

Superstar 301

Chapter 301: There's no need to thank me, Just call me Red-scarf Scout!

The other side.

A disciplinary office somewhere at SARFT.

Li Tao, who had been exposed for his wrongdoings, was currently being investigated by the disciplinary commission. He was restricted to this room and had been spending all day giving statements.

Outside, a few disciplinary commission staffs were passing by.

"Did you hear? About Zhang Ye."

"Him? Didn't he get blacklisted?"

"It's not about that. It's was news that was just released. Peking University has invited him to give lectures. It's not a one-off lecture, but as a lecturer of Peking University teaching classes!"

"What? How does he even qualify!"

"Who knows what the Peking University people are thinking."

"Such a hooligan like him and Peking University dares to take him in? They're really good!"

"Hur, recruiting a person like that, there's definitely trouble brewing. Just wait and see."

"Eh, but this Zhang Ye's luck is really good. The headquarters' intention was to knock him off his perch with the ban, but who knew this person did not even get affected and instead went to Peking University to teach? He's doing even better than before? What the hell is this development?!"

"You don't say. This Zhang Ye really has 1 or 2 tricks up his sleeve. Otherwise an institution like Peking University, not just any person could freely enter."

Li Tao, who was in the room, heard this and his expression changed. The person who had caused him to be in this state was Zhang Ye, but Zhang Ye had gone to teach at Peking University? Your grandmother! I'm in this state because of you! I even lost my job as an official, my wife is contemplating divorce, and they are checking on my financial situation, I might even go to jail, but you f**king Zhang are doing just fine? After scolding the SARFT, not only did you not get into trouble, but you even went to the country's number one institution to teach? This is unfair! So unfair! Li Tao wanted to thrash everything in the room. He was so angry that he nearly exploded!

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Beijing.

Jishuitan Hospital.

Beijing Radio Station's Deputy Station Head Jia was lying down in his bed at the Orthopedic ward. He had fallen and broken some bones the last time he was out for a meal with colleagues when he heard some news regarding Zhang Ye. He had already been in the hospital for many days. At this moment, he had just switched on the TV and news regarding Zhang Ye was being reported. The news footage, which

was being shown on a Beijing locality channel, was probably also being shown on a few other local channels.

A 30 plus year old female news anchor reported, “Peking University has invited Zhang Ye to teach at their institution. The news has already been verified, and as a 23 year old lecturer, Zhang Ye has broken the record for being the youngest lecturer at Peking University. Even after taking private colleges into account, Zhang Ye would still be considered the youngest lecturer. Our reporter was unable to get an interview with the Dean of the Chinese department, but was lucky enough to secure one with the Chinese department’s history professor, Professor Zeng. According to him, this could be considered as an attempt by Peking University, a breaking of new ground. Peking University believes that Teacher Zhang Ye has the ability to take up and fulfill his duty!”

There was only one history professor in the Chinese department and it was Professor Zeng. This was not the same as the history in the History department. It was also a field of study called “Historical Linguistic Studies”. This subject was more inclined towards the Chinese department in terms of the subject matter, and as such fell under the jurisdiction of the Chinese department, but the achievements of the subject actually fell under history, and if we go further into the details, a part of it also fell under the Archaeological department. Professor Zeng was also a joint appointment under the History and Archaeological departments.

An authoritative voice in the field!

A professor of high prestige in Peking University!

Professor Zeng had a high opinion of Zhang Ye in the media. After going on about it for a whole day, he still reiterated his admiration for Zhang Ye’s “Analysis of the Three Kingdoms”. He had helped to bring down the opposition against Zhang Ye’s appointment. After all, Zhang Ye was really still too young and had a rather infamous reputation in the industry. As such, there were also many doubts about him.

Deputy Station Head Jia watched the news in bed and lay there stunned. He was shocked for a whole day, his expression showed disbelief!

“Station Head Jia!”

“Station Head Jia, we’ve come to visit you.”

“Are you feeling better yet?”

A few radio station staff members had come to visit. Zhāng Yě and Jia Yan were also here.

However, despite them greeting him, Deputy Station Head Jia still did not say a word. Instead, he kept staring at the TV as his expression became darker and darker. Only then did they realize and then they turned their heads to see what was being reported. Then, they were also stunned!

“Zhang Ye?”

“Peking University invited him to teach at their institution?”

“What does that Zhang guy have that qualifies him for that?! It can’t be!”

Zhāng Yě and Jia Yan were also bewildered and looked at each other. Zhang Ye had once said when he resigned and left Beijing Radio Station. He said that one day, they were going to regret it. Right now, whether it was Deputy Station Head Jia, or any top level management leader of Beijing Radio Station, they were already experiencing this regret. Zhang Ye was really too talented. Back then, by not treating Zhang Ye with any respect, they now realized that they were in the wrong. If they had treated him well at that time, Zhang Ye might not have left. Then Beijing Radio Station would have created multiple record breaking legendary programs by now, but it was now too late to talk about what ifs. Zhang Ye had already left and did well wherever he went, whether it was at a television station, online television station, or a university. However, their Beijing Radio Station was going from bad to worse by the day!

Suddenly, a phone call came.

“Station Head Jia, your cellphone.....” His secretary reminded him.

Deputy Station Head Jia then came to his senses and checked his phone. He answered the call immediately. “Station Head.”

At the other end came the voice of Beijing Radio Station’s Station Head. “Old Jia, how are your injuries?”

“I’m OK. I will be discharged in a few more days.” Deputy Station Head Jia replied.

The Station Head acknowledged. “Rest well and don’t be in a hurry to leave the hospital. I’ve already arranged for someone over here to cover your duties. As for your duties, we will talk about it after you get better.”

“Station Head! This.....” Deputy Station Head Jia was surprised for a moment.

The Station Head said, “That’s it then.” And then he hung up.

Station Head Jia’s face turned white. He knew that he had been sidelined. Wait for him to get better before discussing? When he gets discharged, there would only be a side job for him to take over! He might even have to opt for early retirement! Deputy Station Head Jia understood it very well. The station has chosen to sacrifice him!

In the ward, many of the visitors were feeling shocked. They had guessed from Deputy Station Head Jia’s expression that something bad had happened. Zhang Ye was now reaching to even greater heights, and the facts had proven that Zhang Ye was indeed a person with a lot of ability, and the chief offender was Deputy Station Head Jia. In the past, no one saying anything about it didn’t matter. After all Deputy Station Head Jia was from higher management, and Zhang Ye was just a tiny figure. Now, with Zhang Ye’s reputation increasing and his prestige growing, to the point of him entering one of the best schools in the academic world, and how people were using “Dead Water” Zhang Ye recited at the Silver Microphone Awards again and again to smack their faces with incessant questioning of their actions, to which even many people in the industry mocked the Beijing Radio Station for lacking the foresight to chase away such a talent, the only way to rectify all these was to let Deputy Station Head Jia go towards the sidelines. This also demonstrated the Beijing Radio Station’s attitude. Someone had to be responsible for this matter!

“Station Head Jia.”

“About this....”

The people around him started feeling awkward. They couldn't stay, but yet they couldn't just go either.

Deputy Station Head Jia seemed to instantly age by a few more years. Once upon a time, Zhang Ye was like a speck-like figure that did not matter. He believed he could summon and use him as and when he wished. He thought he could get rid of him at any moment, but the outcome was that he had belittled him. He had been smacked in the face time and time again. Furthermore, all the methods and tricks Deputy Station Head Jia used had been useless against Zhang Ye. Now that speck-like figure had climbed up to today's position, a spot even higher than him. The scores that Deputy Station Head Jia previously thought little of had finally caught up to him!

"Get out!" Deputy Station Head Jia finally said.

Jia Yan and Zhāng Yě looked at each other again. "Station Head Jia...."

"I need to rest!" Deputy Station Head Jia was getting angry. He had given the order for them to leave!

Jia Yan was his relative, so he naturally felt depressed. The others were all Deputy Station Head Jia's subordinates, so realizing that he was doomed, they also did not plan on staying. Some of them didn't even bother with niceties and just left. Deputy Station Head Jia finally got a taste of the fickleness of human nature!

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Jiao Zi Hu Tong.

Xuanwu District Library.

It was only a few minutes drive away from Zhang Ye's home at Caishikou.

In this world, Xuanwu district still remained as Xuanwu district, but back in his previous world, Xuanwu district had already come under Xicheng district's jurisdiction. There were not many people. As the library was not very large, and was a bit old, along with the fact that a library card was needed before they could browse, many people did not like coming here. However, because this library was older, there was a lot of information that other places lacked. Zhang Ye had managed to find a lot of information regarding "Dream of the Red Chamber".

As he was going through the information, a flood of calls began coming in!

Yao Jiancai was the first, "Little Zhang, you're going against the heavens, aren't you!? Hahaha!"

Zhang Ye laughed and replied, "Old Yao, I have not asked you. Your daughter is also from Peking University?"

"Yes, I didn't tell you? Eh, how did you know then?" Yao Jiancai asked.

Zhang Ye said, "I've already met her, she's one of my students. It's Yao Mi, right? She looks just like you. She has recognizable features. I think her future might lie in being a comedic talent, why is she studying Chinese?"

Yao Jiancai said helplessly, "I, too, wanted her to join the acting department, but her looks did not qualify."

Zhang Ye exclaimed, "They didn't give you face?"

"Enough of that. I'm just a C or D-list actor. I don't have much say about this when it comes to school. By the way, you must take care of my daughter." Yao Jiancai said.

"Don't worry. This doesn't even need to be mentioned." Zhang Ye said.

Following that, Hu Fei also called. "Little Zhang, you sure are capable. Peking University lecturer. I can't even mention how envious I am of you. In the future, when my child does university applications, I'm going to look for your assistance."

Zhang Ye said in an exasperatedly, "I don't even know if I can keep this job. The contract isn't even long term. I'm just considered a hired guest lecturer. If I don't do well, they will definitely not want me next semester."

Hu Fei laughed. "Enough of that. With your ability at lecturing about the Three Kingdoms, could it not be good?"

The call ended.

The next phone call came. It was his old classmate, Dong Shanshan. "Zhang Ye, congratulations. I saw the news!"

"Thank you. Hur Hur. There's nothing to congratulate me about. I'm feeling the stress too." Zhang Ye said honestly.

Suddenly, the voices of many people blared through the phone.

"Teacher Zhang, congratulations!"

"You have made us web hosts proud!"

"That's right. Haha, I never expected that our web host would be able to enter Peking University as a lecturer. Teacher Little Zhang, do well. Maybe we will also gain some of that glow of yours!"

"Right, I'm anticipating the continuation of your 'Analysis of the Three Kingdoms'."

Suddenly, the WebTV department's Deputy Director Wang Xiong's voice transmitted over. He had apparently taken the cellphone from Dong Shanshan. "Teacher Little Zhang, your teaching won't affect your work here, right?"

Zhang Ye said, "Leader, it won't affect it at all. I'm just teaching for slightly more than ten days. Once the school goes on break, I'll be heading back to Shanghai as well. If Peking University still wants me to teach next semester, it would also not affect my main job. I'll have lectures whenever I'm free. I'll have the freedom of choosing my own time since it's just an elective class."

Wang Xiong laughed. "That's good. Do well! President Feng and the company are very supportive of you. With your reputation growing, it will also benefit our program."

"Thank you for your support." Zhang Ye said in a placating manner, "Actually I had just been confirmed to be teaching at Peking University. I was about to give you a call to inform you. The previous Professor

Wang was hospitalized resulting in me filling in his spot. Hence, it was a bit of a rush, so I didn't have the opportunity to report it to you."

Wang Xiong comforted him, "You don't have to think too much. It's no problem at all. This is a good thing. I'm not being courteous when I said that I support your decision. The company is really supporting you!"

Following that.

Zhang Ye's former colleague from Beijing Radio Station, and also one of the pillars of the radio station, Wang Xiaomei called. She told him something. "Deputy Station Head Jia's position has been changed by the Station Head."

Zhang Ye was surprised, "Why?"

Wang Xiaomei said, "Of course it's because of you. They are settling old scores. Actually, the radio station's head was also responsible for forcing you out, however there was a need for a scapegoat. Deputy Station Head Jia was the 'main contributor' who forced you away, so it's natural for him to be put aside. Who else would be able to stand that bunch of fans of yours who post "Dead Water" on our Beijing Radio Station's official website every day or two."

When Zhang Ye heard this, he also gave a slight chuckle. Actually, if Teacher Xiaomei had not told him this, he had almost forgotten Deputy Station Head Jia existed. However, he was pleased to hear that such a person had finally received his retribution. "Thank you, Teacher Xiaomei. Is everyone still doing well? How's Director Zhao? Xiaofang? How's Big Sis Zhou and Auntie Sun?"

Wang Xiaomei smiled and said, "Everyone is fine. Now that you are back in Beijing, let's find an opportunity to catch up. Oh, I forgot you will be busy during this time. Let's see when there is an opportunity. Congratulations. You are no ordinary person now. Looking at the introduction on Peking University's official website, there are probably like seven or eight items in that list of accolades, right? Each one of them has the words famous something. This word famous isn't added on to anybody!"

Zhang Ye was amused as he said, "Teacher Xiaomei, there's no need to flatter me. How would I not know how much I'm worth? Let's meet up when I'm free."

Wang Xiaomei said, "Alright. Let's have a gathering then."

Zhang Ye said, "Very well, also pass my greetings to Director Zhao, Big Sis Zhou, and the others."

Wang Xiaomei said, "Got it. I'll pass it on. I'm looking forward to you lecturing on the 'Analysis of the Three Kingdoms' to the Peking University students. If there is a video posted online, I'll definitely watch it."

There were phone calls one after another.

They were all from old friends and former colleagues. They all said they were anticipating his new 'Analysis of the Three Kingdoms'!

Three Kingdoms?

Everyone thought it would be Three Kingdoms?

Zhang Ye shrugged his shoulders. Even after hanging up the phone, he did not tell them that he wasn't planning on doing "Romance of the Three Kingdoms". He already had a better topic to teach. Also as a cultural hipster who dabbled in literature, Zhang Ye naturally could not sit idle while the world misunderstood "Dream of the Red Chamber". Neither could he stand seeing them misunderstand Cao Xueqin. He had to publicly rectify it. As the only person on this planet who knew the truth about "Dream of the Red Chamber", Zhang Ye had a responsibility to tell the truth to everyone!

It was like how Zhang Ye used the poems and songs from his world. He was not plagiarising. He did not only want to use it to become famous. He was not trying to use the wisdom of the giants without using his brain. That really wasn't the case. In fact, Zhang Ye did not want the classic works from his world to be buried. As a bridge that connected these two worlds, as an ambassador of these two planets, Zhang Ye was shouldered with the mission to proliferate the arts!

It was an important mission!

Was it tiring? It really was!

However, he was not afraid. He could bear all the hardships that came with this responsibility!

Hai, it's to serve the people after all. There's no need to thank me, just call me Red-scarf Scout*!

*It's an online slang for being a person who does things without wanting recognition for it.

It was late in the afternoon.

"Mister."

"Eh, what's the matter?"

"Please keep silent in the library."

"Oh, I'm sorry."

"Well, do not affect the others. Thank you for your cooperation."

Xuanwu Library's female staff member came by to remind Zhang Ye of the rules.

