

Superstar 1211

Chapter 1211: Another increase in popularity!

In the morning.

After Zhang Ye woke up, he drove over to Old Wu's parent's place to bring them the good news.

When he passed by a bookstore at the road outside their alley, it was just opening for the day. Immediately, more than 30 youths who were lining up outside rushed in like they were going to attempt to rob the store!

"Fortress Besieged!"

"I want a copy!"

"Do you have any left?"

"What? Why not?"

"I was here since yesterday!"

"Boss, why didn't you guys bring in more stock!"

"I'm so tired of this. Why is it so hard for me to be able to read a book I want!"

"My dad ordered me to buy a copy home. Hai, how am I going to find a copy for him? Well, whatever, I guess I'll go elsewhere and ask around."

"The stock should stabilize by tomorrow. Right now, a lot of people are surely looking to buy Fortress Besieged for their book collection since it's just won an important award. But that'll slowly die down in several more days."

"Hopefully."

"Then I guess I'll wait another day or two."

Some of the bookstores were out of stock.

Some others were sold out the moment they opened for business.

On this morning, such events were unfolding throughout the country.

Zhang Ye walked toward the alley happy. Hearing all the praise and discussion by everyone about Fortress Besieged, he was feeling really happy for himse—for Comrade Qian Zhongshu 1 !

At the courtyard house.

Zhang Ye pushed open the door and entered. "Auntie, Uncle."

Li Qinqin had just come out to the courtyard to fetch some water. When she heard Zhang Ye's voice, she broke into a smile. "Little Ye, you're here? Go into the house quick, we're all waiting for you for breakfast. It's already been made."

Zhang Ye went up to offer his help. "Auntie, let me do it."

Li Qinqin said, "No, no, leave it to me. You're a famous author now."

"What famous author?" Zhang Ye laughed and said, "No matter what awards I receive, I'll always be your son."

Li Qinqin smiled. "I love hearing that."

Wu Zeqing also came out of the house. She smiled and said, "You're here?"

Zhang Ye waved and said, "Hey, Old Wu."

Wu Zeqing said, "Quickly come in, my dad is getting steamed up over you."

In the Beijing dialect, to be steamed up means to be angry.

Zhang Ye was startled. "What's wrong with Uncle?"

In the house, Wu Changhe grumbled with a copy of *Fortress Besieged* next to his hand, "What do you think is wrong? My daughter hasn't even gotten married to you yet and you're already expressing despair about marriage?" He was wearing his reading glasses and holding up the book, flipping through the pages. Many of the pages were bookmarked and the contents highlighted, then underlined with red or blue ink. Clearly, he had done a lot of reading and research. "Look at this paragraph here, then this paragraph over here. You rascal, how did you come up with so many flirtatious and scheming plots? You're not sincere at all! You are totally not sincere at all!"

Zhang Ye nearly fainted. "Uncle, it's just a novel, none of it is real."

Li Qinqin chuckled and said, "Little Ye, don't worry about your uncle. He just has nothing better to do than nitpick. He didn't even put your book down once the entire night."

Wu Changhe harrumphed, "The book is good, but the author is really dishonest!"

Zhang Ye didn't know whether to laugh or cry.

Old Qian (Zhongshu).

Someone is scolding you.

Wu Zeqing said calmly, "He's writing satire. You're a person from the Go world, so don't go around involving yourself with the literary world. You don't understand them anyway."

Zhang Ye also explained, "Uncle, don't you worry. I'm full of hope when it comes to marriage and really don't have those kinds of thoughts at all. It's not like I went digging for some emperor's grave even though I wrote a grave robbing novel, right? It's only a novel. No matter how real it sounds, it's still made up."

He finally got past it with this explanation.

Everyone sat down to have breakfast together. After the meal, Zhang Ye quickly helped out with the chores like washing the dishes and wiping down the table in an attempt to impress his elders. Finally, he even used his future father-in-law's account to play a few games of Go on his behalf and thrashed

several of the 9-dan experts from China Qiyuan. Only then did his future father-in-law start to look happier!

Hai, do you think life is easy for this bro!

Over the next few days.

Zhang Ye treated his friends and colleagues to meals every day. In total, he attended around seven gatherings. Although they said it was to celebrate him, it was actually just a chance for them to get together and catch up over food and drinks.

The sales of Fortress Besieged continued to hold up very well.

Every batch of books from each print run that Eastern Publishing Firm ran sold out the moment they left the presses. Moreover, the print factories were also putting in overtime every day in order to ship out the goods!

The Eastern Publishing Firm's staff were seemingly celebrating the new year every day. Everyone was walking on air and even felt like they would float into the sky if the windows got opened.

"Boss, we still don't have enough to meet demand!"

"Add another print run!"

"It's too popular! There's no sign of the sales slowing!"

"The demand for it hasn't reached saturation yet! Print more! Print however much more they ask for!"

"Teacher Zhang Ye is amazing!"

"That's right, add an additional print run for Ghost Blows Out the Light and Legend of Wukong. Use this opportunity where Teacher Zhang has climbed to the summit with that newly gained honor to sell another wave of those books!"

"Alright, I'll get in touch with the printers right now!"

200,000 copies!

300,000 copies!

400,000 copies!

The sales figures were so explosive that it dumbfounded many book publishers and people in the literary field. Are you people fucking intending to break the record set by Ghost Blows Out the Light? Ghost Blows Out the Light was a genre fiction novel that was specifically written to appeal to the market. Bu Fortress Besieged? Yes, Zhang Ye was extremely popular, and Fortress Besieged had also won the highest honor of the Chinese literary world. But when you boil it down, this was just a literary novel!

Selling well on the first day? That was normal!

Still selling well on the second day? Acceptable!

But it was still selling like hotcakes on the third and fourth days?

Even with such a large supply of books, it was not enough to satisfy the crazed book buyers? And it was even difficult to get? This was too scary! There was no comparison between genre fiction and literary fiction when it came to artistic merit. Similarly, a literary novel could never compare in terms of sales to genre fiction. However, Fortress Besieged seemed to be the exception. Be it its literary standards, the praise heaped upon it, the award it won, or even its sales figures, all of it was top notch. It had broken many of the known stereotypes in the industry, and many of the analyses and experiences of experts were no longer applicable to Zhang Ye!

Quite a lot of literary figures were getting jealous!

Why?

Based on what?

He could win an award and the book was selling so well too?

Why could he enjoy the best of both worlds!

When the other four literary masters who had also won the Qilu Literature Prize learned about this, they got inspired!

Has literary fiction become popular?

Has spring arrived for literary novels?

On the day itself, the publishing firms they were working with reprinted and promoted their award-winning books on a large scale. This was standard industry practice as they wanted to bank on the momentum from winning the award to sell another wave of books. The publishing firms needed to make a living, and so did the authors. Who would ever think they had earned enough money? Seeing how insanely Fortress Besieged was selling, they wanted to get a slice of the pie too!

But when the four literary masters' books got restocked on the shelves, a lot of people were dumbfounded to find out that those winners' books had a completely different experience from Fortress Besieged!

One of the books had 50,000 copies reprinted, but only managed to sell one-third of the copies after two days!

Another one had a print run of 20,000 copies and still did not sell out after three days!

Nobody knew whether to laugh or cry. So it wasn't the market that had changed. There was no spring coming for literary novels. It was just Fortress Besieged that was on fire, it was just Zhang Ye who was on fire!

Zhang Ye was indeed on fire again!

Not only in terms of popularity, but also overall statistics!

In the latest updated Chinese Celebrity Rankings Index, on the day after Zhang Ye won the Qilu Literature Prize, he gained another increase to his overall popularity score. It wasn't just a gain in a single aspect of his popularity but an overall surge. This was the effect of winning the highest honor. It

was a percent increase accumulated and gained toward the overall popularity score. Moreover, the Qilu Literature Prize was different from the other awards. The highest honors in the literary world could only be won once by an author in their lifetime. Thus, the value of such awards were even greater and the percent increase would similarly be greater. It was probably even greater than the combination of the popularity scores gained from the variety shows' highest honor and the documentaries' highest honor combined! This was also the reason for so many celebrities to chase after those prestigious awards. If they could accumulate enough of said gains, it would be a colossal number! Honors, awards, fanbase, number of works, fame, all of those contributed to the total popularity scores of every celebrity! The Chinese Celebrity Rankings Index was also an aggregate chart. If a celebrity wanted to ascend to one of those seven spots in the entertainment industry, it depended on their overall popularity scores!

And so, with the bonus from winning the award, and including the rising sales figures of Fortress Besieged, Zhang Ye's popularity sprang up by quite a lot again!

He was getting even closer to those seven spots!

The first and second milestones of the "Reach the Summit" plan had been reached!

Chapter 1212: A great harvest from the lottery draw!

On this day.

The sun was shining and the autumn wind blowing.

Zhang Ye was finally done entertaining everyone and took half a day off to rest. The celebratory feasts, the gatherings, handling the reporters, holding autograph signing book events, all these activities had left him totally exhausted. Just the signing event alone required him to sign no less than 500 books. But as Zhang Ye wanted to quickly reach the position of the seven spots, and with his milestones of the plan to reach the summit fully lined up with barely any breaks in between, Zhang Ye could only give himself half a day off with only two milestones completed and the third and fourth ones coming up immediately.

He had no choice.

All of this was so he could reach the top in China.

Even though he called it a break, he actually intended to use this half day to do something very important. With this large chunk of free time and his game ring's Reputation Points reaching an astronomical figure that he only occasionally used to activate the Lucky Halo and buy Memory Search Capsules with, he had no idea how long he had not played the lottery draw. He hadn't added to his Stats and Special Category items for a long time. So he had to make the best of the time he had to restock. This was also to give himself a better foundation for what was to come in his plan to reach the summit. After all, to forge iron, one must be strong. Having more skills would not be a burden and he was still lacking in many areas. Who would ever dislike being good at many things?

His parents had been out since early morning, but he didn't know where they had gone. In order to get luckier, Zhang Ye showered and washed himself from head to toe. He washed just his hands alone five times until his skin almost came off.

It was about enough.

He took the opportunity to call Wu Zeqing as well.

It connected after only two rings.

"Old Wu, what are you doing?"

"I'm at work."

"Have you had breakfast yet?"

"I ate at home."

"By the way, give me a kiss?"

"What's the matter?"

"To give me some luck, come on now."

"Hur hur, but I'm working."

"Aiyo, just secretly give me a kiss."

"There're people around."

"Oh, then it's fine, go do your work."

