

Mr Han 1411

Chapter 1411: I Disapprove Too!

To be a dog in the manger?

But this was too uncouth, and Lu Qi did not dare say it in front of everyone.

“She doesn’t want to go, but there are others who wish to do so. There are so many other students who want the slot but can’t get it—why should Lu Man occupy it for nothing?” Lu Qi’s words were met with agreement from the other students, who nodded their approval.

“That’s right, we wish to go too!”

“The school is good to Lu Man, but always giving her special considerations is going a bit too far, isn’t it? We want the spot for studying, but what about Lu Man? Not going despite having the slot, is she trying to bluff having proof that she’d been to the exchange to make herself more appealing?”

“That’s too much, I disapprove too.”

“If she doesn’t want to go to New York, don’t give her the spot. If she has the spot, then she has to go. It’s just that simple.”

Everyone was agitated.

Lu Qi turned to look at Lu Man smugly.

Lu Man should stop trying to get her hands on all the good stuff.

She’d never let Lu Man off so easily!

But Lu Qi was too busy being smug to notice that Teacher Liang seemed to have expected this and was totally calm.

“Lu Man did reject going to New York at first.” Teacher Liang spoke, and the students quietened down automatically, wishing to hear her explanation. “Moreover, she explicitly said that she didn’t need the spot. But the school took into consideration Lu Man’s ability, and there is a serious need for Lu Man’s ability in the upcoming exchange competition.

“Some of you might have heard from your seniors who went to the exchange in the previous years that every year, at the end of the exchange, New York University would have a competition with our team of exchange students.

“Winning and losing didn’t matter materially for there were no physical awards or losses. But as exchange students, you’re representing the future of our acting industry. This is something you all have to fight for for our country.” Teacher Liang continued, “But every year, our exchange students have never won.

“Every single year. Don’t forget, our competitor is just students majoring in acting in New York University. Just those 10 students from one school, not the best chosen from the whole of the US. There

are countless students majoring in acting there, and so many prestigious performing schools as well. What you're facing is just a part of the best—not the creme de la creme of the whole US.

“But what about our team of exchange students? They're the best few chosen from the top four schools in our country to form the team. To blow my own horn, these four schools of ours represent the best of the performing schools within the country, and the students from these top four schools represent the best at the national level. This may be belittling the students of other schools, but the truth is, in fact, this.

“But the students chosen among such a wide range still lost to students from a single school every year. I'm sure you all know clearly the difference between students picked from a single school versus students picked across the whole country without me saying more.” Teacher Liang said, “It's just like the best ten chosen from our school versus the best ten in the Chinese Arts Championships.”

Zhang Xiaoying could make it to the best ten in the school but could not make it to the best ten in the Chinese Arts Championships.

The Chinese Arts Championships included everyone from freshmen to seniors, the elites from every performing schools across the country.

Chapter 1412: Whom Had She Offended?

And the exchange students from here were the third year elites from the top four academies. In spite of this, they still could not beat the few chosen juniors from a single school.

The whole class turned to look at Zhang Xiaoying.

Zhang Xiaoying: “...”

Whom had she offended? Why were they all looking at her for?!

“Since Lu Man won the Chinese Arts Championships, it's natural that all our schools would pin our hopes on her. The school hopes that in case we lose, at least it won't be by a great margin. The leaders of the academies aren't certain whether Lu Man can beat the students there, but as the champion of the Chinese Arts Championships, if she can't do it, what about the others? To put it plainly, they have much less hope since Lu Man did fight her way to the top against students of all year levels among the nation's performing schools. This equates to her being the first in our local entertainment industry.

“So, Lu Man is crucial to the exchange competition this time. This decision is not just the go-ahead from our school to Lu Man, it's a combined decision from discussions by the leaders of the top four academies with the exchange places. Or do you all think that the leaders of the top four schools are giving special treatment to Lu Man? Don't forget, our four schools have a competitive relationship. Who's willing to let a student from another school occupy the spot for nothing? Who's not willing to take that freed-up spot for their school and let one more of their own student expand their horizon?