Thus, Zhang Ye stopped taking any calls. He had already answered all of them anyway. His research was almost done, so he prepared to leave. He drove home with the remaining information in his head, which was from his previous world. On the road, Zhang Ye brought up the game ring's interface and checked his total Reputation Points — 1.7 million. It wasn't bad, it was enough for him to use it to organize his thoughts and knowledge of "Dream of the Red Chamber".

Actually, Zhang Ye had almost spent all of his Reputation Points on the recording of "Zhang Ye's Talk Show", but with the publishing of "To The Oak" and his new "Everything", as well as the news of him joining Peking University, more people started to know about him. This had given him the opportunity to gain even more Reputation. This was probably how he had gotten his 1.7 million Reputation points.

At home.

His father and mother were still not back from work.

Zhang Ye was getting a little tired as he leaned back on his couch. He took off his shoes and sat cross-legged on it while going online to take a look with his cellphone. He wanted to see the reactions to his joining of Peking University. A few hours ago, when the news first broke, many of Zhang Ye's fans were very excited. There were congratulations, admiration, and many other passers-by who expressed their disbelief, but there weren't many aggressive comments, but now, a few hours later, the comments online became more and more extreme. Quite a few domestic newspapers had strongly questioned Zhang Ye's appointment!

In the educational circle.

In the literature circle.

In the students' parents circle.

They all seemed to be on steroids!

A certain Huaxi Daily, which had a sizable domestic circulation, had published the following headline "What's up with Peking University?". The article reported: Zhang Ye's appointment as a lecturer in Peking University has already stirred up strong opinions in society. As the number one institution in the country, as a global educational institution, we do not understand what's up with Peking University. To employ a person of only 23 years of age, who has even been put on the SARFT blacklist, who doesn't meet any of the standards of a broadcast host. Why would they say that this is breaking new ground? A one time trial? It's a good thing to have change and progress, but there are many ways to innovate. Yet Peking University had to choose the most shocking way to do this. By employing a person like Zhang Ye, who has a bad reputation in his industry, isn't this being too irresponsible to the students of Peking University?

This report was not published physically in Huaxi Daily's print edition, but posted online. Even so, a newspaper like Huaxi Daily has a larger influence than the smaller newspaper publishers. The publication of this online report was like adding oil to fire!

Many netizens were shocked with amazement.

"Yea, that's too much!"

"Zhang Ye can teach? Then even I can become a professor!"

"Peking University's playing with fire this time! If it goes on like this, I think they would soon be surpassed by Tsinghua University as the number one institution. What kind of nonsense is this!"

"What kind of person is Zhang Ye like? Yes, his literary qualities aren't bad, but too bad he is also a literary hooligan. To let him teach young people at Peking University? What would he teach? Teach them how to scold people?"

"This is like sending a tiger into a sheep farm!"

"The Peking University students are going to be led astray this time!"

"What qualifications does Zhang Ye have? He's not fit to be a lecturer!"

“That’s right, there are many others who can teach ‘Appreciation of the Classics’! Why does it have to be this Zhang Ye who can’t do sh*t! I guess Peking University’s the only institution who has the guts to do this! Are you all really not afraid that Zhang Ye would cause some big trouble? Did you not see what happened to Beijing Radio Station, the live broadcast incident at Beijing Television Station, the press conference at SARFT? Does that not show what kind of person Zhang Ye is? And yet Peking University dares to employ him?”

Following that, the opposing voices could also be seen on Weibo.

Some industry experts and professor also began to make their views known!

An old professor from Tsinghua University, who was very well-respected in the academia world, posted on Weibo, blasting him. “Peking University has been engaging in so-called innovative educative methods. There have been failures and successes, so no one would comment too much about it, but today’s matter is too drastic. In my forty years of teaching, the first ten years was me accumulating experiencing in a rural secondary school. The next five years, I attempted teaching at a provincial university. After all that time did I finally manage to cross into the gates of Tsinghua University to be a substitute teacher as lecturer. It was a gradual process. The teaching standards of a teacher is slowly accumulated, and not leapfrogged. I used fifteen years of experience to enter Tsinghua University, so I want to ask, what is Zhang Ye basing it on? Based on experience? He does not have any! Based on his educational background? He does not have any! Based on his resume? He also does not have any! He’s not even a person who came through the education system! Based on personal relationships? Whether there’s such a thing or not, I don’t know!” This sentence was rather strong. Not only was it targeted at Zhang Ye, it was also directed at Peking University!

With Tsinghua University’s old professor’s lead, many others could no longer hold it in!

Renmin University’s Professor Ma Hengyuan appeared once again. He was the one who was originally set as “Lecture Room”’s first lecturer, but later ended with conflict with Zhang Ye, Hu Fei, and their team, resulting in Zhang Ye replacing him. It could be said that Ma Hengyuan had a serious grudge with Zhang Ye. Besides, he was a professor in literature, so he had the right to comment on this matter. “I can definitely say that by inviting Zhang Ye to teach appreciation, this is the biggest mistake Peking University has made in recent years. Zhang Ye may be able to write a poem or prose, but to evaluate the classics, he doesn’t have enough qualifications!” He was disgruntled. Up to now, he did not believe Zhang Ye did a better job lecturing the Three Kingdoms than him.

Some students also started making their views known.

They were all students of either Ma Hengyuan or the Tsinghua University professor’s students!

“Support Professor Ma!”

“Zhang Ye is going to Peking University? He’s going to make a fool of himself!”

“Zhang Ye’s a celebrity of the entertainment circle, what does he know?!”

“He had already been warned by the SARFT and can no longer stay in the entertainment circle, so now he comes to knock on the educational circle’s door? This is not only being irresponsible to us students! It is also insulting the all educators and their predecessors!”

"I don't think Zhang Ye will make good on this appointment. He can present his program well, but to teach others? He does not even qualify! When did it ever come to his turn in this education world?"

Not long after, people from the literary circle also appeared!

Beijing Writer's Association's Vice President Meng Dongguo commented. He a grudge with Zhang Ye, far greater than Professor Ma Hengyuan. It was not only a single conflict. Back at the Mid-Autumn Festival Poetry Meet and at the Couplet Competition, Zhang Ye had previously used Guo Degang's limerick, "It's not like I'll come" back at him when Meng Dongguo said the Beijing Writer's Association would never want a person like Zhang Ye. Now with so many people questioning Zhang Ye's teaching ability, he was no longer alone.

Meng Dongguo posted, "A person who couldn't even get into the Writers' Association now wants to shamelessly teach 'Appreciation of the Classics'? 'Analysis of the Three Kingdoms' was just a variety program. It was only presented to the masses and only touches the surface of the topic. Basically in the literary circle, as long as anyone has done deep enough research, they would know that 'borrowing the east wind' did not exist, that 'the empty fort strategy' also did not exist. Did we even need Zhang Ye to tell us? With most people already knowing this, you now want to use this information to teach the gifted students of Peking University? Isn't that child's play? Everyone, get this clear. Zhang Ye's 'Analysis of the Three Kingdoms' is about history, not literature. If you use 'Analysis of the Three Kingdoms' to point out the logic of 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms', then would this still be called literature? Literature and history are two different fields. If you are in the field of literature, then naturally you would need to study this novel's value and significance and not make a fuss about it. This is really laughable, it'll totally improperly belittle oneself!"

Someone replied after that.

"Right!"

"'Analysis of the Three Kingdoms' is based on history!"

"Come to think of it, in so many episodes of 'Analysis of the Three Kingdoms', Zhang Ye had never talked about the novel's literary contributions and significance. It's all him denying and bringing up what was real and what wasn't!"

"You hit the spot!"

"I don't expect much from Zhang Ye either!"

Of course, there were also people in the industry who supported Zhang Ye. For example, a not very well-known author said, "Someone who can speak so thoroughly about the Three Kingdoms, why would he only critique the novel? Not explain its literary significance? Zhang Ye had already done a thorough study on the 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms' from front to back and back to front. He could talk about it all the same. Doesn't Zhang Ye already have a lot of works? Just citing the most recent 'To The Oak' and the new 'Everything', how can there still be people who doubt his literary level? I believe that a person who can produce so many outstanding poems would definitely be able to give a good talk about a famous classic. In fact, I feel that Peking University has made a very correct choice by inviting Zhang Ye to join them!"

But these words of support for Zhang Ye were quickly drowned out!

More and more educators began to repeatedly denounce Zhang Ye as a black sheep joining Peking University. They all expressed their outrage!

Deputy Station Head Jia, who had already been relieved of his duties, also jumped out to say “If you want to teach others, first you need to know how to be upright. Zhang Ye is a typical person who does not know how to be a person, so how could he teach the students well? I will be the first to distrust him!” Seeing Zhang Ye besieged on all sides, Deputy Station Head Jia also took the chance to add fuel to fire!

With so many famous predecessors and well-known people denouncing Zhang Ye, many parents of the Peking University students, who did not know better, also started to believe what was being said. After all, compared to those authoritative figures, Zhang Ye was only someone from the entertainment circle. The parents would, of course, choose to believe those teachers from the educational and literature world.

“What the heck is Peking University trying to do?”

“Don’t let that Zhang Ye contaminate the campus!”

“My child is one of those who had chosen to take the ‘Appreciation of the Classics’ elective! That Zhang Ye musn’t lead my child astray! I’ve watched an episode of his Talk Show before. He really has no bottom line!”

The discussions were totally one-sided!

Zhang Ye had once again become the topic of discussion!

Many neutral observers were now speechless. At the beginning, didn’t everyone congratulate and were looking forward to it? In the end, everyone started to denounce him? This Teacher Zhang Ye, you really attract too much hate. Just how many people have you offended in the past! Every time something happens to him, why does it always become a gunfight!?

Honestly speaking, if it were somebody else, even if a host from the entertainment circle, who was even more unreliable than Zhang Ye, had been invited to Peking University to teach instead, they might not have caused such a controversy, but just because it was Zhang Ye who had been the one appointed to teach, there was no other way out. Who asked him to have offended so many people before? Whether it was in the entertainment circle, the literary circle, the education circle, or even a government unit, who had he not offended before!?

If there was a competition for “China’s Best Tank*”, Zhang Ye would definitely have been crowned the winner without a doubt. Even if he were to stand there and keep quiet, he’d steadily attract hatred!

*Tank is a character role in gaming, mostly MMORPG’s. They are mainly intended to take damage by drawing “aggro” or “hatred” from enemies.

Chapter 303: An extremely packed public class!

The next day.

Winter had arrived, so it was a little cold.

It looked like the sun was still doing its job, so the skies were still clear.

On this important day, Zhang Ye had gotten up very early. It was his first day as a teacher and also his first day conducting a lesson, so of course he had to make preparations. He showered and made himself up a little before selecting a few clothes. In the end, he chose a very basic suit of a neutral color. He did not wear something that would make him stand out too much. After all he was not recording a program, or appearing on TV, but rather giving lessons to his students instead. It was not wrong for a teacher to dress modestly, otherwise people might start saying things and that would affect his teaching quality.

“Dad, how is this?” Zhang Ye asked his father.

His father took a look, then nodded, “OK, this is fine.”

“What do you think, Mum?” Zhang Ye adjust his suit.

His mother who was just preparing breakfast, glanced over, “Good, my son will look good in whatever he wears.”

“Hur Hur, then this will be it.” Zhang Ye sat down and began to eat, “Dad, Mum, I won’t wash the dishes later. I need to go after I’m done here. The department just informed me that my class will begin at 9:30AM. I will be late if I don’t leave on time, there’s always a traffic jam over at Zhongguancun.”

His mother threw another 2 dumplings into his bowl, “Alright, it’s not like I need you to wash the dishes anyway. Eat more, eat more. You’ve got to perform well today, so you can do your father and I proud!”

Zhang Ye smiled, “Sure.”

His father looked at him and asked, “Have you prepared your lesson already?”

“It’s ready. I worked till the wee hours last night.” Zhang Ye answered.

Although he did not sleep early last night, he was in good spirits as he still had enough sleep. He had already completed all the things he needed to do. The game ring’s reputation points had all been spent on buying “Memory Search Capsules”, which he used to retrieve knowledge of “Dream of the Red Chamber”. Of course, the main resources he used were Wang Xinwu’s novel version and his ‘Lecture Room’ episodes, in which he spoke about “Dream of the Red Chamber”. Old Wang was an authority in the world of Redologists. Although there were many disputes about his views, his way of presenting could be said as a novelty as his perspectives were very unexpected. This was why when Zhang Ye listened to others speak at length about “Dream of the Red Chamber” in his previous world, he felt very uninterested or even sleepy, but when he heard Old Wang speak about it, he would listen to it with relish. As a host, Zhang Ye placed a lot of importance on the word “relish”. As a teacher, Zhang Ye felt the same. He has always thought that education and entertainment were inseparable. Entertainment was used to better education, to spread education in a better way. To this idea, he was going to put it to the test today.

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Peking University.

8:30AM.

As he drove to the school and upon passing the school's main entrance, Zhang Ye noticed many people at Peking University today. He did not know whether they were here to visit, but a lot of people were walking in. Zhang Ye was not bothered by this and he drove directly to the grounds of the Chinese department. He parked his car at the designated spot for teaching staff, even though he had not applied for a pass yet, but it should be fine since everyone was friends now, so he just found an empty lot and squeezed his BMW in.

Upon getting off, he saw some familiar faces.

The doors of low-end car brand, that was of this world's, opened. He saw Professor Zeng and another Chinese department male teacher getting out of it. Maybe it was along the way, so they came to school together.

"Little Zhang."

"Teacher Little Zhang, you've come?"

The two of them smiled and greet Zhang Ye.

Zhang Ye also walked closer, "Professor Zeng, Teacher Yan."

Professor Zeng asked with concern, "How are your preparations?"

Zhang Ye said, "It's OK, I'm ready for class."

Professor Zeng laughed heartily, "I'm rather looking forward to it. I don't have a class later, so Teacher Yan and I will go over to listen in to your class, are we welcomed?"

"That is my honor." Zhang Ye smiled, "But don't say that you will be there to listen, it's making me nervous. If you join my class, it will be to invigilate my teaching methods. If I don't do well in anyway, I hope you two can point it out to me."

Professor Zeng pointed at him, "You're being too modest. In this area, you are the real master. Old Yan and me are not qualified to find fault with you. And you? Nervous? You look quite relaxed to me now."

Teacher Yan also said joyfully, "Teacher Little Zhang, you have already been doing television for so long and even done a number of live broadcasts before. You didn't even get nervous on those occasions, so how could holding a class be any pressure for you? Looking at you, I think you already have it all planned out. This is the look of confidence."

They continued chatting as they made their way to the teacher's office.

There were a few offices. Zhang Ye and Professor Zeng were located in the same office area, but being a professor, he had his own independent room. Zhang Ye, being a new teacher, had his work desk in the cubicle area. The department had given him a table by the window. Of course, the office cubicles here were different from those in a company. Every teacher's work desk was much larger, up to 7 or 8 meters, and the partitioned areas were not too small. This was also due to the fact that there were not many lecturers in Peking University. Whoever could take a seat in here, even if they were just ordinary

lecturers, whether or not they looked outstanding, were still the crème de la crème of the educational world.

“Good morning, teachers.” Zhang Ye greeted.

There were 8 or 9 teachers in this office area. When they heard him, they all looked over to him curiously.

