

## Daily life 131

### Chapter 131 Deployment Procedures

Once Yang Qing sat down, he handed the talisman and the scroll that had the evaluation list to the male employee in front of him as he started his introductions.

"My name is Yang Qing, a superior core court judge. I will be leaving for three days to conduct rank 5 evaluations. It will be 1,400 evaluations in total at the southern quadrant from the White baobab kingdom up to the boundary of the territory of the Bluesky carp sect," said Yang Qing.

"Thanks, Yang Qing. My name is Lai Han and I will be serving you today. Pardon me for a minute as I demarcate your area of evaluation," said Lai Han as he fished out a scroll with the words southern quadrant written on it.

He gently unfurled it revealing a highly detailed map that showed different territories and the power it was under. There was a color marking next to the names of the powers that owned those territories. There were five different colors used on the map next to those powers, they were; Purple, yellow, blue, orange, and red.

Yang Qing despite not being regularly deployed was familiar with the coloring scheme as it was a must-know for every member of the Order more so for the judges, inquisitors, and the members of the review section.

The purple color meant the area was under a rank 1 organization, yellow was for rank 2, blue was for rank 3, orange was for rank 4 and lastly red was for rank 5 organizations.

Lai Han slowly traced the map with his fingers before he finally found the White baobab kingdom. It had an orange color coding around its territory showing it was a rank 4 kingdom. He then moved downwards with his finger until he saw the Blue carp sect that had a blue coding next to it showing it was a rank 3 sect. The boundary of its territory was a long curving river that seemed to traverse for thousands of kilometers across different territories.

Lai Han drew a part square and oval shape around the map highlighting the area Yang Qing would conduct his evaluations.

On paper, the demarcated size was about the size of a palm which gave the illusion that the area Yang Qing would conduct his evaluations, was small. However, Yang Qing knew on the real scale it would be much larger. The area was atleast nine million kilometers squared. The only saving grace is some of the organizations would be clustered together.

Within that demarcated drawing, Yang Qing noticed there was one rank 2 organization. It was a clan called the Zou clan. From what Yang Qing knew about them, they rose into the ranks almost over 10,000 years ago and they were famous for their formation array skills with several top tier blue grade formation masters at the helm. Other than that not much was known about them as organizations at their levels are pretty secretive about their internal matters.

He also noticed a couple of rank 3 organizations in the area, there were atleast seven in total, of which three were sects, one was an empire, two kingdoms, and the last one was the headquarters of a bodyguard and escort organization called the Wind gliding steeds.

As for rank 4 and rank 5 organizations they were too many dots to count or follow. Yang Qing didn't pay them any heed.

Once Lai Han was done with the drawing demarcation, he took out another map. It was thin, translucent, and extremely thin like a cicada's wings. The map didn't have much other than eagle symbols spread about with tiny names above those symbols.

He gently placed that map above the detailed map. The thin translucent map shimmered like it was made of water as it dissolved into the map below it. The eagle symbols that were on it started appearing on the map as they widely spread about within the map. Four appeared within the demarcated area Lai Han had drawn.

"With this, I should have everything I need," Lai Han said as he took a blank scroll. He formed a few hand seals on the blank scroll then proceeded to place it over the current map.

A duplicate copy of the map appeared on the blank scroll which he then handed over to Yang Qing.

"You can have this for your travels," Lai Han said as he handed over the map.

"As shown in the map there are four branches of the Order around your set area of evaluations. There's one near Deer mountain kingdom, another near the headquarters of the wind gliding steeds, the other one is near the Chain gate sect and the last one is next to the Zou clan territory in Yellow Plain County of the Red maple Empire," said Lai Han as he highlighted the four branches on his map.

"They will be informed of your deployment so they can be on alert should you encounter a situation that needs their rapid assistance.

I will also be giving you three different mantra codes for the three days you will be out which will be shared with the four branches. Though even without the mantras with your eagle medallion signature you should be able to get their assistance. Though a little redundancy never hurts.

The mantras are stored here," said Lai Han as he handed a small light grey talisman to Yang Qing who proceeded to scan its contents with his spiritual sense after which the talisman turned to dust with its contents already imprinted in Yang Qing's mind.

"You also need this," Lai Han said as he handed Yang Qing another scroll that was sealed.

"Inside is the updated list of organizations within the southern quadrant. While the map highlights the territories and powers in charge of those areas, it doesn't show other organizations within those territories such as ranked merchant organizations, weapon shops, restaurants, alchemy shops, and the like. This scroll contains the broken-down list of those organizations and the territories they are in," Lai Han swiftly said as he handed the scroll which Yang Qing then stored in his storage ring.

Yang Qing decided he would go through the list on the journey over since it would be a long one.

"Senior Yue Ming, I need the soul ring bell please," said Lai Han as he politely addressed the female palace stage expert next to him.

The lady with red curly hair and matching beauty handed a small aged brown looking antique bell that had all kinds of ancient scribbling on it.

"Please pour your qi and attach a wisp of your soul to the bell," said Lai Han as he handed over the bell.

Yang Qing solemnly grabbed the bell. Although it looked like just a finger would break it, this was a genuine saint-grade treasure called the spirit calling bell. The current bell was but a part of the main spirit calling bell that was stored where the spirit council resided.

The moment Yang Qing poured his qi and attached a wisp of his soul to it, the bell lit up as a phantasm of an old man appeared from it.

"May the protection of the voyaging saint keep you," muttered the old man with an old mellow tranquil voice. He placed his palm on Yang Qing's forehead. A large complex seal appeared from his palm covering Yang Qing's entire body before it disappeared.

Yang Qing felt a form of bubble protection surround his soul.

The silhouette of the old man disappeared immediately after as the bell rang with a solemn sound that almost seemed to be saying safe travels. The ringing went on for almost a minute before it stopped.

The spirit-calling bell was meant to protect the user's soul. If Yang Qing ended up with his body obliterated the bell's protection would be triggered and transport his soul over to the area where the main spirit calling bell was and the spirit council resided.

It was one of the life-saving measures the Order uses during deployments, especially with the recent attacks on their members.

Yang Qing went on with a few more procedures before he was finally done.

"Your lamp soul has already been kept under close monitoring by the spirit council. Thank you for your time and I wish you safe travels ahead," said Lai Han with a polite smile.

"Thanks too," said Yang Qing as he got up.

"By the way are you related to Lai Lei by any chance?" Yang Qing asked as he was leaving.

Lai Han who had a professional look the whole time flinched a little before his appearance resumed back to normal.

"Yes he is my cousin," Lai Han finally answered

Yang Qing didn't say much and only smiled as he left.

He then went over to the requisitioning and disbursement office where he was given 1,000 middle-grade spirit stones and 1,000 gold coins which would be his per diem for the three days he was out. He was all smiles when he received it before finally making his way to the beast hall where Ellie was busy tormenting Haishi.

#### Chapter 132 Leaving With Ellie

Ellie, the cloud-swallowing kite had just pinned Haishi to the ground with her talons as she mockingly made gloating chirps in Haishi's face who was terrified beyond measure.

"Ellie you never grow up, do you?" said Yang Qing in beratement.

