

Superstar 901

Chapter 901: Aiya, I've been hacked!

At Tieba's management office.

The company's technical department was a mess!

"The baseball Tieba is not going to hold up any longer!"

"Ban those accounts!"

"Hurry, hurry!"

"I've already banned a lot of them, but there's too many!"

"It's finished, the baseball Tieba has been crashed too!"

"Oh god, why are there so many people online!"

"Quick, make another call and get all the technicians to come back!"

"Boss, it's the first day of the new year. A lot of them have returned home for the new year!"

"Zhang Ye's fans are too brutal!"

"There are also many who're just helping out! Why would the Cosmetics Tieba people join in for a conflict between Zhang Ye and the sporting world? C'mon, what has it got to do with them!"

"It's so chaotic! Everything has plunged into chaos!"

"It's the festive season, yet everyone's gone crazy!"

...

At this moment, several of the sports-related Tiebas that were still standing had given up resisting.

"Turn on the restrictions! Prevent the sockpuppets from posting!"

"I can't turn them on."

"Why?"

"They have a hacker!"

"What?"

"Seven of our moderator accounts can't login anymore!"

"Then, then what do we do?"

"...Nothing."

They simply surrendered!

They had no way to fight in this battle at all!

On Weibo.

Zhang Ye continued with his countdown: "@SportingWorld, there's just 10 minutes left. I'm waiting!"

In the Celebrity Goof Group.

Many of the celebrities were watching!

Ning Lan: "Little Zhang is so domineering it's like it's ingrained into his bones!"

Xiaodong: "Yeah, most people can't even learn from him even if they wanted to!"

Fan Wenli laughed bitterly. "Director Zhang really wants to fight it out with the sporting world today! But looking at how he is right now, I'm afraid that no one can stop him!"

Elsewhere.

The people from the sporting world were shocked by Zhang Ye's imposing manner, so all they could do now was keep mentioning the SARFT on Weibo.

Li Qi from the table tennis team: "@SARFT! Look at what's happening. Is the punishment still not being meted out yet?"

The national table tennis team's head coach, Liu Yifeng: "Leading his fans to make trouble, isn't this illegal? Isn't anyone going to do anything about it? Isn't anyone going to do anything about it?"

Han Li roared in anger on Weibo: "I call for a comprehensive ban on Zhang Ye!"

A defender on the national soccer team named Tang Hechang shouted: "Boycott such undesirable artists!"

But just after they finished making their stance known, their Tieba was crashed! Some of these athletes were not really popular and did not have their own Tieba, while those who were more famous like Han Li and Li Qi would have a Tieba dedicated to them, although the membership wasn't that high and not too many people paid attention to it. But whatever it was, those Tiebas were not spared!

Han Li's Tieba was crashed!

Li Qi's Tieba was crashed!

Tang Hechang's Tieba was crashed!

Tang...Dazhang's Tieba was crashed!

Crosstalk comedian Tang Dazhang was originally calm and quiet, with everyone laughing about and chatting lightheartedly about Zhang Ye's conflict with the sporting world, even posting a thread about it and livestreaming the conflict. Although they were at odds with Zhang Ye, with Tang Dazhang and the crosstalk world's relationship defined as his deadly enemies and often getting into quarrels, the matter today did not concern them. They did not take part in it either.

But out of nowhere, the troll army appeared, and in the blink of an eye, Tang Dazhang's Tieba was getting spammed!

"What?"

"Holy fuck!"

"Ah!"

"Why are they crashing our bar?"

"Your conflict is with the sporting world! We did not argue with you guys today!"

"Your sister!"

Tang Dazhang's fans were left in utter confusion!

However, the fan club leader, Big Saber Bro, posted a thread right at the moment before the bar got crashed, leaving all the observing netizens laughing: "Apologies, Tang Dazhang and Tang Hechang's names sounded too alike, so we mistakenly crashed your bar along with his! "

Crashed the wrong bar?

Pfft!

Tang Dazhang's fans nearly fainted!

The spectating netizens cramped up with laughter!

The collateral damage suffered by Tang Dazhang's Tieba caused it to become the most innocent victim in this historical bar crashing operation!

At this time, Zhang Ye's Weibo posted something again. "I want to say something. Today's incident isn't targeted at all the individual Tiebas and our friends participating in them. If we harmed anyone by mistake, I would like to apologize to you right here. But this operation still has to go on as I'm really unable to take this lying down! Alright then, there's still three minutes left!"

"Supporting you!"

"Supporting Teacher Zhang!"

"Yeah, we won't take this lying down!"

"Scolding us first and then demanding for us to apologize? Fuck!"

"Supporting Teacher Zhang!"

"Even a clay figurine retains some heat!"

The sporting world's people were red in the face!

What about the SARFT?

Didn't they say they would deal with this severely?

Weren't they going to review the complaints and give an immediate answer?

Everything had come down to this, so why hadn't anyone said anything yet!

There were only two minutes left until the deadline set by Chief Qian was up!

One minute left!

30 seconds...

10 seconds...

5 seconds...

Operation Crash the Bar also ended with this.

Everyone was staring at the time and waiting for the SARFT to make an announcement!

But then, then there were no more thens!

Many of the people from the sporting world were mentioning the SARFT countless times in shock, but did not get any reply as their complaints all sank into the sea!

Liu Yifeng was stunned. "Why?"

Han Li asked: "Why is this happening?"

Li Qi said: "Didn't...didn't they say they were reviewing it?"

No one knew what was going on!

The deadline of the threat had passed and Zhang Ye was still unaffected!

Famous movie star Ning Lan was surprised at this.

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli wore bewildered expression.

The executive director of Beijing Television's Spring Festival Gala, Chang Xiaoliang, was shocked.

The netizens were also astounded and uncertain about what was going on.

"Huh?"

"Nothing is happening?"

"Everything is fine now?"

"The SARFT...aren't bothering with this issue?"

"Hahahahaha!"

"There was nothing to be afraid of in the first place, we were just scaring ourselves!"

"Yeah, the lines in Teacher Zhang's skit were written to satirize the bootlicking phenomenon these days. This performance carries a very deep meaning and also generates a positive message, so how can it have any problems?"

"This is great!"

"Teacher Zhang is fine!"

"It was a false alarm, a false alarm!"

"What about that Sports Administration chief?"

"Oh yeah, where is he? Why has he disappeared?"

"He was behaving quite insolently when he appeared, acting all high and mighty, making me think that he really had something up his sleeves!"

"Didn't you tell Teacher Zhang to try and see what would happen if he didn't apologize? Teacher Zhang has tried that by now! So can I ask...what then?"

At this point, the battle's outcome was decided!

The strong voices of denouncement from the sporting world were met with a strong defeat. In this moment, quite a number of athletes quietly went offline.

It was terrible!

They had lost so terribly!

The onlooking netizens were all clapping in appreciation of what they saw today!

"That was so fun!"

"Yeah, it was truly a battle worthy of being called a classic!"

"'Black New Year's Day' will definitely go down into the annals of history!"

"My drama meter is peaking! If I can witness such an exciting scolding battle every day, I will die without regrets!"

"Today, Zhang Ye has once again proven his fan's cohesiveness!"

"Zhang Ye was so domineering today! He crushed his opponents with just his momentum alone!"

"How satisfying!"

"This battle was well fought!"

The battle ended.

The Tieba authorities were currently cleaning up the mess from the battle.

Weibo's moderators had also started to delete a massive amount of comments with vulgarities in them.

However, the coaches and players of the national table tennis team who were the cause of all these events were utterly unable to accept the outcome. They couldn't figure out why the SARFT had suddenly gone quiet!

No way!

They couldn't just leave it this way!

This was not something they could afford to lose!

Han Li said angrily from the embarrassment: "The SARFT are going to wash their hands of this? Then we will report this to the cyber police!"

Li Qi's eyes lit up. "Yeah, he instigated the netizens into causing trouble and crashing so many bars. This is an act of Internet abuse, so the Internet Surveillance Bureau will surely take on the case!"

"Let's make a complaint!"

"Mention the Internet Surveillance Bureau on Weibo!"

The table tennis team's people hurriedly went to make their complaints!

However, they would probably never know that the previous violation they had reported to the SARFT's department was actually under the jurisdiction of Deputy Chief Wu—who was also Zhang Ye's girlfriend. And now, the Internet Surveillance Bureau they were making their complaints to was headed by one of the world's most famous hackers and cyber police officers, Officer Fan Yingyun—who was also the leader of Zhang Ye's Fan Club! The earlier scolding battle and the spam flooding operation was basically led by this female cyber policewoman from the Internet Surveillance Bureau! Fortunately, the table tennis team and everyone from the sporting world did not know of these facts, or else they might really have vomited blood for three days straight!

When the netizens saw this, they were angered once more!

"They're not done yet?"

"Still making complaints?"

"Haven't you people embarrassed yourselves enough already?"

"What the hell!"

"Teacher Zhang, be careful!"

"This is no trifling matter! We've had scolding battles and spam flooding operations before too, but those were all incited and organized by the netizens themselves. But this time, it happened under Teacher Zhang's command, so if he gets called out for that, this may become a big deal!"

"Ah?"

"Then what should we do?"

"Teacher Zhang, quickly delete your posts!"

"Yeah, hurry up and delete those posts from earlier. Just do it!"

"It wouldn't help even if he deletes them! There's a log for sure!"

A lot of fans were starting to worry again.

When Zhang Ye saw this, he did a little bit of work on his computer with the aid of the Network Technology Experience Books he had eaten in the past. He modified some stuff here, then added some stuff there. Finally, with a nod of his head, he gave Yao Jiancai a call.

"Old Yao, there's something I need your help with."

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Very soon, Yao Jiancai's Weibo suddenly posted: "Hello, everyone, this is Zhang Ye. Aiya, my account was hacked by someone. What just happened anyway? @Weibo Please help me reset my password. I've already sent in a request."

Following that, an account under the official Weibo replied: "Hello, Teacher Zhang Ye. We just checked and saw that your account was logged into from the United States. The password was indeed changed, so we will need to PM you to verify your identity and cell phone number to help you with the reset."

Zhang Ye on Yao Jiancai's Weibo: "Thank you. That is great, I can finally get back my Weibo account! Also, I would like to say that I really condemn the theft. They're way too brazen!"

Hacked?

You were hacked?

Ning Lan: "..."

Chen Guang was stunned!

Liu Yifeng was dumbfounded!

Han Li vomited blood!

Chang Xiaoliang fainted!

When everyone saw this statement, they nearly facepalmed themselves as ten thousand strings of "fuck you" flashed across their eyes! Everyone couldn't help screaming in their heads: "You're even scorning the hackers now? Fuck, you're the one who is brazen! No one else in the world is more brazen than you!"

What a familiar scene this was!

What a sense of *déjà vu* this held!

A celebrity's exclusive excuse—getting hacked!

No one in the sporting world had expected Zhang Ye to pull off such a classic trick at this point of time! You were hacked? Then about those comments and insulting posts from earlier? Who else but you could have written them? Now that you're done with the scolding and the matter has been put to rest, you're fucking acting innocent by claiming that you've been hacked? And you even said it with an "aiya"?

Aiya, your sister!

They were all outraged by the brazenness of Zhang Ye!

Chapter 902: A-list?

The next day.

On the second morning of the Spring Festival.

Having slept enough, Zhang Ye woke up naturally. He looked at his watch then pulled aside the blanket, yawned widely, and shouted into the living room, "Mom, what's for breakfast?"

His mother's voice came through the door.

"You're up?"

"Uh-huh."

"Breakfast is dumplings."

"What's the filling?"

"Chives, do you like that?"

"Hai, I'll just make do with whatever."

"What do you mean by make do with whatever? If you don't want to eat them, then don't eat!"

After squabbling for a bit, Zhang Ye put on his socks and turned on his cell phone which he turned off the night before to charge. As it had been a chaotic night, there were too many updates and calls from his friends, so Zhang Ye didn't bother keeping up with all that and simply turned it off when he went to bed. As a result, when he turned it back on, he suddenly received a flood of messages that were mostly sent to him late at night. Moreover, most of the messages sounded quite baffling to him and he couldn't understand what was going on.

Dong Shanshan's text: "That was really unexpected from you yesterday, but congratulations anyway, old classmate."

Yu Yingyi's text: "Zhang'er, congratulations in advance! I was watching the scolding battle throughout, you were awesome!"

Yao Jiancai: "Why is your phone off? Hahahaha, you were awesome. This scolding battle was really not for nothing! Your popularity really was gained through all that scolding!"

Hou Ge: "Teacher Zhang, congratulations in advance."

Fan Wenli: "Although we still don't know the exact figure, I'll congratulate you first anyway."

Chen Guang: "After the data is confirmed, our The Voice program team should get together for a meal."

Congratulations?

What are they congratulating me for?

What's this data they're talking about?

Zhang Ye did not understand and replied to them: "What do you mean by this? What are you guys talking about?"

The others probably slept late and weren't awake yet, so there was no response from them even after a long time. As Zhang Ye did not wish to disturb them by calling them, he got out of bed to brush his teeth, then went to eat breakfast.

Chenchen was playing games on her new cell phone.