Professor Zeng helped to introduce Zhang Ye to everyone, “This is Teacher Zhang Ye. He will be joining us officially today at Peking University.” Then he pointed out for Zhang Ye, “This is Teacher Sun, he teaches Modern Literature class. This is Teacher Liu, he teaches Classical Literature. That is....the soon-to-be Professor Wu, he teaches the Chinese language.”

“How are you, Teacher Sun?”

“Hello, how are you.”

“Professor Wu, how are you? Please give me your guidance.”

“Welcome.”

Zhang Ye said hello to everyone politely.

The teachers from the Chinese department also returned his pleasantries.

It could be seen that only a few people were interested in Zhang Ye. Most of them might not have known Zhang Ye well, so they just exchanged some words before going back to ignoring him. There were others who obviously did not think much of Zhang Ye. Their eyes shifted around with doubts and distrust and they did not make any attempt to speak with him. After the basic pleasantries, they busied themselves again. Someone even quietly shook their head while in their seat, but even though they had doubts about Zhang Ye’s teaching capabilities, due to the school’s recruitment, they did not say too much. After all, he was the appointed by President Wu to be a lecturer and Zhang Ye was already now a member of their staff. This fact was cast in stone now.

After some time, the pleasantries were done. Zhang Ye went back to his desk to put down his belongings. He looked at his watch and stood up again, for he was prepared to begin class.

When he stepped out of the office area, he was met with the oldest Professor in the Chinese department — Yan Jiantao.

Zhang Ye quickly greeted, “Professor Yan, good morning.”

Yan Jiantao did not even look at Zhang Ye and just gave a cursory answer before walking away..

Zhang Ye shrugged, but was not bothered by it. It’s not the first time he was being doubted and taken lightly, he had gotten used to it, so he did not put it to heart. As for the denouncement from the netizens and newspapers, Zhang Ye had already seen them all yesterday. He felt the same way towards that. He had already been through so many storms, so he was becoming more and more ambivalent to the nasty words of others about him. He was also too lazy to bring it up to them, at least not now. All of this would be meaningless and he would use his actions to prove himself. Zhang Ye only cared about his lesson today, so that was what was most important to him.

Along the way through the teacher's building, many people cast weird glances at Zhang Ye. Their eyes exuded mixed feelings and they were looking at him in all sorts of ways. Some even felt like they were looking at him with contempt.

Almost no one in society felt that Zhang Ye was a good appointment for Peking University.

Even amongst Peking University's professors, almost none of them thought Zhang Ye was any good. They even felt that Zhang Ye would probably only last 2 or 3 lectures before being asked to leave. The university would not let him finish the semester. This was because teaching depended on experience and skills, everyone felt that Zhang Ye, as an outsider, would not have these points. Some of them even believed that if an industry outsider was giving lectures, the students would not even be interested to listen!

But yet, that was far from the truth!

When Zhang Ye made his way to the lecture theater, he was stunned!

When many of Peking University's teachers and professors passed by the 9:30AM class for "Appreciation of the Classics", they too were shocked!

People!

People everywhere!

"Aiyo, don't push!"

"Let me in!"

"Who are you all? What are you doing in our class?"

"F**k, I'm registered for this class, but why can't I even get a seat?"

The tiny lecture theater was packed with people. The 200 seats were fully taken. Some people even brought their own chairs from their dormitories and sat along the aisle. The groups of people had even nearly taken up the space around the podium. This was not even the end! Because the lecture theater was situated on the 1st storey, the windows facing the sports field were also packed with people outside. Numerous Peking University students just made themselves comfortable outside the windows. There were also reporters in there carrying video cameras. A rough estimate would say that there were about 30-40 journalistic workers present. They were all from the various television stations and newspaper publishers. How they managed to get in, no one knew!

A few hundred people!

A full several hundred people had filled up the entire lecture theater and the corridor outside it!

Zhang Ye nearly fainted. My elective class only has slightly over a hundred people. Why the f**k are there so many here now? How am I supposed to conduct my lesson this way!

"Quick, look!"

"Zhang Ye is coming!"

“Teacher Zhang! Please accept our interview!”

“Right now, everyone’s doubting your teaching level, what do you have to say about this?”

“I’m the reporter for Beijing Daily newspaper, can you tell us....”

Zhang Ye put out his hand and blocked them, saying with a straight face, “Sorry, this is not a public lecture. I won’t take any forms of interview right now, please go back. Please don’t disturb the students or their chance to learn!”

But the reporters did not listen, they just surrounded him.

The department Dean, Chang Kaige, and Secretary Zhen Shuquan were also startled. They brought along a wave of teachers and rushed over. There was even a security team dispatched to maintain order. None of them had expected this. Zhang Ye had already been denounced so badly, being scolded like he was a piece of dog turd. Why were there still so many people here to join in the hustle and bustle!?

“Reporters, please leave! This is a school!”

“Please come after the class to do the interview! Teacher Zhang Ye needs to start his lessons now!”

“Dean Chang! Can we observe the lecture? Everyone in society is very concerned about Zhang Ye’s lecture this time. We would also like to do a first-hand report about it to give answers to the society!”

“Let me say it again, please leave!”

“And those students who are not enrolled in ‘Appreciation of the Classics’ should leave as well! There aren’t enough seats for the class! If you’re not in this class, what are you doing here?!”

Chang Kaige and Zhen Shuquan were furious!

Not only did the number people not decrease, instead it increased. A number of Peking University students who heard also rushed over, as if they all wanted to listen to Zhang Ye’s lesson!

Chang Kaige said dumbfounded, “Why are there so many people?”

Zhen Shuquan said helplessly, “It looks like we’ve underestimated Teacher Little Zhang’s influence amongst the younger generation.”

Indeed, there were many people who doubted and scolded Zhang Ye, but there were also a lot of people who liked him, especially among the younger generation. Zhang Ye had a certain appeal to them!

Yao Mi arrived!

Her dormitory mates and classmates also arrived!

When they saw the scene, they all exclaimed together at once!

Professor Zeng and a few Chinese department teachers had also arrived. They came hoping to join the class and listen in, but seeing the situation here, they were all stunned. Don’t talk about listening in, it looked like they wouldn’t even make it into the class with all these people!

“Secretary Zhen, Dean Chang, what should we do?” Professor Zeng had been stepped on quite a few times and his face was green. It wasn’t easy just to squeeze in to come to the side of the department leader.

Chang Kaige and the other also had no ideas. The place was chaotic and they couldn’t maintain order, so they ended up calling the management for instructions.

Two minutes later.

Chang Kaige called Zhang Ye over and brought him away from the people, “Teacher Little Zhang, there’s a last minute change. You can’t give your lecture here, so the management has specially arranged for you to use the auditorium. You will be giving a public lecture today. Would that be a problem?”

Zhang Ye smiled, “No problem, it’s all the same.”

“Alright then. Go to the auditorium to prepare!” Chang Kaige instructed. Then he and Zhen Shuquan addressed the students and reporters, “Everyone, please quiet down, quiet down. There will be a change in the lesson to become a public lecture. Would the reporters please proceed to Auditorium 3. We will arrange for someone to receive you all. Students, please also proceed to the hall for seating. Don’t jam up this place anymore. Please do not push and be careful, proceed to the next location in an orderly fashion!”

With that, everyone rushed out of the doors and cleared the lecture theater!

Many of the reporters were carrying their video cameras and running towards the auditorium!

Many of the students also rushed out after hearing the change in lesson plans. They had to be there early to get their seats. Whoever went there first would get the better seats in front!

Yao Mi was going crazy, “Why is it like this?!”

Yao Mi’s dormitory mate pulled at her, “Let’s go, quick! If we get there late, there won’t be any seats left!”

“This is really amazing!” The brothers Li Ying and Li Li ran along while being at a loss whether to laugh or cry, “We’re only trying to have our elective class! Why does it feel like we’re at war?! Those who’re less fit might not even make it in? I have known Zhang Ye to be quite popular in Beijing, but this is still too exaggerated.....Aiyo! Who bumped into me!” Li Ying nearly fell flat onto the floor as his shoes were trodden black!

This was the also what many of the Chinese department professors and lecturers wanted to say as well. It was just an elective class, how on earth did it attract so many people? From the looks of it, it seemed like many more Peking University students were intending to skip their classes to come listen to Zhang Ye’s lecture? Not attending their own lessons? This made the Chinese department teachers a little angry!

If they had a 100 students in their classes and 95 showed up, it would be considered a very good turn out since there were surely some who would be late or absent.

But just look at Zhang Ye’s class!

An elective class that initially had only a hundred over students was now attracting over 500 to 600 people?

How can it be! There was a damn increase of 500% in attendance!!

Chapter 304: Zhang Ye's Dropping of Atomic Bombshells!

Peking University.

An auditorium on the west side of campus.

The time was now 9:45AM.

The class "Appreciation of the Classics", which had been scheduled for 9:30AM, was now delayed by a quarter of an hour.

This auditorium was usually only used for academic conferences or large public lectures. As it was not prepared beforehand, there was still a banner that wrote "Academic Conference For Education" in bright red hanging above the auditorium's stage. Peking University's staff quickly removed the banner, but could not find time to put one up for Zhang Ye, leaving it empty.

Everyone rushed in with one objective.

There were students, Peking University teachers, and also reporters.

"Friends of the press, please sit in this area. Kindly turn off your video cameras!"

"Why? No filming? Then what kind of public lecture is this?"

"I'll repeat it once more. Please turn off you video cameras and camera flashes. Today's public lecture does not allow filming to take place. Please cooperate, thank you."

"Then can we do an interview after the lesson?"

"Not today."

"How can you all do this? We came all the way here and you don't let us do interviews or filming?"

"It's the department that had given the green light, otherwise this wouldn't even be a public lecture. So please try to understand, we have our rules as well. If you can't cooperate, then please leave!"

"Alright, we understand."

Peking University was very firm on its stand on such matters. They did not accommodate to any of their grumblings. The reporters knew what sort of place this was too. They knew that they being allowed in was already a very good gesture by the university, so they also did not push it too far. Just the name of Peking University alone was enough to make people mind their behavior.

The reporters took their seats.

Professor Zeng and a few other Chinese department teachers were seated in the front row. At last, the department dean and secretary also arrived and got seated.

Professor Zeng smiled, "This is the first time an elective class of our department has gotten so many of us gathered in full force."

A Chinese department teacher shook his head and sighed, "I'm just afraid that when the time comes, we will be embarrassed. The bigger the turnout, the harder it is to keep it under wraps. We still don't know how the media would report it."

Professor Zeng said, "Teacher Zhang has the ability. Such a situation shouldn't happen."

"Hopefully." The Chinese department teacher was still not optimistic about Zhang Ye's lecture. He kept feeling like he was on tenterhooks.

Suddenly, a figure appeared at the auditorium's entrance. It was Wu Zeqing. When she saw the almost packed auditorium, she smiled a little before walking over.

Chang Kaige stood up quickly, "President Wu."

Zhen Shuquan also said, "What are you doing here?"

"I heard that there were many reporters here, so I wanted to take a look at it myself." Wu Zeqing was wearing a long skirt today. She gracefully walked in her skirt and took a seat in the front row seat herself.

After her, there were also a few other professors who came in, but they were not from the Chinese department, but instead other department professors and teachers. It was not known what reason they came for. Maybe it was curiosity, but they had turned up to listen to Zhang Ye's first public lecture. The few of them observed the situation at the entrance and secretly felt shocked. They had just heard that Zhang Ye's class had a situation of overcrowding, so much so that even Zhang Ye could not get into the lecture hall. They had not believed it, but now seeing all of this before their eyes, they finally understood the news that they heard had not been exaggerated at all. In fact, it was understated. This medium-sized auditorium could hold about 1200 people, yet all the seats had nearly been taken up by the students alone!

And people were still streaming in!

There were still Peking University students who rushed over upon hearing the news!

At this rate, nothing would stop the 1200 seats from filling up!

The few professors from the other departments were feeling quite envious. An industry outsider, a host, crossing fields into Peking University to give a lecture in front of the professionals. And yet he could attract so many Peking University students that wanted to listen in? They had even skipped their own classes to come listen to Zhang Ye's lecture? These well-known teachers and professors of the education world could no longer keep their faces.

But the Peking University students were very excited.

Yao Mi managed to get a good seat upfront. She had been extremely looking forward to this and said, "I wonder how Teacher Zhang would talk about the 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms' today. Is there still more to talk about?"

Li Ying said, "Would it really be the 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms'?"

"It will be for sure. Zhang Ye's not familiar with the others." Li Li said.

Yao Mi did not take it well, "Come on, there's nothing my Uncle Zhang doesn't know! He can speak about anything without problems!"

The straight A student, Senior Song, who was silently reading her book and sat just beside them suddenly said, "Among the famous classics, as long as he doesn't lecture about 'Dream of the Red Chamber', with Teacher Zhang Ye's literary background, he would surely be able to handle anything."

Yao Mi did not understand, "Why can't 'Dream of the Red Chamber' be lectured?"

Li Ying knew a bit more, "Hur Hur, it's not that it is prohibited from being lectured, but it can't be taught."

The provocative Senior Zhou, who was sitting a row behind them, added, "Looks like Junior Yao has never studied 'Dream of the Red Chamber'? This is a novel that no one dares touch." Then he explained to Yao Mi and a few others who did not understand as well.

After listening, Yao Mi understood it, "Damn it. Teacher Zhang had previously asked me what topic I thought we would like to listen to. So I told him that it would be 'Dream of the Red Chamber'!"

Senior Zhou said with a gasp, "Surely not?"

Senior Song glanced at them, "Don't worry. Teacher Zhang wouldn't listen to you, he's not that stupid."

Yao Mi patted her chest and breathed a sigh of relief, "That's good, that's good."

Many others in the auditorium were also wondering what topic Zhang Ye would be lecturing about.

The reporters interacted amongst themselves.

"Who knows what Zhang Ye would lecture about?"

"We did not get any updates from Peking University, so I don't know."

"It's a 99% chance that it would be the 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms'. If not, then 'Water Margin' or 'Journey to the West'?"

"It would not be the 'Dream of the Red Chamber' anyway. Hur Hur."

"Nonsense, who doesn't know that?"

From the start, everyone had already consciously left out "Dream of the Red Chamber". No one had a doubt about it, they took it for granted that this would be the case.

Chang Kaige who was in the front row also asked, "What's the topic that Teacher Zhang would be lecturing about? 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms' or Water Margin?"

The passing staff, who was being asked, was stunned, "Oh, I forgot to ask. Teacher Zhang Ye did not mention anything about it. He is still preparing backstage."

Zhen Shuquan was at a loss for words. "We don't even know what he will be lecturing on?"

Professor Zeng smiled, "Don't worry, it will be fine as long as it's not 'Dream of the Red Chamber'."

Suddenly, the Chinese department's most distinguished professor, Professor Yan Jiantao said, "Dream of the Red Chamber? Little Zhang would have to dare to speak about it first. No one in the industry dares to touch on this topic."

Chang Kaige laughed, "Little Zhang is not that muddle-headed."

Zhen Shuquan did not think that Zhang Ye would speak about "Dream of the Red Chamber". This thought had not even passed him.

A department teacher said, "Professor Yan is here too?"

Yan Jiantao nodded lightly to President Wu and the Dean politely as they freed up a seat for him. He sat down preparing to listen to Zhang Ye's lecture. Actually, he was not curious, but merely came to pick on him.