A short while after hanging up, his cell phone text message tone sounded. Zhang Ye took a look and saw that Wu Zeqing had sent him a photo. It did not show her entire face, and even her nose could not be seen in the picture. All the photo showed was two red lips puckered in an elegant and graceful manner.

It was so tempting!

Zhang Ye's fantasies were stirred!

Di di.

Old Wu texted: "Is that fine?"

Zhang Ye typed: "Haha, that's good enough!"

"Why do you need luck?"

Zhang Ye replied: "I have important business."

Zhang Ye threw the phone onto the sofa and rubbed his hands together, then took a deep breath before opening up the game ring's interface to look at his total Reputation Points. It was ridiculously high! The long string of numbers dazzled Zhang Ye, and he didn't hesitate as he activated the Lucky Halo (Upgraded). He was going to leave it activated all the time without caring about the idle time in between his lottery draws. This bro could afford it....Forget it, it was probably better to be more prudent.

Which lottery draw should he go for first?

Alright, Lottery Draw (Two) then!

He opened up Lottery Draw (Two) and a virtual slot machine appeared out of thin air. Zhang Ye did not even think before placing five additional stakes costing a total of 50 million Reputation Points!

Zhang Ye had known Lottery Draw (Two)'s additional stakes function for a long time. But he'd never used it much as he was reluctant to do so. He preferred to save the Reputation Points since he did not use to have much. Lottery Draw (Two) cost 10 million Reputation Points each time he played it, and the rate of getting an "Empty" Treasure Chest (Medium) was very high as well. If he was unlucky, he would have ended up with nothing at all. But now that he had so many Reputation Points accumulated, he was much more emboldened. Further, there was also the Lucky Halo (Upgraded) to bring up his chances. Without even batting an eyelid, 50 million Reputation Points were spent just like that!

The lottery draw began!

The slot machine started moving!

One spin.

Three spins.

Five spins.

Zhang Ye closed his eyes and did not watch.

Finally, the prizes were dispensed!

He heard some jingling sounds as five golden medium treasure chests fell out. Zhang Ye nervously and expectantly opened up the five treasure chests.

They were items from the Consumption Category!

All five were the same items!

[Spring Water of Health] × 5: Heals physical injuries and sickness.

In Lottery Draw (Two), the chances of getting an item from the Consumption Category were very low. Zhang Ye could only remember getting the 1-Up item during his first try at the Lottery Draw (Two), but did not come across this category in his future draws. This was because the items in the Consumption Category for the Lottery Draw (Two) were all extremely precious items.

Spring Water of Health?

Heals injuries and sickness?

That sounded really awesome!

And this Spring Water of Health was probably part of a set with the 1-Up as well? The item description for the 1-Up was quite ambiguous. From what he could understand, if any fatal injuries were inflicted on Zhang Ye, the 1-Up should revive him. But whether he would be revived to a state where he was full of vim and vigor was another matter. That sort of godly item was quite unlikely to be found in the Treasure Chest (Medium), though it might be possible to gain such an item from the Treasure Chest (Large). However, now that he had gotten the Spring Water of Health in addition to his 1-Up, it was going to be

the ultimate combination. The 1-Up would be responsible for saving his life, while the Spring Water of Health would restore him to full health. Boys and girls together, the work gets lighter.

The only issue was that the effect of this item was unknown.

Oh yes, weren't his own internal injuries still not completely healed? Those old injuries he suffered at the martial arts conference had flared up once during his participation in the King of Masked Singers. Although Zhang Ye closely followed the prescription given to him by Rao Aimin and took the medicine religiously for quite a period of time, he did not really dare to use his concealed power in all these months. He was afraid to aggravate his injuries again, and according to Rao Aimin, it was very difficult to fully recover from injuries that were inflicted by concealed power and would require long-term recuperation. So Zhang Ye was bound by his hands and legs most of the time when it came to situations that required him to do something with his powers. He was afraid that it would cause more trouble at a critical moment if he were to take action and then aggravate the injury once more.

This item had arrived quite timely!

After temporarily deactivating his Lucky Halo, Zhang Ye picked up a bottle of Spring Water of Health and gulped it down while pinching his nose.

Eh? Why does it taste so good?

It tasted sweet. Then he could feel his body heating up.

The aftereffects lasted about ten minutes before Zhang Ye slowly wondered if there was any recovery. He moved his arms around and found that he was in an extremely good state of mind. It was as though his whole person was shining, and that feeling was like waking up from a particularly fulfilling sleep without the need to go to work and being able to stretch once awake!

He moved his hands and threw several punches imbued with concealed power!

Huu!

Huu!

His punches even whooshed through the air!

Zhang Ye was ecstatic. He had recovered! His old injuries had really disappeared!

He wondered if this Spring Water of Health would work on anyone else other than him. It wasn't mentioned in the item description, so Zhang Ye wasn't sure. Oh, Rao Aimin's old injuries were even more serious than his, and then there was Qiu Yumei too. Could this thingy heal Sister Qiu's legs? If it could, then wouldn't that be defying all common sense?

Cold and fever.

Broken hands and legs.

Were all these included under injuries and sickness?

Eh, could it treat stuttering? Alright, that was enough thinking for now.

Zhang Ye was very excited. He really hadn't washed his hands for nothing. Old Wu's kiss was not for nothing either. Taking advantage of this lucky streak, he continued to play the lottery and activated the Lucky Halo (Upgraded) once more!

Come on!

Come on!

Keep going like this!

He was playing more and more rounds of the lottery draw. This fellow was completely unable to stop!

The accumulated Reputation Points were finally starting to drop!

[Fruit of Charm]

[Singing Skill Experience Book]

[Basics of Directing Skill Experience Book]

[Higher Mathematics Skill Experience Book]

[Lock Picking Skill Experience Book]

[Computer Programming Skills - Network Technology Experience Book]

[Computer Programming Skills Experience Book]

How coincidental. Many of the items he was getting from the lottery draw today were items he had gotten in the past. Zhang Ye was randomly adding additional stakes every time he played, so he had a lot of some items and very little of others. Like the Lock Picking Skill Experience Books. He had received this item not long after he gained the game ring system. Then the item was put to good use during the plane hijacking incident soon afterwards. At that time, he had "eaten" too few of those experience books, so it was now time to add on. It was the same for the Computer Programming Skills Experience Books and Computer Programming Skills - Network Technology Experience Books. Although he had "eaten" a lot of those, the Treasure Chest (Medium) skill experience books were not capped. He could continue "eating" more of them. Along with those, he was also able to strengthen his directing, singing, and higher mathematics skills. He also gained some Fruits of Charm that were very important for a celebrity like him, but it was unfortunate that there weren't much of them.

Of course, some totally new skill experience and Stats Category fruits were gained!

[Fruit of Alcohol Tolerance]: Increase one's drinking capacity.

Zhang Ye received a thousand of these and ate them all!

[Flight Engine Manufacturing Skill Experience Book]

This skill experience book made Zhang Ye's balls ache, and he had actually gotten quite a lot of them too. Engine manufacturing? Why didn't you just give me an Excavator Repair Skill Experience Book instead!

Whatever, I'll just eat it!

Who knows if it might be useful later!

At the end of the lottery draw, Zhang Ye even dropped by the Merchant Shop and bought several hundred Taiji Fist Skill Experience Books at once. He could straight up buy this item as he had its purchasing rights. He had no need to use the lottery draw and could buy it whenever he wanted, except that it was a little bit costly. This book required a million Reputation Points each, and several hundred of them would mean he had to spend several hundred million Reputation Points all at once. His Taiji Fist abilities had gained a slight improvement again, but as for whether he could step up to the level of grandmaster was still to be seen.

Alright!

Enough spending of Reputation Points, that's all for today!

Zhang Ye did a simple inventory check of his Stats and Skills Category items and felt quite satisfied with it as he raised almost every aspect of them again. He could do everything with even more confidence now!

There was also quite a lot of items left in his inventory.

[Difficulty Adjustment Die] x 1.

[X-ray Vision Eye Drops] x 1.

[Pause Game] x 1.

[1-Up] x 1.

[Spring Water of Health] x 4.

Chapter 1213: Semi-grandmaster!

Noon.

Jiaomen East.

At Old Rao's house.

The door was open. It seemed like Rao Aimin had just finished making lunch as the entire house was filled with the aroma of cooking. Chenchen and Yang Shu were both waiting at the dinner table when Zhang Ye showed up uninvited.

"Yo, Big Sis Rao, are you making lunch?" Zhang Ye eyes lit up.

Rao Aimin looked at him. "Have you eaten yet?"

Zhang Ye took a step into the house. "Not yet, what good timing!"

Rao Aimin's next words were: "Chenchen, shut the door!"

Chenchen actually listened to her and was really going to close the door.

Zhang Ye squeezed in through the doorway. "Hey, hey, hey, what's the meaning of this?"

His junior martial sister was still the one who cared the most about him. Yang Shu gave up her seat and brought over another stool for herself. She said respectfully, "Senior Bro, please take a seat here."

Zhang Ye gave her an approving nod. "OK!"

Yang Shu went to fetch a pair of chopsticks for him.

Zhang Ye spoke like a lord, "Get me a bowl of rice too. Make the serving larger, I'm starving."

"Alright." Yang Shu busily attended to his requests.

Chenchen could not look on and said in her childish voice, "Old Yang, don't spoil him."

Rao Aimin was shaking her head nonstop.

Only Zhang Ye and Yang Shu remained from the Taiji branch of martial arts in this world. Their predecessors were no longer around, and no successors lay ahead. In the whole wide world, only the two of them remained. Zhang Ye was Yang Shu's senior martial brother. As the senior martial brother, he was like a father figure to her. Moreover, Zhang Ye was like a semi-master to Yang Shu. The line of the Taiji branch of martial arts was broken and not something Rao Aimin could take over to teach. Other than Zhang Ye, no one could teach her. Zhang Ye was also the closest person to her in this world, which was why Yang Shu had always been very respectful to him as her senior martial brother. She would do whatever he asked, be it physical work or running errands.

At the dinner table.

Zhang Ye asked, "Yang'er, how's your kung fu practice going?"

Yang Shu put down her chopsticks and answered in earnest, "I did not disappoint you, Senior Bro. I've made some good improvement."

"Good." Zhang Ye smiled and said, "I'll teach you another couple of moves later."

Yang Shu became very excited. "Thank you, Senior Bro!"

Chenchen curled her lips. "Hur hur."

Zhang Ye pretended not to hear. He looked at Old Rao and said cockily, "Shall we exchange a few blows after lunch? You can take the chance to exercise a little and I can teach my junior sis a few new moves at the same time."

