

**Mr Han 1691**

**Chapter 1691: Third Place**

“You lost the competition this time. This is a severely huge lesson for you all. If you can have the right mindset, this lesson will benefit you in many ways,” Luzern said. “Remember, don’t underestimate anyone next time. You must always showcase your best condition and try your hardest to perform well.”

“This time, even without the NFA’s outstanding performance, given your mentality and how you didn’t give your all in your performance, that in itself is a show of disrespect to the performance, to the audience, and to the judges. How much effort you put in to the performance, how your performance turned out, everyone can tell. Even if you guys won, with this kind of laidback attitude, you won’t have put up a very good performance either. You would have won because the other party was weak, but you won’t have won handsomely.”

“And this time, you guys lost disgracefully,” Luzern said in a somber voice. “The result cannot be changed, so be graceful about it. Don’t wait until the end only to leave in dejection and despondence on top of losing!”

The team members finally stopped blaming and accusing each other. At this moment, a volunteer student came over to remind them that the results were about to be announced.

Hence, the team members hurriedly returned to the participants’ seating area to wait for the results.

Not long after they sat down, the emcee went up on stage and said, “Next, we’ll invite the four judges up on stage to reveal the results of the competition tonight.”

The competition this time was not ranked based on a point system but on a consensus reached from the four judges’ discussions.

“First, let us welcome Teacher Tan Xiaoyun up on stage to announce the team in the third place,” the emcee said.

Tan Xiaoyun went up on stage and said, “Let me first speak about how we decided on the rankings, so that everyone can be at ease.”

“To ensure the fairness of the judging this time around, we’d especially invited two renowned actors from Broadway, precisely to prevent bias from either side. The four of us this time wrote our own rankings down on a piece of paper, without indicating our names, before opening them up in front of each other to have a look.” Tan Xiaoyun directly revealed the judgment process, lest there were people who doubted it.

Tan Xiaoyun smiled and said, “And we did not expect that we were surprisingly unanimous in our thoughts. I won’t say that I have been a judge often, since I have only been a judge a few times, but this kind of situation is really quite rare. The rankings which the four of us came up with were all the same. As such, none of us had any disagreements in the judging process before we decided on the rankings.”

Quite a lot of people saw Robert, Hayer, and Xu Jiashan all nodding in unison, so they could tell that it was the truth.

“So, I won’t say too much about it any longer,” Tan Xiaoyun said. “Now, I will announce the team that received third place in this friendly competition. It is the exchange team from New York University.”

The emcee immediately said, “Let us welcome New York University’s exchange team up on stage to receive the award.”

Howard and the others went up on stage with a black face. They did not care for this third place at all.

They actually only got third place. Looks like they were only slightly better than DAD and DFA.

But those two schools in their opinion were obviously too weak to behold. They had zero recognition internationally.

Winning against these two unknown schools was nothing to be happy about.

They did not know that this was actually the judges giving them face, especially Xu Jiashan and Tan Xiaoyun, who felt that no matter what, the exchange team students were still guests from a faraway land.

### **Chapter 1692: Forgot About This Catch**

They came all the way here. If they gave them the last place despite that, that would really be too much.

If people who did not know anything saw it, they might think that they were bullying them.

So they gave a more central ranking.

Luzern’s face did not look good either. Giving them third place, who were they insulting?

They might as well not give them anything.

He glanced at Robert and Hayer. Those two people actually did not disagree?

An ambassador group formed by students from the school came forward to present the trophy.

The team received the trophy in a haphazard manner and quickly got off the stage.

They felt that getting third place was a disgrace even if they were standing on the stage.

“Next, let’s welcome Mr. Hayer to announce the participating team in second place,” the emcee said.

Hayer came up on stage. Basically, once the third placer was announced, there was no more suspense left.

Like what the audience had expected, second place went to the National Drama Academy.

Although they won second place and first place was obviously going to the NFA...

Principal Zhang was still quite happy.

No matter what, winning against the exchange team was a victory.

Next time, when they went out and announced the accolades the school had received, they could say that they had a hard-won victory over the exchange team from New York to finish in second place. Saying this was quite an honor as well.

The students from the NDA were also feeling quite good this time.

When they were mocking the exchange team below just then, they were quite loud as well.

The person that said watching Lu Man fight with others felt good was also a student from the NDA.

Hence, they went up on stage all smiles.

The faces of the students in the exchange team became even darker.