No matter what everyone's purpose of being here was for, this lecture was still highly anticipated!

The teachers were concerned, the students were concerned, the reporters were concerned, the education world was concerned, and even society was concerned!

Peking University's staff members had set up the video cameras, a total of three to face the stage. They did not allow the reporters to do filming, but Peking University would need to do so to keep a record. This was a public lecture after all.

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10 A.M.

The auditorium doors closed. No one was allowed in anymore.

The 1200 seats had been filled up completely and it was still not enough. About a dozen Peking University students, who barely arrived in time, had no seats. So they could only stand along the aisle as they did not want to leave. No one wanted to leave, even if they had to stand. Everyone's eyes were fixed on to the stage.

It was time.

A female staff member tested the microphone and then announced, "Please welcome Teacher Zhang Ye."

The reporters did not react. The professors and teachers of Peking University also did not stir much. Instead, the Peking University students were the ones who cheered and applauded loudly. They were very passionate!

Zhang Ye came out.

The female staff member handed the microphone over to him and went off stage.

He walked towards the podium and placed the microphone into the microphone holder. Then he observed the packed audience and smiled a little. He did not suffer from stage fright and spoke with

composure, "Sorry for the delay. Because of a tiny situation, today's lesson has been changed into a public lecture. As the first time speaking as a lecturer on stage, I am actually feeling very nervous."

The students went, "Hahaha!"

Zhang Ye said in confusion, "But this is not the joke?"

The students went again, "HAHAHAHA!" They laughed even louder this time.

Zhang Ye was speechless. He was truly very speechless. "Alright then, you guys really have a low laughing point."

This was a habitual reaction. Many in the audience had watched "Zhang Ye's Talk Show" before and were accustomed to funny thoughts whenever they saw Zhang Ye speaking.

A proper class had become a Talk Show. Zhang Ye hurriedly withheld himself. Today, he was not standing there as a host, but as a lecturer. "I previously told my students that my classes aren't too particular. Anyone can ask me questions or talk about their own opinions and theories. The more debate there is, the better. Of course, that is limited to my students. As for others, regardless of reason, please do not interrupt my class. Thank you for your cooperation. These are the ground rules I am setting for my lecture." These words were clearly meant for the reporters.

"Then...." Zhang Ye looked over to the dozen odd Peking University students, who were still standing, "Can our reporter comrades over there please let our students have their seats?"

The reporters were stunned.

"Ah?"

"Give up our seats?"

Holy sh*t! He's chasing us off immediately after getting on stage!

Zhang Ye said in a matter-of-fact manner, "There are not enough seats, but we can't possibly ask our students, who are here to listen to the lecture, to remain standing, right? This is a school, so we have to put the students at the forefront. Thank you." You could offend anyone, but a reporter. These words were very popular within the entertainment industry, but Zhang Ye did not possess any such concept. He was now a teacher and the students were an utmost priority.

Chang Kaige nodded slightly. The other Peking University professors thought the same.

But some of the reporters did not move. They felt that Zhang Ye was being too hard on them.

An old reporter looked over to the students at the side and stood up saying, "Child, come and seat here."

"Teacher Zhang is correct, come on." A female reporter also stood up and gave her seat to the students.

More than ten Peking University students felt warmth rush up into their hearts. After exchanging some pleasantries, they also sat down, while more than ten reporters stood by the aisles.

Zhang Ye nodded and said, "Thanks. May I get the staff to move a few chairs for the reporters? Hur Hur. It's best if everyone has a seat." After saying this, he noticed the atmosphere a little tense, hence Zhang Ye chuckled and said, "Actually, I was hinting that someone should bring me a chair. Alright, treat it as if I didn't say anything. I guess that wouldn't be allowed either."

"Hur Hur Hur Hur..." Everyone laughed.

How would it be allowed!? How many teachers have you seen sitting while lecturing!?

Zhang Ye had a perfect grasp of humor. This was not a Talk Show, and neither was it a television program, so he naturally could not use humorous joke segments. However, being too serious was also not Zhang Ye's style. To combine education with entertainment, he had to lessen his humor, without emphasizing too deeply on it. It was all within a reasonable range.

After all these arrangements were done, the auditorium turned quiet. Everyone was waiting to listen to the class properly. The first question on their minds was of course the topic Zhang Ye was teaching.

Was he going to rest on his laurels and teach the 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms'?

Or was he going to attempt at 'Water Margin' or 'Journey to the West'?

Even President Wu Zeqing, who was sitting below, was very curious.

Following that, Zhang Ye held the podium and looked at everywhere. "Alright then, today's class for 'Appreciation of the Classics' shall officially begin. When we talk about the classics, it is actually a very broad spectrum. However, I want to know what everyone's first impression of this course is? Can someone tell me?"

A few people raised their hands.

Zhang Ye chose a person he knew.

Senior Zhou stood up and said loudly. "In my impression, this course is all about 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms', 'Water Margin' and 'Journey to the West'. It will allow us to have a deeper understanding of these classic texts, allowing us to examine the wisdom of the ancients, so as to be able to apply what we learn."

"Alright, please take a seat." Zhang Ye lowered his hand before carrying on. "Many people probably have similar thoughts. 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms', 'Water Margin', 'Journey to the West'. These three famous works form the basis of the 'Appreciation of the Classics' course. This is not limited to Peking University. Other institutions of higher learning are similar. With that, I believe some people must be curious. China clearly has four works in the Four Great Classical Novels. Why of all things is 'Dream of the Red Chamber' not lectured on by people?"

Ah? 'Dream of the Red Chamber'?

How could that even be lectured on!?

Of course no one touches it! Is there a need to ask!?

Everyone was stunned and from their eyes, they had taken it for granted. They did not know why Zhang Ye had suddenly mentioned this!

Yan Jiantao and Chang Kaige, Zhen Shuquan and company were also alarmed. They suddenly had a bad premonition. It can't be?

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Many people know the reason. Everyone seems to think that 'Dream of the Red Chamber' is a famous piece of work, but there are too many problems with it. There are numerous mysteries and defects that cannot be solved. There are even serious lapses of logic in it. Hence, be it the lecture-style programs on television, or in literature courses in university, people try to avoid 'Dream of the Red Chamber' at all costs. It has even reached a point where not a single professor or lecturer will teach 'Dream of the Red Chamber' in an appreciation class. This is a taboo topic no one wants to talk to in literature! They try to avoid it out of fear!

"Uh?"

"What is that supposed to mean?"

"What Zhang Ye is saying is..."

Everyone was stunned for a while.

Chang Kaige's face sank. "What does Little Zhang want to do?!"

Wu Zeqing's eyebrows also jumped. However, she still hung that graceful expressions of hers as she remained silent.

"Everyone previously thought that I would be teaching 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms' again, however, I have already said all I wanted to say about it in 'Analysis of the 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms'', so I don't want to repeat myself." Zhang Ye grasped the microphone and said something shocking, "Some people must have already guessed. Yes, this semester's 'Appreciation of the Classics', I am purposely choosing to teach you the appreciation of 'Dream of the Red Chamber'. I won't be vaguely teaching you, but in detail. It will be so detailed that syllables and isolated words will be talked about, so detailed that we would ruminate upon the wording. It is not to be at loggerheads or to quarrel, and especially not revolting against the education and literary world. I just want to let everyone know that it's not that no one dares to teach 'Dream of the Red Chamber'. This massive masterpiece is not as simple as it seems. The currently 120 circulated chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' has a huge shocking secret hidden within it!"

Chapter 305: The Later Parts of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' were not written by Cao Xueqin?

The auditorium erupted into chaos!

Many people began to discuss!

A female reporter, who was sitting by the temporary chairs along the aisle, said in a shocked manner, "I thought Zhang Ye was going to lecture about the 'Romance of the Three Kingdoms'? I thought someone said that he would rather die than dare to lecture on 'Dream of the Red Chamber'? What's going on? Is he really teaching it!? And to teach for a whole semester? Which means the classes for the next ten days

and more from today will all be about 'Dream of the Red Chamber'? F**k! How can it be! If 'Dream of the Red Chamber' was so easily lectured, others would have long had such public lectures about it!"

Another male reporter said, "And to lecture about it in detail? Ruminating on every syllable and word?"

An old reporter wiped his sweat. "There will be big news today!"

"That's right. This lecture of his will definitely be filled with all sorts of errors!" A young reporter, who had quite an appreciation and liking for Zhang Ye, said in a speechless manner.

The other side.

Professor Yan Jiantao said with a gloomy face, "President Wu!"

Wu Zeqing pretended not to hear him as she lowered her head to play with her cellphone.

Yan Jiantao said, "...Zhang Ye thinks too much of himself! No matter how you teach 'Dream of the Red Chamber', it will be all wrong! The logical errors in it cannot be redeemed!"

"Dean Chang, this!" Another teacher from the department said.

Chang Kaige remained speechless with his breath held in for a long time!

Zhen Shuquan was furious, "What is this Little Zhang doing!? If we knew he was going to lecture on 'Dream of the Red Chamber', then we shouldn't have made it a public lecture! Won't this be too shameful!?"

Professor Zeng was also dumbfounded. He never expected Zhang Ye to actually lecture on 'Dream of the Red Chamber'.

A female teacher from the Chinese department sitting beside him nearly fainted, "This Zhang Ye really catches you off guard!"

The Peking University students were also equally shocked!

Yao Mi covered her face. "I bought a big golden watch last year! Senior Song! Didn't you say Teacher Zhang wouldn't be dumb enough to lecture on 'Dream of the Red Chamber'!?"

Senior Song was also speechless. "Who knows what Teacher Zhang is teaching? Ignoring the Four Great Classical Novels, 'Dream of the Red Chamber' is the hardest to digest amongst all the ancient classical texts. Why must he...he start from 'Dream of the Red Chamber'? Even those Redology experts, who have studied it for decades, can't explain it, so how can Teacher Zhang do so? And to talk about it in detail?" She was also stunned by Zhang Ye's ambitious words. "And that 'Dream of the Red Chamber' has a huge shocking secret?"

Li Ying was trembling with excitement as he said, "I'd like to hear how Teacher Zhang shall teach it! I'm looking forward to it!"

Li Li said, "That's right. What huge secret is there? Why haven't I heard of it before?"

Senior Zhou wiped his sweat. "He sure is bold to say such things. Zhang Ye is doomed. If he teaches something wrongly, his glorious reputation will be ruined!"

Yao Mi was almost about to cry, "That can't be? It's all my fault. Why did I mention 'Dream of the Red Chamber' to Teacher Zhang!?"

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Upon seeing everyone's expressions, Zhang Ye was not surprised. He said with a smile, "I believe almost everyone present has read 'Dream of the Red Chamber', right? Has anyone not read it?"

The moment he spoke, everyone turned quiet.

There were seven or eight people who raised their hands.

Zhang Ye acknowledged. "There should be a few who lack the nerve to raise their hands. However, it seems a large majority of people here have read 'Dream of the Red Chamber', or have at least seen the television dramas. They are all very familiar with this novel. So despite there being a lot of so-called logical errors or plot points that didn't make sense, many people still like 'Dream of the Red Chamber' greatly. Is this not the case?"

The students below nodded their heads.

Zhang Ye chuckled, "Then, we shall discuss 'Dream of the Red Chamber' in detail from the beginning. I want to announce something, which is also that shocking secret within 'Dream of the Red Chamber'. Everyone believes that Cao Xueqin was not in a good condition to perfect this masterpiece due to a serious illness near the end of his life, resulting in many plot holes and flaws? But, now I want to tell you something. Maybe many will find it unacceptable, but I still have to say it. And I can very definitely tell you..." Zhang Ye wasn't himself if he did not let them die from his shocking words. The next sentence of his was like an atomic bomb to them, blasting everyone present into oblivion, "The truth is, for the 120 circulated chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber', the last 40 chapters were not written by Mr. Cao Xueqin at all!"

The moment he said this, the entire lecture hall went silent!

Including the Peking University workers, the more than one thousand strong crowd in the auditorium immediately became silent. Everyone stared with their eyes popping out. They were all completely dumbfounded!

One second...

Two seconds...

Three seconds...

Finally, a female reporter, who looked shy, suddenly stood up, "F**k" A vulgarity came out of her mouth without any concealment!

Then, there were shouts!

"Holy motherf**king sh*t!

"What did Zhang Ye just say?"

"Who can repeat that to me once again? I think I didn't hear it clearly!"

“The later parts of ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’ were not written by Cao Xueqin? Is he mad? This Teacher Zhang Ye wants to send the literary world into an upheaval! How does he dare to say that!?”

“If it was not Cao Xueqin who wrote it, then who wrote it!?”

“Can you not be so stimulating?”

“What makes you say that!?”

“This is definitely Teacher Zhang’s style! He won’t settle for not scaring you to death!”

“This is one of the Four Great Classical Novels! Is it really alright to just say that?”

Chang Kaige, who was sitting right in front, smacked himself in the forehead, “We’re finished!”

Zhen Shuquan also nearly vomited blood. Peking University’s fine reputation was ruined today!

A shadow was cast above the eyes of Professor Zeng and the other Chinese department teachers. Many of them nearly fainted from shock after hearing Zhang Ye’s words. Teacher Zhang Ye! Stop messing around! Seriously, stop messing around!

Professor Yan also nearly cursed. He glanced at Wu Zeqing. “President Wu! We can’t leave it at that! If this carries on, there won’t be anything left of Peking University’s reputation!”

Wu Zeqing was playing with her cellphone with her head down. She seemed to be deaf to his pleas.

Yan Jiantao was overwhelmed with thoughts of how the fire was already reaching one’s eyebrows, but she was still pretending to ignore it!

Yao Mi, “...”

Senior Zhou, “.....”

Senior Song, “.....”

All the Peking University students were stunned from shock!

As the bombshell thrown by Zhang Ye was too earth-shattering, this was no longer a simple academic debate. This was also not any simple academic discussion. If what Zhang Ye said was true, not only was the f**king academic world exploding, even a portion of history had to be rewritten!

How could this be true?

How can that be? No one believed!

A male reporter shouted, “Teacher Zhang Ye! Don’t spout nonsense!” He was an avid reader of “Dream of the Red Chamber”, so he naturally could not accept Zhang Ye’s remarks.

Zhang Ye looked at him. “I had previously said that only my students can speak at anytime or raise questions. I don’t want to repeat myself a second time! If you are going to affect the orderliness of my class or interfere with my teaching, then please leave. I won’t see you out!”

No matter what Zhang Ye said, this was his class. A few Peking University security guards were already staring at the male reporter. The guy leered before angrily sitting down and no longer said a word.

After throwing out such a shocking statement, Zhang Ye appeared very calm and casual. It was as if what he had done was no big deal. He then said into the microphone, "I know many people cannot accept it from an emotional point of view. That is not surprising, but what I say is the truth. And why do I dare to say that? It is because there is a lot of evidence supporting this, and can be easily inferred. This is the type of stuff we will be talking about this semester. Everyone can comment and give your own opinion, but hear me out. We can discuss amongst ourselves before deciding whether what I said is right or wrong."

Right or wrong?

Of course it's wrong!

Isn't that just nonsense!?

