

# **The Billion-Value Lands Are Just For Farming**

## **#Chapter 561 - Read The Billion-Value Lands Are Just For Farming Chapter 561**

C561 – The Goat Is Ripe

After the excitement died down, their attention finally settled on Little Qing.

“Brother Ming, who is she?”

Zhang Qianqian blinked, her voice tinged with confusion and a slight hint of jealousy as she inquired.

“Her name is Su Xiaoqing. You can call her Xiaoqing. She’s my secretary and assistant, as well as my housekeeper,” Su Ming explained with a smile.

”Huh?”

The two girls exchanged a puzzled glance.

A young talent and a beautiful woman together...

Hmm...

That could certainly set off one’s imagination, couldn’t it?

”What are you two silly girls thinking about?” Su Ming asked with a mix of amusement and exasperation. “Xiaoqing lost her parents at a young age and grew up in an orphanage. After graduation, she was swindled out of all her money and struggled to find work, only to face harassment from her boss. A few days ago, I saw her being harassed by some thugs in an alley and chased them off. Now, she’s working with me, and it’s strictly a professional relationship. She’s staying with me for the time being.”

Upon hearing this, the two girls immediately felt a surge of sympathy and sat down next to Xiaoqing, each taking one of her hands. “Don’t worry, Xiaoqing, you’re safe now. My brother is incredibly strong, and we’re pretty tough ourselves. If anyone bullies you again, just tell us, and we’ll make sure they regret it!”

Seeing the girls’ fierce determination, Su Ming shook his head with a chuckle. “Alright, let’s get ready for dinner!”

“Yay!”

Cheerful shouts filled the room as Su Ming headed into the kitchen, shaking his head with a smile.

A villa was home to four unique beauties: his sister, the village chief's daughter, a famous A-list celebrity, and an intelligent robot.

Sigh...

In other stories, the male lead would have a harem, but this situation seemed a bit chaotic. However, living under the same roof with four beauties was a delight for Su Ming, even if nothing romantic happened.

Opening the fridge, Su Ming took out the treasured hotpot ingredients. With so many mouths to feed, hotpot was the perfect choice. With a variety of ingredients and flavors, everyone enjoyed themselves, sipping beer and relaxing in the air-conditioned room while the hotpot simmered away. It was truly a joyful time.

After enjoying the hotpot, Su Ming grabbed some snacks and fired up the projector. A cozy cluster of friends squeezed onto the sofa to watch a movie. Unbeknownst to them, night had fallen.

"Yawn..."

The girls couldn't resist yawning. Ann Chuxia had barely slept the previous night and had spent the whole day on her feet. The two girls had spent the afternoon engrossed in conversation with Ann Chuxia, talking themselves into exhaustion.

Little Green, of course, wasn't tired. Artificial intelligence doesn't need rest as long as it has power.

"Okay, okay, let's call it a night and get some rest," Su Ming suggested with a smile. "Feel free to pick any bedroom on the first or second floor. Ann Chuxia, the first bedroom on the left has a closet with women's clothing, an en suite bathroom, and it's both quiet and secure. You won't have any trouble here."

"Okay," Ann Chuxia agreed with a nod.

She was indeed tired after the long day and night, and she hadn't even checked in with Liu Dashan to see if there was any news from the company. Ann Chuxia chose a room on the first floor, and the two girls, not wanting to be far, picked the room next to hers.

Su Ming retrieved a stick of calming incense from the cabinet. This wasn't just any incense; it was Top Grade, a gift from President Chen. Known for its soothing properties, it was exceptional.

"Brother, they've all entered deep sleep," Little Green reported after a short while.

"Mm," Su Ming acknowledged, glancing at the clock before stepping out of the villa and heading towards the back.

"By the way, what do they see on the land right now?" Su Ming asked out of curiosity.

"Master, except for you, anyone looking at these plots of land sees them as barren—completely empty," Yuvyuv responded telepathically.

That made sense, considering it was late autumn—a perfectly logical sight.

Su Ming strode towards the herding area. Indeed, the Level Three Western Cowboy Alpaca had reached maturity. Technically, it had been ready since yesterday, as Yuvyuv had reminded him.

However, due to the unexpected update of the Prophetic Radio yesterday, Brother Ming had completely forgotten about it. The moment he remembered, he hurried over.

Upon arrival, Brother Ming was taken aback. The Western Cowboy Alpaca from before was truly striking, with a look that screamed western cowboy, especially that contemptuous gaze that was just asking for a punch!

But now, what on earth was this?

It was still an alpaca, but...

The alpaca had turned transparent, completely see-through, revealing just a plastic-like transparent film on the surface. And where its heart should be, there was a glowing yellow orb, shining brilliantly.

"What in the world is this?" Brother Ming muttered as he quickly opened the door and walked in next to an alpaca.

This alpaca, unlike before when it completely ignored Brother Ming, now behaved quite docilely, walking up to him and nuzzling him with its head. Despite its transparency, it felt solid and slightly chilly to the touch.

After nuzzling, the alpaca lifted its head and slightly opened its mouth. The yellow orb of light slowly moved up, traveling through its long neck and out of its mouth, directly into Brother Ming's mouth.

In the next instant, the alpaca radiated a golden glow and gradually vanished.

Impressive entrance!

Brother Ming looked down at the orb of light. It was bright but not blinding and even gave off a warm sensation, like holding a miniature sun in his hands.

He gently extended his hand into it, and in a flash, the orb disappeared, leaving behind a piece of white paper. Yes, a plain white paper with a pure black circle in the center, resembling a black hole.

“Ding! Congratulations, Host, your luck is off the charts! You’ve accidentally connected to the System’s treasure vault! You may reach into the black circle and randomly grab a treasure! The treasure could be good or bad, but it’s all down to your luck!”

“What the heck!?” Brother Ming could hardly contain his excitement.

Is it really that incredible?!

Unbeatable!

Brother Ming swallowed hard, glancing at the other alpacas in the herding area. He had raised five in total, which meant he had four more opportunities!

Let’s get started!

Su Ming didn’t hesitate; he stretched his hand inside and with a twist to the left and right, he actually felt a bunch of items, all jumbled together. There were items of various shapes and textures—some long and cylindrical, others round and soft.

What in the world is this stuff? And why is it moving?

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C562 – The Celestial Peach Is Ripe

Su Ming reached out and felt something soft and furry. It was squirming pleasantly under his touch. His heart leapt with joy. Could this be one of those mystical spirit beasts often found in fantasy novels, essentially a pet?

Good heavens, he already had a maid. Wait, no, that wasn’t right. He had a housekeeper, and now a pet would be the perfect addition!

Without hesitation, Su Ming pulled the object out, and as he did, a brilliant light flashed. Incredible, was this the glow of a discovered treasure?

But as the light faded, Su Ming took a closer look and was left speechless.

Damn it!

He was on the verge of losing his temper.

In his hands, he held a tattered, fluffy stuffed toy, its cotton innards peeking through the worn fabric. It had been moving because of a tiny motor trembling inside.

“Damn it all! You said this was your treasury? Why does your treasury have such junk? Are you a treasury or a junkyard?!”

Su Ming felt like he was about to spit blood.

He had hoped for something valuable, but this was the outcome?

Was this some kind of joke?

After a moment of frustrated foot-stomping, Su Ming resigned himself to the reality. Fine, the System was in charge, and whatever it said, went.

No matter, he thought. With his luck, if it didn’t work out this time, he still had four more chances!

On his second attempt, Su Ming selected a box. Inside, he found a pencil, just an ordinary 2B pencil.

Was this some sort of insult?

For his third try, he picked a spherical object. Upon inspection, it turned out to be nothing more than a plain crystal ball.

The fourth time, Su Ming hesitated before choosing a tiny object. It was a nail clipper.

