# Superstar 1561

# Chapter 1561: That old song!

The champion was crowned!
The winner of the five seasons' culmination battle was crowned!
A new king of the Chinese music industry had emerged!
Or to better phrase it, the former king had returned!
Zhang Ye's sorrow.
Zhang Ye's determination.
Zhang Ye's smile.
Zhang Ye's pride.
Zhang Ye's obsession.
All of that had exploded with his last performance!
He had taken a detour.
He had stayed quiet.
He had suffered.
He had cried.
He had laughed.
He had felt lost.
He had waited for four years.
This was a song that he was singing for himself, a song that he was singing for the world, and also a song that he was singing to the Heavens. Today, Zhang Ye had shone brilliantly. Even after the song had ended, even after the music had come to a stop, even after the competition was over, everyone could still hear the final cry of Zhang Ye's ringing in their ears. The last line sent a lot of people into a craze, made them shed tears, and even made them shout out in excitement!
Oh, fleeting time!
What can you do!
"Zhang Ye!"
"Zhang Ye!"
"Zhang Ye!"

"Zhang Ye!"

The audience was crazily shouting his name!

Chen Guang, Xue Kaiqi, and the others rushed over.

He Huan put his arms around Zhang Ye. "You were awesome!"

Chen Guang gave him a bear hug the moment he went up to him. "Hahahaha! I knew you still had it in you!"

Zhang Xia said, "Well done, boy! Well done!"

Xue Kaiqi said excitedly, "You've really done us proud!"

The class of Season One all huddled together.

Xiao Lu, the executive director, also came running over. "Director Zhang!"

Zhang Ye gave her a hug. "I did it, it's done."

Xiao Lu cried. "I knew you could do it!"

The program team staff approached from every direction!

The live broadcast was still happening. If it were anyone else, the people would've had a feeling that something wasn't right. After all, if the program team's director and staff members were also celebrating the win, it would reveal a certain bias on the show's part and how they were anticipating Zhang Ye to be the greatest champion. However, since that person was Zhang Ye, no one said anything when they saw this scene. None of the people felt that anything was wrong with their behavior. Because, as everyone knew, it was Zhang Ye who created this entire show by himself years ago. These people had all worked under Zhang Ye. That was why Zhang Ye had chosen this place for his first stage appearance after coming back. It was because this place held extraordinary significance to him.

They cheered!

They celebrated!

They had not expected Zhang Ye to actually win!

No one could break them up, because everyone knew that this moment of glory belonged to them!

When the singers of Season Four and Five saw them behaving like this, they could only give each other wry smiles before standing up to clap as well. They were helpless in these circumstances. There was nothing they were dissatisfied about. After listening to this song, they were also extremely shocked. They couldn't help but admit that they wouldn't be able to compose a song like that ever in their lifetimes. Zhang Ye was amazing. He had never needed any gimmicks in his songs, nor make his performances very showy. His songs had always been about his feelings and his story, which he then told with his performances.

His story was very touching!

They felt their blood surging just listening to it!

They looked over to Qu Dong, who seemed like he still couldn't accept the result and sympathized with him. This former Heavenly King was truly a freak of nature. This was clearly no longer his era, yet he still managed to fight his way through the combined siege of the male idols, Qu Dong, Qi Liang, and Hai Yifei, and even ended up winning as the greatest champion. Before tonight, this was something no one had expected him to be capable of achieving!

The media couldn't have expected it!

The people couldn't have expected it!

The industry couldn't have expected it!

Was this really the entertainment industry's legend from years ago?

Qu Dong had suffered a huge setback. He still looked stunned and couldn't understand why or how he had lost!

This was impossible!

How could he still have fans?

How many fans did he still have?

Fleeting time couldn't do anything about him?

Fate couldn't do anything about him?

This shouldn't have been the case!

This was supposed to be our time!

There shouldn't be any place left for him in the present time!

Then, right at this moment, a scene that would shock the entire country's viewers took place.

"Zhang Ye!"

"Zhang Ye!"

"Zhang Ye!"

The shouting gradually came to a stop.

All of a sudden, someone stood up.

It was a woman who strained her throat and sang in a high register  $^{1}$ , "I gently look back on the nights we belonged to each other!"

A young also stood up and followed with, "You are still the rosy, bright sun that warmed my heart!"

Then countless people stood up together. "I hope you can understand and forgive me if I shed silly tears!"

Chen Guang was stunned!

Qu Dong was stunned!

Zhang Xia was stunned!

Xiao Lu was stunned!

Zhang Ye was also stunned!

One person!

A 100 people!

200 people!

More and more voices were heard!

Everyone had gotten up from their seats!

Some of them were crying!

Some of them were shouting!

Some of them were howling with emotion!

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

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

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

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

Xiao Lu sang along!

The staff of Beijing Television sang along!

Countless people watching TV started singing along as well!

"When the raindrops tap on your windows,

"When the wind blows your thoughts into chaos,

"Can you take the time to remember my familiar face?

"Even if someday thousands of romances

"get blown into my path and land!

"Even if someday thousands of stars

"shine brighter than the moon tonight!

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

"Nor could they wash away my memories of tonight!

"'Cause I don't know when I'll be able to sing with you again!"

Zhang Ye smiled. His eyes reddened. He couldn't be more familiar with this song. This was the last song that Zhang Ye had left behind for this world three to four years ago. They hadn't forgotten. All of them still remembered. Today, they were singing loudly together. This sight shocked countless people! On Weibo. "I'm in tears!" "Damn, I'm crying too!" "That old concert is unforgettable!" "The moon that night, the songs that night, I'll definitely remember them my entire life!" "So there were that many people who were still waiting for Teacher Zhang!" At a celebrity dinner party. "This sight is so stunning." "It's gonna get messy in the entertainment industry again." "Hai, he's really returned." "If he has the same popularity, these peaceful times won't last for a lot of people." At the studio of a Heavenly King. "How could this happen!" "He's-" "Zhang Ye has really returned. Everyone better be careful from now on." "A change might be coming to showbiz soon." "Hai, this is too big a change."

At a media outlet. "Face-smacking Zhang hasn't changed one bit!" "Yeah, he either doesn't make a single move, or he does it with an earth-shattering effect!" "Those young guns, newly crowned Heavenly Kings and Queens, and A-list superstars all have something to worry about now." "They might just get a taste of how Zhang Ye operated when he was competing to get to the top!" Online. Back at home. On the news. In the industry. Zhang Ye's name was getting mentioned everywhere at this moment! On this night of Zhang Ye's return to the stage, a lot of people were destined to lose sleep! Chapter 1562: Spring Garden wants to make a comeback? The next day. In the morning. The media was still abuzz. "I Am a Singer comes to an end!" "The viewership sets an astonishing record!" "Zhang Ye defies all odds to take the crown!" "The most popular male idols suffer a collective defeat!" "A night that will shock anyone!" "Last night, in the town squares, bars, and restaurants, tens of thousands of people sang along to 'Thousands of Songs' in unison!"

"Zhang Ye's return: Oh, fleeting time, what can you do?"

On Weibo.

"Zhang Ye's song in the grand finals engulf the updates on Moments!"

"All four of Zhang Ye's new songs storm into the Top Chinese Music Chart!"

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"The viewership ratings have been published too!"
"That is such a frightening figure!"
"Yeah, this is a viewership figure that has never been seen before!"
"I'm afraid that there won't be any variety shows that can exceed this viewership even in the future!"
"At least it's not likely to happen for the next 10 years."
"This is such a perfect ending."
"I Am a Singer was created in the hands of Zhang Ye, and it came to an end in the hands of Zhang Ye.
Perhaps it was fated that he would become the greatest champion upon his return."
"I love him!"
"Me too! I was initially supporting the hunks, but I turned traitor on their fanbase the moment I heard
Zhang Ye sing!"
"I was also reminded of many past events. What a nostalgic feeling."
"It's such a pity that we're gradually seeing less and less of the people from the past generation."
"Sister Zhang has retired."
"Chen Guang hardly makes an appearance anymore as well."
"Old Chen had surgery done on his vocal cords."
"Yeah, and Spring Garden has disbanded too."
Zhang Ye's victory had a very significant effect.
He had triggered the memories of a lot of people regarding past matters and people of yesteryear.
Back at home.
Zhang Ye was shaken awake by his daughter.
"Daddy, Daddy, wake up!"
"Eh?"
"Daddy! Daddy!"
"What is it, my dear?"
"Daddy is on TV!"
"Is that so? Don't you think Daddy is cool?"
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"Daddy is cool! Daddy, carry me!"

Zhang Ye crawled out from under the covers and picked his daughter up to give her a kiss. This little girl had become his number one fan. He could hear the television coming from the first floor of the villa, and there was indeed mention of his name on the news. For a moment, Zhang Ye even imagined that he had been transported four years back to when news of him dominated the headlines.

Buzz, buzz.

His cell phone was vibrating without stop. He didn't know how long it had been ringing for.

After being woken up by his daughter, Zhang Ye couldn't get back to sleep. He yawned and turned around to grab his cell phone from the nightstand to answer the call.

It was from Ha Qiqi.

On the other end of the line, it was extremely noisy.

"Director Zhang!"

"Sister Ha, what's the matter?"

"Don't come to the studio today no matter what!"

"Ah?"

"Our entrance is packed with reporters. There are people everywhere!"

"Whoa, surely not, right?"

