

Superstar 1681

Chapter 1681: What kind of a director is this!

On the same night.

The news spread across the world.

“A Hollywood animation studio gets acquired!”

“Zhang Ye announces the production of an animated film?”

“Zhang Ye forces his way into Hollywood!”

“A Chinese celebrity might be dropping off from the International B-list Rankings!”

“An animated film? An unwise choice!”

“Is it a surge in confidence? Or has something gotten to his head?”

“The Chinese celebrity is acting crazy again!”

...

China.

On Weibo.

“Goddammit!”

“Go watch the news!”

“An animated film? Wasn’t it supposed to be a live-action movie?”

“The acquisition of the movie studio failed, so they ended up buying an animation studio instead.”

“Even so, they shouldn’t be making animated films because of that! Does Zhang Ye have any experience in animated movies?”

“Uh, actually, he does. Have you guys forgotten? Before he went to prison, there was a cartoon called The Legend of Qin that swept aside all of the Japanese cartoons. Wasn’t that directed by Zhang Ye!”

“But that was just a domestic cartoon. It’s nothing compared to a movie!”

“Motherfucker, this fellow has jumped industries again!”

“This guy never stays in the same industry for more than three months!”

...

The UK.

“Holy shit!”

“He’s really going to do it!”

“Is he really going to make an animated film?”

“Although this is also a genre of Hollywood movies, it caters to a very niche audience. Even if they had the best Hollywood director out there to direct it, the box office earnings wouldn’t be high. Moreover, this is going to be his first movie since arriving in Hollywood! He has never been on any Hollywood productions before!”

“What is he planning?”

“God knows!”

“This guy is always doing things the ‘unorthodox’ way!”

...

Japan.

“An animated film?”

“Ah, could this fellow be thinking of making a One Piece movie?”

“Or perhaps, a Naruto movie?”

“You all are overthinking things. Those comics of his have long been castrated.”

“That’s right, shouldn’t you guys know this fellow by now? He’s not that kindhearted!”

“Let’s just wait and see what he’s going to come up with again this time.”

...

America.

At the Directors Guild.

“Hahahahaha!”

“This is cracking me up!”

“Wilson, did you see this?”

“This fellow has really gone to make an animated film!”

“He might as well be asking for death!”

“I am really impressed by his guts.”

“Hollywood movies are the best in the world, but Hollywood animated films are an exception. This Zhang Ye guy has basically chosen a path of no return.”

“We’re gonna be in for a good laugh.”

...

The next day.

In the morning.

At Star Moon Animation Studios. The main business of the company was in animations. It was considered a well-established name in Hollywood, even if it wasn't a very large company. After all, an animation studio in Hollywood had always been considered a second-class entity. In recent years, Star Moon Animation Studios hadn't been run well and had only taken in 18 million USD, 17 million USD, and 2 million USD for each of its three animated films that had been released one after the other. Even among the animation studios in Hollywood, they were considered an average company and were on the verge of bankruptcy as well. It was only because of this that they were bought by the Chinese business group.

In the office.

Qian Haitao was walking at the front. "I'll show you around the place."

Zhang Ye said, "Sure."

Ha Qiqi was looking around the place and said, "This is a pretty large place."

Zhang Zuo nodded. "The atmosphere here is quite different too."

Little Wang muttered, "So this is a Hollywood studio?"

Before coming over, they had also heard of Star Moon being an average company. Therefore, they didn't really have any anticipation of the place. It was only after they came here that they discovered it wasn't like what they had thought. A company of this scale was only considered average in Hollywood? Then what would the top Hollywood studios look like?!

Qian Haitao continued walking as he explained, "This is the company headquarters, but it's not like we have other branches. The offices are based here, and the production and editing are also carried out here. We've already given assurance to the staff and settled them down. Some of the upper management have left their posts along with two animation directors while the remaining technical personnel have all stayed behind. I dare not claim that they are the best in the industry, but they're still a professional Hollywood animation team. Even if I don't wish to admit this, Hollywood's animation teams are much more professional than those in our country. The facilities are also the best out there, so you don't have to worry about that. I've kept an essential team running and made the necessary facilities available, and all of these are the greatest assets that we have at Star Moon Animation Studios."

The equipment.

The technical staff.

The distribution channels.

All of these were what Zhang Ye needed the most. He could gather up a team to shoot Wolf Warrior 2, and he could also pull people from his studio to shoot Man vs. Wild, but that was not possible for an animated film. Be it him, or his studio's staff, they were all completely inexperienced in this field. Most

of them did not know anything about animation, so Zhang Ye needed the most professional team to help reproduce the script and scenes that he had in mind and make it into an animated film.

Zhang Ye asked, "Who's in charge at the company?"

Qian Haitao pointed and said, "There, he's just coming over."

A Caucasian man strode up with a smile and said, "Boss."

Qian Haitao said, "Let me introduce you. This is Mark Foran."

Zhang Ye put his hand out. "Hello, my name is Zhang Ye."

Mark Foran shook his hand. "I know who you are. Hello, Zhang."

Qian Haitao said, "Mark is an old friend of mine. Our acquisition this time only succeeded because of him linking us up with the right people. I want you two to work together on this new project. Discuss things often. If there are any differences in opinion—" He looked at Mark Foran. "—let Teacher Zhang make the final decision. There is no need to consult me."

Mark Foran smiled and said, "I understand."

Zhang Ye smiled. "Please don't say that. It's better that we work things out by discussing them."

Qian Haitao said in amusement, "Get off it. You've invested a larger sum of money than me for this project, so even if there are any disagreements, I'll still have to listen to you. Therefore, you'll have the final say for the project. I'll be cooperating fully with you on my side. I already gave you that promise before we came to Hollywood, so I'd like to deliver on that."

Zhang Ye nodded. "Alright."

Qian Haitao asked, "Have you thought of what style of animation you would like to make?"

Zhang Ye said, "I'll have to do some market research first."

Mark Foran proactively said, "I've got all the information here regarding Hollywood's animated films from over the years. You can find out anything you need to know about whichever animated films you want. We have all of them on VHS tapes and CDs as well."

"That would be great." Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Let me do some research on them first."

Mark Foran asked, "Which ones have you watched? I'll get someone to bring over those that you haven't seen before."

Which ones have I watched before?

Zhang Ye was a little embarrassed. He said, "Bring all of them over."

Little Wang burst into laughter.

Ha Qiqi rolled her eyes.

Zhang Zuo also knew very well what this meant.

How could they not know what Zhang Ye's approach on matters was like?

Mark Foran was taken aback. "That will be too many of them. Shouldn't we be picking out some titles you haven't watched before that are worthier to research?"

Zhang Ye smiled in embarrassment. "Actually, I haven't watched any before."

"What?" Mark Foran was dumbfounded.

Zhang Ye's explained, "I don't usually have time to watch movies."

A group of foreign employees around them were also stunned to hear that!

What?

Haven't watched any before?

What the hell! You've never even watched a Hollywood animation before, but you still fucking decided to go ahead and make an animated film?!

At this moment, everyone from Star Moon felt an unprecedented sense of despair. Just what kind of a director had God sent to them?!

Chapter 1682: Zhang Ye gets into an argument with the Hollywood directors!

Star Moon Animation Studios.

On the third floor, in the screening room.

The animated films of this world were being projected onto the screen.

One film.

Two films.

Three films.

"Teacher Zhang."

"Mhm?"

"Have you seen this before?"

"No."

"Then you must have watched Squirrel before, right?"

"Nope, never watched that before."

"Surely you must have watched Toy Cat then!"

"I really haven't watched any before."

At first, Mark Foran and the others did not believe him. They thought that Zhang Ye was just kidding with them, or perhaps they didn't understand the kind of humor that the Chinese people had. As such, Mark Foran specially picked out a few of this world's better known Hollywood animated films that had the highest box office earnings and showed them to Zhang Ye. In his opinion, even if one wasn't professionally involved with animated films, they would probably still have watched them before. This was because these titles were world-famous. But after playing a few of them, they finally plunged into despair when they realized that Zhang Ye had really not watched any of them before. He had not seen a single animated film before!

Mark Foran was on the verge of breaking down.

The staff of Star Moon were facepalming.

"I have a bad feeling about this."

"Me too."

"Surely you don't need a feeling to see where this is going, right?"

"We're screwed."

Everyone looked depressed.

But Zhang Ye stared fixedly at the screen with a serious expression.

An hour.

Three hours.

Five hours.

It was getting dark and about time to clock out.

Ha Qiqi asked, "Director Zhang, how is it?"

Zhang Zuo said, "Have you made any headway after watching them?"

Zhang Ye smiled and waved his hand, saying, "Go back first, I'll continue watching."

Mark Foran also came in at this time. "Shall I get the staff to clock out first?"

"Sure." Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Go home, all of you. There's no need to worry about me. Haven't all the movies been brought over? I'll just play them by myself and research further."

Everyone left. Only Zhang Ye was left in the screening room as he continued watching. Later on, he sped up the playback and watched it in fast forward.

10 movies.

20 movies.

30 movies.

Some of them did well at the box office.

Some of them didn't do so well at the box office.

Some of them were from the early era of animated films.

Some of them were just shown this year.

Zhang Ye had been wondering why everyone around him kept saying that it wasn't OK to do animated films. It felt like they were trying to avoid making one. Qian Haitao was like this, and so was Ha Qiqi, Mark Foran, and the others from Hollywood. It seemed like this industry was simply a dead end. It wasn't until Zhang Ye watched a portion of the Hollywood animated films that he finally understood why they had said that.

The production budget was low!

The investments were small!

The plots were childish!

How the fuck do they even call those animated films?

What nonsense is this!

So the animation film industry in this world was still stuck in its most primitive state? Their target audience was children and teenagers? Although there were also some animated films made for adults, they all contained dark humor and satire without exception. Such animated films were only targeted at an extremely small demographic, and the younger crowd did not like watching them at all. Therefore, their final box office earnings tended to be extremely poor as well. Year by year, animated film after animated film, an illusion that such works were bad started building up. This resulted in the current situation where no directors liked making animated films and no viewers liked watching them either.

In actual fact, Zhang Ye knew that Hollywood animated films were an extremely strong medium. Many excellent animated films were able to give the top Hollywood live-action movies a run for their money at the box office. In his previous world, if anyone shouted on the streets that Hollywood animated films were bad, they would surely be seen as idiots. This was because in that world, of the Top 100 Highest-Grossing Movies of all time, a quarter of the list was taken up by animated films!