Rao Aimin dismissed, "With that skill of yours?"

Zhang Ye bragged, "I've made huge leaps recently. I'm no longer the old me."

Rao Aimin said in amusement, "Sure then, I'll give it a try."

Chenchen said, "My aunt hasn't fully recovered from her injuries yet."

Rao Aimin cut her off and said, "It's fine. I can win against him even with my injuries. How dare he challenge me!"

After lunch.

Zhang Ye sneakily went to pour a glass of water. With no one watching, he furtively opened up his game ring and retrieved a bottle of Spring Water of Health from the inventory. Then, he silently poured it into the glass. He wasn't sure if this thing would actually work on other people, but he could at least try. He wanted to see if it would heal Old Rao's injuries and at the same time test if his kung fu was good enough to match a grandmaster after he had "eaten" another several hundred Taiji Fist Skill Experience Books.

Yang Shu went to wash the dishes.

Zhang Ye walked over affably. "Old Rao, have some water."

Rao Aimin was taken aback, then said to Chenchen, "Go look out the window."

Chenchen asked, "Look at what?"

Rao Aimin said, "See if the sun rose from the west today. This kid actually poured water for me? Are you trying to poison me?"

Zhang Ye nearly vomited blood.

In the end, Rao Aimin still drank it.

Zhang Ye watched her. "How are you feeling?"

"A little warm." Rao Aimin then stared at him. "Hey, rascal, did you really try to poison me?"

Zhang Ye rolled his eyes. "Why would I poison you? You probably ate too much and the food is burning off."

A space was cleared out within the apartment.

Chenchen hid away at the top of the stairs, lying on the staircase observing the fight downstairs.

Meanwhile, Yang Shu stood in a corner, watching without blinking.

Rao Aimin said uncaringly, "Let's begin."

"You first." Zhang Ye got into a stance.

Rao Aimin asked, "Should I hold back?"

Zhang Ye said, "Doesn't matter."

"Alright."

The most exciting moment was about to arrive.

Chenchen even placed a bet with Yang Shu. "Old Yang, who are you betting on to win?"

Yang Shu said firmly, "My Senior Bro!"

"It's definitely going to be my aunt," Chenchen said.

This time, it wasn't going to be a touch and go exchange of blows. It wasn't going to be fought using fanciful chopstick moves either. This was going to be the first official all-out duel between Rao Aimin and Zhang Ye. It might be a duel held in a living room measuring little more than ten square meters, and there might only be two people watching, but if anyone from the Chinese martial arts world learned about this, it would surely spark a big reaction from them. A lot of people would definitely wish they were here to see this, to see whose technique was the stronger one!

Zhang Ye vs. Rao Aimin!

Taiji Fist vs. Eight Trigrams Palm!

The hooligan of the Chinese martial arts world versus the evil tyrant of the Chinese martial arts world!

A man just below the level of grandmaster versus a Chinese martial arts grandmaster!

A duel that could probably be written in the annals of Chinese martial arts history was happening right here in this humble little apartment without any fanfare!

Bang!

They immediately went all out with their first exchange!

Rao Aimin slipped into the Eight Trigrams Step and aimed a palm strike at Zhang Ye's side!

Zhang Ye fended it off by dampening her blow and countered with a punch!

Rao Aimin raised her hand to block it!

There was concealed power imbued within Zhang Ye's palm!

Rao Aimin met it with a palm strike of her own!

The two of them hobbled back two steps, with no one getting any advantage over the other.

Rao Aimin smiled and said, "Yo, you've recovered from your injuries?"

Zhang Ye smiled. "I guess I have."

"You've got good moves. Come on then." Rao Aimin used her swimming body stance and stuck close to him.

Chenchen shouted from above, "Auntie, go on, hit him! Hit him!"

Meanwhile, Yang Shu silently watched with wide eyes. She was memorizing every move Zhang Ye executed. She knew that her senior martial brother was already starting to teach her!

There was another exchange of blows!

Bang!

Smash!

Both sides were going back and forth!

A closer look would reveal that Zhang Ye's advantage lay in his strength, reaction, and stamina. Together with his young age, he had all the advantages a man should have. But for Rao Aimin, her advantage was in her technique, experience, and control of rhythm. The most critical thing was that her concealed power was clearly much more ingrained than Zhang Ye's. So as the duel went on, Zhang Ye's strength was slowly getting sapped while Rao Aimin gradually gained the upper hand!

A duel involving Chinese martial arts was a very quick engagement of moves. Rarely would you see those huge battles involving hundreds of blows like in the movies or on television. Even if the martial artists didn't starve to death, they would probably die trying to hold their bladders! A quick duel would be over in just one or two exchanges. If it took longer than that, probably several dozen exchanges would leave either one of the opponents lying on the ground.

When Zhang Ye realized that things weren't looking good, he quickly pulled back. "Alright, alright, that's enough for now." Then he saw that his fists and several parts of his arms had turned red!

Hai.

He was still a step away from becoming a grandmaster.

No, it was a step away previously, but he was now only half a step away.

Zhang Ye knew he was still not good enough to beat Old Rao, and he wasn't just lacking by a bit. Although he still had many special techniques that he did not show, Old Rao probably hadn't pulled out any of her special moves either.

But Rao Aimin hadn't had enough. "Come, again!"

Zhang Ye snorted. "I'm tired, another day perhaps."

Rao Aimin pursed her lips. "You're no fun." She relaxed as well.

Then Zhang Ye looked at her. "How are you feeling?"

"What do you mean by how am I feeling?" Rao Aimin did not quite understand him but was gradually taken aback. She looked at her palm, then raised it and struck at the air with concealed power. There wasn't a sound or any movement, but the spectating Yang Shu knew that if anyone had taken her palm strike, even if it just brushed past them a little, they would probably have ended up with shattered bones!

Yang Shu said dumbfounded, "Master Rao, your injuries..."

Rao Aimin was also very happy. "Hey, did I make a full recovery from my injuries? How can it be so quick?"

Compared to the injuries suffered by Zhang Ye, Rao Aimin had nearly died at the martial arts conference. She took quite a few attacks of concealed power and suffered both internal and external injuries. If she wanted to recover to her previous skill level, Zhang Ye estimated it would take at least a year or so. On top of that, Rao Aimin would likely suffer a drop in her skill level in the two to three years that followed or even after her full recovery. She wouldn't be able to reach her peak level again. After all, she was a woman and her age was catching up as well. But surprisingly, after today's exchange with

Zhang Ye, Rao Aimin felt that she had recovered from all her internal injuries and returned to the peak of her prowess.

Only Zhang Ye knew what was really going on!

It was the effect of the Spring Water of Health!

Besides him, this item could aid others to recover from injuries and sickness? Moreover, its effects were almost immediate and could even heal such heavy internal injuries. This must be some type of a miracle cure!

Zhang Ye laughed loudly, "You should thank me."

Rao Aimin sneered. "What has it got anything to do with you?"

Yang Shu added, "Congratulations, Master Rao!"

Chenchen ran down the stairs. "Aunt, this is great."

"Alright, I'm feeling happy today. I'll whip up a good meal for all of you tonight," Rao Aimin said evenly.

Old Rao's injuries were now healed. Zhang Ye's skill level had increased. With them both standing guard now, even if those experts from the "respectable" martial sects who were seriously injured by them made a full recovery and came seeking revenge, they would have nothing to worry about. Besides, there was also one more person who was close to achieving concealed power on their side, Yang Shu!

Chapter 1214: The pie that is the Chinese language textbook curriculum revision!

In the afternoon.

Ha Qiqi went downstairs to look for Zhang Ye.

Zhang Ye was sparring with Yang Shu at Rao Aimin's apartment.

"Director Zhang, are you busy?"

"Not at all, I'm done here."

"Everyone has arrived and are waiting for you in the conference room."

"Alright, I'll be right over."

"I just received some news about something that cropped up over at Central TV."

"Did something happen? Come, let's talk about it back at the office."

His studio was located just upstairs. He didn't even need to take the elevator and only took a minute or two by stairs to get to. The conference room was packed with all the studio employees present.

Zhang Ye sat down. "Let's get the meeting started."

Everyone began reporting about the progress of their work over the past few days.

The sales volume of Fortress Besieged, the reputation gained from winning the highest honor, and a summary of the increase in popularity during this period, etc. Work was going well and the results were very delightful too. All of them had handed in an impeccable answer sheet, and the main contributor definitely had to be Zhang Ye. As expected, when the studio staff were all feeling hopeless about things, Zhang Ye managed to pull it off. He saved the entire "world" with a novel he had written and put back on track the plan they had for him to reach the summit. They were within sight of those seven spots at the top. What laid ahead of them now was only the latter half of the plan.

Zhang Zuo said, "We've already started preparing for the third milestone."

Ha Qiqi gave a wry smile and said, "Although we say that we're preparing for it, there isn't much that we can actually do."

Wu Yi said, "Yeah, whether we can hit the third milestone target or not, we can only leave it in fate's hands. There isn't much hope, but there's still a minute chance, I suppose."

Zhang Zuo analyzed, "The biggest issue is that Director Zhang's relationship with many of those in the education field is just average. The people from Peking University and Media College are definitely going to be supportive of Director Zhang, even though we can ignore and discount the effect that Media College has on this matter. This isn't something that they have much influence in, but Peking University still has a very large say. Then the remaining people could only be considered opponents of this milestone target that we have. Anyone who came out of Tsinghua University definitely won't put in a recommendation for Director Zhang's works. Many of the Redologists in the education field are still scolding Director Zhang every day. Then, there are also some others....Hai, there are just too many of them."

Everyone's heads hurt.

Zhang Ye asked, "It's going to happen soon?"

Zhang Zuo said somberly, "Yes, they'll be making a decision very soon."

Zhang Ye asked again, "Which day exactly?"

"I tried to find out but couldn't get any information," Zhang Zuo said.

Zhang Ye acknowledged, "Alright, I'll go check with my friends then."

Ha Qiqi said, "When we set this as our third milestone, we did have some hesitations as well. Honestly, even if we can't achieve it, it's fine. It's too difficult to achieve in the first place."

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Let's just give it a try."

Little Wang said loudly, "Yes, that's right. We definitely have to give it a try and see how it turns out. This is a great chance to go down in history, and it's also a huge sustainable source of popularity!"

All of them were discussing the new curriculum changes to the national textbooks and teaching materials!

That was the third milestone in the plan to reach the summit!