They still remembered that the judges pointed out many flaws in the NDA's performance previously.

But even so, they were still better than them and got second place.

Instantly, a wave of disgust and humiliation swept over them.

When the NDA students came down, it was time for the team who came in first place to receive their award.

Everyone knew that the first place would go to the NFA. There was no suspense at all!

The emcee invited Robert and Xu Jiashan up on stage together to present the award to the NFA.

When they announced the name of the NFA, the audience burst into thundering applause.

At this moment, they were not anyone's fans and were not divided along fanbase lines. They were united just to win against the exchange team.

No matter which school they were from, they were all from the same country!

Aside from fans, there were also many students from the NFA and NDA.

Regarding the friendly competition, they surely knew more than normal fans would.

They could not help but exclaim excitedly, "This is the first time we won against them! It's really the first time after so many years since both sides opened up for exchange! Oh heavens!"

"They have no right to be arrogant anymore." A student from the NFA clapped so hard that his hands turned red and so did his face. During this period, the NFA really felt on a deeply personal level the arrogance and snobbishness of the people from the exchange team and were really quite angered by them.

Lu Man and the others went up on stage to receive the trophy.

Xu Jiashan and Robert presented them with the trophy.

"You guys performed very well. Keep up the good work," Xu Jiashan encouraged them.

"I hope you guys can maintain this drive and not forget about the essence of performance," Robert said.

After the awards presentation, Lu Man and the others were about to step off stage, but they were held back by the emcee.

"Hold on for a moment," the emcee said. "The competition this time has a special bet as well. The winning school gets to hang their school flag on the honor wall of all the other schools."

The faces of the students and school leaders who were still feeling joyful at the moment, as well as the students from the exchange team who were already in a bad mood, instantly darkened even more the moment they heard that.

They totally forgot about this catch.

They did bring their flags over. As they felt that they would definitely use it, they even brought four flags over at once.

### **Chapter 1693: Instant Regret**

Yet now they had to bring the same number of flags they brought over back home—and still had to bring one additional flag from the NFA.

The four teams sent their representatives up on stage.

On the exchange team's side, Shana and Edinburgh went up on stage together.

On the NFA's side, Lu Man and Principal Liu went up on stage together.

The other schools also sent their respective student representatives to go up on stage together with the principals of their schools.

The other students went up empty-handed. Only Lu Man held four school flags in her hands.

The NFA, DFA, and DAD were not nervous at all.

They just pretended to be.

Below the stage just then, the four principals had already discussed that the NFA would not really hang their school's flags on their honor wall.

Anyway, after the exchange team had left, they couldn't possibly come and check, right?

When Principal Zhang and the others suggested discussing this with Principal Liu, Principal Liu agreed without thinking too much about it.

Although there was a competitive relationship between the four schools on the sidelines, on this matter, in order to prepare for this exchange competition, and to form a student exchange team which had already gone over to New York University earlier on in preparation for the friendly match there, the four schools had banded together and put in a lot of effort together.

Including leaving a spot for Lu Man but not forcing her to go there to learn, and allowing her to remain here.

This was also done with the consent of the other three principals.

They gave in to the National Film Academy in this respect, so Principal Liu seized the opportunity with the flag issue to return the favor.

As for giving them the school flags now, it was just for show.

Lu Man handed the school flags over to the other three schools first, saving the exchange team for last.

When she stood in front of Shana, Lu Man then handed the school flag over and said, "I'm very happy to have competed against you guys this time."

Shana felt that Lu Man was being sarcastic no matter how she interpreted it, like she was a villain who got her way.

She took the school flag with an icy expression.

The school principals and Edinburgh exchanged some small talk.

Finally, the closing credits came on, and this friendly exchange competition officially ended.

After the competition, Principal Liu invited Principal Zhang and the others, as well as the teachers from the exchange team for dinner.

Edinburgh and the others tried their hardest to contain their unhappiness about losing the competition because they did not want to lose their grace, so they agreed to it.

Lu Man packed her things and was about to go and meet Han Zhuoli but did not expect Howard to block her way.

Zheng Yuan stared at Howard cautiously from the side. Could Howard be seeking revenge after losing the competition?

Seeing how fierce Howard looked, it was obvious that he did not have good intentions.

But he was quite daring too, on top of being heartless and unrepentant. The Han Family people were just here. What could he still dare to do to Lu Man?