Now down to his last chance, Su Ming took a deep breath and exhaled slowly, invoking the luck of the European King. This time, he was sure his fortune would defy the odds!

With determination, he reached in again and immediately felt something oddly familiar. Without a second thought, he pulled it out and looked closely. Lo and behold, it was a scroll!

Skill!

It was a skill scroll!

Su Ming burst into laughter. After all, he had managed to draw a scroll this time. Even if it was just a skill for flattery, he was eager to learn it!

He couldn’t let this opportunity slip away, could he?

Without a second thought, Su Ming unfurled the scroll. A familiar glow swept over him, followed by a voice in his head.

“Ding! Congratulations, Host, you’ve acquired the Divine Level carving skill! Would you like to learn it?”

Carving skill?

Absolutely!

Why hold onto it if he wasn’t going to learn it?!

Su Ming immediately chose to learn the skill.

A warm sensation quickly spread through his mind. He closed his eyes and stood still for a solid minute.

When he finally opened his eyes, Su Ming had become a top-tier master sculptor. Looking around, he felt an irresistible impulse to carve anything he saw, be it brick or stone.

Though he was keen to start carving, he didn’t have a knife on hand. That would have to wait.

Su Ming then converted the remaining items into points.

He netted a total of 200 points. Maybe it was because the items he had were rather worthless.

Since there were no Level Three animals in the warehouse at the moment, Su Ming wasn’t in a rush. He’d wait until after the evening refresh.

Before long, Su Ming made his way to the field.

There was a plot of land, about an acre in size, with a solitary Celestial Peach Tree in the center.

While both were Level Three crops, this Celestial Peach Tree was clearly special.

The tree was towering and grand, with leaves that shimmered in gold. Its surface was laced with transparent veins through which streaks of golden light could be seen coursing.

The tree bore a single peach, exuding a delicate fragrance. Su Ming approached and inspected the peach, confirming it was ripe.

Though the Celestial Peach’s lineage had been diluted over 100 generations, it still retained a hint of the Heavenly Court’s essence.

It was, after all, a divine tree!

Su Ming inhaled deeply and exhaled slowly, then carefully reached out and gently plucked the peach from the tree.

The peach, although shaped like its smaller kin, was as large as a watermelon.

And it was significantly heavier, weighing at least 100 pounds. Thankfully, Su Ming's enhanced strength made it manageable, though it was still a hefty load.

"Damn it, I'm lucky it was me. Anyone else might have just tossed it aside. What kind of peach is this, anyway? Made of iron? Why is it so darn heavy?"

Su Ming resisted the urge to take a bite. If it really were made of iron, his teeth would've been history.

"Ding! Congratulations, Host, you have obtained a mutated Celestial Peach!"

"Ding! This item is quite special. Host has two choices."

"One: Eat it directly, and it will significantly enhance the Host's various abilities!"

"Two: Discard the flesh and open the pit. There will be a surprise inside! If the Host eats the flesh, the pit will become an ordinary pit!"

Upon hearing the notification in his mind, Su Ming pondered deeply.

Eating it, as the System suggested, would greatly enhance his abilities.

All abilities...

That meant his strength, speed, vision, hearing, and even intelligence would all see improvement!

It sounded incredibly appealing!

But the second option was far too tempting!

Even though he had a few Celestial Peach seeds on hand, the System had just made it clear that this particular Celestial Peach had mutated due to his extraordinary luck. The others likely wouldn't mutate and would produce ordinary fruit.

"Screw it, I'm going for it. You never know, a bike might just turn into a motorcycle!"

"Great effort yields miracles!"

Without another word, Su Ming threw the peach on the ground, strode into the warehouse, grabbed an axe, and swung it down with all his might.

“Crack!”

A crisp sound echoed.

Su Ming was dumbfounded. The axe, which he had recently bought for its quality at the hardware store, was now ruined, its blade chipped.

And the Celestial Peach? Completely intact!

Damn it!

Su Ming really felt like cursing. So much for giving me the option to eat it. How am I supposed to eat this, am I some kind of iron-jawed hero?

“Master, that’s not how you open it.”

“Since this Celestial Peach is bound to the Master, it cannot be opened by external forces. The Master can simply break it open with his hands.”

Just then, Yuyuv chimed in with a reminder in his mind. Su Ming had an epiphany and tossed the axe aside.

Su Ming crouched down, his hands pressing against the Celestial Peach, and with a gentle twist, he pried it open.

Wow!!!

Su Ming couldn’t help but shout in astonishment, “Oh my goodness!

My fourth uncle’s wife, my second aunt, and my third aunt’s mother-in-law!

This is just too much...”

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C563 – What the Hell Is This?

The flesh of the Peach of Immortality glistened, translucent and delicate, as if it were about to drip with beauty. A rich fragrance burst forth, enveloping the senses. It was incredibly aromatic! Just the scent alone made Su Ming’s mouth water uncontrollably.

It's important to note that the System had previously produced a fair share of edible items, each boasting a Top Grade flavor. Yet, the taste of this Peach of Immortality was so irresistible that Su Ming could hardly keep from devouring it on the spot.

"No, I must resist. I absolutely have to hold back!" Su Ming inhaled deeply and exhaled slowly, clenching his teeth in determination. The Peach of Immortality offered more than just a tantalizing scent; it possessed an overwhelming temptation.

With his eyes closed, Su Ming reached out, trying not to dwell on the peach, and extracted the core from its center. Given that the peach was as large as a watermelon, the core was surprisingly the size of a regular peach. As soon as the core was removed, the peach's flesh dissolved into liquid and seeped into the ground, vanishing without a trace.

"Sigh..." Su Ming let out a sigh of disappointment. Well, he could always plant the remaining four and sample their flavors later. With the peach gone, Su Ming didn't want to dwell on it. He turned the core over in his hands, examining it closely. It was crystal clear, shimmering like quartz, with gentle ripples across its surface. At its heart was a small bead the size of a soybean—presumably what the System had referred to.

Su Ming extended his hand and carefully reached into the core. As expected, he encountered no resistance and easily retrieved the object.

"Ding! Congratulations, Host, you have obtained an Evolution Pill. Using this item will allow you to evolve one of your skills!" The System's announcement left Su Ming momentarily taken aback. Was it really that powerful?

Su Ming reviewed his array of skills, realizing he had quite a selection. Yet, he decided not to use the pill immediately. There was no rush. Once he reached a higher level, he would likely cultivate even more formidable skills. That would be the time to use the Evolution Pill. Yes, that was the plan!

"Ding! You've successfully harvested your crop. You've earned 1,000,000 Experience Points! Additional Reward: 200,000!"

"Ding! Item recycled. Congratulations, Host, you've received 100,000 experience points! Additional reward: 20,000!"

After storing his items, Su Ming heard the notification in his mind.

Wow!

Was that a lot of experience or what?

Over 1.3 million experience points?

I was so far from leveling up, but now I'm just 800,000 points away.

[Leveling up with these things is definitely quicker.]

Considering that three people were still asleep inside, Su Ming decided against using the tractor.

Instead, he grabbed a hoe and shovel from the storage and began tilling the soil in the yard.

Bathed in moonlight, Su Ming worked tirelessly from around eight or nine in the evening until one or two in the morning.

Only then was the acre of land finally tidied up.

Phew!

Su Ming let out a breath of relief.

He stretched, feeling a bit weary after such a long stint of labor. He had the Stamina Talent, but Su Ming preferred not to rely on it while working.

How else could he truly appreciate the essence of farming?

He gingerly opened the door and stepped inside the house.

Listening intently, he noted the three girls were still sleeping deeply. Su Ming smiled and made his way upstairs to his bedroom, softly closing the door behind him.

He powered up his computer.

"Brother, Xiaoqing has detected that you need to hydrate. I've brought you a cup of salt water," Xiaoqing said as she entered, placing a glass of water in front of Su Ming. He nodded in thanks and downed the water in one go.