“But the leaders unanimously decided to leave the spot for Lu Man precisely because she is irreplaceable! Rather than freeing up the spot and switching to another student, they'd rather let Lu Man retain it. Or else, it'll be a waste no matter who they give it to!” Teacher Liang's words cut straight to the point while she was also looking directly at Lu Qi and Yu Jingxian.

Yu Jingxian's face was burning from her embarrassment.

So Teacher Liang was implying that giving her the spot would be a waste?

Then again, what could she say?

As someone who could not even make it to the school's top ten representatives in the Chinese Arts Championships, how could she compare to the champion of the Chinese Arts Championships?

Everyone then knew that Lu Man's going was actually decided on together by the four universities.

They all knew of the competitive relationship among the schools.

They'd heard from the seniors who had gone on the New York University exchange that there was competition even among their team. Everyone was ordered by their respective schools to not get beaten by the students from the other three schools.

Moreover, just as Teacher Liang said, if there was a freed-up spot, wouldn't the four schools do all they could to make it theirs and give their students another chance?

But no one did this; they left it to Lu Man.

Lu Qi gritted her teeth in anger. How was it that Lu Man was always so lucky?

That all the good stuff was hers?

Lu Qi said indignantly, "Teacher Liang, I disagree. It's totally different being an exchange student for a year versus staying here and restricting oneself from growth. Lu Man won the Chinese Arts Championships once, but we all are improving at the same time—especially those who're going for the exchange. But Lu Man's remaining where she is, and it's uncertain whether her standards will still supersede the other students' by then."

Many agreed in their hearts, feeling that Lu Qi's words were reasonable.

"I don't like your words," Teacher Liang said coldly. "Do you mean that what we teach in our school can't be compared to that in New York University? That studying in here for three years can't be matched by studying over there for a year?"

Chapter 1413: The Grass Is Always Greener on the Other Side, Is It?

As a teacher in the National Film Academy, how could Teacher Liang stand hearing these words?

The grass is always greener on the other side, was it?

"Furthermore, this is not decided by me. It's determined by the leaders of the four schools. If you have any opinions, you can bring it up to the leaders of the four schools. It's useless telling them to me," Teacher Liang said coldly.

Everyone could hear that Teacher Liang was unhappy.

And from her words, they sensed the inappropriateness of Lu Qi's words.

Those who had nodded previously all froze, not daring to move an inch.

Teacher Liang said straightforwardly, "Who else has Lu Man's ability and emerged victorious at the Chinese Arts Championships among the nation's performing students? Even the junior and senior students are not her match, and she has brought glory to the school. If Lu Man can't go to New York, then the place will be given to that person. The school will also discuss with the other three schools about leaving the spot just for them, even if they don't want to go to New York, like Lu Man. Who can do it?"

The murmurs of discussion fell silent after they heard Teacher Liang's question.

There were indeed many dissatisfied people previously.

Thinking the same as Lu Qi, feeling that Lu Man was occupying the spot for nothing and that the school was giving special treatment to Lu Man because of Han Zhuoli...

They thought that it was such a waste for Lu Man to take the spot but not go.

But after considering Teacher Liang's question, no one dared to guarantee that he or she could do better than Lu Man.

Since the majority of the class was not even qualified to enter the Chinese Arts Championships.

"Moreover, Lu Man did state clearly that she did not want to occupy this spot. That we could cancel her name from the list since she's not going to New York. But because there were some changes this year, the school also had considerations about asking Lu Man to remain here even if she could go to New York," Teacher Liang said.

Everyone started muttering questioningly, "Why?"

"What changes this year?"

"Could it be changes to the exchange program?"

"Is it because our school's three places became two?"