Lu Man raised her eyebrow. "Yes?"

"What will make the Han Family retract their orders?" Howard asked in a somber voice.

"This has nothing to do with me. My elder brother decided on it, so I have no right to interfere," Lu Man said. "You found the wrong person."

Han Zhuoling clearly did it to stand up for Shi Xiaoya. How could she step in to intervene on this?

As for Han Zhuoling, he expected that Howard would not have the guts to go and find him.

Or else, since the person who gave the order was clearly Han Zhuoling, why would Howard not go and look for him directly but come and plead with her instead?

"What's the matter?" Han Zhuoli's low and cold voice rang from behind Howard.

Howard got so scared that he shuddered. He turned and saw that Han Zhuoli had come over unknowingly.

And not far behind him, the Han Family was there, and they all looked over in unison.

Lu Man did not explain for Howard and did not say what Howard came for. She just silently stared at him, waiting for Howard to explain himself.

**Chapter 1694: I Like to Look at You**

Howard seemed so capable in front of Lu Man, but in front of Han Zhuoli, he immediately became timid. "Howard." Luzern walked over and said, "We have to go. What are you still doing here? Quickly go back with us."

Luzern was also afraid that Howard would still go and provoke Lu Man and Han Zhuoli at this moment.

This time, they were really thrown into deep trouble by Howard.

Howard clenched his teeth and still did not dare to say it in front of Han Zhuoli in the end. He could only go back and look for Bourbotte before making other plans.

"Zheng Yuan, Lu Man." Li Zeyu came over and said, "We're planning to go for a group dinner to celebrate. Let's go together."

"I can come," Zheng Yuan immediately said.

Lu Man smiled and said, "Sorry, my family members all came, so I'm afraid I have to eat with my family now."

"No worries." Li Zeyu only came to ask. If he did not ask Lu Man, and the others went to celebrate without telling her, that would not be nice.

Furthermore, this time, the biggest credit went to Lu Man.

But they did not dare to snatch her from the Han Family!

Li Zeyu glanced over and saw that the whole Han Family was standing there waiting.

This line-up looked just like billion-dollar notes on the move.

Their aura was really too overwhelming.

This was the first time Li Zeyu and the others saw the Han Family people all at once.

"I just came over to ask. When you are free another time, we can all gather together again. The biggest credit goes to you for our win this time!" Li Zeyu said as he smiled.

After *The Performer* incident the previous time, Li Zeyu had developed a very strong faith in Lu Man.

*The Performer* had propped up so many other people, even he wanted to take a gamble and join just for the popularity of it.

Only Lu Man refused to participate in it from start to end.

Yet in the end, it proved that only Lu Man's choice was right.

Now, no matter what Lu Man said, Li Zeyu would definitely support her wholeheartedly.

Hence, Zheng Yuan went off with Li Zeyu to celebrate.

The group was really happy. Winning first place in the competition this time undoubtedly added a layer of prestige to themselves too.

The moment they went off, Lu Man immediately held Han Zhuoli's hand, instantly feeling a sense of security.

Just now, Howard had still wanted to block her path and not let her go, but the moment Han Zhuoli came, Howard got scared.

Having such a strong man by her side really made her feel especially at ease.

Sensing her rare dependence on him, Han Zhuoli lowered his head and happened to see Lu Man looking up at him.

That palm-sized, v-shape face was looking up at him. From this angle, it made her originally small face look even smaller, giving off a cute feel about her.

"What's wrong?" Han Zhuoli squeezed her hand. Being looked at by her like this made his heart feel really full.

"Nothing." Lu Man smiled and said, "I just like to look at you. Being with you really makes me feel at ease. No matter when, as long as you are around, I have nothing to fear. It makes me feel really assured knowing that I have you to back me up."

Han Zhuoli laughed. If not for the fact that the elders were still around watching them, he really felt like pinching the tip of her nose.

She did not even know that her being like this was way too cute.

Guo Yujie had already left first, leaving Shi Xiaoya behind here.

Shi Xiaoya also came to say goodbye, but her hand was being held by Old Mrs. Han. This action seemed to show she was afraid Shi Xiaoya would run away.

Lu Man came over and Old Mrs. Han immediately praised, "Man Man, your acting is really awesome! Although I watched your live performances before, I still feel amazed every time I watch."

"This time was really because of a confluence of factors. To be honest, in another situation, I might not have been able to win, or even win so handsomely," Lu Man said as she smiled.