But Xiaoqing remained standing behind him, not leaving. Su Ming didn't mind and proceeded to open the online store.

As soon as he did, a burst of light flashed across the screen!

My goodness!

There were new Level Three seeds and crops available!

Su Ming quickly clicked to check them out, starting with the plantation area.

Aside from two acres planted with green bananas, the rest of the land had been upgraded and was empty.

Su Ming decided to dedicate an acre to planting another Celestial Peach.

He planned to use the remaining five acres for a variety of new crops.

A shimmering seed then appeared on the screen.

“This is...”

Su Ming squinted, recognizing the seed. Unless he was mistaken, it appeared to be...

Gourd?!

Upon a second glance at the name.

Crying for his parents, Gourd Kids!

???

Three question marks instantly popped into Su Ming’s head. “Hello, System, you need to come out and explain this to me. What’s with this name, and why do I have zero desire to buy it?”

Surely this seed won’t start bawling non-stop the moment it’s planted, right?

What in the world is this?

Gulp!

Su Ming swallowed hard and blinked.

To buy or not to buy, that was the question that warranted some serious thought.

“Ah, forget it, I might as well buy it.”

With a resigned sigh, Su Ming acknowledged that there really wasn’t another option at the moment.

He glanced at the price tag. Wow, the price had shot up to two million for one seed!

Well then.

It looked like it was time to buckle down and make some money because things were only getting pricier by the minute.

Su Ming proceeded to make the payment and purchased all ten seeds.

Next, he turned his attention to the herding area.

It seemed the System was quite in tune with him, knowing that once one item matured, it would immediately refresh with another. Otherwise, the space would just be sitting empty, serving no purpose.

A Level Three animal had also appeared in the herding area.

This creature was stunning, cloaked in pure, snow-white fur.

Lotus Cat?

Su Ming blinked at the name.

He examined the image closely.

It looked almost identical to a regular cat, except for its strikingly pure white fur, without a single hair of any other color.

But what was truly remarkable was the blooming lotus at the tip of the cat's tail, with several butterflies fluttering around it.

This was a nice find!

Buy!

But now, Su Ming was puzzled. Shouldn't cats be in the breeding zone?

Typically, smaller animals like cats would be there, while the herding area was for larger species.

Nevertheless, Su Ming didn't dwell on it. He promptly completed the purchase and headed downstairs, eager not to delay any further.

First, he went to the courtyard.

He took out another Celestial Peach seed and planted it on an acre of land.

"Ding! The Celestial Peach has been successfully planted! Harvest time: 72 hours!"

?

Why had it changed to three days?

Su Ming blinked.

Well, no use overthinking it.

Su Ming pulled out the weeping gourd doll once more!

“Wow! I want my dad!”

“Wow! I want my mom!”

No sooner had the seed been revealed than two tiny hands and a pair of small horns sprouted on the surface of the Calabash Brother, complete with an exceptionally human-like face that broke into a wide-mouthed, heart-wrenching sob.

“I...”

Holding the Calabash Brother, Su Ming felt a headache coming on. Now, what was he to do with this thing?

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C564 – What a Small Cat!

“Shut up!”

Su Ming couldn't take it anymore and yelled, “If you don't shut up this instant, I'll toss you into the pigsty to feed the pigs!”

“Hey! Okay, okay!”

“If you'd been this polite from the start, we wouldn't have cried.”

“No more crying, absolutely no more crying!”

In the blink of an eye, as if their faces had transformed, the Calabash Brothers immediately ceased their wailing and gazed at Su Ming with eyes full of innocence.

.....

Su Ming sighed heavily, feeling overwhelmed.

The Top Grade System always managed to produce such extraordinary things.

Without further ado, Su Ming got to work.

He dug holes and buried seeds.

This time, an acre could accommodate two seeds, perfectly using up all ten seeds.

“Ding! The Calabash Brothers, who cried for their parents, have been successfully planted! Harvest time: 48 hours!”

He then proceeded to water and fertilize the plants in a routine manner.

Having completed these tasks, Su Ming dusted off his hands, unconcerned with the mud on his limbs, and strode over to the herding area.

He pulled out his phone, accessed the warehouse, located the Lotus Cat, and selected exchange.

“Shua!”

With a sound effect, a bright flash appeared in the herding area, and a cat materialized out of thin air!

Holy smokes!

Su Ming, initially smiling, was taken aback at the sight of the cat and involuntarily gaped in astonishment.

“You’re telling me this is a cat?”

Su Ming stood there, speechless and wide-eyed.

Before him was a four-legged creature within the courtyard, but it was enormous.

To give you an idea, it was roughly the size of a rhinoceros.

House cats are generally small, and even the fattest ones barely weigh 20-30 pounds.

So, the appearance of a cat as big as a rhinoceros was nothing short of startling.

Yet, the cat was gentle. It looked at Su Ming, then tenderly licked him with its tongue.

“Damn!”

Su Ming winced in pain, as the cat’s tongue was covered in prickly barbs.

Thankfully, the cat licked him just once before affectionately rubbing its massive head against Su Ming’s chest.

This was indeed a cat.

Not a rhinoceros.

Unlike a rhinoceros, whose head is tiny compared to its body, this cat's head was proportionate to its colossal frame.

"Ah..."

Su Ming stood rooted to the spot, lost in thought for quite a while before he couldn't resist reaching out to stroke the cat's head.

Tsk, tsk, tsk!

The fur was so smooth and shiny; it felt incredibly comfortable!

"Purr..."

But his opinion changed in a heartbeat when the cat started to purr. The sound was almost as loud as thunder, but luckily, the three girls in the house couldn't see or hear anything. Otherwise, they would have had a hard time falling asleep.

Su Ming gave the cat a closer look. Besides its increased size, the lotus flower at the tip of its tail had also grown significantly.

The lotus was now in full bloom, with several butterflies fluttering around it and the petals gently swaying. Clearly, the cat was in high spirits.

Without overthinking it, Su Ming exchanged for a few more cats, but soon reached his limit. After all, the space was limited, and he could only accommodate four cats at once.

"Ding! Lotus Flower Cat has been successfully bred! Harvest time: 72 hours!"

Once everything was set up, Su Ming breathed a sigh of relief, washed up, took a bath, and then fell into a deep sleep in his bed.

Little Green sat quietly in front of Su Ming's computer, silently flipping through the pages at lightning speed. It was still learning about human knowledge. With the vast amount of information available on the computer, even artificial intelligence needed time to fully assimilate it.

The next day, as the first light of dawn crept in, Su Ming awoke feeling refreshed.

"That was a great sleep."

After stretching and feeling content, Su Ming got out of bed, freshened up, and casually made his way downstairs.

“Hmm?”

Upon reaching the first floor, Su Ming paused, puzzled.

Both bedroom doors were wide open.

Where was everyone?

Peering inside, he saw that the rooms were spotless and the bedding neatly folded, but the three girls were nowhere to be seen.

Where could they have gone?

“Heeheehee!”

“Who knew the buns here would be so tasty?”

“Right? And the bakery next door is even better.”

“Shh, keep it down, or that guy will wake up and devour all our breakfast.”

“Exactly.”

Just then, soft whispers drifted in from outside the house. Su Ming furrowed his brow and made his way to the door, peering through the window, and what a sight it was.

The yard of his villa was quite spacious, with several plots of land in the center. No crops were grown, as they wouldn't receive the System's protection. Instead, there were flowers, now somewhat wilted with the arrival of autumn. At the far end lay a swimming pool.

Su Ming ensured the pool was cleaned regularly, and beside it stood a quaint pavilion with a small table at its heart, surrounded by several stone benches. The three girls were seated there, the table laden with an assortment of small plastic bags – remnants of a hearty breakfast.

With a resigned shake of his head, Su Ming pushed the door open and stepped outside.