Zhang Ye sat down and slapped her upside the head. "You only know how to play games!"

Chenchen did not even bother with him and just said straight in the direction of the kitchen, "Grandma, Zhang Ye hit my head."

Zhang Ye was angered into amusement. "You've even learned how to tattle on me now?"

Chenchen looked at him. "—Hur hur."

"What's going on here?" His mother immediately appeared, holding a bowl of steaming hot dumplings as she glared at him. "Don't keep hitting the child's head, or else I'll beat you up."

Zhang Ye said in a speechless manner, "She only knows to play games day in, day out."

His mother's next words left Zhang Ye with nothing to say. "That's still better than you fighting with people every other day!"

Zhang Ye: "..."

His mother snorted, "Did you get into another shouting match with the sporting world last night?"

Zhang Ye made a terse noise in acknowledgment.

Chenchen pouted. "Zhang Ye, you're really childish."

"See." His mother said, "Chenchen also knows how childish that was. You're a grown-up, yet you aren't as sensible as the child is and only know how to scold people!"

Zhang Ye quibbled, "That's part of my job requirements."

The clattering of keys opening the door jangled. It was his father who just returned from outside.

Zhang Ye looked over to the doorway. "Dad, where'd you go?"

"I went to buy the newspapers." His father was holding a thick stack of newspapers in his hands.

Zhang Ye exclaimed, "Did you go on a shopping spree?"

His father removed his shoes after stepping into the house and said, "I usually buy the newspapers that have your news in them. When I saw more than 20 newspapers with your news in them today, I bought them all at once."

Zhang Ye said, "Let me have a look."

His mother nagged, "Finish eating first, the dumplings have already gone cold!"

Taking the newspapers from his father, Zhang Ye stuffed a dumpling into his mouth and read the news as he ate. When he saw what was written, Zhang Ye was tickled and nearly spat out the dumpling in his mouth!

"Beijing TV's Spring Festival Gala wins the viewership ratings championship for the first time!"

"'A Letter to Home' earns an honorable spot on the Top Chinese Music Chart!"

"Zhang Ye and Yao Jiancai's crosstalk routine, 'Everything is Great,' receives rave reviews. Audience broke down in tears at the venue!"

"'Playing it Up' targets the table tennis team!"

"The largest scolding battle of the year began last night!"

"Zhang Ye engages in verbal spar with the sporting world! An earth-shattering battle!"

"Sports-related Tiebas wiped out last night!"

"Tang Dazhang's Tieba caught in 'crossfire'!"

"Zhang Ye claims: 'Aiya, my account was hacked!'"

"The 'account hacker' has once again ended up as the scapegoat!"

"No punishments have been meted out by the SARFT yet!"

All of these were the events from yesterday. The timeliness of news reporting by the traditional newspapers was not really that good. As Zhang Ye had performed his acts on Beijing Television's Spring Festival Gala at night, the daytime newspapers were already published and distributed. Only the online media outlets quickly followed up with his breaking news while the traditional newspapers had to wait until this morning to summarize yesterday's news.

When the television was switched on, the news was reporting about Zhang Ye as well.

"Last night, after being denounced by the crosstalk world last year, the sporting world has now declared war on Zhang Ye as well. Numerous sports stars and coaches, such as Liu Yifeng, Han Li, Li Qi, Tang Hechang, and several others fired off one after another at him. The scolding battle spread all over Weibo and flowed over to several dozen Tieba forums..."

Ring, ring, ring.

His cell phone rang.

It was the executive director of Beijing Television's Spring Festival Gala, Chang Xiaoliang.

He quickly swallowed the dumpling in his mouth and answered the call while mumbling: "Hi, Director Chang."

Over on the other end, Chang Xiaoliang laughed heartily, in high spirits. "Hahaha, Teacher Zhang, you're awake already?"

Zhang Ye put down his chopsticks. "Ah, yes, I'm eating breakfast right now."

Chang Xiaoliang got straight to the point. "The viewership rating for our Spring Festival Gala last night is out!"

"How did we do?" Zhang Ye actually knew already from the newspapers.

Chang Xiaoliang said: "Without a doubt, we were first. It even exceeded the viewership rating of the second place Liaoning TV Spring Festival Gala by a lot. In third place and fourth place are Mango TV and Dragon TV respectively, while Zhejiang TV was placed fifth."

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "That's great then."

Chang Xiaoliang asked: "Did you see the viewership ratings for your acts?"

"Is it out yet?" replied Zhang Ye, interested.

Chang Xiaoliang gave a sound of acknowledgment and sighed with satisfaction. "The viewership ratings of your two acts on Beijing TV's Spring Festival Gala were the highest, even when compared with all the other Spring Festival Galas last night. The nationwide viewership of 'Everything is Great' was 3.77% while the nationwide viewership of 'Playing it Up' was 4.01%. They have broken all the records of the provincial stations' Spring Festival Galas over the years! You might not know this, but when many of the industry insiders saw your viewership ratings, they were all shocked for a long time and regretted not inviting you to appear on their station's Spring Festival Gala this year!"

Zhang Ye was also frightened. "That high?"

A popular show like A Bite of China could only achieve a highest rating of 2.98% in the nationwide viewership ratings, while Zhang Ye's performance on the Spring Festival Gala had actually broken 4%. But it couldn't be compared with those viewership ratings of over 10, 20, or even 30% on Central TV's Spring Festival Gala. After all, even though it was harshly criticized by a lot of people, no matter how terrible the acts were to watch, Central TV's Spring Festival Gala was still Central TV's Spring Festival Gala. This status was something that could never be shaken by anyone. But among the provincial stations' Spring Festival Gala, the viewership ratings of Zhang Ye's two acts were considered very heaven-defying, sweeping aside all the other performances without any of them coming close!

"We are the champions of the viewership ratings!" Chang Xiaoliang exclaimed: "My objectives for this year can be considered to have been completed successfully. I did not let down the station's the trust and expectations they put in me!"

Zhang Ye said: "Congratulations, Director Chang."

Chang Xiaoliang was taken aback, then laughed and said: "Why are you congratulating me? I should be the one congratulating you instead."

Zhang Ye recalled something and asked: "Oh yes, there was a group of people congratulating me in advance this morning, what were they talking about? I reread those messages over and over but I still don't get it."

"Don't you know about it yet?"

"What should I know about?"

"Have you not seen the Celebrity Rankings Index?"

"Uh, I didn't see it as I went to sleep immediately after the scolding battle last night."

"Take a look then. I believe you won't be too far off from the A-list rankings."

"Huh?"

After hanging up, Zhang Ye quickly browsed through the overall popularity scores of the Celebrity Rankings Index which was updated at midnight. The moment he looked at it, he could not find his name in the rankings at all. When he searched for his own name, a message appeared, saying, "Zhang Ye: Ranking pending."

Pending?

His ranking was not shown?

Zhang Ye was suddenly enlightened. Only then did he realize why everyone was congratulating him in advance.

The ranking system of this world was fairly advanced and professional, with the system automatically recording the discussion popularity of each celebrity, the value of their work, the awards they won, and other factors to arrive at a base score that would then be converted into an overall score to rank them accordingly. But a computer system was still a computer system after all and there would be times when it would malfunction. For example, on more than one occasion in the past, when some of the C- or D-list celebrities shot to fame overnight due to their appearance on Central TV's Spring Festival Gala, it resulted in a direct jump for them onto the B-list rankings. When that occurred, the system would have a chance of hanging due to an overly large increase of popularity scores causing the processing to peak and the system becoming unable to handle the calculations. That was why this pending status was shown in place when it happened. It would require human input the next day to assist the system to recalculate the scores to display the most accurate rankings.

Anyway, a pending status was definitely a good thing. It meant that the popularity and exposure figures generated by Zhang Ye yesterday were too great. After the manual assessment, there would definitely be a large increase!

Zhang Ye's previous B-list ranking was at fourth place, which he had just recently been promoted to, so the gap between him and third place was still very wide. In the B-list rankings, especially at the top few places, the popularity and fame required to advance to the next ranking was quite huge!

How many places would he rise with this massive increase in popularity?

To third place on the B-list rankings?

Or second place?

Or could it be first place?

Perhaps even...

Zhang Ye was extremely excited and did not dare to think any further. "Dad, Mom, I've got something to tell you. Haha, my popularity has risen again and there might even be an explosive increase this time!" He explained the situation to them.

His mother was also excited. "Is that true?"

Upon hearing this, his father said in a speechless manner, "You can even gain popularity by scolding people?"

"Did you forget?" His mother interjected, "When our son went from the C-list to the B-list rankings, didn't he do so by scolding others?"

His father: "...It seems like that was the case."

Zhang Ye nearly fainted. "I also performed in a crosstalk and skit last night that set new viewership rating records for the provincial stations' Spring Festival Galas in recent years! Why are you both insisting that I always do it by scolding people?"

Beside him, Chenchen ate a dumpling and looked up at him. "Hur hur."

His mother asked, "So when will the rankings be out?"

Zhang Ye answered, "They should be out soon. I'm sure that they'll be released during the day."

The more his mother thought about it, the happier and more excited she became. She said, "You were at fourth place on the B-list rankings. If you continue moving up further, won't you be really close to getting into the A-list?"

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Meanwhile.

The outside world was also paying close attention to Zhang Ye's popularity ranking!

The media reporters' concentration was at their maximum!

Many of the celebrities in the entertainment industry also couldn't tear their eyes away!

Chapter 903: Becoming an A-lister!

On Weibo.

The so-called "Black New Year's Day" epic battle had ended, the Weibo popularity of it falling by quite a lot today. Of course, this also had to do with everyone staying up late to scold people and watching the spectacle last night. As it was still very early in the morning and the second day of the Spring Festival was a rest day, most people were still not up yet.

"Is anyone around?"

"Where are all the brothers and sisters who did battle together yesterday?"

"*yawns* I just woke up."

"Same. What's up?"

"Teacher Zhang's popularity ranking is currently pending!"

"Huh?"

"Really?"

"Holy shit, there's going to be a breakthrough in his popularity then!"

"Teacher Zhang's popularity score is going to increase again? How much will it increase by?"

"Of course his popularity score will increase. Just the crosstalk and skit acts alone have become very popular with the people. I have a link here for everyone to watch. It's the viewership stats of all the acts on the provincial stations' Spring Festival Gala yesterday. First and second place are both Zhang Ye's acts, and coupled with the entry of 'A Letter to Home' on the Top Chinese Music Chart and the humorous Weibo insults that mocked the sporting world, which led to that earth-shattering battle with them last night, his popularity score will definitely experience a huge surge!"

"Yeah, how many people in the country would not know Zhang Ye's name by now? Moreover, it has reached the point where people not only know about his name, they also become his die-hard fans. For example, my attention on Zhang Ye before this was not worth a mention at all. I used to liked him, but did not pay much attention to him or follow his news daily. But now? Ever since last night, I've started paying attention to Zhang Ye's Weibo and joined his Tieba fan club to fight alongside him. I even kept refreshing for online news about him, and if I saw any news with his name on it, I would click on the link. When I saw anyone speaking ill of Zhang Ye, I would go up to them and scold them. I believe that was what many people were doing as well!"

"Haha, yeah, me too!"

"Zhang Ye was so cool yesterday!"

"Right, this is the first time I've seen a celebrity with such a fucking domineering air to him! Standing firm against a sporting world chief and numerous sports star champions, he even won in the end! How awesome!"

"What rank do you think Teacher Zhang will reach this time?"

"Second place on the B-list?"

"I think he'll become first place on the B-list!"

"That will be difficult. The second place celebrity on the B-list rankings is currently Dongdong, team leader of the most popular domestic girl group. Her popularity score is very high. Furthermore, she gains additional popularity from the group's popularity, so it won't be that easy to surpass her."

The netizens discussed this.

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Elsewhere.

In the Celebrity Goof Group.

Xiaodong sent a crying emoji. "Is anyone awake yet?"

Soon after, Fan Wenli replied: "I just woke up."

Xiaodong: "Looking for some moral support!"

Huo Dongfang also appeared. "What's the matter, Xiaodong?"

About eight people gradually came online. "Why are you crying?"

Finally, Xiaodong said: "Teacher Zhang Ye's popularity score is currently pending and not displayed. He was fourth place previously on the B-list whereas I'm second place. I think I'm in danger! *cries*!"

Fan Wenli: "*pats head to comfort you*."

Chen Guang laughed and said: "That won't happen, right? Fourth place is still quite far from you."

Xiaodong sent another crying emoji. "In the past, I thought it was quite far away and felt that it would be a long time before Teacher Zhang would catch up, but I really don't think it's that far anymore."

Fan Wenli said: "Aren't you all going on tour soon? When the album for the tour comes out, your popularity will definitely rise dramatically. You can then push for the A-list when you release your new songs next year!"

Ning Lan was online too. "That's right! Xiaodong, I believe in you!"

Chen Guang: "Go, Xiaodong! I believe in you. Eliminate Zhang Ye."

Huo Dongfang: "Go, Xiaodong! I believe in you. Eliminate Zhang Ye."

Fan Wenli: "Go, Xiaodong! I believe in you. Eliminate Zhang Ye."

A group of people followed along and gave their reply as well.