"Aiyo, you're saying that because you aren't seeing this. The building's elevator is on the verge of breaking down from all the human traffic, and the reporters and TV station vans are all camping out in the yard and perimeter of the neighborhood, waiting for you to arrive to give them an interview."

"Turn them all away."

"I understand. You better not go out onto the streets without your sunglasses either, at least not for a while."

"Alright, I understand. I'll leave it to you guys then."

"Don't worry, we can hold down the fort."

Soon after, his cell phone rang again.

It was famous director Li Ke.

"Director Li."

"Director Zhang, hur hur, the investors have changed their minds."

"Ah?"

"About the role I reserved for you, they would like you to play the part. The pay this time is quite hefty too."

"Forget it, my drama will be broadcasting soon anyway."

"I knew you wouldn't want it, but I just thought I'd inform you. You've become highly sought after now, and many companies have their eyes on you. No one expected you to become so popular again. Congratulations!" "Haha, thanks." Yao Jiancai. Ning Lan. Hu Fei. His cousins. Calls from his family and friends arrived without a break. After Zhang Ye had arrived home yesterday, he immediately went to sleep and couldn't be contacted by a lot of people. As such, the congratulatory calls only started coming in today. A lot of them found it hard to believe and even found it difficult to accept that Zhang Ye had won on the show. Zhang Ye was kept busy with taking calls for the rest of the day. At night, Amy's call came. "Hi, Amy." "Teacher Zhang, you've totally defied all common sense!" "Haha, not really. However, isn't this call from you a little late?" "Pfft, are you blaming me for not congratulating you earlier?" "Of course not, it's good as long as I get a congratulation from you. Thank you." "You're welcome. Well, Teacher Zhang, there's actually something I'm looking for you for." "What is it?" "Um...well-" "Speak up. What's the matter?" Amy stammered, unable to express herself. Then another voice came from the other end of the line. "You're so slow. I'll tell him." It was Xiaodong's voice. Zhang Ye laughed and said: "Sister Dong? The two of you are together right now?" "Yes." Zhang Ye said: "Didn't Spring Garden disband?" Xiaodong rolled her eyes. "The group has disbanded, not our friendship."

Zhang Ye said: "Fair."

Then Xiaodong said: "There's something we're looking for you for."

"Just speak," Zhang Ye said.

Xiaodong replied: "Actually, we wanted to solve this matter by ourselves, but we couldn't resolve it for the past two years. We thought of many ways and sought out many people we thought could help, but none of it worked. So we have no choice but to approach you."

Zhang Ye laughed. "So what is it?"

But Xiaodong said: "I won't talk about it yet. Let's rewind to the time when you held your final concert. Didn't you promise to invite me, Amy, and Xiaoxian to perform?"

Zhang Ye was taken aback. "I guess so?"

"And you even said that you wanted to sing metal with us?"

Zhang Ye coughed and said: "I think I did say that."

"But in the end, you invited none of us. Was there something like that?"

Zhang Ye exclaimed: "That's because I got into big trouble at that time. I figured I shouldn't drag you guys down with me."

"But do you admit to not inviting us to perform?"

Zhang Ye gave a dry laugh. "I'll admit to that."

Xiaodong said: "Then you must help us out with this problem."

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "Alright, shoot."

Only then did Xiaodong say: "It's about Amy's contract with the talent agency. This matter has been left hanging for the past two years without getting resolved. The talent agency has basically shelved her and isn't helping her find any work or allowing her to leave, which as good as freezing her. Amy has always wanted to leave the agency and go solo, but she can't. They're not letting her to leave no matter what. Even if we let her contract run out, it'll still be some time before that happens. By that time, Amy's popularity will have dropped even further."

Zhang Ye asked: "You're requesting that I help Amy settle her contract dispute?"

On the other end, Amy finally spoke: "I just need to cancel the contract. It doesn't matter even if I have to pay compensation."

Zhang Ye said in amusement: "Why did you guys think of approaching me?"

He heard Li Xiaoxian speaking this time.

"Because you have a lot of influence."

Xiaodong said: "Teacher Zhang, we're depending on you to help us out with Amy's contract issue."

Zhang Ye could understand there was something going on here. He couldn't help but ask: "Sister Dong, aren't you holding a solo concert soon? Why are you in such a rush to deal with Amy's contract?"

There was silence over there.

Then they said something shocking.

Xiaodong, Amy, and Li Xiaoxian said in near unison: "We're hoping that our Spring Garden can make a comeback."

Zhang Ye was stunned and then chuckled. "Alright, I'll help you out with this for sure!"

### Chapter 1563: Zhang Ye handles the matter!

At Xiaodong's house.

The trio were getting extremely worried.

Amy said, "Will Teacher Zhang be able to handle it?"

Li Xiaoxian said, "There isn't much time left."

Xiaodong said, "I only wonder if it can be dealt with before the concert happens in a few days."

Li Xiaoxian said, "I guess we can only leave it to Teacher Zhang."

Amy said, "I'm only afraid that they wouldn't even give face to Teacher Zhang."

The three of them had gone solo for nearly two years now. Ever since Spring Garden was forced to disband over a contract dispute with their talent agency, their days have not been smooth sailing. They were one of the most famous girl groups in Asia, and every member had their own fanbase within the group. However, since going their separate ways, their fans followed suit and went their own ways as well. With the impact from the "male idol" effect, their appeal fell as their popularity dropped by leaps and bounds. As a result, the name of Spring Garden became a memory of the people. Seeing how Zhang Ye had returned and took victory at the competition, they felt really envious of him. They wanted to get back together and be like Zhang Ye, to battle again in show business as the three sisters!

Perhaps their futures were not guaranteed.

Perhaps there wasn't going to be any glory.

But they still wished to try. They really did.

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Monday.

In the morning.

After sending his daughter to school and his wife to work, Zhang Ye parked his car at the curb. He took out his cell phone to call the number Amy had given to him.

Du du.

The call connected.

On the other end, it was a woman who answered.

"Hello, this is Tianhe Entertainment."

"I'm looking for CEO Li."

"You are?"

"I am Zhang Ye."

"Ah?"

"I'm looking for CEO Li regarding some business. Can I make an appointment?"

"CEO Li has gone on a work trip and will probably be back on—"

"Please help me to get in touch with him."

"Alright, I'll pass along the message."

After hanging up, Zhang Ye gave a sneer.

Work trip?

Amy clearly told him that CEO Li was in the country.

Zhang Ye understood that the other party did not wish to see him. When he thought of that, he turned the steering wheel and stepped on the accelerator, heading straight for the headquarters of Tianhe Entertainment.

At the company entrance.

Zhang Ye stepped on the brakes and parked, got out of the car, and headed straight in.

When several of the security guards and staff saw him, they were stunned.

"Oh my God!"

"Zhang...Zhang Ye?"

"What is he doing here?"

Seeing him here, everyone became terrified. They obviously did not think that their Tianhe Entertainment could have possibly signed Zhang Ye under its wing since it was well-known that he had never signed with any talent agency before. So when Zhang Ye appeared here, everyone could sense that something bad was about to happen. Especially when it was also common knowledge that Amy's relationship with the talent agency had soured.

A male idol had just come down from upstairs.

It was Hai Yifei. He was a member of Tianhe Entertainment as well.

Hai Yifei was also taken aback. "Teacher Zhang?"

Zhang Ye did not look at him and went straight into the elevator.

The security guards had wanted to stop him. But in the end, none of them dared to make a move.

Everyone had heard of Zhang Ye's notoriety. Even after three to four years, no one dared to provoke him

A security guard said, "Something bad is gonna happen!"

The receptionist said, "Quickly call upstairs to inform them!"

Ding.

Upstairs, the elevator arrived.

When Zhang Ye stepped out, he was greeted by the sight of a female secretary running over in panic. "Teacher Zhang, why are you here? CEO Li is not around, he's—"

Judging by her voice, she was definitely the woman who had answered his call.

Zhang Ye ignored her and walked forward with narrowed eyes.

The female secretary was getting anxious. "Aiyo, Teacher Zhang! Teacher Zhang, what are you doing!"

The office was just up ahead.

Zhang Ye didn't even bother to knock before pushing the door open.

A middle-aged man was sitting at his desk and taking a call. When he saw Zhang Ye, he was startled before immediately saying to the person on the phone: "Old Chu, something has cropped up over here. I have to hang up."

Zhang Ye smiled. "CEO Li, you're back so soon from your work trip?"

The female secretary looked very embarrassed.

But CEO Li put on a smiling face. "Well, if it isn't Teacher Zhang! Please, come in!"

Zhang Ye did not keep harping on this. "CEO Li, sorry for coming uninvited today."

"You're always welcome here. I've been thinking about buying you dinner ever since you came back, but I couldn't find an opportunity to do so." CEO Li asked, "Is Minister Wu well?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "She's pretty good."

The two of them were not friends, but neither were they strangers. Although Zhang Ye didn't have a particularly good network, he still knew quite a lot of people in the entertainment industry from back then.

The two of them sat down.

The female secretary served him tea with a bitter smile.

CEO Li asked, "What brought you here?"

Zhang Ye didn't beat around the bush. "Amy's contract, please try to resolve it."

CEO Li looked troubled. "Oh, that matter?"