Ellie quickly flinched on hearing Yang Qing's voice before she nervously turned her head to confirm if it was really Yang Qing.

Once she confirmed it really was him she hurriedly let go of Haishi as she lowered her head submissively while making her eyes rounder to draw more sympathy from Yang Qing.

Yang Qing could only shake his head in exasperation at her display.

"There's not a shred in you of the fearsome reputation that cloud-swallowing kites get as the predators of the skies who would even give golden rocs a run for their money. All you have in you is gluttony, shamelessness, and petty tricks.

You spend too much time with us Ellie, maybe I should have you transferred to some of the forests under the supervision of the beast hall to help trigger the ingrained rawness of the cloud-swallowing kites out of you," said Yang Qing which triggered an even more adverse reaction from Ellie who chirped and quivered at the same time as she looked up pitifully like an abandoned kitten.

Ellie has been part of their group ever since she was a young chick who didn't know better. Because she was small and most of her interaction was with Yang Qing and his team she picked up some of their habits over the years.

She gained Yang Qing's shamelessness especially when it came to fawning and asking for apologies for the trouble she created which was also another habit she picked from him, she became a gluttonous eater from associating with Feng Xin, she tries to act like a seasoned expert sometimes from trying to imitate Yi Jie, her bullying personality is from hanging out with the battle maniac Zheng Hu as for Su Jinjing, Yang Qing is not quite sure what Ellie learned from her but he was sure there was something. Maybe it might be revealed when she finally gains the ability to transmorph and talk.

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"K..R.RR..N..O..chirp," Ellie tried to utter the human tongue but failed at the end.

Despite her small failure Yang Qing couldn't help but commend her attempt. She was just in the tenth stage of the core formation realm she couldn't transmorph yet into a human to be able to speak like one nor did she have the monarch sense of a palace realm expert to transmit her thoughts to the other party.

Her attempt was out of sheer willpower and ingenuity as her current anatomy made it almost impossible to speak the human language. However, her efforts would not be for naught as the strides she makes now would help her later as she practices transmorphing skills. Her adaptation to the human physique later would be much easier.

It was due to this factor that most of the spirit beasts that reach the seventh stage of the core formation realm are forbidden from using voice transmission beads in their communication by the Beast hall. An overreliance on external objects would stifle their progress, adaptation, and creativity later on.

"Greetings master Yang Qing," said Haishi. Even though she was currently trembling from her earlier 'match' with Ellie her voice was still without any ripples. It had nothing to do with her ability to mask her fear and more to do with the voice transmission beads' inability to convey deep emotions.

It could project different tones and pitches of a voice but one couldn't tell if someone was sad, melancholic, or fearful as the subtleties that a real voice would present are absent when done via the voice transmission bead which just vocalizes thoughts.

"Hey Haishi, how are you finding your stay at the Order?" gently said Yang Qing as he ignored Haishi's strange posture created by her trembling body.

"It's great Master Yang Qing. It's more than I deserve," Haishi humbly said as she bowed her head.

"Good, good, but if Feng Xin mistreats make sure to tell me or Ellie over here," said Yang Qing as he added emphasis when it came to Ellie's name who bowed her head deeper that she almost burrowed to the ground.

"Master Feng Xin has been most accommodating there's nothing bad I can say. I even owe him a lot for sparing my life and allowing someone lowly as myself to consume the precious primal lotus dew," Haishi reverentially said which helped her alleviate some of the fear and trauma Ellie had left on her a few seconds ago.

"Well, that's good then. I won't be around for three days so you can ask the others for help if you need anything and make sure to follow the guidance and instructions of the beast hall.

Don't be afraid to consult them on matters concerning your cultivation. There are a lot of seasoned experts here, some of them spirit beasts who have successfully cultivated to the palace stage and can now transmorph.

Their insights and experience will be invaluable to you especially in refining the primal lotus dew still in your body and strengthening your wisdom pearl.

The stronger you are the more you can help me and the Order by association. All the best Haishi and don't slack off. I hope you and Bolin can grow strong enough to share the burden we bear," Yang Qing righteously said.

He may have sounded like he wanted to pass the mantle to them but in the real sense he wanted Bolin and Haishi to be strong enough so he would have less to do with them being around to carry the slack.

However Haishi had no way of knowing Yang Qing's true thoughts as she vigorously said,

"I will work my hardest to not let Master Yang Qing and the Order down," said Haishi despite not having any deep sentiments or knowledge about the Order. She was swallowed by Yang Qing's vortex of spiel without even noticing it.

"Good," Yang Qing nodded appreciatively.

Meanwhile, Ellie who had earlier been bowing her head so low that she could see the porous holes of the soil below had raised her head and was gazing at Yang Qing with shock and deep admiration in her eyes with a look that seemed to say,

"I have much to learn from Yang Qing."

She even bowed reverentially to Yang Qing towards the end which drew quizzical looks from him.

"Ellie is getting stranger by the day," Yang Qing worriedly thought before he pushed those thoughts away and did what brought him here.

"Ellie we will be flying around with you for the next three days. We will be handling evaluations and we do not have a lot of time to do it. It will take its toll on both of us but with all the fish you've eaten and stolen from my pond, I know you have more than enough energy to complete the journey in THREE DAYS," said Yang Qing with a smile that did not look like a smile which made Ellie shiver more as she nodded her head repetitively in acceptance.

Even though Yang Qing could fly by himself with his abilities as a palace stage expert he decided against it. The journey would be a long and tiring one without even putting into account the cumbersome evaluations. He would much rather have Ellie go with him and have a few short naps and rests on her back than make the whole journey himself. In addition Ellie was a spirit beast that specialized in extreme speeds. She maybe only at the later stages of the core formation realm but at her top speed she could match a normal early stage palace realm cultivator.



"Haishi, see you later," said Yang Qing as he leaped on Ellie's back who started flying the moment his feet touched her back.

Haishi didn't even have time to reply back as Ellie had already sped away at an alarming speed till she was the size of a mere dot in the sky.

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50 kilometers away from the Order's main headquarters

"Mmmh I should start my evaluations from the middle as I make my way northwards toward the White baobab kingdom then come back to the center again and drop downwards toward the boundary of the Bluesky carp sect. This way when I'm done with the last evaluation, the journey back will be shorter," muttered Yang Qing as he examined the map he was given by Lai Han from the deployment office.

"The central point is mmh the Purple grass county in the Red maple empire. Let's see if there are any interesting organizations in the area," said Yang Qing as he unsealed the scroll that had the updated list of organizations and their ranks within the southern quadrant.

The list was so long that it took a bit of effort to spot the organizations in the Red maple empire which were further subdivided by counties.

"Oh this is a pleasant surprise," said Yang Qing as his lips tugged into a small smile when he saw the list of businesses in Purple grass county.

#### Chapter 133 Odd Arrangement In The Purple Grass County

"This three-day trip might not be that bad after all," said Yang Qing as a small drool dripped from his hungry smile.

"I hope Zhong Quan and the Earthvine restaurant don't disappoint," He added on as he rubbed his hands together.