"Alright, alright, quiet down. Don't make blind guesses." Teacher Liang raised her hands to motion for silence. "Just listen to me, why guess for yourselves?"

The class finally settled after a few moments.

When everyone was silent, Teacher Liang then continued, "Because of the changes this year, New York University will also send their students here for an exchange."

"What! New York University will send their students here for an exchange?"

"Is it to our school!?"

Everyone was eager. "That means that even if we didn't make it to the list of exchange students, we'll still get a chance to compete with them and exchange pointers about acting, right?"

"Everyone, quiet down, listen to me," Teacher Liang said once again. "They're not coming as exchange students. Moreover, we're sending a team of students from four schools to New York University, so how could they come to only our school?"

“They’re sending ten students here for an exchange competition and they’re visiting every school. They’re coming to our school and to the other top three for sure, and are undecided as for the others. And this time, the exchange competition is extremely important as well.

“Concrete rules for the competition have yet to come out, but the prize for the winning side has been decided upon. Because they’re coming in the name of friendly exchange, there’s no material award. But the winning school can hang New York University’s flag on the wall of fame of the losing school” The moment Teacher Liang finished speaking, the class gasped in disbelief.

Chapter 1414: Something Wrong with His Brain

“Isn’t it better to give a material award? That’s going too far!”

“Who suggested it? Aren’t they bullying people?”

“The four academies all have their own wall of fame. There are many talented artistes who contributed significantly to society who went on to have a spot at the wall of fame, starting from the founding of the schools. They’re the pride of the schools. But what’s with the hanging of other schools’ flags? It’s humiliation!”

“Which m*ron suggested it? New York University?”

Teacher Liang smiled bitterly. How could she say that such an idi*tic idea had been suggested by their own department of education?

She had no idea what the other party was thinking; obviously, there’s something wrong with his brain.

There were many factors leading to the slower growth of the local entertainment scene.

What’s more, the team of exchange students going to New York was the best of the top four schools, and they still lost terribly year after year. How could they even hope for the students remaining here to win against the incoming exchange students?

The remaining students were the ones who failed to make it to the list of exchange students!

It’s not that Teacher Liang was boosting others’ morale and reducing their own courage, but the truth was the truth.

They had to know their ability and limits and not be overly prideful.

She reckoned that the leader who made this decision was hoping to use this method to inspire the students who might then fare better than their usual standards.

But no matter how inspired they got, their abilities were just at that standard. How much better could they do?

There was just something wrong with the leader’s brain!

No matter what, they couldn’t hang another school’s flag on their wall of fame. What did one even mean by that?

Teacher Liang got angry thinking about this.

“On the other hand, if one from our side won, we could also hang our flag on NYU’s wall of fame,” Teacher Liang said.

New York University agreeing to this bet was proof that they certainly thought that none of them here could win.

“There’s no clash between the exchange competition here and the exchange competition held there with our exchange students. We have no idea what kind of students NYU will send our way. Hence, to be on the safe side, the exchange students will head to NYU on the agreed time, but Lu Man will stay and lead the school team to take on the challenge here.

“After that, before the exchange competition at NYU starts, Lu Man will head over to NYU and join the team of exchange students there and work with them. They’ll then participate in the competition,” Teacher Liang said.

“Hence, even if Lu Man had agreed to go to New York, she can’t go now that there’s this. She has to join both teams.” They were not hoping for victory, just praying that they wouldn’t lose too terribly.

Everyone could see now that the four academies were using Lu Man as their trump card.

When they thought about it, they had no other feelings because Lu Man had always been their classmate.

But in fact, Lu Man represented the highest standard of the students majoring in performing.

Four major schools actually needed Lu Man to support their side.

“Now, who else has an opinion about Lu Man occupying the spot?” Teacher Liang surveyed the classroom.

At this time, who’d still dare to voice their objections?

Lu Man was holding a spot and a heavy responsibility.

It’s a spot that held the pressure and labor of fighting NYU in the upcoming exchange competitions.