Xiaodong quickly said: "Thank you, thank you, everyone, for your encouragement."

Then, Zhang Ye appeared. He sent a long string of dots.

Chen Guang immediately said: "Go, Zhang Ye! I believe in you. Eliminate Xiaodong."

Fan Wenli: "Go, Zhang Ye! I believe in you. Eliminate Xiaodong."

Huo Dongfang: "Go, Zhang Ye! I believe in you. Eliminate Xiaodong."

It was that same group of people who replied before this.

Zhang Ye nearly fainted!

Xiaodong vomited at least three liters of blood!

Xiaodong shouted: "You people are so two-faced!"

Ning Lan: "Hahahahaha!"

This chat group named Goof Group really lived up to its name.

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At home.

His mother kept asking, "Is it out yet? Is it?"

His father said in speechless manner, "Will you give it a rest? Aren't you being a little too irritating?"

"How can I not be concerned about this major event?" His mother stared at his father.

Zhang Ye refreshed the rankings again, then laughed and said, "It's not out yet, so let's wait a little longer."

Incidentally, he suddenly thought of Old Yao and Shanshan's rankings, so he took some time to check them out. When he saw it, Zhang Ye was shocked for a moment. He realized that Yao Jiancai and Dong Shanshan's popularity scores had surged too after last night!

The two of them were on the C-list rankings!

It was easy to explain for Yao Jiancai as he had been in the industry for over 20 years. He was involved with crosstalk routines and acted in movies. That in and of itself was an accumulation of popularity. This accumulation was many times more compared to Zhang Ye, so it was only normal that Old Yao's past works had accumulated enough popularity for him to be successful in the present. But Dong Shanshan being promoted into the C-list rankings at this time made Zhang Ye quite startled. However, after careful thought, it was not actually that shocking either. Although Shanshan did not have many works behind her, her conditions were simply just too good! She was blessed with good looks and a sexy figure, especially that long pair of legs. Not many people in the entertainment industry could compete with her on that. She was born with this advantage and was a good sapling for the entertainment industry. In the entertainment industry, a person's figure and appearance would also be considered an individual's abilities, so they weren't considered something despicable or disgraceful at all. This was because the entertainment industry was different from other professions!

Zhang Ye hurriedly made some calls to give his congratulations.

Du, du, du. The call was answered.

"Who is this?" Yao Jiancai still sounded asleep.

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "It's me. I'm calling to congratulate you. Your popularity has gone up again."

Yao Jiancai said: "Little Zhang, haha. It has increased by quite a bit. I already saw that last night and wanted to call you, but your cell phone was off!"

Zhang Ye said happily: "Great. As the best duo, we've gained quite a lot this time. Shanshan did even better than us and has been promoted to the C-list rankings. Although her ranking is near the bottom of the list, she is still considered a C-lister now!"

"I saw it." Yao Jiancai said: "She has a better prospect than us since she has the bearing of an A-list celebrity."

Zhang Ye replied: "You make it sound like I don't have that."

Yao Jiancai burst into laughter. "What kind of a bearing of an A-list celebrity do you have?"

Zhang Ye said: "I don't have the looks, but it will still happen soon."

Yao Jiancai laughed and said: "You can try to push your advance this year, but it'll still depend on luck."

"Yeah." Zhang Ye declared: "My goal for this year is to try to aim for the A-list rankings. In the past, countless experts and people from the entertainment industry said that my unconventional way of being a celebrity would come to an end upon reaching the forefront of the B-list rankings, that I wouldn't be able to advance any further than this. Ha, but I really don't believe that shit!"

Yao Jiancai said: "Let's see how much you can rise after your pending status is confirmed. Is it out yet?"

"It's not, I'm still waiting..." Just as he said that, he suddenly heard his mother clamoring next to him.

His mother, who was constantly refreshing her cell phone's browser, shouted, "It's out! Son! The ranking is out!"

Zhang Ye was startled and said into his cell phone: "I think it's out. I'll take a look first. Bye."

Yao Jiancai returned: "OK, I'll take a look too."

...

On Weibo.

"It's out!"

"Zhang Ye's popularity score has been released!"

"Quick, go and see!"

"What's the situation now?"

"What place is he on the B-list rankings?"

"Holy shit! Holy shit! Holy shit!"

"Heavens!"

"What's going on? What are you holy shitting for? And why are you shouting heavens? Could Zhang Ye have really overtaken Dongdong?"

"Come and see quickly! What the hell! This is crazy! This is totally crazy!"

The Internet blew up in an instant!

...

Celebrity Goof Group.

Ning Lan: "It's out!"

Chen Guang also shouted: "The rankings index has been updated!"

However, the many celebrities who saw the rankings were all shocked!

Fan Wenli was dumbfounded. "This..."

Chen Guang: "Holy shit!"

Huo Dongfang gasped: "This is..."

Xiaodong: "*&\$*)(*\$)(@! ! !"

...

At home.

His mother was also shouting, "Son! Quick, take a look at this! Look at this!"

His father came over and said, "Stop shouting, you're disturbing the neighbors."

"What's the matter, Mom? How much did my popularity score increase by?" Zhang Ye quickly took out his cell phone to look at the latest updated B-list celebrity rankings and was stunned by what he saw!

What does this mean?

Why isn't my name on it yet?

Zhang Ye said helplessly, "Mom, don't know how to use a cell phone? It's still not updated yet, my name isn't there at all."

His mother said ecstatically, "It is! It is!"

Zhang Ye was stunned. Suddenly, he thought of a seemingly impossible possibility and immediately picked up his cell phone excitedly again and tapped on the A-list celebrity rankings!

He browsed to the next page!

And the next page!

And further to the next page!

Finally, he saw his own name at the last spot!

Zhang Ye was dumbfounded!

He was totally dumbfounded without any mental preparation at all!

The A-list?

He had become an A-list celebrity just like that?

Chapter 904: Becoming an A-lister even without a proper job?

At Ha Qiqi's house.

After just waking up, she received a call from Little Wang, only to hear her shouting and yelling on the other end.

Little Wang screamed, "Ahhh!"

Ha Qiqi said in a speechless manner: "Who stepped on your foot?"

"Director Ha! Director Zhang has become an A-lister!" Little Wang exclaimed.

"What A-lister?" Ha Qiqi was startled.

"An A-lister! You know, an A-lister!" Little Wang yelled.

Ha Qiqi finally realized what was going on and asked in a stunned manner: "Are you saying that Director Zhang has gotten into the A-list rankings?"

"Yea!" Little Wang was extremely excited. "He's so awesome! He's amazing!"

Ha Qiqi immediately sat up and said in surprise: "How is that possible? Wasn't he just fourth place on the B-list rankings before this? How did he suddenly get into the A-list rankings?"

...

Beijing Times.

At the entertainment section's editorial department.

An exclamation of "holy shit" loudly reverberated in the office!

"Zhang Ye...has become an A-lister!"

"Ah?"

"What?"

"That's not possible!"

"Did they make a mistake?"

"Him? A-lister? How could he become an A-lister so quickly?!"

"Fuck, let me see!"

"This wicked wretch can also become an A-lister?"

...

The people at Central TV also found out about the news instantly!

Xu Yipeng was stunned!

Chen Ye was stunned!

Jiang Yuan was stunned!

Those who were on the program team of the Spring Festival Gala were also stunned!

"Zhang Ye be-became an A-lister!"

"Uh..."

"This..."

Silence!

Or rather, they were cursing in their minds!

Even he can become an A-lister? He really became an A-lister? Is there any justice? Is there any law? What has this fellow done? He had not done any proper work before at all. Taking into account those current A-list celebrities in the entertainment industry, the majority of them were either singers or actors. Hosting was considered an obscure profession in the entertainment industry. Furthermore, Zhang Ye did not even do his main job as a host properly. Instead, he became a director, involved himself in the field of mathematics, took up positions as a university professor, piloted a plane, dabbled in calligraphy, wrote novels, composed poems, and even performed crosstalks? You have not done any proper work at all!

You can even do it like that?

You can even become a goddamn A-lister like that?

...

The media was making a racket!

The entertainment circle was making a racket!

Thousands and thousands of people were also making a racket!

When they saw the rankings, everyone's first reaction was disbelief!

Actually, wasn't that the case for Zhang Ye too? Zhang Ye was even more shocked that he became an A-list celebrity than the media, the netizens, and his colleagues. After working so hard for his goal, he had finally reached it just like that? Zhang Ye did not feel any sense of realism in this as he stood rooted to the spot for a long time, not even believing it himself!

His mother laughed loudly and said, "Son! You're really an A-lister now! Although it's only the last spot!"

His father was also stunned.

Chenchen came out and said, "Zhang Ye, do you need me to step on your foot?" Saying that, she actually stepped right onto his foot.

"Why are you stepping on my foot?" Zhang Ye said speechlessly to her.

Chenchen calmly replied, "I'm just letting you know that you aren't dreaming."

Pfft!

This bad kid!

Zhang Ye was angered into amusement. "Looks like I have to thank you then."

Chenchen acknowledged, "You're welcome."

Suddenly, the phones rang noisily!

His mother's cell phone rang first, followed by a lively ringing tone of Zhang Ye's cell phone, then Chenchen's cell phone also rang at almost the same time. The house phone in the living room rang as well!

There was ringing sounds everywhere!

His mother answered and said joyfully: "Hello...aiyo, Mengmeng...that's right, that's right, your brother has been promoted to the A-list. We just found out about it too....Right, right....Thank you....Your brother is busy answering calls now, I'll get him to call you back later....Is your mom at home? She is? Get her on the phone...."

His father picked up the house phone. It was from an old neighbor. "Hello? Brother Liu....Yes, he's an A-lister now....Thank you, thank you, congratulations....Let me thank you on Little Ye's behalf....Alright, OK...come over to our home when you're free!"

Chenchen was talking to her classmate on the phone. "Hello? Who's this? Oh...Black Widow."

Everyone was busy answering their phones.

Zhang Ye moved far away from them and went back into his bedroom to answer the calls.

The first call was from Dong Shanshan.

Dong Shanshan immediately said: "Are you for real?"

Zhang Ye laughed heartily: "Maybe, probably, it's most likely real!"

Dong Shanshan said: "I saw your popularity score pending in the middle of the night and knew that you would definitely leap up in the rankings. I even sent a message to congratulate you in advance, but who knew that you'd leap by this much? This is not just about jumping several spots in the rankings anymore, but a direct promotion into the A-list?"

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "You were very impressive too. You're now a big shot C-list celebrity!"

"That still can't be compared to you." Dong Shanshan chuckled. "How many years has it been since any of the graduates from Media College have become an A-list celebrity? Three years? Or five years? Who could have expected that it would be you to achieve that!"

Media College specialized in the broadcasting major, and in this specialty, they were ranked number one in the country without others coming close. But because of this, those who graduated from Media College found it difficult to gain any great achievements. It was not easy for a host to stand out in the entertainment industry as they were not mainstream celebrities. And in the other majors, such as singing, directing, and acting, Media College was unable to compare with the Central Conservatory of Music, Central Academy of Drama, and Shanghai Theater Academy. But today, after a few years, Media College had finally produced another A-list celebrity. This undoubtedly made the students of Media College very excited!

After hanging up with Dong Shanshan, many of his other friends called as well.

His beloved Teacher Su of Media College was similarly excited.

"Little Zhang, good job! You did great!"

"It was all thanks to Teacher Su's guidance!"

"Knock it off. Which school or teacher can produce such a reckless celebrity like you? That's all your own hard work!"

"Man, why does it sound like you're lecturing me?"

"Hahaha. Kid, you've brought a lot of pride to our alma mater this time! Good! Very good!"

"Thanks, Teacher Su."

"President Hu contacted me earlier and wanted me to congratulate you on behalf of the college."

"Oh, then please give my thanks to President Hu!"

A while later, the people from Peking University also called!

"Congratulations, Little Zhang!"

"Thank you, Dean Pan!"

"Our mathematics field has produced an A-list celebrity this time around! Hahaha!"

"You can even count this?"

"Why not? Aren't you a Peking University math professor?"

"—Yes."

"Then of course it's counted since you're part of Peking University's Mathematics Department!"

"Uh, alright then."

When the Chinese Department's Dean Chang and Secretary Zhen called, they said something similar as well.

"Little Zhang, congratulations to you. To think that a teacher from Peking University's Chinese Department could become an A-list celebrity! When are you free to come back? We'll hold a celebration for you when you're here!"

"Thank you, Dean Chang, I'll treat everyone when the time comes!"

"I'll hold you to your words then!"

It could be imagined that when Peking University started its school term this year, the entrance of the Chinese Department would definitely have a banner hung with words like "A warm congratulations to Peking University Associate Professor Zhang Ye from the Chinese Department on being promoted to the A-list." Then the Math Department would hang a similar banner saying, "A warm congratulations to

Peking University Associate Professor Zhang Ye from the Math Department on being promoted to the A-list"! Damn, hopefully they won't end up fighting when that time comes!

The calls kept coming!

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli called to offer their congratulations!

A call from songstress Zhang Xia.

A call from skit actress Ci Xiufang.

A call from Qu Haiying who was hospitalized at the moment.

Five calls!