### **Chapter 1695: Only Seen on Three People Before**

"I don't care. Anyway, I just think you acted really well." Old Mrs. Han was especially unreasonable when she was being stubborn.

At this moment, Principal Liu and Deng Xu, Xu Jiashan, Tan Xiaoyun, Robert, and Hayer came over together.

Principal Liu asked the other three principals, as well as the teachers in charge of the exchange team, to have dinner together with the four judges.

Before they left, they came over to say hello to the Han Family people.

"Lu Man, don't forget, you promised me that you will act in my play," Xu Jiashan reminded her the moment he came.

“Why are you like this?” Deng Xu did not want to lose out and said, “Don’t forget about my film either.”

Lu Man felt slightly embarrassed and said, “Please don’t say that. It is my honor to be able to act in both of your productions. Both of you saying that makes it sound as if I’m so great or something.”

Of course, Lu Man knew that Deng Xu and Xu Jiashan were deliberately acting as if they were competing over her, but in reality, they were just joking around.

“We are going out for dinner tonight. Tomorrow, the exchange team will be going back, so we invited their teachers to have a meal to send them off. When that is done, I will invite you and the other students in the team to a meal to have a good celebration,” Principal Liu said.

Lu Man naturally agreed. Deng Xu usually did not participate in such celebrations.

But because Xu Jiashan, Robert, and Hayer were also here, Deng Xu also wanted to interact with them and see if there was a chance to integrate some of his theater elements into their films.

Xu Jiashan had similar thoughts as well and wanted to interact more with Robert and Hayer, to get to know different theater cultures.

“Many thanks to you for this time,” Han Zhuoli said to Deng Xu politely.

“There, there.” Deng Xu smiled and said, “Luckily, I agreed to you and came over to help them with rehearsals. Or else I wouldn’t have known that Lu Man’s acting is so good and would have almost missed out on her. To be honest, I watched both of Lu Man’s films before. But in my eyes, Lu Man was still a newcomer, so I thought that Lu Man’s performance in the film would have mostly relied on the guidance of the directors.”

“I didn’t think that Lu Man’s acting skills were very strong to begin with.” Deng Xu smiled and said, “Although there are a lot of actors nowadays, it’s not easy to find someone who’s suitable. If I hadn’t come this time, I might really have missed out.”

Before leaving at the end, Robert even shook Lu Man’s hand and said, “I really look forward to your development and that we will have a chance to work together in the future.”

Robert did not use the word “hope” but said “look forward” instead. It showed that he was very confident in Lu Man and probably did not think that Lu Man would not be able to make it to that level of achievement.

He believed that they would be able to work together in the near future.

After they left, Hayer even said to Robert, “You really think very highly of that Lu Man, eh?”

“Her stage presence is very good, as if she was born for the stage,” Robert said. “Her aura is something I have only seen in three people so far. This kind of presence is something my teacher told me about when I first got into Broadway. Before I came in, my teacher said that among the people he had seen with such an aura, Mr. Kanboshaw’s aura was the strongest. However, by the time I entered Broadway, Mr. Kanboshaw had already retired and no longer acted on stage.”



“But based on my teacher’s description, I think Lu Man and Mr. Kanboshaw’s situations sound very similar, especially when he had just made his debut when he was young.” Robert smiled and said, “Anyway, from what I see, Lu Man’s aura is stronger than those of the three people I had seen before.”

#### **Chapter 1696: Solved Shi Xiaoya’s Problem with One Sentence**

Hayer also asked curiously, “Then who are the three people you saw before?”

“I can’t say that. If I said that, it would offend people.” Robert smiled prudently.

Hayer could not contain his curiosity, but no matter how he asked, Robert just refused to say it.

“But Lu Man does have a special kind of charm. In that performance just now, she wasn’t the first to come on stage, but the moment she came on, everyone’s attention was irresistibly drawn to her. As a judge, we clearly should not neglect the performance of the other actors, but every time we looked at other peoples’ performance, we could still clearly feel her extremely strong presence. The NFA won brilliantly this time because of this factor as well. It made one subconsciously neglect the performance flaws of others,” Hayer said.

“It’s probably because they rehearsed a lot, so they have chemistry. Whenever their flaws on stage, which cannot be corrected in such a short time, were about to appear, Lu Man would always manage to shift the focus back onto herself skillfully, minimizing the flaws of others to the greatest possible extent.” Hayer smiled and shook his head. “I was really stunned by Lu Man’s performance and the flow of that show, so I couldn’t really react. It’s only now that I realize this was their strategy.”