If even that didn't work?

Then what else would work?

This is only happening because you people are not good at making them!

Sitting there, Zhang Ye spent the entire night researching.

"What the heck is this?"

"This movie isn't good either."

"I guess only I can broaden you people's horizons!"

"Which animated film should I use then? I will crush all of you with whichever one that I bring out!"

Zhang Ye kept muttering to himself in the screening room. But he wasn't wrong either. All of the animated films he could think of were far better than this world's animated films. Whichever one he chose to bring out would definitely astonish a lot of people. This gave Zhang Ye a headache over which one to choose.

...

The next day.

Hollywood, in the morning.

An incident suddenly happened in the outside world. The members of the Directors Guild were once again targeting Zhang Ye. In an instant, a battle started on the Web!

"What?"

"An investment of 160 million USD?"

"And that's only just the production budget?"

"If we count the publicity expenses, wouldn't it come up to 200 million USD?"

"That Chinese man has really gone crazy!"

"Do they even understand how the film industry works?"

"Hollywood has been occupied by laymen!"

"The things that Zhang Ye does are way too crazy!"

"If this animated film can make money, I'll eat my head!"

"The combined box office earnings of all the Hollywood animated films over the past two years didn't even cross 160 million USD, yet you invested 160 million just like that? What a joke!"

"This is an international joke!"

"Even a live-action movie wouldn't cost that much!"

"Ha! I'm so exasperated by this!"

Many Hollywood big name directors couldn't help but step forward and say something.

Many Hollywood industry insiders also started a barrage of scolding aimed at Zhang Ye.

Star Moon Animation Studios.

The employees had not arrived for work yet.

Zhang Ye had gone out alone to buy breakfast for himself. He hadn't gotten any sleep all night and was hungry. As he ate, he browsed the Internet and happened to come across the news as well.

You people stuck your noses in when we wanted to acquire a movie studio?

You people are sticking your noses in again now that I am going to make a movie?

Why the fuck are you all such busybodies!

Zhang Ye logged into his account and replied: "It's my business what I want to make. You guys are such busybodies!"

A big shot Hollywood movie director shot back: "Wanna make a bet?"

Zhang Ye laughed and asked: "What are we betting on?"

Another Hollywood director said: "A bet on your box office earnings!"

Zhang Ye replied: "Sure."

A third Hollywood big name director said: "Your box office earnings won't exceed 30 million dollars!"

Zhang Ye said: "What if it does?"

That American director said: "I'll eat my own head!"

Zhang Ye sneered and said: "Don't talk about things that you can't do. Say something more realistic."

Another American director joined in. "How much do you expect an animated film to earn at the box office? Us directors will all get box office earnings that are multiple times yours. Let's make a bet! It will be limited to this year alone. If your animated film's box office earnings can exceed any of our new movie's box office earnings, we will consider it your win. But if you lose, then get out of Hollywood! A layman like you shouldn't be coming here to make trouble!"

Zhang Ye said: "That won't do."

Wilson was also here. "Haha, you won't bet on that, will you?"

Many of the directors started deriding him.

But at the next moment, their expressions froze.

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "How about this? If any of your new movies' box office earnings can exceed mine, I will consider it my loss. The wager of the bet will remain as you guys suggested. But if none of your new movies' box office earnings can exceed mine, I won't ask too much of you in case any of you back out. When I get a chance to make a new movie, I want you all to guest star in it, free of charge, and play any role that I assign you. How about that? It's not too difficult a request, is it?"

What?

Exceed your box office earnings?

Many of the Hollywood directors were enraged!

Wilson said angrily: "So long as any of us exceeds your box office earnings?"

Zhang Ye said: "So are you going to take the bet?"

Tony said: "I'm just afraid that you'll go back on your words!"

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "This is the World Wide Web; there are records of what everyone has said. The entire world's media outlets and people are looking at this now, and they can all bear witness to what I said. I should be the one who's afraid of you guys going back on your words!"

"Who gave you the balls to say something like that!"

"This is so infuriating! I'll take the bet! Take his bet!"

"I don't believe you can do it! I'll take the bet too!"

"Alright, count me in!"

"And me too!"

This was a provocation!

This was an insult!

How could this group of elite, international Hollywood movie directors take this lying down? They were all stirred up by this, and many other Hollywood directors who did not appear earlier also started coming forward at this time. The entire Directors Guild came forward to take the bet and swore to chase a layman like Zhang Ye out of Hollywood. As for that wager to act for free in a movie by Zhang Ye? It was something that they didn't even consider! Lose? How could they possibly lose! The worst performer of this bunch was already a member of the 100 million USD box office earnings club. Even if they shot a movie with their eyes closed, they couldn't possibly bring in less than 50 million USD at the box office. But an animated film? Of the Hollywood animated films that were shown this year, none had exceeded 10 million USD at the box office!

Zhang Ye sneered and said: "So it's on then?"

The group of Hollywood directors all said: "It's on!"

Zhang Ye said: "Let the world bear witness!"

The directors said: "Let the world bear witness!"

What kind of temper did Zhang Ye have? If this fellow didn't look for trouble with others, it would be a blessing. But for this group of Hollywood directors, they kept coming back time and again to take it up with Zhang Ye, so of course he would strike back at them. Moreover, he was the type who would either do nothing or retaliate in the most vicious of ways! And this time, with several dozen Hollywood directors joining the bet, it was the perfect time for him to strike them down all at once!

The argument was reaching a boiling point!

The outside world was watching in shock!

Something big was happening again in the international entertainment industry!

Zhang Ye had gotten into an argument with the Hollywood directors again!

With the entire world bearing witness, the craziest bet in the history of the international entertainment industry was official!

Chapter 1683: Come on out, Frozen!

Korea.

"Zhang Ye and the Directors Guild got into an argument?"

"If he loses, he's gonna have to quit Hollywood?"

"How can he win?"

"He's betting against all of the big name Hollywood directors!"

"He will lose as long as any of the Hollywood directors' box office earnings surpass his?"

"Unless his new movie can make a billion dollars at the box office!"

...

America.

"Zhang Ye will be bidding farewell to Hollywood soon."

"Yeah, he actually accepted a bet like that?"

"The Directors Guild are clearly targeting him."

"These veteran Hollywood directors are all very united. Now that a new director has come to Hollywood, and it's even a Chinese guy, they will definitely not allow it."

"The matter has blown up."

...

China.

"What?"

"There's no end to the bullying?"

"Motherfucker, Face-smacking Zhang, get them!"

"Yeah, fuck them up!"

"But the wager of this bet is indeed a little big."

"Is he really going to spend a billion yuan to make this animated film?"

...

India.

"Hahahahaha!"

"This fellow is gonna be down on his luck!"

“Yeah, he even dares to take on the Hollywood directors?”

“He’s challenging all of the Hollywood directors by himself?”

“Whoever gave him the confidence to do something like that!”

“Zhang Ye is gonna end up losing very badly this time! I’ll be popping the popcorn!”

...

It blew up in the outside world.

The media.

The people.

The international celebrities.

The industry insiders.

Everyone was stunned by this news.

At the same time, there was chaos at Star Moon Animation Studios in Hollywood.

Mark Foran and the rest of the staff at Star Moon came rushing back to the office in a panic. When they arrived, they saw Zhang Ye sitting there calmly while enjoying his American breakfast.

Mark Foran said startled, “Teacher Zhang! W-What did you just do?”

Zhang Ye said, “Ah? Me? I was having breakfast.” Then he went on to say in a dissatisfied way, “The breakfast here isn’t much. Do you guys have soy milk and fried dough sticks?”

One of the company executives nearly fainted in anger. “How can you still be thinking of eating?”

Ha Qiqi said anxiously, “Director Zhang, why are you fighting with others again!”

Mark Foran took out his cell phone and pointed at the screen. “Did you say this?”

Zhang Ye glanced at it. “Yeah, I said that.”

Mark Foran was floored. “You’re just one person. Why did you declare war on all of the Hollywood directors? And you even made a wager like that? D-Do you know who those directors are?”

Zhang Ye shook his head. “I don’t.”

Mark Foran said, “Wilson has already started production on his new movie.”

“Oh, is that so?”

“You know Tony, right?”

“I don’t know him.”

“Then surely you know who Becky is, right?”

“I’m not sure who that is.”

"You have to know who Flanders is!"

"Flanders? I don't know who that is. I've already told you, I don't usually have much time to watch movies."

When everyone heard that, they were on the verge of a breakdown!

You don't even know them?

You haven't even heard of them?

Then why the fuck would you challenge them?

The Star Moon staff exclaimed:

"They're all famous Hollywood directors!"

"And their new movies are all going to be released this year."

"Tony's last movie earned 500 million dollars at the box office!"

"Becky is a director with a movie ranked in the top thirty worldwide highest-grossing movies of all time!"

"Flanders's new movie has a conservative estimate of 600 million USD for its box office earnings by the industry insiders!"

"All of them are elite directors in Hollywood!"

"We're only doing an animated film. How can we possibly compare to them in the box office!"

Zhang Ye gave a smile and placated, "There's me around, so don't worry."

The Star Moon staff were almost in tears by now. They thought to themselves, Like we can do that! It's fucking because you're here that we're so worried! For someone who hasn't even watched a Hollywood movie animated film, you actually had the guts to come to Hollywood to make an animated film? And you even dared to challenge all of the directors in Hollywood as well? Even God would be worried for you!

Mark Foran couldn't take this anymore. He jogged off to the side and called his boss.

"Boss!" Mark Foran said: "Something major has happened!"

Qian Haitao had returned to China on a flight last night. "I've already heard about it."

Mark Foran said: "What do we do now?"

"Just prepare to start production on the movie."

"Huh? How are we gonna do that?"

"Just do what has to be done and listen to Teacher Zhang's orders. You don't have to worry about him. That's just how he is. You'll be fine once you get used to it."

Get used to it?

How can I get used to that!

Mark Foran was extremely dumbfounded. When he discovered his boss's nonreaction to Zhang Ye's challenge to the Hollywood directors, he immediately understood something. These kinds of incidents must have happened quite often when Zhang Ye was in China. He remembered that this man at the top of the food chain was someone who even dared to beat up a person at the Nobel Prize award ceremony, so what else would he not dare to do?

The nearby chatter reached his ears.