Ten calls!

Twenty calls!

Thirty calls!

Finally, even Zhang Yuanqi gave him a call.

She did not speak much, but it left Zhang Ye in a good mood.

Old Zhang: "You're alright."

Zhang Ye: "Haha, I'm not bad."

Old Zhang: "To be honest, I was rather surprised that you managed to get into the A-list."

Zhang Ye: "I haven't come around yet from all that has happened either."

Old Zhang: "Not bad, but you're still far off from becoming an S-list Heavenly King."

Zhang Ye: "Hur hur, who knows? I might catch up to you by next year."

Old Zhang: "Sure. I'll be waiting."

The news of Zhang Ye getting promoted to the A-list had shocked and startled lots of people!

It was not very long ago that Zhang Ye was just a Media College graduate who could not find a job. He stumbled along in his journey, scolding his leaders, getting involved in fights, working on shows, piloting a plane, battling the global mathematics field, and arguing with the crosstalk and sporting worlds. The difficulties and hardships that he faced along the way could basically be compiled into a book as thick as three Journey to the West books, with an additional book of The Golden Lotus! But now, he was finally promoted to the A-list! This was an affirmation to all of Zhang Ye's efforts over the past two years. He was glad that he had chosen this path and had kept following it all the way until now!

After finishing with all the calls, Zhang Ye breathed a sigh of relief as he finally got some time to call Wu Zeqing. "Old Wu, I'm an A-lister now."

Old Wu laughed and said: "I've already seen it."

Zhang Ye said with a smile: "There's nothing else. I just wanted to thank you. I still remember clearly how no one believed in me back then. Everyone thought that I would not be able to advance any further after I had reached the B-list rankings, that it was impossible for me to have an opportunity or the qualities to rise another level. But it was because of your encouragement that I persisted onward. Now that this bro has managed to persist thus far, I will still continue to move upwards as there are still the S-list and international stage that I want to get to. I won't be stopping here for sure!"

Old Wu said smilingly: "Then don't stop. I, too, am especially looking forward to seeing how far you can go."

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "As long as you're beside me, I can even aim for the skies!"

Chapter 905: Zhang Ye's live interview!

On the same day, the news was out!

The newspapers, television, and online media were all fighting to cover this piece of news!

"Zhang Ye promoted into the A-list!"

"The latest Celebrity Rankings Index!"

"The A-list Celebrity Rankings have finally been updated!"

"Zhang Ye surprisingly breaks into the A-list!"

"Can Zhang Ye maintain his ranking as an A-lister? Let us wait and see!"

"A raffish celebrity creates a miracle that won't be replicated by anyone!"

"A journey: How Zhang Ye walked his path to fame!"

"Zhang Ye: A prodigy not recognized by his industry peers!"

"Feats or faults, leave it to the future generations to judge for themselves?"

In fact, Zhang Ye was ascending to cloud nine looking at all these headlines!

The A-list Celebrity Rankings had stayed unchanged for a long time. It had always cycled between the same few people moving up and down on the list without any new entries. After all, even if one were to shoot to fame overnight, they would at most get onto the B-list. This would be in the most extreme of circumstances where a celebrity shot to fame. But to get onto the A-list? This was something that required results, with a need for background and an accumulation of popularity. A celebrity who shot to fame overnight would never be able to hold onto the status of an A-lister, which was why this ranking had been stable for such a long time. Most outsiders could never break into it!

But today, Zhang Ye had broken the stalemate. A celebrity with average looks, someone who could never depend on his looks to make a living, this person had actually managed to stumble his way to a new height. In the eyes of many, this was a miracle. If it was just the B- or C-list rankings, this would have been acceptable. But in the ranks of the A-list, which celebrity did not depend on their looks to

make a living? Even if they depended on their talents and other factors, their looks were definitely still outstanding. This had become one of the prerequisites of the A-list, but with Zhang Ye's appearance on it, it had surprised everyone. For someone who had just debuted for less than two years, someone who only looked a little better than average, he had somehow been promoted into the A-list?

Although he was still ranked last.

Although his popularity was still unstable as of now.

In the afternoon, Zhang Ye received a call and left in a hurry.

...

At Central TV.

The heavens were kind today with clear skies.

When Zhang Ye arrived, Yan Tianfei's secretary was waiting for him at the entrance. The secretary was already walking up to welcome him when he spotted Zhang Ye's car arriving from afar.

"Teacher Zhang, congratulations! Congratulations to you!" the secretary said.

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

The secretary immediately said, "The interview will be done on Central TV Live News. Please come with me."

Zhang Ye nodded and followed. "Alright. It won't take long, right?"

The secretary replied, "At most ten minutes, but it's a live broadcast."

"Alright, I understand," Zhang Ye said.

The secretary laughed. "I was afraid that you wouldn't come."

Zhang Ye shrugged and remarked, "If it's a live interview with Central TV, why would I not come?"

Right now, Zhang Ye needed to solidify his position and popularity. Having just been promoted into the A-list, the newcomer clearly could not compare with the other A-listers as he wouldn't have their foundations of fame. In the short term, he couldn't compete with them, so there was no need to think about surpassing them. But for the people behind him, their popularity did not differ much from his. That previous A-lister Zhang Ye had replaced was currently at the top of the B-list rankings, so it could be said that he might still return to the A-list at any time and push Zhang Ye back down the rankings. At this time, it was Zhang Ye's most unstable and vulnerable period. He needed to solidify this place he had fought so hard for!

Since there was an interview?

And it was even a live interview on Central TV?

Then of course he had to come. Otherwise, that former A-list celebrity might just come up with something and Zhang Ye would return to the B-list the next day, becoming the most short-lived A-lister in history.

Besides, it wasn't easy to secure this interview either!

There were a lot of going-ons behind it.

After receiving news of Zhang Ye getting promoted into the A-list, Central TV News Channel contacted Department 14 and communicated with them, hoping to arrange for a short live interview with Zhang Ye. According to convention, whenever a celebrity was promoted into the A-list, it was always considered a major event. Therefore, Central TV—being the big brother of television stations—couldn't possibly miss out on reporting such news, so they would usually arrange for a one-on-one live interview with that celebrity on the day of. But the reason why this was delayed until the afternoon was mainly because of the rather awkward relationship between Central TV and Zhang Ye. Having gone through a lawsuit, having fought and scolded each other, the people of the Central TV News Channel could not make the decision to do this interview. They had to urgently seek out the heads to communicate their intentions and hold a meeting to discuss it. It took until the afternoon before this live interview with Zhang Ye was approved, although that would be considered a good thing even with all the setbacks.

Suddenly.

In front of him, his colleagues all appeared!

"Director Zhang!"

"Director Zhang!"

"Teacher Zhang!"

Ha Qiqi, Little Wang, Tong Fu, and Huang Dandan were all here!

Zhang Ye was surprised by them and said with a smile, "Whoa, why are you all back at work on the second day of the new year?"

Ha Qiqi smiled. "We're not. We knew that you were going to come for a live interview, so we came back specifically for that. We wanted to congratulate you and to also cheer you on."

Little Wang gave him a thumbs up and said in admiration, "Director Zhang, you're so awesome! When I heard about you becoming an A-list celebrity, I was totally stunned by the news!"

"Director Zhang, treat us!"

"Yeah, you have treat us!"

"Treat, treat, treat!"

"Zhang Zuo and Wu Yi will be coming over in a while too!"

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Alright, don't leave then. After the interview is done, I'll treat everyone!"

...

The outside world.

The news had long since been released.

"Zhang Ye's going to appear on Central TV's live broadcast!"

"What time?"

"It's almost time!"

"Ah, then I must definitely catch it!"

"Uh, didn't Central TV and Zhang Ye have a falling out?"

"But this is such big news. They still have to invite Zhang Ye for an interview no matter what. He's an A-list celebrity now, a big shot in the entertainment industry, so how can he still be treated like he was before? Even if Central TV dislikes him, for such a big piece of news, they would definitely have to report it!"

"It's only a ten-minute live interview? Back when Huo Dongfang rose into the A-list, he gave an interview for half an hour! They even made a special program to cover him!"

"But the key here is that it's Zhang Ye!"

"Pfft, with his relationships, how can he possibly be compared to Sect Leader Huo?"

"Hahaha, it's already considered very good that he has ten minutes!"

"Let's see if Teacher Zhang can use this chance to solidify his position. The original A-lister who was knocked down to the B-list is hot on his heels. The difference in the popularity scores is just tens of thousands!"

"Teacher Zhang, we're cheering you on!"

"You must definitely hold onto your position!"

A popularity score difference of tens of thousands of points might sound like a lot, but at this level, it would be considered very little. It could just be the difference of one song, a commercial, an interview, or an incident on Weibo. Their popularity scores were very close. Whoever would be in the A-list tomorrow was still an open question!

The interview was about to begin!

His parents turned on the television.

Zhang Ye's relatives and neighbors also tuned into Central TV News Channel.

At home, Yan Tianfei switched on his television.

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli were watching.

Zhang Xia was watching.

Ci Xiufang was watching.

Dong Shanshan was watching.

Yao Jiancai was watching.

Peking University's Teacher Su Na was watching.

Central TV Department 1's Jiang Yuan, Xu Yipeng, and Chen Ye were watching.

The peers of the crosstalk world were watching.

Those from the sporting world were watching.

Zhang Yuanqi and her manager were watching.

Even Wu Zeqing was watching.

Zhang Ye's relatives, friends, colleagues, fans, even his foes, those who liked him, those who disliked him, many of these people were waiting and watching their televisions at this moment, waiting for Zhang Ye's first appearance since getting into the A-list Celebrity Rankings. They wanted to know just what he would say after getting promoted into the A-list.

...

On Central TV News Channel.

Central TV Live News began its live broadcast!

The host was a woman in her thirties. Her name was Zhang Ya, which was a rather strange name. She was a veteran host of Central TV who had even hosted News Simulcast for a period of time. She was also one of the few remaining people at Central TV who had never had any conflict with Zhang Ye. Therefore, her interviewing Zhang Ye today came as no surprise at all.

A long table.

And two chairs.

The two of them sat facing each other.

Zhang Ya put on her signature smile and announced, "We're very happy to be able to invite my colleague to today's Central TV Live News—welcome, Teacher Zhang Ye."

Zhang Ya smiled and said, "Hello, Teacher Zhang Ya."

"Speaking of, we were probably family 500 hundred years ago," Zhang Ya said with a smile.

Zhang Ye nodded. "Right, I heard of your great name long ago."

Zhang Ya asked, "Oh? Teacher Zhang knows of me?"

Zhang Ye chuckled. "I often watch your news shows, so in my mind, you're just like the stars in the sky!"

Zhang Ya said in surprise, "Wow, do I shine that brightly to you?"

"Hai." Zhang Ye then followed with, "Whether there's one star more or one star less, it doesn't make any difference to me."

"Pfft!" Zhang Ya, host who had anchored news shows, had always done her job with only two kinds of expressions, with a serious look or a professional smile! But today, in this process of the live broadcast, Zhang Ya had giggled because of Zhang Ye's words!

The people watching their televisions were also entertained!

"Hahahaha!"

"Aiyo, Zhang Ye is really amazing!"

"It's a live broadcast and he's still talking that way?"

"It feels like he's performing a crosstalk instead!"

"Of course! How can Zhang Ye's interviews be like the others? Hahaha!"

"I like this! I like him so much!"

"That flamboyance can only come from someone like him!"

His mother also said in a speechless manner, "That rascal, he isn't afraid to say anything!"

On TV.

Zhang Ya laughed for a long time before finally giving a helpless expression. "I've finally had a taste of Teacher Zhang's eloquence today."

"It's just a joke, just a joke," Zhang Ye cracked.

In fact, after being together at Central TV for so long, Zhang Ya and Zhang Ye were coming face to face for the first time officially. To say that this was her first humbling experience with Zhang Ye, that was really the truth and she really did learn a little from Zhang Ye. She had interviewed countless celebrities and done countless news reporting in the past. Even for the celebrities who had just risen into the A-list, she had interviewed two of them before. When those newly promoted A-listers came here to Central TV Live News, they would tend to be serious and polite, or keep thanking their fans and family. But this was truly the first time she had come across someone like Zhang Ye who immediately cracked jokes the moment he spoke. At that instant, she wasn't too prepared and couldn't help but lose her composure. She could only smile wryly as she thought of how Zhang Ye was really different from other stars!

Chapter 906: I'm Unfamiliar with this World!

In the recording studio.

Zhang Ya smiled and said, "Teacher Zhang, let's get serious now."

Zhang Ye looked at her and said, "Did you think I wasn't serious just now?"

Zhang Ya: "..."

Zhang Ye cleared his throat and said, "Fine, I'll really be proper this time."

Zhang Ya was holding a cue card in her hand as she gave a wry smile. "After your antics, I really don't know how to host or what to ask."

In front of her was Zhang Ye, who was also an excellent host himself. When these two hosts met, neither of them really knew who would be the one asking or answering the questions.

"It's fine, you can ask me anything." Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Treat it like we're chatting as friends. I'm a very casual person, so I wouldn't know what to say if it gets too formal."

