final matchup of this culmination battle!"

Chen Guang jumped to his feet!

Zhang Xia gave Zhang Ye a thumbs up!

Xue Kaiqi looked happily surprised!

He Huan's jaw dropped!

The singers from Season Four and Five were also shocked!

Qi Liang?

It's Qi Liang?

How is that possible!

There was an uproar at the venue!

Qi Liang's heart sank to the pit of his stomach. He sat backstage, stunned for two seconds, but still couldn't react. I've lost? It's me?

Qu Dong was also startled. Although he had advanced to the next round, he realized that he didn't feel happy about it. It wasn't because he sympathized with his opponent, Qi Liang, but that he had been frightened by how popular Zhang Ye was. If the atmosphere in the venue earlier did not clearly explain this, then the voting result was the most direct reflection of it. This couldn't be falsified as the votes were cast by the people. Zhang Ye had actually defeated Qi Liang? Qu Dong knew that even if Qi Liang's popularity ranking was two places below his, their popularity couldn't have been too far apart!

What the hell?

Just what the fuck is this outcome?

However, there was no time for him keep thinking about this!

Qu Dong and Zhang Ye's final round was going to begin immediately!

The greatest champion of I Am a Singer would soon be revealed!

### **Chapter 1560: 'Fleeting Time'!**

It blew up in the outside world!

The industry was in chaos!

The public was in chaos!

...

At Zhang Ye's maternal grandma's house.

"Our brother has won! He has won!"

"This is too exciting!"

"He managed to stay in the competition!"

"Qi Liang has been defeated by our brother!"

...

At Yao Jiancai's house.

"This fellow is defying all common sense!"

"Uncle Zhang is almighty!"

"Let's see what song he'll sing for his final performance."

...

At a party in the industry.

“Hai, who said that he has become old?”

“Don’t tell me he might really walk away as the greatest champion?”

“If that happens, it would get really interesting in the entertainment circle!”

“He doesn’t really stand a chance there, does he?”

“Who knows!”

...

At a music company.

“Zhang Ye is still hanging on?”

“No one could have expected this!”

“Qi Liang actually lost? Fuck!”

“Four years! It’s already been four years since he left! This—”

“It’s going to be their last songs next. Let’s see how they perform!”

...

Back at home.

“They’re going to start drawing lots!”

“The performances will be beginning soon!”

“Will Little Ye be able to win?”

“Daddy will win!”

..

On TV.

The two contestants were drawing lots.

Only two small balls were left to be picked now that only the two of them remained.

Zhang Ye still did not pick a lot and left it to Qu Dong.

Qu Dong took a deep breath and put in his hand to draw out a ball indicating #1.

Qu Dong shrugged.

Zhang Ye looked very calm.

Qu Dong had a sip of water before standing up to head towards the holding area.

...

On the stage.

Applause.

Cheers.

They were coming from all around the stage.

The music playing.

Qu Dong's singing rang out.

It was a rock song.

It was a rock song which Qu Dong had prepared for a very long time.

"The air has changed!

"The world has changed!

"This is our time!

"A brand new era!

"This world is a blank canvas!

"Let's embrace it with pride!"

This song was called "Our Time" and it was a very popular song in these past two years. Qu Dong had made some rearrangements to the song and used his own style to reinterpret the melody and emotions. It felt as though this song was being sung for Zhang Ye to hear.

Chen Guang narrowed his eyes.

Zhang Xia gave a look to Qu Dong who was onstage.

At this moment, Zhang Ye arrived at the backstage holding area. When he heard this song, he gave a slight grin. In his heart of hearts, he also admitted that the times had indeed changed.

But so what?

What could he do about that?

I'm still the same as before.

I haven't become old yet.

Qu Dong finished performing and left the stage.

It was Zhang Ye's turn to take to the stage.

The lights dimmed.

All of the spotlights focused onto the moon gate.

Zhang Ye strode out and appeared onstage.

Thunderous applause rang out from the audience.

Many of the audience members were looking at him in surprise. A lot of them were still in a state of disbelief at the results of the voting. In the days since Zhang Ye announced his return to the entertainment industry, there were too many doubting voices about him. There was an overall mood of pessimism surrounding his comeback, so no one could have expected Zhang Ye to make it so far on the stage of I Am a Singer. From advancing into the top four? To the top three? Then to the final two? Zhang Ye had pressed on until now?

Could he still go further?

Could he keep it up?