Everyone had such thoughts. Even Yao Mi and a small number of students, who especially liked Zhang Ye, or were considered Zhang Ye's diehard fans could not believe after hearing what he said. There was no way about it. This was a challenge to all their understanding of history and literature! In the textbooks over all the years, the 120 chapters of "Dream of the Red Chamber" was stated to be written by Cao Xueqin. It was already entrenched in everyone's minds. Even if "Dream of the Red Chamber" was filled with errors, no one questioned that this book was written by someone else!

Someone raised his hand. "Teacher!"

Zhang Ye glanced over. "Please speak."

The person who stood up was a freshman. He gritted his teeth and said, "I completely disagree with what you said. This is impossible!"

Zhang Ye chuckled and said, "Why is it impossible?"

The freshman was stunned, "There is no why... it's just impossible!"

Zhang Ye lowered his hands. "Hur Hur, I research in academia. It is based on verification. It has to have historical evidence and logical proofs. Yet you insist that it is impossible without giving a proper reason. Then how are we to carry on this conversation? If we want to argue on this, I can also ask a question. Who can tell me which historical book in history, or any other literary information provides proof that "Dream of the Red Chamber" has a total of 120 chapters? And that all the 120 chapters were written by Mr Cao Xueqin? Is there?"

"That..." The freshman was stumped.

The others could not answer it immediately. Right, in terms of records and validation, there was really nothing about the 120 chapters, but...but...

Many people felt suffocated. They all felt Zhang Ye was wrong, but had no way to retort!

"This student, please take a seat. It is worthy of praise to dare to speak up." Zhang Ye smiled and did not criticize the student. He said, "My class is as such. Everyone might need to be mentally prepared in the future. What I said will shake the foundations of your traditional knowledge. I do not request for you to accept my viewpoints immediately. What I want you to do is just to let go of your so-called logic and calcified understandings. Let go of those preconceptions and mental conflicts. Why don't all of you try to

imagine it. If the last 40 chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' were not written by Cao Xueqin, then what would happen when we study 'Dream of the Red Chamber'? Could those 'logical errors' or 'major flaws', that could not be explained, be understood?"

What he said was very intriguing.

Wu Zeqing even raised her eyes when she heard this, "Oh?"

Professor Zeng was exclaimed. He suddenly put aside his mental conflicts and became interested. He wanted to hear what Zhang Ye had to say!

Redology enthusiasts and experts had already studied "Dream of the Red Chamber" for numerous years. They had proposed numerous theories, but none of them made much progress. This resulted in few Redologists and Redology enthusiasts existing in present day!

However, Zhang Ye's earth-shattering theory had never been proposed before!

Chapter 306: A Lecture that Subverts All Understanding!

Outside the auditorium.

The chaotic commotion from inside spread outside.

A few Peking University teachers from the Mathematics department walked past.

"Hmm? Why is it so chaotic inside?"

"What happened? Isn't this a public lecture?"

"That host, Zhang Ye, is having a public lecture, right? Why is it so noisy? And there is even screaming?"

"Man, is this a class or the filming of a horror film? Must there be so much shouting? What's the fuss all about. Isn't it just a lecture?"

The few of them left after passing the auditorium by.

Many students, who were on the floor below, also heard the commotion from the auditorium. They were also extremely curious. No one knew what was happening inside.

Only those present in the public lecture knew that shocking view thrown out by Zhang Ye!

He was bold!

Simply bodacious!

People who dared to propose such ideas were either geniuses or madmen!

Standing behind the podium, Zhang Ye, who saw the shocked expressions on the students and reporters' faces, subconsciously stood up straight. He felt extremely dignified and was also a bit honored. As Zhang Ye's world had a person, whose name was Hu Shih. He was formerly Peking University's President, and during the early years of the People's Republic, Hu Shih and Yu Pingbo had suggested that the last 40 chapters of "Dream of the Red Chamber" mismatched the first 80 chapters in artistry and ideology. They had made a bold guess that the last 40 chapters were continued on by

someone else, causing quite an uproar. Zhang Ye was actually replicating what Hu Shih and Yu Pingbo did back then. And fate had it that he was doing so at Peking University, who Hu Shih had been President of. At least the superstitious Zhang Ye believed in such matters, so he wanted to do a good job. He wanted to reveal the truth that everyone from his world knew to this world. This was a show of respect to Mr Cao Xueqin, as well as to the work, "Dream of the Red Chamber"!

"Teacher Zhang!" Someone raised a hand.

Upon looking over, it was straight As student Senior Song who was in Year 3.

Zhang Ye said with a smile, "Please speak."

Senior Song stood up. She also wanted to let go of her prejudices and calcified knowledge from before, but she could not do so. She really could not accept Zhang Ye's conjecture. "According to your inference, if the last 40 chapters were not written by Mr Cao Xueqin, then who wrote it? Who can pass off the spurious as genuine?"

Everyone pricked up their ears to listen.

Zhang Ye looked at her and answered, "Your question has two slight problems. Firstly, what I said just now was not a deduction, but a certain fact. As for why I say so, I will explain and analyze it one step at a time later on." Regarding this matter, Zhang Ye was very certain and definite, hence he said it with conviction. There were still disputes as to who finished up the work, but the last 40 chapters were definitely not the work of Cao Xueqin. This was indisputable. "Secondly, I think the words passing off the spurious as genuine is inappropriate. Maybe some people feel that the last 40 chapters and the first 80 chapters match very well, and the plot has proper contrast, but I don't think so. In fact, I find it incongruous. Of course, this will be slowly talked about later on as well. As for you asking who wrote the last 40 chapters, I can answer you right now."

Senior Song asked, "Who?"

Zhang Ye smiled. This time, he was not that certain, but said it with precise words, "I presume it is Gao E!"

Who?

Gao E?

How could it be Gao E!?

Many students gave him looks of suspicion. Clearly, they did not know this name, but many Peking University professors and students knew of this person!

Senior Song was rendered even more speechless. "Gao E was the collator and conservator of 'Dream of the Red Chamber'. He made a great contribution by conserving and spreading 'Dream of the Red Chamber'. How can he be the author? This is a groundless statement! Besides, Gao E was not of the same era as Mr Cao Xueqin! How could the both of them create 'Dream of the Red Chamber' together?" Through her explanation, many Peking University students who did not know now knew who Gao E was.

The collator became an author?

Department Dean Chang Kaige wanted to turn away. What this Little Zhang was saying was becoming more and more preposterous!

Zhang Ye still had a calm expression. "I never said Gao E and Cao Xueqin had produced 'Dream of the Red Chamber' together. In my opinion, due to various unknown reasons, the original chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' after Chapter 80 were lost. As a fan of 'Dream of the Red Chamber', Gao E continued the story with his own 40 chapters!"

The reporters stared. The original manuscript was lost?

Senior Song exclaimed, "That's impossible!"

Li Ying also stood up and said, "That is unfounded!"

"That's right Teacher Zhang." Senior Zhou also said, "Why do you say that?"

Zhang Ye chuckled. "It's not unfounded. There is actually a reason behind it. However, with everyone's preconceptions, no one noticed it, so many things were missed before their very eyes. What I want to do now is help to open everyone's eyes. I want to let everyone see what you should have seen and discovered."

Saying that, Zhang Ye flipped open the lesson plan in his hand and took out a piece of paper before walking to a projector. He projected the information to let everyone see it, "Here I have a poem. Of course, it was not written by me. It was written by an outstanding poet, scholar, and artist in the Qing dynasty, Zhang Wentao. This poem is titled "Dedicated to Gao Lanshu, My Contemporary Examinee". Well, the content of the poem is not important and is just average in standard. It does not have much literary value either. However, the important part is the note following the poem, 'Chapters after the eightieth were all supplemented by Lanshu'."

This world's history and famous people were different from Zhang Ye's world; however, important historical figures, especially figures and history related to the Four Great Classical Novels, did not have many changes. If these were to change, then this world might no longer have the Four Great Classical Novels. There was only information and proof that was lost. For example, many of the information and poems to prove that "Dream of the Red Chamber" were not complete and were lacking in this world. For example, "Folk Tunes From the Capital" was a crucial piece that Zhang Ye never managed to find. It might not have been discovered by others, or was hidden in some desolate corner or time had destroyed this vestige. There was, after all, no way for wishing that this world's historical evidence was exactly preserved the same way that it had been in Zhang Ye's world. Zhang Ye had struggled so much just to find that tiny bit, so although it was somewhat lacking, it had enough information to support his viewpoint.

"Chapters after the eightieth were all supplemented by Lanshu?" Many people were surprised when they saw the poem's note. They shook their heads, "What can this tell?"

Zhang Ye pointed to the projected image, "This poem might not be famous, and might not even be found in today's advanced search engines. It can only be found in libraries, but I want to remind everyone. Don't look down on this tiny piece of information. In the research of 'Dream of the Red Chamber', this poem is extremely valuable. Who is Lanshu? He is Gao E, whose pen name is Lanshu. A

Qing dynasty poet, Zhang Wentao, has already told us that the chapters after the eightieth chapter of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' were supplemented by Gao E!"

Senior Song mulled over it before shaking her head, "This word 'supplement' has a lot of meanings. Finding something that is lost can also be considered as a 'supplement'. If there are missing words or pages, filling in the blanks can also be considered 'supplement'. This word 'supplement' is similar to 'patching', so it can't explain anything." As a straight A student, she was truly talented.

Professor Zeng nodded upon hearing this.

The other Peking University teachers and students similar agreed with Senior Song's points.

Zhang Ye smiled. "I believe I'm not the first person to see this poem. I also believe that in ancient and modern times, there have been an extremely small number of people who have discovered this. However, everyone without exception would have the same views as Miss Song. They would conclude that Gao E had arranged and conserved 'Dream of the Red Chamber', but have you thought of something? The word 'supplement' has another meaning. That is to add to something in order to complete it!"

Everyone, "..."

Senior Song was also speechless, "About that..."

Teacher Zhang was f**king bent on going down such a treacherous path. If he insisted on explaining the word 'supplement' that way, it was of course alright, but...

Zhang Ye carried on, "And according to my analysis, and according to relevant information and records, if it was as everyone else said, Gao E was only doing a 'patching' job. He is not the only one arranging 'Dream of the Red Chamber', right? Then why would there be a note given to Gao E that attributes the role of all the supplementing to him? Why would the word 'all' be used? Was everything arranged by him? No one else was involved? Let's not talk about anyone else. I would like to ask what happened to Cheng Weiyuan? What happened to Cheng Weiyuan, who was with Gao E? Hur Hur, clearly this is illogical and does not match what we know. Hence, the meaning of 'supplement' really means adding to something in order to complete it. It also means continuing the writing, and he alone wrote the rest!"

This view and analysis method was groundbreaking!

Professor Zeng took a deep breath!

Yao Mi was shocked from hearing this!

Senior Zhou disagreed and immediately put forward his doubts, "Teacher Zhang, even if your analysis is correct, who can prove that the Qing dynasty poet knows the truth? Even if we take ten thousand steps back, who knows if Zhang Wentao learned it from hearsay and thought that was how it was. Hence, without any validation, he added this note. That is all possible."

"Right!"

"He's after all not some particularly important poet."

"Right. I've never heard of Zhang Wentao. Is what he said reliable?"

A few students argued.

Zhang Ye smiled. "So you think Zhang Wentao was engaging in hearsay? Alright, then let me show you the next set of information." Saying that, he switched to another piece of A4 paper. "Everyone, take a look. This is a poem Zhang Wentao wrote as a eulogical tribute to his younger sister. There is a small note here: 'My sister married a Han military officer of Gao descent'. It means that his sister was married to a 'Han military officer', whose surname was Gao when she was alive. Hence, if I boldly infer from this, Gao E is very likely to be Zhang Wentao's brother-in-law!"

"Ah?"

"Holy sh*t!"

"It can't be?"

Everyone was amazed!

Brother-in-law? Your sister, that can even work?

Zhang Ye carried on. "If that is truly the case, then how would Zhang Wentao not know about the accomplishments of his own brother-in-law? What hearsay was there? Hence, what he said was somewhat believable!" However, he did not close the case on the matter. "Of course, as there is limited information, you cannot put a nail in the coffin on whether Zhang Wentao and Gao E are relatives or not. To follow academic rigor, this is just an inference on my part. I am just giving everyone a new perspective." In his world, there were people who overthrew the argument according to Zhang Wentao's family history. Some people even speculated if Zhang Wentao knew Gao E when he wrote "Dedicated to Gao Lanshu, My Contemporary Examinee". Everyone had their own justifications, and there was still a huge controversy.

However, 'Dream of the Red Chamber' was always mysterious. This masterpiece had so many mysteries that even in Zhang Ye's world, not every one of them had been unearthed!

Having controversy was normal. It would be odd if there wasn't!

A lot of history could no longer be verified, unless there was new historical data or documents discovered. If not, many mysteries would be forever left unsolved, resulting in endless debate!

The reason why Zhang Ye mentioned this was to tell everyone that his words were backed by information and documents. It also agreed with logical inference. He had not blindly spoken guesswork without any evidence.

Over here.

Chang Kaige, who wanted to leave because he could not stand anymore of it, sat back down!

Many of the Peking University teachers, students and reporters, who had previously shrugged off Zhang Ye's idea, all turned silent!

Of course, they found it impossible to agree with Zhang Ye's audacious conjecture, but after a round of demonstration by Zhang Ye, they realized they had no way to retort him. Just like Zhang Ye, they could not provide any evidence or documents to prove the problem about Gao E!

Chapter 307: Speechlessness!

A brief period of silence.

"It's still not right!"

"This opinion does not hold water!"

"Right, it definitely can't be written by Gao E!"

"Although there's no proof, but, but is there even need for proof?"

Many people who were not taking the "Appreciation of the Classics" elective class began to stir. However, at this moment, everyone also felt that they did not waste this trip and it had been worthwhile. Because no matter what Zhang Ye's perspective was, anyone easily knew that this public lecture would cause a stir in the education and literary world!

The straight As student, Senior Song just remained standing at her seat. Even if she were to sit down, she would soon stand up again to raise her questions. It was too troublesome as she had too many doubts and questions about Zhang Ye's perspective. She raised her hand again and asked her questions directly this time, "Sorry, Teacher Zhang. I still cannot accept your perspective. Your proof that the last 40 chapters were written by Gao E is still insufficient to explain the problem. There's too little information and too much left to our own imaginations. Besides, Gao E was just an arranger and collator of the manuscripts, he would not possess the literary skills to continue writing 'Dream of the Red Chamber' to such a good extent."

Zhang Ye wagged his finger saying, "Little Song, then you'd be wrong to think that."

"Why?" Senior Song asked.

All the other Peking University teachers looked towards Zhang Ye.

Zhang Ye said confidently, "Gao E had the qualities and conditions to carry on writing 'Dream of the Red Chamber'. In that era, I believe that only Gao E was up to the mark! Hur Hur, everyone don't look at me like that. You might not have much understanding of Gao E, and just believe him to be someone who just collated and arranged the work. However, you do not know his background. If everyone does not believe me, then fine. I had first started my argument from an angle using information. Next, I will use a psychological standpoint to talk about it. Well, actually it's not very important. It's fine if I don't mention it, but do you want to listen to it?"

"Yes!"

"Of course!"

"It's a must!"

Senior Song also nodded her head.

Even if they did not agree, they still wanted to hear it.