Because Lu Man was regarded to be the ace by the schools, the burden naturally fell on her.

If anything went wrong, it’s on Lu Man.

Teacher Liang did say that they weren’t hoping for victory, just a less horrible loss.

Chapter 1415: It’s All About the Style

Even so, the schools’ leaders might not be thinking the same.

The moment Lu Man performed worse than usual, or did not meet the leaders’ expectation, the fault was to be Lu Man’s.

If it was like this, it was actually better for Lu Man to join. At least the others wouldn’t be too pressured then.

If there's any problem, Lu Man could solve it. If anything went wrong, Lu Man could shoulder the blame. It's quite good.

Thus, not even mutterings of discussion existed.

"And so the list of names of this year's exchange students is settled," Teacher Liang said. "Zhang Xiaoying, Han Leilei, come to my office later. I'll tell you about the documents to be handed up. Please submit them by this week to me."

With that, Teacher Liang then continued speaking about some details of the new semester, and today's announcement came to an end.

Zheng Yuan and the others had already known about the school's decision for Lu Man to retain her spot, so they were not surprised.

And only Han Leilei managed to score third, so even if Lu Man still had her spot, Zheng Yuan and Pan Xue did not meet the criteria either, so they both had faced the matter calmly.

Apart from Han Leilei, only Zheng Yuan was the highest ranked and the one who could potentially fight for the spot.

Pan Xue knew extremely well where her standard was, so she never wanted to compete for the spot ever since the start.

Even Zheng Yuan said, "Pan Xue and I can't make it in anyways. Obviously, we can't let others take advantage. It's better for you and Han Leilei to occupy those slots."

"But we have no idea when they'll come over for the exchange competition, or how the school will pick the team. Is it only from our batch or from year ones all the way to year fours?"

Lu Man shook her head. "Principal Liu never told me either whether the New York students will be the same year as us or picked from their whole school. It would probably be decided based on their line-up. If they are chosen from the whole school, then our school will do it like that too. If they picked only the juniors, then our side will do similarly."

"Then we're done for. If we keep choosing the same as them, we'll lose for sure." Pan Xue pursed her lips.

"Who led our tradition to become like this, all about fairness and not taking advantage of others?" Han Leilei pursed her lips as well. "It's all about the style."

"Anyway, be it choosing from the whole school or according to the years, we don't have much chance of winning. Either way, Lu Man has to go and the pressure is all on her," Pan Xue said.

Surprisingly, Lu Man took it in stride. "I'm fine, actually. As long as I try my best, there's not much to stress about. Not to mention that we've never won once. Did they seriously think that we'll win just because I'm up? That's not possible. Moreover, I don't know the NYU students well and have never seen them perform. It's too early to say anything right now."

The four of them chatted as they walked towards the school entrance.

During the summer break, Zheng Yuan and the other two rented a three-bedroom flat together for ease of work.

They paid the minimum rent of three months, which was a season's worth of rent.

There's a month left, and it's a waste to not stay there, so the three decided to stay the month before going back to the dormitory.

When they reached the entrance, Lu Man asked the three of them to come into the car and ferried them back to their place.

Lu Man then went back to Yi Garden.

Since the matter of representing the school in both exchange competitions had been settled, Lu Man told Wang Juhuai and Xia Qingwei about it.

Chapter 1416: Becoming an Anti-fan

And during that night, after Lu Man and Han Zhuoli just reached home, her phone kept ringing with WeChat's notifications.

A never-ending tinkling sound.

Lu Man found it weird, for her WeChat had never rung with such urgency before.

She opened it, only to see Zheng Yuan, Han Leilei, and Pan Xue taking turns bombarding her with messages.

Because she didn't want her phone to keep ringing when chatting in the group, Lu Man usually switched off the group chat notification.

Right then, all she saw were questions from Zheng Yuan and the other two.

"Lu Man, are you there?"