Mark Foran looked over and saw that the people in Zhang Ye's team were conversing. He could understand Mandarin and speak it as well.

Zhang Zuo said helplessly, "Something always has to happen whenever we go overseas."

Little Wang put her head in her hands and said, "Even without going overseas, we've also encountered many such incidents."

Tong Fu gave a wry smile. "I think this is happening because Director Zhang hasn't been in a fight in a while."

Ha Qiqi bluntly said, "You're just thinking that? It's precisely because he hasn't been in a fight in a long time!"

Wu Yi said, "Ever since he got into that conflict with Wilson, Director Zhang hasn't really fought with anyone during the three months we spent filming Man vs. Wild. Now that we have some people delivering themselves to us, how can Director Zhang possibly turn them away? He's the type who feels uneasy if he doesn't get into a fight daily, so it must've been really hard on him to endure the three months of peace and quiet that we had."

Ha Qiqi said, "Yeah, it must have been difficult."

Little Wang thought about it. "Now that you say that, it does seem to be true. Ever since Director Zhang was released from prison, his temper has gotten much better."

Zhang Zuo nodded. "It's true that his temper has gotten better."

Mark Foran almost cried listening to their conversation.

His temper has gotten better?

You fucking call this having a good temper?

Jesus Christ! Just how low are your standards!

Ring, ring, ring.

Ring, ring, ring.

The landlines in the office were blowing up with calls!

Because of a wager, the entirety of Star Moon Animation Studios had been pushed into the headlines. Right now, everyone knew very clearly that no matter what would happen, the incident had already

taken place. There was no way back for them. All that they could do was to go ahead and make an animated film, then lose the bet in the most terrible of ways! They were going to end up as the laughing stock of Hollywood for a lifetime!

Mark Foran asked, "Teacher Zhang, have you decided what you want to make?"

Ha Qiqi also said, "What genre are we going to do?"

Zhang Zuo said, "Do you have any ideas?"

Zhang Ye finished up his sandwich and took out a napkin to wipe his mouth. Then he confidently smiled. "I've already made a decision."

He had been thinking a lot before this, and there were many choices that he could select.

Make one that had Chinese elements?

Or one that could win an award?

Or perhaps a brand new style of animated films?

However, he didn't have to consider any of that anymore.

Compete on box office earnings, right? Alright, I'll take on all of you this time!

Don't blame this bro for being a bully! You were the ones who forced my hands!

Zhang Ye looked at everyone. "I've already thought of the title for the animated film."

Everyone asked, "What's it called?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Frozen!"

Chapter 1684: The fastest draw takes to stage!

Frozen?

Everyone looked at one another.

Mark Foran asked, "What genre is it?"

Zhang Ye said, "It's a fairy tale."

Ha Qiqi said, "Isn't that still targeted at children and teenagers?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "It's not the same."

Zhang Zuo asked, "What other elements will there be?"

Zhang Ye thought about it and said, "It will have musical elements."

Mark Foran rolled his eyes. "Will there also be a princess? And a prince too?"

Zhang Ye said, "Eh, that's right."

A MoonStar Studios staff said, "And magic as well?"

Zhang Ye was taken aback. "Did you all sneak a peek at my script?"

Everyone was floored!

What script did we sneak a peek at!

You would have to have a script first!

Mark Foran said despondently, "Isn't that the standard template for most Hollywood animated films? It has been so overused in recent years! Everyone bases their films on this template!"

But Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Mine is different."

How is that different?

Aren't they the same?

Everyone felt pessimistic and let out sighs.

Only Zhang Ye knew that this animated film he was going to make was going to be absolutely different from the animated films that they had imagined it to be.

Frozen, also known as The Snow Queen or Anna and the Snow Queen, had many other translated names. However, all of them referred to that one movie. It was a movie from Zhang Ye's previous world that was the highest-grossing animated film of all time, as well as the only animated film to have made it into the top ten worldwide highest-grossing movies of all time! But in this world, animated films were generally weaker performers, and Zhang Ye did not know if Frozen could create the same miracle that it did in his previous world. But at the very least, he believed that it would easily come out on top against those several dozen Hollywood directors' movies.

The project was confirmed.

The animated film was set to be produced.

The next stage would be the animation production.

On the very same day, Zhang Ye's figure was seen everywhere around the various departments of Star Moon Animation Studios.

...

At the character design department.

"Teacher Zhang, we have some ready-made character designs. Why don't you have a look and see if they're OK?"

"No, that won't work."

"Eh? We have a lot of them, so why don't you take a look first?"

"There's no need to take a look. Just do it according to my specifications."

"Your specifications? Where are they?"

"Do you have a pen and paper?"

"Yes, here you go."

"Alright, just base it off of this drawing. I'll let you all know about the character color palettes at a later time."

"Y-You know how to sketch character designs?"

"Of course, I used to draw comics, after all."

...

At the screenwriting department.

"Teacher Zhang, what about the screenplay?"

"What's our main storyline?"

"Oh, wait for me for a little while."

"Huh? Where are you off to?"

"Teacher Zhang?"

"You're back already?"

"Here, this is the screenplay."

"What? You've already completed it?"

"Did you just write this? But it's only been 10 minutes!"

"Thi-This is too fast!"

"Shouldn't it take at least several months of revisions and development to complete the screenplay?"

"There's no need for that. You can just use this."

...

At the music department.

"Teacher Zhang, what style should the background music and main theme be?"

"Are we going to compose and write the music ourselves or will we be licensing other people's music?"

"There's no need for that. We'll produce it in-house."

"But we're not professionals at this after all. If we do it in-house—"

"I am a professional."

"Ah?"

"I'll write the songs and compose the orchestration and submit it to you to work on."

"Alright, we'll wait for your score then."

"Here, it's done. Go ahead and produce these three songs first."

"What? You've finished composing them?"

"This—"

...

At the animation department.

"Teacher Zhang, which techniques should we use for the animation?"

"Use the best CGI ¹ available."

"But that would be too expensive. For most of our Hollywood animated films, we usually employ traditional hand-drawn techniques ². When we reach the critical scenes, we will then work on them frame by frame."

"For us, we'll create the entire film frame by frame."

"Do you know how much that would cost?"

"Is 160 million dollars enough?"

"Uh..."

"If it isn't, I'll ask for more money. However, there must be a guaranteed quality."

"That's like burning cash. No one has ever done it like this before!"

"Making an animated film is basically burning money in the first place. The only reason why all of those past Hollywood animated films received such lukewarm receptions was because they were reluctant to spend money. But I'm willing to!"

...

At the voiceover department.

"Teacher Zhang, who should we cast for the voice actors?"

"That will be tricky to handle. Normally, we would look to cast some Hollywood celebrities. But now that you've declared war on so many big name directors in Hollywood, I'm afraid that none of those celebrities would dare to do voice acting for us."

"It will be fine."

"Fine?"

"I'll look for the voice actors."

Having said that, Zhang Ye started making some calls.

He contacted Dong Shanshan first.

“Shanshan, how’s your English?”

“Do you have to ask?”

“Haha, that’s great then. Come and do some voice acting for me soon?”

“For your animated film?”

“That’s right.”

“You’re really going to do it?”

“Yeah, I’m really doing it. I’ve already accepted the bet, so how can it not be real?”

“Alright, I’ll be looking forward to basking in your glory as a Hollywood director.”

Then he called Ning Lan.

“Sister Ning, busy?”

“I’m reading the news about your bet with other people. You’re really capable, huh?”

“Great timing. How about doing some voice acting for me?”

“Voice acting for what?”

“A role in my new movie.”

“You’re looking for me to do that? My English is only so-so.”

“Go practice then. The post-production will only happen in several months anyway.”

“Whoa, so will this be considered my Hollywood debut?”

“Of course!”

He made another call to Yao Jiancai.

“Zhang’er, what’s up?”

“Old Yao, go and brush up on your English.”

“Why would I do that?”

“Just practice a few lines. I’ll need you to do some voice acting soon. I’ve reserved a role for you.”

“For your animated film? Fine! Haha!”

After a string of calls.

Zhang Ye turned around and said to the people of the voiceover department, “It’s finished. The majority of the roles have been assigned.”

The voiceover department’s staff had blank looks on their faces.

...

On this day.

Many of Star Moon's employees were genuflecting.

Even Mark Foran was stunned.

It wasn't for anything else. They were just too shocked at Zhang Ye's efficiency. They had assumed that Zhang Ye was just a layman who did not know anything about animation productions. They thought that he was just messing around when he said that he would be making a Hollywood animated film. But the moment Zhang Ye started working on the project, it felt like he had turned into an entirely different person. His work efficiency could shock people to death, and he wouldn't have to pay for it. Whenever he told the staff under him that he would get them the information they required, most people would subconsciously accept this to mean a few days later or within a month's time. But in Zhang Ye's context, this only meant a few minutes!

He went away and came back.

The screenplay was ready.

He picked it up and placed it back down.

The character designs were sketched.

He turned to leave and returned.

Three songs were already composed.

He made some calls and hung up.

The voice casting was finalized.

Mark Foran and the others looked like they had seen a ghost!

This was only the first day of production, but the majority of the work was already done?

Only Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the rest of Zhang Ye's personal team were not surprised because they understood full well what Zhang Ye's work style was. His nickname of China's fastest draw was not for nothing. This fellow was someone who could complete the filming of a 40-episode television drama in just 10 days. But more importantly, he did not sacrifice any quality for speed.

Chapter 1685: Who exactly is the fastest draw around here?

The next day.

The news had spread around the world.

The American media: "Zhang Ye's high-stakes bet with Hollywood!"

The UK media: "An impossible-to-win bet!"

The Japanese media: "A production cost of nearly 200 million USD?"

"The Korean media: "The most expensive animated film in history will soon be produced!"

The Indian media: "Zhang Ye paints himself into a corner!"

The French media: "Hollywood directors express that they're under no pressure!"

The Chinese media: "Zhang Ye's written challenge to Hollywood?"

The matter got blown up even further. Fueled by the deliberate encouragement from the international entertainment industry and media outlets, this bet turned the world upside down. Some nosy people even made the bet into a contract and posted it onto an authoritative media outlet so that everyone could bear witness to the wager.

Someone even started a poll.

"The Hollywood directors will definitely win!"

"Haha, obviously."

"There isn't a need to vote. Zhang Ye will lose for sure!"