The nine-year compulsory curriculum revision of the textbooks and teaching materials was going to be implemented soon. The new content for the textbooks used in elementary, middle, and high schools involved changes in many aspects and also coincided with the educational reforms introduced over the past two years. The importance of such an exercise, its importance, and its politicality were all interconnected. The relationship between them was intricate and complex. In fact, rumors of revisions to the textbooks had been floating around since last year. Curriculum revisions were cyclical in nature, and they had reached the key point in time again. The curriculum revision was no secret, and everyone was prepared for it. However, no one expected it to be dragged out for so long until today, when some insider news finally got leaked.

The public still did not know, but many of the industry insiders had heard the news.

Zhang Ye's Studio was naturally concerned about it as they were hoping for a chance to get written into the textbooks!

It could even be said that the first and second milestones were completed in order to increase their chances of reaching the third milestone. By releasing a best-selling novel and winning a prestigious award, it wouldn't matter if others did not acknowledge Zhang Ye. With such achievements, Zhang Ye would become one of the leading figures in the literary field. The studio staff were all hoping that Zhang Ye would be able to get onto a page of the newly revised Chinese Language textbooks during this time his glowing achievements stood out. Even if it was going to be on the most corner spot of a page, even if only one of his works were chosen, that was enough for them!

Was this an important matter?

Yes, it really was a very important matter!

Thinking back to Beijing Television's Wang Shuixin whom Zhang Ye had fought with over the death of Father Wei, he had a poem called "Everything" that was listed in the appendix of a Chinese Language textbook. It wasn't even the main article, but Wang Shuixin behaved like he was some big shot. Those who could get their works into the official textbooks were either going to be the great ancients or a contemporary literary master!

The benefits were enormous!

A storm was probably brewing within the literary field!

But this only affected the Chinese language textbooks. Mathematics? Whoever could write a question that made it into the math textbook, that would just be it. There wouldn't be any attention given to the identity of the question writer, nor did anyone care. At most, the teacher who wrote that question could brag about it and tell their family and friends that it was they who wrote it.

Physics?

Chemistry?

English?

History?

Geography?

It was the same for those subjects. The Chinese language textbooks were the only difference. Any essays or poems that appeared in the Chinese language textbooks would be credited to the original authors. The students would even be required to recite some of them by heart! And what did that mean? Simply put, as long as a child was born and attended school in China, they would come across your work or have had to memorize it when they were young. They would definitely know your name, and this wasn't even by choice. There was simply no way of avoiding it, and they would have to know about it even if they did not wish to. You would then become known as a very great person to them from the time they were young!

If the highest honors in literature were an ICBM missile, then having your work chosen to be published in the Chinese language textbooks would make it an atomic bomb. The "radiation" effects would last for a very long time, or even affect someone for the rest of their lives!

As a literary figure, how important was this?

As someone from the entertainment industry, how important was this?

However, the other people from the entertainment industry had no chance of fighting for this opportunity. The only exception was Zhang Ye, as only he had the qualifications to fight it out with those big names in the literary field, to fight for that slim chance of having his work picked for the Chinese language textbook!

Textbooks for all six grades of elementary school?

Textbooks for all six grades of middle and high school?

Yes, perhaps there was even get a chance of getting one's works featured in the textbooks of both the first and second semesters of school!

It might sound like it was a lot or that there were many chances of getting one's work featured in the textbooks, but in reality, this was not so. The curriculum revision did not seek to change everything and would keep the majority of past teaching materials intact. For many of the ancients, their already included works would definitely not be touched. So the revision rate was not large at all. Excluding the predecessors' works that made it in, and excluding those sections where poems and essays were irrelevant, whatever was left of the pie was tiny!

Ten bites?

Eight bites?

That was probably all there was!

And those in the literary field who were fighting to get a bite? There were tens of thousands!

Chapter 1215: A great opportunity!

The direction of the third milestone in the "Reach the Summit" plan was set.

Everyone's plan was just to wait? To ask around for information? To depend on luck?

But that was not what Zhang Ye was thinking. He had his own ideas and knew that he had to contend for an opportunity like this. Getting included in the Chinese language textbooks was a great opportunity. Only an idiot would not want this! Of course, Zhang Ye wasn't doing this for himself, he really wasn't. He was doing this for the great scholars from his previous world. If the essence of those scholars' wisdom from his previous world could not even make it into the Chinese language textbooks over here, then damn, what would that mean?

Wouldn't it be too goddamn insulting!

Wasn't it as good as getting pushed around!

Could he tolerate that? Of course he couldn't!

Even if he could tolerate it, would Old Li (Li Bai) tolerate that? Would Old Du (Du Fu) tolerate that?

And so, Zhang Ye hoped that he could seize a spot in the textbooks however small it was!

After the meeting, Zhang Ye went to call his Peking University colleague, Su Na. Teacher Su was from the university's Chinese Department and had maintained a good relationship with him. Her father was also someone in the literary field.

"Teacher Su."

"Yo, Teacher Zhang."

"What have you been up to recently?"

"Teaching, what else?"

"By the way, can I ask you something? The textbook curriculum revision will be implemented soon, have you heard about it?"

"Yes, I've heard. The literary field is stirring up because of it, so who wouldn't know? Why are you asking? Do you intend to contend for it too? That's right, Teacher Zhang, you're qualified to get selected!"

"Aiyah, please don't say that. How am I qualified? I'm still lacking by too much. I was just asking. Anyway, what are the requirements to get selected for the textbook curriculum revision?"

"Didn't you say that you were still lacking by too much?"

"Yeah, but a person cannot have no goals. Otherwise, what difference would that be from being a salted fish?"

"Pfft, you can say whatever you like. In any case, I don't know much. I've heard some things from my parents, but I'm not exactly sure what the selection criteria is. That's something that the Education Department Textbook Revision work groups are handling. All I know is that they should probably be finishing the revision soon and should've prepared everything that needs to be prepared. I think it should be happening tomorrow morning. They'll be holding a meeting to discuss the specifics to tie up the changes. As for when they'll announce the changes and start the actual printing of the new textbooks, I'm not sure. For the mathematics and physics revisions, they might delay it until a later time

because there's a bigger debate over them. They probably wouldn't be able to get it settled in the short term—that's what I heard from the Math Department. So yeah, that's about it."

"Tomorrow morning?"

"I think so."

"Don't just think so, are you sure?"

"I'm sure!"

"Alright, I got it. Thanks, you sure are well-informed."

"That's because you don't even come by Peking University anymore. If you came here to teach every day, what news in the education field would you not know?"

The call ended.

Zhang Ye went to find Ha Qiqi and Zhang Zuo. "I've found out that the curriculum revision for the Chinese language textbooks will be tied up by tomorrow morning."

Zhang Zuo said in anticipation, "I hope for good news then!"

Zhang Ye suddenly remembered something and looked at Ha Qiqi. "By the way, Sister Ha. You told me earlier at Old Rao's house that something happened at Central TV? What was it about?"

Ha Qiqi hesitated for a while before saying, "It's insider news. I learned of it from a former coworker at Central TV. It hasn't been announced yet, but it's been confirmed."

Zhang Ye asked, "So what's the matter?"

Ha Qiqi said, "Central TV Department 1 will be filming a second season of The Voice!"

Little Wang's ears were sharp and caught what they were saying. "What? How'd they get the copyright! Back when they signed the contract, the copyrights were all given to Director Zhang!"

Ha Qiqi shook her head. "It was just a figure of speech. In fact, they're going to film a new show and have already started prepping for it. The name of the show will be Sing! China, but to put it plainly, they just changed the name from The Voice to Sing!. In reality, it's just the second season of The Voice. The Voice was incredibly popular with the audience last year, and since Central TV Department 1 does not have any good reality shows lined up for this year, they're resorting to using The Voice again to carry the banner. They'll probably be putting together a new program team and invite a new panel of guest coaches, although I heard that there won't be many changes to the stage. The show's format will also remain the same."

Little Wang exclaimed, "That's considered infringement too!"

Wu Yi said angrily, "They're only changing how the show looks! Sue them!"

But Zhang Zuo said, "If they just change the segment where the guest coaches turn around in their chairs and make them stand up to turn around instead, or use some similar methods to block their

views, it would really be very difficult to sue them. They can just claim that it's a new show with a new design. What can we do about that? We couldn't win even if we went to court."

A year had already passed since The Voice was broadcast. Counting the days, Central TV Department 1 could no longer continue sitting on it. Earlier, a lot of netizens were discussing whether there would be a second season of The Voice after Zhang Ye ended his contract with Central TV. Who would do it? And how were they going to do it? It seemed like there was an answer now. Central TV Department 1 would still carry on filming it. They would just ditch Zhang Ye, Ha Qiqi, Zhang Zuo, and the rest of the old program team, then take the show and film it by themselves!

How devious!

But this was expected!

Zhang Ye was not at all surprised. "Let's put this issue aside for now."

What else could he do? Such things had happened even in Zhang Ye's previous world. Although they were no longer authorized to make the show due to not having the copyrights, there had always been striking similarities in history and was difficult to enforce.

Forget it, just ignore them for now. The plan to reach the summit was still the most crucial of all.

...

Later that afternoon.

The news started to spread!

The curriculum revision for the elementary, middle, and high school textbooks was finally revealed. In fact, it was the Ministry of Education that held a press conference to announce this important news. For a lot of those in the industry, this wasn't really news. But to the majority of the public, this was the first time they were hearing about it.

A lot of information was made available through this press conference.

Like how there would be an increase in difficulty for the high school math textbooks.

And how the patriotic education in the elementary school textbooks would be enhanced.

Or the increase in vocabulary words used in the English language textbooks.

But of course, it was still the revision of the Chinese language textbooks that attracted the most attention. Every time there was a curriculum revision, the elementary and middle school Chinese language textbooks would get the most attention!

"Math is already so difficult, but they still want to make it harder?"

"No, please, no! Math is the only subject I'm bad at!"

"Hai, they shouldn't put so much stress on children."

"The Chinese language textbooks will be getting a major revision as well?"

"Whose essays do you guys think will get into the textbooks?"

"Hard to say."

"Right, any master in the literary field stands a chance of getting in. Isn't the prose by Master Liu super famous? There's been a heated discussion for the last two days, so it should probably get selected, right?"

"Who knows?"

"The winners of the last two Yanhong Literary Prizes should stand a chance, right?"

"Eh, does that mean that Zhang Ye has a chance as well?"

"Yeah, he probably has a chance as well!"

"Ahhh, I like Zhang Ye's 'The Answer.' 'Debasement is the password of the base.' I really love this poem, but maybe it'll be too dark for the younger people? It probably won't get chosen."