When he was looking at the list of organizations in the Red maple empire, he happened upon the name Earthvine restaurant in one of its counties, the Purple grass county.

His mood turned for the better the moment his eyes zoned in on that name. It wasn't because it was a restaurant, though that didn't hurt but it was because it he had struck a deal with Zhong Xuan where he would be getting 50% off on his meals when he visited.

He'd get to eat twice the normal amount at that charge. What wasn't to love about such a situation? Even if their food ended up being subpar he would still capitalize on the discount. A free meal was a free meal and Yang Qing wasn't about to break his creed of never refusing something free for something as trivial as quality. But with the reputation the Earthvine restaurant had, from princes dining there down to it being a subsidiary of the Golden bamboo pavilion, Yang Qing was sure that their quality had to be decent at the very least.

"Mmmh the area seems to have a lot of rank 4 organizations," Yang Qing pensively said as he noticed that there were atleast seven organizations including the Earthvine restaurant that were at rank 4. One of them was an alchemy shop that sold pills and potions, another was a blacksmith shop and the remaining four were all-purpose merchant stores that sold different wares.

Even though the Red maple Empire was a rank 3 powerhouse, it was still odd for it to accommodate so many rank 4 organizations within a single county. Without a palace stage expert to man the helm within the county it would prove difficult for the Empire to autonomously govern the county with so many rank 4 organizations in the area.

"So many organizations of this caliber clustered together like this is odd. It would make sense if the empire had a domain-level powerhouse but as far as the Order can tell, the Red maple empire has four palace stage experts of which three are usually stationed at the capital to keep the noble families within the capital at bay and one is permanently stationed at the border the empire shares with the Zou family.

Mmmh with so many organizations in the area, it seems the stunt the Shen brothers pulled at the Earthvine restaurant was not as random as it seemed," muttered Yang Qing as he recalled the Earthvine restaurant case he had the other day.

The list he had on hand had just the barest of bones when it came to information. Other than the names and rank there was nothing else added to it so even if Yang Qing wanted to have a picture of the situation, it would be hard with the information he had on hand.

"Ellie we are headed here," said Yang Qing as he used his monarch sense to imprint the general direction into Ellie's mind. It was another perk of the spiritual sense upgrade when in the palace realm.

The deep blue judge robes Yang Qing had on slowly transformed into a light grey robe. The Order-issued robes had a feature that enabled them to transform into the image the wearer had in mind. This was because the robe was made of silk from a void mimicry silkworm.

The void mimicry silkworm had the ability to transform into whatever it sees. It was a rare silkworm that was found in areas with unstable space such as degrading spatial nodes found in collapsing mysterious realms or damaged grottos.

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"This should be alright," said Yang Qing pleased with himself as he admired the normal-looking grey robe his robes had transformed into.

It was common to change one's robes for Order employees to draw in less attention when outside. There were even those such as the inquisitors who would alter their faces and bodies so they wouldn't draw unwanted attention due to the nature of their occupation and the grudges they have accumulated over the years, especially with the recent rise in attacks on Order personnel.

Yang Qing decided that changing robes was as far as he would go in trying to blend in. In his eyes doing other things was counterproductive to the goal.

For example, he was not that proficient with transformation cultivation arts though his judgment was based on his comparison with those from the Order who were gifted in that regard. If he were to do it he was sure no one at the core formation and below would be able to spot it or even those at the early stages of the palace realm. However, he had doubts if he would be able to fool the seasoned eyes of those who were familiar with such arts and techniques. If the goal was to hide from shady villainous characters then wouldn't using skills those characters were skilled in be a huge welcome sign that those characters would spot?

As for concealing his cultivation base that was an even incomprehensible action to him. If your goal is to avoid trouble then that is the last thing you would do since this was a cultivation world where the strong constantly prey on the weak even with Order's presence not much has changed. Hiding your cultivation

base would just draw in trouble and curious looks when someone with seemingly no cultivation base easily topples a disciple in the foundation establishment stage, his master in the middle of the core formation stage, and their sect master in the peak of core formation stage, in all under five minutes. Even a blind man would be able to tell there was something fishy there.

Thus Yang Qing decided changing his robes was as far he would go and as for his cultivation base though he wouldn't actively publicize it by releasing its aura he wouldn't go to great lengths to hide it either. Those who wanted to know would know provided they were at his level as those with higher cultivation realms had their levels inscrutable to those below them though they did feel a faint suppressive pressure from them.

#### Chapter 134 Purple City

It took almost three hours before Yang Qing could finally reach the border of the Red maple Empire. The border guards went on high alert the moment they saw Ellie fly toward them.

The general in charge of the border who was at the eighth stage of the core formation realm hurriedly flew up to meet Yang Qing. He was riding a winding vine condor that had the signature coiled green vines on its wings and legs. From what Yang Qing could tell it was at the fourth stage of the core formation realm.

While the winding vine condor was not as fast as a monstrous cloud-swallowing kite like Ellie, it had great stamina for long flights and was sensitive to murderous aura and slaughtering qi. Making it the best choice of spirit beast to have in areas that need high monitoring such as the border.

"The Red maple Empire may not exactly be considered top tier among rank 3 powers but it is no slouch either," thought Yang Qing as he admired the arrangement of the border team. From the winding vine condor to the late-stage core formation general who despite detecting Ellie was much stronger than him still rode out to meet them, to the monarch-grade long-range transmission artifact Yang Qing detected below him along with the killing array laid below that could kill an ordinary peak core formation stage expert either on the ground or at an altitude of 10,000 meters.

All these spoke to the resources the Red maple Empire had and its willingness to use them.

The stocky-built general with mildly graying hair and a robe that had the Red maple symbol on it had his expression turn graver when he detected there was someone seated on top of the cloud-swallowing kite. He shuddered to think about the identity of the person that was able to ride a fearsome spirit beast that was releasing so much pressure that it took all he had along with the winding vine condor to not plummet downwards. The winding vine was even faintly trembling as it avoided eye contact with Ellie.

"I hope the capital can send someone over in time. Luckily a representative from the Golden bamboo pavilion is at the palace. With their help the situation may be contained," thought the general.

The moment he detected a spirit beast stronger than him crossing the borders he decided to err on the side of caution and immediately inform the palace in case the situation escalated and became too much for them to handle. The palace was already on high alert due to hosting a figure from the rank 2 Organization the Golden bamboo pavilion.

He used this thought to try and rile his spirits up which plummeted down again when he realized he couldn't detect Yang Qing's cultivation base no matter how much he tried to scan with his spiritual sense. The more he stared at Yang Qing the more his heart started rapidly beating on its own as he felt a primal fear coming from his soul.

"Palace realm..," muttered the general as he smiled weakly lamenting his circumstances. Backup would be useless now as a palace realm cultivator would have already disappeared by the time the reinforcements from the palace arrived.

Even though he couldn't detect Yang Qing's cultivation base that deep intrinsic suppression was something he was familiar with as he had experienced it personally when he was stationed at the border with the territory of the Zhou family. The general stationed there who was a palace stage expert exuded the same type of suppression.

"Enough showing off, reign in your aura, we don't need its deterring effect anymore," said Yang Qing when he saw the winding vine condor was almost at its limit.