“So you should understand what I mean when I talk about Lu Man’s stage presence,” Robert said. “She’s extremely well-versed in her craft. When her classmates were putting on a brilliant performance, she was able to diminish her presence to accentuate her partner. When the other party couldn’t really hold up, she was able to instantly switch the focus back onto herself. This is not something that just anyone can do, be it their own skill or mentality. Even if a person is skilled enough, not every person would be able to do that, to be willing to perfect another person’s performance.”

Hayer nodded. “That’s true. Just like in that performance previously. That student wasn’t even that skilled and still wanted to steal the show. The end result was even worse.”

Both of them were walking together with Principal Liu, and they did not speak covertly to intentionally avoid attention.

There was nothing to hide about these words anyway.

When Principal Liu and the others heard them, Principal Zhang was very surprised. He did not expect them to have such high praise for Lu Man.

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Lu Man did not know that Robert and Hayer were still commenting on her after they left. They were walking out to the exit to head for dinner.

When they reached the car park, Lu Man naturally went with Han Zhuoli.

The two elderly people went in one car.

Shen Nuo also brought a chauffeur along. She smiled and said, "When I came here, I came with Elder Sister-in-law. Elder Sister-in-law, do you still want to ride in my car or in Zhuoling's car?"

Lin Liye smiled and said, "I'll just ride in your car. The two of us can have a chat as well. If I get in Zhuoling's car, what can I talk to him about?"

"Sure." Shen Nuo smiled and nodded.

Lin Liye turned and asked Shi Xiaoya, "Xiaoya, what about you? Are you riding in Zhuoling's car or ours?"

Shi Xiaoya definitely could not ride in Han Zhuoli and Lu Man's car. How could she be the gooseberry?

She would not choose to sit with the two elders either; the pressure would be too great.

Although Old Mrs. Han was very friendly and warm, she still felt nervous around her.

As for Lin Liye and Shen Nuo...

Shi Xiaoya had just looked over and felt a little hesitant before Han Zhuoling said, "She's riding in the car with me."

He solved Shi Xiaoya's problem with one sentence.

"Good, good, good." Old Mrs. Han had been afraid that Shi Xiaoya would object and quickly dragged Old Mr. Han along with her to their car. "Then we will meet at Sheng Yue and have dinner there tonight."

#### **Chapter 1697: I Think I Hear Someone Shouting**

Lin Liye got in the car with Shen Nuo as well.

Han Zhuoli brought Lu Man to leave with him.

Only Han Zhuoling and Shi Xiaoya were left in the car park.

Han Zhuoling realized that after a few days of not seeing her, seeing her today made his heart beat uncontrollably now.

His heart beat went "dum dum dum" furiously fast, and he could not calm down no matter how he tried.

Seeing her, he felt that his lips could not help wanting to curve up, as if something went wrong with his facial muscles. It could not be controlled at all.

In other words, the corners of his mouths had their own thoughts.

As long as he saw Shi Xiaoya's face, his mood would be exceptionally good.

Han Zhuoling never expected that there would come a time when he would miss a girl so much.

Previously, his feelings were still quite average. When he saw Shi Xiaoya, his whole body felt light and refreshed.

As if in that instant, a mountain full of wildflowers had blossomed.

Han Zhuoling was about to say something when he saw Han Zhuofeng running over from afar.

“Let’s get into the car first,” Han Zhuoling immediately said.

Shi Xiaoya was back-facing Han Zhuofeng and had not seen him yet.

Shi Xiaoya nodded obediently and sat in Han Zhuoling’s car.

Han Zhuoling sat in and speedily fastened his seatbelt, followed by a series of actions done with absolute speed and familiarity, which all seemed very natural to him.

He took a quick glance at the rearview mirror and saw Han Zhuofeng braving the harsh cold winds and still running towards them.

As he ran, he shouted, “Brother, wait for me! Don’t start the car yet!”

“What’s that sound? I think I hear someone shouting,” Shi Xiaoya said.

The windows of the car were down. Han Zhuoling turned on the aircon, warming up the car interior.

The winds were quite strong outside, so Shi Xiaoya could only vaguely hear some noise, but she was not sure of it.

She was about to turn around when Han Zhuoling quickly stepped on the pedal and turned the car to exit.