"Is there even a need to vote?"

"Anyone with brains should know that Hollywood animated films will never be able to win against Hollywood live-action movies even if a 100 or 200 years pass."

"We don't even know if Zhang Ye can complete production of his animated film by the end of the year."

"Yeah, the production cycle of an animated film usually takes up to a year or two to finish."

"If he can't finish making the movie this year, he won't be able to release it for screening, which means he'll lose the bet."

"Pfft, why does everyone say that he will lose?"

"Are you expecting otherwise? Do you think that anyone really expects him to win?"

The outcome of the poll was decided very quickly.

But the results still surprised many people.

Votes for the Hollywood directors: 95%

Votes for Zhang Ye: 5%

So there were actually people who felt that Zhang Ye could win!

...

Wilson's studio.

"There are people who voted for him?"

“Hahaha, I’m dying of laughter.”

“There really are a lot of idiots out there.”

“I guess those votes are all from his Chinese fans.”

“There’s no need to worry about him. We just have to make sure we do well on our own movie and let the box office do the talking.”

“Yeah, let the box office do the talking.”

“We’ve already started filming our movie and will wrap up production in less than three months. Star Moon was acquired just two days ago. Counting the time that they’ll need to get the project initiated, raise the funds, and get the screenplay sorted out, it would be considered very good if they can start production in two months. However, I’m quite sure they won’t be able to finish making the movie by the end of the year.”

...

Tony’s film crew.

“Director, the preparations are in order.”

“Alright, let’s start filming next week.”

“We’re definitely going to hit a new record at the box office.”

“Yeah, everybody is confident about that.”

“Everyone, let’s take the filming seriously. We have to let the Chinese know exactly what makes a Hollywood movie. It’s not something that just any Tom, Dick, or Harry can come to Hollywood and make.”

...

Director Becky’s studio.

“Is there any news about Zhang Ye’s movie?”

“Nothing at all.”

“Hur hur, they’ve only arrived in Hollywood for two days. I’m afraid they’re still far from making any progress on the preproduction stage of the animated film.”

“It’s impossible to make a good animated film without three to five months of preproduction.”

“This bet that we have with him does make us seem like bullies.”

“There was no way around it. The Chinese guy asked for it.”

“Come on, let’s get prepped for the shoot.”

...

Director Flanders’s studio.

“We have to hurry.”

“Yeah, many of the other movies are about to start filming.”

“We were a little late in initiating the project.”

“It’s alright. Don’t you know who Director Flanders is? Our director is well-known for being the fastest worker in Hollywood. The screenplay should be finalized within the next few days.”

“That quickly?”

“Haha, as expected from Director Flanders.”

“In all of Hollywood, no one dares to compete with us on the speed of making a movie.”

“That’s right. Especially not for a production like an animated film whose process can be excruciatingly slow. Even the character design process can take over a month to complete, hahaha.”

...

At this moment.

Many of the Hollywood directors were also giving their best.

For those who accepted Zhang Ye’s bet, some were already into the initial stage of filming, while others had already completed their preproduction work and received the initial funds to begin production. They had much more time to prepare than Zhang Ye did. Some of them had already received the confirmation for their projects several months ago and had started casting and booking locations. As such, their progress was much faster. When they did not see any activity coming from Star Moon Animation Studios, every one of them laughed without making any comments. They understood very well what was going on. Even though most of them had not made an animated film before, they were still considered industry insiders and knew what an animated film production entailed. The production cycle of a project like this could simply be described as horrendous. This was also the reason why many directors were unwilling to work on an animated film.

The screenplay would take at least a month to complete.

The character designs would take at least two months to work on.

There was also a need to design the sets for the scenes.

And outsource the soundtrack to professionals.

Coupled with the frame-by-frame drawing and production work, an animated film could take up to a year or two to complete, so how could they possibly finish it within the year?

The Hollywood directors were in a good mood and didn’t seem worried at all.

Many of the media outlets were also fanning the flames. After interviewing the Hollywood directors who made the bet with Zhang Ye regarding the progress of their movies, many of these Hollywood-based reporters deliberately went over to Star Moon Animation Studios to interview them on their progress. A majority of the reporters headed there with the mindset of seeing a joke, but upon getting

feedback from the company, these reporters were all dumbfounded. Every single one of them who went to Star Moon Animation Studios walked out with a bewildered look!

Finally.

Breaking news exploded onto the scene.

Star Moon Animation Studios announced the title for its latest animated film, Frozen.

The progress of the animated film production: midway!

...

America.

“What?”

“Midway into production?”

“Holy fuck!”

“They’re already in the middle of the production cycle?”

“How can they be this fast!”

“Is that guy taking off?”

...

Japan.

“What?”

“How is that possible!”

“The screenplay has been finalized?”

“The character designs are already done?”

“The set designs have been completed?”

“They’ve cast the voice actors already?”

...

The Hollywood directors.

“Jesus Christ!”

“Is that dude on steroids?!”

“What do they fucking mean by midway through production?”

“Our project started half a year ago, but we aren’t even midway into production. How many days has it been since their project started?”

...

China.

“Pfft!”

“Hahahaha!”

“The fastest draw, Zhang Ye, has appeared again!”

“The work efficiency of this fellow is always leaving the world in shock!”

“Some foreigners had claimed that Zhang Ye would definitely not finish making the movie by the end of the year. At that time, I just laughed and said nothing. If this fellow gets serious, will you believe that he’ll finish the animated film by next week?”

...

The media.

The industry.

People around the world.

Everyone was terrified!

They’d seen a movie getting made quickly before, but they’d never seen one getting made so fucking quickly!

You just arrived in Hollywood three days ago, and the animation studio was only acquired three days ago by the Chinese businessman. After initiating the project yesterday, you’re already midway through the production by today? The screenplay? The character designs? The set designs? The music? The voice actors? All of the preproduction work was already complete?

At this moment, even Director Flanders, who had been hailed as the fastest worker in Hollywood, was dumbfounded. What the fuck! Who exactly is the fastest draw around here!?

Chapter 1686: Convincing the Heavenly Queen to come out of retirement?

Heated discussions.

Side bets.

Watching the commotion.

Joking around.

This wager set all of Hollywood abuzz.

All the Hollywood directors who were involved in the bet were stepping up on their movie productions. They had been spurred by the revelation that Zhang Ye was progressing quickly on his animated film.

Onlookers from around the world also couldn't wait for the day they could finally see these people's finished products.

...

A few days later.

Hollywood.

In a chartered car.

Yao Jiancai looked out of the window curiously. "So this is Hollywood?"

Ning Lan smiled and said, "Old Yao, is this your first time here?"

Yao Jiancai said, "Yes. Have you guys been here before?"

Dong Shanshan smiled and said, "It's my first time visiting as well."

Ning Lan said, "I came here a few years ago, but only as a tourist. There are almost no Chinese actors who come to Hollywood for work."

Chen Guang gave a bitter smile and said, "The only person who is qualified to act in Hollywood chose to make an animated film instead."

Ning Lan also smirked and said, "Yeah, if I were as capable and popular as him, I would just take part in a few Hollywood productions first. I'd take whatever movies and roles that I could since it's more important to build up my reputation first. But for Zhang Ye, he's always choosing to take the unorthodox path." Then she looked at Ha Qiqi and Little Wang, who came to pick them up. "Hai, why didn't you all talk him out of making an animated film?"

Ha Qiqi laughed and said, "Don't you guys know Director Zhang's temper?"

Little Wang sighed. "Yeah, who other than Minister Wu has the ability to change his mind? Besides, Minister Wu has always been such a good wife to him and always supports Director Zhang in whatever he does."

Ning Lan said, "This animated film will take at least a few months to complete. Isn't he afraid that his popularity will fall and he'll drop back down to the International C-list Rankings?"

Ha Qiqi was amused by this. "Actually, that doesn't seem like it will happen. We've been keeping an eye on the international celebrity rankings for the past few days as we were also afraid of that. However, not only has Director Zhang's popularity not dropped, it even rose by a little bit. At the very least, his position on the international B-list has stabilized. He definitely won't lose his ranking in the short term. The main cause of concern this time is his bet with the Hollywood directors. As everyone knows, it's a must to raise one's popularity. What I'm worried about now is the wager they have. If the box office earnings at the end are not good enough, there probably won't be a way to turn things around. Director Zhang has always been the type to carry out his promises. If he says that he'll quit Hollywood, he'll definitely do it."

Dong Shanshan flipped her hair. "We were worried about this too. That's why we came over in advance to see if there's anything we can do for him."

The car arrived at its destination and stopped in front of Star Moon Animation Studios' main entrance.

The moment they stepped out of the car, Zhang Ye was there to welcome them.

"Haha, you've all arrived?"

"Zhang'er!"

"Welcome, welcome!"

"We haven't seen you in a few days, but you're already jostling with Hollywood again?"

"It was what I had to do."

"Can you win?"

"Definitely."

"No matter what, we're here to help."

"Now that you're all here, I feel much more reassured."

Zhang Ye invited them inside and brought them around for a simple tour of the place. Seeing his old friends here, he felt very happy and also calmed down a little. They were, after all, his partners he had worked together with for a very long time. With them around, he would always feel much more at ease.

Finally.

They came to the conference room.

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Brothers and sisters, we're going to be working together again. Since we're such old friends, I'll skip the formalities."

Dong Shanshan laughed and said, "Since when have you ever said anything formal before?"

Yao Jiancai said, "If only he knew how to do that, we wouldn't be in this situation."

Zhang Ye chuckled and said, "With you guys, I don't need to be so polite. I've worked together with Shanshan on many variety shows and have been longtime partners with Old Yao for many years as well. Old Chen has also always joined me on many of my shows as a guest, and I don't think I need to mention Sister Ning, do I? We're such old friends, so of course I would think about you guys first when a good opportunity arises. As the saying goes, a family always looks out for one another. We used to work so well together back in China, and now that I'm making my first movie abroad, it's actually not that different."

Yao Jiancai rolled his eyes. "But this is Hollywood. How is it not different?"

Zhang Ye said in amusement, "How is it different? Isn't it just making movies?"

Ning Lan couldn't help but laugh and say, "It's only you who dares to think that way."

Zhang Ye said, "For these voice acting roles, some of you might have done it before, and some of you might not have. But it's actually not that different from traditional acting. You still have to carry out your work as an actor. I don't have to explain to you all how important a voice actor is for an animated film. We have two main problems right now—English and singing. How is everyone's English? Tell me."