Ellie immediately complied and the suppressive atmosphere disappeared which came as a relief to both the general and the winding condor as they could now easily move and breathe. The little goodwill from Yang Qing eased the general's nerves though he was still weary as he clenched a talisman in his hand which Yang Qing assumed was the controller of the killing array below.

"Hello senior, my name is Qin Qiang a general of the Red maple Empire. Pardon my insolence senior but it's a requirement for all who enter the Red maple Empire to identify themselves and their reason for the visit. It's not that we want to pry into your matters but it's for us to ensure the safety of our citizens," said the general as he gave a daoist salute.

He had assumed Yang Qing was an old monster maintaining a youthful look. It wasn't anything strange as one of the palace stage experts of the empire was doing the same thing. Outwardly he looked like a 17-year-old youth when infact he was one of the ancestors of the empire who has been alive for almost 4,000 years.

"I'm not a senior or some old monster. This is my real age," said Yang Qing as he chuckled which made the general's head spin.

"Wouldn't that mean....," General Qin Qiang halted his thoughts from shock, fear, and embarrassment at the possibility of the youth before him being a 20-year-old palace realm expert while he was 450 years old with an 8th stage core formation cultivation base. Within the Red maple Empire, he could be considered a talent as 400 years was considered really young for a core formation expert who had a lifespan of 4,500 years more so considering he was at the late stages.

He had always been proud of his talents and achievements but right now that pride had been ruthlessly smashed to pieces by casual seemingly innocent words from the green-haired youth before him.

"General Qin Qiang, General Qin Qiang I'm in a bit of a hurry here," said Yang Qing as he reappeared where the dazed general was.

Seeing Yang Qing floating in the air removed any doubt he had about his guess about Yang Qing being a palace realm cultivator.

"Yes sorry about that. We just need your details and reason for venturing into the empire and then we will issue you a token though with the senior's..ahem sorry I mean.." general Qin Qiang paused midway with an embarrassed expression as he didn't know what name to use.

"My name is Yang Qing," said Yang Qing

"Thank you...With young master Yang Qing's cultivation realm there is no need for one though for ease of travel it's good to have one," general Qin Qiang humbly said.

"It's okay, I don't mind having the token.

"My name is Yang Qing and I'm here to visit a friend, it's Zhong Quan the owner of the Earthvine restaurant. He told me to pass by his restaurant when I'm around the Red maple Empire," said Yang Qing.

Yang Qing decided against divulging he was from the Order to avoid the hassle of the welcome ceremonies and the eventual leak of his location should that happen.

"Oh, so you are Master Zhong Quan's friend?" said general Qin Qiang as his tone turned friendlier and even more respectful when he mentioned Zhong Quan's name.

"It seems Zhong Quan is a big shot within the Red maple Empire," thought Yang Qing as the general excused himself to retrieve the token he would need.

"With this, you can move freely without any unpleasantness," said the general who had hurried back with an orange-red round wood that had the red maple tree engraved in it.

"Thanks," said Yang Qing as he received the token. He detected the material used was at the top tier of sky grade and there were a few arrays in there to prevent duplication and also a unique signature mark which Yang Qing assumed was of the royal family.

Yang Qing didn't waste any more time after receiving the token. He hurriedly said his goodbyes to general Qin Qiang and sped away with Ellie.

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20 minutes later

"Ellie since you can't transform yet and you're too huge you'll have to hide in the clouds. I'll call for you when I'm done," said Yang Qing when they were a few kilometers away from Purple grass county.

Ellie screeched reluctantly when Yang Qing decided to coax it with a few snow peaches which seemed to have done the trick as she happily flew away.

"Now time for the great feast," said Yang Qing as he speed blitzed so fast that conical airwaves were produced from his flying.

It only took him at most ten minutes before he saw the outline of the largest city in Purple grass county. It was known as the Purple city.

#### Chapter 135 Purple City's Captain Drastic Action

Even from a distance, Yang Qing could detect the vibrancy of the Purple City. The sounds of streams of people laughing, talking, haggling, yelling, the voices that showed there was life in a place flooded into Yang Qing's senses.

He didn't scan the city using his monarch sense and just used the heightened senses of cultivators to take everything in. Other than the good pay, safe thigh to hug, and fair distribution of resources, sights like this were one of the reasons he would never leave the Order no matter how much they overworked him.

Yang Qing sauntered on ahead once he had taken everything in. He decided against flying but instead walked.

There was a long line of people walking in steadily, there were even large carts in those lines for those who did not have storage rings or for those dealing in living things as storage rings don't provide a habitable space for any living organism except the void mimicry silkworm.

There were guards carefully checking the goods and the owners. From Yang Qing's detection the guards were mostly in the early stages of the core formation realm though he did detect in one of the rooms next to the gate there was a concealed aura of an eighth-stage core formation expert.

Since the line was steadily moving, Yang Qing decided to just follow the line as he admired the light purple mist above the city.

The Purple grass county was named so because it was home to grass that produced purple mist every morning. The mist had refreshing properties that renewed the mind and the spirit, as for the grass it was a top tier sky grade herb that served as the main ingredient for the mauve rejuvenation potion, a common sky-grade potion preferred by most rogue cultivators below the palace stage due to its ubiquity and wide range of uses. The potion restores qi, heals injuries within certain parameters, and also helps



soothe the soul when it has been overdrafted which comes in handy when one needs to constantly be on guard through the deployment of their spiritual sense.

Though the Red maple Empire is not the sole producer of purple grass or the largest either, the purple grass it produces has been one of the foundations of the growth it has today and is still one of its most important resources. This is why other than the capital, Purple grass county is the second most prosperous area in the whole Empire.

Yang Qing's turn soon came barely five minutes later. When he produced the orange-red token he was given at the border it drew a few shocked looks from the guards who quickly went to talk amongst themselves before one of them run off in the direction where Yang Qing had detected the eighth-stage core formation expert.

Yang Qing frowned at their interactions as this was the sort of attention he wanted to avoid. Because of the drastic change in the guards' behaviors, he was already drawing curious looks from the crowd behind him.

The guard who was holding Yang Qing's token flinched upon noticing Yang Qing's change in his expression.

"Sorry senior you can have this back and enjoy your stay in the Purple City. You can use the token to dine and rest on the seventh floor of the White orchard villa for free.

All holders of this token are to receive the utmost care while in our city. It was why my colleague has suddenly run off . We need to make the necessary arrangement and inform the relevant parties to ensure you have a pleasant stay in the city," said the guard as his voice shook a little while he hurriedly gave the token back.

While the token was meant to help the holder travel easily it also served as an alert or a warning to other guards or officials of the Red maple Empire about the capabilities of the owner so they could be mindful and avoid any complications that may arise from ignorance.

The Red maple Empire usually gave out different colored tokens and the one Yang Qing had was the highest-ranked token that one could get. Only foreign dignitaries whose rank was the same as the Empire were qualified to get that token. All holders were to be shown the utmost courtesy and failure to

do so would result in the execution of the party or parties responsible. It was why the guards were all flustered that they had to involve their boss because if anything went wrong even their boss wouldn't be let off.