Zhang Ye said, "They were the most successful girl group in the country with no one else coming close. Now that they've disbanded, only Amy remains contracted to your company, yet you're not giving her any support or giving work to her. She still has to make a living, doesn't she? Since that's the case, wouldn't it be better to just let her go? We're all industry insiders and can't avoid seeing each other. It won't do any of us any good by making matters the way they are now. How about this, CEO Li? I won't make things difficult for you. Just treat it like I owe you a favor. Sever her from her contract and name the compensation amount. I'll pay on Amy's behalf."

CEO Li did not say anything.

The female secretary suddenly said, "That won't do. Amy's matter is very complicated. Back then, she—"

Zhang Ye gave her a look.

"I'm speaking with Teacher Zhang here. What business is it of yours?" CEO Li interrupted his secretary.

The female secretary shut her mouth.

CEO Li looked at Zhang Ye. "Teacher Zhang, since you're putting it like that, alright, I'll do it for your sake. We won't even mention the compensation since that would be disrespectful." He then instructed his secretary, "Get in touch with the legal department. Terminate Amy's contract by the end of today!"

The female secretary replied, "Yes, sir!"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Thank you very much, CEO Li."

Within ten minutes.

Zhang Ye left.

CEO Li heaved a sigh of relief.

The female secretary also came back at this time.

CEO Li asked, "Is it done?"

The female secretary said in an agonized manner, "It's done. The contract has been sorted out. We just need to wait for Amy to get here. The contract can be terminated at any time after that."

"Alright," CEO Li said.

The female secretary asked out of curiosity, "Why did you agree to his request?"

Several of the deputy CEOs also came in after knocking.

"CEO Li."

"Amy has been released from her contract?"

"But why?!"

"You didn't even ask for any compensation?"

CEO Li threw his hands up. "Enough, stop talking about this. Let's just leave it as that." He sighed and said, "Zhang Ye came calling, so we have to give him face."

When everyone heard that, they couldn't help but smile bitterly.

CEO Li said, "It isn't easy to get Zhang Ye to owe us a favor. His wife is in a high place, so there will surely be an opportunity to get his help someday. Moreover, it's not like you all don't know what Zhang Ye's temper is like. Now that he's back, my guess is that the entertainment industry is going to turn chaotic again, so let's avoid being the bird that sticks our head out first. Hai, with Zhang Ye on the right and Minister Wu on the left, we better not rile them up!"

Everyone looked at one another.

That's right.

One was a hooligan.

The other was a minister.

Who could they afford to offend?

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Outside.

Zhang Ye called up Amy.

"Teacher Zhang?"

"The problem has been resolved. You just need to come down to Tianhe Entertainment to finalize things."

"What?"

"Hurry up and come over to terminate the contract."

"Damn, I love you to death, Teacher Zhang!"

On at the other end of the line, Amy, Xiaodong, and Li Xiaoxian cheered!

It had really been dealt with?

Amy had regained her freedom?

Teacher Zhang was truly influential!

They couldn't hide their excitement. They were overjoyed at the outcome!

Two years!

It had been a whole two years!

Their Spring Garden group was finally able to make a comeback!

Xiaodong immediately said: "Teacher Zhang, for the concert that is happening soon, we're now officially inviting you to be our concert's guest to support us with your singing. You have to come no matter what, alright?!"

Amy shouted: "Yes, yes, yes! You definitely have to come!"

Zhang Ye was very happy for them too. He said with a hearty laugh: "Sure, for this important occasion, I will definitely be there. I'll write you three another song, so let's have fun together! During the concert that I held in Olympic Stadium, I gave you all my promise that we'd perform together once more. In the end, I stood you up, so I'll have to make it up to you this time. Treat it as a gift from me!"

Li Xiaoxian yelled: "That's great!"

Amy shouted: "Lord Zhang, what a loyal friend!"

Xiaodong said: "Hahahaha, let's get all our friends from back then to attend the concert. We can all have fun together!"

### Chapter 1564: 'Years of Friendship' leaves the venue in tears!

Many days later.

On the day of the concert.

The name of Xiaodong's solo concert had been changed a few days before the tickets went on sale. It was now called: "Spring Garden's Comeback Concert"!

The industry was shocked!

The country was shocked!

Asia was shocked!

There wasn't much publicity, nor any promotions!

With just the name of Spring Garden alone, it was more than enough to create hype!

This was one of the most popular girl groups in Asia a few years ago!

A legendary group that had accompanied a lot of people in their teenage years!

At the venue.

The audience had already entered.

"The tickets are too difficult to get!"

"I only managed to get one because I got lucky."

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"I think the tickets were sold out within a day."
"I'm still in disbelief!"
"Yeah, have they...have they really decided to reunite?"
"This came too suddenly. Wasn't the contract issue still unresolved?"
"Don't you guys know? I heard that the matter has been dealt with."
"That can't be. Tianhe Entertainment has publicly argued with Amy and Xiaodong before. How could
they possibly let her go so easily?"
"Apparently, Zhang Ye personally went down to the company on Amy's behalf."
"Ah? Zhang Ye?"
"Damn, no wonder. So it was because of him!"
"Zhang Ye's got huge influence, doesn't he?"
"It's not his influence, but his notoriety!"
"Hahaha, yeah! Back then, when those entertainment companies issued that industry-wide boycott on
him, how many of them got hit by Zhang Ye's actions on the backswing? He's got such a bad reputation,
so now that he's back, I'm sure none of the entertainment companies would want to offend him again."
"I am a hardcore fan of Spring Garden!"
"Me too! Thank you, Teacher Zhang!"
"Teacher Zhang is so cool! I thank you on behalf of Spring Garden!"
"He's such a loyal friend!"
"I heard that there's a mystery guest today."
"I heard about it too."
"I wonder who's gonna come and be the supporting act. I'm so looking forward to it!"
Screams!
Yells!
The concert had not started yet, but the audience was already in a frenzied state!
On Weibo.
"Is there going to be a stream?"
"I couldn't get tickets."
"There's a livestream. It's gonna start soon."
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"That's great. I haven't heard them sing in so long!" "How nostalgic, I'm getting so emotional." Within the industry. "Spring Garden has made a comeback?" "Yet another one has returned." "Zhang Ye's comeback has affected the entertainment circle quite a bit." "Ning Lan has made a comeback in acting, Grandma Zhang Xia has made a comeback in singing, and now, even Spring Garden has reunited and made a comeback too!" It was time. The stream began. The concert venue was suddenly dazzling with lights! The audience screamed even louder when they saw this! "Xiaodong!" "Amy!" "Xiaoxian!" Everyone was shouting their names! Some fans even started crying! Two years! They had been waiting for this day for far too long! All the onstage lights were extinguished. Then some words flashed across the big screen: "Years of Friendship." The music played. The moving melody silenced everyone! A spotlight shone down onto the stage! Xiaodong was already standing in the spotlight! Xiaodong closed her eyes and sang lightly 1, "Wasted time scatters into the wind."

A second spotlight shone down at the other end of the stage where Li Xiaoxian was. She closed her eyes

and sang, "As if unable to face it again."

A third spotlight shone on Amy, who was revealed next!

The three of them suddenly opened their eyes and looked at each other. Their eyes were brimming with tears.

"Our roving days,

"You followed along.

"Let fate reunite us."

Many of the audience members who listening to these lyrics could not bear it any longer. They bawled their eyes out!

Watching TV, a lot of people also started crying!

At the next moment, another spotlight shone down!

Jiang Hanwei was on stage as well. "Innocent voices have died down."

Yet another spotlight shone down. It was Chen Guang who appeared this time. "We separated for our own goals."

The next beam revealed Fan Wenli. "Gazing at the night sky, who in the past—"

Another spotlight revealed Ning Lan. "—understood my tired heart?"

Finally, the last spotlight lit up!

Zhang Ye made his appearance onstage!

He looked at the tearful Xiaodong, then at Amy and Li Xiaoxian who were sobbing hard. He smiled as he gripped his microphone and walked over to them. Chen Guang, Fan Wenli, Jiang Hanwei, and Ning Lan also walked over. They gathered around and stood together, hugging, giving each other high fives, crying, or belly laughing!

"Let's forget our mistakes.

"Let's cherish the past.

"Once we get through these troubled times, there will be joy.

"No way is it hopeless!

"There's no hesitation!

"Competing in our dreams!

"Keep forging ahead every day!

"Running in the storm!

"Unruly drunk and awake!

"All our stories seem to have drifted into years gone by!

"The wind's blown past and quieted!

"Who should I return my kindness to!

"Let my tears take away the night's worries!"

The audience members were wiping away their tears as they stared dumbfoundedly at the stage!

A lot of people were up on their feet and screaming like crazy!

Zhang Ye smiled and raised a fist!

Chen Guang raised a fist too and gave him a fist bump!

Ning Lan put her arms around Amy's shoulders.

Fan Wenli hugged Xiaodong.

Xiaodong sang in tears, "Let's forget our mistakes."

Li Xiaoxian voice was hoarse from crying. "Let's cherish the past."

Amy sang loudly as she sobbed, "Once we get through these troubled times, there will be joy."

At present, all of them were standing shoulder to shoulder with their arms around the person next to them. They looked at one another, then looked at the audience and sang in unison.

"No way is it hopeless!

"There's no hesitation!

"Competing in our dreams!

"Keep forging ahead every day!

"Running in the storm!

"Unruly drunk and awake!

"All our stories seem to have drifted into years gone by!

"The wind's blown past and quieted!

"Who should I return my kindness to!

"Let my tears take away the night's worries!"