"'Ode to Young China' has a higher likelihood of getting selected!"

"Right, 'Ode to Young China'! How did I forget that!"

"That's right, I just remembered it too. It was even featured on People's Daily!"

"Zhang Ye's essays and poems are usually too aggressive in nature. If he really stands a chance of contending for one of the spots in the Chinese language textbook revision, 'Ode to Young China' is probably the most hopeful one!"

"Teacher Zhang, we'll be cheering you on!"

"Damn, if Face-smacking Zhang really gets selected for the textbooks, he'll be so awesome! Won't that fellow be soaring to the skies then?"

"He's already an author, poet, host, singer, mathematician, calligrapher, crosstalk comedian, skit actor, variety show director, documentary director, Go master, and so on and so forth, so would he still need to soar to the skies? That fellow is already fucking standing shoulder to shoulder with the sun!"

"Pfft!"

"Hahahahaha!"

"This is such a great opportunity, so let's see if Teacher Zhang can grab hold of it!"

Chapter 1216: All of the Tsinghua University representatives meet with trouble!

Friday.

In the morning.

The alarm sounded and Zhang Ye climbed up from bed rubbing his eyes. He headed to the bathroom to wash up while calling out to the living room, "Mom, what's for breakfast? I'm not going to work this morning."

His mother asked, "Did you take time off to rest?"

Zhang Ye squeezed some toothpaste onto his toothbrush. "Yeah."

"There are only leftovers from yesterday, so make do with that," his mother said.

Zhang Ye said absent-mindedly, "Sure, anything's fine."

After breakfast, Zhang Ye kept checking his watch.

His father wondered, "What are you doing?"

Zhang Ye smiled. "It's nothing, I'm just whiling away the time."

His mother suddenly thought of something. "Did you see the news? They're reporting about the national curriculum revision for the elementary, middle, and high school textbooks. Do you have any chance with the Chinese language textbooks? Can any of your works get published?"

Zhang Ye spread up his hands. "How would I know?"

His father was also very concerned. He said, "Go ask around."

"I can't." Zhang Ye shook his head. "I could ask around about the voting process for the most coveted domestic literary awards, but for something like the curriculum revision process, I can't find out anything about it. That information is privy only to those in the Ministry of Education and a select few in the education community. It's no place for me to speak."

His father sighed, "I don't suppose there's much of a chance anyway."

His parents also knew that the curriculum revision was a huge event. Even if it were the most reputable and respected person in the literary circle, their names would not be easily made known to the public. The importance and sensitivity of such matters clearly went far beyond the selection process of the Yanhong Literary Prize or the Qilu Literature Prize. Any person, name, or essay that was shortlisted would cause a great discussion and have far-reaching effects in the education field, or even within society itself.

It was almost 7:40 AM.

Seeing this, Zhang Ye went back to his room and closed the door behind him.

His staff at the studio were all waiting for this slice of pie to drop from the sky, but only Zhang Ye was prepared to fight for it. Networking? That was not his style! This fellow had always preferred to be self-reliant!

There were two choices.

The Lucky Halo?

Or the Difficulty Adjustment Die?

After thinking about it, he felt that the latter was too precious an item. He only had one die left in his inventory. Moreover, the die was mighty powerful. Whether it be lowering or raising the difficulty level, it was overpowered. The effective duration of the item was also not fixed, so using it would be as good as wielding an atomic bomb. It couldn't be used unnecessarily. So the remaining option was clear and simple. Although the Lucky Halo (Upgraded) could not be compared to the Difficulty Adjustment Die in terms of its might, it was far more stable and dependable. It should be more than enough to handle this sort of situation. But of course, whether this plan would work was not guaranteed. He could only do his best and give it a try.

He activated the Lucky Halo (Upgraded)!

The Reputation Points were getting consumed without stop!

-100,000!

-100,000!

A halo appeared over his head.

The bright pulsating glow rippled outward wave after wave.

...

Meanwhile.

The experts were busy chattering and analyzing things.

The netizens were also voicing their opinions.

The media outlets also set aside their headlines while waiting for the outcome of the curriculum revision.

Throughout society, everyone placed great hopes and expectations on this textbook curriculum revision. From a survey, everyone was happy to see the positive education reforms and changes that were going to be introduced. But as for the degree and depth of change the revisions would bring, no one other than those in the review commission set up by the Ministry of Education knew.

At an office somewhere in the Ministry of Education.

On the third level.

Inside the conference room of the Chinese language textbook revision work group.

"Old Qi, you're here?"

"Dr. Chen, good morning."

"So it's going to be decided today, huh?"

"It's already been dragged on for so long, so of course it has to be decided soon."

"In the past few meetings, they've nearly come to blows every single time, so how can we come to a decision?"

"Hai, hasn't it always been this way? Every time there's a textbook revision, it's always our Chinese language team that is the most 'lively.' We're always locked in a fierce struggle over the decisions. Didn't you also take part in the previous curriculum revision eight years ago? Let's see if the group leader will make the decision this time. If there's still no outcome, we'll have to turn to voting to decide it."

"Yeah, just look at the math group and the physics group. There's no resistance at all and their meetings are always carried out so harmoniously. Then look at our group over here. The only thing we're short of now is someone flipping the table."

"Scholars tend to scorn each other, and there are a lot of involved relationships."

"The main issue is the disagreements between the Peking University representatives and the Tsinghua University representatives."

"The Fudan University representatives are also not helping by muddying things further."

The meeting had not started yet, but people were gradually arriving.

The Chinese language textbook revision work group was mostly made up of doctorates and professors in the circle of Chinese Departments within the various well-known universities, as well as relevant educators in the industry. There were also representatives from the Ministry of Education, with the work group headed by a director from there. He was a very good person and a meticulous worker.

Several people from Peking University arrived.

Soon after, the Ministry of Education's Director Liu walked into the conference room with a big smile. He was the overseer of the Chinese language textbook revision work group. Although he was wearing a smile on his face, Liu Quancheng was actually feeling very down. It had been days and the mathematics and physics work groups had more or less wrapped up their revisions. Meanwhile, their work group was still arguing nonstop over several spots on the prominent pages of the textbooks. To be fair, the Chinese language work group had already finalized 80% of the content for the textbook revision, but the remaining 20% could not be finalized yet as everyone had their own ideas.

What a difficult task it was to lead this work group!

Whoever wishes to take this role in the future can come and take it, I've had enough!

Although he had such thoughts, Liu Quancheng could explicitly say such things. Many of the work group's members were distinguished people in the education field, and some of them were even teachers to Liu Quancheng's bosses at the ministry, or even his boss's bosses! All in all, the total age of the people in the room came up to over 2,000 years old, so of course he had to be courteous and polite to them. You wouldn't know which of them had direct access to the highest authorities, would you? The waters of the education field were too deep! As such, Liu Quancheng's opinion was very simple. He wouldn't offend anyone and just let them fight among themselves. He wasn't going to care at all.

An old academic representing Peking University looked at him. "Little Liu, are we going to have a vote today?"

Liu Quancheng nodded. "Old Master Chu, I think we should have the vote just to be sure. There are only that dozen or so spots left to decide on, so we have to get it done by today no matter what."

Old Master Chu used to be a dean of the Chinese Department at Peking University. He even became the vice president of the university later on, but that was more than 40 years ago. After his retirement, Old Master Chu was still involved in a lot of the decision-making processes regarding educational reforms and policies. So just by addressing the work group leader as Little Liu, that was enough for a director like Liu Quancheng to listen to him obediently.

Old Master Chu smacked his lips. "Why do we still have to vote? Since this is a reform, we have to be heavy-handed with the decisions. The world belongs to the young now; we have to show more acceptance and care for the younger generation of academics. We should allow their essays to be published and made known to everyone through the textbooks and not keep guarding those people who already have one foot in the coffin. Is there any meaning in doing so? Then what's the point of having a reform? By the way, I think Zhang Ye is pretty good, don't you?"

An old man from Renmin University said, "I disagree. That Zhang Ye kid is too impulsive. 'Ode to Young China' must not make it into the textbooks, not even an excerpt."

"And who are you to say no?"

"It's not only me, many of the others disagree as well."

"Who are the ones who disagree?"

"Just wait for Old Hu and the others to get here!"

There!

Even before the meeting had commenced, they were arguing again!

Liu Quancheng could only sigh in his mind.

Old Hu and the others—that referred to the representatives from Tsinghua University. The reason why the curriculum revision had not wrapped up yet in the last few meetings was due to the representatives of Peking and Tsinghua University arguing every time they were about to decide on something. Especially when they touched on that fiercely contested spot in the seventh grade (middle school) textbook where an essay was to be featured, the arguments became even more intense. Three essays were shortlisted for it: Ji Hong's "Yangtze River," Li Yucheng's "Above the Storm," and Zhang Ye's "Ode to Young China"!

These three authors were respectively related to Tsinghua, Renmin, and Peking University. So the old comrades who represented these schools were all fervently arguing over which should be chosen. Later, the representatives from Fudan University joined the mix and started voicing their support for Peking University by agreeing that Zhang Ye's essay should be chosen. Seeing that, the representatives from Renmin University changed their tune and expressed their support for Tsinghua University's Ji Hong's "Yangtze River." The mess that followed was simply too chaotic!

Both sides stood by their views and were almost equal in numbers as well. As such, this was where it was most disputed since there was a possibility of either "Yangtze River" or "Ode to Young China" getting chosen.

Liu Quancheng mediated, "Teachers, when everyone has arrived, we'll decide by voting. We'll start off with the first grade elementary school textbook and vote on the disputed works one by one."

It was 7:55 AM.

In another five minutes, they would officially kick off the meeting. For now, they waited.

The few representatives from Renmin University looked at their watches and waited for the representatives from Tsinghua University to arrive. The reason why the representatives from Renmin University were supporting the Tsinghua University representatives was not that they had a good relationship with them. What happened back on the show Lecture Room, as well as Zhang Ye's lecture on Dream of the Red Chamber, had simply offended too many people at Renmin University. So when it was proposed that Zhang Ye's essay be used in the seventh grade textbook, and when the Fudan University representatives started supporting the Peking University's representatives call to include his essay, they knew that they couldn't allow it to happen. As such, they turned to supporting Tsinghua University's represented essay.

Why weren't they here yet?

Look at the time.

Two minutes had passed, but there were no signs of the Tsinghua University representatives!

Everyone started looking at one another.

At this moment, a phone rang.

"Hello, Old Hu, where are you?"

"I'm still at home."

"The meeting will be starting soon!"

"I suddenly got the runs, so I won't be able to make it in time."