Yao Jiancai took the initiative and said, "I have to practice more."

Chen Guang said with a wry smile. "My English isn't up to par. I'm only around the level of CET-4 or so."

Ning Lan said, "It's not a problem for me."

It was even more unnecessary for Dong Shanshan to mention hers. Graduating as a broadcasting major, her English would definitely not be bad.

Zhang Ye nodded. "Old Yao doesn't have too many lines and should do OK with some practice. Old Chen has more scenes, so do hurry and put in more effort to practice."

Chen Guang said, "Alright, you don't have to worry about it."

Ning Lan looked at him. "I can understand your concerns about our English, but what was it about singing?"

Zhang Ye said, "There will be many scenes in the movie where the characters will be singing."

He assigned the roles to them.

The leads.

The supporting roles.

Ning Lan said in anguish, "I'm not great at singing."

Dong Shanshan smacked her lips. "I'm only so-so, but I can sing."

Chen Guang laughed. "I'm a professional when it comes to singing."

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Let's do a table read."

The group had just arrived, but they were already pulled in for practice by the workaholic Zhang Ye.

One song.

Two songs.

Three songs.

There wasn't a need to mention Chen Guang since he was a professional singer. Even though his English was average and he had a heavy accent, when he opened his mouth to sing in English, the accent disappeared, and all of the words were properly enunciated. Perhaps this had to do with him singing English rock songs in his early years in the industry. Hence, Zhang Ye was very happy with his performance. What most astonished him was Dong Shanshan's good singing. It wasn't at a professional level yet, but it fit the role she was going to play. The ingenuous sense in her singing portrayed Princess Anna's character quite well, and there was nothing in her English to nitpick either.

Zhang Ye only had praise for her.

Ning Lan blinked. "What about me?"

Zhang Ye said nervously, "Sister Ning is lacking a little."

Ning Lan said helplessly, "That's all I've got though."

Chen Guang said, "Why don't you practice more? There's still time."

Ning Lan shook her head. "This is a matter of talent. It's not something that can change with practice. I can't sing the songs that the character sings in the movie. Zhang'er, do you have any other roles that don't require me to sing?"

"I do." Zhang Ye gave it some thought. "But who will sing the female lead's songs then?"

Chen Guang said, "The female lead hasn't been decided yet?"

Zhang Ye said, "There are two female leads. Shanshan will be playing one of them, and I wanted Sister Ning to take the other one because I think her voice is very suitable for it. But that's not really possible now since Sister Ning can't sing the key song. This song is the crux of the entire movie. It's even more important than all of the other songs in the movie combined. That's why I must cast someone with the right voice who can both act and sing. Old Chen, do you think your wife is up for it?"

Chen Guang said, "She might not be able to sing it good enough."

Dong Shanshan said, "Can Sister Lan do it?"

Zhang Ye said, "I'll check with them."

Fan Wenli.

Xu Meilan.

Zhang Ye went looking for them.

They recorded their samples and sent them to him.

In the end, Zhang Ye was still unsatisfied. Fan Wenli was a professional singer, and there was nothing to say about her singing. However, her voice was not suitable for the role. A person's vocal register was not something that can be changed. It was the same for Xu Meilan as well. Not only did her vocal register not match Zhang Ye's requirements for the character, she was also not a professional singer. She made her name as an actor, so her singing was relatively weaker.

What should he do then?

Who else was there?

Zhang Ye was starting to get worried. He could improvise on everything other than this role and song.

Suddenly, Ning Lan smiled. "I thought of a person who can definitely do it."

Zhang Ye was taken aback. "Who?"

Chen Guang gave Ning Lan a look. "I also thought of someone."

Ning Lan smiled. "The two of us must be thinking of the same person."

Chen Guang said, "Yes, if it's her, she'll definitely be able to do it."

Zhang Ye urged them, "Hurry up and say it. Who?"

Ning Lan blinked. "I'm just afraid you won't be able to convince her."

Zhang Ye chuckled. Then he boasted, "Sister Ning, are you looking down on me? I dare not claim so for the celebrities abroad, but in China, this bro still has some influence, alright? Who can there be in Chinese showbiz that I cannot convince?"

Ning Lan gave him a look. "Can you convince Sister Zhang?"

Sister Zhang?

Zhang Yuanqi?

The former Heavenly Queen?

One of the rare few people in the Chinese entertainment industry who stood on the international stage before?

Zhang Ye had a contemplative look on his face. Then he suddenly slapped his thigh and shouted out, "That's right! That's right! How could I have forgotten about Sister Zhang! She will definitely be suitable for this role!"

Singing?

Acting?

Vocal register?

Sister Zhang was a perfect fit for the role!

There wasn't even a need for her to audition. Zhang Ye knew that she could absolutely play the role!

But the only problem was that Sister Zhang had retired from the entertainment circle for a long time. Was there anyone who could possibly convince her to come out of retirement?

Chapter 1687: The Heavenly Queen is sick?

Several days later.

A surgical mask.

A pair of sunglasses.

A cap.

Zhang Ye was all wrapped up as he returned to China quietly.

The moment he got off the plane, a car from the studio came to pick him up. He got in and passed an address that Ning Lan wrote for him to the driver. Without going home, he headed straight for that location. Along the way, he even found a stall where he bought a drawer of soup dumplings, two fried dough sticks, and a bowl of savory tofu pudding. After being on a plane overnight, he was hungry. As he gorged himself with the food, he kept praising how delicious it was. Home-cooked food was still the best thing ever. It was a pity he didn't have time to get some stewed pork liver. Hence, Zhang Ye decided that he must eat enough stewed pork liver and pork offal stew ¹ before returning to America.

An hour later.

The car arrived at the destination.

Checking his watch, it was only about 8 in the morning.

A security guard stopped the car.

"Who are you looking for?" The security guard asked in an unaccommodating manner.

Zhang Ye got out of the car. "I'm here to look for Zhang Yuanqi."

The security guard was taken aback. He said warily, "You're a reporter?"

Zhang Ye said, "A friend."

The security guard looked at him, then lowered his head and picked up a phone to make a call. "Hello, it's the guard at the gate. There's someone looking for Sister Zhang—" Then he looked up and asked, "What is your name, sir?"

Zhang Ye said, "Zhang Ye."

The security guard felt his legs give way and nearly fell over. "Ah?"

Zhang Ye took off his sunglasses.

The security guard said into the telephone: "It's really Teacher Zhang!"

A moment later, a young woman walked out from the villa district and looked out towards the gate. "Are you serious? Where is he?"

The security guard waved his hands.

When the woman saw it, she was delighted. "Aiyo! It's really Teacher Zhang!"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Is Old Zhang at home?"

The woman said, "Yes, she's around."

Zhang Ye looked at her. "You are?"

Ma Fei said, "I'm her cousin. My name is Ma Fei."

Zhang Ye said, "Whoa, what a good name. How refreshing!"

Ma Fei said, "...Aren't you supposed to be in Hollywood making a movie? Why did you come back to China? I didn't see any reports of that on the news?"

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "I sneaked back. I'm looking for Old Zhang regarding some matters."

Ma Fei didn't probe further. "Come inside with me."

At the entrance of a villa.

Ma Fei opened the door and brought Zhang Ye into the house.

Ma Fei shouted, "Sis, your friend is here."

The television in the living room was on. From Zhang Ye's angle, he could see a woman sitting cross-legged on the sofa and watching TV. But it was only her back that he could see. Because of their relationship, Zhang Ye knew that this woman was definitely her even though this was the first time he was seeing her again after four years. During the few years that he was serving his sentence, there was not much news about Zhang Yuanqi. It was only after he was released that he found out that Old Zhang had already retired from the entertainment industry. But all this while, he hadn't had a chance to meet her.

Four years had passed.

Time really flew by.

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Sister Zhang, long time no see."

The woman on the sofa did not turn around. "Take a seat, pour yourself a drink."

Ma Fei rolled her eyes. "Let me do that instead. Teacher Zhang, don't mind her. My sis has always been like this, if you didn't know."

But Zhang Ye just smiled and said, "How could I not know?"

Since Zhang Ye's return, he had heard from others and saw the news from back then. Zhang Yuanqi had gotten into trouble after getting exposed as someone who hid her temper and character in front of others. At that time, a lot of people criticized her for being a hypocrite and many of her fans turned into her haters. The media even added fuel to fire and caused many of Sister Zhang's friends to start avoiding her. This past incident blew up and caused quite a shake-up in the Chinese entertainment circle at that time. However, Zhang Ye was not surprised by this matter. This was because he might have been the only person who knew about Old Zhang's temper before this incident was exposed.

Ma Fei was taken aback. "You knew already?"

Zhang Ye said, "Does she still drink every day?"

Ma Fei said, "Drink? How could she? Her health isn't good anymore."

Zhang Ye said, "She's sick?"

Ma Fei said, "Yeah."

Zhang Yuanqi said, "You talk too much, just pour the water."

“OK, OK, I’ll leave you two to talk.” Ma Fei harrumphed and walked off.

Zhang Ye walked up to the sofa and sat down beside her. He stared at her for a long time before saying, “Looks like you haven’t aged, but you seem to have lost quite a bit of weight?”

Zhang Yuanqi looked at him. “You look like you’ve gained quite a bit of weight.”

Zhang Ye asked, “Have you really retired?”

Zhang Yuanqi said indifferently, “I’ve long since retired.”

Zhang Ye smacked his lips and said, “Wasn’t it only your fans finding out about your temper? What’s the big deal with that? Although there were many people who criticized you at that time, it’s years in the past now. The chapter has closed. Many of your fans are still waiting for you to come back, and those old friends of yours are also waiting for you to take on the industry again.”

Zhang Yuanqi said, “I’m happy with staying home.”

Zhang Ye said, “Actually, I think it was a good thing that they revealed this about you. You should just act normally. What’s the big deal with that? Don’t I also have a bad temper? Haven’t I been scolded a lot by people over the years as well? Do you see me lacking anything? Didn’t this bro still make it all the way to Hollywood? It’s pretty good for you this way. You can just let yourself go and be who you really are. Come back to showbiz and take on the industry again with a brand new attitude!” This fellow started getting all philosophical with her.

Zhang Yuanqi probably understood what he meant. “So what are you really here for?”