The singing was thunderous, and it was making everyone's blood race with excitement!

Those familiar faces from years ago!

Those familiar voices from years ago!

The audience members also shouted until their voices went hoarse!

Ning Lan?

Old Jiang?
Chen Guang?
Fan Wenli?
Zhang Ye?
Spring Garden's old friends were all here!
The friends they gone through adversity with were all here!
What song was this?
Who was the one who wrote this song?
Onstage, Xiaodong held her microphone with a lot of emotion. Her hand was trembling as she said loudly while crying, "Thank you, Teacher Zhang, for composing this song for us old friends. Thank you to our friends who came here today to sing together with us. Thank you to those of you who are attending the concert today. Thank you to all of you who are watching the livestream on your computers. And thank you to everyone who has not forgotten us! I hereby declare that Spring Garden has officially returned!" Her voice trembled as she said, "Sorry that we had to make you all wait two years! Sorry for being away from everyone for the past two years! But now—"
At this moment.
Xiaodong, Amy, and Li Xiaoxian interlaced fingers and yelled together, "We're back!!!"
The three of them were crying and laughing!
The audience was shouting for them!
The crowd at the concert blew up in an instant!
"Spring Garden!"
"Spring Garden!"
"Spring Garden!"
Chapter 1565: The shit stirrer makes his move!
On this day.
At the studio.
Everyone came together for a meeting.
"Our popularity has clearly started picking up again."
"Yeah. Although Director Zhang's name hasn't be relisted in the popularity rankings yet, we can still get a clear sense of the signals from the news and Internet."

"Director Zhang's songs were fucking awesome!"

"'Years of Friendship' has charted to first place on the Top Chinese Music Chart as well."

"That's right. Our comeback has gone perfectly."

"All that's left is to see how the TV series performs."

"Hai, I really can't get a feel of how that might do."

"When will it be broadcast?"

"They'll determine the dates today. Director Zhang is in talks with Beijing TV right now."

"Let's hope that we get a good date."

"We don't need the anti-corruption drama to be popular as long as it can reach the 1% viewership ratings mark set by the Central Publicity Department."

"1% is already a heaven-defying figure, so there's no need to think about anything higher than that."

"If this drama is successful, Director Zhang might really be able to get back to the peak of his popularity and return to his position as a domestic Heavenly King."

...

On Weibo.

The netizens were also having a discussion about television dramas.

"There haven't been any good TV series recently."

"Yeah, the ones they've been showing these past few months are not interesting at all."

"There are two blockbuster series coming up."

"Yeah, Heavens of the Gods and Age of Kingdoms will be showing soon!"

"I'm anticipating them so much!"

"Go Li Shao!"

"I think Chi Hao can take the step to become a Heavenly King this time."

"Their popularities are about the same, and both are ranked in the top five of the A-list, so it's still unclear who will end up winning. It all depends on how well their series perform."

"With their appeal, there wouldn't be a need for the series to be good. Even without asking, the viewership ratings will exceed 1.5%. You guys are really underestimating the appeal of a young hunk by too much."

"Those two are gonna start battling now."

"Yeah, this is going to be a fight to the death."

"It's a fight to become a Heavenly King!"

"We're really in for a show this time. Their two series are scheduled for the same day. If either one of them holds off the other, that person's status as a Heavenly King will be assured and Xu Meilan would drop off the S-list rankings. In that case, the old generation of Heavenly Kings and Queens will finally become a thing of the past. The future of showbiz will then be dominated by the hunks."

"There's still Zhang Ye."

"Has Zhang Ye's finished filming his TV series yet?"

"I doubt Zhang Ye can make a splash. He's just messing around by taking on the project. A political drama spearheaded by a government department, what sort of viewership ratings could that get? I believe he took on the production only because he didn't receive any offers for work in the days when he first made his comeback. He probably did not take it seriously either. What's more, the actors cast in the drama are all has-beens, and the invested sum isn't large either, so how can it possibly take on the current professional production teams and actors? You people are expecting too much from him."

"If Zhang Ye's drama can get popular, I'll fucking eat my computer."

"What was it called again?"

"I think it's called In the Opinion of the Name or something like that"

"Huh? Is that what it's called?"

"What opinions could a name have?"

"Damn, I forget what it was called as well."

...

At a restaurant.

The production crew of Heavens of the Gods was holding a get-together.

"Li Shao, we're depending on you this time."

"Director Wu, what's your estimate for our drama's viewership ratings?"

"It's not easy to give hard figures now, but it won't be bad for sure."

"We've spent four months working on this production and put in so much blood, sweat, and tears, so it will definitely be good enough."

"We only have one opponent in Age of Kingdoms!"

"They must be crazy, right? Why would they choose to broadcast on the same day as us?"

"They're obviously trying to challenge us! If so, then let's find out who is better!"

"Yeah, who's afraid of who!"

•••

At Chi Hao's studio.

"It won't be long."

"Let's shoot down Heavens of the Gods!"

"Right, Teacher Chi Hao will definitely take the step to the top this time!"

"We've spent more than half a year on this series, from the preparations to the filming. It has been meticulously polished to the point of being impeccable, so I don't believe it can't outdo Heavens of the Gods!"

"Qu Dong, Qi Liang, and Hai Yifei have all been knocked down a peg, so it's a good chance for us!"

"They were unlucky to run into Zhang Ye. That fellow might not be good at other things, but he's invincible at singing."

"The battle for the Heavenly King's spot will be between just us and Li Shao."

"Everyone, let's put in a bit more effort! We are gonna bring down Xu Meilan!"

..

Online.

Li Shao and Chi Hao's fans tangled with each other!

"Chi Hao's worth a fart!"

"Li Shao's worth shit!"

"Whatcha lookin' at!"

"So what if we're looking at you!"

"Look again, we dare ya!"

"Oh, we dare!"

. . .

The public was watching intently.

The production crews were creating hype for their series.

The media was also helping with the publicity.

After several days, the topicality of Zhang Ye's comeback victory had faded. The entertainment industry returned back to its previous state as the media, news, and Internet started clamoring over the male idols again. This sort of atmosphere and attitude was clearly not something that a few songs or people could change that easily. The male idols' fans would not leave their idols overnight. After all, they were still the most popular artists in show business at the moment.

Especially in the field of television and film.

The overwhelming popularity and appeal they had was unparalleled.

Yet someone had to come to mess things up!

No one could have expected that someone would come and cause trouble at such a critical juncture!

•••

In the Celebrity Goof Group.

Xu Meilan appeared. "I'm in danger."

Xiaodong quickly replied: "All the best, Sister Lan!"

Amy: "Supporting Sister Lan!"

Li Ke: "Their time hasn't arrived yet."

Ning Lan: "Right, their popularities are still a way off from yours."

Xu Meilan sent a smiley face in the chat group. "They're not that far off anymore"

Amy said dejectedly: "Are the artists from our generation really becoming irrelevant?"

Fan Wenli: "The younger generation has to be feared. Competing with the young guns in popularity is just impractical."

Li Xiaoxian: "But Teacher Zhang managed to do it."

Chen Guang: "He's a freak, so don't compare us to him."

Out of the blue.

Zhang Ye appeared and said cheerfully: "Sister Lan, your little bro will aid you."

Aid her?

What did he mean by that?

Xu Meilan, Ning Lan, and the others were taken aback and did not understand what he meant.

But the next second, when the news was revealed online, all of them were dumbfounded!

Xu Meilan: "What?"

Amy: "Fuck!"

Xiaodong: "Damn!"

Li Ke: "What the hell!"

Ning Lan: "Your sister!"

Jiang Hanwei: "Zhang Ye, your grandpa!"

Chen Guang: "That guy is crazy!"

The news broke! The media pissed their pants! The public pissed their pants! The industry pissed their pants! Zhang Ye's new TV series, In the Name of the People, had quietly completed its post-production and was even given a time slot for broadcast on Beijing Television! When they saw the time slot for the drama's premiere, the entire country's citizens were stunned! Heavens of the Gods! Age of Kingdoms! In the Name of the People! They were all going to be broadcast at the same time slot on the same day! Countless people utterly horrified! In the industry: "That madman!" "What is he trying to do!" "He completed the filming in just 10 days? Fuck your sister!" "Are you a motherfucking machine gun?!" "It's even scheduled to broadcast on the same day as them?" "That fella must be drunk, right?!" The public: "Yours is just a fucking shitty, low-budget 30 million RMB production. Why didn't you schedule it for and Age of Kingdoms?"

some off-peak time slot and get it over with? Why would you even try to challenge Heavens of the Gods

"Zhang Ye is crazy!"

"When has this fucker ever been normal!"

"Isn't he trying to start trouble?!"

"Pfft, this troublemaking shit stirrer!"

"He really can't stay idle for a day!" "Those two are fighting it out to become a Heavenly King, so what is this fellow messing around for!" At the Central Publicity Department. "We're done for!" "This series has as good as doomed!" "Ours is a political drama. How can it possibly challenge their commercial dramas!" Heavens of the Gods' production crew. Everyone was tongue-tied! "Is he drunk?" "W-W-What the hell does this have anything to do with him!" "It's a fight between our dramas, so why is he throwing in his lot?" "Where did he get the courage!" At Chi Hao's studio.

"How dare he broadcast on the same day as us with that shitty drama of his?"

"Jesus!"

"What on earth is that fellow thinking!"

"Could it be a coincidence?"