“Ah! You're up?”

“You're the one who should be sleeping in, shouldn't you?”

“Bro, these breakfasts are ours. You can't just come and snatch them away!”

Ann Chuxia was more composed. As a top-tier celebrity, she maintained a certain decorum while staying at someone else's home. But Ann Chuxia and Zhang Qianqian were less concerned, quickly shielding their breakfast from him.

"Please, I'm not so low as to compete with you for breakfast. But tell me, why are you all up so early?"

Su Ming sauntered over and took a seat on one of the vacant stools, asking with a warm, teasing smile.

He was blessed with the ability to wake up whenever he wished, never feeling tired or groggy.

But these girls were another story.

They had turned in early the night before, and normally, they might have lingered in bed a bit longer. Why were they up at the crack of dawn?

"It's my fault. I got a phone call this morning that woke me up," Ann Chuxia said, her smile tinged with regret.

"No worries at all. We've had plenty of sleep," Su Ming reassured her.

"Absolutely."

Su Qiu and the other girl nodded in agreement, quickly chiming in.

"Hold on a second."

Something suddenly occurred to Su Ming. "Did the three of you go out to buy breakfast together this morning?"

"Yes," they said, exchanging glances.

"Just like that?"

"Yes!" The three girls nodded emphatically, leaving no doubt that they were the ones in question.

Su Ming couldn't help but smack his forehead in exasperation. "Sigh, Chuxia, you're a major celebrity. Luckily, it's the morning when not many people are out, and those selling breakfast are usually older folks who don't pay much attention to entertainment news. Just imagine if you tried to go out for lunch."

"The city center would be completely packed," he said, clearly feeling resigned to the situation.

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C565 – Master Lee Wangyang

“Yes...”

Ann Chuxia scratched her head upon realizing, “I’ve been so relaxed living here that I completely forgot...”

Su Ming was at a loss for words, but relieved that everything was okay.

“By the way, I have something to tell you.”

“This morning, my agent called me. I have to attend an event today. Would you like to join me?”

Ann Chuxia suddenly remembered.

“No.”

Su Qiu was the first to decline. “I really dislike attending events. They’re chaotic and just so bothersome...”

“Same here.”

Zhang Qianqian expressed her agreement.

“To be honest, I don’t want to go either, but I don’t have much of a choice.”

Ann Chuxia looked troubled. Being under a talent agency sometimes meant you couldn’t call all the shots.

“So...”

Su Qiu and Zhang Qianqian exchanged glances, and all three girls’ eyes converged on Su Ming in silent agreement.

“Huh? Why are you all staring at me?”

Su Ming blinked, sensing danger.

They say three women make a drama.

Why did it feel like there was a trap lying in wait for him?

“Brother, you’ve said before that Chuxia is a big star. It’s not safe for her to go out alone.”

“Yeah, yeah, Brother Ming. Chuxia is our friend now. What if something happens to her?”

Su Qiu and Zhang Qianqian chimed in together.

“Stop, stop, stop!”

Su Ming quickly gestured with his hands. “Alright, alright, you win. I’ll go with you. But what kind of event is it? Just don’t tell me it’s a red carpet event, because I’m definitely out.”

“It’s not.”

Ann Chuxia shook her head. “It’s a sculpture exhibition by Lee Wangyang. You’ve heard of Lee Wangyang, haven’t you?”

“Do you mean the president of the Sculptors’ Association?”

Su Ming raised an eyebrow.

“Yes, that’s him.”

Ann Chuxia confirmed, though her eyes betrayed a hint of reluctance.

It seemed as though President Lee was somewhat disagreeable.

“Hold on, why would a small sculpture exhibition require the presence of an A-list star like you?”

Su Ming asked, puzzled.

“A small sculpture exhibition?”

Before Ann Chuxia could utter a word, Su Qiu’s eyes widened in excitement. “Come on, Brother Ming, that’s Lee Wangyang, an international master of sculpture. I might not follow his work closely, but did you catch that news story last year? He carved a piece called All-Encompassing Revival, no bigger than the palm of your hand, and auctioned it off for over ten million.”

“Really?” Su Ming responded with a casual smile. In the past, he would have been clueless about the world of sculpture.

But that was before he acquired new skills last night.

Now, Su Ming was among the elite in the carving world.

To be frank, he didn't hold much regard for someone like Lee Wangyang, whose reputation exceeded his talent.

"That's part of it. Plus, Lee Wangyang is an old friend of our company's boss, so my hands are tied," Ann Chuxia sighed.

"Okay, no problem. I'll accompany you. When does it start?" Su Ming inquired.

"Around 10 a.m.," she replied.

"Great," Su Ming nodded in agreement. Having made a promise, he saw no reason for second thoughts.

After finishing breakfast, they returned to the house to relax for a bit. Knowing they would be heading out later, Liu Dashan made a special trip to deliver a new outfit to Ann Chuxia.

Liu Dashan had claimed to be quite composed before his arrival, but upon reaching the place, he was utterly astounded.

This was Eastsea, after all.

One had to be incredibly influential to own such a vast expanse of land in the heart of the city, and his admiration for Su Ming grew even more profound.

Time was ticking away, and Su Ming headed straight to the garage to fetch the car. It wasn't wise to board the vehicle at the front door, not when the streets were bustling with people. He might never make it out.

Setting the destination on his phone, Su Ming drove off toward the venue. As he rounded the corner, the streetscape transformed dramatically.

This area was part of the Second Loop, right in the center of Eastsea City. The main thoroughfare was lined with banners and festooned doorways.

"Enthusiastic celebration for the opening of Master Li's sculpture exhibition!"

"XXX Group celebrates Master Li's sculpture exhibition!"

"XXX Bank rejoices in Master Li's sculpture exhibition!"

.....

The streets were not only adorned with various banners but also teeming with media personnel.

“Ladies and gentlemen, we are honored to have the President of the Imperial Court Sculpting Association, Honorary President of the Asia Sculpting Association, member of the World Sculpting Association, two-time Golden Award recipient, and recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award in Sculpture, Mr. Lee Wangyang, hosting his sculpture exhibition in Eastsea today!”

“According to our station’s reporters, not only will various master sculptors be in attendance, but also the renowned A-list actress, Ms. Ann Chuxia, will grace the event with her presence!”

The entire street was swarming with journalists.

The central roadway had been entirely shut down, prohibiting any passage.

It was a jubilant ocean of activity, teeming with excitement.

“Master Li certainly has a knack for things, organizing an exhibition that’s drawn such a crowd.”

Su Ming chuckled.

“It’s inevitable, given his status as a master.”

Ann Chuxia furrowed her delicate brows, a hint of impatience stirring within her.

An exhibition that bore no relevance to her profession, yet she was expected to make an appearance.

She couldn’t shake the feeling of being reduced to a showpiece, a mere object of others’ attention.

Devoid of any personal value.

“Excuse me, sir, this road is closed.”

Su Ming had stopped his car at the entrance of the barricaded road when a traffic officer approached and gave a salute.

“Officer, take a look at who’s with me.”

Su Ming said with a grin.

“Oh?”

Upon recognizing Ann Chuxia, the officer's eyes brightened, and he quickly said, "Oh, it's Ann Chuxia! Please wait, I'll let you through right away."

After speaking, the officer communicated briefly with his colleagues and relayed a message over his radio before removing the roadblock.

Su Ming then continued driving towards their destination.

The deeper they went, the livelier it became.

The crowd grew denser by the minute.

Approaching the entrance of the exhibition hall was overwhelming; a seemingly endless queue of people snaked its way forward, a veritable mountain of humanity pressing in from all sides.

"Wow, what kind of car is that?"

"Is that the Hennessy Venom GT?"

"Incredible!"

Su Ming's car, with its thunderous engine and striking design, captivated the onlookers, leaving them in awe.

"Who's driving this car?"