Zhang Ya then said in a relaxed manner, "Alright then, let's just treat it as if we're chatting as friends."

Zhang Ye said, "Sure."

Zhang Ya smiled and said, "Regarding the news that was just released this morning, you have officially been promoted to the A-list. I especially would like to know what your reaction was when you found out about it."

Zhang Ye threw up his hands and said with a smile, "My first reaction was to look at the sun outside the window."

Zhang Ya asked puzzled, "Did you feel that it would bring you a sunny warmth?"

Zhang Ye shook his head. "Nope."

Zhang Ya asked again, "Did you feel like you were glowing from the sun's rays?"

Zhang Ye shook his head. "It's not that either."

Zhang Ya asked in curiosity, "Then why did you look outside at the sun?"

Zhang Ye said, "I was looking to see if the sun rose from the west today."

Zhang Ya reacted, "Pfft! Just for that?"

Zhang Ye nodded his head seriously and said, "Yes, that was it."

The audience was also entertained!

"That mouth on Teacher Zhang!"

"If you were in disbelief, just say that you couldn't believe it. Why are you talking about looking at the sun!"

"Pfft, a Beijinger's bad habit of speaking nonsense has rendered me speechless!"

"Yeah, he never wants to speak properly and has to beat around the bush for some reason!"

"What an informal interview this is!"

"Haha, it's quite good that they're being informal. I like to watch Zhang Ye's teasing!"

At the recording studio.

Zhang Ya said in amusement, "Looks like you were also very surprised by this news."

Zhang Ye said, "Yes. I also read the netizens' comments and watched the reports on television. Honestly, you might not believe this. You thought you guys were surprised? I was even more surprised than all of

you. Such an unpopular person like me in the entertainment industry could actually push into the A-list overnight? If you were me, would you believe it?"

Zhang Ya smiled and said, "If I were you, I wouldn't believe it either."

"That's right." Zhang Ye said, "My feelings right now are the same. That's why I really want to ask about something. Are you sure that there hasn't been a mistake?"

Zhang Ya smiled pleasantly and said, "We're sure."

Zhang Ye suddenly sat up straight and said with a smile, "Then that's great, I can finally straighten my back. I didn't dare sit up straight since I entered the recording studio as I was feeling guilty. I was afraid that someone would suddenly come in and drag me off in the middle of the broadcast, saying that there had been a mistake."

Zhang Ya laughed again for a long time.

One question.

Two questions.

Three questions.

Zhang Ya asked the questions while Zhang Ye answered them, occasionally bantering.

Very soon, the ten-minute duration was almost up.

Zhang Ya received the time update by the technical director over her headset and said, "Since the moment you debuted, you seemed like you couldn't fit in with this world and never got along with your industry peers. Up to now, despite all the doubting voices against you, you've endured and kept walking toward the stage of an A-list celebrity. I'm actually very impressed by that." Pausing, she added, "So, since we're coming to the end of our interview, do you have anything else to say to our audience? Or something you'd like to express? I'll leave the rest of the time to you."

It's already time for the closing remarks?

What should he say?

What should he express?

Zhang Ye suddenly thought of himself being in this other world and remembered his choice of choosing this path filled with disaster. He suddenly had some mixed feelings and for the first time, he organized his thoughts about his life and the situations he encountered. When he first came to this unfamiliar world, he went through many situations that forced him into silence; made him humble; left him disappointed; needed him to be brave; infuriated him; set him against the heavens; set him against the earth; and set him against other men. He had really been through a lot.

He truly had something he wished to say.

Hence, Zhang Ye turned to the camera and "looked" at all the viewers watching their televisions and uttered softly:

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my silence.

"I still have a lot of questions

"about the south, my roots, hope, and about distance."

Zhang Ya was stunned!

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my despair.

"I still have a lot of passion

"for division, death, yesterday, and solitude."

This...

Listening to this, the viewers watching their televisions were all stunned!

Zhang Ye smiled and said:

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my deceit.

"I still have a lot of candor

"I can't do without, or let go; yet lives, and loves."

Zhang Ye smile slowly faded as he gently went on:

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my 'loneness.

"I still have a lot to demand:

"I need comfort; to share, get upset, and tell you."

...

At home.

His parents were watching the television in shock.

When Chenchen—who was playing with her cell phone—heard Zhang Ye's voice, she also raised her head to look for the first time.

Zhang Ye's voice sounded like it came from afar, yet it felt very near.

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my coldness.

"I still have a lot of feelings

"for time, the white clouds, the night, and for destiny."

...

At a villa.

Chen Guang's home.

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my shirking.

"I still have a lot I long for:

"my dreams, memories, my failures, and desires."

Chen Guang and Fan Wenli looked at each other as they listened to Zhang Ye's voice. For some reason, they suddenly felt very touched and were full of admiration for him!

Good.

This poem was really good!

...

Somewhere in Beijing.

Zhang Yuanqi's home.

Zhang Yuanqi and her manager, Fang Weihong, were watching Zhang Ye on TV. The two of them were chatting and munching on sunflower seeds a while ago, but had suddenly turned quiet for some reason.

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my weakness.

"I still have a lot of courage,

"renouncing loss, the gods, the Heavens, and the Earth."

Renouncing the Heavens?

Renouncing the Earth?

...

Wu Zeqing's home.

Zhang Ye's deep voice resounded through the house.

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my sorrow.

"I still have a lot of delight:

"I have my being, worth, uniqueness, and meaning."

...

At Central TV Department 14.

People like Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, Yan Tianfei's secretary, and others who were waiting for Zhang Ye in their office said nothing and just stared straight at the figure speaking on TV.

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my turmoil.

"I still have a lot of angles

"to move forward, look back, to leap, and stop to rest."

...

At this moment.

Thousands and thousands of viewers were staring at their televisions, listening in silence to Zhang Ye's life.

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my splitting.

"I still have a lot of wholeness,

"at the least, I must fulfill myself."

About to recite the last stanza, Zhang Ye smiled again.

"I'm unfamiliar with this world.

"But this isn't the cause of my selection to die or to live.

"I still have a lot of choices;

"By chance, of these two, neither of them were options."

He finished reciting.

Zhang Ya was listening to him with rapt attention.

At last, Zhang Ye smiled at the camera and host before saying, "That is all, thank you."

The time was up.

The live broadcast signal was cut.

Zhang Ye got up to leave but suddenly heard applause coming from around him!

Zhang Ya stood up and started slowly clapping her hands.

A few of the technical directors in the studio also came to their senses and applauded loudly for Zhang Ye!

Everyone was dumbfounded by what they'd heard!

They believed that these lines were definitely not prepared by Zhang Ye beforehand!

That was why they were so dumbfounded by what they heard! As a result, they were clapping their hardest for him, even forgetting about the conflict that existed between him and Central TV!

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Thank you."

Zhang Ya was very touched and felt a mix of emotions. She said, "Teacher Zhang, I've met a lot of people and celebrities before, and heard a lot about their life experiences as well. But I feel that you are the most wonderful person amongst them."

Was it wonderful?

It probably was.

Zhang Ye flashed a smile but did not say anything. That was because he did not know how to respond to her. There were too many things that he could not say, not even to his own family. In this world, only Zhang Ye alone knew that he was...truly unfamiliar with this world! He did not belong to this world at all!

But there was something he would not waver on.

He would continue to walk down this path without stopping, until he reached the highest point of this unfamiliar world!

Chapter 907: The battle for the A-list rankings!

At Central TV.

After Zhang Ye came out of Central TV Live News, he saw Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the others already waiting outside for him.

When they saw Zhang Ye, everyone congregated around him.

Zhang Zuo said, "Director Zhang, I was caught in a traffic jam on the way here. Congratulations!"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Thank you."

Wu Yi hurriedly said, "We watched your live interview just now at the office. You did really well!"

"That poem was really good!" Ha Qiqi sighed.

Little Wang even said, "Director Zhang, I nearly cried listening to that poem!"

Zhang Ye looked at his assistant and said in amusement, "Aren't you a little too easily moved?"

Department 14's Huang Dandan replied, "It's not because we're easily moved, but that the poem was truly touching!"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Alright, let's head off now. I'll be treating everyone to lunch. Let me call Director Yan to see if he has time to join us. We should all have a get-together."

But Zhang Zuo suggested, "Director Zhang, if it's a hassle, we can skip the get-together today. I think you should still have some matters to attend to for now. Who knows when the previous A-lister, Li Yu, might catch up to you again?"

Little Wang, realizing the situation, agreed, "Yeah, that's true!"

Tong Fu said, "I just checked. Your popularity score and Li Yu's popularity score are pretty close!"

Ha Qiqi considered for a moment before saying, "Director Zhang, let's just skip today's meal and take a rain check. There'll be plenty of opportunities for a get-together later. Now that Li Yu has been nudged down to the B-list, he's sure to take action. He definitely won't do nothing and there might still be a popularity battle to fight tonight, so you should be careful."

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Let's go. We should just do whatever we want to do. If I get nudged back down, there's nothing I can do about it. If it's mine, it's mine. I can't force the situation either."

"I'm Unfamiliar with this World," the poem he had just recited, was thought to have originated from Bei Dao. But after some verification, it seemed like it wasn't Bei Dao's work at all. It was more likely that it was just a fan's pastiche instead. As for who the original poet of this poem was, Zhang Ye couldn't figure it out either. He loved this poem regardless, but had never been able to find a suitable occasion to bring it out. However, he was able to fulfill that wish today and that made Zhang Ye feel like he was finally freed! He was like an alcoholic who had not had a drink in a month and was able to finally grab a bottle of Erguotou to drink to his heart's content. As such, he felt like he had been set free from his chains, and at this moment did not really care about that battle for the A-list spot.

He would just do whatever needed to be done.

And say whatever needed to be said.

And after that? Whatever goes!

...

On Weibo.

A lot of netizens were crying out and clamoring!

"I like this poem so much!"

"That's right! I really like it!"

"Why did the live interview end so quickly? Zhang Ye, say a few more words!"

"Central TV News Channel didn't allocate much time to Zhang Ye at all!"

"If Teacher Zhang were to come up with such poems every day, how great would that be!"

"I'm unfamiliar with this world. / But this isn't the cause of my weakness. / I still have a lot of courage, / renouncing loss, the gods, the Heavens, and the Earth."

"I was really touched! I was really touched by this!"

"This poem is absolutely the best!"

"The poem was really wonderful, but the key is that Zhang Ye's life is wonderful in the first place!"

"That's right. If this poem were recited by someone else, it would never have brought about the impact on me like it did when Zhang Ye recited it! Because this poem is talking about Zhang Ye and his life, so if it were any other? Who could have the same great of ups and downs like Zhang Ye has had in his lifetime? Zhang Ye's path in the entertainment industry was truly much harder than anyone else's! That he could journey to this point, I'm not the least bit surprised. No one knows more about determination than he does!"

"This poem is really awesome!"

"Teacher Zhang is really awesome!"

After "I'm Unfamiliar with this World" was broadcast live, it immediately began to set off a wave on the Internet. There were not a lot of people who forwarded this poem, because most of the netizens felt that if this poem were written text alone, it would be wholly unable to express the impact it had on them. As such, that short ten-minute interview on Central TV Live News was forwarded like crazy instead!

10,000!

50,000!

100,000!

The comments instantaneously filled up to the point of shooting through the roof!

...

Hong Kong.

Li Yu's personal studio.

"Hurry up!"

"Send them a reminder again!"

"We must get this taken care of by today! There's no time left!"

"If we don't hit back today, our chances of getting back onto the A-list will only get slimmer and slimmer!"

"Teacher Li, we have already communicated with our partners in mainland China. Regarding the micro movie, 'The Shooting,' that you took part in last month, they've agreed to move the release date to today!"[1.]

"Very good!"

"That's great! We've finally got that settled!"

"There won't be a problem then!"

"We'll definitely regain the A-list spot tonight!"

"Right!"

"That's right!"

"Let's go! Everyone, let's put in our best efforts!"

Li Yu was a celebrity active in the Greater China region. He was a well-known actor and a Cantonese singer. He had debuted for over a decade already and had even received a prestigious domestic film award for best supporting actor. Of course, Li Yu was still best known for his singing. His popularity in Hong Kong was practically unmatched and he'd released over a dozen albums. Almost half of the songs he had released were well-known tunes that everyone could hum along to. He also had the title of "Little Singing God." The once big shot A-lister had ruled the A-list Celebrity Rankings for many years, even though he had not been able to break through any further in both the acting and singing fields. Thus, he just kept circling around at the bottom of the rankings, but had never dropped off from the A-list rankings before!

But today, Li Yu had been replaced in his A-list spot by Zhang Ye. His team was suddenly coveting the return of the position!

This was a battle!

A battle of life and death!

It was a battle for honor!

...

2 o'clock in the afternoon.

The long promoted micro movie "The Shooting" was unexpectedly released in advance. It even premiered first on the Internet through an online video hosting site and was free to watch!

This was a sequel to one of Li Yu's previous movies!

It was also Li Yu and his company's way of testing the waters of the micro movie art form!

It was suddenly getting lively on the Internet!

"Heavens!"

"They're premiering the micro movie so soon?"

"That's great! I'll go and have a watch!"

"I like Li Yu!"