Zhang Ye coughed. “Didn’t I just take a new animated film production? There’s a role in it that I can’t find anyone to do the voice acting for. Why don’t help me and take the role?”

Zhang Yuanqi didn’t even consider it. “No.”

Zhang Ye said sternly, “How many years of friendship do we have between us?”

Zhang Yuanqi said, “Go look for someone else to try it.”

Zhang Ye said, “Did you think I didn’t do that? I’ve looked all over and can’t find anyone who is suitable for it.”

Zhang Yuanqi watched the television and said, “I’ve already retired. Don’t look for me if it has anything to do with showbiz.”

Zhang Ye pointed at the television screen and said, “If you’ve really retired, why are you still watching entertainment news?”

“Am I not allowed to watch the news?” Zhang Yuanqi said.

Zhang Ye said, “You still haven’t returned the favor from back then.”

Zhang Yuanqi replied, “I don’t remember it.”

Zhang Ye said, “Aiya, quickly come and play the role for me!”

Zhang Yuanqi said flatly, "No."

He talked about the salary.

He talked about their friendship.

He got philosophical with her.

Zhang Ye tried everything, but it was all for naught.

Old Zhang seemed really firm in her decision not to come out of retirement.

In the end, Zhang Ye even resorted to bringing up their surnames. "We're both Zhangs and were one family 500 years ago. Surely you wouldn't want to shatter the Hollywood dream of your kin, would you?"

When Ma Fei heard that, she nearly spat out a mouthful of blood.

Kin, your sister!

You two are Zhangs!

But are they even the same fucking Zhang ² ?

Ma Fei came over and said, "Teacher Zhang, stop making things difficult for my cousin. She really can't help you right now. Can't you see that my sis doesn't look well? She's not healthy, so we're going to the hospital later."

Zhang Ye asked, "What is she sick with?"

Zhang Yuanqi suddenly coughed.

Zhang Ye said, "A cold? Why would you need to go to the hospital for that? This bro in front of you is a doctor. I'll take a look at you. If I get you cured, will you go with me straight to Hollywood tomorrow?"

Zhang Yuanqi didn't even look at him. "If you can cure me, I'll go with you right away today."

Zhang Ye slapped his thigh and let out a hearty laugh. "That's what I want to hear." He pointed at Ma Fei and said, "Sis, you heard it too. Be my witness."

Ma Fei said in a speechless manner, "Sure, I'll be your witness. But you won't be able to cure her."

Zhang Ye said in amusement, "Are you two messing with me? How hard can it be to cure this minor illness?" He then grabbed Zhang Yuanqi's arm and pretentiously pressed on her wrist.

Zhang Yuanqi frowned. "What are you doing?"

Zhang Ye said calmly, "Taking your pulse."

Zhang Yuanqi was speechless.

Ma Fei asked, "Are you sure you know what you're doing?"

Zhang Ye said, "You must trust the doctor."

Zhang Ye did not take this matter seriously at all. Wasn't it just a cold and cough?

Awhile later, he turned around and walked away without saying a word. Then, roughly 30 minutes later, this fellow returned with two large packets of traditional Chinese medicine that he had gotten from a Chinese pharmacy. He casually handed them to Ma Fei and told her, "Boil these for your sister. When it's almost ready, call me." Just before the medicine was prepared, Zhang Ye chased them away. Then he opened his game ring and took out an unidentified vial of liquid from the inventory to pour into the medicine.

The item was [Spring Water of Health].

Its effects were: heals physical injuries and sicknesses.

Chapter 1688: Divine Physician Zhang Ye!

In the morning.

Old Zhang's house.

The whole villa was filled with the scent of traditional Chinese medicine.

Zhang Ye brought out a bowl and said, "The medicine is ready."

Ma Fei pinched her nose. "Why does it smell so strong?"

"Good medicine is always bitter." Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Old Zhang, drink it up."

Ma Fei looked unconvinced by the black medicinal brew. "Is this even drinkable? It had better not cause more problems after drinking. Teacher Zhang, do you really have medical knowledge?"

Zhang Ye said, "I guarantee all illnesses will be cured after drinking it. Don't worry, I've grasped the extent of your sister's illness. There's no need for her to go to the hospital over something like that. This matter is solved now that I'm here. Quickly drink it and pack up your luggage. We're going to Hollywood today."

Zhang Yuanqi looked on doubtfully. "What is this?"

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Hurry, drink it and you'll be cured."

Ma Fei blinked. "Sis, do you want to give it a try?"

Zhang Yuanqi said, "Are you making me a lab rat?"

Ma Fei said, "Teacher Zhang is quite reputable. He knows everything from airplanes to tanks to singing and acting, so it wouldn't surprise me if he knew medicine too."

Zhang Ye laughed. "See, she understands me!"

Zhang Yuanqi couldn't stand blabbering any longer and drank the medicine.

Zhang Ye said in anticipation, "How is it? Don't you feel much better?"

Zhang Yuanqi said coldly, "I don't feel anything."

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Sniff and see if your nose is still runny."

Zhang Yuanqi said, "Do you really know what illness I have?"

Zhang Ye said in amusement, "It doesn't matter what illnesses you have. This bro can cure it all the same."

At this moment, a cell phone rang.

Old Zhang picked up. "Hello? OK—OK, I got it—I'll go over now." After hanging up, she said, "I've got to make a trip to the hospital."

Why do you need to go to the hospital for some lousy cold!

This is why people say you celebrities so fragile!

Zhang Ye rolled his eyes and said, "You've already been cured. Just come with me."

Zhang Yuanqi said, "Whether or not I'm cured will be determined by the doctor."

Ma Fei immediately said, "Sis, I'll accompany you."

Zhang Ye threw up his hands and said, "Hur hur, I've already told you that you're cured, but you just won't believe me, huh? Alright, go to the hospital and get it checked then. You'll see that this bro did not lie about his medical skills. Go on, I'll stay here and watch TV. Come back quickly if there's nothing wrong after checking. I'll book the plane tickets for this afternoon."

Old Zhang and her cousin left.

Leaving Zhang Ye alone humming a little ditty as he watched the news.

...

At a major hospital.

There were around seven doctors seated in the consultation room.

Soon after, Zhang Yuanqi and Ma Fei arrived.

Dr. Sun, who was in his sixties, said, "Little Zhang, you've arrived?"

Zhang Yuanqi acknowledged him and said, "How are things, Professor Sun?"

Dr. Sun pointed to the several people beside him. "Let me introduce you first. Everyone who's here are China's most authoritative doctors. Professor Chen, Professor Fang, Professor Han, Professor Hu, and Dr. Qi. All of us have been following up on your test results in recent days and have called for this specialist review with you today to decide on a surgical plan. Actually, the final decision still lies with you. We can only offer the best advice to you."

Zhang Yuanqi said, "Sorry to have troubled you all."

Professor Hu spoke up. "Consider removing it. That's the safest option."

Ma Fei said anxiously, "But her image—"

Professor Han said, "You have breast cancer. Why would you still care about your image?"

Dr. Qi said, "It was fortunate that we discovered it early before the situation became worse. All you'll need is a simple procedure, and you'll basically be assured that there will be no relapse nor any danger to your life. But if you delay it and choose a conservative treatment, it will be difficult to say whether there will be no problems after that. If it gets serious, there will definitely be a danger to your life. You shouldn't wait for it to spread before you decide on having surgery! Of course we understand what this means to a woman. Image is still very important, so we considered the post-recovery cosmetic surgery process as well. Professor Chen is an expert in this area."

Zhang Yuanqi said, "Is there no other choice?"

Professor Sun said, "With the existing medical technology in our country, this is the best that can be done. The medical technology in America is better, but not by much. Little Zhang, we've known each other for over a decade. I also suggest that you quickly get it removed. Do the surgery as soon as possible."

Zhang Yuanqi asked again, "Is there really no other way?"

Professor Sun shook his head. "The most authoritative figures in breast cancer research are all in this room. From your scans and lab results, we strongly suggest that you do the surgery."

One minute.

Two minutes.

Three minutes.

Zhang Yuanqi finally said, "Alright, I'll do it."

Ma Fei looked at her. "Sis, have you really thought it through?"

Zhang Yuanqi said, "Staying alive is more important."

Everyone knew that this decision must not have been easy for her.

Professor Sun said, "When do you want to be admitted?"

Zhang Yuanqi said, "Since I've already decided, let's do it today."

Professor Fang said, "OK, we'll arrange for your admission to the hospital then. We'll do further testing and give you another scan, essentially a comprehensive preop exam, to verify your current state of health first. If everything is in order, we'll arrange for the surgery to take place in a week's time. Rest assured that with us here, nothing will go wrong."

Zhang Yuanqi said, "Thank you for taking the trouble."

A series of tests were carried out.

The several doctors started discussing the surgical procedure.

“Who will be the main surgeon?”

“Old Sun, will you do it?”

“Yes.”

“Do another biopsy to make sure.”

“OK.”

“We’ll take a look at the indicators again afterwards.”

However, when Zhang Yuanqi’s lab tests came out an hour later, when a nurse came running in looking shocked with a thick stack of the test results, the top experts of China in the room were all dumbfounded. Everyone looked like they had seen a ghost!

Professor Sun asked, “A-Are these results from today?”

The female nurse said in panic, “Yes.”

Professor Sun exclaimed, “Damn!”

Professor Fang was floored. “How is this possible!”

Professor Han was holding a form and said in a daze, “Where’s the breast cancer?”

Professor Qi immediately said, “Could you have taken the wrong results?”

The female nurse wiped her sweat away and said, “It can’t be wrong. This is it. I, I followed up on it personally!”

Professor Sun had a scare and said, “Impossible! Check it again! Something must be wrong somewhere!”

Another hour passed!

They repeated the testing again!

In the end, the results were still the same!

Zhang Yuanqi was back. “What’s the matter?”

Ma Fei was also wondering, “Why did you all do the tests twice?”

They saw the dumbfounded looks on the doctors’ faces as they didn’t answer.

Ma Fei’s expression changed. “Did it spread?” When she asked that, her tears started falling. She hugged Zhang Yuanqi and bawled, “Sis! Why is your life so cruel, Sis!”

Zhang Yuanqi turned gloomy.

Professor Sun hurriedly said, “It didn’t spread!”

Ma Fei looked back tearfully. “Ah?”

Zhang Yuanqi asked, “Then what’s the matter?”