“It’s probably the wind,” Han Zhuoling said very calmly.

Just when Shi Xiaoya turned back to look, she could no longer see Han Zhuofeng, who was at the back.

“Oh. I think I really misheard, then.” Seeing that there was no one behind, Shi Xiaoya did not continue looking back.

Han Zhuofeng stopped dumbfounded as he watched Han Zhuoling’s car boot disappearing at the speed of light before him.

What in the world?

Wasn’t he being picked up by the Han Family?

He had followed the family to come over here to give Lu Man support and encouragement. It was fine if everyone’s attention was on Lu Man and Shi Xiaoya.

Yet when it ended and they were about to leave, he just went to the toilet and they all disappeared when he came out.

He quickly called Lin Liye, but they said that they had already left.

When Han Zhuofeng ran out, Han Zhuoling was fortunately still there.

Han Zhuofeng quickly ran over towards him, wanting Han Zhuoling to drive him over.

Yet when he just started running over, he seemed to have seen Han Zhuoling glance towards his direction. He should have seen him... right?

Han Zhuofeng thought about it, but he could not be sure either.

But he had already shouted so loudly—Han Zhuoling actually refused to stop the car!

And he drove off super fast!

Was he really his older brother?

Han Zhuofeng was shaking from anger. He instantly took out his phone to call Han Zhuoling.

Han Zhuoling's phone was on the supporting phone bracket right in front of him. When his phone rang, he could not even pretend he could not hear even if he wanted to.

Shi Xiaoya glanced at it and saw that the name on the display was Han Zhuofeng's.

Han Zhuoling put on the Bluetooth earpiece and answered the call. "What?"

"Brother, didn't you see me just now?" Han Zhuofeng asked pitifully.

Han Zhuoling said without a hint of guilt, "I didn't. Why? You were there just now?"

"Yeah!" Han Zhuofeng felt utterly aggrieved.

Han Zhuoling play-acted quite decently. "Where were you? How come I didn't see you?"

#### **Chapter 1698: You Have Quite a Deep Impression of Him?**

Han Zhuofeng low-key doubted it. Could it be that Han Zhuoling really did not see him just now?

"I was just in the car park and even called you, but you didn't even stop." Han Zhuofeng walked towards the entrance of the school, preparing to call a cab to Sheng Yue.

Han Zhuoling thought about it for a moment. He did not remember seeing Han Zhuofeng when watching the competition.

He came today too?

Luckily, Han Zhuoling did not say it out loud, or else it would really prick Han Zhuofeng's heart.

"Really? I really didn't see you," Han Zhuoling said without a change in his expression.

"Aish, forget it. I'll call a cab to Sheng Yue by myself," Han Zhuofeng said.

"Okay." Han Zhuoling hung up.

Han Zhuofeng sighed. He called for a cab pitifully and waited for the cab to come and fetch him.

He came together with the two elders today, so he did not drive his own car.

Yet he did not expect that Old Mrs. Han would be too excited. Her mind was just filled with Lu Man winning and her incoming granddaughter-in-law Shi Xiaoya, so she totally forgot about Han Zhuofeng.

Han Zhuoling hung up. Shi Xiaoya was curious but was too shy to ask, afraid that Han Zhuoling would think she was interfering too much.

She was not someone special to him, so why ask so much?

Who knew, Han Zhuoling would actually take the initiative to explain. "It's Zhuofeng, my younger brother. He also came to watch the competition today. But when we were leaving, we left him behind. Everyone else in the family left already, so by the time he came out, he couldn't find anyone."

Hearing that sounded so pitiful.

Shi Xiaoya recalled and said, "Then when I heard someone shouting just now, could it have been him?"

Han Zhuoling was afraid that he might be exposed when they saw Han Zhuofeng, so he might as well admit it. "That's possible. I didn't hear it just now."

Shi Xiaoya thought that he was busy starting up the car, so that was probably why he did not hear.

"Then do we need to go back to fetch him?" Shi Xiaoya asked.

"No need," Han Zhuoling immediately said. "He's a grown man, can't he call a cab by himself?"

He totally forgot that when he insisted on sending Shi Xiaoya home, he did not also say such words to her.

"How was the recording for the second episode of *Survivor*? Did it go well?" Han Zhuoling asked.