"Ah?"

"Aiyo, I gotta hang up, I have to get back to the toilet."

Du du. The call ended.

Following that, another call came in for Liu Quancheng.

"Hello, Elder Chang?"

"Little Liu, has the meeting started yet?"

"Not yet, where are you?"

"Old Qing and I got stuck in traffic not long after we set out. We're on a viaduct and there's an accident ahead of us. We can't move at all, none of the cars can!"

Then came yet another call.

"Professor Xu, haven't you gotten off your plane? Didn't you catch the 5 AM flight from Shanghai?"

"I was just calling to notify you. There was a passenger causing trouble on the flight and the plane was late, so we were forced to land at Jinan Airport 1. We won't be able to resume flying anytime soon!"

"Eh? Forced to land at Jinan Airport?"

No one had thought much of it when it was just the first call.

But after five or six calls, everyone felt like they had seen a ghost!

A stomachache?

Traffic?

The flight was forced to land?

The train was stopped due to a landslide?

All of the old comrades from Tsinghua University were not going to make it for the meeting?

Dammit! How can it be so coincidental?

Do you people from Tsinghua University have to be so down on your luck?!

Everyone has met with some kind of trouble?

Liu Quancheng was stunned for a very long time. "This..."

The representatives from Renmin University nearly vomited blood!

An old professor from Peking University said, "It's time, isn't it?"

Liu Quancheng didn't know whether to laugh or cry. He said, "Then let's get the meeting started so that we can vote."

Chapter 1217: Zhang Ye's works get selected for the national Chinese language textbooks!

At 9 in the morning.

Back at home.

Zhang Ye deactivated the Lucky Halo. When he saw the consumed Reputation Points, he felt pinched and squeezed. He did not know about the progress of the meeting, nor how the discussion went. All he did was activate the Lucky Halo (Upgraded) at close to 8 AM and keep it on for close to an hour. The Reputation Point consumption rate of the Lucky Halo was extremely heavy, with 100,000 Reputation Points needed for every second it was activated. Even with the large amount of Reputation Points Zhang Ye had accumulated by now, it was difficult to bear. He was lucky that he had only used up a portion of his total Reputation Points during the lottery draw the other day and still had some left for today's purpose.

Just how did it go?

Only God would know!

Whatever! However it turns out, so be it!

Zhang Ye opened the door and came out of his room.

"What were you doing in your room?" his mother asked.

Zhang Ye smiled and said, "Handling some important business."

His father asked, "How did it go?"

Zhang Ye shrugged and said, "I suppose we'll find out tonight."

His mother rolled her eyes at him. "What are you being so secretive about? The most important issue at hand is the curriculum revision! That's right, isn't your girlfriend from the education sector? She was the vice president of Peking University and has even worked at the provincial education department. Why don't you check with her? You have to take the initiative."

But Zhang Ye said, "Aiya, don't bother her with such things. Mom, I'll help you to make lunch. After eating, I'll have to head to work." Since Zhang Ye had nothing better to do, he decided to help out with whatever chores there were around the house. In reality, it was to divert his attention from the national textbook curriculum revision so that he wouldn't have to keep thinking about it.

In the afternoon.

They were still discussing it on the Internet.

"The changes to the English language curriculum seem to have been set in stone."

"Yeah, I heard that the middle school textbooks will get more difficult."

"The revisions for the math curriculum aren't out yet."

"What about the Chinese language textbooks?"

"I don't know."

"Even though they're calling this a curriculum revision, the majority of the content will still remain the same. There won't really be much change, and this has been talked about before."

"Let's see whose essays will get chosen this time."

"It's gonna be amazing for whoever gets to have their work published."

"It's going to be more than amazing. They'll become famous."

Elsewhere.

Zhang Ye arrived at the studio.

He had just stepped into the office when Elder Qian arrived a moment later. "Is this Little Zhang's Studio?"

Little Wang opened the door to greet him. "Yes, may I ask who you are?"

Zhang Ye hurried outside when he heard the voice. "Aiyo, Elder Qian, what a rare guest."

Elder Qian chuckled, "I was nearby when I remembered you saying that you had set up your studio not long ago, so I came over to have a look. Am I welcome?"

"Of course you are." Zhang Ye told his studio staff, "This is Elder Qian, a most distinguished person in the literary field. If I'm not around when Elder Qian comes to visit, remember to give him the best reception."

Little Wang said briskly, "Understood!"

Elder Qian said happily, "Kid, don't try that with me."

"Come in, let's talk inside." Zhang Ye and Elder Qian went upstairs.

After glancing around the office, Elder Qian suddenly looked at him. "Is your relationship with Wu Zeqing quite good?"

Old Wu?

Zhang Ye was taken aback for a moment. "Ah, it's not too bad."

Elder Qian gave an "oh" in response.

Zhang Ye wondered, "Why do you ask?"

Elder Qian said, "Your old boss is pretty good to you. I have a friend in the education field I spoke with recently, someone from Fudan University who's also taking part in this education reform. Wu Zeqing contacted him some days ago to ask if he could help you out a little in the Chinese language curriculum revision. When Wu Zeqing was heading a department in the education sector, she had helped that Fudan University friend of mine out quite a bit. So he didn't reject her request. Later on, my friend came to ask me about what kind of a person you were. I told him not to believe the rumors out there and that you were really quite a nice person. He acknowledged that without saying anything else."

Zhang Ye really did not know about this. He said in surprise, "There was something like that?"

This Old Wu! Why didn't she tell me about this!

Zhang Ye had only found out about the exact time of the curriculum revision meeting yesterday, but who knew that Old Wu was already well aware of it way before he was? And she had even helped him pull some strings?

Elder Qian blinked and said, "You didn't ask Chief Wu to put in a word for you? Then you better thank her properly. She really went through a lot of trouble for you. It seems she values you a lot. Although Wu Zeqing has now gone on to oversee the entertainment industry, her network in the education field is still there. Quite a few Peking University alumni are also in the textbook revision work group. In recent years, you're the only professor from Peking University to have any involvement in the literary field, so they'd definitely support you. Together with Fudan University's support, you probably stand quite a good chance this time, especially with 'Ode to Young China.'"

Zhang Ye chuckled. "Then I'll hold you to your auspicious words?"

Elder Qian said emotionally, "Kid, you're really going to skyrocket soon."

Yes, he wanted to skyrocket in popularity. But before that, Zhang Ye's essay would have to be selected for the revised edition of the textbooks. Until the final moment, no one would know how it would turn out!

Zhang Ye was waiting to find out.

The studio staff were waiting to find out.

The education and literary fields were waiting to find out.

The media reporters were also eagerly looking forward to it.

...

At 7 PM.

The studio staff hadn't left work yet.

Little Wang said anxiously, "Will they announce it today?"

"I don't know." Wu Yi was browsing the news online. "There aren't any updates. The English language and chemistry textbooks' revisions have already been confirmed, but there's still no news about the Chinese language textbooks."

Ha Qiqi said, "Wait a little longer."

"Hey, there it is!"

"What?"

"Where, where?"

"Look at the news, the changes to the Chinese language textbooks have been finalized!"

In a flash, the studio staff all gathered around. Zhang Ye also ran down from upstairs to join them.

"Is Director Zhang's name in there?"

"I'm looking for it!"

"An excerpt of Sun Fang's novel has made it in?"

"Meng Han's poem will be featured in the eighth grade's second semester textbook?"

"Who else is there?"

"I'm still looking, don't rush me!"

"Ah!"

"I saw it!"

"Holy shit! There's Director Zhang's name!"

"An excerpt of 'Ode to Young China' has been selected! It's going to be in the middle school textbook!"

"Oh my God! He really made it in!"

"Director Zhang! It's in! We've made it in!"

"Wait, why is there another one?"

"Holy fuck!"

"'Tribute to the White Poplar'?"

"What's that?"

"When did Director Zhang write an essay titled 'Tribute to the White Poplar'?"

"I know this one! I've read it before! It was written by Director Zhang!"

"Th-This one made it into the elementary school textbook? We didn't only have one essay selected, two of them actually made it into the textbooks?!"

"Tribute to the White Poplar"?

Startled, Zhang Ye suddenly remembered it. This prose titled "Tribute to the White Poplar" was written back at the parent-teacher conference at Chenchen's school. At that time, the teachers wanted the children to write an essay, but Chenchen did not know how to and kept asking Zhang Ye to write one for her. This was also that very well-known essay that made it into the national textbooks back in Zhang Ye's previous world! Zhang Ye had still not made a name for himself when he brought over this essay to this world. On top of that, the circumstances in which it had been brought out made it relatively unknown here since there was hardly any publicity. That was why this essay was not well-known over here. In fact, many people didn't even know that Zhang Ye had written the essay. So Zhang Ye was astounded that "Tribute to the White Poplar" had made it into the elementary school textbooks. This was indeed an unexpected gain!

He was very happy for himse—

Oh, he was very happy for Mao Dun!

The studio staff started cheering!

"Director Zhang the Mighty!"

"This is so impressive!"

"He's made it into the national textbooks!"

"There won't be any more changes, right?"

"No, the announcement said the selected works are final! It's been decided!"

"I thought it was exceedingly lucky to have one work featured, but there were two in the end? How generous of the education field to give so much face to Director Zhang! It looks like he hasn't offended as many people as we thought he had!"

"That's great!"

"The third milestone in our 'Reach the Summit' plan has been achieved!"

"Yeah, we didn't even think that the third milestone could really be achieved!"

"And it was even achieved beyond our expectations!"

Everyone was shouting and screaming!

Zhang Ye was also quite happy with the outcome, but thought to himself, Do you guys really think that it was the education field's people who gave me face? If it weren't for my Lucky Halo and Old Wu's help, much less "Tribute to the White Poplar," even "Ode to Young China" might not've been selected!

Chapter 1218: Skyrocketing!

Beijing Television.

Central TV News Channel.

Shanghai Satellite Television.

And everyone else. On the same night, every television station was reporting this news!

Which family did not have a child? Which child did not need to go to school? The issue of education had always been of the greatest concern to the public. The national textbook curriculum revision was an even greater issue for them. Any news that was relevant to the public would naturally be given the widest coverage by the media and television stations!

"Physics textbook compilation fraught with difficulties?"

"English language textbook will see increase in number of vocabulary words included!"

"Huge changes to Chinese language textbooks!"

"Both 'Ode to Young China' and 'Tribute to the White Poplar' have been selected?"

Zhang Ye might become greatest beneficiary of Chinese language textbook curriculum revision!"

The Ministry of Education uncharacteristically gives Zhang Ye their approval?"