"A veteran A-list celebrity's strength is definitely not something that a person like Zhang Ye who only knows how to scold people every day can match!"

"They're contending with each other already?"

"Li Yu and Zhang Ye have sounded the gong for their popularity battle!"

"'The Shot' was a classic! So the sequel is definitely a must-watch!"

"Zhang Ye's in danger now!"

"Yeah, Teacher Li's team has made their move!"

Many of the Greater China citizens were practically in full support of Li Yu.

"Who is Zhang Ye?"

"I don't know, I've never heard of him before!"

"I only recognize Teacher Li Yu as an A-list celebrity!"

"Tonight, the outcome will be decided!"

"Teacher Li, go for it!"

The entire entertainment industry was watching!

From a subjective perspective, there was no such thing as a higher or lower art form. Some people might like this celebrity, while the others might prefer that celebrity; this was very normal behavior. But objectively, Zhang Ye and Li Yu were actually two very different types of celebrities. Alright, actually Zhang Ye's style was basically just different from everyone else and he had always been a unique one. Zhang Ye's current popularity score on the popularity rankings was just a little higher than Li Yu's, almost to the point of being negligible. The two's overall popularities were nearly identical, with Li Yu being much more popular in the Greater China region, while Zhang Ye was ahead in mainland China. Therefore, if they started contending, it would be very difficult to say who the eventual winner would be.

The micro movie was released and only ran for 31 minutes.

But the moment it was released, the reviews online were extremely good!

"It's really quite good!"

"Ahhh, it was great!"

"Li Yu is so handsome! My idol!"

"It's indeed a classic! It continued the high quality of 'The Shot'!"

"It's such a good watch!"

"Recommending it! Recommending it with everything I've got!"

"The ending really deserves praise! What a turnaround!"

"Hahahaha, Teacher Li is going to return to the A-list!"

"Yeah, I have a feeling that might be so!"

The views on the micro movie climbed at a very fast rate and it was trending highly as well!

Last but not least, a lot of Li Yu's good friends who were also big shot celebrities in Greater China came to support him too. They all rallied behind him and helped promote his new film, "The Shooting"!

With that, there were even more people who went to watch it!

"Wow, so many celebrities have appeared for Teacher Li?"

"Teacher Li has a really good network!"

"Much better than Zhang Ye's!"

"Pfft, thanks, Captain Obvious. You can randomly pick any celebrity in the entertainment industry and I'm sure their network will be better than Zhang Ye's!"

"Zhang Ye's position is now up in the air!"

"Yeah, the A-list will be changing again!"

...

At a restaurant in the vicinity of Central TV.

In the restaurant's private suite.

Little Wang was getting anxious. "What are we gonna do! What are we gonna do!"

Huang Dandan was also anxious about the situation. "Why was Li Yu's micro movie released ahead of time?"

"They must have done it to compete with Director Zhang!" Wu Yi said.

Central TV Documentary Channel's Director Yan Tianfei suggested, "Little Zhang, why don't you go back first? We're almost done eating anyway, so maybe you should get back to work?"

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "No need, let's continue eating."

Yan Tianfei's secretary said anxiously, "You're acting way too calm."

Zhang Ye threw up his hands and said, "Didn't Central TV Live News interview me just now?"

The secretary said in a speechless manner, "That was just a ten-minute live interview. Besides, you only recited a poem. How do you expect that to be able to compare to a movie by an A-list celebrity from Greater China?"

...

Li Yu's studio.

The team members were nervous and busy with their work. There was even someone who was tracking Zhang Ye's Weibo and followed any news regarding him so that they would be able to take countermeasures if he took action.

Then, an hour passed. Followed by two more hours.

But Zhang Ye didn't move a muscle, doing absolutely nothing!

"What's going on?"

"Zhang Ye did not post anything?"

"No!"

"He did not do any promotions?"

"No!"

"How can his team's public relations be so bad?"

"Sis Xu, I heard that Zhang Ye does not have a team!"

"Ah?"

"He doesn't even have a manager!"

"Ah? Why didn't his management agency assign one to him?"

"He, he doesn't have an agency either!"

"What?"

"That's how it is."

"—Are you serious?"

"Yeah, everyone in mainland China's entertainment industry knows about this!"

"No agency? And not even a team or a manager? Then how did he get all the way into the A-list? Did he fly up there? Never mind him, we're almost definitely going to get our spot back! He just appeared on Central TV Live News for an interview and recited a...cryptic poem? Then he better forget about contending with us anymore!"

"That's right!"

A lot of the people here did not really understand modern poetry, so they used the word "cryptic" to describe the poem.

...

Goof Group.

The messages kept popping up in the chat group.

Chen Guang said excitedly: "The battle has begun!"

Huo Dongfang: "@LiYu @ZhangYe Are you two online?"

There was no response from Zhang Ye. He wasn't online.

But the seldom online Li Yu actually appeared this time. He was also one of the participants of this group. "Old Huo, looking for me?"

Huo Dongfang: "Yu-zai, long time no see." [2.]

Li Yu: "I've been very busy lately, so I haven't released any new works in a while. And since I dropped off the A-list, I had to quickly get my micro movie released in advance."

Fan Wenli: "The micro movie is quite good. I've already watched it twice."

Li Yu: "Thanks, Wenli."

Ning Lan was also online. "Yu-zai, you're really unlucky to have met with Zhang Ye this time."

Li Yu said: "I know about Zhang Ye, he's very popular in mainland China."

Xiaodong appeared too. "Both of you, do your best."

Ning Lan asked: "Let's hold a poll. Who does everyone think will win today?"

Xiaodong: "I know both Teacher Zhang and Teacher Li, so I'll abstain."

Huo Dongfang: "I'll stick with Yu-zai. After all, he's brought out his micro movie as his ace in the hole!"

Fan Wenli added: "Yeah, especially when it's the sequel to the classic movie, 'The Shot.'"

Chen Guang said: "Director Zhang's on thin ice."

Ning Lan laughed: "Yu-zai, I believe in you too." Then she wondered: "But why is Zhang Ye not taking any action? He went completely quiet after the live interview? And only recited a poem on it?"

The people in the chat group were all chiming in with their opinions.

Most of the people still believed that Li Yu would be able to reverse the situation today.

But at this moment, Zhang Yuanqi actually made a rare appearance in the chat group. "Don't underestimate his poems. They have always been one of Zhang Ye's most powerful weapons!"

"Yo, Sister Zhang!"

"You think Zhang Ye can maintain his ranking?"

"Zhang Ye's poems might be powerful, but after all is said and done, they're not mainstream."

"Yeah, no matter what, a micro movie is still a movie. It's the most mass-marketed and mainstream art form that the people would have no reason to reject."

...

At night.

With great anticipation, midnight arrived!

The latest Celebrity Rankings Index had been updated!

But when everyone from the entertainment circle and the citizens saw the rankings, the results caught a large portion of them by surprise. Some people even had their jaws drop as they stared at the rankings!

There were no changes to the list!

The two of them had an increase in their popularity scores!

But Zhang Ye was still on the A-list while Li Yu was still on the B-list. Furthermore, the previous popularity score difference in the tens of thousands had now been stretched by a bit more, to a difference of almost a hundred thousand points!

This outcome greatly shocked many people!

How could this be?

Why was it like this?

Chapter 908: What do I know of determination? All I rely upon is stubborn endurance!

Li Yu's studio.

Everyone was still working overtime despite it already being midnight. They'd all stayed behind because they wanted to witness Teacher Li Yu's reascendance to the A-list. They felt that it was because their team and Teacher Li Yu had underestimated Zhang Ye all along that it led to them slipping up and him leapfrogging into the A-list rankings and taking Li Yu's position. They thought it was their mistake! So today, they became serious and paid close attention to their objective. They did all they could, even messing up their future work arrangements. They brought out their ace in the hole, releasing "The Shooting" ahead of its original schedule. They thought they had everything covered!

Yet reality had given them a great big slap!

The rankings did not change!

In fact, the popularity scores had even widened by a bit more!

The studio manager said in shock, "Why?"

Li Yu's manager was so angry that his hands were trembling. "This is impossible!"

"Teacher Li, he..."

"Why was he still unable to catch up?"

"This...this..."

"Could there have been a mistake in the calculation?"

Everyone in the studio was unable to accept this outcome!

Including Li Yu himself, who sat there in shock for a very long while.

...

Online.

The netizens were also very surprised!

"Zhang Ye won?"

"Damn, he won just like that?"

"Just how on earth did Teacher Zhang do it?"

"Li Yu even released the micro movie he starred in! But as for Zhang Ye? What did Zhang Ye do? He only recited a poem on Central TV Live News?"

"This result is too surprising!"

"Fuck, I never expected this either!"

"Teacher Zhang's popularity has already reached such a state?"

"He could actually use a poem to beat a movie?"

"This is too goddamn barbaric!"

...

The people from the literary world were also shocked by this fact!

Just a poem, and it was just a simple modern poem, but it could actually fucking stand up to the popularity of a movie? Even if it was a micro movie, it was still a movie! It was still the sequel to a classic movie that had earned over a hundred million RMB at the box office! That achievement in itself would have contributed a lot to the popularity scores! But it still wasn't enough to finish off Zhang Ye? It couldn't even finish off a poem of Zhang Ye's?

Damn!

Since when did modern poetry have such a strong influence on people?

Why were the poems composed by the people from the Writer's Association not as powerful then?!

A lot of the literary world members were very perplexed by this, especially the poets. They almost vomited blood, thinking that comparison always ended up torturing people indeed!

Zhang Ye wrote poems.

They also wrote poems.

But why was the attitude toward it and its influence on people on a totally different level!?

...

The people from the entertainment industry were trembling in fear!

"Why?"

"Why didn't Yu-zai move up in the rankings?"

"That doesn't make any sense!"

"That micro movie was really good too!"

"Yeah, it was wonderful! So why didn't..."

...

Only Zhang Ye's friends and family were heaving sighs of relief.

At home, Ha Qiqi didn't whether to laugh or cry. "I got scared and worried for Director Zhang for nothing!"

When Zhang Zuo, who had gone to a bar with an old classmate, saw the results, he roared with laughter thrice. In his state of happiness, he toasted himself and chugged his drink before wiping his mouth and saying, "So it was because Director Zhang already knew how it would end!"

Several of his classmates started conversing.

"I really envy you."

"Out of our group of classmates, you're the only one who is doing rather well now."

"Zhang Ye is really great!"

"Yeah, I love him!"

Having had a few drinks, Zhang Zuo was also more talkative. "It's all because of Director Zhang that I'm doing as well as I am now. If it weren't for him bringing together our team, I wonder which TV station I'd have ended up at as someone's assistant. How could I have possibly become an assistant director of the number one team in the industry? You guys don't know this, but Director Zhang is truly capable and also a very loyal person to his friends! In my thirty-some years of life, I admire only him, really!"

"Now that Zhang Ye is an A-lister, it would only get better for you guys in the future!"

"Yeah, Zhang Ye can consider himself solidified on the A-list now!"

Zhang Zuo downed another glass before excitedly proclaiming in a slurred voice, "A-list, ma ass! We're gonna head for the S-list from here! Towards da international S-list! We'll destroy whoever stands in our way. Fuck, we dun care who it is!"

...

In the Goof Group.

The results had been published.

Ning Lan: "What do you guys think of this?"

Xiaodong sent a wry smile emoji. "What do I think of this? Well, I think Teacher Zhang Ye is completely out of the ordinary! I'm not young anymore and debuted many years ago, but this is the first time I've witnessed someone use the influence of a poem to combat the popularity of a movie! And...it even won!?"

Huo Dongfang: "I'm afraid that Yu-zai might not have a chance to regain his place in the A-list rankings in the short term. Zhang Ye has firmly established himself there. I guess Sister Zhang does have a good eye for detail."

A B-list actor suddenly appeared. "He only recited a poem? That's really amazing! Hai, when will I get the chance to achieve what he did with such flamboyance?! But I've really got to admit that sometimes, I'm really quite envious of Teacher Zhang Ye!"

At this time, yet another big shot A-list celebrity who was rarely seen online appeared and simply said: "A-list celebrities, do take care. The wolf is here!"

The wolf is here?

Yes, a wolf had really entered the mix of the A-list celebrities now!

And from a certain perspective, those words represented many of these heavyweight celebrities' acknowledgment of Zhang Ye as an A-list celebrity for the first time ever!

...

The next day.

The news was published.

"Zhang Ye establishes his place in the A-list rankings!"

"Li Yu regrettably defeated!"

"I'm Unfamiliar with this World: Possibly one of most representative works of Zhang Ye!"

"Using a poem to subvert the entire entertainment industry's understanding of what is mainstream and what is not!"

"A niche work that can turn the world upside down—Zhang Ye has done it!"

"The brewing of a literary miracle!"

"From today onward, no one would dare claim, 'There is no place for literature at the top of the entertainment industry'!"

In the morning, Zhang Ye began inviting guests over.

At noon, he invited his relatives over for lunch. At night, he brought his old colleagues from Beijing Television and the new friends he made from Beijing Television's Spring Festival Gala out for dinner. Later in the night, he bought rounds for Zhang Xia, Chen Guang, Fan Wenli, and a bunch of other friends.