"Yeah. It's quite good. Qin Zigou went this episode. There's also Zhang Shuidong, Lin Yantao, Zhang Jian, and a quite well-known eSports player called Cheng He. It's for that really popular PUBG game right now. His team had just won the world championships too." Shi Xiaoya smiled as she spoke.

There were too many important points in this. Han Zhuoling scanned through them one by one and said, "Cheng He? You have quite a deep impression of him?"

Shi Xiaoya blinked and said, "Yeah. He's quite fun. He's really young too and just graduated from high school. The others are all unfamiliar with eSports and were asking him all sorts of questions. He also answered very patiently. Although the second episode was filmed in Man City which was very cold, the filming time each day was not very long because of the weather. So filming ended quite early on the first day, and he led our team to play the PUBG game."

Qin Zigou and Zhang Jian were also playing this game in private. However, both their standards were very low level, and they were the kind that would get eliminated often.

So when both of them learned that Cheng He was a god of PUBG, they insisted on making him lead their team no matter what.

The three of them lacked one more player. Zhang Shuidong and Lin Yantao were not interested in playing such games, so they asked Shi Xiaoya along to fill the gap.

In the end, Cheng He had had to lead three noob players along yet actually managed to play a good game.

Qin Zigou and Zhang Jian quickly posted on Weibo and shared with their social circles, showing off delightedly.

Han Zhuoling tapped his fingers twice on the steering wheel. "He just graduated from high school. He's 18 years old?"

## Chapter 1699: After Asking That, His Own Heart Withered

"Yeah, I think so." Shi Xiaoya nodded. "He's probably the youngest guest on *Survivor*."

Han Zhuoling raised his eyebrow. Young?

An 18-year-old punk. Had he even grown hairs completely?

Thinking about it, Shi Xiaoya was six years older than Cheng He. Shi Xiaoya probably won't like a boy that's way younger than her, right?

Han Zhuoling's fingertips tapped on the steering wheel mindlessly as he said, "Do you like guys who are older or younger than you?"

"What?" Shi Xiaoya totally did not expect that. They were still talking about the show, so why did Han Zhuoling suddenly change the topic to this?

And he did not seem like someone who was interested in another person's love life.

"I... never really thought about it before. Anyway, it's fine as long as we can get along." Shi Xiaoya gave a very PR answer.

Han Zhuoling: "..."

What was going on?

Did that mean that it's fine even if the guy was six years younger?

Han Zhuoling suddenly felt that he could not let down his guard regarding Cheng He.

Right after that, he heard Shi Xiaoya add, "But it's best if he's not too old or too young."

She felt quite embarrassed actually. "Whether the guy is too old or too young, it just feels like the gap is a little too big, and there might be a generational gap."

Han Zhuoling: "..."

He wondered, was the age gap between him and Shi Xiaoya considered too big in her eyes?

Had he known the answer, he would not have asked.

After asking that, his own heart withered.

"Is being six years younger than you considered too young?" Han Zhuoling asked.

"Ah? Probably, yeah. If he's six years younger than me, he's still a kid." Shi Xiaoya suddenly paused. "You can't be talking about Cheng He, right?"

Han Zhuoling did not speak, but for some reason, Shi Xiaoya felt that she guessed the answer from his expressionless face.

Shi Xiaoya quickly explained, "I don't have that kind of feelings towards Cheng He. These kinds of things cannot be spoken about casually. In my eyes, he's just like a little brother."

Thinking about it, Shi Xiaoya shuddered uncontrollably. "He's still so young. Thinking about that feels like I'm committing a crime. I'm not so perverted."

The corners of Han Zhuoling's mouth curved upwards. Hearing Shi Xiaoya's reply finally lifted his spirits a little.

"I just really did not expect that you, Young Master Ling, actually liked to gossip about these kinds of things." Shi Xiaoya laughed awkwardly. She thought that he did not care about such things at first.

Shi Xiaoya thought about it. Could it be that Han Zhuoling was getting married?

Han Zhuoling's age now was actually not very young either.

On top of that, he had just gone through a failed marriage, so his family should be quite anxious about his marriage prospects.

If Han Zhuoling asked, it was clear that he had someone in mind and had the intention to get married as well.

Shi Xiaoya lowered her head. Her spirits fell for some reason.

Han Zhuoling was thinking about getting married now. Thinking that he might probably fall in love with a girl and get married made Shi Xiaoya's heart feel unbearably stuffy.

She did not want Han Zhuoling to get married just for the sake of it, or else he would not be happy either.