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"Is that so? Then I offer my thanks in advance for your generous hospitality. I'll be off then," said Yang Qing as he dryly laughed.

Before the guard could respond Yang Qing had already disappeared from the spot with shadow-void steps and reappeared later in some alley a few hundred meters away from the gate.

"While I'd love to take them up on their offer at the White orchard villa I'm sure it will end up being more trouble than it's worth which would make the little time I have even tighter," said Yang Qing as he disappeared off into the sea of people walking about looking for the Earthvine restaurant.

"Where is he?" asked a handsome young man with orange-red hair who rushed to where the guard who had just been communicating with Yang Qing, was.

"He has just left captain. He seemed to be in a hurry though from his shift in expression he seemed to have done so because he wanted to avoid the attention he was getting," said the guard with a guilty awkward smile as he couldn't help but feel in part it was their fault due to their exaggerated reactions.

"Whaaat?! He wasn't angry when he left was he?" the young man hurriedly asked.

"He didn't seem like it, he even thanked me for the offer package at the White orchard villa," the guard nervously answered as he shrunk back in fear from being abruptly grabbed by the collar.

"Captain won't this draw further attention to that person," weakly said the guard trying to get the captain to calm down from his current agitated state.

For some strange reason, the guard found the captain's current state rather novel like he seemed more approachable and human now as compared to his normal stoic state accompanied by an overbearing aura which the guard suspected was because the captain was a long distant relative of the royal family.

"Mmh as expected of the royal bloodline even their faces can bloom like the flowers of the red maple," thought the guard before he hurriedly brought his straying thoughts back.

#### Chapter 136 Stumbling Onto The Two Zhi Siblings

The captain continued on completely oblivious of the guard's thoughts and the strange curious looks he was giving him, especially on his face.

"Make sure the White orchard villa is informed and also make sure you tighten security and place those arrogant scions from the noble families under close watch. Better yet round them up and throw them in the city lord's dungeons," the captain hurriedly gave out orders to the rest of the guards. However, he was mindful enough to use a small sound transmission technique as he gave those orders.

"Captain isn't this..." one of the guards couldn't help but fearfully question the order especially on rounding up the noble's children within the city and locking them up in the dungeon.

With the numerous rank 4 organizations around, add to that some of the noble families who moved some of their branches to the city because of the purple grass, Purple city was a powder keg of different powerhouses maintaining a fragile coexistence and it was the job of the guards to ensure that balance is maintained but if they were to follow the captain's order, chaos may ensue.

"What? What? What are you afraid of? It's the royal family that rules this place, not the noble families despite their greedy wishes to do so. Only one of the families here has a palace stage expert and he is usually stationed at the capital not to mention that he is weaker than any of the palace stage experts in the royal family.

There's a reason why the Empire's ruling family has remained unchanged for 30,000 years. Act with some backbone will you? You are the face of the Red maple Empire.

LOCK THEM ALL UP. Whatever backlash comes from it I will be the one to face it, so go do your jobs!!!" fiercely said the captain this time he didn't even bother to lower his voice.

All the guards got riled up for some reason as they unsheathed their sabers pointing them to the sky as they left as if going off to battle.

The crowd behind waiting to enter all had dumbfounded looks at what just happened. Those close to the captain were trembling from being exposed to the overbearing and murderous aura that leaked from the captain which later got compounded by the guards' own murderous aura.

"Is the Empire at war or something," most couldn't help but wonder. There were even some of the weaker ones within the crowd who fearfully turned back to head back to whence they came from.

Meanwhile, Yang Qing who was the unwitting cause of all this was busy whistling with his hands clasped behind his head happily taking in the sights.

"Hey big brother, are you a visitor by chance?"

Yang Qing's intake of the scenery was interrupted by two children about nine years old who appeared in front of him. It was a boy and a girl and from their evident close resembling looks, they were twins.

They had on worn-out light blue robes that had a few holes in them. Though Yang Qing noticed despite the holes and worn-out appearance the robes were clean and well-maintained down to their looks. Their skins were tanned and a little sallow but they were clean nonetheless.

Both two siblings had short pitch-black hair with the girl's hair being amateurly tied in twin ponytails.

Though the two were identical twins they seemed like polar opposites. The brother had lively eyes that shone with energy, intelligence, and a hint of cunningness. He was also the one that asked Yang Qing if he was a visitor. As for the sister she had a shy and cautious temperament to her as she stood closely behind her brother's back. She was also curious sort as he occasionally examined Yang Qing's light grey robes while hiding behind her brother.

Yang Qing smiled with deep interest as he examined the two siblings before him. Even though the sister seemed like she was the one who had chosen to hide behind her brother's back in the real sense Yang Qing noticed when the boy appeared he was the one who had conveniently placed his sister in that position.

Even though he seemed rambunctious, the young boy was calculated. Even the moment he had chosen to talk to Yang Qing was conveniently when one of the city guards appeared within shouting distance.

"Quite the sneaky cautious one," thought Yang Qing as he noticed a few bruises on the brother's arm hidden under his robes.

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"Yes, I am a visitor. How did you know" gently said Yang Qing as he offered a small friendly smile which made the brother increase his wariness though he was quick to mask it with a cheery laugh.

"It's because I am pretty good with details, among them, faces. Big brother, I'm sure you have heard this plenty of times but there's a lofty bearing to you almost like a solitary immortal. With such an aura there's no way I would have not noticed you were a resident of the Purple city despite its large populace hence why I knew right away you were a visitor," said the brother with a bit of smugness and no shame whatsoever at calling Yang Qing a solitary immortal.

Yang Qing was decent looking but even he knew it wasn't to the extent of being likened to a solitary immortal. He even wondered what part of him looked lofty from his carelessly kept hair and lackadaisical air. He was the farthest thing from what an immortal should be though he had to admit it was nice being shamelessly complimented even if it was a complete lie.

"Many thanks for your compliments little brother though my skin isn't too thick to accept such a compliment. So how can I help you two?" asked Yang Qing.

"My name is Zhi Da and this is my sister Zhi Ruolan. Big brother how about we be your guides in Purple City? I don't mean to brag but you would be hard-pressed to find better guides than us.

We know all the best general merchant stores, alchemy shops, and blacksmith shops where you can buy top quality products at a considerable price..," Zhi Da suddenly paused from his enthusiastic speech as he beckoned Yang Qing over, cautiously eyeing his surroundings afraid someone will overhear them.

Yang Qing happily obliged him as he bent his ear over.

"Big brother it's only because I have a favorable impression of you that I'm willing to tell you this even at the risk of my life. While the Purple city is known as the central hub for trade especially when it comes to alchemical ingredients and potions such as the Mauve rejuvenation potion, the city is unkind to outsiders. Most shops won't sell outside their established clientele and those that will, do so at exorbitant prices. Lots of visitors have been swindled like that some even got defective potions but with my help and recommendations, I know shops with decent reputations that will open their doors to you on my account.

So what do you say, big brother? Do you want to employ our services? Don't worry because I feel like fate has brought us together I'll even give you a discount. I usually charge 4 low-grade spirit stones but in your case, I'll charge just 2 and I'll even answer any and all questions you may have.