Professor Fang wiped his sweat away and said, "The cancer has totally disappeared."

Ma Fei was stunned. "What? It disappeared? "

Professor Han nodded. "It disappeared. The biopsy and tumor markers are all indicating that everything is back to normal again!"

Professor Qi corrected and said, "It's more than just normal. Little Zhang's health indicators are showing that she is healthier than 99.9% of people!" After saying that, he looked at her in disbelief. "Then what's the matter? We should be asking you that instead! We clearly ran several tests at each of our hospitals and found traces of breast cancer. The cancer couldn't have just disappeared into thin air!"

It disappeared?

Her cancer was cured?

Ma Fei jumped in surprise. "Is that true? The cancer really happened?"

Professor Sun said, "There has never been a case like this in the medical community!"

Professor Fang also said, "This case will live on for ages!"

If it had only been a single hospital that diagnosed this, it may have been a mistake or a case of switched biopsy samples. But this was not the case for Zhang Yuanqi. Before this, she had visited several hospitals to get tested, and all of them had concluded that it was undoubtedly breast cancer. There was no chance of being misdiagnosed. Unless these three top hospitals in China had all taken the wrong patient's scans, and at the same time, taken the same patient's test results, this was obviously something that couldn't have happened!

There must be some supernatural forces at work!

What the fuck is this situation?

The authoritative experts were very confused. Having lived for so many years, it was the first time they felt doubtful of science.

Even Zhang Yuanqi found it strange.

However, Ma Fei thought of an incident. She suddenly yelled, "Could it be Teacher Zhang?"

Zhang Yuanqi said, "That's not possible."

Ma Fei said firmly, "It has to be Teacher Zhang!"

Professor Sun stared at her. "What Teacher Zhang?"

Ma Fei said, "It's Teacher Zhang Ye. He came to my sister's place to visit her today and said that he would treat her illness. He even took her pulse and then brewed some Chinese medicine for her to drink, claiming that it would definitely cure her illness. After drinking it, we came here together. Heavens, Teacher Zhang really knows how to cure diseases. It has to be the effect of that Chinese medicine that he gave her!"

Zhang Ye?

Zhang Ye from the Chinese Academy of Sciences?

Isn't he involved in physics and math research?

Chinese medicine?

Can Chinese medicine cure cancer?

How can that be possible!

This is cancer we're talking about!

It wouldn't be cured even if you had eaten the flesh of Tripitaka

Chapter 1689: The miracle of the fake medicine!

Noon.

At Old Zhang's villa.

Zhang Ye was watching a soccer game by himself.

"Run!"

"Dribble past him!"

"It went it! It's a goal!"

"Beautiful play! Score another one!"

"The Chinese team is quite good this year!"

At this moment, the door behind him suddenly opened.

Zhang Yuanqi and Ma Fei led Professor Sun and the others in.

When Ma Fei entered the house, she shouted excitedly, "Teacher Zhang! Teacher Zhang!"

Zhang Ye turned around and said, "You're back? How was it?"

Professor Sun came up to him. "Fellow Zhang, long time no see."

Zhang Ye was startled. He stood up and said, "Oh, Professor Sun, why are you here?"

Ma Fei said, "Ah, so you two know each other?"

Professor Sun said, "We both had appointments in the Chinese Academy of Sciences, so we've met once or twice before."

At the Chinese Academy of Sciences, one of them was involved in mathematics, while the other was involved in the biomedical sciences. Although they had crossed paths before, they hadn't really spoken much and were not familiar with each other. It was only because Zhang Ye had a good memory that he remembered him. As long as he met someone once, he could address them by their name.

The several of them exchanged some pleasantries.

Then Zhang Yuanqi asked, "What was that medicine that you gave me?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "It's good medicine, why?"

Ma Fei said excitedly, "My sis has been cured! Her illness has gone away!"

Zhang Ye simply chuckled and said, "I already told you all that I had Old Zhang's illness under control. Once I did something about it, her illness would be cured."

Behind them, Professor Han stared dumbfoundedly and said, "Did you really cure her?"

Zhang Ye said, "Of course."

Professor Qi said in shock, "How did you do it?"

Zhang Ye let out a laugh. "What's so difficult about curing a simple illness like that?"

"A simple illness?" The medical professors were confused.

Zhang Ye pointed over to the other side of the house. "I just prescribed some medicine for her and cured her."

Professor Sun hurriedly said, "Where is it?"

Professor Han also said eagerly, "Let me have a look at the prescription!"

Zhang Ye was dumbfounded. It was only at this moment that he realized something was off. "What for?"

Professor Sun said, "What do you think! You've cured cancer!"

When he heard that, Zhang Ye almost fell to the ground before he could catch his breath!

What?

Cancer?

Cancer?!

I thought you had a fucking cold!

Zhang Ye said in surprise, "What cancer?"

Ma Fei said, "Breast cancer. I thought you already had a grasp of the situation, no?"

Zhang Ye nearly spat out a mouthful of blood!

Breast cancer?

Old Zhang had breast cancer?

Me? Grasped the situation? Your sister!

Zhang Ye stared at Zhang Yuanqi with wide eyes. "Didn't you have a cold and a cough?"

Zhang Yuanqi asked him back, "Who told you I had a cold?"

Zhang Ye said, "Huh?"

Ma Fei was stunned. "So you didn't know what illness my sister had?"

Zhang Ye was almost crying. "If you didn't tell me, how could I have fucking known!"

Ma Fei was infuriated. "You were the one who said that you knew what was going on!"

Zhang Ye said, "I was just bragging. You actually believed that?"

Ma Fei was speechless

Zhang Yuanqi was speechless.

Professor Sun was speechless.

Professor Han was speechless.

The professors couldn't believe it either. They quickly took the prescription that Zhang Ye had gotten and repeatedly studied its contents. In the end, they came to a surprisingly important conclusion!

—This was just ordinary cold medicine!

Professor Sun asked, "Are you sure?"

Professor Qi was a traditional Chinese medicine expert. I'm very sure."

Professor Han said, "Is it really just ordinary cold medicine?"

Professor Qi added, "In fact, one part of the medicine has already expired and turned damp. Even as cold medicine, this is not a particularly effective concoction."

Zhang Yuanqi looked at him. "You gave me expired medicine?"

Zhang Ye rolled his eyes and said in embarrassment, "How could I have known that? That lousy pharmacy picked it out for me. I'll go seek an explanation from them afterwards!"

Professor Sun said, "But how did Little Zhang recover from her cancer?"

Naturally, Zhang Ye knew what was going on. The Spring Water of Health could cure a cold, but it could cure any other injuries and illnesses as well. However, he could only play dumb at this moment as he pretended to be shocked. "You all must have misdiagnosed her." This fellow was pointing his fingers at others first. He sighed. "The big hospitals these days are getting so unreliable. How can they misdiagnose something as major as this! Old Zhang, I'll support you if you want to sue them. This bro has a lawyer's license. I'll fight the court case for you!"

Ma Fei thought to herself, You're saying that other people are not reliable? The one who is the most unreliable is you! Divine Physician? You even gave my sister expired medicine to drink!

Professor Han said anxiously, "It's impossible that we misdiagnosed her!"

Professor Sun also said, "Absolutely impossible!"

With the matter left hanging, it was finally dropped in the end.

After the medical professors left, Zhang Ye could finally heave a sigh of relief. He had panicked so badly that he had broken out into a cold sweat. That was too fucking close!

Ma Fei was still grumbling, "Then what on earth happened?"

Zhang Ye's tone immediately changed. He laughed and said, "Whatever it is, isn't this something worth celebrating? Now that Old Zhang's illness has been cured, it's time to head to Hollywood."

Ma Fei said in a speechless manner, "It's not like you were the one who cured her."

Zhang Ye didn't like hearing that. "Hey, what do you mean I wasn't the one who cured her? If it weren't for that miracle drug of mine, could Old Zhang have come back home without any issues?"

What miracle drug!

Ma Fei corrected, "It's fake medicine."

Zhang Ye said, "You don't have to worry about what medicine it is. In any case, do you admit that her illness has been cured?"

Ma Fei was speechless.

Zhang Ye looked at Old Zhang. "So is our deal still on?"

Ma Fei turned sideways and looked at her. "Sis."

Zhang Yuanqi did not say anything. She went over to the sofa by herself and sat down.

Zhang Ye said, "Come on, Sister Zhang, give me something to be happy about."

One second.

Five seconds.

Ten seconds.

Zhang Yuanqi suddenly said, "When do we leave?"

Zhang Ye jolted. "Whenever you wish."

Zhang Yuanqi said softly, "Book the tickets."

Zhang Ye laughed and slapped his thigh. "Alright, leave it to me!"

...

Later that afternoon.

The plane tickets were booked.

Zhang Ye made a call to Hollywood.

Ning Lan, Yao Jiancai, and the others were just discussing this matter.

Ning Lan laughed and said, “Do you guys think that Zhang’er can convince Sister Zhang?”

“Surely not, right?” Yao Jiancai shook his head.

Dong Shanshan smiled and said, “I think it’s difficult to say.”

Chen Guang said, “I don’t think it’ll happen.”

Being one of Zhang Yuanqi’s closest friends, Ning Lan also said, “I think so too. I suppose the fellow is currently getting snubbed all over the place.”

Ring, ring, ring.

A call arrived.

Ning Lan answered: “Hello, what’s up?”

Zhang Ye laughed out loud. “I’ve got her! We’ll be flying back to Hollywood tomorrow.”

Ning Lan was stunned. “You really managed to convince Sister Zhang to come out of retirement?”

Zhang Ye said: “When this bro personally handles something, can there be any other outcome?”

Ning Lan said in disbelief: “Impossible!”

Didn’t he just arrive in China?

Yet he already convinced her?

How could it be so smooth-sailing!

Which of them didn’t know about Sister Zhang’s temper!

After hanging up, everyone came to the consensus that Zhang Ye was only bragging.

...

The next day.

At Los Angeles International Airport.

When Ning Lan, Dong Shanshan, and the others who came to receive Zhang Ye saw Zhang Yuanqi walking beside him, every one of them looked like they had seen a ghost!

“Sister Zhang?”

“Heavens!”

“You really came?”

“Zhang’er, how did you do it?”

Zhang Yuanqi had retired from the entertainment industry for many years!