It was the same the next day.

And the day after next.

Zhang Ye had treated all of his close friends and relatives to meals and drinks. To him, he felt that the reason he could stand here today was because of all their help and support. Now that he had finally established his place in the A-list, he definitely had to hold a feast to give them his thorough thanks, as well as celebrate his own achievements.

He drank continuously for a few days in a row.

He treated all those who deserved it and thanked those who he was supposed to thank.

On this day, Zhang Ye began to slow down and relax. He checked his Weibo and saw many comments left for him by his fans on his blog or within Weibo directly.

"Teacher Zhang, my sincerest congratulations to you!"

"We will walk with you all the way!"

"Teacher Zhang Ye, your determination has given me strength!"

"Yeah, you're the celebrity I admire most of all. From you, I have learned so many things. I want to continue learning from you and stay determined on my chosen career path by enduring all the way until the end!"

When Zhang Ye saw that, he thought for a moment before he started to type out a long passage of thankful words. "To my fans, and also to those who have ever helped me out before: Thank you, everyone. Those are the words I've wanted to say for a long time now, and it seems that I've said it many times before too. But as all of you know, which I believe that you all do, every time I say those words that have been repeated so many times, it has always come from the bottom of my heart. I am not great, nor am I excellent. I seek fame and wealth, I'm picky about what I eat, and also love to laze around. I do not have the great character and sentiments of my forebears; I'm not even worthy of being compared to them. All I am is just an ordinary citizen, an ordinary person like one you might pick out from the crowds on the street. Yes, that's right. That person you pick out might just be me. We're neither related by blood nor bond, and you won't find fame or wealth through me, but all of you have always supported me, fought alongside me, and scolded other people with me. You guys are the greatest. Really."

After typing that, Zhang Ye posted his message.

When a lot of the people saw this, they suddenly felt a tide of emotions surging within them!

"Teacher Zhang!"

"Teacher Zhang Ye!"

"Please don't say that!"

"We're not great!"

"Yeah, we just like you, that's all! We just like battling alongside you and scolding other people!"

A fledgling musician said: "Teacher Zhang, I wanted to give up several times during this journey of mine. But because of your greatness, your spirit, they made me gain the determination to stay on the path!"

Zhang Ye's fans were appearing all over the place!

Some of them were even tearing up!

Zhang Ye continued to type: "I have nothing that I can repay your kindness with, so all I can do is give everything that I've got, to cheer everyone up and make all of you happy to your satisfaction. Perhaps this might not be much, but it's the only thing I can do for all of you. You guys might not know this, but I'm not as determined as you guys think I am. I'm not the one who's encouraging you, I'm not the one giving strength to you. In fact, all of you are the ones who are encouraging me and giving me strength. Otherwise, I couldn't have traveled this far and stood here today."

He thought about the times when his leaders suppressed him.

He thought of the times when his peers scolded him.

He thought of the times when he was attacked by the netizens.

Then, he asked himself, "Determination?"

Zhang Ye forced a smile and typed out: "What do I know of determination? All I rely upon is stubborn endurance!"

When that was posted onto Weibo, silence ensued!

At this moment, Zhang Ye's fans went quiet!

The netizens who saw this Weibo post also stayed silent!

Chen Guang sighed.

Zhang Xia felt her heart get wrenched.

Ha Qiqi, Little Wang, and the others could also feel their heartstrings being pulled.

Zhang Ye's friends all experienced a heavy heart from these words that Zhang Ye had written.

In the past, when Zhang Ye was in front of his fans, friends, family, and the media, when had he not put up a brave front? He always acted like he wasn't going to be pushed around and was always full of energy! But today, Zhang Ye had shown the most helpless side of himself to them!

He had shocked many people!

But at the same time, moved many of them!

Suddenly, the fans started to voice themselves!

"Teacher Zhang, we will stubbornly endure together with you!"

"Right! We will always be by your side!"

"Let's stubbornly endure till the end!"

"We will fight it out with them all the way!"

Thousands of people!

Tens of thousands of people!

Hundreds of thousands of people!

Zhang Ye's fans were appearing from everywhere like crazy!

Some of the female fans even cried as they typed their responses!

"Stubbornly endure till the end!"

"Stubbornly endure till the end!"

"Stubbornly endure till the end!"

When he saw this, Zhang Ye was very touched. At that instant, he could feel his blood pumping and stirring within him. Unable to stop himself, he impulsively typed out on the keypad: "Don't worry. Even if the sky falls someday, I'll definitely be the last one to fall! Alright, for my journey from here on out, let us stubbornly endure together...till the end!"

Chapter 909: The Pollution Problem!

On the eighth day of the Spring Festival.

It was back to work again.

Perhaps due to the setting off of firecrackers during the festive period, the air quality was not too good. Zhang Ye put on a face mask that was specially used for filtering out fine particles and went off to work very early in the morning.

At Central TV.

The Spring Festival was actually not over yet. The Central TV staff who came to work were still in a festive mood, with some of them discussing how much New Year's money they had given out, some arranging to go out at night and have some drinks, and some others dragging their luggage to work. From the looks of that, they must've just gotten off the train that ran during the Spring Festival and transported passengers to Beijing.

Suddenly, someone looked over.

"Teacher Zhang?"

"Morning, Teacher Zhang."

"Congratulations, Teacher Zhang!"

"Congratulations!"

"Teacher Zhang, happy belated New Year. Hope you've had a good one so far."

"Congratulations on ascending to the A-list!"

A small group of people walked past Zhang Ye and greeted him.

Central TV News Channel's Zhang Ya was also walking over at this time. When she saw Zhang Ye, she smiled and waved at him.

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Have a good New Year, too, thanks."

Actually, after Zhang Ye had sued Central TV and caused chaos at the annual staff party, whenever most people bumped into him at work, they would usually try to avoid him as much as possible. They didn't risk greeting or talking to him for fear of getting into trouble. But today, a lot of them were a lot more friendlier. This was due to Zhang Ye's status being different from before!

An A-list celebrity!

Of all the Central TV staff, how many were at least an A-list celebrity?

None!

Not a single one!

Zhang Ye was the one and only!

If this were during the time when Zhang Ye had just arrived at Central TV, he would just be considered one of the more popular hosts of Central TV and maybe one of the several pillars of Central TV. But now, being known as one of some was no longer relevant. Right now, he was the most popular host in Central TV and the pillar of the station! Although, it was unlikely that this pillar would be supporting Central TV much longer. Everyone within Central TV knew that Zhang Ye's contract with Central TV was going to end soon and that Central TV would definitely not be renewing his contract, nor would Zhang Ye be renewing it with them!

Upstairs.

Central TV Department 14.

The Documentary Channel.

Half the staff had already arrived at the office.

"Teacher Zhang!"

"Morning!"

"Teacher Zhang, Director Yan is looking for you. He asked for you to see him in his office after you arrived."

"OK." Zhang Ye waved in acknowledgment and put down his bag. Then he knocked on Yan Tianfei's door and entered, finding him sipping tea at the moment. "Director Yan, you were looking for me?"

Yan Tianfei sighed with pleasure. "This Da Hong Pao you gave me is delicious!"

Zhang Ye sat down and said generously, "Haha, I will bring more for you next time."

"Forget it, I can't afford to drink this tea." Yan Tianfei waved it off and put down his teacup. He then said with a smile, "After the new year fully passes, you'll almost be a free man."

Zhang Ye sighed and said, "Yeah, it's been quite quick."

Yan Tianfei laughed and said, "Yeah, pretty quick. It's almost been a year, eh? So, what are your future plans? What are you thinking of doing next? Will you still be working at a TV station?"

Zhang Ye shrugged. "I haven't actually thought about it."

Yan Tianfei asked, "You're an A-lister now, so aren't lots of people waiting at your door to try to recruit you? Don't you have any preferences for yourself?"

Zhang Ye shook his head and smiled. "I really don't have any. Anyway, it's still going to be awhile before my contract finally runs out, so I would like to use this period of time to rest up. After joining Central TV and up till now, I have not had any time for myself. Since there's no rush, I'll just rest and think about it along the way. When the time comes and my contract runs out, I'll decide it then."

Produce a show?

Host?

Sing?

Act?

Write novels?

He had too many options to choose from, making it difficult for him to decide what to do next.

Yan Tianfei nodded and said, "It's important to contemplate how you want to continue your journey. The competition is intense within the A-list. You could even describe it as brutal, so protecting your position there is considered a huge achievement. Moreover, you're thinking of going even further than this, which makes it even harder for you. I think that it's right for you to put some serious consideration into this."

After chatting for a while.

The secretary came in and said, "Director Yan, everyone has arrived."

Yan Tianfei looked at his watch and said, "Alright, tell everyone to gather in the meeting room."

In the meeting room.

Everyone from Department 14 was here.

The first thing Yan Tianfei announced was, "During the new year celebrations, Director Zhang treated us, but many of you had gone back to your hometown at that time. Therefore, I would like to make use of this opportunity and have everyone give their congratulations to Director Zhang for getting promoted into the A-list!"

Applause thundered!

Everyone was excitedly clapping their hands!

"Director Zhang, congratulations!"

"Congratulations, Director Zhang!"

"You're amazing!"

"Yeah, when I found out about the news in my hometown, I was totally dumbfounded!"

"You've brought a lot of pride to our Documentary Channel again!"

Those colleagues who did not spend the new year in Beijing were all giving him their congratulations.

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Director Yan, it was just a small thing. Why are you bringing it up at the meeting?"

Yan Tianfei laughed. "How many Central TV hosts have ever become A-listers? There's practically no one. Besides, you even achieved it while you were a part of Department 14, so how can that be a small thing?"

The meeting continued.

He gave a summary of last year's performance and very quickly summed up everything. Yan Tianfei was not one to drag things out. Soon, they were touching on the job assignments for the upcoming year.

"With the new year, the pressure on our department to perform will be enormous. As everyone knows, Director Zhang will be leaving us soon." Saying that, Old Yan smiled and said, "But the legacy that he has left for us is much too great. Using a documentary, he ruled over the nationwide viewership ratings for two straight months. That has now become a source of pressure for us as well as our motivation, spurring us forward."

Everyone gave a wry smile at Zhang Ye. Yes, this hat was certainly too big for their heads and the results were too brilliant. In the future, after Zhang Ye left, what would they do? How could they shoot another documentary like A Bite of China? Thinking about it gave them a splitting headache. But from a different perspective, this was a good thing. Since when had an unloved and uncared for documentary channel like them been able to attract so much attention from the audience? Essentially, Zhang Ye had helped them lay a strong foundation before he left so that their path ahead would be much smoother!

Yan Tianfei took out some documents and handed them to his secretary to pass out. "During the festive season, people set off firecrackers. It created a ton of smog everywhere. I've been coughing for several days and feeling bad because of that, but when I read some of the newspapers, they don't seem to be placing any emphasis on new terms like PM readings and such. As a result, a lot of citizens are not conscious of the need to protect themselves against this. I've noticed that the only ones who wore a mask to work were Teacher Zhang and Little Huang, right?"[1.]

Huang Dandan coughed and said, "I've been having some breathing problems lately."

Next to her, her boyfriend, Tong Fu, gave her a cup of warm water. "Drink up."

Zhang Ye asked, "Is it serious?"

"Cough, cough..." Huang Dandan coughed several times again. "It's alright, it's just a slight cough. Maybe a cold."

Zhang Ye said, "The skies are getting smoggy, so everyone should wear a face mask."

Yan Tianfei said, "Director Zhang is right, we should all take precautions. I have a few friends who are experts in the related fields and they told me that this is a very serious problem that will cause great harm. Moreover, it's a slow-acting chronic harm, so why are the media and government not placing any importance on this problem? Whenever the issue of pollution is brought up, it only receives superficial mentions from them? There's too many concerns involved in this problem, like economic and societal factors that make it very complicated. Therefore, after some thinking, why shouldn't our Documentary Channel be the first to bring about the changes to this issue? We should create a documentary based on the pollution problem and bring the citizens' attention to it. We have to make the enterprises contributing to the issue panic and pressure the environmental departments to govern this with more regulations so that we can get rid of the pollution problem! What do you guys think about that?"

"That's good!"

"It'll work!"

"Whatever you say! We'll do it your way!"

"Right, please assign the tasks to us!"

Yan Tianfei said, "Alright, our Documentary Channel's first project this year has been decided. We'll set up a program team and collect data, conduct interviews, and film onsite. As for the documentary's executive director...hmm, let me think about who will be the most suitable for the role."

Zhang Ye was amused. "Director Yan, are you already excluding me?"

Yan Tianfei looked at him and said, "I of course know that you're the most suitable for the role, but your contract will be up soon and I can't possibly hold you back from leaving, can I?"

Zhang Ye bluntly said, "Each day that I'm still at the Documentary Channel, I will keep working. I will leave only after I leave. Besides, I would also like to make this documentary investigating the pollution problem. I already have an idea in mind for it. I'm not going to ask for the role of the executive director, because I think either Old Ha or Zhang Zuo are more suitable for it. So just let me be in charge of the planning for the documentary."

Yan Tianfei considered this for a moment before saying, "Alright! That's fine!"