As I said before, I'm pretty good with details, the information I have in my head is sufficient to ensure the longevity of any information organization," said Zhi Da as flashed a professional deal-closing smile that left his sister red faced which Yang Qing guessed was from passive embarrassment.

"What a talent," Yang Qing muttered in shock as he dryly chuckled.

#### Chapter 137 Zhi Da's Dilemma

Yang Qing paused for a bit before he gave his reply. It was an intentional pause as he wanted to see whether Zhi Da's current smug expression would change and squirm a little bit.

While Zhi Da did manage to skillfully hide his emotions but for a seasoned judge such as Yang Qing it was easy for Yang Qing to read his nervousness. It even seemed like a couple of times Zhi Da wanted to speak but held himself back.

As for Zhi Luoran, she was eyeing the two of them alternating her glances between the two during their showdown as her eyes glittered as if enjoying a show.

The little dance between Yang Qing and Zhi Da was interrupted by the mild rumbling of a hungry stomach.

Eiiii!!!!

Zhi Luoran's embarrassed cry broke the stalemate as she yelped in shame burying her head in her palms with a reddened face.

"Fine, I agree to hire your services Zhi Da. I will be in your care from now on," said Yang Qing after he decided he had teased Zhi Da long enough and any more would just be cruel.

It couldn't have been easy for the two siblings to survive alone especially given their current age. From what Yang Qing could detect they were only at the body refining age and from the density of their bones and internal structure, they were both at the bronze refining stage. In a place as prosperous as the Purple city they were no different from a mortal with no cultivation.

The bulk of the population roaming the streets was atleast in the qi refinement stage and with how ruthless and exploitative the cultivation world was, it was a wonder how the two Zhi siblings were still walking about. But with how mature and overly cautious they were, it seemed they had gone through their fair share of difficult moments that shaped their current habits.

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"You won't regret it, big brother," eagerly said Zhi Da who would have jumped up and down in excitement if it wasn't for his restraint and professional business-mode persona he currently donned on.

"So do you want the payment now or later?" asked Yang Qing.

The Zhi siblings didn't seem to have any storage rings on them and if he casually produced spirit stones to pay them even if it was the lowest grade spirit stone, it would still draw in unwanted attention to the two siblings. Birds die for food and men die for treasure. Openly giving them two spirit stones was the same as painting a target on their backs.

Zhi Da was also in a dilemma as he kept exchanging glances with his sister Zhi Luoran.

Earlier he had picked Yang Qing out of the crowd not because he was a visitor since there were always a lot of visitors streaming into the city, but it was because Yang Qing looked young and affluent. Even though his light grey robes seemed casual both Zhi Da and Zhi Luoran could tell it was made of excellent

materials more so the latter who had a sensitive eye for certain things. She was the one who told Zhi Da that Yang Qing might be rich.

Zhi Luoran would be the one to judge potential prospects while Zhi Da would be in charge of soft selling and closing the deal. This has always been their modus operandi. They have had a bit of success with it along with some close draws where they almost got kidnapped or got stiffed on the payment. But all in all, they always made enough to meet their basic needs and also pay 'operating tax' to the head of the Black vipers, which was the local underground organization in charge of the area they operated under.

Yang Qing seemed like an easy mark to them so the Zhi siblings made their approach. Zhi Da decided to raise a high charge first, then they would bargain back and forth and he would eventually settle for maybe 10 gold coins. Not once has he ever gotten a low-grade spirit stone as payment. It has always been a few silver coins on a bad day and maybe five to ten gold coins on a really good day. As for getting a low-grade spirit stone, that was a pipe dream as just a single low-grade spirit stone is valued at 100 gold coins, and even if you had the gold coins it didn't necessarily mean you'd be able to get a place that would agree to the trade.

Only mortals with no hopes of cultivation and who had a spirit stone in their possession would agree to such a trade since the spiritual qi in a low-grade spirit stone would dissipate over time if not used or stored properly.

When Yang Qing agreed on paying them two low-grade spirit stones, Zhi Da agreed on reflex but now that he had time to cool down and think on the matter, he couldn't help but worry for his and his sister's safety. The spirit stone was a hot potato that would get them killed by some of the thieves in the area and if they decided to hand them over to the Black viper they may get killed by the person in charge of collections so they could pocket the stones for themselves and eliminate the witnesses.

Zhi Da's eyes seemed to be asking his sister what they should do. He couldn't outright admit to Yang Qing his earlier charge was a bluff and he wanted gold coins instead. He would seem like a sham and receiving a beating from it would be their best-case scenario.

He couldn't tell Yang Qing's cultivation realm but if he was to guess he assumed Yang Qing was in the foundation establishment stage and one that had good backing based on the quality of his robe. He wasn't sure how someone of that caliber would react and the consequences they would suffer.



Zhi Da sneakily glanced around to see if the guard was still within shouting distance. If worse comes to worst he would scream for their help. Though even then there would be consequences from the guard's end but it would be a better end than what might happen.

Zhi Da gritted his teeth as he prepared to ask for gold coins instead but he was cut off when Yang Qing suddenly spoke up.

#### Chapter 138 Trouble Brewing From The Alleyway

"How about this, I'm a bit hungry right now, you could show me the way to the Earthvine restaurant first and we can discuss the payment over a meal. You can also tell me a bit about Purple city."

Zhi Da who had prepared himself for a beating that would come when he came clean was caught off guard by Yang Qing's suggestion that it took him a minute before he oriented himself.

"Sure, sure, big brother. That can work too," Zhi Da hurriedly said as he chuckled awkwardly.

Zhi Luoran had her eyes glow at the mention of the Earthvine restaurant but then they dimmed with melancholy and worry.

"Big brother will they..." she nervously said as she tugged at Zhi Da's robes.

"It's okay while we can't afford a meal there, we both know they have a good reputation for not discriminating against their guests. It will be okay and we have a duty as guides to bring big brother there atleast. If they refuse us entry we can just wait outside for big brother to finish his meal and we can resume the tour.

It will be okay Luoran," Zhi Da gently said as he flashed a confident smile while patting his sister's head.

"Okay," Zhi Luoran meekly said.

Yang Qing couldn't help but sigh when he saw this.

"Maybe I can test their talent later and see if they can apply for the Order. Even if they don't have the talent for the posts with high requirements, the administration department is always undermanned and in desperate need of manpower. Maybe they can get a post there," thought Yang Qing.

"Big brother..."

"Just call me Yang Qing," said Yang Qing.

"Okay big brother Yang Qing, I'll lead the way. The Earthvine restaurant isn't that far away from here.

The restaurant can be considered to be a jewel of the city other than the purple grass of course. While I have not had a meal from there since I'm a simple person with simple pleasures, some of my friends, very trusted friends might I add, have. From their reviews, they said the meals there were worth every spirit stone they charge.

They even considered it a huge bargain for the money spent because eating a meal there is the same as consuming any alchemical pill or potion except it's cheaper and doesn't have the bitter taste or the risk of accumulating pill poison associated with consuming alchemical pills and potions.