"Coincidence, my ass! That Zhang guy is clearly doing this on purpose!"

If it were anyone else, it might have been a coincidence. But since this was Zhang Ye, they knew to rule out that possibility. All of them knew that Zhang Ye must be doing this on purpose, because he had pulled something similar a few years ago by broadcasting on the same day as another show even though he had nothing concrete to back it up with. Further, it had happened on more than one occasion too. This fellow seemed to enjoy doing such things!

### Chapter 1566: A godly drama is about to appear!

With the revelation of this news, the details surrounding the activities of In the Name of the People were unearthed.

The production cost.

The production period.

The cast list.

And so on.

Zhang Ye and this drama had been pushed into the headlines!

...

In the car, on the way back to the studio, Zhang Ye's cell phone was blowing up with calls.

Ning Lan, Jiang Hanwei, Shu Han, Yao Jiancai, and the main cast members of In the Name of the People all looked for this fellow in outrage.

"Zhang'er, do you want to die?!"

"Haha, what's the matter?"

"What do you think is the matter! Why are you pitting our drama against theirs!"

"Didn't I already tell you guys? That our new drama will be broadcasting at the same period as those two young guns? Didn't you already know?"

"The same period is not the same as the same day!"

"Wasn't that quite close to what I said?"

"I'm gonna faint! That's way off, alright!"

"Don't worry, I know what I'm doing."

"Your sister!"

All of them wanted to vomit blood!

They had been looking forward to the drama quite a bit before this. Although the production's investment wasn't large, although it was the director's debut TV series, although the cast did not feature even a single hot, young male star, this group of out-of-time celebrities still cherished the rare opportunity to act. This was especially true when many of them were personally invited by Zhang Ye to join the cast. Even people like Ning Lan, who had long since retired, were convinced by him to make a return.

But look at this.

This bastard actually decided to take on two of this year's most anticipated commercial drama productions? Isn't this as good as jumping into Hell! Others can't wait to steer clear of them! How many directors and TV series are looking to avoid broadcasting at the same time slot as Heavens of the Gods and Age of Kingdoms! But you? Not only are you not attempting to avoid it, you even chose to fucking take it head-on! Just how confident do you have to be to do something like that? Do you really think that this low-budget political drama can possibly make a challenge on those commercial drama

productions? How is that possible! If the viewership ratings get apportioned out to the point where we don't even hit 0.2%, that would be such a huge slap to our faces! How will we answer the Central Publicity Department then!

...

Up ahead.

He had reached the studio.

The moment Zhang Ye got back here, he spotted Ha Qiqi and the others handling a group of reporters.

The news hadn't even broke for half an hour, but the media reporters were already swarming the place. There was a surprised expression on every one of their faces, and he could clearly see that the news had shocked them too!

"Ah!"

"Zhang Ye is here!"

"Director Zhang!"

"For your first drama production, why did you choose to broadcast it at this time slot?"

"Do you intend to fight the male idols?"

"What opinion do you have about your own TV series?"

"What sort of a TV series is it?"

The reporters were all pointing their cameras and microphones at him.

Having hardly received any interviews lately, Zhang Ye said confidently, "This production is led by the Central Publicity Department, and it's an unprecedented anti-corruption drama. We suffered a lot during the filming process and encountered many difficulties along the way, but I have to thank the cast for being so awesome. They were great, so we overcame a lot of hardships that were beyond our imagination. So I hope that everyone will look forward to our drama. I believe that the premiere episode's broadcast will surprise everyone."

The reporters rolled their eyes upon hearing that!

Suffering?

Hardships beyond imagination?

For a drama production that wrapped up filming in ten days, what fucking hardships beyond imagination could there be!

If this could be considered as hardships beyond imagination, then how would it be for those people who had to fucking film their dramas for one to two years!

. . .

The interview footage was broadcast.

The netizens responded to it with contempt.

"This fellow is too shameless!"

"His skin is so thick!"

"Beyond imagination, your sister!"

"10 days? Are you on drugs or something! Just how shoddy is this production!"

"This fellow is still as efficient as always?"

"Yeah, he's fast at recording shows, he's fast at composing songs, he's fast at writing novels, and he's even so fast when filming a drama that the process is described as a matter of days. In the entire entertainment industry, I've never encountered a faster worker than him!"

"To be honest, I'm already starting to look forward to it."

"Me too, motherfucker, I'd like to see just how this fellow's debut TV drama will turn out!"

"If Zhang Ye's drama can get above 0.2% viewership, he'll have to thank the gods!"

"I doubt it will even hit 0.2%!"

"He's asking for it!"

"The Central Publicity Department will probably hold him responsible when the time comes!"

Back when Zhang Ye first announced his comeback, there wasn't much attention given to the drama. A lot of people knew that he was shooting a drama, but they couldn't even remember its name. But with this hubbub, In the Name of the People sent the country into an uproar. All of a sudden, a lot of people found out about it, and it even grabbed the limelight from Heavens of the Gods and Age of Kingdoms! Everyone was talking about it.

•••

At Li Shao's studio.

Li Shao was hopping mad.

"He can even steal away the headlines of our drama this way?"

"This Zhang Ye is full of heinous tricks!"

"So this is the legendary Heavenly King from years ago?"

"I finally understand why this fellow made so many enemies back then! H-He's totally not sticking to convention with how he does things!"

...

At Chi Hao's studio.

"Bring it on, who's afraid of who!"

"Right, it makes no difference competing against one or two dramas!" "Does Zhang Ye still think that he's the Asian Heavenly King from back then?!" "I don't believe it. How can a shitty drama that you finished filming in just 10 days possibly challenge us!" In the Name of the People's actors also cast Zhang Ye aside as they came together and scolded him. "That dumbass!" "If I ever accept a role in a show that he directs again, I'll spell my name backwards!" "Yeah, my heart can't take this!" "How unlucky to have encountered a director like him!" "I no longer hold any hope for the viewership ratings of the drama." "I can only hope that our drama doesn't perform too badly, that's all." It seemed like Zhang Ye was born with a "Hatred Halo" over his head! It was so for his foes. It was so for the disinterested. And it was so for his friends. One day. Two days. Three days. It was getting closer to the day of the premiere episode's broadcast. The three drama productions were keeping pace with one another as their news constantly came up in the media.

"The premiere episode is nearing!"

"Experts predict the viewership ratings!"

"Two more days to D-Day. Who will end up victorious in the battle for a Heavenly King's throne?"

"A TV drama that wrapped up filming in 10 days shocks the industry!"

"Experts claim: 'Zhang Ye doesn't understand the TV industry at all. He's only here to make trouble!"

Zhang Ye was very happy. This was exactly the effect that he wanted. It was a different time now. With the male idols holding sway and commercial productions dominating the industry, everyone's attention

was focused on them. It was a situation that was very difficult to turn around, so Zhang Ye thought of a way to stand out and diverted everyone's attention to In the Name of the People. As long as there was attention given to it, as long as no one ignored it, he believed that this good drama production would not get buried.

As for Heavens of the Gods?

As for Age of Kingdoms?

Zhang Ye didn't care about them at all.

It wasn't because he was arrogant, nor that his confidence was inflated. If it were any drama production other than In the Name of the People, he would have judged his opponent first to see how much they had invested and what their scripts were about. But there was no need for that, because this was In the Name of the People they were talking about!

No matter who the opponent was!

No matter how many of them there were!

None of that mattered. Whoever crashed head-on with it would get utterly destroyed!

Come, I'll show you all the godly drama that swept away everything in its path back in my previous world!

#### Chapter 1567: In the Name of the People's premiere episode!

Friday.

On the day of the scheduled broadcast.

It was getting lively on Weibo.

"Come, come, place your bets!"

"My bet is on Heavens of the Gods!"

"I'll place my bet on Age of Kingdoms!"

"Count me in! I'll put my money on Heavens of the Gods!"

"Damn, Qingqing, aren't you Zhang Ye's diehard fan?"

"Yeah, why did you place your money on Heavens of the Gods?"

"I'm a fan of Teacher Zhang's music, not his shows. He's never even shot a drama before."

"So which TV series does everyone intend to catch today?"

"I reckon more people will watch Heavens of the Gods."

"All their broadcast times clash with one another, so I can only choose one to watch first."

"Haha, I intend to watch In the Name of the People first. I would like to see just what kind of surprises a shit stirrer like Teacher Zhang can come up with. I'll catch Heavens of the Gods and Age of Kingdoms later when they get uploaded."

"I'm also waiting to see how Face-smacking Zhang will die."

"Hahaha, Face-smacking Zhang is finally going to be face smacked. I get excited just at the thought."

It was a public holiday today, and everyone had knocked off from work early. Some people had even pushed back their business engagements to get home earlier so that they could wait for this grand feast of dramas to begin. In recent years, there hadn't been such a boisterous mood in the TV industry for quite a while. Two highly anticipated blockbuster dramas would be starting their premiere episodes at the same time, and oh, there was also going to be the premiere episode of one terrible drama as well. All of the attention from the media, the industry, and the public had virtually been pulled over here. Many people couldn't wait any longer for the broadcasts to begin!

...

Meanwhile.

At Zhang Ye's Studio.

Inside, the aroma from the cooked food was attacking the nose. Alcohol had also been brought out to the tables.

Ding dong.

Ding dong.

The doorbell rang.

Zhang Ye personally went to open the door.