Zhang Ye acknowledged, "Alright, then I'll speak briefly about it. Gao E had always been assigned the title of the publisher and collator, but many people actually do not know that Gao E's literary level was

his most dazzling accomplishments.” He noticed Professor Zeng was nodding slightly his head as he said, “Looks like Professor Zeng is aware of this.”

Professor Zeng affirmed, “Teacher Zhang is right. Anyone with eyes would appreciate him. That was the evaluation of Gao E’s contemporaries.”

Zhang Ye smiled as he continued to explain, “This is how it was. Gao E was an extremely talented man. ‘Often distressed by his frustrations, his talents exceeded everyone else’ could be used to describe Gao E’s life. Never short of experiencing ups and downs, this made his life very similar to Cao Xueqin’s. In his early years, he would be held back in the Imperial examinations while his later years were spent on a dull career that left him emotionally distressed. This put him very close to Cao Xueqin’s emotional experiences and allowed him to complete that captivating tragic ending of the novel. Additionally, we just need to look through the information and we’d know that Gao E was an honest man, often encouraging and advising his disciples about filial piety and striving for the Imperial examinations. He was very skilled in writing eight-legged essays, was a creative thinker, and had great penmanship. In poetry, he would often describe the sentimental feelings of life as if it were embodied in a dream, adding a touch of Buddhism within. All of these can be experienced in the text contained in the last 40 chapters of ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’. So from the angle of sentimentalism, Gao E was the most suitable person in that era to continue writing the ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’. He was also the only one that was capable of doing so!”

With a moment’s pause, Zhang Ye continued on, “When I mentioned that Gao E’s continuation of the writings of ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’ was mismatched with the earlier chapters, what I meant was the personal style of writing was different. I did not deny Gao E’s talent. On the contrary, I really respect him as he had given an ending to ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’ and facilitated the spread of the novel. Gao E made a huge contribution!”

F**k!

Why does it sound more and more like this was the truth!

A straight As student from the History department suddenly raised his hand to speak, “What you have just said, was built on the assumption that after the first 80 chapters of ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’, somebody had to continue to write it. I feel that it’s not the time now to argue whether it was Gao E or an unknown person who continued writing, but...what do you base it on when you say that only 80 chapters of the original manuscripts were written by Mr Cao Xueqin? Based on what are you saying that the 120 chapters consisted of someone else continuing the writings and were not the original works of Mr Cao Xueqin? Just based on a bet that a Qing dynasty’s poet work had mentioned the words of ‘80 chapters’?”

Zhang Ye lost it and said laughingly, “You’re getting pretty agitated.”

The history department student was at a loss whether to laugh or cry, “How can I not be agitated? What you have said undermines all our knowledge of the novel. Have our history classes all these years been wrong? Has such a stupid mistake been committed for all these years by our country’s education world? Not even getting the author of one of our Four Great Classical Novels correct?”

This was also the main reason why everyone did not believe Zhang Ye!

So many experts, so many enthusiasts, are you telling me that all of them had been wrong? That's impossible!

Even though the saying goes that the truth is often in the hands of only a few, but regarding this method, this wasn't even fewer than a few! You're the only one with such a perspective!

One was the education world, and the other was the academic world. Both were the authorities amongst authorities!

The other was Zhang Ye, the hooligan of the literary circle. The thorn in the broadcasting circle.

Who do you think deserved to be trusted more? The answer was clear, there was not even a need to ask!

"We might not have any proof to refute you with...."

"Right, but neither can you refute our views!"

Take for example, "Journey to the West". If you wanted to say that this novel was not written by Wu Chengen, but instead written by his twin brother, and that his twin brother also took up the name Wu Chengen since he was young enough to impersonate him and only his family knew that Wu Chengen was not Wu Chengen, but his brother instead, but no one else knew that this Wu Chengen was not that Wu Chengen, and took it that Wu Chengen was just Wu Chengen — If you really wanted to insist, couldn't it be said in that way too? If someone had made such a claim and even if there was no proof, no one could refute it. Then would that mean that the author for "Journey to the West" would also have to be changed?

If that was it, then the literary world would be in a mess!

Instead, Zhang Ye said, "Who says that I do not have evidence to refute?"

The third year student from the Chinese department, Senior Zhou said, "But the information you had earlier were...."

Zhang Ye said with a snigger, "That was just the opening to bring everyone up to speed and get them into the mood. Since I dared to make such a claim, I would obviously have my own evidence and information to back myself up. So then, I would first like to ask everyone about something. Other than Gao E's version, did the earliest manuscripts for 'Dream of the Red Chamber', whichever version it might be, have records of the novel after the 80 chapters?"

Everyone was dumbfounded.

"Is there?"

"I don't know."

"Oh, let me do a search!"

The students had all taken out their cellphones to go online to check.

Professor Zeng also frowned and closed his eyes, trying to remember.

A department of the literary arts student suddenly exclaimed, "There is! There's an ancient manuscript here that is 120 chapters!"

Zhang Ye smiled, "This student, could you check once more to see which year that manuscript was printed in? I can tell you that this ancient manuscript was originally only 35 chapters and had been edited and added on after 1791, when it was republished. It had been edited to fit in Gao E's intact edition." He had also done his homework.

The liberal arts student checked and then did not speak anymore after that. It was true.

Professor Zeng, Chang Kaige, and Zhen Shuquan all realized it too. It was strange, but there really wasn't any!

Zhang Ye said, "So the most complete ancient manuscript that everyone has read before would be Gao E's compilation, which was printed and published in the year 1791. And with that, I have a question. Why is it that before this version, all the ancient manuscripts that existed did not have any version that exceeded 80 chapters? If it were just one version, it might pass, but why were nearly all the versions like this?"

Yao Mi spoke, "Because the ancient manuscripts were lost and damaged badly?"

This world's ancient manuscripts for "Dream of the Red Chamber" were really in tatters.

But Zhang Ye said, "Isn't that too much of a coincidence? Doesn't anyone have a suspicion about this? Some manuscripts only had a little over a dozen chapters left. Some others had a little more and managed to have 40-50 chapters intact, but all of these manuscripts that were much older than Gao E's version did not have any records of anything over 80 chapters. Then in 1791, a full version, that had 120 chapters, suddenly emerged. This does not make sense from a logical point of view, isn't that a little too strange? If the last 40 chapters had been written by Cao Xueqin, then why didn't anyone besides Cheng Weiyuan and Gao E manage to copy it out? And no one managed to buy any of it off the gray market? With so many chapters, even if not all the chapters were copied, at least a portion of it could have been copied, but why was it that before Cheng Weiyuan and Gao E, no one had managed to copy even one chapter of the last 40 chapters?"

With this question asked, everyone was stumped!

Even a few Peking University teachers, who had studied and researched about "Dream of the Red Chamber", momentarily choked!

Chapter 308: One bombshell after another!

Senior Song spoke, "It might be a coincidence, and not considered evidence."

Zhang Ye shook his head, "Coincidence cannot explain it. The only explanation is that only 80 chapters of Cao Xueqin's 'Dream of the Red Chamber' were transmitted and seen by Gao E. He seriously studied it and then carried on writing the story. Gao E was very lucky. He saw a more complete ancient version of the 80 chapters that none of us have ever seen. Of course, there are things that he modified and filled in the blanks, but there were no major changes."

Senior Song insisted, "Then why couldn't it be Gao E obtained the 120 ancient chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' before arranging and publishing it?"

Zhang Ye did not answer the question, but rather asked, "Has anyone heard of a person known as Zhiyanzhai (Red Inkstone)?"

Senior Song shook her head.

Many Peking University students also shook their heads.

Only a History department junior said in a crisp voice, "I think there was an ancient text. I remember the name as 'Zhiyanzhai's Second Annotations to The Story of the Stone'. However, this ancient book only had a few rounds of circulation only. It is extremely incomplete. The comments in it are all baffling, so many expert scholars and Redologists do not count it as an ancient text. They find that it lacks the authority, and might have been blindly written."

The students checked on the internet, and indeed, there was such an ancient text.

"Well said." Zhang Ye smiled. "Zhiyanzhai's ancient book is not looked up to by people because of two reasons. First, it's because it's too incomplete, and second, because it's hard to understand. Hence, no one has seriously researched it. Even if one were to research it, it would be in passing, without paying close attention to it. Hur Hur, but I have something to tell everyone now. You can't say he blindly wrote it just because you can't understand it. This would be disrespectful to academia in itself. Actually, Zhiyanzhai's ancient text is the only version of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' that has been spread down with the greatest authority!" In his previous world, Zhiyanzhai's ancient text was passed down with the most complete and detailed evaluations. He had seen the original version before!

"How can it be!?" Senior Song refused to believe.

Many Peking University students also shook their heads.

Zhang Ye said with a mocking smile, "You say that Zhiyanzhai was just blindly writing? It is only because the people who researched Zhiyanzhai's ancient book could not understand what he was saying. Others might not understand, but I do. I believe if everyone keeps thinking based on the establishment that 'Dream of the Red Chamber' only has 80 chapters, you will also be able to understand it." He took out another piece of information. It was information readily available in this world. Although Zhang Ye had seen the original versions of Zhiyanzhai's ancient text, most of it had been lost in this world. He could not use that as proof, and could only use available evidence.

Everyone looked up.

Zhang Ye pointed to the projector, "Zhiyanzhai had this comment, Jia Baoyu later ends up 'choking on sour porridge in the dead winter, sobbing in a winter night covered in rags'. I want to ask, in the first 80 chapters of the 120 circulated chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber', was there ever such an episode? No! Was there any such an episode in the last 40 chapters? Also no!" He then pointed, "Zhiyanzhai's comments also included the fact that Xiaohong 'had helped Baoyu' in the 'The Temple of the Prison God', but was there such an episode in the last 40 chapters? Also no! Even 'The Temple of the Prison God' did not appear in the last forty chapters! In addition to this, Zhiyanzhai even mentioned in his comments a title of one of the chapters after the eightieth. It was called, Xue Baochai, borrowing

phrases, admonished; Wang Xifeng, reckoning fate, made a heroic stand. Was there such a title in the last 30 chapters? Still no!”

Senior Zhou said, “This evaluation itself is not authoritative.”

Zhang Ye retorted, “Then what is authoritative? An ancient piece of literary information is not considered authoritative, but a Redologist’s research ends up being authoritative? Is there any logic to that? When we study ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’, we need to rely on existing information. Also, do you think an ancient person like Zhiyanzhai had nothing better to do? He wrote some brainless things just to mislead everyone?”

“Uh, about that...” Senior Zhou was stumped.

Senior Song argued, “Maybe Zhiyanzhai interacted with Cao Xueqin before and thought that Cao Xueqin would write it in this manner. A plot and title was revealed to him, and in our present day language is considered an outline, but it is very possible that Cao Xueqin did not write in accordance with his original intentions!”

Zhang Ye looked towards her and said, “Don’t you feel that Zhiyanzhai’s tone in his comments were too affirmative? His tone was not talking a bit about Cao Xueqin’s ideas in some hearsay manner, but like he had read or known the story after the first 80 chapters! Zhiyanzhai was very sure! Hence, Zhiyanzhai’s comments cannot be understood by people. This is because in this story, after the first 80 chapters of ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’, it was not the original intent or written by Cao Xueqin, but followed up by Gao E. Zhiyanzhai is a key person in the study of Redology. ‘He’ might have been Cao Xueqin’s wife or Cao Xueqin’s father, or even Cao Xueqin’s close friend. We do not know the specific details, but we can be sure of one thing. This Zhiyanzhai was not a person who copied ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’ after simply borrowing it! You can tell from the comments! Zhiyanzhai was involved in the entire creation process of ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’! He had read, communicated, and discussed with Cao Xueqin before writing those comments!”

Another bomb!

It set off once again in the auditorium!

Zhiyanzhai, who was never really paid attention to by Redologists, actually ended being said by Zhang Ye to be the most authoritative person who had participated in the creation of ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’?

You just won’t give up unless you say something astonishing!

The Peking University students were once again pelted by bombshell shrapnel. They looked blankly at each other!

A Peking University female student from the History department argued, “Even if what you said is reasonable, there is no historical records of a person like Zhiyanzhai. It is just a pen name. He comes from unknown origins. We don’t even know if he is male or female. Of course, we can’t believe his words. We cannot use it as evidence.”

Zhang Ye was amused, “I can’t accept what you just said. From the comments, we can already tell that Zhiyanzhai and Cao Xueqin are extremely close. We just do not know the exact identity of Zhiyanzhai. He

is not someone of unknown origins. If we consider Zhiyanzhai to be someone of unknown origins, then according to what you said, then Cao Xueqin himself is also a person of unknown origins. In academia and Redology, no one actually knows if Cao Xueqin is Cao Yong's son or Cao Fu's son. Hence, identity cannot be used as rhetoric to deny evidence."

Cao Xueqin's identity was also unknown?

The face of female student from the History department changed colors before she finally sat down crestfallen.

"Furthermore, I believe many people have not discovered, and even numerous Redologists have not noticed this." Zhang Ye projected another piece of information, "As you can see, this is one of the ancient texts of 'Dream of the Red Chamber'. It was copied by handwriting and has many more mistakes. The typesetting also seems problematic. Compared to many ancient texts, it is not worthy, but this ancient text contains a very important bit of information. Look at this. Do you see it? This line seems to be a mistake. There seems to be an additional few words. These words, if just read simply, would seem incomprehensible, but what if you do this?" Zhang Ye took another document and placed over it.

Everyone gasped.

"It matched!"

"Why is this line the same?"

"This is Zhiyanzhai's comments?"

"Holy sh*t! Why are Zhiyanzhai's comments in other ancient texts?"

Professor Zeng and company looked alarmed. The strokes and writing was clearly different, and was written by two different people, but...they were exactly the same!

Zhang Ye maintained his smile. This was a smile of self-confidence, because he knew he had control of every piece of information. The research of "Dream of the Red Chamber" had already reached a point where almost nothing could come out of it. Many things were already fact. Zhang Ye was also a broadcasting host by training, so his eloquence was excellent, so everyone present or even everyone in the world could not win a Redology debate with him.

He said, "Now, it's very clear, right? The person who wrote this ancient text also referenced Zhiyanzhai's version. Here, his mind might have wandered and ended up making a mistake while copying. He lifted it without any modifications of Zhiyanzhai's comments in a baffling manner. It has nothing to do with the following text. Many people have seen it and thought it was a typo or a mistake, so no one paid much attention to it. However, I have studied it, and everyone can see that this line was actually a sentence Zhiyanzhai injected into one of the chapter titles. And it was the original words!"

Zhang Ye projected another piece of information, "If everyone still does not believe this ancient text, there's also this paragraph. This is even Gao E's version, and is also the 120 circulated chapters."

The information wrote:

They continued on their way to Xi-chun's apartment. Being younger and more immature than the other cousins, Xi-chun was much more frightened by this visitation and, at first, seemed to be quite

bewildered by it. It took all of Xi-feng's efforts to calm her down. Unfortunately, while they were searching in Picture's trunk, they came across a large packet containing thirty or forty silver medallions. So instead of evidence of immoral conduct, one had found stolen goods. There was also a carved jade belt-buckle, a pair of men's boots, and a pair of socks.