Some of the alchemical shops in the area have lost a bit of business to them and as a result of that, there has been a recent increase in the number of restaurants in the city. None comes close to the Earthvine restaurant though but there are some decent ones that have good food and equally complementary décor.

If you want to visit one later after you have had your meal I can take you to one I go to on special occasions. It may not be much but it has a great ambiance with good food though not as high quality as the Earthvine restaurant or other upcoming high-class restaurants. But they do try as they bring the best out of the ingredients they have. They make the best cakes and tea and they keep improving, they are now even trying their hand at pork dumplings," Zhi Da animatedly said as spittle flew everywhere.

"Oh, what is the restaurant's name?" asked Yang Qing with interest showing in his tone. Food was food to him and if it was made with people passionate about their craft, it was even better despite the quality of the ingredients they used he would eat it with relish.

"It's called Wang's restaurant. The grandpa and grandma there who run the place are nice," Zhi Luoran softly answered from the side as a small smile formed on her face.

Clearly, she too liked the restaurant albeit for different reasons than Zhi Da.

"Seeing the praise it's getting from Purple city's finest guides it would be foolish of me not to try the food there atleast once before I left," said Yang Qing.

"You won't regret it big brother Yang Qing," Zhi Da happily said with Zhi Luoran nodding along in agreement.

Yang Qing noted the current smile Zhi Da showed when talking about the Wang restaurant was the most sincere one he had shown during their brief interaction.

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During their walk over, Zhi Da was dutiful in his role as a guide as he gave brief introductions of the businesses they passed by on their way over while adding a few trivia here and there. Yang Qing had to admit Zhi Da wasn't just boasting shamelessly when he said he had lots of information to share and was detail-oriented. As some of the insights he had could only be obtained by someone meticulous in their observations.

Close to ten minutes passed by as information poured out of him nonstop with Zhi Luoran occasionally shyly adding on her two cents from the side. She grew less and less reserved on the walk over as she occasionally bickered with Zhi Da over the accuracy of his details.

Yang Qing occasionally threw a few questions here and there as he enjoyed the company of the two siblings.

Just as he was about to ask another question he suddenly paused as he turned his gaze down some alleyway to his right before resuming his attention back to the siblings' tour who did not seem to notice his brief pause. They were heavily engrossed in their roles.

"Is it someone from the guard's station? No, it can't be. There wouldn't be a need for them to hide and I don't think someone at the second stage of the foundation realm would qualify to be a guard in Purple city.

Maybe it wasn't me he was trailing," thought Yang Qing as his eyes narrowed on the two siblings.

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"Did he notice me?" said a thin man with sunken eyes and a hawk-like nose with a few blade scars on his face. He had pressed himself against one of the walls within the alleyway he was in so he could take advantage of the dark shade the building provided to hide.

He cautiously glanced in Yang Qing's direction before pulling his head back in once again.

"What's with that kid? Isn't he just some easy mark those kids targeted? Maybe I'm just being overly sensitive and he didn't notice me. Anyhow now that I've confirmed the kids' location, I can tell the boss," muttered the hawk-nosed man as he took a beat-up communication talisman.

"Boss it's me, I've spotted the two kids," said the hawk-nosed man with a faint shiver in his tone.

"Where are they?" asked a gruff voice from the other end.

"Just a few meters away from the Earthvine restaurant. They're guiding a young youth around,"

"Keep following them and make sure they are within your sight at all times,"

The hawk-nosed man hesitated a bit before he answered back. He finally gritted his teeth and decided to air his concerns.

"Boss I think the youth they are guiding may have spotted me as I was stalking them," the hawk-nosed man nervously said. There was a long pause before he heard a reply back. He nervously held his breath as he waited for a response.

"It doesn't matter, just keep following them. One of the Mo family scions has his eye on the two siblings and asked us to bring them to him today.

In consideration of my past relationship with the two siblings and how much money they have made me I decided to give them a few hours together before I deliver them tonight. Until then I need you to be constantly aware of their whereabouts before I send iron tooth to collect them later. That Zhi Da has always been a slippery brat.

Do your job well, there is a lot at stake. With the help of the Mo family scion, our Black viper may join the Tiger claw gang, the Jade scorpions, and the Crimson blades as one of the top underground gangs in the market square.

Don't fail me, Shu Wei," said the gruff man as he ended the call.

The hawk-nosed man despite no one being there shivered as he put the communication talisman away.

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"So it's them they are after," Yang Qing silently muttered as they finally stopped at the entrance of the Earthvine restaurant.

#### Chapter 139 Turned Away

On seeing the suspect behavior from the person tailing them, Yang Qing decided to spread his monarch sense to the area the person was hiding in.

His conversation with the head of the black viper had all been heard by Yang Qing.

"It seems the city is not as peaceful as it seems," thought Yang Qing as he took a step to the Earthvine restaurant's doors.

It was a four-storey building made entirely of maroon cedar wood and a hip and gable roof. Although its design seemed simple, it was that elegant simplicity that felt inviting to all who placed their eyes on it.

"What an interesting design. Mmmh it's pretty well defended too," thought Yang Qing as he detected a dormant array formation surrounding the building that would defend against the attack of several late-stage core formation experts. If Yang Qing had to guess, he surmised the grade of the formation array was at the peak of orange grade tittering towards the blue grade. It only missed it by a small distance.

"Zhong Quan is either a pretty resourceful guy than he lets on or he is valued by the Golden bamboo pavilion. Though none of that matters. Time to see how the food is in this place. I hope it comes close to the Thousand flavors restaurant even better if it exceeds it," thought Yang Qing as a greedy glint flashed in his eyes.

"Is it always this empty?" Yang Qing suddenly asked when he noticed the crowd outside the restaurant was small which was strange, especially for a restaurant that was deemed one of the jewels of the Purple city.

"No, this is odd. There's usually a long line of people waiting for their turns. No matter the time, the line is always long. This is strange. The only times it's been like this is when the owner was hosting some special guests. From what I heard they're not from the Empire either and they seem to have some relations with the restaurant along with a few other top shops within the city.

Might be some big shot on the same level as the Emperor," Zhi Da said pensively as he whispered toward the end.

"Oh, then should we go in?" asked Yang Qing though even if it seemed like he was waiting for Zhi Da's input his hand was already on the door pulling it.

The two siblings followed behind with Zhi Luoran's nervousness showing with every step she took. While Zhi Da tried to seem okay he too had some anxiety showing in his darting eyes.

"Don't worry, they won't chase you out. The owner is a friend," Yang Qing softly said trying to ease their tension. He was tempted to pat them on the head but he didn't think it would be a good move, given how guarded the two were to strangers.

Zhi Dao didn't believe Yang Qing's statement about his friendship with the owner. In his mind how could a foundation establishment youth be friends with the unfathomable owner who even the princes of the Empire had to treat with respect?

He assumed Yang Qing made the statement to comfort them or seem like a big shot. There were many people who would lie they were friends with a big shot to increase their own prestige.

Creak.

The door opened as Yang Qing walked in with the two siblings in tow.