Outside, Ning Lan, Yao Jiancai, Dong Shanshan, Zhang Xia, Jiang Hanwei, Shanshan, as well as the rest of the production crew's staff had arrived. Zhang Ye had called all of them over to the studio today to watch their drama's premiere episode together.

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Come in, quick. Dinner is almost ready."

Ning Lan rolled her eyes.

Jiang Hanwei put on a stern face.

Shu Han did not show Zhang Ye a welcoming attitude either.

Zhang Ye said in amusement, "Yo, what's wrong with all of you?"

Dong Shanshan laughed and said, "We've already discussed things. If the viewership ratings turn out to be terrible, we'll chop you up into eight pieces, so you better be prepared for it."

Yao Jiancai added, "You're too good at causing trouble."

But Zhang Ye said, "Really? I haven't even gone all out yet."

Shu Han said, "You still haven't gone all out? I nearly got a heart attack because of your antics."

Jiang Hanwei said, "Didn't you read what they're saying online? Everyone is waiting for us to make a fool of ourselves."

"Alright, whatever, just get seated. The dishes are ready." Zhang Ye greeted everyone with a smile and ushered them to take their seats. "We have food and drink, so please help yourselves."

The stove in the open kitchen was turned off.

Wu Zeqing, who was wearing an apron, carried over the last dish to the table and served it. "Alright, let's eat."

When everyone saw her, they stood up in panic.

"Aiyo."

"Minister Wu."

"Why is it you who's cooking?"

Everyone was overwhelmed.

Wu Zeging smiled. "Have a taste of the food. I hope it suits everyone's tastes."

Zhang Ye was bragging, "Let me tell you all this: My wife's cooking is particularly good. Most people don't even get the chance to try it. If you've tried it once, you'll ask for seconds."

Wu Zeqing chuckled. "Don't listen to his nonsense."

Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the others also got seated.

With Wu Zeqing around, nobody dared complain about Zhang Ye. They hurriedly lowered their heads and got down to eating. The moment they tasted the food, everyone was pleasantly surprised and praised it to no end.

"This shredded pork with garlic sauce is delicious."

"The braised pork belly is amazing."

"Director Zhang, you're such a blessed man."

"It smells so good."

For most of the people here, it was not their first time seeing Wu Zeqing. Several years ago at Zhang Ye's wedding, they met her. But no matter how many times they met her, they were always speechless in her presence. They could not understand why such a beautiful woman who could cook so well and had such a good temperament would throw her lot in with a spitfire like Zhang Ye. She was even such a high-ranking official as well. They just couldn't wrap their heads around this at all!

Slowly, the time passed.

Zhang Ye suddenly said, "Little Wang, it's about to start."

Little Wang responded, "Alright, I'll turn the television on."

The television was turned on.

Everyone watched it.

In fact, no one other than Zhang Ye had seen the final cut of the drama. Although all of them had filmed every scene of the show together, no one knew exactly how the shots had turned out and what kind of effects it had. Their hearts were beating fast, and they couldn't help but feel nervous to watch the finished product.

"It's starting!"
"It's starting!"

At Zhang Ye's parents' house.

His parents were already waiting around the television.

"It's starting!"

"Turn up the volume!"

...

At his eldest younger sister's house.

His three sisters had gathered.

"It's starting!"

"Oh, there's our brother!"

...

On TV.

Beijing Television.

The opening theme song was playing.

Executive Producer: Zhang Ye

Project Director: Zhang Ye

Supervising Producer: Zhang Ye

Art Director: Zhang Ye.

Screenwriter: Zhang Ye.

Editor: Zhang Ye.

Executive Director: Zhang Ye.

The production credits stunned a lot of people. Zhang Ye, who was self-directing a television series for the first time, had taken multiple roles in the production team as well. His name filled nearly every possible role of the production.

Then the story began.

Whistling came from the television.

This was one of Zhang Yuanqi's songs that a lot of people had listened to before.

Beijing.

In a neighborhood.

In the car, someone's hand was fiddling with a cell phone.

"Chief Hou, why don't we take action right now? We've been waiting for almost two hours already."

"Exactly. What if his wife and child don't leave the house tonight?"

Then the owner of the phone spoke.

"They will. She normally brings her kid out for tutoring at 5 PM. Let's wait a little longer."

"You still want to wait? Hang on, Chief Hou, do you realize the times are strange now? Jumping out has become commonplace. I'll give you a friendly reminder. This Chief Zhao we're looking for, he lives on the fourth floor."

All of a sudden.

The man sat up straight.

Zhang Ye's face appeared onscreen at this moment.

Captions appeared: Department Chief of the Investigation Department of the Anti-Corruption Bureau of the Supreme People's Procuratorate  $^1$ .

-Hou Liangping.

He smiled and said, "This Chief Zhao we're looking for has countless reasons to want to live on."

In just a simple scene.

With just a few short exchanges of words.

A thrilling anti-corruption operation was about to begin.

•••

At Zhang Ye's Studio.

Many of the people gasped.

The premiere broadcast today consisted of two episodes without any commercial breaks in between.

It cut to a scene of Zhao Dehan eating mincemeat noodles with soybean paste.

The scene of the provincial leadership holding a meeting was next.

Then the scene in which the mastermind disposed of the SIM card came.

Yao Jiancai played Secretary <sup>2</sup> Li Dakang, Jiang Hanwei played the role of Bureau Director Qi Tongwei, Dong Shanshan was cast as Lu Yi'ke. One by one, the actors were introduced.

The money that was stashed away in a fridge.

That hoard of cash that was revealed when the bedsheets were pulled aside.

The piles of money that were hidden behind a large painting on the wall.

It was too shocking!

The scenes that were unfolding gave Ning Lan, Yao Jiancai, Shu Han, and the others watching goosebumps!

Inside the studio, there was only the sound of Zhang Ye eating and drinking. Meanwhile, the rest of the people had put down their chopsticks at some point in time. They were all staring at the screen in astonishment and gasping with every scene!

Did they shoot this?

This was what they had filmed in those 10 days?!

## Chapter 1568: An intense battle!

Meanwhile.

Heavens of the Gods was also broadcasting its premiere episode.

It was a very magnificent scene on television.

"Dongfang, are you really going to do this?"

"I've already decided to."

"Are you going to give up on Cangsheng just like that?"

"I don't wish to give up on others, but they have given up on me!"

Li Shao appeared.

Another popular male idol was guest starring in the episode.

A lot of people were constantly getting surprises as they watched. This was because the visuals of such quality were rarely seen. Just one look and you'd know that a huge investment had been poured into the production, with the venues and scenes easily described as grand. Although some of the technical details in the scenes were still unseasoned with some slight flaws observed, there really weren't too many television series that could reach such a level in China.

On Weibo. "Li Shao is so handsome!" "He's really suited for a period drama role!" "Heavens of the Gods has already won." "The investment in this production shouldn't be lower than 300 million RMB!" "How awesome, how enjoyable!" "This drama is gonna explode in popularity!" "I wonder how Age of Kingdoms looks." "It's definitely not as awesome as Heavens of the Gods, of course!" "I don't suppose there are still any doubts that Li Shao will get an S-list ranking after this drama has broadcast." On the other channel. Age of Kingdoms' premiere episode. There were also a lot of grand scenes. It was a similar-looking period drama. Compared to the special effects of Heavens of the Gods, Age of Kingdoms had obviously put more thought into its details and portrayal of battles. The scenes were magnificent as well. In the forums. "It's good!" "Chi Hao's so damn suave!" "This is the must-follow drama of the year!" "My Chi Hao will definitely reach the S-list summit!"

"The quality is really good. There are hardly such attractive TV dramas these days."

"We finally have something to look forward to. Heavens of the Gods seems pretty good too."

"Zhang Ye is done for."

"Yeah, he's gonna be edged out of the competition!"

"Showing the premiere episode at the same time as these two blockbuster dramas, any other production would be wiped out as well!"

...

Of those who had watched Heavens of the Gods and Age of Kingdoms, almost no one believed that Zhang Ye's new drama could survive. But unbeknownst to them, the viewers who were watching In the Name of the People were also stunned to the same level. This shock wasn't something that could simply be described in a few words!

Online.

Everyone was bursting with excitement.

"Why is Zhang Ye heading all of the roles in the production crew?"

"Just how many roles has he taken!"

"The way that actor ate the noodles, that was such an awesome scene!"

"That actor looks really familiar. I think he's a big name in the theater scene!"

"His acting was too fucking good!"

"Yeah, this is the first time I've realized that eating a bowl of mincemeat noodles with soybean paste can even be done this way. His expression and movements were all amazingly portrayed!"

"Heavens! A wall full of money!"

"What a shocking scene!"

"My Dong Shanshan has appeared!"

"Teacher Shanshan's role is really distinctive!"

"There's nothing to nitpick on Jiang Hanwei's acting as well!"

"Zhang Ye seems like he's just acting as himself this time, right? Monkey Sun<sup>1</sup>? This fellow is as much of a shit stirrer in real life as he is in the show. He can be so reckless in the drama too?"

"The plot is packed with so much tension. I can't stop watching."

"Is this really his first time directing a TV series?"

"It was filmed in just 10 days? How is that possible?!"

"They're clearly a bunch of has-been actors. How could the end result be something like this?"

"Is this what acting skills are about? They're too fucking good!"

The first two episodes of In the Name of the People finished broadcasting.