"Whoever it is, they must be no ordinary friend of Master Li."

"You can say that again."

The crowd buzzed with conversation.


After parking, Su Ming stepped out of the car.

"Wow! This guy is so handsome. I want to have his babies!"

"Please! Can't your family afford a mirror? Take a good look at yourself; you might actually end up having monkeys with him."

"Hmph! Don't even think about competing with me. This guy is definitely mine!"

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## C566 – This Is Mr Su's Daily Operation

Hearing the buzz of conversation around him, Su Ming simply smiled without uttering a word.

He really was quite handsome.

"Don't idolize me; I'm merely a legend!"

He approached the passenger side.

Su Ming flashed a slight smile and opened the car door.

"Is there someone sitting in the passenger seat?"

"Could that be this handsome guy's girlfriend?"

"No way, I've set my sights on this handsome man. Nobody better try to snatch him from me!"

"Exactly, we need to show this woman our strength!"

The girls nearby were in a frenzy.

A man this handsome should either marry us or stay single!

At that moment, a pair of flawless, long, and straight legs extended from the passenger seat.

Numerous men gaped in awe.

"Wow, those legs are so straight and fair!"

"Looking at those legs, she must be a stunning beauty, right?"

"Who could she be? So perfect?"

The men were going wild, and the women were green with envy. Amidst the expectant stares, Ann Chuxia stepped out of the car.

Then, the lively, densely packed street fell into an eerie silence!

A second later, a thunderous wave of cheers broke out!

"Wow! It's actually my goddess, Ann Chuxia?!"

“I’m filled with envy and jealousy, but I can’t deny they’re a perfect match!”

“Oh, I feel like crying. Is this the legendary couple of myth?”

“No other girl is a match for this handsome man, but Ann Chuxia certainly is!”

“A mysterious handsome man driving a Hennessy Venom GT alongside Xiao Hong, a top domestic superstar—they’re just too perfect together...”

“People often criticize female celebrities for marrying into wealth, but why does it feel so right for Ann Chuxia to marry this handsome man?”

The crowd around them erupted.

Even the news media waiting on the sidelines swiftly powered up their cameras.

This was sensational news!

At that moment, Ann Chuxia donned her disguise, her face adorned with a polite smile as she gently waved.

A perfect smile, a perfect visage, perfect manners, plus a perfect man by her side!

Life couldn’t get any better!

“Viewers at home, breaking news: Miss Ann, Ann Chuxia, has been spotted with an unidentified handsome man. Our station will keep you updated...”

A reporter from an out-of-town TV station had just made a comment when a local journalist beside him couldn’t resist rolling his eyes in disdain.

Indeed, the local reporters maintained their composure.

“Look at you, acting like you’ve never seen the world before. This gentleman here is none other than the renowned Mr. Su from Eastsea.”

“Do you even realize who Mr. Su is? A man who owns over a dozen acres in the city center isn’t just anybody, is he?”

“Mr. Su’s bank account boasts more than 20 billion.”

“You out-of-town reporters might scramble for a good spot, but there’s no need for such overreaction.”

The local reporters bantered back and forth, their cameras rolling all the while, yet their expressions conveyed a shared sentiment: indeed, Su Ming was the only match for Ann Chuxia.

Ann Chuxia, oh Ann Chuxia.

You, an A-list star, should just graciously accept Mr. Su's courtship.

The Eastsea locals remained unfazed.

They simply clapped from the sidelines, while the loud cheers came from admirers who had traveled from afar.

"Miss Ann, have you arrived?"

Just then, the venue's doors burst open, and a white-haired elder hurried out, flanked by an entourage.

Ann Chuxia was the day's VIP.

Truth be told, sculpture has a rather niche appeal, but Ann Chuxia was their marquee attraction for the exhibition. Without her, the turnout would have been much less impressive.

"Uncle Wang."

Ann Chuxia greeted him with a gracious smile.

"You're too modest," the elder replied, chuckling. Observing the bustling scene, he inwardly marveled at the drawing power of a top-tier beauty and star.

"And who might this be?"

His attention now turned to Su Ming.

He then glanced at the car beside Su Ming. Despite his usual indifference to worldly affairs, the elder could appreciate the Hennessy Venom GT's design and knew it wasn't inexpensive.

Judging by the frenzied reactions of the crowd, he surmised the car was far from merely expensive.

To afford such a vehicle and to chauffeur Ann Chuxia here, all while maintaining a composed demeanor and a gentle smile amidst the throng, was no small feat.

Standing next to Ann Chuxia, he appeared as if part of a match made in heaven. This young man, Su Ming, clearly had an impressive background.

It wouldn't hurt to get to know him better.

"Uncle Wang, this is my friend, Su Ming. He's accompanying me to the exhibition this time; that's not a problem, is it?" Ann Chuxia asked with a smile.

"Not a problem at all," the white-haired elder chuckled. "It's too crowded outside. Let's go in to talk."

"Sure."

Ann Chuxia nodded, giving Su Ming a quick look. Su Ming remained silent, offering only a smile, and they both followed the elder inside.

Just then, behind the elder, a young man's eyes narrowed, and a flicker of annoyance crossed his face.

Yet, with the elder present, he dared not speak up. Instead, he clenched his fists and gritted his teeth, forcing his anger down.

The exhibition hall was still closed, leaving the vast space empty except for a few staff members organizing the area.

The hall was split into three levels, comprising seven large rooms, all interconnected by corridors—a logical design for public exhibitions.

Upon entering, one was greeted by a massive tree sculpture at the entrance.

It was a substantial piece, easily the height of two people and weighing at least a ton, seemingly carved from Golden Nanmu wood.

The sculpture depicted Sun Wukong, complete with his Golden-Hooped Rod, his eyes vivid and lifelike.

Su Ming stood before the sculpture, his brow furrowed as he scrutinized it.

"Do you have an interest in carving, young man?" the elder inquired, approaching Su Ming.

"Just a bit," Su Ming replied humbly.

"Really? It's rare to find young people with an appreciation for carving. What do you think of this tree sculpture?" the elder probed.

"Overall, it's quite impressive," Su Ming responded.

"There are a few minor imperfections, though," he added thoughtfully.

"Ha!" Before the elder could respond, the young man behind him blurted out in a cold tone, "Nonsense! This masterpiece was carved by Vice-Chairman Wang himself, flawless in every way. It's been lauded by the finest sculptors. And you dare to criticize it? You're way out of your league!"

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C567 – All Kinds of Snake Gods Have Appeared

"Mr. Wang is the vice president of our Sculpting Association, and his skills are exceptional. And yet you, a greenhorn, dare to critique him?"

"Feeling the sting of truth, aren't you?"

"Do you assume that the pieces displayed at the entrance of an exhibition are always mediocre? You've misjudged this time."

"I'm curious to see how you'll manage to save face later."

The group behind the white-haired gentleman couldn't suppress their sneers.

"Is this your creation?"

Su Ming paid no attention to the others, pausing briefly before turning to the white-haired gentleman beside him.

The old man nodded, though his expression soured slightly. Since its unveiling, his work had received unending accolades, with not a single criticism to be heard. Naturally, he took great pride in this, believing he had created a masterpiece to be remembered for generations.

But today, he encountered a young man with an enigmatic background who boldly pointed out a flaw in his work.

The elder was understandably irked.

Yet, with age comes wisdom, and he quickly regained his composure, offering a slight smile, "Then, young man, I would welcome your insights."

“Let’s not. Mr. Wang’s sculpting prowess is surely unparalleled, and I’m but a novice who spoke out of turn.”

Su Ming offered a smile.

“Ah!”

The old man, however, was not so easily dissuaded: “You can’t dismiss it like that. Despite your youth, I sense you have a discerning eye. Throughout my career, no one has dared to critique my work. I’m genuinely curious to hear your honest opinion.”