During this period, countless people had approached her to get her to come out of retirement. Her fans, people from entertainment companies, and many of Zhang Yuanqi’s friends, including Ning Lan, brought

this matter up to her many times. However, she had turned all of them down without exception. In the end, Ning Lan also felt that Sister Zhang had made up her mind to just spend the rest of her days leisurely, and that there wouldn't be anyone else who could possibly get the former Heavenly Queen, who was the number one person of the Chinese entertainment circle, to make a return. But as it had to be, Zhang Ye managed it. He even used less than a day's time to get it done. Wasn't this fellow's influence a little too large?

However, Zhang Yuanqi's arrival clearly boosted their confidence too. With Sister Zhang joining the cast of Frozen, it would only make them stronger!

On the same day.

The news came out.

"An Asian Heavenly Queen returns!"

"Zhang Yuanqi's surprising appearance in Hollywood!"

"Has the Chinese Heavenly Queen decided to return to showbiz?"

"Zhang Ye casts yet another big name!"

"Zhang Yuanqi joins the cast of Frozen!"

"The strong team up! Can it create another miracle?"

Chapter 1690: The first showdown!

On this day.

Hollywood.

Star Moon Animation Studios.

"Director."

"This won't do. Build the scene even larger."

"You still want it larger?"

"Yes. Tom, how's the progress on your side?"

"I've done it according to your requirements."

"Let me have a look. Good, this is not bad at all. This is exactly the feeling I wanted to portray."

"Director, I've finished one version of the soundtrack. Please listen to it."

"This works, we'll go ahead with it."

"Teacher Chen and Teacher Shanshan have recorded the insert songs."

"OK, let the production team animate the scene according to the insert song's lyrics and rhythm."

“Understood.”

The animated film’s production was in full swing.

And right at this time, one of the Hollywood directors who was involved in the bet with Zhang Ye premiered their movie. This director was called Hanson. He was also one of the more well-known directors in Hollywood and had many previous works under him. Some of these productions only performed average, while others did quite well. For his latest project, Hanson had painstakingly spent a year working on it. The public also had high hopes and was looking forward to watching the movie.

Ha Qiqi came looking for Zhang Ye with some statistics in hand.

Tong Fu said anxiously, “They’re premiering so early?”

Ha Qiqi said, “They started filming a long time ago. The production has been going on for a year already.”

Wu Yi said, “The first challenger has arrived!”

Zhang Ye casually smiled and said, “OK, got it.”

Zhang Zuo said in worry, “They’re really stepping up on their promotions and coming on very strong.”

Little Wang wickedly clasped her hands together and looked up to the sky. “Amitābha, Grand Supreme Elderly Lord ¹, abracadabra, may the Heaven’s bless this fellow to fuck up real badly.” She even made the sign of the cross as she closed off her “prayer.”

Zhang Ye said in a speechless manner, “Just which religion do you follow?”

Little Wang said bluntly, “I’ll follow whichever one that will make him fuck up. This is what is called ‘casting a wide net.’ There’s no harm in believing a few more gods. Surely one will respond to your prayers.”

...

Meanwhile.

The premiere ceremony began.

The guest lineup for the premiere of Hanson’s new movie was a grand one. Many of Hollywood’s directors had come in a show of support, while many Hollywood movie stars and key creative teams also attended. The ceremony also attracted countless media reporters from all around the world. As this was the first battle between the Hollywood directors and Zhang Ye, everyone would be very concerned about it.

Very soon, it was time for the Q&A session.

A reporter said, “How do you view the bet you’ve with Zhang Ye?”

Hanson laughed and said, “I think with just my movie alone, it’ll be enough to make it his loss.”

A female American reporter asked, “Are you that confident?”

Hanson let out a chuckle. "Our opponent is just an animated film. Surely everyone knows that Zhang Ye can't win, right? So of course I'm confident of winning. I'll also be waiting for Zhang Ye to carry out his promise. As a newcomer to Hollywood, he started feuding with all of our Hollywood directors on the first day he arrived. We'll let him know what an unwise move that was and also show him that this isn't China but Hollywood!"

A few of the Hollywood directors led the applause.

Some of the actors also broke into uproarious laughter.

...

The UK.

"It's premiering!"

"I managed to buy tickets."

"I'm waiting to see how this sci-fi movie will turn out."

"Hanson hasn't made any new films in two years. He'll be staking everything on this movie."

"I love sci-fi movies."

...

France.

"Me, the Extraterrestrial?"

"The title sounds attractive."

"I watched the trailer and thought that it was quite good."

"Cool, I'm gonna watch it."

"You'd have to buy the tickets quick. The premiere is today."

...

Japan.

"Supporting Hanson!"

"I like the style of his movies."

"I'm supporting Hanson as well. Even though I've never watched his movies before, I really dislike Zhang Ye."

"High five, me too!"

"Unless Zhang Ye makes a One Piece, Naruto, or Dragon Ball movie, I'll be resolutely boycotting him!"

...

India.

"I must watch the movie!"

"Zhang Ye is destined to have to quit Hollywood."

"Let's contribute some box office earnings to Hanson."

"Haha, I might not know who he is, but I'll definitely support whoever challenges Zhang Ye."

...

China.

"How are we dealing with this, bros?"

"Are we going to watch it or not?"

"Why would you watch it! I'm definitely not watching it!"

"I've decided that I won't be watching any Hollywood movies for the rest of the year!"

"Yeah, I'll wait until Frozen screens!"

"Motherfucker, have you guys seen the video taken at Hanson's movie premiere? Listen to what he said. What does he mean by 'this isn't China'? Isn't he clearly looking down on us?"

"All the foreigners have such an attitude!"

"We should really show them the glorious tradition of China!"

"Ah? What tradition does China have?"

"Watching the world burn, of course! Aren't they looking to fight Zhang Ye? Aren't they competing on box office earnings? Fuck, so what if he's making an animated film? Even if Face-smacking Zhang shoots a shitty movie, we'll still make him into a god! All I want to see is how much trouble Face-smacking Zhang can stir up in international showbiz!"

"Haha, good one!"

"Right, let's make Face-smacking Zhang a god!"

"Fight it out with them!"

"It's time we sent the shit stirrer up onto the altar!"

...

At the movie premiere.

The reviews were excellent.

The media published their reviews of the movie.

There were also detailed analysis from the professional film critics.

“One of the rare sci-fi movies to screen in the year!”

“A deep plot with great visuals.”

“One of this year’s most outstanding sci-fi films! A worthy watch!”

“Hanson could be deified once again with this movie!”

The box office earnings for the day were released.

North America: 13 million USD

The UK: 2 million USD

France: 1.2 million USD

Japan: 3.7 million USD

The Netherlands: 600,000 USD

Korea: 1.8 million USD

India: 2.9 million USD

The box office earnings were astonishing!

It was even performing very well in a country like India where the foreign film market was suffering from a downturn!

When the box office data was revealed, many people got excited by what they saw!

...

The Hollywood directors.

“Hahaha!”

“We’ve already won!”

“Zhang Ye can’t surpass Hanson’s first-day box office earnings even with his total box office earnings!”

“Yeah, victory has been secured!”

“It’s been secured before it even started. Did you people really think that an animated film could make a splash? That won’t happen even if it were made by the same Zhang Ye who directed Wolf Warrior 2 and Man vs. Wild!”

“There are still a few countries that haven’t calculated their earnings yet.”

“How I wish I could see Zhang Ye’s expression right now.”

...

Hanson’s crew.

“This is so awesome!”

"It's on fire! On fire!"

"We've finally proved ourselves!"

"Director Hanson, congratulations!"

"There's a chance that the first-day box office earnings can break 30 million dollars!"

"Which other countries have not released their box office earnings yet?"

"There are still Russia and China."

"We don't have to consider Russia since their film market isn't good. But the film market in China is really strong. They're recognized as the second largest box office market in the world."

"Director Hanson, the box office earnings for China is out!"

"How much did we get?"

"5 million!"

"It's a little low, but I guess it's still not bad."

"It's not that, director!"

"Not what?"

"It's...it's 5 million yuan!"

"What? Why is it so low?"

"How can that be possible? Haven't the Chinese always been big admirers of Hollywood movies?"

What was 5 million RMB?

It was only about 800,000 USD!

Not comparing it to America, or even Japan, it wasn't even close to the figure that they had earned in Korea? It was only around the same as the Netherlands that had a much lower population?

Everyone was speechless. But upon further thought, they understood the reason. It must have had something to do with Zhang Ye. Their ongoing challenge against Zhang Ye, as well as their attitude towards China and the Chinese businessman's attempted acquisition of the Hollywood studio, had all seriously broken many of the Chinese people's hearts.

The Chinese box office earnings?

Perhaps they had expected too much of it right from the beginning.

Hanson's crew was outraged.

"The Chinese are too vengeful!"

"The mindset and thinking of Easterners are indeed too different from us Westerners."

“We’re still doing well at the box office anyway!”

“Yeah, we’ve gotten 28 million dollars for our first-day box office earnings!”

“Estimate whether we can bring in 200 to 300 million dollars for the global box office earnings.”

“It should be doable. It might even be higher; we can aim for 400 million!”

“It’s only a matter of time before Zhang Ye leaves Hollywood!”

“The mess that’s going on in Hollywood and China’s unstable box office is all because of Zhang Ye. If it weren’t for him, Hollywood would be so peaceful. Right now, Zhang Ye is the only Chinese celebrity with international influence. He’s China’s treasure, so every move that he makes will have a very large effect on the Chinese box office.”

“Although we might have lost the Chinese box office, we still managed to rid the world of evil!”

“That’s right. As long as we can chase Zhang Ye out of Hollywood, any price that we pay will be worth it!”

“Actually, if we think of it in another way, we might’ve gained something out of Zhang Ye this time.”

“What do you mean?”

“Why do you say that?”

“Just look for yourselves. Although the Chinese box office earnings are not high, our box office earnings in India, Japan, Korea, and many other countries are surprisingly good. Some of those regions’ box office performances even exceeded their previous records for a Hollywood movie. We’ve never had a Hollywood release with such high earnings before. Clearly, this shows that Zhang Ye has many enemies around the world. It was because of him that those people who never used to spend a single cent watching Hollywood movies went to the theaters to watch our movie!”

“Hey, that’s true!”

“Yeah, it is like that!”

“The box office earnings in India are ridiculous!”

“Fuck, just how many people has that Zhang Ye guy offended!”

Everyone was overwhelmed with emotion.