"Come, quickly, reply if you're there!"

"A netizen said that you not going to the exchange in New York yet occupying the spot was because of the school giving you special treatment due to Young Master Han's influence. They say it's unfair to the other students."

"Lu Man, when you see this, please go and reply on the Net! The discussions now are extremely unfavorable to you."

"Lu Man, are you there?!"

"When are you gonna come online?!"

"Come quickly!"

"There are people on the Net saying that you're feeling guilty now. The later you reply, the worse it's gonna get!"

Lu Man quickly entered the chat. "I just reached home and saw your messages."

Pan Xue immediately replied: “You finally appeared.”

Zheng Yuan: “Go and make a statement. There’s someone leading those malicious comments for sure.”

Han Leilei said: “We reckon it’s either Yu Jingxian or Lu Qi. Only the two of them have the biggest reactions to this issue. But this is only our guesses, we’re not sure either. It’ll be better if you deal with the issue first, then seek out the mastermind when you’re done.”

“I understand, I’ll settle it. Don’t worry,” Lu Man replied.

Lu Man did not immediately make a statement; instead, she went to gauge the netizens’ reactions first.

“Lu Man’s not going to New York but still holding on to the slot? That’s too much!”

“How can Lu Man’s fans still speak up for her? Isn’t Lu Man insisting on doing things her way now that Han Zhuoli’s her husband?”

“Suddenly thought of a meme, ‘Does being rich mean you can be wilful?’ Sorry, but being rich, I can afford to be wilful.’ What more Lu Man, who has Han Zhuoli—the big boss of the entertainment industry—backing her up?”

“But this doesn’t stop us from saying that she’s too much for bullying others like this, to be a dog in the manger just because of Han Zhuoli. What right does she have to occupy the spot when she’s not going?”

“This matter’s too gross. Sorry, but I’m becoming an anti-fan.”

“The National Film Academy is really interesting. Sacrificing other students’ interests just for Lu Man, all to curry favor with Han Zhuoli. Lu Man’s not going, so how good will it be if they gave this chance to someone else who wants to go?”

“As a bystander, it’s not an issue with me no matter who this slot is given to, but even I can’t stand for Lu Man’s actions. ”

“This time, Lu Man’s really in the wrong. How can people still speak up for her?”

Lu Man went to search for the origin of this issue and found an account used for gossip.

She contacted Da Xiong and sent a screenshot of the account details.

“Brother Xiong, did you receive any news about this? Who sent details about this to this account anonymously?” Lu Man asked.

“Heh, what a coincidence. I just received news about this. I was just about to call you.” Da Xiong said nothing else and just sent a few screenshots. “Though the person is anonymous, I find the account name familiar, so I asked someone to sift through some old records.”

Chapter 1417: Suspicions

“This is my occupational habit. I keep a record of the information sorted according to the artiste, date, or event types and such, and I update my records every time I see something new. It might come in

handy anytime,” Da Xiong said as he sent a few more pictures. “Look at this, this was the second account people found back when Lu Qi was still popular.”

When Lu Qi was popular back then, she had her fair share of embarrassing stories.

During the times when Lu Qi felt that there weren’t enough topics about her, she would purposely create some herself.

And these topics weren’t anything good so as to grab the netizens’ attention and, through their discussions, make her a sensation again.

One time, Lu Qi’s second account was exposed.

Lu Man had some inklings now that Da Xiong reminded her of it.

Since, for Lu Man, this was something from another lifetime, literally.

She recalled only that there were not many topics going on about Lu Qi. Her hot topics were beaten by all her competitors, so she purposely created a second account to vent her anger through it.

For example, posting about her high stress levels, or expressing her displeasure at some of her anti-fans who kept flaming her, or expressing her grievances as well.

Every word was extremely passionate.

Such alternate accounts should be relatively difficult to be found out by netizens.

Because who could scroll until they found an account with literally no fans?