Zhang Ye looked at the audience, "There's this line 'so instead of evidence of immoral conduct, one had found stolen goods' in there. If a meticulous person were to flip through the ancient text of 'Dream of the Red Chamber', he would realize there was no such line. Only Zhiyanzhai's edition has it. This line is in no way Cao Xueqin's original text. So instead of evidence of immoral conduct, one had found stolen goods—This is simply Zhiyanzhai's own comment!" And coupled with the previous information, I want everyone to take a clear look, "Look, the origins come from here! And clearly, Zhiyanzhai's ancient text was many years before Gao E's edition. Of course it couldn't be Zhiyanzhai erroneously copying Gao E's ancient text. That is illogical. Hence, this is how a mistaken portion from Zhiyanzhai entered Gao E's version. This was because Gao E was using Zhiyanzhai's ancient text as a template!"

"This..."

"It's really true!"

"What does this say?"

"Right, what does this represent?"

A few students could not help but ask.

Even Professor Zeng spoke up, "What is your opinion?"

Zhang Ye smiled. "For this situation, I believe or can even say that I'm certain that all the ancient texts of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' were actually copied from 'Zhiyanzhai's Second Annotations to The Story of the Stone'. This includes Gao E's version and all the derivative 'Dream of the Red Chamber' versions. All this came from Zhiyanzhai's evaluations! And as previously mentioned, the most complete ancient text Gao E had which no one had seen before can, in fact, be concluded to be Zhiyanzhai's version. It's just that one of Zhiyanzhai's versions was too incomplete. It did not hold much meaning even when we discovered it. However, what Gao E obtained was Zhiyanzhai's most complete edition of the first 80 chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber'! So by inference, Zhiyanzhai's comments are too valuable, and can be considered very reliable. Hence, the Zhiyanzhai comments about things past chapter 80, that I previously mentioned, have been established. That is to say, the last 40 chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' was in no way written by Cao Xueqin!"

"Are you serious?"

"Holy sh*t!"

The Peking University students rioted!

Even Professor Zeng and a few teachers, who had a relatively deep understanding of 'Dream of the Red Chamber', clearly showed a look of shock! Through Zhang Ye's evidence and information, along with his analysis and reasoning, it did sound possible!

Wu Zeqing smiled. She no longer pretended to play with her cellphone!

The Chinese department's Chang Kaige and Zhen Shuquan were also visibly shaken!

Chapter 309: This is the precursor of re-writing History!

The auditorium hushed up!

It was yet another comment that challenged everyone's knowledge!

A lot of them were busy thinking and digesting this argument of Zhang Ye's!

Offstage in a corner, a Peking University Economics and Management department male teacher in his fifties couldn't help but ask, "Where did this Zhang Ye come from?"

Beside him, a history department's female teacher said, "You don't know him?"

The male teacher said, "I don't really follow the news nor pay attention to the entertainment and literary circles."

The female teacher said, "This Zhang Ye has a bit of a name in Beijing. His literary qualities are very high."

The Economics and Management department male teacher said, "I can see that, that's why I'm curious as to where this genius appeared out of. I like 'Dream of the Red Chamber' very much too and have spent a portion of my time reading up about reviews and analysis of 'Dream of the Red Chamber', including some expert scholars and Redology talks, but to question who the author of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' was, only Zhang Ye alone dares to offer this view. He's really not simple." Watching Zhang Ye, who was in a relaxed state on stage, he said, "Have you all realized? Up until now, he has not used a script. He's only brought some information up on stage and the rest was done off-script. It seems like he has already fully digested the knowledge of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' right into his bones!"

The female teacher did a slight kowtow saying, "This opinion is really a novel way of thinking. If Zhang Ye did not mention it, then no one might ever consider it or question who the author of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' was." Blinking, she added on, "But even though his arguments make sense, I still have reservations on it."

The male teacher acknowledged, "We will still need to continue listening on. Just this bit of evidence alone won't do. To reverse the widely-accepted view of the novel, he would have to offer solid proof that no one would be able to doubt and use extensive literary evidence and multiple points of view to prove it. Otherwise, no one would accept it!"

Behind them was a new trainee teacher who said, "I think that's all to it. After all, the Redologists have already researched 'Dream of the Red Chamber' for so many years without progress. All the literary evidence would have been looked through more than once already. Would evidence be so easy to find? The fact that Zhang Ye has managed to find these evidences to support his argument is already a miracle!"

The reporters were also whispering among themselves.

The Peking University students were all speaking in hushed tones.

"That's too godly!"

“This perspective is too scary!”

“If it’s real, then....then the literary world will become a mess!”

“This is the first time I’ve witnessed that a lecture on ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’ could be given this way!”

From before Zhang Ye arrived at Peking University. From the time when Zhang Ye was first announced to be joining Peking University’s Chinese department. Many people had doubted his standard and qualifications. The students might have been interested in Zhang Ye and were hoping for such an unique style of teacher, but that was mainly from the perspective of entertainment. If they were to seriously consider how good of a teacher Zhang Ye would be in ‘Appreciation of the Classics’? Then I’m afraid that these Peking University students did not expect much either, not to mention the members of the education and literary world. Even Peking University’s Chinese department’s colleagues, the professors, and teachers kept a doubting and even distrustful attitude towards him. They were all very judgmental of Zhang Ye! And when Zhang Ye mentioned that he would be speaking about the “Dream of the Red Chamber” that no one else would dare to touch? It had caused another shocking reaction. Everyone’s distrust towards him had become stronger and stronger, like Professor Yan of the Chinese department, like Dean Chang Kaige, and company. They all took Zhang Ye to be a maniac!

But as the hour passed!

At this moment right now!

As the first lesson was coming to a close!

Many people had now reversed their contempt and looked seriously at Zhang Ye as a person for the first time, to consider the ‘inconceivable’ viewpoint! Whether or not Zhang Ye was correct, however much they did not want to believe his view, they could only put down their resistance and pride now and admit that Zhang Ye’s understanding and research of “Dream of the Red Chamber” had reached a pinnacle!

Professor Zeng?

Professor Yan?

Teachers of the Chinese department?

Even Professor Wang who had previously taught this class?

Without a doubt, they knew they could not stand up to Zhang Ye in the field of “Dream of the Red Chamber” research. In this field, Zhang Ye’s alternative way of handling the issues had left a majority of them convinced! Just the evidence that all of the manuscripts originated from Zhiyanzhai was enough to cause a stir in the world of Redology!

This was a big discovery!

This was a breakthrough for Redology research!

Even that poem dedicated to Gao E by the Qing dynasty poet was valuable research information!

Having listened to Zhang Ye's lecture until now, many people were left feeling incredulous. Why? Why was it that such key information and documentation had not been discovered by anyone until this moment? Was it that it had been discovered before, but not taken to be important? Why did it have to be Zhang Ye alone who realized this point? This meant that he alone had f**king disproved the whole Redology world!

.....

More than ten seconds passed.

People finally came out of their pondering states.

Senior Song breathed in and raised her hand, "Teacher Zhang!"

Zhang Ye kept the projector transparencies and smiled. "Little Song, go ahead."

"Your discovery indeed seems very valuable, but..." Senior Song stubbornly insisted, "Even if many ancient texts of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' originated from Zhiyanzhai's edition, if we want to force it, it still doesn't answer the problem. We can't use Zhiyanzhai's comments to say that the last 40 chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' were not written by Cao Xueqin. Even if Zhiyanzhai was extremely close with Cao Xueqin, and might have participated in discussions and the creative process, I still have the same thing to say. It is possible that when Zhiyanzhai wrote those comments, 'Dream of the Red Chamber' was still not completed yet. Later on, Cao Xueqin changed his mind and did not follow his original intentions. You previously refuted me saying that Zhiyanzhai's tone was very affirmative, and said that he had seen the entire 'Dream of the Red Chamber', that still lacks evidence."

Professor Zeng nodded. Little Song's sharp question was good. Academic research had to be as such. By continuously picking at flaws in an argument, and continuously searching for problems, only then could you see things clearer.

As Senior Song was saying, her thoughts became clearer, "So although many things make sense according to Zhiyanzhai's words from inference, and people of that era had never seen the entire 'Dream of the Red Chamber', while Zhiyanzhai, who was very close with Cao Xueqin, only had a general idea and outline of the story, resulting in Zhiyanzhai having such comments. This also led to the ancient texts being passed down without the complete 120 chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber'. They could not record it down because no one had seen the ending plot. After Cao Xueqin finished writing 'Dream of the Red Chamber', the manuscript was for some reason sealed and saved, but was found many years later by Gao E. Only then was it spread during that period! As for why Gao E referenced Zhiyanzhai's comments, and had erroneously included it in the circulated version, this also indicates the level of Gao E's academic rigor. When he 'supplemented' 'Dream of the Red Chamber', he studied Zhiyanzhai's comments, and maybe even the complete 120 chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' that was passed down contained in Zhiyanzhai's comments. As a collator, he ended up making a mistake, so the 120 chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' was still written by Cao Xueqin!"

"That's right!"

"That was well said by that student."

"Mighty Senior Song! Well said!"

"If we depended on guessing like that, then everything would be able to make sense! Teacher Zhang Ye's opinions can't really hold water! That's indeed our Straight A student, Senior Song!"

The students of Peking University were suddenly enlightened!

A few Peking University teachers also looked towards Senior Song and thought to themselves what a smart student she was!

However, Zhang Ye did not mind, and instead smiled. He looked at Senior Song and said, "Then according to what you say, people from that era have never seen the complete 'Dream of the Red Chamber'?"

Senior Song affirmed, "It has to be so. According to this inference, your opinion will be overturned. If the complete 120 chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' was first spread by Gao E, the comments of Zhiyanzhai would not be able to hold."

Zhang Ye smiled as he shook his head.

"You don't agree?" Senior Song leered at him.

Zhang Ye said, "Hur Hur, actually I'm very happy. Why? Because when I first put out my views, everyone was thinking that I was making excuses. They thought that I was using some unreliable information with biased assumptions to make my arguments, but it seems that you all have realized that this situation is now switched?"

Senior Song immediately blushed, "But I'm not forcing my argument and using biased assumptions. It might be a possibility, no, it has to be like that!"

"Are you sure?" Zhang Ye asked.

"I'm sure!" Senior Song insisted firmly.

"Then you must put a question mark to the word sure. Actually, people from that era had read 'Dream of the Red Chamber'!" Zhang Ye had already finished all his preparations, so how could he be stumped by a student? He pulled out a document and projected it, "Everyone, please take a look at this."

What is that?

Poem? Another poem?

Everyone stared at it with rapt attention!

Do not ask about the marriage of the gold and jade, for it is like a spring dream when gathered, or smoke too soon departed.

Its magical spirit lost, the stone returned to the foot of Greensickness Peak, where even its ability to speak was all in vain.

Everyone looked at each other. What poem is this? Why haven't we heard of it before?

Zhang Ye said, "This document took me a long time to find in the internal system of Beijing Library. The person who wrote this poem is named Fucha Mingyi. Trusting my word, he was a small noble of the Qing

dynasty, however, he was not very successful. By his time, his family had declined. His poems were also not that great. It was lower in quality than your average poems. He was not famous. The poems he wrote were mostly for his own pleasure, or spread amongst his relatives and friends. The poem anthology's name is 'Anthology of Green Smoke and Locked Windows'."

Everyone was baffled. Who was this person?

Some people searched on the internet, but found nothing.

Zhang Ye scanned everyone's expression and said, "From the looks of it, no one knows this person, but please remember Fucha Mingyi. When studying 'Dream of the Red Chamber', this person plays an important role. If everyone looks at the poem projected on the screen, it's clear that it is writing about 'Dream of the Red Chamber'. What's the meaning of the poem? 'Dream of the Red Chamber' has a story of a marriage of gold and jade. He was saying, don't ask about it, it's unbearable to recall it. Why? This was because Fucha Mingyi had seen both the marriage of gold and jade that 'was like a spring dream when gathered', then he had also seen the part of how 'smoke too soon departed'. Fucha Mingyi had seen a complete version of 'Dream of the Red Chamber'!"

Someone raised his doubts, "Is there such a person in history?"

"That's right, why hasn't the Redology world verified this poem before? Is this really writing about 'Dream of the Red Chamber'? Then why has no one discovered it before?"

"What's so surprising for him to have read 'Dream of the Red Chamber'?"

"Right, I have also seen the 120 chapters. It too has a beginning and an end!"

Senior Song also raised many doubts, as people threw questions at Zhang Ye.

In this world, Fucha Mingyi was someone no one paid attention to. As his poetry standard was mediocre, and was not considered famous, no one paid him attention. Besides, the "Anthology of Green Smoke and Locked Windows" was incomplete. The original words "Mentioning Dream of the Red Chamber" no longer existed. Out of the twenty poems that wrote about 'Dream of the Red Chamber', only three or four were left on this planet. Without a title, without any fame, and it being too obscure, it caused the Redologists of this world to not discover it. However, Zhang Ye, as a person who had crossed universes, knew the importance of this person and these poems. If no one else could discover this poem, then Zhang Ye, who knew the truth, could easily find it.

It couldn't be said that he was of a higher learning than this world's Redologists. It could only be said that Zhang Ye had seen more than them and knew about things that they didn't!

Zhang Ye said, "I see that all of you have many questions. It's alright. I will answer them one by one. First, let's talk about when Fucha Mingyi wrote this poem. According to my verification and research, Fucha Mingyi's 'Anthology of Green Smoke and Locked Windows' would list down his poems according to its year." A piece of information was projected on the screen. "Take a look. This is all verified information. Everyone can see clearly that the poems at the end of 'Anthology of Green Smoke and Locked Windows' were completed in 1781. And the poem that was about 'Dream of the Red Chamber' I showed everyone was before this. And that is to say, Fucha Mingyi had finished reading a complete

'Dream of the Red Chamber' before the year 1781. However, when did Gao E's 120 circulated chapter version of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' appear? It was 1791!"

Senior Song was stunned!

Many other people were also stunned!

Zhang Ye chuckled and said, "So the point Little Song inferred and guessed could not be established. Before Gao E, there was someone who had seen the complete 'Dream of the Red Chamber'. However, that was not the 120 circulated chapters!"

Senior Zhou supported Senior Song by saying, "Even if someone else had seen it, that's not considered proof. This Fucha Mingyi might have seen it, but it might be some ancient manuscript that was not copied by others. So others had seen it, and that complete version of the manuscript was obtained by Gao E. Only was it released by Gao E many years later."

Zhang Ye chuckled. "Did you notice? The grounds on which you are arguing are narrowing, and are becoming more and more subjective."

Senior Zhou denied with his neck tensed. "But that's the case."

"Alright, then let me show everyone else a poem. It is also a poem written by Fucha Mingyi about 'Dream of the Red Chamber'." Zhang Ye said, "If the previous poem was incomprehensible or you could not understand that it was about 'Dream of the Red Chamber', then this poem will be irrefutable proof."

The information was projected.

How many Springs, indulging in gold and jade, last, the young scion of a noble house ends in emaciation.

Where did the powdered rogue go, letting down Shi Jilun of yesteryear.

Zhang Ye explained, "What does it mean? He says the Jia clan lived a life of opulence, but it would not last many Springs. It meant such opulent lives could not last long, not more than a few Springs. Then we would immediately remember the first 80 chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' that we have read. It clearly states that when the three springs have gone, the flowering time will end, spring griefs and autumn sorrows were by yourselves provoked. It says the life of luxury only lasts three years. Clearly, Fucha Mingyi had seen such a prophecy in the first 80 chapters, but at the same time, he had also seen the novel's main character, young scion of a noble house, Jia Baoyu. And what was the final impression? Emaciation! Which means reduced to skin and bones!"