“Alright, then. I suppose I’ll have to speak frankly.”

Su Ming smiled serenely, recognizing the old man’s challenge.

Well, I was prepared to spare your feelings. After all, pointing out a flaw could significantly devalue a piece. But if you insist, don’t hold me responsible.

“If I’m not mistaken, Mr. Wang, you must have employed the rosewood technique, which demands the utmost precision in knife work and design, striving for flawlessness.”

“Upon closer inspection, your Sun Wukong sculpture is remarkably lifelike, yet there’s a slight oversight.”

Su Ming stood with his hands clasped behind his back, smiling gently.

“Oh? What might that be?”

The old man’s face tensed, a clear sign of concern.

Su Ming’s knowledge of the carving technique was proof enough of his expertise.

The insights of an expert do carry a certain weight.

“Mr. Wang’s prowess in carving is unquestionable, but have you ever delved into ‘Journey to the West’?” Su Ming inquired.

Mr. Wang paused, a bit taken aback. “I was quite familiar with it in my youth, but as I’ve aged, I’ve devoted myself to carving...”

“Mr. Wang, Sun Wukong in the novel is under 1.5 meters tall, almost beast-like. Your carving captures his likeness impressively, but have you considered that Sun Wukong is the heart and soul of ‘Journey to the West’?”

“He’s decisive and full of vitality, yet you chose wood as your medium. While the result is realistic, it seems to lack that vital essence,” Su Ming remarked thoughtfully.

"Ha! I was expecting some profound criticism, but is this what you come up with?"

"By that logic, any carving could be subject to the same critique."

"Run out of things to say, have you?"

"Just as I thought, it's nothing more than a pretense."

The crowd erupted into laughter upon hearing Su Ming's comments.

The white-haired gentleman shook his head in disbelief. Such a justification seemed rather tenuous, didn't it?

Su Ming simply offered a slight smile and continued, "Typically, a jade wrist knife would be used at the joints, but if one were to use a flat blade in this instance..."

Leaving his thought unfinished, Su Ming turned and walked away with Ann Chuxia.

"Pfft! And here I thought we had a real expert, but he's just full of hot air."

"Everyone knows that for curved areas, the Jade Bowl Saber Technique is the standard!"

"Using a flat blade? That's far too cumbersome..."

The onlookers kept up their sneering, but the white-haired elder's expression turned to one of astonishment.

He suddenly spun around and bellowed, "Silence, all of you!"

The crowd was startled into quiet, each person's mouth snapped shut. They were all puzzled as to why Vice President Wang had become so enraged.

"What's the matter?"

A few people asked tentatively, surprised by his outburst.

The elder's hands shook with disbelief. "My goodness, if it were indeed carved in that way, it would be nothing short of divine... What do you understand? The so-called techniques are merely constraints. In truth, once you've mastered a certain level of skill, any knife can become your teacher. To progress in the art of carving, you must break free from these constraints! But to reach such a level, you'd have to be at the pinnacle of the carving world, something you are far from achieving!"

After the white-haired elder finished speaking, he quickly made his way toward Su Ming, his heart devoid of any previous condescension. This young man was far more complex than he appeared.

At that moment, Su Ming and Ann Chuxia had reached the central exhibition hall, bustling with security personnel. In the middle stood a man, advanced in years yet brimming with vitality. His eyes sparkled upon seeing Ann Chuxia, and he approached her with enthusiasm. "My dear, I'm afraid I must impose on you this time."

"Uncle Lee, we're practically family. There's no need to speak of trouble," Ann Chuxia replied with a warm smile.

"You're too humble, my girl. Your popularity is skyrocketing. Without you, this event wouldn't have drawn such a crowd," Lee Wangyang said with a grin.

As the exhibition hall doors swung open, a flood of visitors poured in. Thanks to the ample security and a designated route marked by red ropes, the flow of guests around the exhibits was well managed.

Before long, the hall was teeming with people. Su Ming and Ann Chuxia noticed that the key members of the Carving Association were reluctant to leave, and the crowd continued to swell until it was a dense sea of onlookers.

"Thank you all for coming to my exhibition today," Lee Wangyang announced. "As a token of my appreciation, I have ten uncarved seals here. Shortly, I will select ten lucky attendees at random and carve your names on them!"

His announcement was met with jubilation. Lee Wangyang, pleased by the turnout, stroked his beard and laughed heartily.

"Fantastic!"

"Marvelous!"

"Thank you, Chairman Lee!"

The crowd erupted into enthusiastic applause.

"Who would have thought we might get the chance to own a piece of Chairman Lee's legacy?"

"Chairman Lee's carving skills are truly masterful, a blend of spirit and form."

"Indeed, within the imperial court's carving circle, Chairman Lee is unrivaled."

"Please pick me, pick me!"

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C568 – The Person I Am Talking about Is You!

The crowd was already in a frenzy.

Lee Wangyang swelled with pride.

“Furthermore, today I have someone special to introduce to you all.”

“This individual is my disciple, and also my protege.”

“Despite his youth, he is exceptionally gifted and has mastered at least seventy percent of my skills.”

Lee Wangyang, sensing the atmosphere was ripe, raised his voice.

At that moment, the crowd made way.

A young man emerged, his face beaming with pride he could barely contain.

“Hello, everyone. I am Mr. Lee’s apprentice, Gao Yunfan. A few pieces in today’s exhibition are my own creations. Please, enjoy.”

Gao Yunfan’s eyes drifted to the side.

He spoke with a polite air, but the smug look on his face betrayed his true feelings.

“Wow! Is this... Oh my, to carve the Great Wall from such a large piece of jade, and with such lifelike detail, it’s nothing short of divine inspiration!”

“President Lee, you’ve truly discovered a gem this time.”

“Your disciple is so young, yet in his thirties, he has achieved such mastery. He’s destined to be a great master!”

“President Lee, it seems he has indeed surpassed the teacher!”

The local citizens simply clapped.

They weren’t well-versed in the art of carving, nor did they care much about who held the title of president.

Their interest lay in seeing Ann Chuxia.

But within the carving association, flattery was a must, and the compliments flowed incessantly.

How could Lee Wangyang not be thrilled? The praise was for his own disciple, after all.

Yet, he couldn't let his pride show.

"Ladies and gentlemen, please don't overpraise the young man. He's still maturing and needs to keep a level head. We wouldn't want him getting too cocky."

Lee Wangyang chuckled, "My disciple's humble works are merely a prelude to greater things. I apologize for their simplicity."

"Not at all. If Yunfan's works are considered humble, then the rest of us might as well not bother."

"Indeed, especially since he was trained by Master Lee himself."

"We're simply not in the same league!"

While everyone was busy showering praise, the white-haired elder, Vice President Wang, who often clashed with Lee Wangyang, stood by observing with a cool detachment, not uttering a single word.

Under normal circumstances, even he would have to acknowledge that the young disciple had considerable talent. Achieving such a level of skill at his age was no small feat.

But now...

To be honest, I've discovered someone even more impressive: Su Ming.

Compared to Su Ming, your disciple still has a long way to go.

"Besides that, I've got another announcement to make!"

Lee Wangyang and Gao Yunfan were smug for quite a while, and the area around them buzzed with excitement. Sensing the moment was ripe, Gao Yunfan cleared his throat, straightened his clothes, and spoke up with confidence.

The crowd fell silent upon hearing him.

"Today, in addition to attending my master's exhibition, I have a significant announcement to make."

"I've been secretly in love with a girl for a long time, but I've always been too shy to confess my feelings. Today, however, in front of all of you, I've decided to muster up the courage!"

With a flourish, Gao Yunfan produced a large bouquet of roses from behind him as if by magic. He strode over to Ann Chuxia's side and knelt on one knee.

"Ann Chuxia, I didn't have much fame before and felt unworthy of you. But now, I'm about to become the vice president of the Sculpting Association. Please, promise me, be my girlfriend. I will make you happy!"