But a lot of the viewers were left wanting more as they couldn't wait to find out what would happen next.

At this moment, the ending theme song started to play.

Zhang Xia's thick vocals drifted into the credits.

Everyone pricked their ears up and listened to that song. They dropped whatever they were doing and fell silent.

They listened.

They thought.

They were suddenly overcome by a sense of awe.

Zhang Xia sang<sup>2</sup>.

"With whom I fought, to shoulder the duty,

"Hearing the leaves fall and bloom,

"Seeing the clouds break the twilight,

"Right here and now, I have a close friend beside.

"With whom I lived, for our shared perseverance,

"Listening to childhood stories,

"Gazing at the starry, twinkling sky,

"Right here and now, love continues to keep us close.

"You're bestowed with the name of the people.

"A life of honor, dedicated to rights.

"Like a ship going full steam ahead, a soaring cyclone,

"Your words show an embodiment of righteousness.

"You're entrusted with the name of the people.

"With the scepter's weight, the significance of the badge,

"When all the dust has settled, retired from the bustle,

"You've returned home and begun on a brilliant tale."

No one else could sing this song.

Jiang Hanwei couldn't sing it.

Zhang Yuanqi couldn't sing it.

And even Zhang Ye could not sing it.

This was one of the few rare songs that Zhang Ye had brought over to this world but was unable to sing. Instead, he had to find someone else to perform it. Grandma Zhang Xia was the most suitable candidate. Be it her age, her vocal weight, or the emotions she sang with, she was impeccable. Hence, Zhang Ye had gone to look for Grandma Zhang before filming began to convince her to come out of retirement. It

was all for this drama's ending theme, which he hoped Grandma Zhang Xia could help bolster the drama with.

..

At Zhang Ye's Studio.

Everyone silently kept their eyes on the television. It wasn't until the last line of the song finished and the song had come to an end that everyone turned to look at Zhang Ye in unison.

Zhang Ye looked at his wife and said with a smile, "It wasn't too bad, was it?"

Wu Zeqing smiled. "It's very good."

Zhang Ye said, "Is this what the Central Publicity Department expected?"

Wu Zeqing nodded. "I'll always rest easy as long as it's you handling things."

"That's good then." Zhang Ye chuckled.

Shu Han said in a daze, "I-Is this really the drama we filmed?"

Zhang Ye said happily, "Of course! Who else could have filmed it?"

Shu Han still hadn't regained her composure. She said in surprise, "But didn't we follow a very tight schedule and rushed through the filming of scenes one after the other? So how did it end up like this?"

Zhang Ye said, "It might have been a little rushed, but I know what I'm doing. I considered all of the angles and shots beforehand, so all I had to do was piece them up together in post-production."

Ning Lan immediately said, "I want to see what happens next."

Yao Jiancai said anxiously, "I want to watch what happens next as well. Do you have the source footage?"

Unsurprisingly, Zhang Ye said, "That won't do."

Ning Lan stared with wide eyes. "Even we're not allowed to watch it?"

Zhang Ye said in a bureaucratic tone, "About that, I can't just pass it around carelessly. It's too dangerous. What if the footage gets leaked? Beijing TV is broadcasting it daily anyway, right? Just watch it on TV."

No matter what they said, Zhang Ye didn't want to show it to them.

Finally, Zhang Ye even instructed Wu Zeqing. "Go and inform the SARFT to have them pay more attention to it. They had better not let the source footage leak out, or I'll take it up with them!"

Take it up with the SARFT?

Only Zhang Ye would dare to say something like this.

But they knew that Zhang Ye was truly capable of doing so. However, they could not understand why Zhang Ye was being so wary about the source footage. Only Zhang Ye himself knew. Back in his previous

world, the original footage of In the Name of the People was leaked to the public. But even so, its viewership ratings still managed to break records and hit an astonishing figure. As a result, he would like to see just how high that figure could go in this world where the source footage hadn't been leaked. This was the reason for his extreme cautiousness.

All that was left was to wait for the viewership ratings.

Whether it was a mule or a horse would be revealed tomorrow!

## Chapter 1569: The viewership ratings get published!

The next day.

There was a constant stream of news online.

"Countdown to the viewership ratings release of the premiere episode broadcasts!"

"Heavens of the Gods receives extremely high praise!"

"Age of Kingdoms getting good reviews!"

"Li Shao and Chi Hao to welcome an all-out battle!"

Countless people were waiting for the viewership ratings to be announced.

Although viewership ratings weren't everything, the reputation and influence of these figures were still critical factors for a drama series. To a lot of people, viewership ratings were still the overall most intuitive and comprehensive indicator of a TV series. It directly reflected the popularity of the drama, the popularity of the director, and the popularity of the celebrity cast members.

...

Shanghai Television.

"Is it out yet?"

"Not yet."

"The name of Heavens of the Gods must get off to a good start!"

"Producer, don't worry, it definitely won't be a problem."

"Producer, I've watched In the Name of the People yesterday. It seems like—"

"Seems like what?"

"It seems like the praise surrounding it is especially good."

"Ignore that production. It's just a serious political drama, so of course there would be more praise surrounding it than a commercial drama. There's nothing to compare. Beijing TV isn't going to be a match for us."

"True that."

...

At Chi Hao's studio.

"The viewership ratings list still hasn't been published yet?"

"It should be out soon."

"Is there any movement from Li Shao's side?"

"Not yet."

"Keep a close eye on him. If he takes any actions, we'll respond immediately."

"Do we need to get ready for Zhang Ye's side—"

"Zhang Ye? Who cares about him?"

"I've seen the online reviews of In the Name of the People. It seems like they're not bad."

"A political drama that the country is using as a project to fight corruption, how could the reviews be bad? Reviews are just reviews, but viewership ratings are viewership ratings. No one ever thought that drama was an opponent."

"Understood."

...

At Xu Meilan's studio.

The staff had taken on event after event.

"Sister Lan, there are seven events to attend today. It will be a little tight."

"It's fine. We'll take it one by one."

"You've been pushing too hard recently. Do you want to take a short break? Teacher Zhang has just made his comeback. Why don't you meet up with your old friend and take it easy?"

"The youngsters these days are too amazing. If I don't give it my all, I'll get replaced very soon. More than one person has their eyes on the spot that I'm in now, hur hur, so how can I not put in more effort?"

"Pfft, didn't Teacher Zhang say he will help you give them some trouble?"

"Don't listen to him. Who knows what he's thinking?"

"You shouldn't just dismiss him like that. Lord Zhang's shit stirring ability has always been world-class. If Teacher Zhang makes a move against them, I believe they'll surely be given a lot to deal with."

..

At the Central Publicity Department.

Everyone was having a fervent discussion on the matter.

"The viewership ratings will be out soon, right?"

"Will Teacher Zhang be able to do it?"

"I've watched In the Name of the People. It's so wonderful!"

"I've watched Heavens of the Gods. It's also wonderful."

"Teacher Zhang is fighting with his back to the wall."

"That's true. He shouldn't have much popularity left, and with those has-been celebrities in the cast, a low production budget, and also it being his first time crossing over into the TV industry, all the odds are stacked against him."

"There's no need to compare with the commercial dramas. It will already be quite good if it can get 1% in the viewership ratings."

"That's right, our boss's goal for the drama was also 1% in the viewership ratings."

•••

At Beijing Television.

Ning Lan, Yao Jiancai, and the others had come to the station for an interview today. This was in conjunction with their promotions for the new drama.

Before the interview even started, they were very anxious backstage.

"How long before the viewership ratings get released?"

"I don't know. My heart is in my throat because of this."

"Although I found the drama to be quite good, I still can't get a feel of how it might do."

"Let's wait a little more. It will be published soon."

"I'm just worried that we might really get dealt a slap to our faces by those male idols."

"It's only ever been Director Zhang smacking the face of others. Since when have you guys seen Director Zhang getting slapped by others?"

"That was four years ago. Four years has passed, so who can really say?"

•••

On Weibo.

"Place your bets, we're into the final hour!"

"I'm betting on Heavens of the Gods!"

"I'll bet on Age of Kingdoms!"

"Supporting Age of Kingdoms!"

"Crazily supporting Heavens of the Gods!"

"Fuck, why isn't anyone supporting In the Name of the People?"

"Do you think we're stupid? Even though that drama was really good, it's still a political drama. Its main aim is propaganda, so how could it possibly compete with a commercially motivated drama?"

"Zhang Ye is indeed very capable. In just 10 days, he was able to film a low-budget political drama with such quality. There's really no one else who can do something like that. You can only blame him for accepting the project without thinking it through in the first place. If he had taken a commercial drama instead, he probably could've challenged blockbusters like Heavens of the Gods and Age of Kingdoms. However, a political drama's target audience is just too niche. There's absolutely no chance it will do well. If Zhang Ye manages to one-up those two blockbuster commercial dramas with a political drama and a cast of has-been stars, this fellow will really be too fucking godly!"

"Haha, that's right. If that happens, there really won't be anyone left in this world who can curb him!"

"Fuck, surely what you said won't happen, right?"

"Pfft, I'm just kidding. Of course it won't be possible."

...

Ten minutes.

Half an hour.

The outside world was chattering in excitement.

Almost everyone was debating the issue of the viewership ratings.

But at this moment, there was only laughter at Zhang Ye's parents' house. Old Wu was working overtime today, so Zhang Ye brought his daughter over to his parents' place to play.

"Daddy, come and catch me!"