"Expert analysis: Having works selected to be included in the national textbooks will have a major impact on Zhang Ye's popularity and status!"

There was a heated discussion on Weibo.

"He was really chosen!"

"And it's even two his essays as entries?"

"Has Teacher Zhang been on steroids recently or something?"

"Yeah, selling that many copies of Fortress Besieged and taking the top honors at the most prestigious domestic literary awards. And now, he even has his works selected for the national Chinese language textbooks?"

"In the future, Zhang Ye's best-selling books won't be Ghost Blows Out the Light or Fortress Besieged!"

"Huh? Then what will it be?"

"It's going to be the elementary and middle school textbooks, of course!"

"Pfft!"

"Zhang Ye has boarded a rocket ship and can't be stopped!"

"All the latest headlines have been about him!"

"What is he trying to achieve here? Putting in so much effort? He couldn't have set his sights on one of those seven spots in the S-list, could he?"

"That can't be. Teacher Zhang's still far from reaching the S-list. He shouldn't be able to get there without at least another few years of hard work, right?"

"That's hard to say. Just look, how much has Zhang Ye's popularity grown over the past few days? There might not even be a need to wait a few years to see that happening. Those at the top should really start being wary of him!"

"That's quite unlikely."

"Yeah, you're exaggerating."

"I don't think it will happen anytime soon either. After all, those seven spots are too difficult to reach, and we've never seen a change in the rankings after so many years. But then again, looking at the current entertainment industry, if there's anyone who can replace one of those seven Heavenly Kings and Queens, it should only be Zhang Ye. Just look at his domestic celebrity ranking. He's been sitting comfortably atop the A-list and has been widening the gap on those who were almost even with him in just what? A month? Two months?"

"Supporting Zhang Ye's climb to the top of the entertainment industry!"

Of course, there were also voices of doubt.

"What's with this?"

"Is he even qualified enough?"

"Is it really a good idea to put the essays of someone with a temper like Zhang Ye's into the national textbooks?"

"What the hell is 'Tribute to the White Poplar'? It's just an essay written in vernacular!"

Among those who questioned the decision of the Ministry of Education, the representative figures of the group actually turned out to be several executives from Central TV Department 1.

Central TV Department 1's Deputy Director Jiang Yuan: "Education is a serious matter, and so are the textbooks used to educate our children. Putting the works of a historically tainted celebrity into the teaching materials is irresponsible to our children!"

There was a wave of scolding below that comment.

"Get lost!"

"It's Central TV Department 1 that has a tainted history!"

"Are you done trying to slander Zhang Ye?"

"Enough is enough! It was you people who didn't handle the matter properly back then that led to Zhang Ye suing you in court. You guys lost the lawsuit, remember?"

...

At home.

When Zhang Ye reached home, he heard his mom talking on the phone with her old colleague in the living room.

"Yes, didn't you watch the news? It's being reported everywhere!"

"Really?"

"Yes, his works were really selected to be in the Chinese language textbooks. One of them is for the elementary school textbook, and the other is for the middle school textbook!"

"Your son is amazing. You and Old Zhang have taught him so well! Everyone is envious of you two."

"Hahaha, when your granddaughter starts school, my son's essays will be in the textbooks. She might even be asked to recite them...."

His mother was bragging to other people again.

Zhang Ye was used to this, and his mother could not be controlled by anyone when it came to bragging.

"Hai, my son is home now, I'm going to hang up!" After his mother put down the phone, she said excitedly, "Son, you were really chosen! You've done us proud!"

His father also said with glee, "This is a good thing! It's an extremely good thing!"

His mother said, "You'll become even more well-known."

"It's not a matter of fame." His father said sternly, "Doing something for the cause of education is what truly matters. Using this to gain popularity is unconventional, so don't be so short-sighted."

Mom winked at her son. "Ignore him."

Zhang Ye laughed.

Congratulatory calls were also starting to come in one after another.

Zhang Ye's friends were also feeling very shocked by Zhang Ye having two of his essays selected for the national textbooks. All of them expressed their incredulity while offering their congratulations to him.

Hu Fei wondered, "What kind of trick did it take to pull that off?"

Zhang Ye said, "Haha, magic?"

Hu Fei said in amusement, "Since when were you so loved in the industry?"

Zhang Ye sighed. "I suppose everyone did give me some face."

The industry's opinion of Zhang Ye was improving as they felt he had a lot of potential. In the past, Zhang Ye always went around scolding and offending everyone. Not many industries were able to accept him and the industry insiders mostly did not want to acknowledge someone like him. Even though he hadn't changed his temper much, a lot of the mainstream was slowly starting to accept him. In fact, some of them even accepted that extraordinarily foul temper of his!

It was the literary field before this!

Now it was the education field's turn!

Zhang Ye was stepping onto the right path, and his place in the industry was slowly stabilizing.

At night.

His parents were asleep.

The buzz on the Internet started to die down.

Zhang Ye was lying in bed as he took out his phone to call Wu Zeqing. His first call did not go through, but Old Wu returned his call after 15 minutes.

Zhang Ye asked: "What are you doing?"

"I just finished bathing. I had to work overtime today, so I got home a little late," Wu Zeqing said with a giggle.

Zhang Ye blinked and said: "Two of my essays were selected for the national textbooks."

Wu Zeqing laughed: "I know, I saw it on the news this afternoon. That's a good thing. Your essays are absolutely good enough, so they deserved to be selected."

Zhang Ye asked: "Did you help me out?"

Wu Zeqing replied: "No, how could I be of any help? I'm heading the SARFT, so I don't really know about all the happenings in the education sector anymore."

Zhang Ye was amused. "You really didn't do anything?"

"Hur hur, you must've been chosen based on the quality of your essays," Wu Zeqing said.

Nonsense!

Elder Qian told me about it. You obviously asked your friend from Fudan University to help me out!

Zhang Ye knew what she had done. He understood that Old Wu knew that he wasn't someone who wanted to depend on others for help. Every time Old Wu asked if he needed her help on anything, he would always say "No, I'll handle this on my own." After knowing each other for many years, and being in a relationship for a long time, Wu Zeqing understood his temper quite well. This was why Old Wu had quietly handled this matter and even pretended not to know anything about it.

Perhaps this was the greatest tenderness of all?

Even one's own wife would probably not go this far for her husband?

And if you think about it, Zhang Ye found out about this by chance. If he didn't know Elder Qian personally? If Elder Qian didn't receive a call from his friend and find out? Then Zhang Ye would probably have never found out about what Old Wu had done for him!

And for similar things like this, how many times had it happened in the past?

How much more had Old Wu done for him without him ever knowing?

Zhang Ye felt warm and fuzzy inside. He and Old Wu were both the type that wasn't good at expressing their feelings. It was very difficult for them to say the words "I love you." Zhang Ye didn't know how to be romantic and wasn't good at getting into the good graces of a woman. Meanwhile, Old Wu wasn't the clingy type, nor did she know how to be all lovey-dovey. The way they expressed their affection for each other was very different from most other couples. But! Zhang Ye felt that it was great this way.

Yes.

It really was great.

Chapter 1219: Zhang Ye's new show is coming! (First Half)

The next day.

Zhang Ye's Studio was still in a celebratory mood.

The public also took some time to appreciate Zhang Ye's soaring popularity.

But it was at this time that something unexpected happened.

—These were troubled times.

—Gossip flies when a person gets popular.

These two sayings were the most apt descriptions of the entertainment industry. There were a lot of unrest and activities constantly going on. No one could predict what would happen next!

Central TV Department 1 announced without warning in the afternoon that they were going to begin production on the second season of The Voice. In fact, they were already midway through production, so it wouldn't be long before they met the audience again. In the announcement, it was even revealed that they would stick to the old ways and continue making the show in the same style as the first season of The Voice. There would be an all-new panel of guest coaches joining the show and an all-new

production team of professionals to help recreate this classic reality show. They would bring the audience a most fresh and awesome audio sensory experience.

When the news got out, many people were shocked!

There was amazement all over Weibo!

"What?"

"Season Two of The Voice?"

"That's great, it's finally returning!"

"What so great about that? Isn't that show copyrighted to Zhang Ye?"

"Right, it was this exact matter that embroiled Zhang Ye and Central TV Department 1 in a lawsuit, so what's with this? Has Teacher Zhang made up with Central TV Department 1? Did he give them authorization to film the show?"

"That's impossible!"

"Look at what they said in the announcement. They mention that it's headed by an all-new production team!"

"Right, Zhang Ye couldn't have authorized them. Who doesn't know what his temper is like!"

"The Central TV Department 1 executives were even scolding Zhang Ye on Weibo last night on his essays getting selected for the Chinese language textbooks! They couldn't have made up so quickly overnight!"

"Then why does Central TV Department 1 still dare to call their show The Voice?"

"It's copyright infringement, right?"

"I'm utterly confused as well!"

No one in the industry expected that Central TV Department 1 would actually go against the grain and act so brazen. They even said they were already halfway through production?

At Zhang Ye's Studio.

Ha Qiqi said angrily, "What the heck are they trying to do!"

Zhang Zuo said, "Old Ha, didn't you say their show would adopt a name and format change?"

"Yeah," Ha Qiqi said, "that's why I don't understand what's going on either!"

Zhang Ye did not even hesitate and said, "Send them a cease and desist!"

And so, the law firm representing Zhang Ye's Studio immediately issued a Cease and Desist Letter to Central TV on the same day and sent someone to liaise with the courts.

The incident blew up!

Zhang Ye and Central TV Department 1 were going to go to court again?

However, the way things developed caught everyone by surprise!

Just as countless people's attention focused on this incident, Central TV Department 1 quickly deleted that promotional Weibo post and updated it with a new one. The official Weibo account of Central TV Department 1 announced that due to copyright issues, their new show would drop the name of The Voice and be known as Sing! instead. There would be some changes to the format of the show as well. At the end of the post, it even hinted that although the name was changed, the spirit of the show would still be the same.

Video publicity!

Advertising campaigns!

The promos went into full swing!

The name of Sing! was quickly made known to everyone too!

It was at this moment that everyone realized what was going on!