Gao Yunfan declared, his eyes shining with hope.

...

He had expected a round of applause, but the crowd just blinked and stayed quiet.

"Hmm?"

What's happening here?

This isn't quite how I pictured it.

Gao Yunfan was taken aback. He blinked, looking left and then right.

Hey, hey, hey!

What's with the looks, folks? Why are you staring at me as if I've lost my mind?

Oh!

I get it now; you're all green with envy!

The women must be thinking, 'Why can't I land such a perfect man?'

And the men, well, Ann Chuxia is the dream girl of countless fans, and here I am, boldly confessing to her. I'm confident she'll say yes!

The guys must be heartbroken!

Hmph!

Your heartache is none of my concern!

I'm the epitome of cool, charm, and unbeatable style!

What do you have that can even compare to me?

“Ann Chuxia, I’ve always been fond of you. Please, say you’ll be mine!”

Gao Yunfan stood tall and proud, still kneeling on one knee.

His eyes sparkled with excitement.

“Uh...”

Ann Chuxia stepped back, facing a situation she had never encountered before. Previously, there would always be an agent or security personnel to assist her.

But now...

“Why not just focus on your carving? Why the marriage proposal?”

“Mr. Su and Ms. An are the real match. Who do you think you are?”

“It’s just not even close. It’s painful to look at.”

“How can a member of the Sculpting Association even think to compare himself to Mr. Su? Whether it’s looks or talent, he’s out of his league...”

Many Eastsea locals couldn’t resist making snide comments.

Even those who weren’t from around here, after being influenced by the locals, found themselves unable to refrain from adding their two cents.

“Huh?”

Gao Yunfan was utterly baffled.

What was happening here?

This wasn’t how it was supposed to go...

Wasn’t this a bit much?

Who in the world was Mr. Su?

Which jerk is he?

I’m going to challenge him to a duel!

“Hey, this sculpture over here looks great, shall we check it out?”

Just then, Su Ming approached Ann Chuxia and gestured toward a nearby ivory carving.

“Sure!”

Ann Chuxia responded with a sweet smile, turned on her heel, and strode off with Su Ming.

Whoosh...

It was as if a breeze had swept through the area, leaving a few fallen leaves in its wake.

Gao Yunfan knelt on the ground alone, awkwardly holding a rose, as if proposing to thin air.

Damn it...

The rest of the Carving Association members stood in silence behind him, no one daring to speak up.

Today was supposed to be Lee Wangyang and Gao Yunfan's turf.

Instead, they were utterly humiliated.

“Who are you? How dare you try to steal my woman?”

“Ann Chuxia, don't let him deceive you. We've known each other for a long time, and you know how sincere I am.”

Gao Yunfan quickly got to his feet and shouted.

“This ivory carving is truly remarkable. The craftsmanship is exquisite, truly a rare gem.”

Su Ming and Ann Chuxia seemed not to hear him, continuing to heap praise on the sculpture.

“Oh? You understand carving?”

Hearing their conversation, Gao Yunfan's eyes brightened, and a dark smile crossed his lips. “Do you have what it takes to challenge me? Let's see who can win Ann Chuxia's heart...”

Su Ming turned with a slight smile. “Gao Yunfan, Ann Chuxia is a person, not an object. If she were to fancy a street beggar, what concern is it of yours?”

“I...”

Gao Yunfan felt a surge of frustration, nearly choking on his own indignation. “Are you brave enough or not?”

“A challenge?”

Su Ming laughed heartily. “There’s no point in competing with someone who hasn’t even started their training.”

“Hmph! Sounds like you’re backing down.”

Gao Yunfan scoffed coldly.

“No, you’re mistaken. The untrained one I’m referring to is you.”

Su Ming’s gaze was piercing as he spoke deliberately.

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C569 – Let Me Show You!

The statement immediately caused an uproar.

“Yunfan is a prized pupil of Master Li, fully versed in his teachings. How could an outsider like you dare to offer guidance?”

“Exactly! He’s oblivious to the vastness of the world!”

“Miss Ann, how can a top-tier star like you associate with someone like him?”

The crowd around them frowned, voicing their disapproval loudly.

“I...”

Ann Chuxia hadn’t anticipated Su Ming’s remarks.

She found herself momentarily speechless, unsure of how to respond.

“Don’t bother arguing with them.”

Su Ming chuckled. “In the carving world, they’re all just patting each other on the back. You could randomly chip away at a roadside stone, and they’d call it a masterpiece. Aside from a few of these ivory carvings, the rest hardly surpass a child’s efforts.”

“Such arrogance!”

Lee Wangyang, who had been silent up to that point, scowled and retorted, “Young man, you claim my disciple hasn’t even begun to grasp the basics. You must be quite the expert then. How about you give us a demonstration right here, right now, and show us your skill?”

Su Ming simply offered a slow smile.

You’re the president of the Carving Association, not the Farming Association.

You stood by with a grin while your disciple tried to corner me, not uttering a peep. Now that I’ve spoken about your disciple, you can’t sit still.

Your double standards are quite blatant.

“I’m a bit tired. Let’s head home.”

Su Ming glanced at Ann Chuxia and paid no further attention.

“You stay right there!”

Lee Wangyang’s face darkened as he glared at Su Ming, “Today is my exhibition. You’ve done nothing to celebrate, instead casting aspersions on my disciple, implying that he’s barely a novice. That would suggest I’m hardly more advanced. If you can prove your carving prowess today and impress me, all will be forgiven. But if not, leaving here won’t be so simple!”

“That’s right, you can’t just spout harsh words and walk away scot-free!”

“He’s just a greenhorn, yet he dares to critique Master Li’s disciple!”

“There’s a swarm of news, media reporters, and a host of live streamers and viewers here. If word gets out, won’t our reputation be completely tarnished?”

“If you’re as skilled as you claim, then show us what true sculpting is.”

Members of the Sculpting Association began to chime in one by one.

“Did you hear that? What they’re saying is the collective sentiment here.”

“If you’re going to disparage us like this, then prove your skill.”

“Come on, you’re a man, and you’re in front of Miss Ann. You can’t just chicken out now, can you? It’s only a carving, and I’m not asking you to sculpt anything massive. We have a few unopened jade stones right here. Surely it’s not too much trouble for you to carve a few names on them, is it?”

Lee Wangyang certainly had a knack for speaking.

If Su Ming just walked away now, it would really look bad.

“President Lee, this could be problematic...”

Ann Chuxia could see the situation escalating and quickly stepped forward to intervene.

“Miss Ann, as a top-tier celebrity, you’re under the watchful eyes of many. Showing favoritism could damage your image.”

“And you, young man, as a man, you surely can’t hide behind a woman, can you?” Lee Wangyang said with a light smile.

”Fine.”

Su Ming sighed deeply. “To tell you the truth, President Lee, I refrained from acting to spare you some dignity. But now, since you insist on putting your face forward for a slap, I’m left with no choice.”

Su Ming shook his head, a look of regret on his face, prompting laughter from the crowd.

“Hahaha, this guy really knows how to talk big. Such shameless boasting!”

“Can he really back up such bold claims?”

“I’m curious to see what he’s capable of.”

The Sculpting Association members sneered and joked among themselves. We may have sought recognition in less than honorable ways, but we’ve dedicated years of hard work to our craft.

Even as young apprentices, we diligently honed our skills for over a decade. You’re so young; even if you started sculpting from the womb, you couldn’t surpass President Lee!

“Su Ming, please don’t cause trouble. President Li is nearly seventy years old and has been sculpting for five to six decades. How can you possibly compete with that?”

Ann Chuxia was visibly worried.

“No worries. I’ll show them that age doesn’t define ambition, and that there’s such a thing as natural talent.”

“And today, you’ll all witness what I mean.”