Would he make it past this final step?

In the audience.

Chen Guang stood up.

Zhang Xia stood up.

Even before Zhang Ye had started singing, a lot of the audience members were on their feet.

This was going to be the final performance of the competition.

Zhang Ye had a lot that he wanted to say, and all of it was going to be said with this song. At this very moment, he wasn't nervous in the slightest. Recalling the events of the past few years and the people that he came across, he was deeply moved. He felt his blood pumping with excitement. He wanted to keep fighting, he wanted to keep scolding, he really wanted to keep battling!

The music played.

Everyone had their eyes on Zhang Ye.

It was like this for those watching TV and at the venue.

Zhang Ye raised his microphone.

"I don't know how long I can keep persevering,

"Even though it won't last beyond this lifetime."

He clutched his chest and sang steadily.

"To prevent all this filth from staining my heart,

"To prevent all this shame from breaking my spirit,

"I sit on this patch of land and gaze into the distance.

"While I try to be an upright, stubborn person,

"While my stubborn heart tries to learn to be strong.

"Oh, fleeting time!

"What can you do!"

Qu Dong was stunned!

The guests were stunned!

Xiao Lu was stunned!

The entire venue was stunned!

Zhang Ye smiled and sang.

"I don't know just how much persistence I have.

"Although I'm nothing but the velvet among steel,

"Not gonna let fate come between my aspirations,

"Not gonna drag out my life just 'cause the world sucks."

Four years.

Those were the hardest four years Zhang Ye had to go through in his life.

To his wife, child, parents, family, friends, and fans, he had disappeared for that entire period of time. None of them knew where Zhang Ye had gone. Meanwhile, however, Zhang Ye knew exactly where they were. He could see them on TV, he could hear about how they were doing from others, but he couldn't see them.

He had been completely isolated from the outside world!

He had no one to care about him.

Yet he made it through.

He had endured and made it through all of that!

He was still smiling!

He could still laugh!

Zhang Ye sang loudly.

"I stand on this stage looking back on my journey!

"As a stronger person laughing at my mistakes!

"While my mistakes intensify my soul's desire!"

"Oh, fleeting time!"

He thumped his chest. "What can you do!"

Some people started crying!

Some people were screaming!

Some people were howling!



Many people were hit right in the feels!

It hit them so hard that they were caught off guard!

They had no way to fight back!

Zhang Ye sang loudly.

“I sit on this patch of land and gaze into the distance.

“While I try to be an upright, stubborn person.

“While my stubborn heart tries to learn to be strong.”

Chen Guang gave him a thumbs up!

Zhang Xia stood up and gave him a thumbs up!

He Huan, Xue Kaiqi, and the others also gave a thumbs up in the direction of the stage!

The entire audience was on their feet!

The TV viewers at home also stood up in shock!

Zhang Ye pointed at the sky and shout sang in a higher register.

“Oh, fate!

“What can you do!

“Oh, fleeting time!

“What can you do!”

...

Cui Na went up on stage. “The voting window has closed. The final results are out. So then, the contestant who will be crowned as the greatest champion is—”

One second.

Two seconds.

Cui Na said loudly, “Teacher Zhang Ye!”

...

Back at home.

“He won!”

“Greatest champion!”

“Little Ye has won!”

...

At Zhang Ye's maternal grandma's house.

"Holy shit! Damn!"

"It's our brother!"

"Our brother has won!"

...

At Ning Lan's house.

"Oh my God!"

"He really pulled it off!"

"This fellow is amazing!"

...

At Yao Jiancai's house.

"Good showing, Little Zhang!"

"Uncle Zhang, well done!"

...

Within the industry.

"How could this be!"

"Qu Dong lost?"

"Zhang Ye is the greatest champion?"

...

On Weibo.

"Ahhhh!"

"It's Zhang Ye!"

"This is too fucking unexpected!"

"Yeah, how could it possibly be him?"

...

In the forums.

"The greatest champion has emerged!"

"This is so awesome!"

"The Heavenly King has returned, and his ways are still as glorious as ever!"

...

The media was stunned!

The industry was dumbfounded!

The public was astonished!

The whole nation was shocked!

“Fleeting Time” sent Zhang Ye to the summit of the music industry once more!

It wasn’t the music industry of four years ago!

But the music industry four years later!

Four years!

A whole four years!

Oh, fate! What can you do?

Oh, fleeting time! What can you do?