Hence, Lu Qi exposed her alternate account herself.

She contacted the paparazzi and acted as if someone else had exposed her account.

This happened in Lu Man’s previous life, and she was the one who helped Lu Qi contact the paparazzi.

At that time, they reached out to Tang Zi.

As Lu Man was remembering, Da Xiong said, “After that matter, I noted down her second account and thought it’ll be useful next time. I have a special folder here just for recording all the artistes’ alternate accounts.”

Da Xiong sent the screenshot of Lu Qi’s exposed account.

It had been so long since the exposure that almost no one remembered it.

Unless they were professionals like Da Xiong. Even Lu Man had forgotten about it.

But the account this time was slightly different from Lu Qi’s.

“The last digit and alphabet are different, but the rest is the same,” Da Xiong said. “So I suspect it’s Lu Qi.”

“If you have the means, you can check the origins of this alternate account,” Da Xiong said.

With Han Zhuoli at Lu Man’s side, Da Xiong had no doubts that Lu Man had her methods.

“Alright, thanks a lot,” Lu Man said gratefully.

“Sigh, it’s no big deal,” Da Xiong replied. “If it’s Lu Qi for sure, does that mean that the recording on your hands can be used?”

Lu Man almost forgot about the recording.

Because Han Zhuoli was beside her then, she listened only to the beginning before switching it off because she did not want Han Zhuoli to listen to Lu Qi.

She wanted to find some time alone to listen to it.

The matter dragged on until now, and it almost slipped her mind.

After Da Xiong’s reminder, she said, “Of course. If she did this, I won’t be courteous either.”

She had been too kind all this while, and Lu Qi knew no fear.

Every time she was struck down, she would be out and about trying to make her existence known the moment the pain was over.

Ending the call with Da Xiong, Lu Man then sent the account to Han Zhuoli and asked him to check.

Han Zhuoli did it with no hesitation.

Principal Liu also got news of this matter.

Just as Principal Liu was about to contact the administrator managing the school’s official account, he received a call from Teacher Liang.

Chapter 1418: Misunderstanding

Afraid that Principal Liu would misunderstand, Teacher Liang hurriedly explained, “Principal Liu, I’ve already explained in class that Lu Man was staying for the exchange competition here and that’s why she could not go for the exchange.”

“I know, don’t worry.” Principal Liu had confidence in Teacher Liang.

Teacher Liang was smart and would not make a muddle of such issues.

And she had always handled things well.

“It’s fine, I’ll settle this. Our school should just clarify things officially and that will do,” Principal Liu replied and hung up, then contacted the administrator next.

Not long after, the official account of the National Film Academy posted a clarification: “About the issue of Lu Man holding on to the exchange spot despite not going to New York circulating on the Net, the school will now offer a clear explanation.

“Firstly, Lu Man won the spot through winning the Chinese Arts Championships; the slot is not given to her by the school. And retracting Lu Man’s spot is not decided just by our school alone, but by the four schools, which have the exchange slots as well. And the decision made by the four schools is to let Lu Man retain her spot.

“Secondly, it is not Lu Man’s own decision to not go to New York. It’s because a team of New York University’s students majoring in performing will also be sent here to have a friendly competition with each of the four academies. As the champion of the Chinese Arts Championships, Lu Man is a crucial support on our side. The four academies have decided together to let Lu Man remain in school and, after the friendly competition here, to head to New York for another exchange competition there.

“Lastly, the school wishes to clarify that it is not the case that Lu Man is occupying the spot but is refusing to go to New York. It is Lu Man sacrificing her chance to go to New York in view of the larger picture to face the upcoming challenge in the school. Please do not twist Lu Man’s sacrifice into Lu Man’s occupying a spot selfishly.”

And at the end, the sign-off was accompanied by the official seal of the National Film Academy.