The crowded restaurant he expected to find was not there as the seats on the ground floor were all empty and from his senses, he detected the other floors were empty too. However, despite it being empty there were people rushing about carrying trays of food and wine with others carrying decorative materials hurrying to the upper floors. The staircase was even adorned with carpet made from silk gotten from the lunar silkworm. It had an ethereal white feel to it and even without touching it one could feel its delicate softness along with the cool refreshing sensation it added to the floor.

"Young sir, what are you doing here? We already gave out a notice an hour ago that we are not accepting any guests for today. Please leave, if you want to eat you can back tomorrow morning," said a middle-aged man in pristine white robes that were not even an inch out of place. He had a short mustache and black hair tied in a small bun.

Yang Qing assumed the middle-aged man was the supervisor. He had an air of superiority about him and his cultivation base was at the second stage of the core formation realm while the other workers shuffling about had cultivation bases that were at the late stages of the qi refinement realm and some were in the early and middle stages of the foundation establishment realm.

Though Yang Qing did detect three other core formation experts on the ground floor. They were in a room that Yang Qing assumed was the kitchen.

The middle-aged man was walking down the staircase from the first floor as he said this. He stopped when he was a few meters away from Yang Qing. He showed an imperceptible frown and a look of disgust when his gaze fell on Zhi Da and Zhi Luoran. Although it was only for a second the two siblings

seemed to have noticed it as Zhi Luoran lowered her head in shame while Zhi Da gave a self-deprecating smile as he held his sister's hands.

That veiled look of contempt didn't only appear on the middle-aged man but on some of the workers too who didn't even bother hiding their unkind looks of disgust as though the presence of the two siblings was tainting the place. But there were others who had looks of pity and empathy when they saw the two sibling's sallow and malnourished looks.

Yang Qing wasn't surprised by this but rather he expected it. Despite the restaurant's all-welcome policy the people who could afford to come to this place were either rich with prominent backgrounds or had powerful cultivation bases. With the fame it had, with time, the staff would grow accustomed to serving a particular client base and would form a bias against those who didn't fit that criterion.

Most organizations with huge reputes suffered from this flaw be they sects, clans, kingdoms and empires, or merchant organizations even the Order wasn't immune to this. They would occasionally get a few bad eggs but with time the Order has found means to tackle the issue and they keep adding to those means to avoid the danger such a habit could bring.

#### Chapter 140 Welcome At The Wang's Restaurant

"Atleast not all of them are bad but just on this reception alone they fall short of the thousand flavors restaurant and the other restaurants at the Order," thought Yang Qing as he took everything in.

As a basic rule, all the restaurants within the grounds of the Order had to create a menu that catered to customers of all spectrums. Food that could be bought with spirit stones from low grade to high grade and food that could be bought with coins from gold coins to silver. It was required to be all-inclusive in every sense of the word.

....

"Sorry I'm new to the city and I just arrived today so I wasn't there when the notice was being given.

Zhong Quan gave me an open invitation to visit his place when I was around so I did. Once again I'm sorry for badging in, I will take my leave. When he comes back tell him Yang Qing passed by," said Yang Qing as he turned to leave. When he was scanning the restaurant with his monarch sense he noticed Zhong Quan's aura wasn't anywhere in the restaurant.



"Let's go," he gently said as he spoke to the two siblings who nodded and turned to leave with him.

The middle-aged man was left frowning as he stared at Yang Qing's departing back but he made no attempt to stop him from leaving.

The reason he had even personally intervened was the strangeness surrounding Yang Qing. He was seemingly a 20-year-old youth with no cultivation base who just easily opened their doors that had a restriction that would prevent it from moving not unless one used the strength of a middle-stage foundation establishment realm expert.

Even at such a close range, the middle-aged man didn't detect any cultivation realm fluctuations coming from Yang Qing which is why he opted to be polite and then there was the matter of him being friends with the owner. He wasn't sure how valid that statement was because many people use that same line to try and get in the restaurant especially when there are not any empty spaces for them to seat.

"It doesn't matter what his background is. It can't beat the restaurant's backing with the Golden bamboo pavilion.

Speaking of which, I hope master makes it in time to host the guest from the main headquarters and the branch head of Purple city," nervously thought the middle-aged man as he decided to push the matter about Yang Qing to the back of his mind and focus on the task at hand. He continued yelling orders as the staff moved with more urgency.

....

Yang Qing and the Zhi siblings were already a few meters away from the Earthvine restaurant making their way to Wang's restaurant.

It took them a bit of time before they reached it as the restaurant was quite some ways away from the Earthvine restaurant.

The roads, the buildings, and the shops seemed more downscaled compared to the street the Earthvine restaurant was in. Even though the area was still decent in terms of infrastructure but even someone who wasn't a craftsman would notice there is a huge difference in stature between the two areas.

From what Zhi Da told him Yang Qing learned that the area was known as the lower market square while the area the Earthvine restaurant and the other big stores were located in was the upper market square.

After they had left the Earthvine restaurant, they all as if in tacit agreement didn't bring up what happened in there. Yang Qing suggested they go to Wang's restaurant which was a welcomed suggestion to the two siblings who perked up quickly erasing their earlier gloom. At least on the surface, it seemed that way but Yang Qing saw the sadness the two hid deep in their eyes even though they tried to mask it by resuming their information guide on the areas they passed by before they finally arrived at Wang's restaurant.

Just like advertised it was a small three-storey restaurant made out of sandal wood while its interior was simple with wooden round chairs and tables and a few plants here and there to add a little freshness to the place.

It was a welcoming and lively place, especially with the sounds of joyous laughter, gorging sounds, and conversations that spanned across tables. It reminded Yang Qing of the restaurants from the Order during dinner time when almost everyone had clocked off and were in there at the same time. Employees from different departments would be there sharing laughs, banter, and good food.

"This is nice," Yang Qing said with a smile.

"Told you," Zhi Da smugly said as he cheekily rubbed his nose with his finger.

"Zhi Da are you up to no good again? You shouldn't pull sweet little Luoran into this,"

"Luoran ask grandma Wang to give you the blue cloud cake on my tab,"

"Put plum juice on mine,"

"And a few dumplings on mine,"

Some of the customers started chiming in when they saw Zhi Da and Zhi Luoran walk in.

"Don't I get anything?" Zhi Da hurriedly asked when he heard no mention of his name on the food being offered.

"Pay me back the few silvers you owe me from the bet you lost,"

"Zhi Da how can you be so thick-skinned after you charged my sworn brother from out of town four gold coins to show him the best blacksmith shop where he ended up being charged an arm and a tooth,"

"Wait, he did that to you too. He did that to my maternal uncle's granddaughter. Now I can never visit them and the way their house has a good spirit gathering array even the guest house...Zhi Da you bastard,"

"Why don't you start your own information organization? You always brag about how you could guarantee the lifeline of one. With the money you get from being an information broker, you could buy us meals for years instead of being the stingy braggart you are,"

"I doubt he would do it. We all know how stingy he is. He could stumble on a spirit stone mine and still hustle us for free food,"

"Yes, he is that type of person. Stingy money grabber,"

The tune took a turn from gentleness when it came to Zhi Luoran to vengeful anger and scorched earth when it was Zhi Da's turn.