...

The meeting ended.

Ha Qiqi and Zhang Zuo came looking for him.

Zhang Zuo said helplessly, "Director Zhang, if you're not leading the team, how can we film this?"

"Yeah." Ha Qiqi added meekly, "The two of us have always worked under you. We can't handle the role of executive director."

Zhang Ye replied, "When it comes to work experience, the two of you are better than me, so why can't you do it? I'll be leaving soon, and I don't even know if that will be before or after this documentary is completed, so of course it has to be one of you who takes the role, haha. Besides, I was thinking of taking some days off to rest at home for a while and relax, so the interview and filming here can only be overseen by you two. Don't worry, I'll draft an outline of the interviews and shoot to let you two have a guideline on what to do. Just follow it and you'll be fine. If you really encounter something that you can't handle, or you can't find a suitable candidate for the interviews, just wait for me to come back after my break and I'll help out with that!"

Only then did Zhang Zuo finally smile. "Sure. With you saying that, I can feel relieved."

Zhang Ye said, "Don't worry, I won't refuse to work. The outline will definitely be drafted by the end of the day."

The two of them left.

Zhang Ye's assistant, Little Wang, brought in a cup of hot tea for him then went back out.

Zhang Ye, now alone in the office, picked up a pen and closed his eyes to think for a long time. Finally, he started scribbling on the piece of paper!

A documentary on the pollution problem?

The first thing he thought of was that documentary film by Chai Jing that caused a great deal of controversy across the nation, the famous Under the Dome: Chai Jing's Documentary on Air Pollution in China! It was also the first documentary in his previous world that brought such large-scale concern of the fearful problem of pollution to the attention of the citizens. It was the highly influential and controversial missing piece to the understanding of this subject.[2.]

Naturally, Zhang Ye had to use it as his reference for the new documentary.

He spent the entire day cooped up in his office to finish drafting the outline of the documentary!

Chapter 910: The Landlady Auntie's whereabouts!

The next day.

He happily slept in until it he woke up naturally. Since the outline of the documentary on air pollution was already given to the staff, Zhang Ye did not bother with the rest of the production or how they were going to shoot it. He had already applied for some time off and was preparing to sleep well. He did not wish to do anything at all in the coming few days.

His mother was making breakfast.

His father was watching the morning news.

His mother asked, "Up already?"

Zhang Ye returned, "What are we having?"

His mother replied, "Buns. I steamed them myself."

Zhang Ye said, "OK, I'm gonna go out for a run first and eat when I come back."

His mother remarked, "Heh, you're quite hardworking, aren't you?"

Zhang Ye said, "It's just some exercises to build up my stamina and recharge myself."

His father inquired, "Didn't you take the week off? You might as well take a vacation and enjoy yourself."

Zhang Ye said, "That sounds good too. I'll think about it."

Outside.

Zhang Ye ran a long lap around Caishikou and found it not satisfying enough, so he ran another two laps and ended up at Guozixiang where he got recognized by someone at the bus stop. There were two girls shouting and yelling like they had gone crazy!

"Look, it's Zhang Ye!"

"Quick, come and take a look, it's Zhang Ye!"

"Heavens! It's really him!"

Zhang Ye quickly adjusted his sunglasses before running back the other way.

The two girls chased him with all their might as the crowd grew larger and larger. In the end, it turned into a pack with at least a dozen people "jogging" together behind Zhang Ye.

After becoming an A-list celebrity, Zhang Ye could clearly feel that the treatment he was receiving was totally different from when he was just a B-list celebrity. When he left work yesterday and was behind the wheel stopped at a traffic light, he nearly got surrounded by the people who recognized him.

After reaching home.

Zhang Ye was panting heavily. "Aiyo, I'm so exhausted!"

His father looked at him and asked, "What's the matter? Why did you run so hard?"

"Some people were chasing after me!" Zhang Ye quickly took a towel to wipe away his sweat and said, "Fortunately, this bro has been training and running from time to time over the past two years, or I would have really been surrounded by them!" Ever since he had learned Taiji Fist...alright, after eating the Taiji Fist Skill Books, he had gained a greater enthusiasm for training his body. At times, his training would be delayed when he got too busy with work. But once he had some free time, he would go for a run to keep himself active.

"Chenchen, get up and eat breakfast!" Zhang Ye went to her room to wake her up.

However, he found Chenchen still sleeping very soundly.

Suddenly, Zhang Ye's cell phone rang in the living room. He went out to check who it was from and saw that it was actually Rao Aimin calling him. He immediately answered and said angrily: "Old Rao, why was

your cell phone switched off for the past few days?" He was very unhappy with Rao Aimin since he did not even address her as Big Sis Rao anymore, but instead directly addressed her as Old Rao!

At the other end, the landlady auntie's lazy voice spoke: "Where's Chenchen?"

Zhang Ye snapped: "She is still sleeping. I tried to wake her but she won't get up."

Rao Aimin said: "Uh, it's been hard on you, kid."

Zhang Ye chuckled: "You telling me that, are you? Did the sun rise from the west today?"

"And thank your parents on my behalf too," Rao Aimin added calmly.

Zhang Ye said: "Alright, don't talk about those useless things. When are you coming back? Before you left, you said that you would be back within the month, or at most be gone for an entire month. Just look at which day it is already! Which year it is already! Every month I called, you always said that you would be back soon, so where did you go to? It's already been more than six months!"

Rao Aimin answered: "It will be soon for real this time. I'll be back in Beijing in another two days."

Zhang Ye paused for a moment, then asked in bewilderment: "Did something happen to you?"

Rao Aimin said: "Just a minor matter."

"But why do I feel that something is not right?" Zhang Ye had already gotten used to Rao Aimin's venomous mouth which she would always use to deride him and not say anything nice the other times she had called. But what was wrong with her today? She acknowledged how it's been hard on me and even thanked me?

However, Rao Aimin sounded quite spirited. "I'm very good. In fact, I've never been better. Alright, I'm not going to chitchat with you any longer! I'll be back in at most another two days." However, Rao Aimin's next lines made Zhang Ye shudder with fear. "If I don't make it back, take good care of Chenchen. My houses at Jiaomen will all go to you. That's all, I'm hanging up now!"

"Eh, what do you mean by that? Hello? Don't hang up!"

The connection was severed!

Zhang Ye hurriedly called back but her cell phone was already switched off!

Dammit!

Don't make it back?

Take good care of Chenchen?

The houses will all go to me?

What's the meaning of all that!

Sensing something amiss, his mother quickly asked, "Was that Chenchen's aunt? What's wrong?"

Zhang Ye quickly whispered, "I don't know. She said she would be back in two days, but at the end of the call, she added that if she didn't make it back, her houses at Jiaomen would all go to me and requested that I take good care of Chenchen!"

His father was startled. "What happened?"

"Why...why would she not make it back?" His mother was also badly shocked and said, "Was she just kidding?"

His father immediately said, "Is she suffering from some illness? Did she go away to treat her illness for the past six months? Is she getting surgery?"

Zhang Ye immediately said, "Nonsense, I've never even seen her catch a cold. Even if I die twice from illness, she would still be alive!"

"Pui!" His mother said angrily, "Why are you saying such inauspicious things during the new year?! Why are you talking about dying!"

His father also said with worry, "Something serious must have happened to Chenchen's aunt!"

"It is definitely something big!" Zhang Ye said, "For a miser like Big Sis Rao who would even pick up a cent from the ground and wipe it clean before pocketing it, she is actually saying that she would leave me those dozens of small-sized apartments over at Jiaomen for free? Fuck! Something really serious must have certainly happened!"

His mother: "..."

His father: "..."

Zhang Ye quickly searched through his cell phone's contacts, saying, "That won't do, I have to ask around!"

If Rao Aimin had switched off her phone, then he would have to call up Old Rao's junior brother, Lu Yuhu who was working at the Ministry of Public Security.

However, when he called, that phone was also switched off.

What was happening?

What sort of situation was this?

He made another call to Director Dong of the Internet Surveillance Bureau, who was also the head of Big Saber Bro's—Fan Yingyun's—department. Back then, when Zhang Ye was sent to the police station after beating up Lee Anson at the Spring Festival Gala, it was Rao Aimin who got Lu Yuhu to contact the Internet Surveillance Bureau's Old Dong to let Zhang Ye seek refuge there.

Du, du. The call connected.

"Haha, Teacher Zhang, congratulations! You're an A-list celebrity!" Old Dong said.

Zhang Ye did not have time to thank him and immediately said: "Director Dong, can you contact Lu Yuhu?"

Old Dong was dumbfounded. "Why? Can't you get through to him?"

Zhang Ye said: "His cell phone is switched off!"

Old Dong sounded surprised and replied: "Alrighty then, I'll help you ask around."

Zhang Ye said: "Please help me ask around. I'm looking for him regarding some urgent matters!"

However, he received a call back a few minutes later.

Director Dong said: "Sorry, I was also unable to get through to him. Who knows where he might have gone for a mission again. Their Ministry of Public Security is constantly very busy with something!"

After hanging up, Zhang Ye couldn't help but let out a curse as he felt very anxious. Although the landlady auntie was very sharp-tongued, when he had just graduated from university and was without a job or money for food, it was Rao Aimin who helped him out. Now that she had suddenly left behind what was seemingly her last words, Zhang Ye's heart was thumping furiously in anxiety!

I don't really have any guts, so please don't scare me like that!

Where on earth did you go?

Finally, Zhang Ye went back into his room and closed the door behind him. Then he powered on his computer and hacked into the airport, the train ticketing system, the car rental stop, the cell phone service provider, and some other websites, hoping to check up on Rao Aimin's whereabouts. In his impulsiveness, Zhang Ye even hacked into the bank system to trace the balance of Rao Aimin, to see which city she had used her bank card at. Since Zhang Ye was the most wanted hacker with the highest bounty in the world, this action was extremely risky for him. Even so, Zhang Ye still could not find any information. It was not that his hacking skills were bad, but because a lot of the websites and access points were not under the same network. If he were to really check them one by one, it would be too much work for him to avoid all the firewalls and web security at any given time. If he really had to run an in-depth trace, it would take at least three to five days to track her down. Judging from Rao Aimin's tone, her event was definitely going to happen within the next two days!

What should he do?

What should he do?

Zhang Ye had no ideas left as he pushed open the bedroom door and scolded, "Where on earth did that Rao Aimin disappear t—" Before he finished, he quickly shut his mouth. "Chenchen, you're awake already?"

Chenchen looked at him. "What happened to my aunt?"

His mother quickly signaled to her son.

Zhang Ye just laughed it off and said, "It's nothing, it's nothing. Your aunt called just now and asked whether you did your homework and how your learning is progressing. I told her everything was good."

Chenchen could sense something was off as she stared at him and asked, "Where's my aunt?"

Zhang Ye stuttered, "She...will be back in another two days."

"Let's have breakfast!" His mother changed the topic as she smiled and said, "Come, Chenchen, taste the big buns that Grandma made and steamed."

His father picked up his chopsticks and gave a bun to Chenchen with a smile. "Try it. It's delicious."

Chenchen didn't move and simply stared unblinkingly at Zhang Ye. "Zhang Ye, where's my aunt?"

"Didn't I already tell you?" Zhang Ye forced a smile and said, "She'll be back very soon."

"Have some buns, Chenchen." His mother smiled and said, "They're going to turn cold."

Chenchen's expression sank and she jumped right out of the chair. She went over and tugged on Zhang Ye's arm, ordering, "Zhang Ye! Bring me along to find my aunt!"

This child was way too clever!

Zhang Ye said, "Stop making a fuss."

Chenchen shouted, "Zhang Ye! Zhang Ye!"

Zhang Ye tried to scare her. "I'll get angry if you keep making a fuss!"

Chenchen was not even listening as she continued pulling Zhang Ye's clothes at the direction of the door while yelling, "Zhang Ye! Bring me to find my aunt!"

This was the first time that Zhang Ye had seen Chenchen get so anxious!

When his mother saw this, she could no longer pretend and felt her heart wrench as she teared up!

Zhang Ye was also feeling a sense of uneasiness. "I would like to know where she is too. Where am I going to find her?!"

Chenchen's cries were getting louder and louder. "Zhang Ye! Bring me there!"

"I don't know where we can find her." Zhang Ye's heart softened the more he heard her cries.

Chenchen shouted, "Zhang Ye! Bring me along to find my aunt! Zhang Ye! Zhang Ye! Zhang Ye!" The child's voice was turning hoarse from all that shouting!

Thinking of Rao Aimin.

Looking at Chenchen.

Zhang Ye's heart was wrenching!

"Zhang Ye! Zhang Ye!"

Suddenly, Zhang Ye clenched his teeth and slapped his thigh. "Fuck! Alright! I'll bring you along to find her! Even if she is hiding in the Sahara Desert, I'll goddamn locate her!"

Chenchen was finally quiet.

"It wasn't easy for me to get a few days off, do you think I have it easy?!" Zhang Ye turned around and said to his parents, "Dad, Mom, I'm gonna be out for a few days!"

His mother asked anxiously, "Where on earth are you going to find her?"

Zhang Ye said exasperated, "God knows where! I'll think of a way!"