This time, Principal Liu personally posted a Weibo, stating: “It’s easy to see how important the opportunity to go to New York is. There are only three spots for my school and the National Drama Academy each, and only two spots for the other two schools respectively. This shows how precious the slots are. It’s extremely competitive to get the spot and there may be students who harbor a grudge because he or she couldn’t make it, thus making misleading statements. This has brought the school and Lu Man serious negative impacts, and the school will get to the bottom of this and give Lu Man her fair treatment!

“Please analyze clearly, everyone. Do not be misled by the perpetrator! Do not let Lu Man, who sacrificed herself for the greater good, to be maligned and despair. My school has always been fair and honorable, and we’ll never give special treatment to anyone just because of their background. This is an insult to the school. Ever since our founding, we’ve been religiously maintaining and protecting our school’s image and striving to follow the school’s promise and motto. A century of our school’s reputation is not to be slandered! The school will never condone such a selfish and immoral student, and we will never let a selfless student who sacrifices for the school and the greater good to suffer!”

The netizens were all stunned. Many thought back to the comments they had posted and went to delete them silently for fear of embarrassment.

Some did not manage to delete them in time and were immediately hounded by Lu Man’s fans, who scolded them.

No one expected the truth to be like this.

“I’m sorry, I misunderstood Lu Man. I’m hereby apologizing and admitting that I’ve scolded Lu Man wrongly. I’m deleting my post and apologizing.”

Chapter 1419: How Many Can Do It?

“It’s alright commenter above, it’s alright.”

Many had apologized.

But there were still a few who carried a skeptical attitude.

“It’s still too early to say. Who knows if the school’s saying this just to protect Lu Man?”

“I won’t dare to underestimate the power of influence.”

There was still a portion of netizens, the ones who always roasted Lu Man, insistent on their views that the school was protecting Lu Man.

“The principal of the National Film Academy put it so nicely, but when was he ever on a different side from Lu Man?”

“Person above, you’re funny. Lu Man is right, so why can’t we support her? When is Lu Man ever wrong?”

Just as the argument was coming to a boil, someone commented: “Stop arguing. If you all don’t believe the words of the National Film Academy’s principal, will you believe the principal of the National Drama Academy?”

“What do you mean?”

“Principal Zhang of the National Drama Academy has also spoken. Here’s the link.”

Everyone clicked on the link and went straight to Principal Zhang’s main page.

Only to see Principal Zhang reposting Principal Liu’s words, saying: “This is a decision made by the four academies together, and we’re thankful for Lu Man’s sacrifice and work for the larger picture. I can’t stand for Lu Man being maligned and criticized on purpose despite clearly sacrificing so much. Lu Man isn’t my school’s student, though she did nearly become one. As always, I’ve regretted missing out on having Lu Man, who’s such a talent.

“Every time Lu Man won another glory for the National Film Academy, I’m both angry and rueful. Thinking that if Lu Man were a student in my school, the glory would be ours. As such, I always have conflicted feelings towards Lu Man. I both admire her but also wish that she wasn’t that mighty. Not to mention the competitive relationship that the National Drama Academy and the National Film Academy have always had. Even if you were an outsider, everyone knows it clearly. Both our schools have the relationship of feeling one is good and the other is better. But this time, we’ve decided to ignore our differences and unite. I hope everyone will stop misunderstanding Lu Man and even maligning her.”

“My gosh, never thought that Principal Zhang from the National Drama Academy will also speak up.”

“That’s right. Just like Principal Zhang said, the National Drama Academy and the National Film Academy are competitors, and we’ve never seen them speak up for the other party before. It can be seen that this time, it is a unanimous decision by the four schools and Lu Man gave up her chance to go to New York for the bigger picture.”

“I just want to ask, just how many of us can do it like Lu Man? You clearly have a chance to upgrade your skills and better yourself. Especially Lu Man, who always has her abilities questioned ever since the beginning. For her, the chance to go to New York is far more important compared to the others. But she gave up on that so that she could represent her school in the competition. Between personal gains and losses versus a group’s interests, I want to ask, how many of you can truly give up personal gains for the group?”