"Boo, here comes the big bad wolf!"

"Hehehe, Daddy, you can't catch me, you can't catch me. Sister Chenchen, come and catch me!"

"Haha, I'll catch you together with your Sister Chenchen."

"Catch me, come and catch me."

"Zhang Ye, why are you so childish?"

Sisi ran.

Zhang Ye chased after her.

Chenchen was also here and she gave them a look of contempt. She was completely uninterested in playing with them.

But Zhang Ye kept chasing after Sisi happily without feeling tired.

His parents watched helplessly.

His mother said in annoyance, "Why are you so nonchalant?"

Zhang Ye said, "Huh?"

His mother facepalmed. "Shouldn't you be more concerned about the viewership ratings of your new drama? Just look at what everyone is saying online. They're arguing and saying that your TV series is gonna fail big time."

Zhang Ye continued chasing after Sisi and said with a laugh, "Just leave them be. When the viewership ratings is released, they'll most likely be surprised. That is the kind of face-smacking that this bro likes to give."

His father was taken aback. "Do you really think that your drama can take the top spot?"

Zhang Ye remarked, "Just about."

His mother curled her lips. "Would it kill you not to brag for once?"

Chenchen cut in, "Definitely."

Ring, ring, ring.

Ring, ring, ring.

It was a call from Beijing Television.

Only then did Zhang Ye finally stop in his tracks. "My dear, Daddy needs to take this call. I think the viewership ratings are out." He then put his phone to his ear. "Brother Hu, what is it?"

Hu Fei said excitedly: "It's out! The viewership is out!"

Zhang Ye smiled and said: "So how is it?"

"You're too freaking awesome!"

Zhang Ye said: "So how much is it?"

Hu Fei mentioned some numbers to him.

But Zhang Ye blinked. "It's that low?"

When he put down the phone, Chenchen giggled. "It failed?"

His mother gave him a look. "Go on, keep bragging."

Zhang Ye smiled but ignored them.

At this moment, his father lowered his head to look at his cell phone. "The news is out, the viewership ratings!"

Chenchen immediately walked over.

His mother also went over to take a look.

When they saw it, all of them were dumbfounded!

Chenchen said angrily, "Zhang Ye! Why are you always lying!"

His father was stunned for a while. "How is this possible!"

His mother cursed, "Damn!"

## Chapter 1570: A crazy viewership ratings figure!

Shanghai Television.

"It's out!"

"Heavens of the Gods' viewership ratings for the first and second episodes are 1.43%!"

"That's acceptable, but it's a little off from our expected results."

"Yeah, I thought that we would be able to get more than 1.7% for the premiere broadcast!"

"I wonder what went wrong."

"I don't know, our drama was very highly praised."

"The viewership must have been taken by Age of Kingdoms."

"I guess there's nothing we can do about that. For two blockbuster commercial dramas to premiere together, there will surely be some splitting of the viewership. It's unavoidable. Oh yes, what is the viewership ratings for Age of Kingdoms?"

"Let me see. Ah, it's 1.42%, very similar to ours."

"But it's still lower compared to us!"

"It's good as long as we were able to win against Age of Kingdoms."

"Right, let's not get into the details of beating them by how much. It's good as long as we get first in the nationwide viewership ratings."

"Wait, dammit!"

"What's the matter?"

"Guys, quickly take a look at In the Name of the People's viewership ratings!"

...

At Chi Hao's studio.

"The viewership has been announced!"

"We got 1.42%!"

"This is bad, Heavens of the Gods has taken the top spot from us!"

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"Their viewership is only 0.01% higher than ours!"
"Goddammit, how could this happen!"
"It's such a pity! We were so close!"
"It's fine. We still have a chance later on since we're only at the starting line. It doesn't matter much
even if they top the nationwide viewership ratings at first."
"Holy shit!"
"Old He, what's the matter?"
"Heavens of the Gods isn't first in the viewership ratings!"
"What did you say?"
"How is that possible!"
"Oh my god! Quickly check out the viewership ratings of Zhang Ye's new drama!"
Online.
The viewership ratings were announced.
Everyone was dumbfounded by what they saw!
#1: In the Name of the People, 1.62%!
#2: Primordial Grand Heavens, 1.43%!
#3: Age of Kingdoms, 1.42%!
It was at this moment that the jaws of countless people across the country dropped as a chill ran up
their spines. This news caught them completely by surprise!
At the Central Publicity Department.
"What?"
"What the heck!"
"This-this-"
"We're in first place?"
"A political drama has held off two commercial dramas?"
"Heavens! Minister Wu's husband is defying all common sense!"
"Is this for real?"
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"This is totally illogical! It doesn't make any sense at all!" At Li Shao's studio. Everyone was startled and surprised. "Motherfucker!" "What's with this situation?" "I'd let it slide if it were Age of Kingdoms that got the top spot, but why is it a political drama?" "What sorcery did that Zhang guy use?" "A bunch of has-been celebrities in a low-budget political drama, how could it possibly compare to a commercial drama? How did they manage to achieve it? Is that Zhang guy on steroids or something?" At Beijing Television. "Director Zhang is so fearsome!" "He's soaring to the Heavens!" "I knew it, I knew Director Zhang still had it in him!" "Who said that Director Zhang has become old? Who said that Director Zhang can't do it anymore? Fuck whoever said all of that!" "So what if four years have passed? Zhang Ye is still the same ole Zhang Ye!" "Awesome! This is so awesome!" "I'm stunned. This is even more shocking than Director Zhang winning as the greatest champion on I Am a Singer. This is only Director Zhang's first foray into directing a television drama; it's just his debut drama production!" In the media. "Holy motherfucking hell!" "This is too amazing!" "We got it totally wrong this time. Everyone has got it totally wrong this time!" "Zhang Ye is really still the same Zhang Ye!" "I should've known. How could this guy possibly be slapped by others! It's always been him slapping the faces of others!"

"This slap of Zhang Ye's should've smacked everyone in the face!" On Weibo. "Your sister!" "Teacher Zhang, are you crazy!" "Even Li Shao and Chi Hao combined couldn't defeat you?" "I'm going crazy! Just what the fuck is going on?" "They're both the most popular hunks around! Those two are practically the closest to reaching the status of an S-list Heavenly King! If even they can't stop Zhang Ye, who can stop him?" "This fellow is truly a shit stirrer!" "This pile of shit must be driving Li Shao and Chi Hao mad!" "I feel like it won't only be them? I'm pretty sure that everyone is going crazy over this right now!" "Zhang Ye is amazing! He's indeed the king of crossovers!" At Xu Meilan's studio. "Sister Lan!" "What's the matter?" "The viewership ratings are out! Teacher Zhang, he's—he's taken the top spot in the nationwide ratings!" "What?" "We're safe! Teacher Zhang has really delivered on his promise. He's really done us a big favor. Li Shao and Chi Hao are probably dazed from this defeat. He's really used a political drama that no one was optimistic about and destroyed two blockbuster commercial drama productions! Teacher Zhang is too godly!" In the Name of the People's cast members looked at one another. They were suddenly overcome by a blood coursing sense of excitement. "Holy fuck!" "Director Zhang really did it!" "Yeah, Zhang'er has really achieved it!" "Are we gonna become popular now?"

"Hahahaha, I knew that it wasn't the wrong decision to act in his TV production!" "Damn, Sister Ning, didn't you say before this that you would never take part in Director Zhang's dramas again?" "What? Did I say that?" At the studio of a Heavenly King. There was silence. Everyone in the room was quiet. "So that's Zhang Ye?" "So that's the legendary former Heavenly King?" "He is too fearsome!" "He even managed to make a political drama with such quality? I suddenly realize just how great the pressure must have been for those artists who were active at the same time as Zhang Ye!" Back at home. His mother said angrily, "You call that low? Low, my ass!" Zhang Ye smiled and said, "It was lower than I expected." His father said in surprise, "How much were you expecting then?" Zhang Ye remarked, "It's only the beginning. We'll see how it turns out later on." Chenchen said angrily, "Zhang Ye, can you stop bragging!" Zhang Ye chuckled. "Let's wait and see then. This low viewership figure doesn't interest this bro one bit." "Daddy, Daddy!" Sisi said anxiously, "Did you win?" Zhang Ye smiled and picked his daughter up to giving her a kiss. "Of course I did. When has your daddy ever lost?" The country was shocked! The media was shocked! The industry was shocked!

The public was shocked!

The 1.62% viewership ratings of In the Name of the People wasn't actually considered high in the field of television series in recent years. It wasn't like there were no series that exceeded 2%. Just a year ago, a blockbuster drama starring a hot, young Heavenly King had reached an astonishing 3% in the viewership ratings and sent shockwaves across the industry. Compared to a viewership ratings figure of 3%, 1.62% was really not much at all. However, that wasn't the case in reality. This 1.62% viewership was only for the premiere broadcast. It was only the figure for the first and second episodes of In the Name of the People. That drama that starred Heavenly King Guan Zhaohua did not even hit 1.62% for its premiere broadcast. It had only gotten around 1.6% as well. And what was even more unbelievable was that the blockbuster drama production in which Guan Zhaohua had taken part in did not have such fierce competition in the same time slot when it was shown!

But for In the Name of the People?

There was Heavens of the Gods!

And Age of Kingdoms too!

Yet it had still gotten a viewership ratings figure of 1.62%?

This was an entirely different concept to speak of!