

Losing Money to Become a Tycoon: Starting with Games

Chapter 341: Acting Sparked by a Can of Beer

The scene being filmed now depicted the male lead's muddled, listless state as he drifted through life inside the capsule before meeting the female lead.

The living space inside the capsule was very small. Lu Zhiyao was fairly tall, so when he sat on the bed, there were only a dozen or so centimeters between the top of his head and the ceiling.

The entire interior of the capsule was decorated in a minimalist, tech-heavy style, with no unnecessary embellishments.

Where the television screen should have been was a large green screen; all TV programs would be composited in during post-production.

Some filming props had also been prepared nearby, such as instant relief meals, potato chips, and beer.

Of course, these props were all customized. Take the beer, for example: they used regular tall cans of beer and pasted special labels over them, partly to cover the original brand logos, and partly to emphasize the setting of this fictional world.

Besides a made-up beer brand logo, the cans were also plastered with colorful advertisements. According to the script's setting, advertising in this future world had become ubiquitous, so much so that even beer cans couldn't escape it.

After that, Lu Zhiyao lay down inside the capsule, and filming began.

First came a few shots of him loafing around inside the capsule, idly watching TV commercials.

These shots were relatively easy to film and didn't require much acting, so after shooting a few takes, they quickly passed.

Next came the scene where he eats the relief meal.

Inside the living capsule, there was a special dining area directly opposite the bed: a small single-person table, a small screen mounted on the wall beside it, and a food dispensing port.

The small screen was also a green screen. Post-production effects would be used to create the ordering menu. When no order was being placed, the screen would loop various food advertisements.

The content of this scene was also very simple. At mealtime, the male lead receives his daily relief meal here, eating it while watching the looping food advertisements on the ordering screen, emphasizing just how miserable his situation is.

Lu Zhiyao sat down by the small table, staring blankly at the food dispensing port.

Because watching ads and collecting relief meals at fixed times every day had long since become routine, there was no sense of anticipation at all. Lu Zhiyao needed to act out that complete lack of expectation.

With a *click*, the dispensing port opened, and a tray-like object—packaged and presented decently enough—dropped out onto the table.

Lu Zhiyao expressionlessly tore off the foil-like seal on top, revealing a black-and-white powdered substance inside.

Pei Qian asked quietly, “What’s in that?”

Zhu Xiaoce replied softly, “Milk powder and chocolate powder.”

Pei Qian nodded. “That’s alright.”

At least it was edible. It seemed there was no need to give Lu Zhiyao extra money for this.

Lu Zhiyao took the tray to the water dispenser beside him, added warm water, and stirred it evenly with the small spoon that came with the tray.

Naturally, the entire process was still carried out in a dazed, indifferent manner, completely devoid of expectation.

Then he picked up the spoon and began feeding himself one spoonful at a time.

As he ate, Lu Zhiyao kept staring at the small screen beside him.

Although it was currently just a green screen, the post-production effects would add all kinds of flashy, tempting food advertisements.

As he looked at the green screen, Lu Zhiyao’s gaze needed to change—showing yearning and anticipation for the food—and he also had

to make some unconscious small movements, like swallowing or licking his lips.

“Cut!”

“That expression just now was a bit too strong. According to the story, you should be seeing these ads every day, so there’s no need for such a big reaction. Just show some instinctive responses to food.”

“Overall, it’s great. OK, let’s do another take!”

Zhu Xiaoce would immediately point out anything inappropriate, and Lu Zhiyao did his best to cooperate.

After shooting several takes, this scene was wrapped up.

Watching from the side, Pei Qian couldn’t help but sigh inwardly—*Lu Zhiyao’s acting isn’t bad at all, is it?*

In the past, Lu Zhiyao had often been labeled a “box office poison.” His acting was serviceable, but audiences still criticized him—too handsome, not grounded enough, trying too hard, breaking immersion, and so on.

But this time, Lu Zhiyao was genuinely committed to portraying a washed-out, down-and-out man.

Even though he was still handsome and his misery wasn’t quite as convincing as it could be, that sense of decay and listlessness was undeniably there.

The crew began bustling about, preparing for the next scene.

Zhu Xiaoce said to Pei Qian, “President Pei, what comes next is the real highlight.”

Pei Qian: “Hm?”

Zhu Xiaoce pointed toward several cans of beer nearby. “Next up is a close-up of him drinking beer.”

“The plot is that the male lead wins a decent amount of betting credits from a TV quiz show, so he rewards himself with a can of beer.”

“To act this scene properly, Lu Zhiyao hasn’t touched beer since the day he arrived in Jingzhou.”

“He barely even drinks water. Instead, he’s been drinking some absolutely awful stuff, Hey Song Sarsaparilla, Laoshan Baihua Snake Grass Water, Western Tree Root, and the likes.”

“All just so that when he finally drinks that beer, he can deliver a truly unforgettable performance.”

Pei Qian: “...Isn’t that a bit excessive? Are those even drinks meant for humans? It’s just a movie, there’s no need to risk his life...”