“The students going to New York this time are all the best chosen from each school. Asking anyone of them to stay means increasing the school’s fighting chance. Isn’t it clear now where the problem is? Everyone chose to better themselves while only Lu Man chose the school.”

Lu Man read until here and felt embarrassed. She really didn’t wish to go...

Just then, Principal Liu called her. Afraid that she would go onto the Net and speak frankly with that honest attitude of hers, he hurriedly instructed Lu Man in advance: “Lu Man ah, don’t you go and post so honestly this time! We’re all saying that you’re sacrificing for the school, and no one would know that you originally didn’t want to go, would they? Even if the person who exposed this knew, no one will believe her even if she said it. Don’t you go and say so yourself!”

Chapter 1420: The First

“I won’t say a thing. It’s just strangely embarrassing looking at these since I’m really not sacrificing anything!” Lu Man chuckled helplessly.

“But the ending’s all the same,” Principal Liu said. “Anyway, if I say that you’re staying for the school, then you are staying for the school.”

Lu Man was grateful—Principal Liu was doing it all for her.

“Alright.” Lu Man nodded. “Thank you.”

She wouldn’t put on a pretense, acting like “you’re all so fake, I’m the only honest person here,” for that would be an utter waste of Principal Liu’s considerations.

At this moment, the principal of Donghua Academy of Drama also spoke up. “Regarding the issue of our team of exchange students participating in the exchange competition at New York, you netizens might not have known about it, hence not realizing that every year, our students there would take part in the friendly competition. It’s a bit embarrassing to say that we’ve never won once. Not once.

“Ten students every year, and all had lost terribly. Not one winner. This time, New York University is sending their students over here for a friendly competition, and the winner can hang his flag on the losing party’s wall of fame. This is a matter of pride. It’s something worse than losing prize money—it’s unacceptable. To spell it out plainly, as the champion of the Chinese Arts Championships, Lu Man stood out the most from the performing schools across the nation. She’s currently the first among all of the country’s students majoring in acting.

“We’re not asking Lu Man to win the competition as that would be too demanding and the pressure will be too great. How can we ask her of that when we’ve never won before? We only hope that as the first across all the nation’s performing schools, she could join both competitions to increase our fighting chances.

“Lu Man knew this and accepted it. How great must her responsibility and pressure be? Still, she shouldered it by herself. It’s no longer about helping her school, it’s about fighting for the younger generation in our acting industry!

“The responsibility Lu Man took on is, frankly, totally unbeneficial to her. As she is the best, people will think it normal for her to win, and no one will know of her difficulties. If we lost, she’ll be blamed and

criticized that she doesn't deserve the title of "best," that her acting skills are lacking and can't compare to that of others. All the pressure is on her and she has nothing to gain from it. If she was truly for herself, she would've gone straight to New York and rejected our proposal. We can't force her to accept either. If there was no issue of occupying the slot but not going to New York, I wouldn't have done this, being forced to tell the truth. Even now, after the truth is out, Lu Man gained nothing from it, only greater pressure."

The netizens were silent.

No one thought that it would be like this.

"I don't know what others are thinking, but I'm stating here that I won't pressure Lu Man. Just as Principal Liu said, we've never won before—we could even say that we were totally wiped out—and we can't expect Lu Man to turn the tide on her own. It's not a person's responsibility, it's everyone's. Lu Man's willingness to accept this now means that she's living up to all the honors she had won. After so many years of defeat, nobody can ask for Lu Man to succeed this year."

"That's right, don't give Lu Man pressure. We can support her, but don't give willful demands. If we win, we have to see the hard work she put in; and if we lose, we can't blame anyone. Not only Lu Man, the others in the team just have to do your best. Our local entertainment industry already differ from Hollywood greatly, but we can slowly improve ourselves and catch up to them one day."