Many people were deep in thought.

Professor Zeng and a few others were still constantly savoring that poem.

Zhang Ye looked at everyone, "Then, I would like to ask, in the 120 circulated chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber', did Jia Baoyu ever end up in that state? Was he emaciated? Not at all! Hence, the complete version of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' Fucha Mingyi read is completely different from the 120 circulated chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' that you have all read! This is because the last 40 chapters everyone of you have read was continued by Gao E! It was not Cao Xueqin's original work!"

This proof was indeed rather important!

A few Peking University professors looked at each other!

“Old Li, what do you think?” A Chinese department teacher asked another History department teacher.

The History department teacher pondered for a moment, “I will need to verify it first.” As he said so, he picked up his cellphone and made a call to a few friends. “Hello, can you help me to check out some information? Regarding someone named Fucha Mingyi.....” Zhang Ye’s shocking remarks no longer only affected the literary and education world. Even the history world could not escape its clutches.

A 3rd Year History department senior said, “Are the words of this Fucha Mingyi reliable?”

Zhang Ye laughed, “I have some information here about Fucha Mingyi. Please take a look before you decide if he’s to be trusted or not.” After he put up the information for everyone to see, he said, “The information shows that Fucha Mingyi was born later than Cao Xueqin, but that they still belonged to the same time. They had a time where their lives crossed, meaning to say when Cao Xueqin was alive, Fucha Mingyi was also alive. The information also adds on to say that the both of them had lived in the grounds of the capital, in the same suburbs, so it was very likely that these 2 people had met each other before!”

Senior Song no longer said anything.

Many others were trying hard to digest all the evidence that Zhang Ye had presented!

Zhang Ye said, “Everyone can think about it as you listen to me speak. The second half of the poem is also a very important piece of evidence. Where did the powdered rogue go? It talks about the young women in the book, who disappeared in the end. In the phrase, ‘letting down Shi Jilun of yesteryear’, the ancients liked to use allegories. Shi Jilun was a person from the Western Jin dynasty. His name was Shi Chong, and he was a wealthy politician who led a licentious life. However, this person’s fate ended up very tragic. He lost a power struggle, and when his political rivals surrounded his manor, his concubine, named Lu Zhu, made her move. To express her resistance and loyalty to Shi Chong, she ran to the top of the mansion and jumped off, killing herself. This became a famous historical event, known as Lu Zhu’s Jumping. Shi Chong was actually a terrible person and was not worthy of being pitied. From our current day viewpoint, what Lu Zhu did was nothing to sing praises about, but it’s because of this, when Fucha Mingyi saw the ending of ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’, he felt mixed emotions. When the Jia clan was annihilated in the end, there was no character like Lu Zhu that appeared. None of those powdered young women stood forward to show any bit of resistance, so what Fucha Mingyi saw was a tragic ending. It was an ending with the Jia clan leaving the landscape desolate and bare. This was Cao Xueqin’s original intent and word of ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’!”

Everyone was once again riled up!

No one could think clearly anymore and did not know how to rebut him.

So Zhang Ye said, “So putting two and two together, the answer becomes clear. If we had to force it by saying that Zhiyanzhai had only heard of Cao Xueqin’s outlines and ideas when ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’ had not been completed in writing? And after that when it was finished, it was sealed away? And thus no ancient manuscripts covered the novel after the first 80 chapters? Then how do we explain the existence of these poems by Fucha Mingyi? Isn’t this already detailed enough? He had obviously read the ending of ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’ with his own eyes! And it was a different version to that

of the 120 chapters that we have read today! And he even read it many years before Gao E! Against this backdrop, who could explain as to why such a strange situation came about?"

Silence.

"Anyone? If not, then I will explain! The current version's last 40 chapters of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' were not written by Cao Xueqin!" Zhang Ye asserted once more!

At this moment, that History department teacher's friend had gotten back to him. He clearly had a friend who worked in a library. He had called them to check for him internally, so they managed to get the information very quickly!

"Old Li?"

"How was it?"

"Does this person and those poems really exist?"

When the History department teacher got off the call, he nodded solemnly at his colleagues saying, "Zhang Ye's speaking the truth. At least all of that information can indeed be verified. Fucha Mingyi really wrote those poems. His life and background were also as Zhang Ye had put it." Then he proceeded to show them the cellphone with the information that his friend had sent to him, "And it's not only these 2 poems, but there are others too. Although these poems did not mention explicitly 'Dream of the Red Chamber', their phrasings and meanings were clearly referring to 'Dream of the Red Chamber', but because this information was too obscure, if you did not pay close attention to it, you'd miss this information!"

Professor Zeng, who was seated further away, shifted seats when he heard them. He also took a look at the information, "This...."

The Peking University teachers nearby were convinced at once, not at Zhang Ye's perspective, but at his ability to do research!

Such obscure information!

A person like that who wouldn't raise an eyebrow of others!

You could even find them? You were even able to discover such a source of information?

From this alone, those Peking University teachers and professors thought that Zhang Ye was really crazy! They had already known this host named Zhang understood the Three Kingdoms rather well and could speak about it rather interestingly, but who would have ever thought that his research and study of 'Dream of the Red Chamber' would be so meticulous! It didn't even matter if his research was correct or wrong. To them, Zhang Ye was already way ahead of all of the Redologists!

Wu Zeqing smiled elegantly once more, "Looks like Teacher Little Zhang is able to carry out his responsibilities for this course?"

The Chinese department's Professor Yan Jiantao said with a heavy expression, "Many of these arguments and the evidence still needs to be verified." He still despised Zhang Ye, who came through the ranks of broadcasting rather than history or literature.

But others did not feel the same.

Anyone present could tell that if Zhang Ye could provide even stronger evidence later, wouldn't this be a precursor to rewriting History!?

Chapter 310: The First lesson is over!

Peking University.

In the auditorium.

Many of the reporters were trying their best to take photographs!

Many of the Peking University students were hungry for more! Compared to those experts or teachers, the students were much more receptive to fresh perspectives or opinions that subverted their understanding. They could accept and understand much more easily, and thus a group of such students were already hooked by interest towards the research and logical reasonings of Zhang Ye's argument. They all were thinking how Teacher Zhang Ye would continue on from here.

"Teacher!"

"Do you still have more evidence?"

"Teacher Zhang, I have a question!"

"Are you really able to explain all of the logical errors in 'Dream of the Red Chamber'?"

The Peking University students said one after the other, all scrambling to get their questions answered!

It was already 11:30AM.

The school had initially planned for Zhang Ye to have one hour to give his lecture for "Appreciation of the Classics", but it had already exceeded the time slot by quite a bit.

Zhang Ye looked at his watch and spoke into the microphone, "Sorry everyone, I cannot answer everyone's questions during today's lesson due to time constraints. Those students who are interested can look for me after class to discuss. I also welcome any students, who are not in my elective class, to come and listen in on my second lesson. I welcome anyone who seeks to learn more about literature and those who love classical novels to join me as well. So then, we will be ending today's lesson here. Class dismissed!" With that, Zhang Ye started packing his teaching materials from the projector and left the stage.

There was no applause.

There was not a single applause.

Instead, it was replaced by a surge of students rushing forward. The moment Zhang Ye got off the stage and was preparing to leave via the aisle, he was surrounded by a large group of Peking University students!

"Teacher Zhang!"

"What will we be tested on for our elective class?"

“Will we be tested on ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’? Can you give us a clue about what’s examinable!”

“Teacher, I still don’t really understand your perspective, could we discuss it?”

At this moment, the students of “Appreciation of the Classics” class had already recognized Zhang Ye’s position as their lecturer. Zhang Ye had used his knowledge to shake up these students! If the students had only respected Zhang Ye because of his Talk Show, his poems, or just because he was such a straight talker, then now the students were convinced by his solid and impressive lecturing skills!

Even if someone did not agree with Zhang Ye’s views or did not like his behavior, no one would be able to cast any more doubt that Zhang Ye did not know how to give lectures!

Who said that as a host, Zhang Ye would not know how to teach students?

Who said that an outsider of the education world would not know how to give a lecture?

The netizens, industry insiders, and experts of the education world that had cast doubt on Zhang Ye before now seemed quite laughable!

From the beginning, he threw out his argument and enticed the audience through his speech. The details were slowly revealed as he spent the entire lecture pushing out his logical reasoning in order of succession. What’s more, Zhang Ye was doing all of it off-script in front of them and without even a backup script highlighting his lecture pointers. The lesson was even done in a Q&A format, taking questions and debating about them. No one would know when and what these students would ask, yet Zhang Ye had countered them with extremely well thought out answers. He even managed to pull them back to his original main argument and drive his point home! He had used the questions from the students to reinforce his views and created a more visual and impactful understanding of them. What was key, was that this lesson was very interesting and no one had fallen asleep from the beginning till end. Not a single person in the more than thousand strong audience lost focus. The entire lesson was all within Zhang Ye’s control. They were all led by the nose by Zhang Ye’s bombshell. As such, the students had a very memorable lesson and gained more knowledge as well!

The education world experts still looked down on this host, Zhang Ye?! They were still biased against a person who was not from their industry? Bullsh*t! With the standard set by his performance today, even a professor with more than 10 years of experience....would not do better than this, right? They couldn’t possibly deliver the lecture better than Teacher Zhang Ye right? Alright, even though there were professors in Peking University and Tsinghua University who had the same standard as Zhang Ye’s lecture delivery and could do it with such interest, logic, and impact, would they be able to do so for a whole hour? Surely they would not be able to do so without a script, but Zhang Ye could! From this alone, no one in the education world would dare say they could do better than Zhang Ye!

This teacher was too interesting!

This was why the students had all surrounded Zhang Ye!

Of course, the group of reporters were even crazier than them!

More than twenty reporters rushed forward and squeezed in trying their best to take some pictures while others held out their voice recorders!

“Zhang Ye!”

“Please accept our interview!”

“I’m a reporter with the Beijing Times!”

“Teacher Zhang, do you realize that your lecture today is going to cause a huge stir?”

“This is only your first time giving a lesson as a lecture, but you’ve already thrown out such a shocking theory! How many people do you think will accept your views?”

“Teacher Zhang!”

“Please tell us about your thoughts!”

“What you said today was too shocking to the people! No! It’s too shocking to the world! Why did you not raise these views before? Did you just discover the shocking secret to ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’ recently?”

Zhang Ye raised his hand, “Please let me through. I will not be giving any interviews today. If there’s a need, you may contact the relevant agencies in Peking University and if they allow it, I will give an interview. Sorry, please excuse me.” He was not here as a host, but as a teacher of Peking University. He would need to handle the issues of interviews carefully. The system and characteristics here were different from a television station, the school’s principles did not encourage a teacher to do informal interviews.

The security team had also come to maintain order.

After being tussled left and right, Zhang Ye was finally escorted out safely after 7-8 minutes. It was only giving a lecture, but it felt like he had gone to war. Zhang Ye was at a loss at whether to laugh or cry. He had intended to interact for a short while with President Wu and Dean Chang. The university and department leaders had come specially to listen in on his lecture, so it would have been rude if he just left without saying anything, but there was no other way now, as he could not find them anymore, even after looking left and right. He could only avoid the people and quickly walk back to his office.

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At the other end.

The auditorium’s dedicated staff doorway.

Wu Zeqing, Chang Kaige, and company were walking out together with a camera crew member as well as the website administrator. They were discussing as they walked.

“Did you get the whole lesson?” Wu Zeqing asked.

The cameraman, who was in his forties, said, “Yes, I’ve recorded everything.”

The website administrator said respectfully, “President Wu, it is standard practice for all our past public lectures to be uploaded onto the Peking University website and also a publicity and showcase for us, but this time, Teacher Zhang Ye’s lecture on ‘Dream of the Red Chamber’, should we.....not post it up?”

Wu Zeqing laughed gently, "Why not?"

Secretary Zhen Shuquan said, "There is quite a bit of information overload for this lecture and much of Zhang Ye's views have not been verified yet. If we post this, it will inevitably cause a commotion? Right now, only a small group of students are slightly convinced by Zhang Ye. They still do not fully believe, let alone others. What more, those education and literary circle's experts. They would surely make a fuss!"

Chang Kaige sighed, "There's already a big fuss going on now. Even if we do not post it, when those reporters get back, they will still publish it. We should take the initiative and post it first instead. At least, Zhang Ye's views will be presented with details, rather than letting the reporters take his arguments out of context and have the possibility of an even greater negative reaction!"

Wu Zeqing said, "Dean Chang is right. Just like Zhang Ye said himself, the more truth is debated, the less obscure it becomes. Having some controversy is a good thing."

Yan Jiantao raised his eyebrows in disagreement, "Will that really not be a problem? If it is not handled properly, our Peking University will become the target of criticism! After all, Zhang Ye is now a lecturer of Peking University. If his views are made known, then whatever trouble that comes along with it will also have to be handled by Peking University? And furthermore Little Zhang's point of view has not been perfected or elaborated in full. He's still so young and wouldn't be able to handle the pressure from outside. What if the lessons turn out to be a mess later? Wouldn't it be better if we delayed it for a few more days before posting? To see if Zhang Ye has anymore new evidence to show for?"

Wu Zeqing said flatly, "Hur Hur, there's no need to wait a few days." To the website administrator, she said, "Clean up the recording and post it up."

"Yes, President Wu." that person acknowledged.

Then, Wu Zeqing said to Yan Jiantao, "Professor Yan, I know that you have always been very stringent towards academic issues, but issues related to 'Dream of the Red Chamber' are not something that we can be overly stringent with. There are already all sorts of unsolved mysteries to it and at this point of time, being stringent is no longer the single most important factor. A daring questioning and view of it would be the most important thing. I believe that Teacher Little Zhang also wishes to be doubted from the outside world and the world of Redology. Only if that happens would there be more analysis and more debates. With more opinions and views, we will be able to finally gain a clearer understanding and solve this mystery. This should be a good thing." She smiled as she was saying, "As to whether Teacher Little Zhang will be able to handle the pressure from outside, I don't think that we should even be worried about it?"

You could worry about anything, everything has a chance to go wrong, but when it came to resisting pressure, a person like Zhang Ye would definitely have no problems handling it!

Professor Zeng was jubilant when he heard these words. "Professor Yan probably does not know the background of Teacher Little Zhang. Back then, during the hijacking of plane, Zhang Ye, who had never piloted a plane, stood forward at the most critical moment and landed it safely. He saved over a hundred lives. We can not use logic to deduce what this man is thinking."

Chang Kaige, the other teachers and Peking University staff, who were present, had also heard a little about Zhang Ye's miraculous stories. Their expressions broke out into wry smiles.

Of course, everyone tacitly knew that there was no reason to worry about Zhang Ye about handling pressure! In two live broadcasts, he had scolded his leader once and criticized the SARFT in the other. With all that pressure from the second incident, Zhang Ye could still scold the SARFT with a poem a day in a carefree manner. It could be said that he was the type who fought even harder the more pressure there was. This was the sort of literary hooligan he was. If he couldn't take the pressure, then no one in this world would be able to take it either!