But even if he did, given Han Zhuoling's personality, he would probably treat his wife very well.

He was such a good person, after all.

She only hoped that his future wife would treat him a little better, whether or not she really got together with him because of love.

She hoped the other party would be able to see Han Zhuoling's virtues and not let this man get hurt once again.

But no matter which situation it was, she should maintain a distance from Han Zhuoling when he got married next time.

Shi Xiaoya forced a small smile. She had just begun to treat him like a friend and felt that interacting with him felt especially comfortable, and they seemed to have gotten much closer as well, but they still had to distance themselves in the future, when the time came.

### **Chapter 1700: Young Master Ling, You're Really Chatty**

Shi Xiaoya's low spirits were too obvious, spreading throughout the entire car.

Although Han Zhuoling was driving, he could still keep some of his attention on Shi Xiaoya.

And naturally, he very sharply noticed the change in Shi Xiaoya.

But though Han Zhuoling racked his brains and thought about it until he was frowning, he still could not think of a reason for it.

“Are you okay?” Han Zhuoling simply asked out loud.

“Huh?” Shi Xiaoya finally lifted her head up, looking a little silly.

“You suddenly look very down.” Han Zhuoling took a glance at her while he was driving.

“No.” Shi Xiaoya lifted her spirits and smiled at Han Zhuoling. “I’m fine.”

Han Zhuoling retracted his gaze. He naturally did not believe her and kept this on his mind.

Suddenly, he changed the topic. “This time, Qin Zigou went again? He went twice in a row?”

Shi Xiaoya was caught off guard by Han Zhuoling’s sudden jump in topics and was not in the mind to harp on her disappointment and dejection just then.

They were talking about a topic related to *Survivor* at first and unknowingly landed on the topic of relationships.

They were only talking halfway about the relationship issue before they suddenly jumped back on the topic of the show *Survivor* again.

*Sure, Young Master Ling, you’re very good at chatting.*

“Yeah. He filmed for two consecutive episodes, so he won’t be going for the third episode. I wonder if he will go for the fourth episode. Anyway, Director Lu’s intention is that each guest will not participate in more than two consecutive episodes. They have to rotate the guest groupings to make sure the audience feels some novelty,” Shi Xiaoya explained.

Lu Dongliu was very skilled in grasping the audience’s attention in the realm of variety shows.

No matter how popular the artiste was, there would always be some haters.

There would always be some people among the audience who liked someone but not another.

Only by grouping the guests together would it ensure that fans would not be able to help coming back to watch the show because they liked a guest, even if they did not like another guest, and would not give up on this show just because they did not like any of the guests.

Han Zhuoling nodded. “So for that Cheng He, this is his first time going to film for the show, right?”

Shi Xiaoya felt a little strange. Why was Han Zhuoling holding on to the topic of Cheng He?

That 18-year-old boy probably had not had much interaction with Han Zhuoling before.

“Yeah.” Shi Xiaoya nodded. “From what he said, it seems like he’s also coming for the third episode. The production team probably lets the guests participate for two episodes consecutively before pausing for a while and thereafter continuing filming with the same guest again.”

However, Han Zhuoling was an exception.

The production team did not dare to treat Han Zhuoling the same way as they treated normal guests.



It was quite good that he could participate already. They did not dare to request that he participate in a certain number of episodes.

And Shi Xiaoya and Han Zhuoling still did not know that after the first episode had been filmed, Lu Dongliu even told Chi Xingrui happily that, thankfully, Han Zhuoling would not be participating in a lot of episodes or else, given his stellar performance streaks, there would be no suspense as to who the ultimate champion of that episode would be. It would surely be Han Zhuoling.

Since Han Zhuoling was not going to participate in so many episodes, at least the gap between his results and that of others would not be too far off. There was still an element of suspense to the competition for rankings.

Han Zhuoling's fingertips started tapping on the steering wheel again.

Shi Xiaoya felt as if she had discovered a small habit of Han Zhuoling's.

When he was thinking about something, his fingertips liked to tap on some surface.

Just like what he was doing now. As long as he was thinking of something, he would casually tap lightly on the steering wheel.

This kind of small little action done by him actually seemed a little cute.

Noticing this subconscious small habit of his and learning a little more about him made Shi Xiaoya's heart feel a sliver of sweetness, as if she knew something that other people did not know about—that she knew a little more about him than other people did.