With that, Su Ming stepped forward towards the platform.

It was a moderately sized table with a long wooden tray in the center, holding several jade stones already shaped into what appeared to be seals, though their bases were yet to be carved. One seal, however, was complete.

Su Ming picked it up and read the inscription: Gao Yunfan's seal!

"Garbage!"

He glanced at it and flung it away dismissively.

"You!"

Gao Yunfan, witnessing this, was livid, his blood pressure soaring, nearly choking on his rage.

This was his proud creation, and Su Ming had the audacity to dismiss it as trash?!

"I can't stand this. I'm going to thrash this guy!"

"Gao Yunfan's carving is top-notch, and he dares to call it garbage?"

"He claims to have talent and skill, so let's see him prove it."

"The fool doesn't know how out of his depth he is. Let's see how he handles this."

The crowd was seething, rallying behind Gao Yunfan, as Su Ming turned with a serene smile.

"Carving is about the level of skill, not about one's status within the association. What he's carved is indeed trash, and it's only considered notable because there are so few skilled artists in the association, and they're underutilized. It's a case of the blind leading the blind!"

"If I say it's trash, then it's trash. Are you all in the Association so closed-minded that you can't handle a bit of criticism?"

"I thought the Sculpting Society was broad-minded, open to all critiques and censure. But if you can't handle an outsider's opinion, then fine. Today, I'll show you what true carving is!"

Su Ming finished speaking, his smile unwavering, and reached for one of the jade stones. He picked up a flat blade and without further ado, made a swift cut.

"Shick!"

The sound of the blade slicing through the jade was crisp, and a perfect vertical line appeared instantly.

“There.”

Su Ming set the stone down on the table and casually waved his hand, signaling the end of his demonstration.

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C570 – And I Won’t Even Kneel to Your Grandfather!

“Is that all?”

“Ha! I was expecting something spectacular, and that’s all we get?”

“Absolutely ridiculous, utterly ridiculous!”

The members of the Sculpting Association erupted into raucous laughter.

“Everyone, shut the hell up!”

Just then, Lee Wangyang bellowed.

The room fell silent as Lee Wangyang, looking wild, charged over and snatched the seal from Su Ming’s hand.

“My God, how can this be? How can this be?!”

“Could this be the legendary ‘Unity of Man and Blade’?”

“This can’t be! This can’t be! How did you do it? How did you do it...?”

Gone was Lee Wangyang’s earlier sneering demeanor; now, he was so agitated he seemed ready to take flight.

“No, wait, just, you, you, speak clearly, will you? I’m really freaking out here.”

Su Ming instinctively stepped back from Lee Wangyang’s intense stare.

What are you trying to do?

I’m not into that sort of thing, you old coot.

“Young man, no, master, no, father! Please, I’m begging you, tell me how you did it?! I’ve chased this level my entire life without even approaching the threshold. How did you achieve it? How?!”

Lee Wangyang fell to his knees before Su Ming, tears coursing down his cheeks, his hands shaking.

The onlookers were speechless. The entire hall went quiet—whether it was the Sculpting Association members, Gao Yunfan, the surrounding reporters, or the spectators.

Everyone was in shock!

What in the world was happening? The story had taken an unexpected turn. Why was Master Lee kneeling before Su Ming and calling him ‘father’?

What on earth was going on?!

“Look at the seal in your hands!”

All eyes turned to the seal. Su Ming’s technique was simple; he had written just one character.

In the world of calligraphy,

the single stroke of ‘one’ is the most challenging to execute.

Ordinary characters are composed of numerous strokes and dots.

These elements come together to form a character that looks solid and attractive. But the character ‘one’ is the most difficult.

It must convey the essence of the character without being overly complex.

True simplicity is often the most difficult to master!

Writing with a brush in the calligraphy world is already a formidable challenge, but carving with a knife is even more so – it’s a difficulty compounded!

Yet, when Su Ming finished his piece, it was imbued with such a lifelike spirit.

He was undeniably a true Top Grade within the realm of calligraphy!

What stood out most was that Su Ming’s work was unadorned. Everyone witnessed how he effortlessly glided the tool in one fluid motion.

It was simply astounding!

Suddenly, several elderly men with graying hair covered their eyes, overwhelmed by a wave of dizziness.

“It’s the essence! This young man has actually captured the essence within!”

“Indeed, this must be the pinnacle of the engraving world!”

“Am I really seeing the Yin Yang Eight Trigrams?!”

“The Tai Chi Diagram?”

The essence of such works is both divine and enigmatic, varying from one viewer to another, yet they undeniably exist. Take, for instance, the paintings of master calligraphers that evoke an inexplicable sense of essence even to the layperson.

It’s difficult to articulate, but its presence is tangible. And those who can achieve such a level are among the world’s elite, aren’t they?!

Most of them were masters of ancient times. Nowadays, with society awash in materialism, the rapid pace of life, and the prevalence of self-interest, reaching such heights has become a rarity.

”This...”

Su Ming stroked his chin, pondering the issue with earnest. I truly have no idea – it was the System’s doing!

“Dad, could it be that you’re upset? I’ve got it now!”

Lee Wangyang’s eyes bulged as he suddenly stood up, strode behind Gao Yunfan, and with a swift kick, sent him tumbling to the ground: “Damn it, kneel and bow to your grandfather!”

“What?”

Gao Yunfan was completely taken aback. What was happening? How did he suddenly acquire a grandfather?

Wasn’t he supposed to be the one stepping down? How did the tables turn so quickly, and he became the grandson?

“Apologize and bow your head now!”

Lee Wangyang, seeing Gao Yunfan's lack of response, bellowed at him. Gao Yunfan's heart was filled with turmoil – the baby was in distress, but the baby wouldn't speak!

"Sir..."

Gao Yunfan clenched his jaw, struggling before finally managing to utter a word. Su Ming quickly gestured for him to stop. "Hold on, hold on, just call me Su Ming."

"Hehe... Dad... Mr. Su, could you please tell me how you did it?"

Lee Wangyang rubbed his hands together.

"Actually, it's quite simple," Su Ming pondered for a moment. "It all comes down to one word: stillness."

"Stillness?"

Lee Wangyang was taken aback.

Ah, truly the words of a master! That was simply splendid!

Like a spring breeze in winter or an autumnal gust in the heat of summer...

What in the world was all that about?!

[Well said, indeed!]

His words were rich with nuance and depth. The master's speech was truly exceptional!

But what exactly did it mean?

"Exactly, it's all about being 'still'."

"Master Li, honestly, your foundational skills are quite solid, and your carving is commendable."

"But you've forgotten something over time. In the world of art, you can't afford to be overly driven by profit. Of course, I'm not saying that one should live a life of poverty just because they're in this field."

"It's normal for a young man like Gao Yunfan to chase after fame and fortune. Striving to make more money for survival is perfectly acceptable."

"However, Master Li, at your age, having settled into your status and wealth, isn't it time to pursue the true essence of art?"

“You’re holding on to too many things you’re reluctant to let go of.”

Su Ming spoke evenly, yet his words cast a profound silence over everyone present.

Though he was addressing Lee Wangyang, his message resonated with everyone. Indeed, each person has their own ambitions, but along the way, they can become blinded by the glitz and glamour.

“I...”

Lee Wangyang’s hands trembled as he reached out, tears streaming down his face. Suddenly, he knelt down once more: “Master, I’ve seen the light. Thank you for your guidance. You’re absolutely right. For years, I’ve been captivated by the title of president, enamored with the flattery, power, and even more so, the money. From today on, I will step down from the presidency. I will seclude myself in my studio, turning a deaf ear to the outside world!”

“Master Lee.”

Su Ming smiled, helping Lee Wangyang to his feet. “In truth, I have great respect for someone like you. After all, there are few left in our country who are dedicated to the arts. It’s commendable how steadfastly you’ve held on.”

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