Central TV Department 1 knew that there would be a problem with the copyright, so they hadn't planned to produce the show as the second season of The Voice. Right from the start, they were planning to change the name and modify the trademarked segment where the coaches turned around in the chairs. By having a different look for the show, they were intending to continue doing The Voice as it was. But as they were afraid the audience would not be convinced if they just announced this new show and inadvertently suffered a drop in viewers and notability of the show, they billed it as the second season of The Voice. Seizing the opportunity to publicize Sing! while the media's attention was all on Zhang Ye, it was their way of telling the audience that this was not an entirely new show, but in fact, the second season of The Voice! If this wasn't their intent, Central TV Department 1 couldn't have possibly reacted so quickly. It didn't even take a day for them to come up with another name for the show? And change the format of the show's segment? Even the publicity video was readily released after the announcement? It was impossible that they could do all that so quickly! They were riding on the name of Zhang Ye and The Voice!

Moreover, they had already deleted that previous Weibo post, so it wouldn't affect them much even if Zhang Ye's Studio sued them in court. There was no loss for them!

Some of Zhang Ye's fans started cursing.

"Fuck!"

"How can they be so despicable?"

"Damn, I've lost my faith in humanity!"

"They were scolding Zhang Ye on Weibo just last night but are now using his name and show to promote themselves? This is what Central TV Department 1 is? How can they do that?"

"What they're doing is really shameless!"

"If you all want to make Sing!, then go ahead. But why did you have to do it this way? Even back then, you were in the wrong first, no? The Voice is Zhang Ye's baby. You didn't want to pay Director Zhang for

the copyright and even tried to steal it from him to sell it off. After that, he was even shipped off to the Documentary Channel while you continued to raise a ruckus about him until Central TV was forced to terminate his contract. In this past year, you've continued scolding Zhang Ye on the Internet and criticizing him at various public events. But in the end? This was what you resorted to doing? Haven't you gone too far!"

Of course, some people didn't mind.

"Anything is fine as long as we get a second season of The Voice!"

"Right, I like this show so much. They mustn't shelve it!"

"Counting the days, it's about time the second season began. I'm really looking forward to it!"

"It's just a name change, we'll still watch it anyhow."

"Yeah, there are too few good singing shows, and The Voice and King of Masked Singers are the two most representative works in the genre. Since King of Masked Singers only ended a few months ago, I doubt there'll be a second season anytime soon. So there's only The Voice left to look forward to. I don't care if they change the name to Sing! They can call it Dog Shit for all I care! I'd still watch it!"

"Hurry up and start broadcasting please!"

"Just don't destroy the reputation of The Voice."

"I watched the promo vid and found it quite good!"

There was a lot of controversy!

A lot of attention was given to it too!

But this was exactly the effect Central TV Department 1 was going for. They knew that even though some people would scold them, those same people would still come and watch the show when it was broadcast. This was because there was no one to compete with their show, nor was there anyone who could compete with them. Among the singing shows, they would sweep away everyone else. As long as they could hold viewer attention on the show's premiere and make them realize that it was basically The Voice with a different name, then the viewers would give their recognition to it. They wouldn't possibly just give up on the show just because Zhang Ye wasn't the director or the host. Other than Zhang Ye's diehard fans and some hot-blooded youths, not too many people were so principled and bothered by such things. In the end, what the people needed was entertainment, not some impossible to emulate person standing on stage speed-reciting some advertising messages!

The Voice was already an established show!

Therefore, Central TV Department 1 no longer had a need for Zhang Ye!

The host?

The director?

The guests?

It would all be the same whoever held those roles!

Chapter 1220: Zhang Ye's new show is coming! (Second Half)

Later that afternoon.

At Zhang Ye's Studio.

Everyone was sitting in a meeting.

"They planned it all out!" Wu Yi said furiously.

Little Wang said, "Central TV Department 1 deliberately did it this way!"

Ha Qiqi said in anger, "By issuing our Cease and Desist Letter, we inadvertently helped them publicize the show and helped them let everyone know that The Voice has a new name. If we knew that this would happen, we shouldn't have played their game! We should've let them promote it longer with the name of The Voice before suing them!"

But Zhang Ye said, "That would be pointless. Even if we didn't say a thing, they would've come up with some other excuse. They aren't stupid."

Zhang Zuo slapped his thigh. "I'm pissed off!"

Ha Qiqi said indignantly, "Those people will really stoop to anything to achieve their goals? Why isn't Central TV Documentary Channel like that? We've worked with Central TV Sports Channel too. They're all very nice people, respectful, and professional in their work. But why does it have to be the largest channel that behaves like this?"

Everyone kept cursing for a long time.

Then, Zhang Ye's cell phone rang.

It was Chen Guang's wife, Fan Wenli.

Zhang Ye said: "Hello, Sister Fan?"

Fan Wenli asked: "Zhang'er, do you know about Sing!?"

"Let Central TV Department 1 do what they want. It doesn't matter to me," Zhang Ye said.

"Well, they just contacted Old Chen and me to ask whether we would like to return to the show as guest coaches." Fan Wenli's words seemed to hold a deeper meaning. "Do you think it will do well?"

Zhang Ye knew what she was getting at. "It should do well. Even without me, it shouldn't affect them much. The platform is already there, so even without any new breakthroughs in the show, the viewership ratings should still be quite good with them retaining the same format. Just go back with Old Chen, hur hur. You don't have to make your decision with me in mind."

Fan Wenli said: "Alright then, I'll think about it for a while longer."

Zhang Ye said graciously: "Sister Fan, there's no need to think too much about it. If the appearance fee is good enough, just go ahead. You can earn the money and gain publicity on TV at the same time. Only a fool would not accept."

Fan Wenli laughed and said: "Alright, I know what to do then."

Zhang Ye understood that Old Fan had called him to give him a heads up. The other party must have given her an offer she couldn't refuse, and she probably still had some feelings for The Voice. However, due to the rocky relationship between Zhang Ye and Central TV Department 1, she was slightly hesitant and probably felt bad about accepting the offer. But Zhang Ye did not think of it this way. Old Fan did not work for him, after all. She was just a friend and coworker, so if she had the chance to gain more fame and money, who was Zhang Ye to stop her? How could he? He couldn't be so particular about such things.

But to his surprise, Chen Guang called shortly afterwards.

The moment the call connected, Old Chen said: "Zhang'er, did Wenli call you earlier?"

Zhang Ye laughed and said: "What's the matter?"

Chen Guang said: "I'm telling you, however much that copycat version of The Voice offers me, I won't be joining them! What nonsense is that? Without you heading The Voice, I won't acknowledge them! But Wenli might be tempted to join, so I argued with her earlier. That woman is too short-sighted! She makes me so angry!"

Zhang Ye said: "Whoa, come on, did you two have to argue over this? It's not even a big deal."

Chen Guang said: "I can't control what she does. The Sing! program team has gotten in contact with the former guest coaches, but I've already spoken to Grandma Zhang Xia, and the two of us definitely won't accept. I didn't check with Sister Zhang, but I doubt that anyone other than you can move her. She probably won't accept the offer either. Only Wenli is keen on returning to the show. I'll speak to her again!"

"Don't."

"I'm terribly sorry."

"Aiya, that's enough."

The call ended.

The studio staff were looking at him.

Ha Qiqi asked, "Are both Teacher Chen and Teacher Fan going to join the production of Sing!?"

Little Wang said anxiously, "Then the show will be even more popular. With the old guest coaches holding the fort, Sing! will be able to shed the 'copycat' tag more easily."

Zhang Ye waved it off. "It's not like that. Sister Fan will probably join, but Old Chen isn't."

Zhang Zuo said, "That's not so bad then. What about Sister Zhang? Could Sister Zhang also..."

Zhang Ye said, "They can't get her to join."

Zhang Zuo heaved a sigh of relief. "Fortunately for us."

Zhang Ye turned serious and said, "Let's not talk about this anymore. We should discuss our fourth milestone in the 'Reach the Summit' plan."

The staff each had a copy of the document and information in their hands.

Zhang Zuo spoke, "The first three milestones have been successfully completed. It wasn't easy, but they've helped to build a very strong foundation for the latter part of our plan. For the fourth milestone, we need to create a reality show. We're thinking that since you have a foundation and made your name in this area, a lot of viewers will accept any new show that you come up with. At the very least, it would be propped up by the celebrity effect for a while. Besides, even though the popularity we received from the domain of TV shows is quite large, there's still a lot to be gained and could be expanded upon."

Ha Qiqi nodded and said, "Right. We've analyzed that the popularity you gained in many of the industries that you dabbled in has reached saturation. For example, in the field of Go, it would be pointless for you to beat any additional top players. All of the popularity that you could gain from there has already been earned. And in the field of literature, the previous three milestones you reached by winning the highest honor in the domestic literary field and breaking book sale records have also helped to peak your popularity. There isn't much you can improve on in those areas. There's only the domain of TV shows that we still have a lot of room to work in. There are tons of viewers in this area and the market is huge. Since everyone is receptive to your works, why don't we aim to bring up your popularity in this field to its highest? By making another show that can outdo The Voice, A Bite of China, and King of Masked Singers?"

Zhang Ye said, "What are your suggestions?"

Ha Qiqi and Zhang Zuo gave each other a look.

One of them said, "We were originally going to suggest that you produce a singing show since that's what you are most familiar with. But things have changed. With Central TV Department 1 bringing out The Voice, a signature show, and us being from the old program team, we know full well how popular and loved this show is. So with this condition, it'd be difficult if we were to do a singing show as well."

Zhang Ye laughed and said, "Why's that?"

Zhang Zuo said, "We can't fight fire with fire. If it were anyone else's show, that might be fine. We could probably still take them head on and fight it out! Who's afraid of whom! But The Voice was the most successful show we created, and it's going to have a second season. There'll be too many diehards around. If we really take them head on, it can only be a lose-lose scenario, and no one will be happy in the end. Moreover, our show's popularity would likely fall behind since The Voice has already accumulated a year's worth! Stripped to the waist, our new show is sure to suffer. Our objective isn't to compete with Central TV Department 1. We're looking to reach the summit of the entertainment industry. If both we and Department 1 suffer, the ones who'll lose more will be us!"

Ha Qiqi suggested, "Why don't we make a reality show instead?"

Wu Yi nodded and said, "A reality show is a pretty good idea."

"Yeah, there hasn't been much competition for reality shows recently!" Everyone was chipping in with their suggestions.

Zhang Ye looked at them and said, "Who says that if we film a singing show, we'll definitely end up suffering along with Central TV Department 1?"

"Ah?"

"What do you mean?"

Everyone was stunned.

Zhang Ye said, "The suggestion for a reality show isn't bad either." Thinking, he suddenly looked up and smiled. "I have an idea about a reality show combined with a singing show. Are you guys interested in hearing about it?"

A singing show?

A reality show?

Could these two be combined?

Everyone was stunned again. "What show?"

Zhang Ye narrowed his eyes and said, "I would like to call it: I Am a Singer."