Zhu Xiaoce chuckled. “That’s what makes him a professional actor. Even Mr. Zhang Zuting has nothing but praise for Lu Zhiyao’s attitude toward acting.”

Pei Qian: “.....”

Seriously, there was *no* need to go this far!

What if this ended up creating some classic, viral scene that shot straight to the trending charts? That would be disastrous!

But at this point, Pei Qian had no idea how Lu Zhiyao was actually going to perform it, so all he could do was watch silently from the sidelines, staying on high alert.

Once filming began, Lu Zhiyao first acted out the entire process of winning—facing the green screen.

The anxiety while waiting for the TV show's results, the quiet, solitary celebration after finding out he'd made a small profit, and then the eager anticipation as he approached the food dispenser to buy a can of beer.

After two or three takes, it was finally time to shoot the drinking scene.

Lu Zhiyao stood in front of the small screen beside the dispenser, pretending to operate it while facing the green screen, carefully layering in his acting: the lingering joy of winning still on his face, mixed with a hint of anticipation at the thought of beer, along with unconscious gestures like licking his lips...

Standing next to Zhu Xiaoce, Pei Qian clearly caught all of Lu Zhiyao's micro-expressions. For a brief moment, he actually found himself missing the days when idol actors could get through a movie by just shouting "one, two, three, four, five, six, seven."

Clack

A can of beer dropped out of the dispenser.

Lu Zhiyao immediately grabbed it with excitement. Beads of condensation clung to the chilled can. With a loud *psshh*, he popped it open, tilted his head back, and—

Glug, glug, glug, glug, glug...

He drank more than half the can in one go before finally stopping.

With an expression of pure bliss and satisfaction, he let out a long breath, gazing at the can of beer in his hand, his face filled with contentment.

Wiping the foam from the corner of his mouth, Lu Zhiyao tilted his head back again, still unsatisfied, and downed the remaining half-can of beer in one go. Even after the can was empty, he kept tipping it toward his mouth, as if unwilling to let a single drop go to waste.

At last, with obvious reluctance, Lu Zhiyao tossed the empty can into the trash chute, wiped his mouth, let out a satisfied burp, and then returned to the bed to resume lying there like a corpse.

The burp came out extremely naturally. It clearly wasn't planned—it was simply the result of Lu Zhiyao drinking too aggressively, popping out at just the right moment.

“Stop!”

Strictly speaking, the call should have been “Cut,” but since this “Stop” came from President Pei, Zhu Xiaoce hurriedly followed up with a “Cut,” then turned to Pei Qian with great seriousness.

“President Pei, is there something wrong with the performance?”

Zhu Xiaoce knew very well that President Pei was not only the film's investor, but also the original author of the script.

If President Pei had objections to any part of the film, it meant that something had deviated from the original intent of the work, and that opinion absolutely had to be respected and adjusted accordingly.

Pei Qian felt a bit helpless.

Brother, you're trying way too hard.

It's just a can of beer, your expression is even more over-the-top than Shokugeki no Soma!

Pei Qian could already foresee the trending topic on Weibo the day the movie was released: Lu Zhiyao drinking beer.

Pei Qian coughed lightly twice. "There's really no need for all that. Just act more normally..."

"The male lead is basically a salted fish. Acting like a salted fish is the best approach."

Lu Zhiyao looked completely confused. "Huh?"

He was extremely confident in his acting. He had genuinely believed that what he'd just done was a scene worthy of being written into film history, yet it hadn't moved the script's original author at all.

This...

He could only turn to Zhu Xiaoce.

Zhu Xiaoce pondered for a moment. “I didn’t think so at first, but after President Pei put it that way... it does feel like you might’ve gone a bit too far. Mr. Zhang, what do you think?”

Zhang Zuting nodded. “President Pei truly deserves his reputation as the original author. His grasp of this story and this character is extremely precise.”

“His words may sound very plain, but I understand what he’s really trying to convey.”

Pei Qian: “?”

Somehow, things were starting to head in a direction he hadn’t expected...

Zhang Zuting looked at Lu Zhiyao and said earnestly, “Let’s imagine we change the background of this scene.”

“You’re playing a manual laborer who works eighteen hours a day, and only after a full month of backbreaking labor can he afford a single can of beer. There’s no other entertainment around, beer is the ultimate pleasure.”

“In that case, your performance would be appropriate, and it would be very moving.”

“But the character you’re playing now is an ordinary, muddle-headed person in a future world.”

“Does he only get to drink one can of beer a month? Obviously not.”

“Does he lack access to higher forms of enjoyment? Also no.”

“That small screen beside him constantly plays advertisements for other foods and fine drinks. Compared to those, the pleasure brought by this can of beer is negligible.”

“The male lead wins some money through a TV quiz show and rewards himself with a can of beer. In other words, as long as he wants it, he can buy it at any time, he just has to spend his savings.”

“So this can of beer isn’t precious.”